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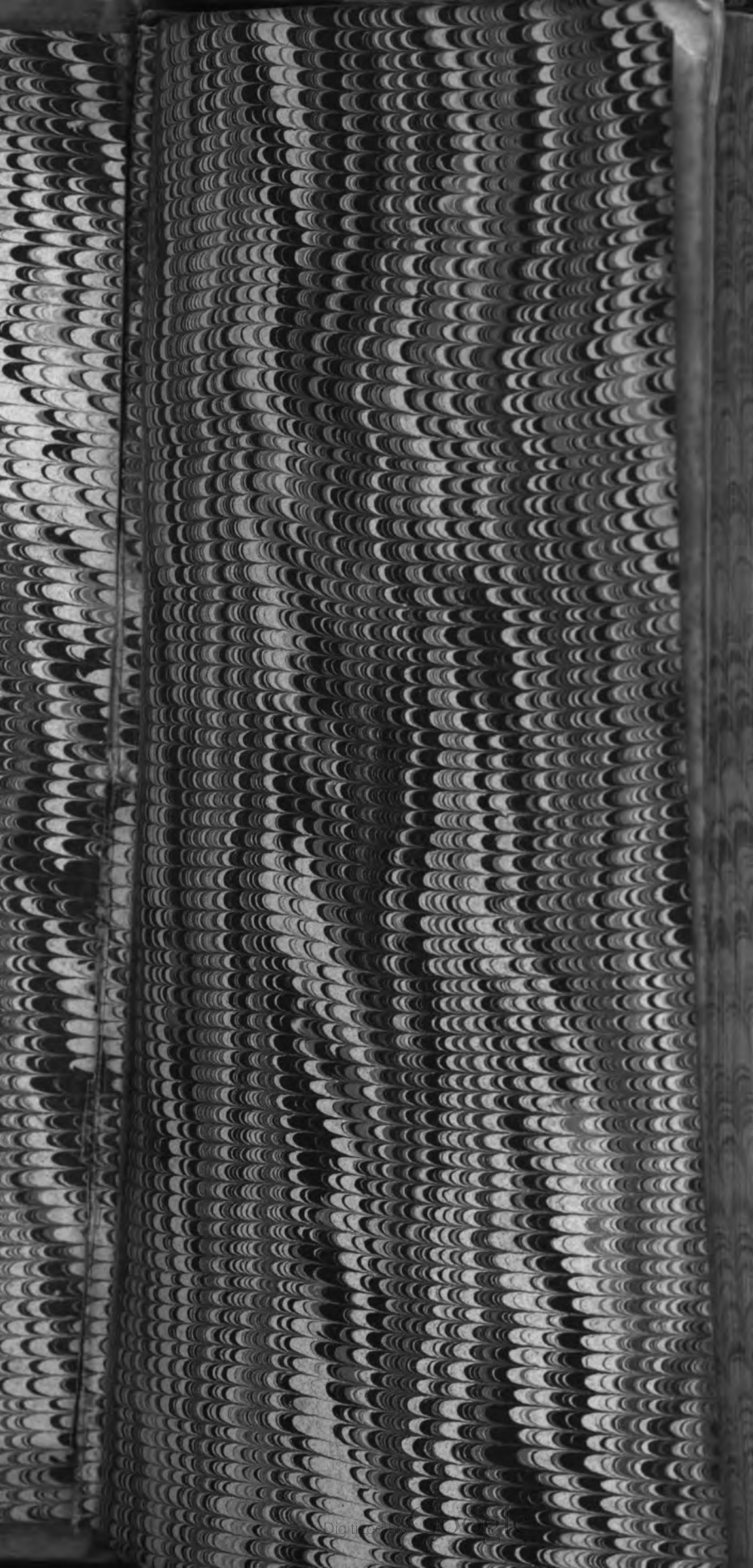

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ANNOTATIONS

UPON

E HOLY BIBLE;

WHEREIN

...ED TEXT IS INSERTED, AND VARIOUS READINGS ANNEXED,

TOGETHER WITH THE PARALLEL SCRIPTURES;

...T TERMS IN EACH VERSE ARE EXPLAINED, SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS ...ATIONS AND DOUBTS RESOLVED, AND THE WHOLE TEXT OPENED.

BY MATTHEW POOL.

...book of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.—NEH. viii. 8.

...ver, what thou readest? How can I, except some man should guide me?—ACTS viii. 30, 31.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

NEW YORK:

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THE HOLY BIBLE;

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THE MORE DIFFICULT TERMS IN EACH VERSE ARE EXPLAINED, SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS *RECONCILED*, QUESTIONS AND DOUBTS RESOLVED, AND THE WHOLE TEXT OPENED.

BY MATTHEW POOL.

They read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.—NEH. viii. 8.

Understandest thou what thou readest? How can I, except some man should guide me?—ACTS viii. 30, 31.

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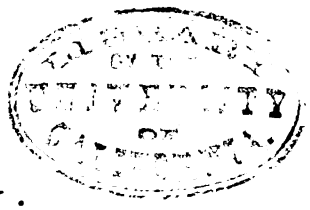

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ANNOTATIONS

ON THE

†BOOK OF PSALMS.

† Luke 20. 42. Acts 1. 20.

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THE ARGUMENT.

THE Divine authority of this Book of PSALMS is so certain and evident, that it was never questioned in the church; which being fixed, it is of small moment that the penman of some of them is not now known; nor doth this any more lessen its authority, than it invalidates the decree of a prince, or an act of parliament, that it is not certain by whose pen it was drawn up. Most of them were composed by David, as is evident, both from the title of them, and from the express testimony of the New Testament concerning some of them; and that by the inspiration of God's Spirit, as appears both from the Divine matter and frame of them, and from 2 Sam. xxiii. 1; Matt. xxii. 43, &c; Acts i. 16; ii. 25. But some of them were composed by other persons; by Moses, as Psal. xc., by Heman, and Ethan, and Asaph, as the title of the Psalms show; and by others after their times, whose names are not mentioned, as is manifest from Psal. cxxvi. and cxxxvii. It is apparent that the Psalms were not written in the order in which they now lie; and they were put into this order either by Ezra, as the Hebrew doctors affirm, or by some other holy prophet or prophets. It is sufficient for us that the whole book is owned as canonical by our blessed Saviour, Luke xxiv. 44.

PSALM I.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was put first as a preface to all the rest, as a powerful persuasive to the diligent reading and serious study of the whole book, and of the rest of the Holy Scripture, taken from that blessedness which attends upon the study and practice thereof.

The godly blessed, 1. *Their delight in God's law*, 2. *Their fruitfulness*, 3. *The wretched course and condition of the ungodly*, 4—6.

a Prov. 4. 14, 15. ‖ Or, wicked. b Ps. 26. 4. Jer. 15. 17.

BLESSED [a] *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ‖ ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, [b] nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

The Hebrew words are very emphatical, *Blessedness belongs to that man*, or, *Oh the blessedness of that man!* Thrice blessed is that man; who is here described negatively, and in the next verse positively. *That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly*, i. e. that doth not lead his life according to their counsel, or course, or manner of living; that doth not associate himself with them, nor follow their evil instigations or examples. *Walking* notes choice of it, and continuance or progress in it; otherwise good men do sometimes step aside into an evil action. For the explaining of the phrase, see Gen. xlix. 6; 2 Chron. xxii. 3—5; Prov. i. 15; iv. 14; Micah vi. 16. *Nor standeth;* which notes a more settled abode, hardness, and obstinacy in it. *In the way*, i. e. in their course or manner of conversation; in the practice of those things which they choose and use to do; which is called a man's *way*, Psal. v. 8; xxv. 4; 2 Pet. ii. 2, 15. *Of sinners;* emphatically so called here, as also Psal. xxvi. 9; Eccles. ix 2; Matt. xxvi. 45; Luke vii. 37; John ix. 16, 31, who give up themselves to the power and practice of sin, making it their great business and their delight. *Nor sitteth in the seat;* which notes their association or incorporation of themselves with them; a constant and resolved perseverance in their wicked courses, with great content and security; and a great proficiency and eminency in the school of wickedness, and an ability and readiness to instruct others therein. *Of the scornful;* of those who are not only diseased, but reject, despise, and scorn all remedies; who make a mock of sin, and of God's threatenings and judgments against sinners; who deride all wholesome reproofs and counsels, and make it their trade to scoff at goodness and good men. Divers have observed a gradation in this verse; the following clause still exceeding the former, for *standing* is more than *walking*, and *sitting* more than *standing*. And *the way* or course may seem to be worse than the *counsel* or design, and the *seat* is worse than *the way;* and *sinners*, in Scripture use, are worse than the *ungodly*, and *the scornful* are the worst of *sinners*. But I would not lay great stress upon such observations.

2 But [c] his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; [d] and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

c Ps. 119. 35, 47, 92. d Josh. 1. 8. Ps. 119. 1, 97.

In the law, i. e. in the study and practice of it, as appears from the context. The *law* of God may be here understood of the whole doctrine delivered by God to the church, consisting of doctrines, precepts, promises, and threatenings, &c.; as it is taken Psal. xxxvii. 31; lxxviii. 1; Isa. li. 7; John x. 34; or more particularly of the preceptive part of it, which is commonly so called; and so this is noted as the peculiar character of a good man, that he delighteth himself not only in the promises, which a bad man may do, Matt. xiii. 20, but even in the commands of God, Psal. cxii. 1; cxix. 47, 127, 143; 1 John v. 3, which are unwelcome and burdensome to a wicked man.

The word *meditate* implies a deep, and serious, and affectionate thoughtfulness about it: see Psal. xix. 14; xlix. 3; Prov. xxiv. 2; Isa. xxxiii. 18. *Day and night;* not seldom and slightly, as hypocrites do; but diligently, frequently, constantly, and upon all occasions.

3 And he shall be like a tree [e] planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not †wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall [f] prosper.

e Jer. 17. 8. Ezek. 47. 12. † Heb. *fade.* f Gen. 39. 3, 23. 1 Ps. 128. 2. Is. 3. 10.

And, or *for*, as this particle is oft used, as Psal. lx. 12; cviii. 13; Prov. iv. 17; this being the proof of that blessedness of a good man, which he had only asserted, ver. 1. *By the rivers*, i. e. a river; the plural number being put for the singular, as it is Judg. xii. 7; Jonah i. 5, and oft elsewhere. *In his season*, i. e. in the time of fruit-bearing;

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which being applied to the good man, notes either, 1. His active goodness, that he seeketh and improveth all opportunities for the doing of good, exercising godliness, justice, temperance, charity, patience, &c., according to the several occasions offered to him. Or rather, 2. His certain prosperity and happiness, as may be gathered from the end of this verse, and the opposite state of the ungodly, ver. 4, 5; that he shall have the fruit or benefit of his godly life in due time, or when it is expedient for him; possibly in this life, but assuredly in the next life. *His leaf also shall not wither;* his happiness is not short and transitory, as all worldly felicity is; but fixed and everlasting, like those trees which are continually green and flourishing: or, *and* (like a tree) *whose leaf never withers. Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper;* all his actions shall be crowned with success, and a blessed end or effect: see Rom. viii. 28.

g Job 21. 18. Ps. 35. 5. Is. 17. 13. & 29. 5. Hos. 13. 3.

4 The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* [g]like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

The ungodly are not so; their condition is far differing from the former. *But are like the chaff;* in regard either, 1. Of their sinful disposition. They are vain and frothy, unprofitable and hurtful, without any root of true and solid goodness, without any certain end or constant course, tossed to and fro with every wind of their own lusts or temptations. Or rather, 2. Of their wretched condition. They are restless and unquiet in their own minds and consciences; their seeming felicity, in which they please and pride themselves, hath no firm foundation, but quickly vanisheth and fleeth away, as chaff doth before the wind, and their end is to be burned: see Job xxi. 18; Psal. xxxv. 5; Matt. iii. 12.

h Wisd. 5. 1.

5 Therefore the ungodly [h]shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

Therefore, to wit, because they are ungodly; or *because*, as this particle is sometimes used, as Gen. xxxviii. 26; Numb. x. 31; xiv. 43; Psal. xlii. 6; for this verse is added to enforce or prove what he said in the former. *Shall not stand*, i. e. not subsist or endure the trial; or not be justified, or carry his cause, as this word is oft used; being opposed to *failing*, as Psal. xviii. 38; xx. 8; Mal. iii. 2; Luke xxi. 36; Rom. xiv. 4; Eph. vi. 13. *In the judgment;* either, 1. In the time of temporal calamities, when God shall arise to judge and punish them; for then the hearts of the wicked fail, and their consciences are filled with horror. Or, 2. In that great and general judgment of the whole world, called here *the judgment* emphatically; in that solemn and general congregation of all mankind, as the next words express it. *In the congregation of the righteous*, i. e. In that society which shall consist of none but righteous persons, or amongst the righteous ones on Christ's right hand, Matt. xxv. 32.

i Ps. 37. 18. Nah. 1. 7. John 10. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 19.

6 For [i]the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

For; he now gives a reason of this great difference between the righteous and the ungodly, expressed in the foregoing verses. *The Lord knoweth;* either, 1. Properly and speculatively; he searcheth and knoweth all their hearts and ways or actions; and therefore will preserve, prosper, and bless them; which may be gathered out of the following and opposite clause of this verse, and out of ver. 1, 2. Or, 2. Practically and affectionately, as words of knowledge in Scripture do frequently imply affection, as Exod. i. 8; Psal. xxxi. 7; ci. 4; Hos. viii. 4; Amos iii. 2. He approveth, loveth, and delighteth in them, and in the course of their lives, and therefore will recompense them; or, he careth for and directeth their actions to a blessed issue. *The way of the ungodly shall perish;* all their wicked designs and courses shall come to nothing, and they shall perish with them.

PSALM II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The penman of this Psalm was David, as is affirmed, Acts iv. 25. As for the matter or subject of it, it may seem to have some respect unto David, and to his advancement to and settlement in the throne of Judah and Israel; but the chief design and scope of it, and the primary intention of the Holy Ghost in it, was to describe the Messiah and his kingdom, as is manifest, 1. From express testimonies of the New Testament to that purpose, as Acts iv. 25; xiii. 33; Heb. i. 5; v. 5; and, 2. From the consent of the ancient Hebrew writers, who did unanimously expound it so, as is confessed by their own brethren, particularly by Rabbi Solomon Jarchi upon this place; who hath this memorable passage, *Our doctors expounded this Psalm of the King Messiah, but that we may answer the heretics* (by which he means the Christians, as all know) *it is expedient to interpret it of David's person, as the words sound;* which words, although they are left out of the latter editions of that book, either by the fraud of Jews, or carelessness or mistake of others, yet are extant in the ancient editions of it. 3. From divers passages of the Psalm, which do not agree to David, but to Christ only, as the title of *Son*, of which see Heb. i. 4, 5, the extent of his kingdom, ver. 8, and Divine worship, ver. 11, 12.

The kingdom of Christ, and the opposition of the heathen foretold, 1—7. *God giveth him the earth for his possession,* 8, 9. *He summons all the kings and judges of the earth to submit themselves to him,* 10—12.

WHY [a]do the heathen ‖rage, and the people †imagine a vain thing?

a Ps. 46. 6. Acts 4. 25, 26.
‖ Or, *tumultuously assemble.* † Heb. *meditate.*

Why? upon what provocation, or to what end or purpose? *The heathen*, or, *Gentiles;* who did so against David, as we see, 2 Sam. v. 6, 17; 1 Chron. xiv. 8, &c.; and against Christ, Luke xviii. 32; Acts iv. 25, &c. *And the people:* this is either another expression of the same thing, as is usual in Scripture; or as the former word notes the Gentiles, so this may design the Jews or Israelites, who also combined against David, 2 Sam. ii. 8, &c., and against Christ, Acts iv. 27, though they were all of one nation, and descended from one and the same mother, as this word signifies, and it is used Gen. xxv. 23. *Imagine a vain thing;* what they shall never be able to effect; and if they could, it would do them no good, as they fancy, but great hurt.

2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD, and against his [b]anointed, *saying*,

b Ps. 45. 7. John 1. 41.

The kings; either those mentioned 2 Sam. v. and viii.; or rather Herod the Great, and the other Herod, and Pilate, and others with or after them. *Of the earth;* so called in way of contempt, and to show their madness in opposing the God of heaven. *Set themselves:* the word notes their firm purpose and professed hostility, and the combination of their counsels and forces. *Against the Lord;* either directly and professedly; or indirectly and by consequence, because against his anointed, and against his counsel and command. *And;* or, *that is*, as that particle is oft used; the latter clause explaining the former, and showing in what sense they fought against that God whom they pretended to own and worship. *Against his anointed;* against such a king whom God hath chosen and exalted, and wonderfully accomplished and set up for his work and service, who therefore will certainly defend him against all his enemies.

3 [c]Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

c Jer. 5. 5. Luke 19. 14.

Their, i. e. the Lord's and his anointed's, *bands*, which they design to put upon our necks, that they may bring us into subjection. They mean the laws of God, which the king would oblige them to observe, which though easy and pleasant in themselves and to good men, Matt. xi. 29, 30; 1 John v. 3, yet are very grievous and burdensome to corrupt nature, and to men of wicked lives. *Cast away their cords from us;* the same thing expressed with a little more emphasis. Let us not only break off their yoke, and the cords by which it is fastened upon us; but let us cast them far away, that they may never be recovered, and we may never be brought into bondage again.

4 [d]He that sitteth in the heavens [e]shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

d Psal. 11. 4.
e Ps. 37. 13. & 59. 8. Prov. 1. 26.

He that sitteth, as the Judge upon his tribunal, and as the King of the whole world upon his royal throne; who, without stirring from his place, can with one look or word destroy all his enemies. *In the heavens:* this is opposed to their being and reigning upon *earth*, ver. 2, and is mentioned here, as it is in other places of Scripture, as an evidence both of God's clear and certain knowledge of all things that are done below, as is noted, Psal. xi. 4, and of

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his sovereign and irresistible power, as is hence gathered, Psal. cxv. 3. See the preface to the Lord's prayer. *Shall laugh*, i. e. shall both despise and deride them, and all their crafty devices, which he shall manifest to the world to be ridiculous and contemptible follies. Compare 2 Kings xix. 21; Psal. xxxvii. 13.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and ‖vex them in his sore displeasure.

‖ Or, trouble.

Then; in the midst of all their plots and confidences of success. *Shall he speak to them in his wrath;* he shall severely rebuke them, not so much verbally as really, by dreadful judgments. For God's *speaking* is oft put for his actions; and so here it is explained by *vexing* in the next branch. Or, he shall pronounce a terrible sentence against them.

* Heb. anointed. † Heb. upon Zion, the hill of my holiness. † 2 Sam. 5. 7.

6 Yet have I †set my king †[f]upon my holy hill of Zion.

Yet; notwithstanding all their artifices and powerful combinations. *Have I set*, Heb. *I have anointed*, i. e. designed, appointed, or constituted, as this word is commonly used in Scripture, as of priests, 1 Chron. xxix. 22, and of prophets, 1 Kings xix. 16, 19, 20; so also of kings, as Judg. ix. 8, 15; 2 Sam. ii. 4, 7; iii. 39; Ezek. xxviii. 14. *My king*, in a singular manner, who hath not his kingdom by succession from former kings, nor by election of the people, as other kings have, but by my special and extraordinary destination; and who ruleth in my stead, and according to my will, and for my service and glory. *Upon my holy hill of Zion*, i. e. over my church and people. *Zion* properly and strictly taken was a hill on the north part of Jerusalem, Psal. xlviii. 2, where there was a strong fort, which when David had taken he called it *the city of David*, 2 Sam. v. 7, 9, and made it the head of his kingdom. But in a more large and improper sense it is frequently put for the city Jerusalem, Psal. xlviii. 12; lxxxvii. 2; cx. 2; and for the temple of Jerusalem, Psal. cxxxvii. 3; Isa. xviii. 7; Jer. li. 10, which was built upon the hill of Moriah, which was either a part of Mount Zion, or another hill adjoining to it; and for the church of the Jews, Psal. lxv. 1; lxix. 35; xcvii. 8; and for the Christian church, Heb. xii. 22; Rev. xiv. 1. And by these things it is plain why *Zion* is here called God's *holy hill.*

‖ Or, for a decree. [g] Psal. 89. 26, 27. Heb. 1. 5. & 5. 5.

7 I will declare ‖the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, [g]Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

I will declare, or *publish*, that all people concerned may take notice of it, and submit to it upon their peril. Publication or promulgation is essential to all laws or statutes. *The decree*, or, *concerning the decree*, i. e. the will or pleasure and appointment of God concerning my advancement into the throne, and the submission and obedience which the people here following shall yield to me. *Thou art my Son;* which though it may in some sort be said to or of David, who was in some respects the son of God, and begotten by him, as all believers are, John i. 12; 1 John iii. 9; James i. 18; yet much more truly and properly belongs to Christ, who is commonly known by this title both in the Old and New Testament, as Prov. xxx. 4; Hos. xi. 1; Matt. ii. 15; iii. 17; iv. 3, 6, and oft elsewhere; and to whom this title is expressly appropriated by the Holy Ghost, who is the best interpreter of his own words, Acts xiii. 33; Heb. i. 5; v. 5, and to whom alone the following passages belong. *This day have I begotten thee:* this is also applied by some to David, and so *this day* is the day of his inauguration, when he might be said to be begotten by God, inasmuch as he was then raised and delivered from all his troubles and calamities, which were a kind of death, and brought forth and advanced to a new kind of life, of royal state and dignity; and so this was the birthday, though not of his person, yet of his kingdom, as the Roman emperors celebrated a double birthday; first the emperor's, when he was born, and then the empire's, when he was advanced to the empire. But this is but a lean, and far-fetched, and doubtful sense; and therefore not to be allowed by the laws of interpretation, when the words may be properly understood concerning Christ. And so this may be understood either, 1. Of his eternal generation. *This day;* from all eternity, which is well described by *this day*, because in eternity there is no succession, no [yesterday], no [to-morrow], but it is all as one continued day or moment, without change or flux; upon which account *one day* is said to be *with the Lord as* long as *a thousand years, and a thousand years as* short as *one day*, 2 Pet. iii. 8. Or rather, 2. Of the manifestation of Christ's eternal sonship in time; which was done partly in his birth and life, when his being the Son of God was demonstrated by the testimony of the angel, Luke i. 32, and of God the Father, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5, and by his own words and works; but principally in his resurrection, which seems to be here mainly intended, of which day this very place is expounded, Acts xiii. 33; when Christ was in a most solemn manner *declared to be the Son of God with power*, Rom. i. 4. And this day or time Christ might very well be said to be begotten by God the Father; partly, because the resurrection from the dead is in Scripture called a *regeneration* or second birth, Matt. xix. 28, as well it may, being a restitution of that very being which man received by his first birth, and that by the peculiar and mighty power of God; partly, because in this respect Christ is called *the first begotten of the dead*, Rev. i. 5; and partly, because of that common observation, that *things are oft said to be done in Scripture when they are only declared or manifested to be done;* of which see instances, Gen. xli. 13; Jer. i. 10; Ezek. xliii. 3, and elsewhere.

8 [h]Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

[h] Ps. 22. 27. & 72. 8. & 89. 27. Dan. 7. 13, 14. See John 17. 4, 5. & 19. 15.

Ask of me; claim or demand it of me, as thy right by my promise, and thy birth and purchase. *For thine inheritance;* to be possessed and enjoyed by thee in a manner of an inheritance, to wit, constantly, surely, and perpetually. *The uttermost parts of the earth;* either, 1. The whole land of Canaan, from one end of it to the other, as this phrase is used, Psal. lxi. 2; lxxii. 8; which is but a very narrow sense, and that was but a very small kingdom, and no way agreeable to those magnificent expressions here used. Or rather, 2. The whole world, not only the Jewish nation, but the Gentiles also, as this phrase is almost universally used in the Old Testament, as Psal. xix. 4; xxii. 28; xlvi. 10; lxv. 5; Isa. xl. 28; xlv. 22, &c. And so these words declare the great amplitude of the kingdom of the Messiah.

9 [i]Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

[i] Ps. 89. 23. Rev. 2. 27. & 12. 5.

Thou shalt break them, i. e. those people that will not quietly submit to thee, shall be crushed and destroyed by thee. *With a rod of iron;* with thy mighty power, which they shall never be able to resist.

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

Be wise; understand your true interest. *Now*, whilst you have time and space for repentance and submission. *O ye kings;* you and your people. But he speaks of and to kings only; partly, because they most needed the admonition, as presuming upon their own power and greatness, and thinking it below them to submit to him; partly, because their authority and example could do much with their people; and partly, to intimate the greatness of this monarch, and that he was *King of kings, and Lord of lords. Ye judges*, or *rulers*, or *governors;* the same called *kings* in the former branch.

11 [k]Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice [l]with trembling.

[k] Heb. 12. 28. [l] Phil. 2. 12.

With fear, i. e. with reverence, and an awful sense of his great and glorious majesty, as very careful and diligent to please him, and afraid to offend him. *Rejoice;* do not esteem his yoke your dishonour and grievance; but know that it is a greater glory and happiness to be the subjects of this King, than to be emperors of the greatest empire; and accordingly rejoice in it, and bless God for this inestimable grace and benefit. *With trembling:* this is added to express the quality of this joy to which he calls them, and to distinguish it from that carnal and worldly rejoicing which

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is usually attended with security, and presumption, and licentiousness, and to warn them to take heed that they do not turn this grace of God into wantonness, nor slacken their dread of God's tremendous majesty, and of his terrible judgments, if they should hereafter revolt from him, or rebel against him; but, on the contrary, *work out their salvation with fear and trembling*, as it is prescribed, Phil. ii. 12: compare Matt. xxviii. 8.

m Gen. 41. 40. 1 Sam. 10. 1. John 5. 23.
n Rev. 6. 16, 17.
o Ps. 34. 8. & 84. 12. Prov. 16. 20. Is 30. 18. Jer. 17. 7. Rom. 9. 33. & 10. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 6.

12 [m]Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when [n]his wrath is kindled but a little. [o]Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

Kiss, in token of your subjection and adoration; whereof this was a sign among the Eastern nations, as is manifest both from Scripture, as 1 Sam. x. 1; 1 Kings xix. 18; Hos. xiii. 2, and from heathen authors. Submit to his person and government. *The Son*, to wit, the Son of God, as appears from ver. 7, called here *the Son*, by way of eminency, and in a singular manner; which agrees much better to Christ than to David, who is never particularly called by this name. *And ye perish from the way*, i. e. be taken out of the way by death or destruction; or, perish out of *the way*, i. e. by losing the right way, by taking wrong and evil courses, the end of which will be your certain and utter ruin; or, for *the way*, i. e. for your evil way or manner of living, for your perverse and foolish course of opposing my Son instead of submitting to him. Or, in (which particle is oft understood) *the way*, i. e. in your wicked way or course, in the midst of your plots and rebellions against him; and so you will *die in your sins*, as it is expressed, John viii. 24, which is a sad aggravation of their death, and therefore here fitly proposed as a powerful argument to dissuade them from such dangerous and destructive courses. *But a little*, i. e. the least degree, of his anger is very terrible, much more the heat and height of it, caused by such a desperate provocation as this is. Or, *for his wrath will be kindled shortly*, or *suddenly*, or *within a very little time*, as this word is used, Psal. lxxxi. 14; Cant. iii. 4; Isa. xxvi. 20. His patience will not last always, but will shortly be turned into fury; and therefore take heed that you neither deny nor delay subjection to him, but speedily comply with his offers and commands before it be too late. *They that put their trust in him*; who put themselves under his power and protection, believing in him, and expecting safety and happiness from him; which cannot with any colour be applied to David, who always dissuades all men from putting their trust in princes, or in any men or thing besides or below God, Psal. xx. 7; xliv. 6; lxii. 6—8; cxviii. 8; cxlvi. 3, and every where; and therefore it would very ill have become him to invite others to *put their trust in him*. And he is pronounced *cursed that trusteth in man*, Jer. xvii. 5. But Christ is every where propounded as an object of trust, not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old, as Isa. xxviii. 16; and therefore they are most truly and fitly said to be *blessed that put their trust in him*. Under which sentence the contrary is implied, that they are most cursed and miserable creatures that provoke and oppose him; and so cursed and miserable that David dreaded the very thoughts and mention of it, and therefore expresseth it by the contrary and blessed condition of his friends and subjects. And such-like significations of the miseries of sinners by the blessedness of others opposed to them we have Matt. xxiii. 39; Rev. xiv. 13.

PSALM III.

* 2 Sam. 15. & 16, & 17, & 18. 1023.

¶ A Psalm of David, *when he fled from Absalom his son.

Composed by David, as this phrase implies, Psal. cx. 1, compared with Matt. xxii. 43, and generally elsewhere. *When he fled*, or, *after he had fled*. Either this Psalm was composed in his flight, or the matter of it was then in his thoughts; which afterwards he digested into this form and order.

The psalmist complaineth of the multitude of his enemies, 1, 2; *but comforteth himself with his confidence in and reliance on God*, 3—6; *and the manifold experiences of his former assistance*, 7. *He prayeth for his own and the church's salvation*, 8.

LORD, [a]how are they increased that trouble me? many *are* they that rise up against me.

a 2 Sam. 15. 12. & 16. 15.

He might well say so; for almost all his people joined in that conspiracy.

2 Many *there be* which say of my soul, [b]*There is* no help for him in God. Selah.

b 2 Sam. 16. 1. Ps. 71. 11.

Of my soul, i. e. of me; the *soul* being commonly put for the person, as Isa. xlvi. 2; Amos vi. 8, compared with Gen. xxii. 16. *There is no help for him in God*; God hath utterly forsaken him for his many crimes, and will never help him more. *Selah*: this word is no where used but in this poetical Book of the Psalms, and in the song of Habakkuk, chap. iii. 3, 9, 13; which makes that opinion probable, that it was a musical note, directing the singer either to lift up his voice, or to make a short stop or pause, or to lengthen out the tune. But withal, it is generally placed at some remarkable passage; which gives occasion to think that it served also to quicken the attention or observation of the singer and hearer.

3 But thou, O LORD, *art* [c]a shield ‖ for me; my glory, and [d]the lifter up of mine head.

c Gen. 15. 1. Ps. 28. 7. & 119. 114.
‖ Or, *about*.
d Ps. 27. 6.

For me, or *about me*, on every side, where also mine enemies are. *My glory*; either, 1. The author of my princely glory and majesty. Thou didst first give it, and I doubt not thou wilt defend and restore it. Or, 2. The matter of my glorying. Thou hast formerly and frequently given, and wilt further give me occasion of glorying or boasting of thy power and favour to me. *The lifter up of my head*; thou dost and wilt enable me to look up to thee with comfort and cheerfulness, and upon mine enemies with confidence; and thou wilt lift me out of the mire in which I now lie, and restore me to my former power and dignity from which I am fallen. For the phrase, see Gen. iv. 7; Job xi. 15; Luke xviii. 13.

4 I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and [e]he heard me out of his [f]holy hill. Selah.

e Ps. 34. 4.
f Ps. 2. 6. & 43. 3. & 99. 9.

With my voice; the witness of my faith and fervency of affections. *Out of his holy hill*; either out of heaven, so called Psal. xv. 1: compare Isa. lxvi. 1. Or rather, 2. Out of the hill of Zion, where God was especially present, the ark being there at this time; towards which the saints then used to direct their prayers, and from thence God heard and answered and blessed them, Psal. cxxviii. 5; cxxxiv. 3.

5 [g]I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

g Lev. 26. 6. Ps. 4. 8. Prov. 3. 24.

I laid me down and slept, to wit, securely, casting all my cares and fears upon God, and relying upon his help. *I awaked* in due time and manner, after a sweet and undisturbed sleep. *Sustained me*; or, *supported me*, as it were with his right hand, that I should not fall under my burden. He upheld my spirit, and person, and cause.

6 [h]I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set *themselves* against me round about.

h Ps. 27. 3.

So that I see no human way to escape.

7 Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: [i]for thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

i Job 16. 10. & 29. 17. Ps. 58. 6. Lam. 3. 30.

Arise; bestir thyself on my behalf, and be no longer as an idle spectator of my miseries. *O my God*; who art mine by special relation and covenant, and I am thy son and thy servant; Lord, save thine own. *Thou hast smitten all mine enemies*; thou hast hitherto helped me, do not now leave me. *Upon the cheek-bone*; which implies either contempt and reproach, as this phrase signifies, 1 Kings xxii. 24; Micah v. 1; John xviii. 22; xix. 3; or the smartness and soreness of the blow, whereby, as the next clause explains it, their teeth were struck out; and so they did not only receive hurt themselves, but were disenabled from

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doing that mischief to others which they desired and were accustomed to do. *The teeth*, i. e. their strength and the instruments of their cruelty. He compares them to wild beasts.

8 [b]Salvation *belongeth* unto the LORD: thy blessing *is* upon thy people. Selah.

[b] Jonah 2. 9. Rev. 7. 10. & 19. 1.

I expect not salvation from my forces, but from thy power and favour alone. *Thy blessing is*, or rather, *let it be*, (so he closeth with a prayer,) *upon thy people*; either upon my friends and followers, who alone are thy people, the rest being rebels to thee as well as to me; or, upon all thy people Israel, to preserve my friends, to convince and convert mine enemies, and to save the body of the nation, which without thy mercy are likely by this civil war to be brought to utter ruin.

PSALM IV.

¶ To the ‖chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David.

‖ Or, overseer. Hab. 3. 19.

The chief musician; the master or director of the sacred musicians and music of the temple; of whom see 1 Chron. vi. 31; xv. 16, 17; xxv. 1, 2; 2 Chron. xx. 21; xxxiv. 12, 13. Heb. *To him that overcometh*, or *excelleth*, or *triumpheth*, to wit, in his profession of music. *On Neginoth*; or, *on stringed instruments*, as this word is translated, Hab. iii. 19; for the Hebrew verb *niggen*, whence this is derived, signifies to *play with the hand* upon an instrument, 1 Sam. xvi. 23; xviii. 10. This Psalm is, for the matter or substance of it, much like the former, and seems to have been made upon the same or some other like occasion, when he was distressed either by Absalom, or by Saul, or by some other great and powerful enemies.

David prayeth for audience, 1. *He reproves the wicked*, 2. *The privilege of the godly, and his faith in God*, 3. *An exhortation to duty*, 4, 5. *The ungodly satisfied with earthly blessings, but the godly cannot be at rest without the favour of God*, 6—8.

HEAR me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me *when I was* in distress; ‖have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

‖ Or, be gracious unto me.

O God of my righteousness; either the witness and defender of my righteous cause; or from whom I expect that righteous judgment and decision of my cause which I cannot obtain from mine enemies, who load me and my cause with manifold injuries and calumnies. Or, *O my righteous God*. Or, *O God of my mercy*; which title is given to God elsewhere, as Psal. lix. 10, 17; whereas this title, *O God of my righteousness*, is not given to God in any other place of Scripture. O God, to whose mercy I owe all that I have or hope for: which was a very fit and powerful argument in prayer, and very agreeable to the following words, in which there is an acknowledgment of God's former mercies, and a petition for mercy. And so this and other words in Hebrew and Greek, which properly signify *righteousness*, are oft used for *mercy* or *kindness*, as Isa. lviii. 8; Psal. xxxi. 1; xxxvi. 10; 2 Cor. ix. 9, and in many other places. *Thou hast enlarged me*, i. e. freed me from my former straits and troubles. So he urgeth God and strengtheneth his own faith with his former experiences. *Have mercy upon me*; thou mayst justly destroy me for my many and great sins, and therefore I flee from thy justice to thy mercy, on which all my hopes are grounded.

2 O ye sons of men, how long *will ye turn* my glory into shame? *how long* will ye love vanity, *and* seek after leasing? Selah.

O ye sons of men, i. e. princes and potentates, as this Hebrew phrase seems and is thought to signify, who are engaged with Saul or Absalom against me. *Will ye turn my glory into shame?* or, shall *my glory* be *for a shame*, i. e. be made by you matter of reproach and scorn? By his *glory* probably he means that high honour and royal majesty which God had either promised to him, or conferred upon him; wherewith, when he was in great straits and dangers, they might possibly reproach him in some sort as this: Is this the man, whom God so highly loves, and honours, and will exalt, who now flees from one mountain or cave to another, who runs away to the Philistines, whom his own son hath banished out of the land? Is this the effect of his glorying and boasting of God's favour and promises? *Love vanity*, i. e. affect and pursue these courses and designs of opposing me and my kingdom, which you will certainly find to be vain, and to no purpose. *Leasing*; or, *lying*; the same thing with *vanity*; these two words being promiscuously used, as Psal. lxii. 9. Only this seems to add some emphasis, and to intimate the fair hopes and promising probabilities of success which they had, and which aggravate their disappointment. Or *by lying* he may design those horrid calumnies, which the partisans either of Saul or Absalom had raised against him, and which they joined with their other endeavours to make him odious to all the people, and so the better to effect his ruin.

3 But know that [a]the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

[a] 2 Tim. 2. 19. 2 Pet. 2. 9.

But know that you fight not against me, but against the Lord. *Hath set apart*; or, *hath wonderfully separated me*; hath rejected the other royal person and family, and hath called me by name, and chosen me out of all the tribes and families of Israel, and out of my father's family, though I was the youngest of them, and thought by Samuel and by my father to be most remote from this honour. *Him that is godly*, i. e. me, whom though you traduce and censure, as if I were an egregious hypocrite and impostor, who only pretended religion for my own ambitious ends, God hath pronounced to be *a man after his own heart*, 1 Sam. xiii. 14; and that I am such in some good measure both my own conscience and the general course of my life bear me witness: which testimony David gives to himself, not out of a vain-glorious humour, but merely because he was constrained to it by the calumnies of his enemies, for his own just and necessary vindication. Or, *his favourite*, as this word oft signifies; him, whom he hath been pleased to choose and advance, not for any worth or merit of mine, but out of his free grace and kindness to me; who therefore will maintain the work of his own hands and grace, although I cannot deny that I have been guilty of divers frailties and miscarriages, for which God might justly reject me, if he should deal with me according to the rigours of his justice *For himself*; either, 1. In his stead, or to be his vicegerent, as all kings are, and especially the kings of God's own people. Or rather, 2. For his own service and glory, *to fulfil all* his *will*, as it is expressed, Acts xiii. 22; which may be spoken by way of opposition to Saul, who had no regard to God, nor to his will and glory, but minded only his own honour and advantage. *The Lord will hear when I call unto him*; therefore I am assured that God will hear my prayers, and save me out of your hands.

4 [b]Stand in awe, and sin not: [c]commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

[b] Eph. 4. 26. [c] Psa. 77. 6. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

Tremble therefore and be afraid, if not of me, yet at least of God, who hath engaged himself in my cause or quarrel, and will be an adversary to my adversaries. Or, *be angry*, as this word is here rendered by all the ancient and some modern translators, and, as it is thought, by the apostle, Eph. iv. 26. Or, *are you angry?* for it may be taken interrogatively. Admit you be angry or displeased that God hath preferred me, an obscure person, and of a mean family, before so many noble and mighty men; *yet*, or *but*, (as it follows,) *sin not*, i. e. do not so far indulge your anger as to break forth into murmuring against God, or rebellion against me; but seasonably suppress and mortify your unadvised and sinful passion, lest it break forth to your own ruin. This Hebrew word signifies in general a vehement *commotion of the mind or heart*, whether through grief, as 2 Sam. xviii. 33; or fear, as Exod. xv. 14; Deut. ii. 25; or anger, as Gen. xlv. 24; 2 Kings xix. 27, 28; Prov. xxix. 9; Ezek. xvi. 42. *And sin not*, by cherishing and prosecuting your anger and malice against me, and your rebellion against God's authority. *Commune with your own heart upon your bed*; calmly and

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deeply consider these things in your own breasts in the silent night, when you are at leisure from the crowd of distracting business, and free from the company of crafty and daubing parasites. *And be still;* either, 1. As to your outward actions; for this verb oft signifies a cessation of actions, as Josh. x. 13; Job xxx. 27. Proceed no further in your wicked speeches and contrivances against me. Or rather, 2. As to your inward passions. Compose your tumultuous minds; as this verb is used, Psal. xxxvii. 7; lxii. 2; cxxxvii. 2. Suppress your anger and rage, which though directed against me only, yet is indeed against God, and against his counsel and providence.

d Deut. 33. 19. Ps. 50. 14. & 51. 19. 2 Sam. 15. 12. e Ps. 37. 3. & 62. 8.

5 Offer [d] the sacrifices of righteousness, and [e] put your trust in the LORD.

Offer. to wit, unto God, that he may be reconciled to you, and may pardon all your murmurings and insurrections against him and against me. For it seems plain that this, as well as the former verse, is spoken not to David's friends and favourers, as some think, but to his enemies, even to those *sons of men*, ver. 2, to whom he directeth his speech, ver. 3, *but know*, and, ver. 4, *stand in awe*, and here *offer*. *The sacrifices of righteousness*, i. e. righteous sacrifices; which requires that the persons offering them be righteous, and do righteous things, and offer them with an honest mind, and with faith (as it follows) and true repentance; without which he intimates that all their sacrifices were of no esteem with God, and would be wholly unprofitable to them. And withal, it is probable that he reflects upon the followers of Saul or of Absalom, who had the only place of sacrifice in their possession, whilst David was debarred of the opportunity of sacrificing, as he complains, 1 Sam. xxvi. 19; and accordingly they gloried in their sacrifices, and upon that account promised themselves success against David, who was by God's providence deprived of the opportunities of reconciling and engaging God by sacrifices. *And put your trust in the Lord;* and then, i. e. so doing, you may rely upon God, and confidently expect his assistance, which otherwise it is in vain for you to hope for. Withal, he seems to reflect upon his enemies, who trusted to an arm of flesh, to their own great numbers and power, and to intimate what his course was, to wit, to trust in the Lord.

f Num. 6. 26. Ps. 80. 3, 7, 19. & 119. 135.

6 *There be* many that say, Who will shew us *any* good? [f] LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

There be many; either, 1. Of my own followers, who are weary of waiting upon God, and ready to despair. Or rather, 2. Of mine enemies, and of the body of the people, who were either engaged against him, or at least unconcerned for him, and sought only their own ease and advantage. *Who will shew us*, Heb. *make* or *give us to see*, i. e. to enjoy, as this phrase is frequently used, as Psal. xxvii. 13; xxxiv. 12; Eccles. ii. 1; iii. 13. *Any good*, i. e. worldly good, as appears by the opposition of *the light of God's countenance* to it in the next words, and by the explication of it of *corn and wine* in the next verse. i. e. Who will put an end to our present broils and troubles, and give us that tranquillity and outward happiness which is the only thing that we desire. Withal, he may seem to intimate the reason and motive which induced so many persons to take part against him, which was their eager desire of honour or worldly advantage, which they promised to themselves by appearing against David: see 1 Sam. xxii. 7. *Upon us*, i. e. upon me and my friends. Give us assurance of thy love and favour to us, and evidence it to us by thy powerful and gracious assistance.

g Is. 9. 3.

7 Thou hast put [g] gladness in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and their wine increased.

Whatsoever thou shalt do with me for the future, as to my outward distresses and concernments, I have at present unspeakable pleasure and full satisfaction in the impressions and testimonies of thy love in and to my soul; whereby also I am encouraged with confidence to expect good success to my righteous cause. *Than in the time that their corn and their wine increased;* than worldly persons have in the time of a plentiful harvest, which is a time of great rejoicing, Judg. ix. 27; Isa. ix. 3; Jer. xlviii. 33.

8 [h] I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: [i] for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

h Job 11. 18. 19. Ps. 3. 5. i Lev. 25. 18, 19. & 26. 5. Deut. 12. 10.

Both: this word relates to the two following verbs; as soon as I am laid down, I will quietly compose myself to sleep; whereas many lie down upon their beds, and cannot sleep through distracting cares or troubles. Or, *in like manner*, i. e. as they do who have abundance of corn and wine, of whom he last spoke, Luke xii. 19. *In peace;* either, 1. In outward peace or safety, as the next clause explains it. Or, 2. In inward peace or tranquillity of mind, as Luke ii. 29, resting securely upon God's promises, and the conduct of his wise and gracious providence. *Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety;* I owe not my safety to my own valour or wisdom, nor to the courage of my followers, but to thee only. Or, *thou, Lord, makest me to dwell alone in safety;* either, 1. *Alone*, or apart from mine enemies: compare Deut. xxxiii. 28. Or rather, 2. Though I be in a manner *alone*, i. e. forsaken and destitute of friends or helpers, as that word is used, Psal. cii. 7; Lam. i. 1.

PSALM V.

¶ To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.

Nehiloth: this is no where else used in Scripture. It is generally and probably thought to be a term belonging to music, and to signify either some kind of tune, or rather an instrument, and particularly a wind-instrument, as Neginoth in the title of the last Psalm signified *stringed instruments*.

This Psalm supposeth David to be in some great distress or trouble, either from Saul, or from Absalom, or some of their courtiers.

David earnestly beseecheth God to hear his prayer, 1—3; *and assureth himself of God's justice against his enemies*, 4—6. *Professing his faith in God*, 7, *he prayeth him to guide his goings*, 8. *He exclaims against his enemies' cruelty*, 9; *and prayeth God to destroy them*, 10, *but to preserve the godly*, 11, 12.

GIVE ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

i. e. My prayer, as the words foregoing and following shew; which he calls his *meditation*, to note that it was not a lip prayer only, but that it proceeded from and was accompanied with the deepest thoughts and most fervent affections of his soul.

a Ps. 3. 4. b Ps. 65. 2.

2 Hearken unto the [a] voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for [b] unto thee will I pray.

It is the part and duty of a king to answer the just and humble desires of his subjects. To thee alone will I direct all my prayers, and therefore from thee alone I expect succour and relief.

c Ps. 30. 5. & 88. 13. & 130. 6.

3 [c] My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.

In the morning; either, 1. Metaphorically, i. e. early, seasonably, in a time when thou wilt be found, and art ready to hear. Or, 2. Properly, every morning. *As soon as I awake, I am still with thee*, as he saith, Psal. cxxxix. 18. The first thing that I do is to pray to thee, I neither neglect nor delay that work. But this is not spoken exclusively as to his other times of prayer, as appears from Psal. lv. 17; but only eminently, to show his constancy, diligence, and eagerness in the work. *My prayer;* or, *mine eyes;* which may be well understood out of the following word, which is usual in Scripture. Or, *it*, (so it is only a defect of the pronoun, which is most frequent,) to wit, my voice, last mentioned; or, which is equivalent, *my words*, which is also understood with this very verb, Job xxxiii. 5, and is expressed with it, Job xxxii. 14. And the verb here and there used is very emphatical, and notes his great care and exactness so to *direct*, or *order*, or *compose* himself and his

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prayers in such a manner as was most pleasing to God. *Will look up*, to wit, unto thee (as he now said) for help. The word implies a confident, and withal a patient, expectation of relief, as Psal. cxxx. 6; Micah vii. 7; Hab. ii. 1. See also Psal. cxlv. 15; Acts iii. 4.

4 For thou *art* not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

For; or, *but*; or, *surely*. *In wickedness*; or, *in wicked men*. Thou dost not approve of nor delight in them, or in their prayers, but dost *hate* and wilt *destroy* them, as it here follows: compare Prov. xvii. 15. And this he saith partly for the conviction and discouragement of his enemies, who were such; and partly for his own vindication, to show that he was not such a wicked man as they falsely and maliciously represented him. *Dwell with thee*, i. e. have any friendship, or fellowship, or quiet abode with thee, as those that dwell together usually have one with another.

d Hab. i. 13. * Or, *before thine eyes.*

5 d The foolish shall not stand † in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

The foolish; or, *the madmen*, as the word properly signifies, as Eccles. ii. 2, 12; vii. 7; x. 13; Isa. xliv. 25, i. e. wicked men, as the next words explain it; who are indeed morally and really madmen, in fighting with the Lord God Almighty, and in exposing themselves to such dreadful hazards and mischiefs for such mean and momentary advantages. *In thy sight*; either in battle against thee, as this phrase is used, Deut. vii. 24; Josh. i. 5; vii. 12; or in judgment at thy tribunal, of which see on Psal. i. 5: compare 1 Sam. vi. 20; Job xli. 10. *All workers of iniquity*, i. e. such as make sin their choice, design, and business, giving up themselves to the constant or customary practice of it. Compare Matt. vii. 23. Otherwise, in a general sense, there is no man that doth not sin or work iniquity, Eccles. vii. 20.

e Rev. 21. 8. f Ps. 55. 23. † Heb. *the man of blood and deceit.*

6 e Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: f the LORD will abhor † the bloody and deceitful man.

Leasing; or, *lies*; that make it their business to raise and scatter calumnies and reproaches concerning me; as many did. *The bloody and deceitful man*; those who design mischief against me or my friends under a pretence of kindness; of whom he oft speaks.

g 1 Kings 8. 29, 30, 35. Ps. 28. 2. & 138. 2. & 1. 6. 2. † Heb. *the temple of thy holiness.*

7 But as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; *and* in thy fear will I worship g toward † thy holy temple.

I will come, to wit, with holy boldness and confidence, as becomes thy son and servant; whereas mine enemies cannot appear in thy presence with any comfort and safety, ver. 5. *Into thy house*, to wit, the tabernacle; from which, though I be now excluded, through the malice and power of mine adversaries, yet thou wilt, I doubt not, restore me to my former opportunities of coming thither to worship thee, which was my constant custom and chief joy. *In the multitude of thy mercy*, or, *by thy great mercy*, i. e. trusting only to thy great mercy for admittance thither, and acceptance there. Or, *for* or *because of thy many mercies* to me, for which I will come to pay my thanks and service unto thee. *In thy fear*; with a holy dread and reverence of thy majesty, and of thy house, and a due care to please thee in my religious worship, and in the whole course of my life; which he opposeth to the carelessness of his enemies, who came thither so rudely and presumptuously, and with the conscience of such wicked hearts and lives. *Toward thy holy temple*; looking towards it, when I cannot come to it. Compare Dan. vi. 10. Or, *at thy holy temple*, i. e. the tabernacle, which is sometimes called by that name.

h Ps. 23. 3. † Heb. *those which observe me.* Ps. 27. 11. & 143. 10. i Ps. 25. 4. & 27. 11.

8 h Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of † mine enemies; i make thy way straight before my face.

Lead me; direct my heart, and counsels, and affairs, and all the course and actions of my life. *In thy righteousness*; in thy righteous laws; which sometimes are called *righteousness*, as Psal. cxix. 172; Matt. iii. 15. Or, *for*, or *because of*, or *according to thy righteousness*; which is a phrase and argument frequently used in this Book of Psalms. *Because of mine enemies*; either, 1. That I may give them no occasion of slandering me, or religion for my sake. Or rather, 2. Because they are most malicious and mischievous, and withal cunning and treacherous, as he describes them in the next verse, (which he useth as an argument to enforce this petition,) and they lay snares for me, and if thou dost not assist me, will be too hard for me, and will triumph over me; which will reflect dishonour upon thee also. *Thy way*, i. e. the way wherein thou wouldst have me to walk, or the course which thou wouldst have me to take; for God's precepts or counsels are most commonly called his *way*. *Straight*, or *plain*, or *smooth*, that I may clearly discern it, and readily walk in it, without mistake, or let, or stumbling, or offence. This was a needful request, because many good men are oft at a loss what their duty is in several circumstances. And God granted this request to David, as in many other things, so in this, that he should not cut off Saul when he had opportunity and instigation to do it, 1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi., but that he should wait till God took him away. *Before my face*; to my view and for my walk; for men walk forward, not backward.

‖ Or, *stedfast.* † Heb. *in his mouth*, that is, *in the mouth of any of them.* † Heb. *wickedness.* k Luke 11. 44. Rom. 3. 13. l Ps. 62. 4.

9 For *there is* no ‖ faithfulness † in their mouth; their inward part *is* † very wickedness; k their throat *is* an open sepulchre; l they flatter with their tongue.

They speak one thing, and mean another, and under a pretence of kindness they seek my destruction; which makes it difficult for me to know how I should carry myself to them; wherein therefore I have begged thy direction. *Their throat*; either, 1. Metonymically; their speech coming out of their throat, though smooth and subtle, yet is most pernicious. Or, 2. Properly; their throat and mouth are wide opened, ready to devour all that come within their reach. A metaphor from wild beasts gaping for the prey. *They flatter with their tongue*; they make show of piety and friendship, that they may more easily deceive and destroy me.

‖ Or, *Make them guilty.* m 2 Sam. 15. 31. & 17. 14, 23. ‖ Or, *from their counsels.*

10 ‖ Destroy thou them, O God; m let them fall ‖ by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

Destroy thou them, Heb. *Hold them guilty*, i. e. condemn and punish them. Or, *make them to offend*, to wit, in their counsels, as it follows; so as they may either be given up to bad and foolish counsels, or fail in the execution of their wise or crafty counsels. Or, *make them desolate*, as the word is used, Ezek. vi. 6; Joel i. 18. *Let them fall by their own counsels*, i. e. make their counsels not only unsuccessful against me, but also destructive to themselves. Or, *from their*, &c., i. e. let them fall short of their aims and designs. Or, *because of their counsels*, which are ungodly and unjust, and so deserve destruction. *Cast them out*; out of thy land, and from among thy people, whom they either infect or molest by their wicked courses. *In*, or *for*, or *because of*, as before. *Against thee*; against thy authority and declared will concerning my advancement to the throne; which divers Israelites opposed against their own consciences. See 2 Sam. iii. 8—10.

n Is. 65. 13. † Heb. *thou coverest over*, or, *protectest them.*

11 But let all those that put their trust in thee n rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because † thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

Those that put their trust in thee; that dare rely upon thy word and promise when all human hopes and refuges fail; which was oft the case of David and his followers. *Rejoice*; let them have cause of great joy from thy love and care of them, and *because thou defendest them*, as it follows. *Thy name*, i. e. thy majesty, thy word, and worship, and glory; all which is called God's *name* in Scripture. David doth not confine his prayer to his party, but prays for all good men, though by their own mistakes, or other men's artifices, some of them might now be in a state of opposition against him.

o Ps. 115. 13. † Heb. *crown him*

12 For thou, LORD, o wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou † compass him as *with* a shield.

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i. e. Thou art resolved, and hast engaged thyself by promise and covenant, to bless them; and therefore my prayer for them is agreeable to thy will. *With favour;* with thy love and gracious providence. *Wilt thou compass him as with a shield,* i. e. keep him safe on every side.

PSALM VI.

‖ Or, *upon the eighth*: See 1 Chro. 15. 21.
* Ps. 12, title.

¶ To the chief Musician on Neginoth ‖ * upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

Neginoth; of which see on Psal. iv. title. *Upon Sheminith;* or, *upon the eighth.* It is thought to be the shrillest or loftiest note, as *alamoth* is the lowest; of which see 1 Chron. xv. 20, 21; and, as some add, *Muth-labben*, Psal. ix., the mean. But all this is only conjecture; and the Jews themselves have no certain knowledge of their own ancient music, and of the signification of the terms belonging to it. *A Psalm of David:* the occasion of the Psalm seems plainly to have been some grievous distress or disease of the body then upon him, accompanied also with great trouble of conscience for his sins, whereby he had brought it upon himself.

David, being very weak and feeble, presenteth his misery before God, 1—3; prayeth for his mercy and recovery, 4—7; and being assured of a gracious hearing, triumphs over all his enemies, 8—10.

a Ps. 38. 1. Jer. 10. 24. & 46. 28.

O [a]LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

Rebuke me not, i. e. do not chasten or correct me, as the next clause explains it, and as this word is frequently used, as Job xxii. 4; Psal. l. 21; Isa. xxxvii. 4; Rev. iii. 19. *In thine anger;* with rigour or severity, as my sins deserve, but with gentleness and moderation, Jer. x. 24; xlvi. 28, or so as it may not be the effect of thy strict justice or anger, but of thy mercy and faithfulness. *Neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure;* the same thing repeated, after the manner.

b Ps. 41. 4.
c Hos. 6. 1.

2 [b]Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I *am* weak: O LORD, [c]heal me; for my bones are vexed.

Have mercy upon me; I plead not my merit, but thy free mercy. *I am weak;* or, *I languish;* my body pines away and my spirit fails through my excessive pains or troubles. *Heal me*, i. e. the distempers of my soul and body, of both which this word is used, Psal. xli. 4; cvii. 18, 20. *My bones are vexed;* my torment is so deep and so general, that it reacheth and is very grievous even to my bones, though they are inward, and might seem to be out of the reach of it, and also strong and senseless, and therefore can best bear it. See the like expressions Job iv. 14; xxxiii. 19; Psal. xxxviii. 3; li. 8.

3 My soul is also sore vexed: but
d Ps. 90. 13. thou, O LORD, [d]how long?

My soul is also sore vexed; partly by sympathy with my body; and partly with the burden of my sins, and the sense of thine anger, and my own danger and misery. *How long* wilt thou suffer me to lie and languish in this condition? It is a figure called *aposiopesis*, very agreeable to men in pain or anguish, who use to cut their words short.

4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

Return unto me, from whom thou hast withdrawn thyself, and thy smiling countenance, and thy helping hand. *Deliver my soul*, i. e. save me or my life, as the *soul* oft signifies, as Gen. ix. 5; xii. 5; Job xxxvi. 14; Psal. xxxiii. 19. David and other good men in those times were much afraid of death, partly because the manifestations of God's grace to his people were then more dark and doubtful, and partly because thereby they were deprived of all opportunities of advancing God's glory and kingdom in the world. Compare Isa. xxxviii. 1—3.

e Ps. 30. 9. & 88. 11. & 115. 17. & 118. 17. Is. 38. 18.

5 [e]For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

In death; amongst the dead; or in the grave, as it follows. *There is no remembrance of thee;* to wit, by me David, consisting both of soul and body; and no such remembrance, to wit, in way of thankfulness and praise, as the next clause of the verse limits and explains it; which he might fear would be true, not only because he should not have occasion to praise God for this deliverance, but also because he was in grievous agonies of conscience, and under terrors of God's wrath, and his eternal damnation; which being oft incident to the saints of God under the New Testament, it is not strange if it were so also under the Old Testament. Besides he speaks of the remembrance or celebration of God's name and grace in the land of the living, to the enlargement and edification of God's church, and the propagation of true religion among men; which is not done in the other life, and was justly prized at so high a rate by David and other holy men, to whom therefore it must needs be a great grief to be for ever deprived of such opportunities. For otherwise David very well knew, and firmly believed, that souls departed were not extinct, but did go to God, Eccles. xii. 7, and there remember, and adore, and enjoy God, though quite in another way than that of which he here speaks.

6 I am weary with my groaning; ‖ all ‖ Or, *every night.*
the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

All the night; he mentions this time, by way of aggravation of his misery, because that season, which is to others by God's appointment a time of rest, was to him very sad and doleful, whether from his disease, which then came upon him more strongly, as it is usual; or from the opportunity which the solitude or silence of the night gave him to think of his own sins, or his enemies' perfidiousness and malice, or God's displeasure, or his future estate. *Make I my bed to swim,* to wit, with tears. See the like hyperbole Jer. ix. 1; Lam. iii. 48, 49. *I water my couch;* or, *my bedstead.*

7 [f]Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.
f Job 17. 7. Ps. 31. 9. & 38. 10. & 88. 9. Lam. 5. 17.

Consumed; or, *grown dim* or *dull*, through plenty of salt tears which I shed; or through the decay of my spirits. *Because of grief*, i. e. my grief arising from mine enemies, as the next clause interprets it, and from the consideration of their multitude, and rage, and falseness.

g Ps. 119. 115. Matt. 7. 23. & 25. 41. Luke 13. 27.
h Ps. 3. 4.

8 [g]Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath [h]heard the voice of my weeping.

Depart from me; I advise you for your own sakes to cease from opposing or molesting me, or insulting over me, or approaching to me with design of deceiving and betraying me; for all your labour will be lost. *All ye workers of iniquity;* all you wicked enemies of mine. *The Lord hath heard*, i. e. he will hear, the past time being put for the future, as is usual in prophetical passages, such as this was; David having received by the Spirit of God particular assurance that God would hear and deliver him. *The voice of my weeping*, i. e. of my fervent prayers joined with my tears.

9 The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.

The Lord hath heard, and therefore will hear, as it follows. He draws an argument from his former experience.

10 Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return *and* be ashamed suddenly.

Ashamed of their vain hopes and confidence of conquering and destroying me. Or, *they shall be ashamed,* because of their great and unexpected disappointment. *Let them return,* to wit, from their wicked ways, from their hostile and malicious practices against me, and let them come and submit to me, from whom they have revolted. Or, *let them turn back,* as it is expressed, Psal. lvi. 9; let them be put to flight. Or, *let them be converted,* i. e. repent of their sins, and return to their obedience to me. Although it seems more probable, both from the foregoing and following words, that this *turning* or *returning* is rather penal than penitential. Or, *they shall turn* or *return.* Or this verb may be taken adverbially, and joined to the following verb, as it is frequently in other places, and both may be thus rendered,

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let them, or *they shall, be again ashamed;* clothed, as it were, with double shame. *Suddenly;* sooner than I could hope, or they did expect or believe.

PSALM VII.

¶ * Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, * concerning the ‖ words of Cush the Benjamite.

* Ps. 7. 1. * 2 Sam. 16. etc. 18. 32. ‖ Or, matters.

Shiggaion: this seems to be the name of a certain kind either of song, or tune, or instrument, which then was very well known, but now is only matter of conjecture; wherewith I think it not fit to trouble the unlearned reader; and the learned may consult my Latin Synopsis. *Concerning the words;* the false and slanderous reports raised or fomented by him. This was the occasion of this Psalm. *Of Cush;* by which he designs either, 1. Saul; whom he thought it indecent to express by his proper name, for which he might at this time have divers reasons, and therefore he deciphers him enigmatically, which is not unusual in Holy Scripture; where Babylon is called *Sheshach*, Jer. xxv. 26; li. 41, and Rome is called *Egypt*, and *Sodom*, and *Babylon* in the Revelation; and John the Baptist is called *Elias*. And he might call him *Cush*, partly by a tacit allusion to his father's name Kish, and partly with respect to his black and wicked disposition planted and firmly rooted in him. Compare Jer. xiii. 23; Amos ix. 7. Or, 2. Some eminent and potent commander or courtier under Saul called *Cush*, though he be not elsewhere named; it being the lot of many other persons to be named but once in Scripture. And he is called the *Benjamite*, because he was one of that tribe, in which Saul put most confidence. See 1 Sam. xxii. 7.

The psalmist prayeth for deliverance from his persecuting enemies, 1, 2, *and maketh a solemn profession of his innocency,* 3—7. *By faith he seeth his defence,* 8—11, *and the destruction of his enemies,* 12—17.

O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: [a] save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

a Ps. 31. 15.

In thee do I put my trust; all my hope and confidence is in thy favour and faithfulness to make good thy promise made to me.

2 [b] Lest he tear my soul like a lion, [c] rending *it* in pieces, while *there is* †none to deliver.

b Is. 38. 13. c Ps. 50. 22. † Or, not a deliverer.

Lest he, i. e. *mine enemy*, as it is expressed, ver. 4, even Saul, or any of his followers, *tear my soul* out of my body; or destroy me and my life, as Psal. vi. 5. *Like a lion;* to which he compares him both for power and cruelty, and withal intimates his own inability to oppose or escape his rage without God's almighty help. *While there is none to deliver;* whilst I have no considerable force to defend myself, but am forced to flee to mountains, and caves, and woods for my safety.

3 O LORD my God, [d] if I have done this; if there be [e] iniquity in my hands;

d 1 Sam. 16. 7. e 1 Sam. 24. 11.

If I have done this, i. e. that which Cush and others falsely lay to my charge. If I design or have endeavoured to take away Saul's crown and life by violence, as Saul's courtiers maliciously reported, 1 Sam. xxiv. 9, 10; xxvi. 19. *In my hands*, i. e. in my actions or carriage towards Saul. *The hand* is oft put for *actions*, whereof the hand is a great and common instrument, as Psal. lxxviii. 42; cix. 27; Jonah iii. 8. If I design or have attempted to lay violent hands upon Saul.

4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, [f] I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)

f Or, I have delivered him that without cause was mine enemy.

Unto him that was at peace with me, i. e. to Saul, when he was peaceable and friendly towards me; for David was charged with evil designs against Saul before Saul broke out into open enmity against him. *Yea:* this particle is here used by way of correction or opposition, as it is also Psal. ii. 6; Prov. vi. 16. So far have I been from doing this, that I have done the contrary. *I have delivered him*, when it was in my power to destroy him, as 1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi. *Without cause;* without any provocation on my part.

5 Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take *it;* yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.

I am contented, and wish that Saul may so persecute my life as to overtake it, and take it away. *Mine honour;* either, 1. That honourable and royal estate to which I am chosen and designed. Or, 2. My reputation and memory. Or rather, 3. The same thing which he called his *soul* and his *life* in the former branch of the verse, and here his *honour;* it being very frequent to express one thing in several words or phrases in one verse. And so here may be observed a gradation. Let him, 1. Persist to *persecute* it; 2. *Take* it; 3. *Tread* it down, or destroy it; and, 4. *Lay it in the dust*, or bury it, to prevent all hopes of restitution.

6 Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, [g] lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and [h] awake for me *to* the judgment *that* thou hast commanded.

g Ps. 94. 2. h Ps. 44. 23.

Arise in thine anger; oppose thy just anger to their causeless and sinful rage against me. *Lift up thyself*, that thou mayst give them a deadly blow. A metaphor from men who arise and lift up themselves to do so. Heb. *be thou exalted;* glorify thyself, and show thyself to be above them. *To the judgment that thou hast commanded;* to execute that just and righteous sentence of Saul's deposition, and my advancement, which thou hast *commanded*, i. e. appointed, (as that word is used, Psal. cxlviii. 5; 1 Kings xvii. 4, and in this very case, 1 Sam. xiii. 14,) and declared by thy holy prophet Samuel.

7 So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.

The congregation of the people; either, 1. A great number of all sorts of people, who shall observe thy justice, and holiness, and goodness, in pleading my righteous cause against my cruel and implacable oppressor. Or rather, 2. The whole body of thy people Israel, to whom both these Hebrew words are commonly ascribed in Holy Scripture. *Compass thee about;* they will, and I as their king and ruler in thy stead will, take care that they shall come from all parts and meet together to worship thee, which in Saul's time they have grossly neglected, and been permitted to neglect, and to offer to thee praises and sacrifices for thy favour to me, and for the manifold benefits which they shall enjoy by my means, and under my government. *For their sakes;* or, *for its sake*, i. e. for the sake of thy congregation, which now is woefully dissipated and oppressed, and have in a great measure lost all administration of justice, and exercise of religion. *Return thou on high;* or, *return to thy high place*, i. e. to thy tribunal, to sit there and judge my cause. An allusion to earthly tribunals, which generally are set up on high above the people, 1 Kings x. 19.

8 The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, [i] according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity *that is* in me.

i Ps. 18. 20. & 35. 24.

It belongs to thee to judge all persons and people, and to give sentence between them, especially when they appeal unto thee; which I now do. If I be guilty of those evil designs towards him, wherewith Cush and others charge me, do thou give sentence against me; but if I be just and innocent towards him, as thou knowest I am and have been, do thou plead my right.

9 Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: [k] for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

k 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Ps. 139. 1. Jer. 11. 20. & 17. 10. & 20. 12. Rev. 2. 23.

Let the malice of mine enemies cease, put a stop to their wicked practices, either by changing their hearts, or by tying their hands, or some other way; say to it, as thou dost to the sea, Hitherto hast thou gone, but thou shalt go no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. Or, *The*

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wickedness of the wicked shall have an end; not an end of perfection, which is to be accomplished; but an end of termination, it shall cease; and an end of destruction, it shall be rooted out. Or, *Let, I pray thee, wickedness consume the wicked,* i. e. those that are maliciously and incorrigibly such. And so this prayer is opposed to that following prayer for the just. And such prayers against some wicked men we find used by prophetical persons, which are not rashly to be drawn into precedent by ordinary persons. *Establish;* or, *and thou wilt establish,* or *confirm,* or *uphold;* which is opposed to that *coming to an end* or *consuming* last mentioned. *The just;* all just persons and causes, and mine in particular, which is so. *The righteous God trieth the heart and reins;* and therefore he knows that I have not so much as a thought or a desire of that mischief which Cush and others report I am designing against Saul.

† Heb. *My buckler is upon God.* l Ps. 125. 4.

10 †My defence *is* of God, which saveth the [l]upright in heart.

My defence is of God, Heb. *My shield* is *upon God;* he doth as it were carry my shield before me. See 1 Sam. xvii. 7. He doth and will protect me against all mine enemies. *Which saveth the upright in heart;* and therefore me, whom he knoweth to be sincere and honest in my carriage toward him and toward Saul.

‖ Or, *God is a righteous judge.*

11 ‖God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

God judgeth, i. e. defendeth, or avengeth, or delivereth, as this word is oft used, as Deut. xxxii. 36; Psal. ix. 4; x. 18; xxvi. 1, &c. To *judge* is properly to give sentence; which because it may be done either by absolving and acquitting from punishment, or by condemning and giving up to punishment, therefore it is sometimes used for the one and sometimes for the other, as the circumstances of the place determine it. *With the wicked;* which though it may seem a bold supplement, yet is necessary, and easily fetched out of the next and following verses. *Every day;* even then, when his providence seems to favour them, and they are most secure and confident.

m Deut. 32. 41.

12 If he turn not, he will [m]whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

If he, i. e. the wicked man last mentioned, either Cush or Saul, *turn not* from this wicked course of calumniating or persecuting me, *he,* i. e. God, who is often designed by this pronoun, being easily to be understood from the nature of the thing, *will whet his sword,* i. e. will prepare, and hasten, and speedily execute his judgments upon him. Did I say, *he will do it?* nay, *he hath* already done it; his sword is drawn, his bow is bent, and the arrows are prepared and ready to be shot.

13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; [n]he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

n Deut. 32. 23, 42. Ps. 64. 7.

For him; either, 1. For or against the persecutor, as it follows. Or rather, 2. For himself, for his own use, to wit, to shoot against his enemies. *The instruments of death,* i. e. arrows, or other deadly weapons. *He ordaineth,* Heb. *maketh* or *worketh,* designeth or fitteth for his very use. *Against the persecutors;* or, *against furious and fiery persecutors,* as the word signifies, and as it is used, Gen. xxxi. 36; Psal. x. 2; Lam. iv. 19.

o Job 15. 35. Is. 33. 11. & 59. 4. Jam. 1. 15.

14 [o]Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

He, i. e. the wicked, as is undeniably manifest from the matter and context. *Conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood:* this metaphor noteth his deep design, and continued course, and vigorous endeavours for the doing of mischief, and his restlessness and pain till he have accomplished it.

† Heb. *He hath digged a pit.* p Heb. 7. 10. Job 4. 8. Ps. 9. 15. & 10. 2. & 35. 8. & 94. 23. & 141. 10. Prov. 5. 22. & 26. 27. Eccles. 10. 8.

15 †He made a pit, and digged it, [p]and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

Hath brought that evil upon himself which he intended against me; which may be understood either of Saul, who whilst he plotted against David's life ran into apparent hazard of losing his own, 1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi.; or of some courtier or courtiers of Saul, in whom this was evidently verified, although the history and memory of it be now lost.

q 1 Kings 2. 32. Esth. 9. 25.

16 [q]His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

Which phrase may note whence this retribution should come, even from heaven, or from the righteous and remarkable judgment of God.

17 I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

According to his righteousness, declared and asserted by him in their exemplary punishment, and my seasonable and wonderful deliverance.

PSALM VIII.

* Ps. 81, & 84, title.

¶ To the chief Musician *upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.

The same title is prefixed to Psal. lxxxi., lxxxiv. *Gittith* also is supposed to be the name of a tune, or song, or instrument so called, because it was either invented or much used in Gath. Some render it *for the wine-presses* and say it was to be sung at the time of vintage.

It is a great question among interpreters, whether this Psalm speak of man in general, and of the honour which God put upon him in his creation; or only of the man Christ Jesus. Possibly both may be reconciled and put together, and the controversy, if rightly stated, may be ended. For the scope and business of this Psalm seems plainly to be this, to display and celebrate the great love and kindness of God to mankind, not only in his creation, but also and especially in his redemption by Jesus Christ; whom, as he was man, he advanced to the honour and dominion here mentioned, that he might carry on that great and glorious work. So Christ is the principal subject of this Psalm, of whom it is interpreted, both by Christ himself, Matt. xxi. 16, and by his holy apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 27; Heb. ii. 6, 7.

David extolleth the majesty, power, and providence of God in the world, 1—3; *and his love and kindness to mankind,* 4, 5, *in giving him power over the earth,* 6, 7, *the air, and the sea,* 8, 9.

a Ps. 148. 13. b Ps. 113. 4.

O LORD our Lord, how [a]excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who [b]hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Thy name, i. e. thy fame or glory, as it is explained in the next clause, and as *the name* commonly signifies, as Gen. vi. 4; Eccles. vii. 1; Phil. ii. 9. And this glory of God is most eminent in the gospel and the work of redemption. *In all the earth;* not only in Israel, to which the name and knowledge of God was confined, Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2; cxlvii. 19, but among all nations; which shows that this Psalm speaks of the Messias, and the times of the New Testament. See Isa. xl. 5; Mal. i. 5, &c. *Who hast set thy glory above the heavens.* What do I speak of *the earth? thy glory* or *praise* reacheth *to the heavens,* and indeed above all the visible heavens, even to the heaven of heavens; where thy throne of glory is established, where the blessed angels celebrate thy praises, where Christ sitteth at thy right hand in glorious majesty, from whence he poureth down excellent gifts upon *babes,* &c., as it followeth.

c See Matt. 11. 25. & 21. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 27. † Heb. *founded.* d Ps. 44. 16.

2 [c]Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou †ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still [d]the enemy and the avenger.

Babes and sucklings; either, 1. Properly such; for there is much of God's glory seen in infants, in their conception and strange progress from small and contemptible beginnings, in their preservation and nourishment in the dark cell of

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the womb, in their bringing forth and bringing up, in providing breasts and milk for them, and keeping them from innumerable dangers, from which they are utterly unable to keep themselves. But this, though it sets forth God's praise, yet how it stills the enemy and avenger seems not clear. Or rather, 2. Metaphorically so called, *babes* not so much in age and years, as in disposition and condition; weak, and foolish, and contemptible, and harmless persons, who are very frequently called *babes* or *children*, as 2 Chron. xiii. 7; Prov. i. 4; Eccles. x. 16; Isa. iii. 4; Matt. xviii. 3; Eph. iv. 14, &c. For such are very unfit to grapple with an enemy: and therefore when such persons conquer the most powerful and malicious enemies, it must needs exceedingly confound and silence them, and mightily advance the glory of God; as indeed it did, when such mean and obscure persons as the apostles, and ministers, and disciples of of Christ were, did maintain and propagate the gospel in spite of all the wit, and power, and rage of their enemies. See 1 Cor. i. 25, 27—29. And of such *babes* as these Christ himself expounds this place, Matt. xxi. 16; of which more, God willing, upon that place. *Hast thou ordained strength*; or, *thou hast founded* (or *confirmed*, or *established*, or *firmly settled*, or *fitted*, or *perfected*, as it is rendered by the LXX. and vulgar Latin here, and by St. Matthew, chap. xxi. 16, i. e. perfectly or firmly settled) *strength*; by which he seems to understand either, 1. The celebration or praise of his strength or power, by comparing this with Matt. xxi. 16, where it is rendered *praise*. So it is only a metonymy of the adjunct, which is most frequent in Scripture and all authors. And so the word *strength* seems to be taken Psal. xxix. 1; xcvi. 7. Or, 2. A strong and mighty kingdom; the abstract being put for the concrete, than which nothing is more frequent; even the kingdom of Christ, or his gospel, which is oft called the *arm* or *power of God*, as Psal. cx. 2; Isa. liii. 1; 1 Cor. i. 18, 24. And this kingdom being an everlasting, and invincible, and all-conquering kingdom, Dan. ii. 44, it is no wonder it is here called *strength*. And this gospel or kingdom is here said to be founded or established, not by the hands or valiant actions of men of might, as other kingdoms are; but merely by *the mouths of babes*, &c., i. e. by the words and discourses of Christ's apostles and disciples; which is justly observed and celebrated here as a wonderful work of God. *That thou mightest still*, i. e. silence, and confound, and conquer, either by convincing and converting them, or by destroying them. *The enemy*; the enemies of God and of his people, the devil, the head of them, whose kingdom and power is abolished by this means, and all men who fight under his banner against God and Christ and his members. *The avenger*; which title most truly and fitly agrees, first to the devil, who being sentenced by God to eternal flames, and conquered and tormented by Christ, maketh it his great business to revenge himself, which because he cannot do upon God and Christ, he endeavours to do it upon their servants and children; and next to all these men who are his vassals and espouse his quarrel; who also are provoked, and conceive, though falsely, that they are injured by the gospel, and by the preachers, professors, and practisers of it, and therefore seek to revenge themselves of them; whereof we have an eminent instance, Rev. xi. 10. Compare Heb. xi. 37.

e Ps. III. 2.

3 When I [e] consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

Thy heavens; thine by creation, as it follows. *Of thy fingers*, i. e. *of thy hand*, as it is expressed, Psal. cii. 25; a part being here put for the whole; God's *hand* and *finger* being indifferently used to note his power, as Exod. viii. 19; Luke xi. 20, &c. Though some conceive that by this phrase he intended to signify both with what facility God made this glorious work, even with a touch of his finger; and with what curious and exquisite artifice he framed it; the fingers being much used in such works. *The moon and the stars*: either the sun is included under this general title, or he omitted it because he made this Psalm by night, when the sun did not fall within his contemplation. *Which thou hast ordained*, or *established*, or *directed*, or *disposed*, or *ordered*, i. e. placed in that excellent and unalterable order, and directed to all their several courses or motions.

4 [f] What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

f Job 7. 17. Ps. 144. 3. Heb. 2. 6.

What, i. e. how mean and inconsiderable a thing is man, if compared with thy glorious Majesty, who art so infinite in power and wisdom, as thou hast showed in the frame of the heavens, &c. *Man*, Heb. *infirm* or *miserable* man; by which it is apparent that he speaks of man, not according to the state of his creation, but as fallen into a state of sin, and misery, and mortality. *Art mindful of him*, i. e. carest for him, and conferrest such high favours upon him. *The son of man*, Heb. *the son of Adam*, that great apostate from and rebel against God, the sinful son of a sinful father, his son by likeness of disposition and manners, no less than by procreation; all which tends to magnify the following mercy. *That thou visitest him*; not in anger, as that word is sometimes used, but with thy grace and mercy, as it is taken, Gen. xxi. 1; Exod. iv. 31; Psal. lxv. 9; cvi. 4; cxliv. 3.

5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou hast in and through Christ mercifully and wonderfully restored man to his primitive and happy estate, in which he was but one remove below the angels; from which he was fallen by sin. *Hast crowned him*, i. e. man, fallen and lost man; who is indeed actually crowned and restored to the glory and dominion here following, not in his own person, but in Christ his Head and Representative, who received this crown and dominion, not so much for himself, who did not need it, as for man's good and in his stead; which also he will in due time communicate unto all his members. And so the two differing expositions of this place concerning mankind and concerning Christ may be reconciled. For he speaks of that happy and honourable estate by God's favour conferred first upon Christ, of whom therefore this place is rightly expounded, Heb. ii. 6—8; and then by his hands upon mankind, even upon all that believe in him. And so this whole place compared with that may be thus paraphrased: What is man, that thou shouldst mind or visit him by thy Son, whom thou hast sent into the world! who, that he might restore man to that happy and glorious estate, which was but a little below that of the angels, was pleased to take upon him man's miserable and mortal nature, and thereby to make himself (who was far above all angels, even their Lord and God) lower than the angels, mortal and miserable, for a little time; after which he was advanced to the highest honour, and to a universal dominion over all God's works, the angels not excepted.

6 [g] Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; [h] thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

g Gen. i. 26, 28. h 1 Cor. 15. 27. Heb. 2. 8.

Thou didst give all power and all things into his hands, Matt. xxviii. 18; John xiii. 3. *Thou hast put all things*, both in heaven, where are the angels mentioned ver. 5, and in the earth, air, and sea, as it follows; for nothing is excepted besides God, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 27; Heb. ii. 8. *Under his feet*, i. e. made them subject to him, as this phrase oft signifies. See Deut. xxxiii. 3; Judg. v. 27; Psal. xviii. 38; cx. 1.

7 † All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

† Heb. *Flocks and oxen all of them.*

All sheep and oxen; here is no perfect enumeration, but under these are comprehended all other beasts, and much more men and angels. *The beasts of the field*, i. e. the wild beasts; which together with divers fowls and fishes were subject to Christ, and are governed and employed as it pleaseth him; although many of them be without the reach and are not brought under the power of any other man.

8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

9 [i] O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

i ver. 1.

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PSALM IX.

1018. ¶ To the chief Musician upon Muth-labben, A Psalm of David.

Muth-labben also seems to be another title of some song, or tune, or instrument; of which we must and may be content to be ignorant, as the Jewish doctors also are. Some render it, *upon the death of his son*, to wit, Absalom, or of one called *Labben;* or, *of the middle man*, or *the man* that stood *between* the two armies, to wit, Goliath, who is so called in the Hebrew text, 1 Sam. xvii. 4. But none of these suit with the design and matter of the Psalm, which is more general, and relates to his former manifold dangers, and the deliverance which God had graciously given him out of them. And that of Goliath agrees not with ver. 14, where there is mention of praising God in Zion, which then and long after was in the hands of the Jebusites.

David resolveth to praise God, 1, 2, *for executing judgment upon his enemies*, 3—8. *God is a refuge to the oppressed*, 9, 10. *David calls the people of Israel to praise the Lord*, 11, 12. *He prayeth him to consider his trouble*, 13, *that he might have cause to praise him*, 14. *The heathen, by God's judgment, fall into the snare they made for others*, 15, 16. *The portion of the wicked that forget God*, 17. *A promise of mercy to the needy and poor*, 18; *and a prayer for judgment on the ungodly*, 19, 20.

I WILL praise *thee*, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

With my whole heart, i. e. with a sincere, and affectionate, and united heart. I will discourse in the general of thy manifold wonders wrought for me, and for thy church and people formerly. The particle *all* is here, as it is oft elsewhere, taken in a restrained sense.

a Ps. 5. 11. 2 I will be glad and [a]rejoice in thee:
b Ps. 56. 2. & 83. 18. I will sing praise to thy name, O [b]thou most High.

In thee, i. e. in thy favour and help vouchsafed to me.

3 When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

When they are discomfited and put to flight, they shall not save themselves by flight, and reserve themselves to do further mischief, but shall stumble as it were at gall-traps by thee laid in their way, and shall be pursued, and overtaken, and cut off, upon thy appearance against them. One angry look of thine is able to confound and destroy them. Heb. *from thy face*, because thou didst march in the head of our armies, and against them. They could not stand before thee. So he ascribes the honour of his victories to God only, and to his presence and assistance.

† Heb. *thou hast made my judgment.* † Heb. *in righteousness.* 4 For † thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging † right.

My right and my cause, i. e. my righteous cause against thine and mine enemies. *Thou satest in the throne;* thou didst judge and give sentence for me. *Judging right*, or, *O righteous Judge*, or, as *a just judge*.

c Deu. 9. 14. Prov. 10. 7. 5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast [c]put out their name for ever and ever.

Rebuked, i. e. punished, as Psal. vi. 1; or destroyed, as it is explained in the next clause. *The heathen*, to wit, the Philistines and other heathen nations, who did from time to time molest David, or the people of Israel. *Their name;* either that fame and honour which they had gained by their former exploits, but now utterly lost by their shameful defeats; or their very memorial, as it fared with Amalek.

‖ Or, *The destructions of the enemy are come to a perpetual end: and their cities hast thou destroyed, &c.* 6 ‖ O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.

This is a sudden apostrophe to the enemies of God's people, Philistines, Amorites, or other nations, who had formerly made great havoc and waste among them. *Destructions are come to a perpetual end;* thou hast destroyed the Israelitish nation utterly and irrecoverably, and, as it follows, their defenced cities, and their very name and memory, according to thy own desire. So it is a sarcasm or irony, a usual figure in Scripture and all authors, whereby the quite contrary is signified, to wit, that they were not only frustrated of their desires and hopes of destroying the Israelites, but were also subdued, and in a great part destroyed by them. Or this verse may be understood of the great waste and ruin which God's enemies had brought upon Israel before this time; which is here remembered, to make the Israelites more thankful for their later or present deliverances. Or it may be taken as a prophecy of the future calamities which the enemies should by God's permission bring upon Israel, of which he speaks as of a thing past and done, after the manner of the prophets. But this place is otherwise rendered in the margin of our Bibles, and by divers others, *the destructions of the enemy* (which may be understood either, 1. Actively, which they caused; or, 2. Passively, which they felt) *are come to a perpetual end*, or, *are fully and finally completed. Thou hast destroyed cities;* either, 1. Thou, O God, who is oft understood and couched in a pronoun in this manner, thou hast destroyed their cities. Or rather, 2. Thou, O enemy; as may be gathered both from the foregoing clause, where it is so expressed; and from the next verse, where it follows by way of opposition to this, *But the Lord*, &c. *Their memorial is perished with them;* the places and people are utterly extinct.

d Ps. 102. 12, 26. Heb. 1. 11. 7 [d]But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

Though cities and people may perish for ever, yet the Lord abides for ever; which is sufficient for the enemies' terror, and for the comfort of his church. *He hath prepared*, or *established*, by his immutable purpose, and his irrevocable promise.

e Ps. 96. 13. & 98. 9. 8 And [e]he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

The world; not you only, but all the enemies of his people, and all the men of the world.

f Ps. 32. 7. & 37. 39. & 46. 1. & 91. 2. + Heb. *an high place.* 9 [f]The LORD also will be † a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

God will not only judge the world at the last day, and then give sentence for his people against their enemies, but even at present he will give them his protection.

g Ps. 91. 14. 10 And they that [g]know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

They that know, i. e. that thoroughly understand and duly consider. *Thy name*, i. e. thy nature and perfections, thy infinite power, and wisdom, and faithfulness, and goodness; which make a person a most fit and proper object for trust. *The name of God* is most frequently put for God, as he hath manifested himself in his word and works, as Deut. xxviii. 58; Psal. vii. 17; xx. 1; Prov. xviii. 10, &c. *Thou hast not forsaken;* the experience of thy faithfulness to thy people in all ages is a just ground for their confidence. *Them that seek thee*, i. e. that seek help and relief from thee by fervent prayer, mixed with faith, or trust in God, as is expressed in the former clause.

h Ps. 107. 22. 11 Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: [h]declare among the people his doings.

Which dwelleth in Zion; whose special and gracious presence is there; for there was the ark at this time. *Among the people*, i. e. to the heathen nations, that they also may be brought to the knowledge and worship of the true God.

i Gen. 9. 5. ‖ Or, *afflicted.* 12 [i]When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the ‖ humble.

For blood, Heb. *bloods;* the bloodshed or murder of his innocent and holy ones; which though he may connive at for a season, yet he will certainly call the authors of it to a very severe account, and avenge it upon them. *He remembereth them;* either, 1. The humble, as it follows, or the

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oppressed, ver. 9, that trust in him, and seek to him, ver. 10, whom he seemed to have forgotten. Or, 2. *The bloods* last mentioned, for that noun and this pronoun are both of the masculine gender; and then *remembering* is put for revenging or punishing, as it is Deut. xxv. 17, 19; Neh. vi. 14; Jer. xiv. 10; xliv. 21, and oft elsewhere. *The humble*, or *meek*, as this word, which is used also Zech. ix. 9. is translated Matt. xxi. 5, who do not, and cannot, and will not avenge themselves, but commit their cause to me, as the God to whom vengeance belongeth. Or, *afflicted* or *oppressed ones*.

13 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; consider my trouble *which I suffer* of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:

Consider my trouble, to wit, compassionately and effectually, so as to bring me out of it. *From the gates of death*; from the brink or mouth of the grave, into which I was dropping, being as near death as a man is to the city that is come to the very gates of it. And so the phrase is used Psal. cvii. 18; Isa. xxxviii. 10, and in other authors [of whom see my Latin Synopsis]. *Gates* elsewhere signify power and policy, because the gates of cities were places both of counsel and strength; but *the gates of death* are never so taken in Scripture.

14 That I may shew forth all thy praise
k Psa. 13. 5. & 51. 8. & 35. 9. in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will k rejoice in thy salvation.

In the gates, i. e. in the great assemblies, which were usually in the gates. Compare Prov. xxxi. 31; Isa. iii. 26. These gates he elegantly opposeth to the former, and declareth that if he be brought off them, he will go into these. *Of the daughter of Zion*; either, 1. Of Jerusalem, so called also Isa. i. 8; Zech. ix. 9, because at this time it was subject to Zion; which at this time was the seat of the king's palace, and of the ark. For cities or towns belonging or subject unto any metropolis are commonly called its *daughters*, as Josh. xv. 45; 2 Chron. xiii. 19; Psal. xlviii. 11; as the chief cities are called *mothers*, as 2 Sam. xx. 19; Gal. iv. 26. Or, 2. Of the people who live in, or belong to, or meet together for civil and religious matters in Zion. For cities are as it were mothers to their people, giving them birth and breeding, and therefore the people are commonly called their *daughters*. So the names of *the daughters of Egypt*, Jer. xlvi. 11, and *of Edom*, Lam. iv. 21, 22. and *of Tyre*, Psal. xlv. 12, and *of Babel*, Psal. cxxxvii. 8, and *of Jerusalem*, Lam. ii. 13, 15; Micah iv. 8, are put for the people of those places. *I will rejoice*, to wit, with spiritual joy and thanksgiving; else it were no fit motive to be used to God in prayer.

l Psa. 7. 15, 16. & 35. 8. & 57. 6. & 94. 23. Prov. 5. 22. & 29. 6. & 26. 27.

15 lThe heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

Fallen into that destruction which they designed to bring upon us.

m Ex. 7. 5. & 14. 4, 18, 31.

16 The LORD is mknown *by* the judgment *which* he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. ‖ nHiggaion. Selah.

‖ That is, meditation. n Psa. 19. 14. & 92. 3.

The Lord is known, or, *hath made himself known*, or famous, even among his enemies, by his most wise counsels and wonderful works. *By the judgment which he executeth* upon the wicked, as it followeth. *Higgaion* is either a musical term, or a note of attention, a kind of *behold*, intimating that the matter deserves deep and frequent *meditation*, or *consideration*, as the word signifies.

17 The wicked shall be turned into
o Job 8. 13. Psa. 50. 22. hell, *and* all the nations othat forget God.

Into hell; either, 1. Into the grave, which is oft called *sheol*, into which they are said to *be turned*, or *to return*, because they were made of or taken out of the dust, Eccles. xii. 7. Or, 2. Into the place of eternal perdition; which also is sometimes called *scheol*, as Prov. xv. 24, and elsewhere. For he seems to speak here of those punishments which are peculiar to the wicked, whereas the grave is common to good and bad. And as, ver. 8, he seems to speak of the last and general judgment of all the world, so this verse may be understood of the general punishment of *all* persons and *nations* consequent upon it. And into this place wicked men may be said to *be turned back*, or to return; either, 1. Because it is their own proper place, Acts i. 25, to which they belong, and from which they have their original and their wicked qualities, as being of their father the devil, John viii. 44; in which respect the *locusts* (who are by all interpreters understood to be living men) are said to *come out of the bottomless pit*, Rev. ix. 2, 3. Or, 2. Because they had set themselves as it were in battle-array against God, and were beaten back and driven from his presence into their graves, and into hell itself. *All the nations*; whom their great numbers and power cannot protect from God's wrath. *That forget God*; that do not consider nor regard God, nor his precepts, nor his threatenings and judgments, but go on securely and presumptuously in their oppressive and wicked courses.

18 pFor the needy shall not alway be
p ver. 12. Ps. 12. 5. q Prov. 23. 18. & 24. 14. forgotten: qthe expectation of the poor shall *not* perish for ever.

The needy shall not alway be forgotten, though God for a time may seem to neglect or forget them, and suffer their enemies to triumph over them. *Shall not perish*; which negative particle is fitly understood out of the former clause, as it is Psal. i. 5; xliv. 18; Isa. xxiii. 4; xxviii. 27, 28.

19 Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

20 Put them in fear, O LORD: *that* the nations may know themselves *to be but* men. Selah.

Subdue their proud and insolent spirits, and strike them with terror, or with some terrible judgment. *But men*, Heb. *weak, and miserable, and mortal men*, and therefore altogether unable to oppose the omnipotent and eternal God. This he saith, because wicked men, when they are advanced to great power and majesty, are very prone to forget their own frailty, and to carry themselves as if they were gods. See Isa. xxxi. 3; Ezek. xxx. 7, 8; Dan. v. 21.

PSALM X.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains David's complaint unto God against his malicious enemies, especially those of his own people, whose wicked and deceitful practices he here describes, and then commits his cause to God, and begs his help against them.

The psalmist complaineth of God's hiding himself, 1; *and of the outrage and pride of the wicked*, 2—5. *The language*, 6, 7, *and malicious practice of the wicked*, 8—10, *and their denying God's omniscience*, 11. *David prayeth for remedy against and punishment upon the wicked*, 12—15; *and acknowledgeth God's mercy in hearing the oppressed*, 16—18.

WHY standest thou afar off, O LORD? *why* hidest thou *thyself* in times of trouble?

Why standest thou afar off, like one that neither sees, nor hears, nor regards me, nor intendest any help for me? *Thyself*, or, *thy face*, out of ver. 11, which did sometimes shine upon me; or, *thine eyes*, by comparing this with Prov. xxviii. 27; Isa. i. 15. *In times of trouble*, when I most need thy pity and succour. Do not add affliction to the afflicted.

2 †The wicked in *his* pride doth per-
† Heb. *In the pride of the wicked he doth persecute.* secute the poor: alet them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.
a Psa. 7. 16. & 9. 15, 16. Prov. 5. 22.

In his pride; *through pride* of heart; which makes him forget God, ver. 4, and despise the poor, and oppress others, either because they oppose or dislike his wicked courses, or that he may have more fuel for his pride or ambition. Or, *in his exaltation*. This is the use that he makes of that power and authority to which thou hast advanced him, to persecute those whom he should protect and cherish. He seems to point at Saul or his courtiers. *Doth persecute* with great fervency and burning fury, as the word signifies. *The poor*, to wit, me, who am through their tyranny poor, and destitute, and miserable, and therefore the more proper

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object for thy compassion, and others who favour my righteous cause.

b Ps. 94. 4. + Heb. soul's. c Prov. 28. 4. Rom. 1. 32. ‖ Or, *the covetous blesseth* himself, *he abhorreth the* LORD.

3 For the wicked [b]boasteth of his †heart's desire, and [c]‖blesseth the covetous, *whom* the LORD abhorreth.

Boasteth, or *glorieth*, or *praiseth*, or *pleaseth* himself. *Of his heart's desire;* or, *in*, or *concerning*, or *because of the desire*, or *concupiscence*, or *lust of his heart*, or *soul;* which word is added to note the vehemency and fervency of it. He glorieth in his very lusts, which are his shame, Phil. iii. 19, and especially in the satisfaction of his desires, how wickedly soever he gets it. *Desire* is oft put for the thing desired, as Psal. xxi. 2; lxxviii. 29, 30. *And blesseth the covetous;* and as he applaudeth himself, so he commends others that are greedy after and get abundance of gain, though it be done by fraud and violence, accounting such the only happy men. Or, *the covetous* (the same with *the wicked* enlarging his desire, as was now said) *blesseth*, or *applaudeth*, or *flattereth* himself in what he hath already gotten, and in the confident expectation of the continuance and increase of his worldly wealth and glory. *Whom the Lord abhorreth;* so his judgment as well as practice is contrary to God's. Or rather, without any supplement, as it is in the margin, *he abhorreth*, or *despiseth*, or *provoketh the Lord.* He sets himself not only against men, but against God himself, as he declareth more fully in the next verse.

d Ps. 14. 2. g Or, *all his thoughts* are, There is *no God.* e Ps. 14. 1. & 53. 1.

4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, [d]will not seek *after God:* ‖God *is* not in all his [g]thoughts.

Through the pride; by which he scorns to stoop to God, or to own any superior, and makes himself and his own lusts his only rule, and his last end, and is full of self-confidence, and a conceit of his own self-sufficiency and unchangeable felicity, as is noted, ver. 6. *Of his countenance;* so called, because though pride be properly seated in the heart; whence it is called *pride*, or *loftiness of heart*, or *spirit*, as Psal. cxxxi. 1; Prov. xvi. 18; Eccles. vii. 8, &c.; yet it is manifested in the countenance, and therefore is oft described by lofty looks, as Psal. ci. 5; cxxxi. 1; Prov. vi. 17; xxi. 4; xxx. 13, &c.; which possibly was done purposely to meet with the excuses of proud persons, who when they are charged with pride for their looks, or gestures, or apparel, or the like, use to make this apology for themselves, that pride lies in the heart, and not in these outward things. *Will not seek after God*, i. e. not seek or inquire into the mind and will of God, to order his life by it so as to please God, nor seek to him by prayer for his favour and blessing. But the words *after God* are not in the Hebrew, and it is thought by some too great boldness to add them here. And therefore others omit it, and render the Hebrew words, *will not search*, or *consider*, to wit, his actions, which seems to be a more natural and easy supplement: he will not trouble himself to inquire whether his actions be just or unjust, pleasing or offensive to God; but without any care or consideration rusheth into sin, and doth whatsoever seemeth right in his own eyes. But these and the former words are and may be, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew, thus rendered without any supplement, *The wicked, through his pride*, (for so this Hebrew word by itself signifies, Isa. v. 16; x. 33,) *will not seek his* (i. e. God's, which is plain both from the foregoing and following words) *face*, which is a usual phrase in Scripture, as 2 Chron. vii. 14; Psal. xxiv. 6; xxvii. 8; cv. 4, &c. *God is not in all his thoughts;* he hath no serious thoughts of nor regard unto God, or his word, which ought to command him; or his threats and judgments, which should keep him in awe. Or, *all his thoughts are, There is no God*, to wit, no such God as minds the affairs of the world, and the actions of men, and punisheth sinners. He was a deist, and owned a God, at least in words, but denied his providence.

f Prov. 24. 1. Is. 26. 11. g Ps. 12. 5.

5 His ways are always grievous; [f]thy judgments *are* far above out of his sight: *as for* all his enemies, [g]he puffeth at them.

His ways are always grievous; his whole course and carriage is vexatious to all that are within his reach, but especially to the poor, who cannot right themselves; and to just and good men, whom he hateth and persecuteth. Or, *His ways*, i. e. his designs and enterprises, *at all times are prosperous*, or *successful*, or *do bring forth;* for this verb signifies, as the pains and trouble, so also the success and comfort, of child-bearing, or the bringing forth children, as Psal. xxix. 9; Isa. liv. 1; Jer. iv. 31. And the accomplishment or disappointment of designs is frequently expressed by this metaphor; of which see 2 Kings xix. 23; Psal. vii. 14; Isa. lix. 4, &c. And this sense seems best to suit with the context. *Thy judgments;* either, 1. Thy laws, which are oft called *judgments*. Or rather, 2. Thy threatenings denounced against and punishments inflicted upon sinners. *Are far above out of his sight;* either, 1. He doth not feel them; thou removest them far from him; which indulgence of thine is the cause of his insolency. Or rather, 2. He doth not discern, nor regard, nor fear them, nor think of them, but goes on securely and resolvedly in his wicked courses. He hath not so much faith nor reason as to apprehend or consider them, but, like a brute beast, looks only downward to the earth, and minds not things above him. And thus it seems best to agree with the foregoing and following clauses. His devices succeed, and therefore he neither fears God's judgments, nor the power of his enemies, but fancies his happiness to be unchangeable, as it follows, ver. 6. *He puffeth at them*, i. e. he despiseth them, being confident that he can blow them away with a breath. This is a gesture of contempt or disdain, both in Scripture, as Psal. xii. 5; Mal. i. 13, and in other authors, as in Plautus; where one speaks thus to a proud and bragging captain, *Thou hast blown away whole legions with thy breath, as leaves are blown away by a wind.*

h Ps. 30. 6. Eccles. 8. 11. Is. 56. 12. i Rev. 18. 7. † Heb. *unto generation and generation.*

6 [h]He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: [i]for *I shall* †never *be* in adversity.

He hath said in his heart; he thinketh or persuadeth himself. *I shall not be moved;* or, *removed*, to wit, from my place and happy state. *For I shall never be in adversity;* or, *because I am not in adversity*, therefore I never shall be in it. His present prosperity makes him secure for the future. Compare Rev. xviii. 7. Or, *yea*, (for this particle sometimes hath no other signification or use but only to amplify or aggravate, as it is also taken 1 Sam. xv. 20; xxiv. 11,) I shall *never be in evil.* So the sense of the place is, I shall not only be kept from total ruin, or a removal from my place and estate, but I shall not meet with the least cross or trouble. For this *evil* is not the evil of sin, as some here understand it, in which he knew that he was, and was resolved, ever to continue; but the evil of punishment, which was the only thing that he feared or regarded.

k Rom. 3. 14. + Heb. *deceits.* l Job. 20. 12. m Ps. 12. 2. ‖ Or, *iniquity.*

7 [k]His mouth is full of cursing and †deceit and fraud: [l]under his tongue *is* mischief [m]and ‖vanity.

Of cursing; either, 1. Of oaths and blasphemies against God. Or, 2. Of reviling and execration of other men, especially those that are good; or those that stand in his way, and hinder his wicked designs. Or rather, 3. Of oaths and imprecations against himself, of which this word is used, Numb. v. 21; Deut. xxix. 12, 21; Neh. x. 29; by which he endeavours to gain credit, and to make his neighbours secure, and so to make way for the *deceit and fraud* which here follows. For this wretched man is represented both here, and in the succeeding verses, as one that doth not act with open violence and hostility, but with subtle and secret artifices, using all cunning insinuations, and flatteries, and lies, and, among others, oaths, of which an atheistical politician said, that men were to be deceived with oaths, and children with rattles or toys. *Deceit and fraud;* two words signifying the same thing, to note the greatness and frequency of his deceits. Or one word may signify the deceit lurking in his heart, and the other the manifestation of it in external frauds and stratagems. *Under his tongue;* either, 1. In his heart, which is under the tongue. Or rather, 2. Under his fair and plausible speeches the *mischief* here following is hid and covered. Withal he seems to allude to serpents, whose poison lies hidden under the tongue, or within their teeth. *Mischief and vanity;* or rather, *iniquity*, as this word is oft rendered, or *injury*, the vexation or oppression of other men, which he covers with these fair pretences.

n Hab. 3. 14.

8 He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: [n]in the secret places doth he

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murder *the* innocent: • his eyes †are privily set against the poor.

• Ps. 17. 11. • Heb. hide themselves. † Heb. *are hid.*

In the lurking-places of the villages; not within the villages, which is not a fit place for lurking; but about them, in the ways bordering upon them, or leading to them, as robbers use to do. *In the secret places*, that he may avoid the shame and punishment of men; which is the only thing that he fears. *Are privily set*, Heb. *are hid.* The sense is either, 1. He winketh as men do when they shoot their arrows at a mark. Or rather, 2. He watcheth and looketh out of his lurking-place, to spy what passengers come that way. He alludes still to the practices of robbers.

9 ‡He lieth in wait † secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

‡ Ps. 17. 12. Mic. 7. 2. † Heb. *in the secret place.*

As a lion in his den, where he lurks and waits for prey. *He doth catch*, or *snatch*, or *seize upon*, to wit, with violence, and to devour or destroy him. *When he draweth him;* or, *by drawing him;* or, *after he hath drawn him.* He layeth snares for him, and when he takes him, tears him in pieces.

10 †He croucheth, *and* humbleth himself, that the poor may fall ‖ by his strong ones.

† Heb. *He breaketh himself.* ‖ Or, *into his strong parts.*

Like a lion, (for he continues the same metaphor,) which gathereth himself together, and lies close upon the ground, partly that he may not be discovered, and partly that he may more suddenly, and surely, and fiercely lay hold upon his prey. But for this translation, because this *and* is not in the Hebrew, and there is another *and* there prefixed to the first verb, some join that first verb to the end of the 10th verse, and render the place thus, *he catcheth the poor by drawing him into his net, and breaks* him *to pieces*, as that verb properly signifies. So there is only a defect of the pronoun, which is most frequent. And this makes the sense complete, which otherwise would be imperfect in that verse, and showeth us what he doth with his prey when he hath taken it. And this 10th verse begins very well with the next verb, *he humbleth* himself; or, *he stoops*, or *bends* himself. *That the poor may fall;* or, *that he may fall* (for this verb is sometimes taken actively, as Josh. xi. 7; Job i. 15) upon *the poor;* that having first crouched and lain down, and then of a sudden rising, he may leap and fall upon his prey, like a lion. *By his strong ones*, i. e. by his strong members, his teeth or paws. So it is an ellipsis of the noun substantive; whereof we have examples, as 2 Sam. xxi. 16, *new* for *a new sword;* and Psal. lxxiii. 10, *full* for *a full cup;* and Matt. x. 42, *cold* for *cold water.*

11 He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: •he hideth his face; he will never see *it*.

• Job 22. 13. Ps. 73. 11 & 94. 7. Ezek. 8. 12 & 9. 9.

God hath forgotten, to wit, *the poor*, ver. 10; or *the humble*, which we are taught to supply out of ver. 12, where he saith, *forget not the humble.* He forgets and neglects all their oppressions and prayers, and doth not avenge their cause, as he hath said he would do; nor execute judgments upon their oppressors, as he hath sometimes done or been thought to do. *He hideth his face*, lest he should see. He takes no notice of their sufferings, lest he should be engaged to help them. He will not encumber himself with the care of things done upon earth, but leaves it wholly to men to manage their affairs as they think fit. *He will never see it*, to wit, the oppression of the poor, or the design of oppressors against them, which is the chief subject of the whole Psalm, and is particularly expressed ver. 10.

12 Arise, O LORD; O God, ‘lift up thine hand: forget not the ‖ humble.

‘ Ver. 5. 9. ‖ Or, *afflicted.*

Lift up thine hand, to rescue the poor, and to smite their oppressors with a hand stretched out and lifted up, that the blow may be the greater: compare Exod. vii. 5; Isa. v. 25; ix. 12. &c. *Forget not the humble;* show by thy appearance for their vindication that thou dost remember and regard them.

13 Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require *it*.

The sense is either, 1. What is the cause of his contempt of God? To which question the next words give an answer, Thy connivance makes him secure. Therefore show thyself. Or, 2. Why dost thou by giving them impunity suffer and occasion them to despise thee? Do so no longer. Which tacit desire he enforceth by representing their atheistical denial of God's providence.

14 Thou hast seen *it;* for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite *it* with thy hand: the poor †‘committeth himself unto thee; ‘thou art the helper of the fatherless.

† Heb. *clearveth.* ‘ 2 Tim. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 19. ‘ Ps. 68. 5. Hos. 14. 3.

Thou hast seen it; or, but *thou hast seen it*, and therefore they are horribly mistaken, as they will find to their cost. *For;* or, *surely*, as this particle is oft used, as Job viii. 6; Psal. lxxiii. 18. *Thou beholdest;* not as an idle spectator, but with an eye of observation and vindication, as it follows. *Mischief and spite*, i. e. all the injurious and spiteful or malicious carriages of wicked men towards those who are more righteous than they. *To requite it with thy hand*, Heb. *to give* (i. e. to restore or pay, the simple verb for the compound; which is usual in the Hebrew tongue) *it* (to wit, the mischief which they have done to others) *with thy hand*, i. e. by thy own immediate and extraordinary providence, because the oppressed were destitute of all other succours. Or, *to put* (*giving* being oft used for *putting*, as hath been observed before) it *in* or *into thy hand*, that thou mayst have it always in thine eye, and under thy care and consideration, as the like phrase is evidently used, Isa. xlix. 16. Therefore thou dost not and canst not forget it, but wilt certainly require it. *Committeth himself;* or, *his matters or cause*, i. e. the care of his person and righteous cause. Heb. *he leaveth;* which word is used for committing to the trust of another, Gen. xxxix. 6; Job xxxix. 14; Isa. x. 3. *Of the fatherless*, i. e. of such poor oppressed ones as have no friend nor helper; one kind of them being put for all the rest.

15 “Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil *man:* seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

“ Ps. 37. 17.

Break thou; or, *Thou wilt break.* For it may be either a prayer or a prophecy. *The arm*, i. e. his strength, the instrument of violence and mischief. *Seek out his wickedness;* search for it so strictly, and punish these wicked atheists so severely. *Till thou find none*, i. e. no such wickedness, to wit, undiscovered and unpunished, or indeed left in the world, or at least in the church; which might happen, because those wicked men here spoken of should be generally either convinced or rooted out, and the rest should be warned and reformed by their example, and so this *lewdness* should *cease out of the land*, as the phrase is, Ezek. xxiii. 48. That is said to *be sought for, and not found*, which is utterly lost, as Job xx. 7, 8; Psal. xxxvii. 36; Rev. xvi. 20; xviii. 21. And this phrase is used both of good men, whose sins are taken away by God's grace and mercy, pardoning and purging them away, and of wicked men in the sense above mentioned.

16 ×The LORD *is* King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.

× Ps. 29. 10. & 145. 13. & 146. 10. Jer. 10. 10. Lam. 5. 19. Dan. 4. 34. & 6. 26. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

The Lord is King; to whom it belongs to protect his subjects. Therefore thou wilt save the humble, and punish the oppressors. *For ever and ever;* therefore his people's case is never desperate, seeing he ever lives and reigns to help them, and therefore he will help them in his time sooner or later. *The heathen;* either, 1. Those impious Israelites who oppressed David and other good men, whom, although they were reputed Israelites by themselves and others, yet he might call them *heathens* for their heathenish opinions of God and his providence, and for their ungodly and unrighteous lives. Compare Isa. i. 9; Amos ix. 7. Or, 2. The Canaanites, whom God as King of the world did expel or destroy, and gave their land to his people; by which great example he confirms his faith and hope for the future. *Out of his land*, i. e. out of Canaan, which God calls *his land*, Lev. xxv. 23, because he spied it out for them, Ezek. xx. 6, and gave it to them, and fixed his presence and dwelling in it.

17 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt ‖ ‘prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

‖ Or, *establish.* ‘ 1 Chron. 29. 18.

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Thou hast heard the desire of the humble; and therefore wilt still do it, being unchangeable and the same for ever. *Thou wilt prepare,* or *direct,* or *fit,* by thy grace and good Spirit, either that they may so pray as thou wilt hear, or that they may be made fit to receive the mercies which they desire; which when they are, they shall have their prayers heard. Or, *thou wilt confirm* or *stablish* (as this verb is oft used) *their heart,* to bear their present pressures, and to wait upon and hope and trust in thee for deliverance, until thou seest fit to hear and help them. *Thou wilt cause thine ear to hear* in due time, though for a season thou seemest to turn a deaf ear to them. But this and the foregoing verb may be taken as a prayer, future verbs being oft used imperatively; *prepare* or *stablish their hearts,* (by giving them support and assurance of help in the time of need, and then,) *cause thine ear to hear.*

x Ps. 82. 3. Is. 11. 4.

18 To [x]judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more ‖oppress.

‖ Or, *terrify.*

To judge, i. e. to defend them, and give sentence for them, and against their enemies, as this word is used, Deut. xxxii. 36; Psal. vii. 8; cxxxv. 14. *The man of the earth,* i. e. earthly and mortal men, who are made of the dust, and must return to it, such as the oppressors of thy people are; who yet presume most audaciously and madly to contend with thee their Maker and Judge. Therefore it is time for thee to repress such insolency, and to show how unable they are to stand before thee. *May no more oppress,* to wit, the fatherless last mentioned.

PSALM XI.

¶ To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David when he was persecuted by Saul, and forced to flee from place to place for safety.

David encourageth himself in God, 1, *against the wicked designs of his enemies,* 2, 3. *The providence and justice of God,* 4, *to the righteous and wicked,* 5—7.

cir. 1060. a Ps. 56. 11. b See 1 Sam. 26. 19, 20.

[a]IN the LORD put I my trust: [b]how say ye to my soul, Flee *as* a bird to your mountain?

In the Lord, i. e. in his faithfulness, who hath promised, and will, I doubt not, give me the kingdom. *How say ye?* either, 1. Ye my friends; who through diffidence and despondency advised him to this course. Or, 2. Ye my enemies; who said it scoffingly and insultingly. *How say ye?* With what face or reason can you say thus to him, who hath the Lord God Almighty for his refuge? *To my soul,* i. e. to me, as Psal. vi. 4; vii. 2. *Flee as a bird,* suddenly and swiftly, and to some remote place, where thou mayst be out of Saul's reach. Feed not thyself with vain hopes of the kingdom, but consult for thy own safety, which thou canst not do without taking *the wings of a dove,* or some other bird, that thou mayst *flee away* out of the land, *and be at rest,* as thou sayest, Psal. lv. 6. Or, *Flee away, O thou bird,* thou little silly bird, lest the royal eagle seize upon thee. *To your mountain,* i. e. to some of your mountains in Judah, and there hide thyself. But this was David's common practice; and therefore there was no need that any should advise him to it, or that he should reprove them for that advice. Or, from (which prefix is oft wanting, and to be understood, as Josh. x. 13; 2 Sam. xxiii. 24) *your mountain,* i. e. from *the mountain or mountainous country of Judah,* as it is called, Josh. xx. 7; *the mountain* being frequently put for a mountainous country, as Numb. xiii. 29; xxiii. 7; Josh. ix. 1; x. 6, 40, and oft elsewhere. Or, from *your mountains,* in which thou and thy companions use to hide yourselves. Flee into some foreign land, where you may be safe. For this was the design of David's enemies, as he complains, 1 Sam. xxvi. 19; and afterward, when David was under sore temptations, it was his practice once or twice.

c Ps. 64. 3, 4. d Ps. 21. 12. † Heb. *In darkness.*

2 For, lo, [c]the wicked bend *their* bow, [d]they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may †privily shoot at the upright in heart.

For lo: these are the words, either, 1. Of David's friends or enemies, confirming their former advice; which might suit with it, if that was the counsel of his friends; but not if it was (as it seems to have been) the counsel of his enemies; for these would never have called themselves *wicked,* nor David and his men *upright in heart.* Or rather, 2. Of David himself; who having directed his speech to his enemies, ver. 1, now turns it to God, and pours out before him his complaints against his enemies, as his usual course is in this book. They do not only speak scornfully of me, as I have said, but, O Lord, they act against me with all their might and malice. *They make ready their arrow upon the string;* they lay designs for my destruction, and they make all things ready to execute them. *Privily;* out of their lurking holes: compare Psal. x. 8, 9; lxiv. 5. For as some of his enemies did openly oppose him, so others did secretly undermine him, and with pretences of friendship seek to betray him. *At the upright in heart;* at me and my followers, who have manifested our integrity both towards God and towards Saul, whom I have faithfully served and spared when I could have taken away his life.

3 [e]If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

e Ps. 82. 5.

If; or, *for;* or, *when. The foundations,* i. e. piety, and justice, and fidelity, and mercy, which are the *pillars* or *foundations* of a state or kingdom, as they are called, Psal. lxxv. 2, 3; lxxxii. 5; by which they are established, Prov. xxix. 14, and which Saul and his courtiers had manifestly violated and overthrown in persecuting David and his friends. The sense is, There is nothing in public administrations but disorder and oppression, and right can take no place. *What can the righteous do?* the condition of all righteous men (whom thou hast engaged thyself to protect and deliver) will be desperate; which will not be for thine honour. Heb. *what hath the righteous done?* As for me and my friends, upon whom all the blame is laid, what have we poor, but righteous, persons (for such thou thou knowest us to be) done? namely, to cause all these calumnies and persecutions, or to occasion all these commotions and disturbances of public peace and justice. It is easy to slander us, but let them prove their accusations by any one of our actions.

4 [f]The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD's [g]throne *is* in heaven: [h]his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

f Hab. 2. 20. g Ps. 2. 4. Is. 66. 1. Matt. 5. 34. & 23. 22. Acts 7. 49. Rev. 4. 2. h Ps. 33. 13. & 34. 15, 16. & 66. 7.

The Lord, to whom I appeal from men's unjust tribunals, *is in his holy temple;* either, 1. In his tabernacle, which is sometimes called his *temple,* as 1 Sam. i. 9; iii. 3; Psal. xviii. 6; xlviii. 9; lxviii. 29, where he resides to hear the prayers and appeals of all his people. Or, 2. In heaven, as it is explained in the next clause; which is also called God's *temple,* Micah i. 2; Rev. vii. 15, and which seems to be most emphatical here; for God's being in heaven is oft mentioned as an evidence of his glorious majesty, of his sovereign power and dominion over all men and things, and of his accurate inspection into all men and their actions here below, which from that high tower he can easily behold, as it here follows. *The Lord's throne;* where he sits to examine all causes, and to judge all men, and to give forth righteous sentences according to every man's works; which is my great comfort and joy. *His eyes behold, his eye-lids try, the children of men,* i. e. he doth exactly and thoroughly discern all men, and all that is in men, their most inward and secret actions, Psal. vii. 9. And therefore he sees and will reward my innocency, notwithstanding all the reproaches and calumnies of mine enemies; and withal he sees all their secret, and subtle, and malicious designs against me through all their cunning pretences, and will discover and defeat them.

5 The LORD [i]trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

i Gen. 22. 1. Jam. 1. 12

The Lord trieth the righteous; either, 1. He examines them, and knows them to be righteous, and consequently approveth, and loveth, and will preserve and bless them; which may be gathered from the contrary condition of the wicked, whom God is supposed to try, though that be not expressed, and upon trial finds them to be wicked, and

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therefore hates and punisheth them, as it follows. The like ellipsis of a whole sentence, see on Psal. i. 6. Or, 2. He trieth and exerciseth them and their graces by afflictions, or he corrects them for their sins; which is oft called *trying*, as Psal. lxvi. 10; Zech. xiii. 9; James i. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 12. So this is spoken by way of concession, and to remove the offence which some men might take at David, whose person and cause they might be apt to condemn because of his troubles. Therefore he saith, God *tries*, i. e. chastens, even righteous persons; yet still he loves them, and therefore will in due time deliver them. But as for the wicked, let not them rejoice in my trials, for far worse things are appointed for them; God hates them, and will severely punish them. *Him that loveth violence;* by which character he describes and brands his enemies, and aggravates their malice, because they chose and practised violence against him, not for any need which they had of it, (for David was a most peaceable and harmless man, and neither pretended nor endeavoured to do any more than to defend himself, and that, as far as was possible, without the offence or injury of any other man,) but merely from their love to injustice and violence, and their implacable hatred against goodness and good men. *His soul hateth;* he hateth with or from his soul, i. e. inwardly and ardently.

[k] Gen. 19. 24. Ezra 38. 22. [l] Or, *sword, burning coals.* [m] Or, *a burning tempest.* [n] Ps. 75. 8.

6 [k] Upon the wicked he shall rain ‖ snares, fire and brimstone, and ‖ an horrible tempest: [l] *this shall be* the portion of their cup.

He shall rain; which notes their original to be extraordinary, and from God's hand; and withal, that they should come plentifully, swiftly, and suddenly, violently and unavoidably, as rain commonly doth fall from heaven. *Snares*, i. e. grievous plagues or judgments, which are called *snares* here, as also Job xviii. 9, 10; xxii. 10; Isa. viii. 14; xxiv. 17, 18; partly because wicked men are ofttimes surprised with them when they least expect them, Luke xxi. 35; and partly because they cannot escape them, nor get out of them, but are held fast and destroyed by them. *Fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest*, i. e. dreadful judgments, so called metaphorically, and by allusion to the destruction of Sodom and other places by these means. But this he seems to speak not so much of present and temporal calamities, as of their future and eternal punishments, because he manifestly speaks of those miseries which are peculiar to wicked men; whereas David knew very well, both by his own experience, and by the history of Job, and of Israel's bondage in Egypt, that *all things* here *came alike to all men*, good or bad, Eccles. ix. 2, and that wicked men had many times a greater share of worldly prosperity than God's own people; as David acknowledgeth and complaineth of it, Psal. lxxiii. *This shall be the portion of their cup;* this is their portion, and as it were the meat and drink appointed to them by God. This shall certainly and unavoidably be their state or condition; which is oft called a man's *part* or *portion*, as Psal. xvi. 5; lxiii. 10; lxxv. 8; Matt. xxiv. 51. He alludes to the ancient custom of masters of families, or of feasts, who used to distribute the several portions of meat to their domestics or guests.

[m] Ps. 45. 7. & 146. 8. [n] Job 36. 7. Ps. 33. 18. & 34. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 12.

7 For the righteous LORD [m] loveth righteousness; [n] his countenance doth behold the upright.

This is given as the reason why God hateth and punisheth wicked men so dreadfully, because he loves righteousness, and therefore must needs hate wickedness and punish wicked men. Or, *but*, as this particle is oft rendered; for this seems to be added by way of opposition to what he now said concerning the state of wicked men. *His countenance doth behold the upright;* to wit, with an eye of approbation, and true and tender affection, and watchful and gracious providence; which is oft signified by God's *beholding* or *looking* upon men, as Exod. ii. 25; Ezra v. 5; Psal. xxv. 18; xxxiii. 18; xxxiv. 15, &c.; as, on the contrary, God is oft said to hide or turn away his face or eyes from wicked men.

PSALM XII.

¶ To the chief Musician ‖ *upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

‖ Or, *upon the eighth.* * Ps. 6. title.

The same title is prefixed to Psal. vi. This Psalm was composed in the time and upon the occasion of Saul's ill government, and his persecution of David, and other good men who favoured him.

David, being destitute of human comfort, craveth help of God, 1. He exclaims against flattering and deceitful tongues, 2; and comforteth himself with God's judgment on them, 3, 4; and assureth himself of his tried mercies to the needy, 5—8.

HELP, ‖ LORD; for [a] the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

‖ Or, *Save.* [a] Is. 57. 1. Mic. 7. 2.

Help; or, *save* me and other good men from the subtlety and rage of wicked men. Saul will not help us, and other men cannot help; therefore it is a fit season for thee to help. *The godly;* or, *kind*, or *merciful*, as this word is oft used, as Psal. xxx. 5; xxxi. 24; lxxxvi. 2: q. d. I and my friends are sorely and causelessly persecuted, banished from our homes and friends, and, which is worst of all, from God's sanctuary, and yet few or none pity us; all mercy and humanity is lost. *The faithful fail;* men have lost not only serious piety, but even common honesty, in their words and dealings with men.

[b] Ps. 10. 7. [c] Ps. 28. 3. & 62. 4. Jer. 9. 8. Rom. 16. 18. † Heb. *an heart and an heart.* 1 Chron. 12. 33.

2 [b] They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: [c] *with* flattering lips *and* with † a double heart do they speak.

Vanity; or, *falsehood*, which is a vain thing, and wants the solidity of truth. *With a double heart;* pretending one heart, and that they speak from a kind and upright heart, when they really have another, even a cruel and deceitful heart.

[d] 1 Sam. 2. 3. Ps. 17. 10. Dan. 7. 8, 25. † Heb. *great things.*

3 The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaketh [d] † proud things:

Or *great things*, or *great words*, either bragging or threatening what they will do, and what great things they will effect, to wit, by their tongues, as they themselves explain it in the next verse, which they will use so cunningly and powerfully, that they shall not need to use their hands, or strike a stroke.

† Heb. *are with us.*

4 Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips † *are* our own: who *is* lord over us?

With our tongue will we prevail, by raising and spreading slanders and evil reports concerning him, whereby both Saul will be highly and implacably enraged against David, and the hearts of the people alienated from him; which was indeed a very likely way to prevail against him, and that by their tongues only. *Our lips are our own*, i. e. at our own dispose to speak what we please. *Who is lord over us;* who can control or restrain us? This was not the language of their mouths, for they were Israelites, that owned a God above them, and they were subjects of Saul; but the language of their actions. Scripture oft tells us not only what men do actually say, but what they would say if they durst, or what their actions mean, as Psal. xciv. 7; Mal. i. 12, 13; ii. 17. They take as great a liberty in their speech as if they believed there was no God or man superior to them; because neither the fear of God, nor the reverence of men, can keep them from speaking whatsoever they please, or what they suppose makes for their interest.

[e] Ex. 3. 7, 8. Is. 33. 10. [f] Or, *would ensnare him.* [f] Ps. 10. 5.

5 For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, [e] now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that* ‖ [f] puffeth at him.

For the oppression of the poor; oppressed by Saul through the instigation and artifices of his fawning courtiers. *Now;* speedily, sooner than they imagine or expect. *From him that puffeth at him*, i. e. from him that despiseth him, and hopeth to destroy him with a puff of breath, or a parcel of

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words. See this phrase Psal. x. 5: Only there it is construed with *beth*, and here with *lamed;* which may make some difference. And the supplement in our translation may seem to be large, and not necessary. And the place is and may be otherwise rendered according to the Hebrew, without any such large supplement, *I will set* him (to wit, the needy last mentioned; so it is an ellipsis of the pronoun, which is most frequent) *in safety: he* (to wit, the Lord, mentioned before) *shall speak* (as this verb signifies, Prov. vi. 19; xiv. 5; xix. 5, 9, i. e. shall speak comfortably, by a synecdoche; or *shall speak plainly*, as this verb is used, Prov. xii. 17; Hab. ii. 3) *to him*, i. e. to the needy here mentioned. Or, *he*, i. e. God, *shall speak* (to wit, in his wrath, as it is expressed, Psal. ii. 5) *to him*, who is the cause of his oppression, of whom he speaks ver. 3, 4. Or, *shall puff at him*, as he used to do at his enemies, Psal. x. 5.

g 2 Sam. 22. 31. Psa. 18. 30. & 19. 8, & 119. 140. Prov. 30. 5.

6 The words of the LORD *are* [g]pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

Pure; or, *sincere;* without the least mixture of vanity or falsehood; and therefore shall infallibly be fulfilled. This he seems to add to answer an objection which might arise in some men's minds concerning what was last said. You tell us, *The Lord saith, I will set him in safety*, &c.; but saying and doing are two things. They are so indeed in men, who oft speak rashly what they cannot perform, and deceitfully what they never intend: but all God's words are pure from all manner of dross; from all folly, or fraud, or uncertainty; he is holy and true in all his doctrines, threatenings, predictions, and promises. *Tried in a furnace of earth*, i. e. made of such earth or clay as was proper for and then usual in that work. See 1 Kings vii. 46.

7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve † them from this generation for ever.

† Heb. *him:* that is, *every one of them.*

Thou shalt keep them; either, 1. The poor and needy, ver. 5, from the crafts and malice of *this* crooked and perverse *generation* of men, and for ever. Or, 2. Thy words or promises last mentioned, ver. 6. These thou wilt *observe* and *keep* (as these two verbs commonly signify) both now, and *from this generation for ever*, i. e. Thou wilt not only keep thy promise to me in preserving me, and advancing me to the throne, but also to my posterity from generation to generation.

† Heb. *the vilest of the sons of men are exalted.*

8 The wicked walk on every side, when † the vilest men are exalted.

The wicked walk on every side; which phrase may note, 1. Their great numbers; they fill all places. 2. Their freedom and safety; they are not restrained nor punished, but go about boldly and securely whither they please. 3. Their proficiency and success, which is sometimes signified by this verb, as Gen. xxvi. 13; 1 Sam. ii. 21; Isa. xl. 31. They grow worse and worse, and prosper in and by their wickedness. 4. Their uncessant and unwearied industry in doing mischief to good men. Compare 1 Pet. v. 8. And this is very fitly here added, as another argument to prevail with God to arise to help his poor people who are oppressed by wicked men. *The vilest men*, Heb. *vilenesses*, i. e. all manner of wickedness, lying and slandering, profaneness, oppression, cruelty, and the like; or, vile persons, the abstract being put for the concrete, which is frequent, as *pride*, Psal. xxxvi. 11, for a proud man, and many such like; both comes to one, vile persons and vile practices were both advanced and encouraged through Saul's misgovernment, whereby all the foundations were destroyed, as he complained, Psal. xi. 3. The Hebrew word *zolel* (whence this *zuloth* comes) signifies first *a glutton* or *drunkard*, as Deut. xxi. 20; Prov. xxiii. 21, and thence any *vile person*, as Jer. xv. 19; Lam. i. 11.

PSALM XIII.

‖ Or, overseer.

¶ To the ‖ chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The occasion of this Psalm was David's deep and long-continued distresses, from which he prays for deliverance.

David complaineth to God of his delay to help, 1, *and the enemies' triumph*, 2. *He, praying for preventing grace*, 3, 4, *professeth his trust in God*, 5, *and boasteth of Divine mercy*, 6.

HOW long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? [a]how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

a Deu. 31. 17. Job 13. 24. Psa. 44. 24. & 88. 14. & 89. 46. Isa. 59. 2.

How long wilt thou forget, i. e. neglect or disregard, *me? for ever? how long wilt thou* withdraw thy favour and assistance?

2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, *having* sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

How long shall I be in such perplexities and anxieties of mind, not knowing what course to take, nor how to get out of my troubles?

3 Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God: [b]lighten mine eyes, [c]lest I sleep the *sleep of* death;

b Ezra 9. 8. c Jer. 51. 39.

Lighten mine eyes; either, 1. Because I find my counsel insufficient, ver. 2, do thou enlighten my mind, and guide me by thy counsel and Spirit into the right way of obtaining thy mercy and help. So this phrase is used Psal. xix. 8; Eph. i. 18. Or, 2. Do thou revive, and comfort, and deliver me from the darkness of death, which is ready to come upon me and to close mine eyes. Nothing is more common than to express great dangers and calamities by *darkness*, and great comforts and deliverances by *light*, as Job xv. 22; xvii. 13; xxx. 26. and by an *enlightening of the eyes*, as Ezra ix. 8. Compare Prov. xv. 30; xxix. 13. *Lest I sleep the sleep of death*, i. e. lest I sink under my burden and die; for death is oft called a *sleep* in Scripture, as Job iii. 13; xiv. 12; Psal. lxxvi. 5; John xi. 11.

4 [d]Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; *and* those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

d Ps. 25. 2. & 35. 19. & 38. 16.

I have prevailed against him, to wit, by my art or strength; which will reflect dishonour upon thee, as if thou wert either unfaithful and unmindful of thy promises, or unable to make them good. Therefore repress this their arrogancy and blasphemy, and maintain thine own honour. *When I am moved;* or, *stumble*, or *fall*, to wit, into mischief.

5 But I have [e]trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

e Ps. 33. 21.

Neither their threats and brags, nor my own dangers, shall shake my confidence in thy mercy promised to me.

6 I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath [f]dealt bountifully with me.

f Ps. 116. 7. & 119. 17.

Either, 1. In giving me that support and assurance of his favour which for the present I enjoy. Or, 2. In giving me that mercy which he hath freely promised me; it being a common thing for David and other prophets to speak of future deliverances as if they were already come, that so they may signify both the infallible certainty of the thing, and their firm assurance thereof. But the words may be rendered, *when he shall have dealt bountifully with me.* This verb properly signifies to *requite*, or *reward*, (as it may be taken here, for there is *a reward of grace* as well as *of debt*, Rom. iv. 4.) but here it signifies a *free and bountiful giving*, as it doth also Psal. cxix. 17; cxlii. 7.

PSALM XIV.

¶ To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

The design of this Psalm is to describe and bewail the horrible wickedness and corruption of mankind, and especially of ungodly men, and of his own enemies.

David showeth the atheism and corruption of men, 1—3. *He convinceth the wicked by the light of conscience*, 4—6; *and longeth for the salvation of God*, 7.

THE [a]fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. [b]They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good.

a Ps. 10. 4. & 53. 1, &c. b Gen. 6. 11, 12. Rom. 3. 10, &c.

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The fool, i. e. the wicked man; for such are commonly and justly called *fools* every where in Scripture, and that purposely to meet with their false, yet common, conceit of themselves, as if they were the only wise men, and all others were fools. *In his heart*, i. e. in his secret thoughts, or within himself, being afraid and ashamed to utter it with his mouth. Not that it was his fixed and constant opinion and judgment, but this he saith by construction, because he heartily wisheth there were no God, and lives as if there were none. So this text may be explained by comparing it with Psal. xxxvi. 1; Tit. i. 16. *There is no God:* he denies not God's being or existence, but only his providence. He saith not, *There is no Jehovah*, which name of God notes his being; but *no Elohim*, which expresseth God as the Judge and Governor of the world, who observes and recompenseth all the actions of all men according to their several qualities. *They are corrupt*, Heb. *they have corrupted*, to wit, themselves, or their ways, as this word commonly signifies. Their great and wilful wickedness is alleged as a ground of their atheism or infidelity. *There is none*, to wit, of the fools here described, *that doeth good;* none of their actions are really and thoroughly good or pleasing to God; for if some of them be materially good, as when they do an act of justice or charity, yet they are poisoned with bad principles or ends, not being performed by them out of a good conscience, and serious care to please God, for then they would do one good action as well as another, but in hypocrisy, or with vain-glory, or some sinister and unworthy design.

c Ps. 33. 13. & 102. 19.

2 c The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God.

The Lord looked down from heaven, to search out the truth. God knoweth all things without any inquiry; but this is a figure called *anthropopathia*, whereby Scripture oft speaks of God after the manner of men. *Upon the children of men;* upon the whole body of the Israelitish nation, and upon the generality of mankind under heaven; for he speaks of all except his *people*, and the *righteous* ones, who are here opposed to these, ver. 4, 5. *That did understand, and seek God;* that did truly *know God*, to wit, so as to love, and fear, and trust, and obey him, (for all these are frequently signified in Scripture by this expression of *knowing God*,) and that did diligently *seek* him, i. e. study his mind and will, that they might do it, and seek his grace and favour.

d Rom. 3. 10, 11, 12. † Heb. *stinking.*

3 d They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become † filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

Gone aside, to wit, from God, whom they should have sought, ver. 2, and from the rule which he hath given them, and by which they sometimes professed and seemed to govern themselves. Or, *are grown sour*, as this word signifies, Hos. iv. 18. And so this is a metaphor from corrupted drinks, as the next is taken from rotten meat. *Filthy*, Heb. *stinking*, i. e. loathsome and abominable to God, and to all wise and sober men.

e Jer. 10. 25. Amos 8. 4. Mic. 3. 3. f Ps. 79. 6. Is. 64. 7.

4 Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who e eat up my people *as* they eat bread, and f call not upon the LORD.

Have *the workers of iniquity* lost their wits? have they neither religion nor common discretion? either of which would teach them not to make themselves so hateful to the all-seeing and almighty God, and to all men. The words may be rendered thus, *Do not all the workers of iniquity know it?* So it is only an ellipsis of the pronoun, which is frequent, as I have showed before. Are they not conscious to themselves of the truth of what I say? I dare appeal to their own consciences. But this I propound with submission. *Who eat up;* or, *they eat up*, i. e. devour and destroy, as this word signifies, Deut. vii. 16; Prov. xxx. 14; Jer. l. 17; Nah. iii. 15. *My people*, i. e. the poor and godly Israelites, of whom he principally speaks; whom he calleth *my people*. Either, 1. God's people, as they were in many respects; or rather, 2. David's people; for David speaks both these words, and all the rest of this Psalm, in his own name and person. And David might well call them *his people*, either because they were his friends and favourers; or because he being anointed their king, they were consequently his people; or because he was now actually their king, and so they were actually his people; for some conceive that this Psalm was made in the time and upon the occasion of Absalom's rebellion. *As they eat bread*, i. e. with as little regret or remorse, and with as much greediness, and delight, and constancy too, as they use to eat their meat. The particle *as* is here understood, as it is Psal. cxxv. 2; Prov. xxvi. 9, and in many other places. *Call not upon the Lord;* they are guilty not only of gross injustice, and oppression towards men, but also of horrid impiety and contempt of God, whose providence they deny, and whose worship they wholly neglect and despise.

5 There † were they in great fear: for God *is* in the generation of the righteous.

† Heb. *they feared a fear.* Ps. 53. 5.

There, i. e. in the place, or upon the spot, where they practised these insolences, God struck them with a panic fear. Or, *then*, i. e. in the height of their tyranny and prosperous impiety, when they seemed to have no cause for it. An adverb of place for an adverb of time, of which there want not examples in Scripture and other authors, as hath been noted before. Or, *thence*, as this particle is rendered, Gen. ii. 10; xlix. 24; Isa. lxv. 20; i. e. from that time; or for that cause, as some take it, and it may be taken, Job xxxv. 12; Psal. xxxvi. 12, i. e. for this their contempt of God and manifest injury to men. *In great fear*, from their own guilty consciences, and the just expectation of Divine vengeance. Heb. *they feared with fear*, i. e. vehemently, *where there was no* cause of *fear*, as is here implied, (for they are now supposed to be in a state of power and tyranny,) as is expressed in the parallel place, Psal. liii. 5. Or, *they shall be greatly afraid*, the past tense being put for the future prophetically. *For;* for they remembered what a potent adversary they had, and therefore had cause enough to fear. Or, *but*, as this particle is taken, Gen. xlv. 8; Psal. xxxvii. 20; Eccles. ii. 10; vi. 2. So he describes the contrary and safe condition of the righteous. Or, *when*, as it oft signifies, and so it answers to the *then* in the beginning of the verse, when God shall once appear for his people, a dreadful horror shall seize upon their wicked enemies. *In the generation of the righteous*, i. e. among them, with his gracious and powerful presence to defend them, and to fight against their enemies. Or, *God is for*, &c., as the Hebrew *beth* oft signifies, that is, God is on their side, and therefore their enemies have great cause to tremble.

6 Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD *is* his g refuge.

g Ps. 9. 9. & 142. 5.

Shamed, i. e. desired and endeavoured to bring it to shame, or disappoint it. Compare Psal. vi. 10. Or, *ye have reproached* or *derided* it, as a foolish thing. *The counsel of the poor*, i. e. the cause which he hath taken to defend himself, which is not by lying, and flattery, and violence, and all manner of wickedness, which is your counsel and usual practice, but by trusting in God, and keeping his way, and calling upon his name. *Because;* this was the ground of their contempt and scorn, that he lived by faith in God's promise and providence. Or, *but*, as in the foregoing verse. So there seems to be an elegant and fit opposition. You reproach them, but God will own and protect them, and justify their counsel which you deride.

7 † h Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! i when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

† Heb. *Who will give, &c.* See Rom. 11. 26. h Ps. 53. 6. i Job 42. 10. Ps. 126. 1.

Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! These words directly and immediately concern the deliverance of the people of Israel out of that sinful and deplorable estate in which they now were; which having described in the body of the Psalm, he concludes, after his manner, with a prayer to God to hear and help them *out of Zion*, where the ark then was, whence God used to hear and answer his people's prayers. But ultimately and principally they design a further, even the spiritual, redemption and salvation of all God's Israel by the Messias, as may appear by divers considerations: 1. That the ancient Jews did thus under-

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stand it, and among others Jonathan's Targum or Paraphrase on the Bible expound it thus; *I do not expect Gideon's salvation, which was but corporeal, nor that of Samson—but the salvation of the Messias.* With whom agrees the Targum of Jerusalem. 2. That the doctrine of Israel's redemption or salvation by Christ was very well known, as to other ancient patriarchs, John viii. 56; 1 Pet. i. 10—12, so particularly to David, of whom it is expressly said that he *knew* and *foresaw* this mystery, Acts ii. 30, 31, in whose Book of Psalms there are divers and very distinct and clear prophecies of it, as we have in part seen upon Psal. ii. and viii., and shall see more fully and evidently hereafter. 3. That David and other holy prophets, in the midst of their sad thoughts, and fears, and troubles, did usually comfort themselves with the promise and expectation of the Messias, by whom, and by whom alone, they should receive that plenary salvation for which they groaned; of which it is thought we have one instance, Gen. xlix. 18; but we have many unquestionable instances in the prophecy of Isaiah, as chap. vii. 14; ix. 6, &c. And this course might be the more seasonable for David, because he speaks here of his troubles after he was settled in his kingdom, (as may be gathered from the mention of Zion, where the ark was not till that time,) and possibly of the sad and sinful state of his kingdom during Absalom's rebellion; and therefore finding himself so strangely disappointed of that peace and happiness which he confidently expected when once he came to the kingdom, and wisely and justly presaging that his children and the following generations of Israelites for the same causes were likely to meet with the same or greater calamities than this, he weareth himself with the expression of his belief and desire of the coming of the Messias to save his people. 4. To this also suits the mention of Zion, because the prophets knew and foretold that the Messias or Deliverer should first come to Zion, and should set up his throne there, and from thence send forth his laws and edicts to the Gentile world; as is positively affirmed, Psal. ii. 6; cx. 2; Isa. ii. 3; lix. 20, compared with Rom. xi. 26, and in many other places. 5. The following words agree only to this time, wherein he speaks of bringing back the captivity of his people with the universal joy of all Jacob and Israel; which cannot agree to David's time, wherein there was no such captivity of the people, but only a civil war and mutual slaughter, which is quite another thing; nor to the time of Israel's return from Babylon, when there was no such return of all Israel, but only of Judah and Benjamin, and some few of the other tribes, and the joy which the returning Israelites then had was but low, and mixed with many fears, and dangers, and reproaches, as we see in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. And therefore they must belong to the times of the Messias, by whom this promise was fulfilled to the true Israel of God, who were brought back from that most real and dreadful, though spiritual, captivity of sin and Satan, as is declared, Luke iv. 18; Eph. iv. 8, and shall be literally accomplished to the natural seed of Jacob or Israel according to the expectation and belief of all the Jews in their several ages, and of most Christian writers. *The captivity of his people*, i. e. his captive people; *captivity* being oft put for *captives*, as Deut. xxi. 10; xxx. 3; Psal. cxxvi. 1, 4. Or, his people from captivity, of which see the former note. *Jacob*, i. e. the seed or children of Jacob, as Aaron is named for his sons, 1 Chron. xii. 27; xxvii. 17, and David for his sons, and the like.

PSALM XV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The occasion and time of composing this Psalm is uncertain; but the scope of it is plain, which is to give the character of a holy and happy man, and to describe the way to true blessedness; wherein this is observable, that he is wholly silent as to the ceremonial or ritual observations of the law; not that he doth disown them, or allow the neglect of them, as is manifest from David's constant practice, and from many other passages; but that he might undeceive the hypocritical Israelites, who laid too great a stress upon those things, as if the diligent performance thereof would excuse their wicked lives, which error almost all the prophets do observe and condemn in them; and that he might inform the church of that and all succeeding ages, that the substance of religion did consist in the practice of true holiness and righteousness.

¶ A Psalm of David.

David describeth a citizen of Zion, 1, *i. e. he is pure in heart*, 2; *governeth his tongue*, 3; *contemns a vile person, but honours him that fears God*, 4. *He is no usurer*, 5.

LORD, [a]who shall †abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in [b]thy holy hill?

a Ps. 24. 3, &c.
† Heb. sojourn.
b Ps. 2. 6. & 3. 4.

O thou who art the sovereign Lord of this holy hill and tabernacle, to whom it belongs to give laws to it, and to admit or reject persons as thou seest fit, I beg of thee the resolution of this important question. And he proposeth this question to God, that the answer coming from him may have the greater authority and influence upon men's consciences. *Who shall abide*, Heb. *sojourn*, to wit, so as to dwell, as it is explained in the next clause; unless this clause be meant of sojourning in the church here, and the next of dwelling in heaven hereafter. Who shall enter thither and abide there, with thy good leave and liking? *In thy tabernacle*, i. e. in thy church; either, 1. Militant. Who is a true and will be a persevering member of this church? Or, 2. Triumphant, or in heaven; which is called the *true tabernacle, not made with* man's *hands*, Heb. viii. 2; ix. 11; Rev. xxi. 3. *In thy holy hill*, to wit, of Zion, so called Psal. ii. 6, which is oft put for the church and for heaven. Who shall so dwell in thy church here as to dwell with thee for ever hereafter in heaven?

2 [c]He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and [d]speaketh the truth in his heart.

c Is. 33. 15.
d Zech. 8. 16. Eph. 4. 25.

Uprightly, or *perfectly*, or *sincerely*, without guile or hypocrisy, loving, worshipping, and serving God, and loving his neighbour, not in word and show only, but in truth and reality; and this constantly, and in the whole course of his life, as *walking* implies. *Worketh righteousness;* maketh it his work and business to do justly, i. e. to give to every one his due, first to God, and then to men; for the words are general, and not restrained to either. *Speaketh the truth in his heart;* his words and professions to God and men agree with and proceed from the thoughts and purposes of his heart.

3 [e]*He that* backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, [f]nor ‖ taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

e Lev. 19. 16. Ps. 34. 13.
f Ex. 23. 1.
‖ Or, receiveth, or, endureth.

He doth not take away or diminish his neighbour's good name, either by denying him his due praises, or by laying any thing to his charge falsely, or without sufficient cause and evidence; *nor doeth evil*, i. e. any hurt or injury, *to his neighbour*, i. e. to any man; as is evident, 1. From the nature of this precept, which reacheth to all, it being plain and certain that, both by laws of nature and of Moses, it was not lawful to do evil to any man, except where God the Sovereign commanded it, as he did to the Canaanites and Amalekites. 2. From the Scripture usage of this word *neighbour*, which frequently signifies every man, though a stranger or a heathen, as appears from Gen. xxix. 4; Exod. xx. 16, 17; Lev. xviii. 20; xix. 15, &c.; Prov. xxv. 8, 9; Luke x. 29, &c.; Matt. v. 43, 44. And he useth this word *neighbour*, because he who is strictly so is most within our reach, and most liable to the injuries which one man doth to another. *Nor taketh up*, to wit, *into his lips* or *mouth*, which is understood here, as also Exod. xx. 7; Job iv. 2, and fully expressed Psal. xvi. 4; l. 16, i. e. doth not raise it, though that may seem to be included in the first clause, *that backbiteth not;* or doth not spread and propagate it; which men are too prone and ready to do, and which makes that a public which before was but a private injury and mischief. Or, *nor taketh* or *receiveth*, i. e. entertaineth it cheerfully and greedily, as men usually do such things, and easily believeth it without sufficient reason. See Exod. xxiii. 1; Lev. xix. 16. Or, *nor beareth* or *endureth*, as this phrase signifies, Psal. lxix. 7; Ezek. xxxvi. 15. He doth not suffer another to defame him without some rebuke or signification of his dislike, Prov. xxv. 23.

4 [g]In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that

g Esth. 3. 2.

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fear the LORD. *He that* [b]sweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not.

[b] Judg. 11. xi.

In whose eyes, i. e. in whose judgment and estimation, *a vile person*, i. e. one that deserves contempt, an ungodly or wicked man, as appears from the next clause, where *he that feareth God* is opposed to him, *is contemned*, or *despised*, notwithstanding all his wealth, and glory, and greatness. He doth not admire his person, nor envy his condition, nor court him with flatteries, nor value his company and conversation, nor approve of or comply with his courses; but he thinks meanly of him; he judgeth him a most miserable man, and a great object of pity; he abhors his wicked practices, and labours to make such ways contemptible and hateful to all men as far as it lies in his power. But this contempt of wicked men must be so managed as not to cause a contempt of just authority, which if it be lodged in a wicked hand, doth challenge not only obedience, but also honour and reverence; as is manifest from the precepts and examples of Christ and of his apostles, who charge this upon the Christians every where, although the magistrates of those times were unquestionably vile and wicked men. See Acts xxiii. 5; Rom. xiii.; 1 Pet. v. 13, &c. *He honoureth*, i. e. he highly esteemeth and heartily loveth them, and showeth great respect and kindness to them, though they be mean and obscure as to their worldly condition, and though they may differ from him in some opinions or practices of lesser moment. *He that sweareth*, to wit, a promissory oath, engaging himself by solemn oath to do something which may be beneficial to his neighbour. *To his own hurt*, i. e. to his own damage or prejudice. As if a man solemnly swear by the name of the great God, that he will sell him such an estate at a price below the full worth, or that he will give a poor man such a sum of money, which when afterwards he comes to review and consider, he finds it very inconvenient and burdensome to him, where he is tempted to break his oath. *Changeth not*, to wit, his purpose or course, but continues firm and resolved to perform his promise, and sacrificeth his interest and profit to his conscience, and the reverence of God and of an oath. See Ezek. xvii. 18, 19.

5 [i] *He that* putteth not out his money to usury, [k] nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* [l] shall never be moved.

[i] Ex. 22. 25. Lev. 25. 36. Deut. 23. 19. Ezek. 18. 8. & 22. 12. [k] Ex. 23. 8. Deut. 16. 19. [l] Ps. 16. 8. 2 Pet. 1. 10.

He that putteth not out his money to usury, in such manner as is contrary to God's law; of which see in Exod. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 36, 37. *Nor taketh reward*, or *a bribe*, from him who hath a bad cause; that he may either condemn the innocent, or acquit the guilty; both which God abhorreth. *He that doth these things* here enumerated, and such things as naturally and necessarily flow from them, or are akin to them, and joined with them, he shall constantly persevere in God's church here; and though he may be shaken, and stagger and fall, yet he shall never wholly and finally be removed or fall away from it, nor from that happiness which was proposed and promised to him, but shall abide with God here, and go to him when he dies, and be for ever with the Lord.

PSALM XVI.

[1 Or, *A golden Psalm of David.*]

¶ ‖ * Michtam of David.

* So Ps. 56, & 57, & 58, & 59, & 60.

Divers render this word *Michtam*, *a golden Psalm*, because of the preciousness and excellency of the matter of it; for it treats of Christ's death and resurrection. But because this title is prefixed to Psal. lvi., lvii., lviii., lix., lx., wherein there is no such peculiar excellency, it may seem rather to be a title belonging to the music or the song, which, with the rest, is now lost and unknown. It is a great question among expositors, in whose name and person he speaketh this Psalm, whether his own or Christ's. It seems hard to exclude David's person, to whom almost the whole Psalm properly and literally belongs, and to whom some parts of it do more conveniently belong than to Christ. And some parts of it do peculiarly belong to Christ, of whom it is expounded by the two great apostles, Peter and Paul, Acts ii. 25; xiii. 35. And yet it seems probable by the contexture of the Psalm, and the coherence of the several verses together, that the whole Psalm speaks of one and the same person. But because David was a mixed person, being both a member and an eminent type of Christ, he may without any inconvenience be thought to speak of himself sometimes in the one and sometimes in the other capacity, to pass from the one to the other. And therefore having spoken of himself as a believer or member of Christ in the former part of the Psalm, he proceeds to consider himself as a type of Christ; and having Christ in his eye, and being inspired by the Holy Ghost with the knowledge and contemplation of Christ's passion and resurrection, towards the close of the Psalm he speaks such things, as though they might be accommodated to himself in a very imperfect, obscure, and improper sense, yet could not truly, literally, and properly, fully and completely, belong to any but to Christ, to whom therefore they are justly appropriated in the New Testament.

David, distrusting his own merit, and hating idolatry, fleeth to God for preservation, 1—4. *He showeth the hope in life and death*, 5—9, *of the resurrection and everlasting life*, 10, 11.

PRESERVE me, O God: [a] for in thee do I put my trust.

[a] Ps. 25. 20

Preserve me from all mine enemies. *In thee do I put my trust*; therefore thou art in honour and by promise obliged not to deceive my trust.

2 *O my soul*, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my Lord: [b] my goodness *extendeth* not to thee;

[b] Job 22. 2, 3. & 35. 7, 8. Ps. 50. 9. Rom. 11. 35.

O my soul; which words are fitly understood; for it is manifest he speaks to one person of another. And it is usual with David to turn his speech to his soul, as Psal. xlii. 6; xliii. 5. *Thou hast said*; thou hast ofttimes avowed and professed it, and dost still persist to do so. *Thou art my Lord*, by creation, and preservation, and otherwise; to whom I owe all service and obedience upon that account. *My goodness*; whatsoever piety, or virtue, or goodness is in me, or is done by me. *Extendeth not to thee*, i. e. doth not add any thing to thy felicity; for thou dost not need me nor my service, nor art capable of any advantage from it. Or, is *not for thee*, as this word is used, Gen. xvi. 5; 2 Sam. i. 26, i. e. for thy use or benefit. Or, *is not upon thee*, i. e. it lays no obligation upon thee, as this very word is taken, Judg. xix. 20; Psal. lvi. 12; Ezek. xlv. 17. All comes to the same thing. The sense is, God is all-sufficient and infinitely happy, and the author of all the good that is in or is done by any of his creatures; and therefore cannot prevent nor oblige God any further than he is graciously pleased to oblige himself. Thus he renounceth all opinion of merit; and though he urged his trust in God, as a motive to persuade God to preserve him, ver. 1, yet he here declares that he did not do it, as thinking that God was indebted to him for it.

3 *But* to the saints that *are* in the earth, and *to* the excellent, in whom *is* all my delight.

But, i. e. but my goodness extendeth, which is easily understood out of the former verse; from which also there may be fetched another supplement; *O my soul, thou hast said, to the saints*, &c. *To the saints that are in the earth*, i. e. to those holy and righteous persons that live upon earth with me; to these only or principally my goodness is extended. Because I cannot reach thee, I endeavour to pay a singular respect, and love, and kindness to all saints for thy sake, whose friends and servants they are, and whose image they bear. This may seem more properly to agree to David than to Christ, whose goodness was principally designed for and imparted to sinners, and did not find men saints, but make them so; nor was it confined to them that lived with him upon the earth, but extended to all the believers of all ages before and after him. *To the excellent*, or, *the magnificent*, or *mighty*, or *honourable*, to wit, the saints, as he now called them, whom, because they were mean and despicable in the eyes of the world, he honours with their just titles; and by appropriating them to the saints, he sufficiently intimates that all other men, how great soever, are

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but ignoble and *vile persons*, as he had called them, Psal. xv. 4. *In whom is all my delight*, i. e. whose company and conversation is most pleasant and desirable to me. Compare Psal. cxix. 63.

‖ Or, *give gifts to another.* c Ex. 23. 13. Josh. 23. 7. Hos. 2. 16, 17.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied *that* ‖ hasten *after* another *god:* their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, [c]nor take up their names into my lips.

That hasten after another god; or, that *present* or *endow* (as this verb signifies, Exod. xxii. 16) *another god*, to wit, with oblations, as it follows. God is not expressed in the Hebrew text, but seems fitly and necessarily to be understood, because of the following *offerings*, which are made to none that is not either really or by reputation a god. The sense is, Idolaters, notwithstanding all their zeal or cost about their idols, gain nothing to themselves but abundance of sorrow and misery. This he mentioneth partly as one reason why he would have no fellowship with them in their idolatrous worship, which he adds in this verse; and partly that by this comparison he might illustrate and commend his own happiness, in having the Lord for his portion, of which he speaks, ver. 5, 6. Or thus, *Let their sorrows be multiplied*, &c. Having showed his great respect and affection to the saints and excellent servants of the true God, he now declares what an abhorrency he had for those that forsake the true God, and worship idols; to whom he wisheth increase of their sorrows, whereby they may either be awakened and converted to the Lord again, or may be cut off, if they be impenitent and incorrigible. *Drink-offerings;* under which he comprehends all their offerings, the reason being for substance the same in all; but he mentions these particularly, because of a special corruption in them above their other sacrifices, to wit, that the very matter of them was unlawful, as we shall see; which also might serve both to convince and deter those Israelites which hearkened after idolatry, and made no conscience of maintaining communion with idolaters, which was the case of many of them in Saul's time; and to justify himself for his detestation of them, and of all fellowship with them. *Of blood;* in which the Gentiles used (as divers learned men have observed) to offer, and sometimes to drink part of the blood of their sacrifices, whether of beasts or of men, as either of them were sacrificed; which must needs be very hateful to God, because he had so severely forbidden the drinking of blood to his people, either at their sacrifices, or in their common food. *Nor take up their names*, i. e. of those other gods mentioned before. I abhor the very name and memory of them. Not that he thought it unlawful to name these idols, which is frequently done by holy prophets, but to express the odiousness of the thing by his loathing of the very name and shadow of them. Compare Exod. xxiii. 13; Deut. xii. 3; Hos. ii. 16, 17; Eph. v. 3. Or the sense is, I will not swear by them; for *taking* up one's name is used for swearing, Exod. xx. 7.

d Deut. 32. 9. Ps. 73. 26. & 119. 57. & 142. 5. Jer. 10. 16. Lam. 3. 24. † Heb. *of my part.* e Ps. 11. 6.

5 [d]The LORD *is* the portion †of mine inheritance and [e]of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

Of mine inheritance, or, *of my division*, i. e. of that inheritance which God hath mercifully divided or distributed to me, and which I by his grace have chosen for myself. I envy not the vast riches and glory of idolaters, but do heartily rejoice in God as my portion, and desire no better nor no other felicity. God, who hath suffered other nations to walk in their own idolatrous ways, hath granted this favour to me, to know and worship him, the only true God. And as other nations have chosen and do adhere to their false gods, so have I chosen God, and will cleave to him. *And of my cup;* the same thing repeated in other words. *The portion of my cup*, is the portion which is put into my cup, as the ancient manner was in feasts, where each had his portion of meat and of wine allotted to him. See Psal. xi. 6. The *cup* oft denotes a man's portion or condition, as Matt. xx. 22; xxvi. 39. *Thou maintainest my lot*, i. e. my inheritance divided to me by lot, as the custom then was, Josh. xviii. 11; Judg. i. 3: q. d. As thou hast given me an excellent lot, having planted me among thine own people, and in that place which thou hast chosen for thy dwelling and worship, so, I doubt not, thou wilt uphold and preserve me there, in spite of all the malicious designs of mine enemies that seek to drive me hence.

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places;* yea, I have a goodly heritage.

The lines, i. e. my portion, which was measured with lines. Compare Josh. xvii. 5; Deut. xxxii. 9. *In pleasant places;* in a sweet land flowing with milk and honey, and, above all, blessed with the presence, and knowledge, and service of the true God.

7 I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: [f]my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. f Ps. 17. 3.

Who hath given me counsel, Heb. *consulted for me*, i. e. by his wise and gracious counsel hath provided so good an heritage for me, and withal inspired that counsel and wisdom into me, by which I have chosen the Lord for my portion, and am so fully satisfied with him. *My reins*, i. e. my inward thoughts and affections, (which are commonly signified by *the reins*, as Psal. vii. 9; xxvi. 2; lxxiii. 21; cxxxix. 13; Jer. xi. 20; xii. 2; xvii. 10,) being inspired and moved by the Holy Spirit. *Instruct me*, i. e. direct me what course to take, how to please and serve God, and to put my whole trust and confidence in him, as it follows. *In the night seasons;* not only in the day time, but also in the night, when others are asleep, but my mind is working upon God, and the things of God, and improving the silence, and leisure, and solitude of the night to holy meditations, and the exciting of my affections towards God.

g Acts 2. 25, &c. h Ps. 73. 23. & 110. 5. & 121. 5. i Ps. 15. 5.

8 [g]I have set the LORD always before me: because [h]*he is* at my right hand, [i]I shall not be moved.

i. e. I have always presented him to my mind as my rule and scope, as my witness and judge, as my patron and protector, in the discharge of my office, and in all my actions. Hitherto David seems to have spoken in his own person, and with special respect to himself; but now he seems to have been transported by a higher inspiration of the Spirit of prophecy, and to be carried above himself, and to have an eye to the man Christ Jesus, who is and was the end of the law, and the great scope of all the prophets, and to speak of himself only as a type of Christ, and with more special respect unto Christ, in whom this and the following verses were much more truly and fully accomplished than in himself. Christ as man did always set his Father's will and glory before him, as he himself oft declareth, especially in St. John's Gospel. *He is at my right hand*, to wit, to strengthen me, (for the right hand is the chief seat of a man's strength, and instrument of action,) to protect, assist, and comfort me, as this phrase signifies, Psal. cix. 31; cx. 5. And this assistance of God was necessary to Christ as man. *I shall not be moved*, or, *removed*, either from the discharge of my duty, or from the attainment of that glory and happiness which is prepared for me. Though the archers shoot grievously at me, and both men and devils seek my destruction, and God sets himself against me as an enemy, withdrawing his favour from me, and filling me with deadly sorrows, through the sense of his anger; yet I do not despair, but am assured that God will deliver me out of all my distresses.

k Ps. 30. 12. & 57. 8. † Heb. *dwell confidently.*

9 Therefore my heart is glad, [k]and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall †rest in hope.

Therefore; upon this ground and confidence. *My heart;* the proper seat of joy, and of all the affections. *My glory;* either, 1. My soul, which is indeed the glory of a man. Or rather, 2. My tongue, which also is a man's glory and privilege above all other living creatures, and the instrument of glorifying both God and man; and which is oft called a man's *glory*, as Gen. xlix. 6; Psal. xxx. 12; lvii. 8; cviii. 1; cxlix. 5. And so this very word is translated Acts ii. 26. And thus the distinction between *heart*, and *glory*, and *flesh* is more certain and evident. *Rejoiceth;* or, *exulteth*, i. e. declares or expresseth my inward joy. For this verb signifies not so much internal joy, as the outward and visible demonstrations of it in words or gestures and carriages. *My flesh shall rest*, i. e. my body shall quietly and sweetly rest in the grave, to which I am hastening. *In hope*, i. e. in confident assurance of its incorruption there, and of its

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resurrection to a blessed and immortal life, as it is explained, ver. 10, 11. The flesh or body is in itself but a dead and senseless lump of clay, yet *hope* is here ascribed to it figuratively, as it is to the brute creatures, Rom. viii. 19, because there is matter and foundation for such hope, if it were capable of it, the good promised and expected being certainly future.

l Ps. 89. 48. Acts 2. 27, 31. m Gen. 37. 35. Num. 16. 33.

10 [l]For thou wilt not leave [m]my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

My soul, i. e. my person, as this word is every where used, by a synecdoche of the part, and then the person by another synecdoche of the whole is put for the body. *The soul* is oft put for the body; either for the living body, as Psal. xxxv. 13; cv. 18, or for the carcass or dead body, as it is taken Lev. xix. 28; xxi. 1; Numb. v. 2; vi. 6, 9, 11; ix. 10; xix. 11, 13; and so it is interpreted in this very place, as it is produced, Acts ii. 29, &c.; xiii. 36, 37. *In hell*, i. e. in the grave or state of the dead, as appears, 1. From the Hebrew word *scheol*, which is very frequently so understood, as is undeniably evident from Gen. xlii. 38; Numb. xvi. 30; Job xiv. 13, compared with xvii. 13; Psal. xviii. 5; xxx. 3; cxli. 7; Eccles. ix. 10; Ezek. xxxii. 21, 27; Jonah ii. 2, and many other places. 2. From the following clause of this verse. 3. From Acts ii. and xiii., where it is so expounded and applied. *Thine Holy One*, i. e. me thy holy Son, whom thou hast sanctified and sent into the world. It is peculiar to Christ to be called *the Holy One of God*, Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34. *To see corruption*, or *rottenness*, i. e. to be corrupted or putrefied in the grave, as the bodies of others are. *Seeing* is oft put for perceiving by experience; in which sense men are said *to see good*, Psal. xxxiv. 12. and *to see death*, or *the grave*, Psal. lxxxix. 48; Luke ii. 26; John viii. 51, and to *see sleep*, Eccles. viii. 16. And the Hebrew word *shochath*, though sometimes by a metonymy it signifies the pit or *place of corruption*, yet properly and generally it signifies *corruption* or *perdition*, as Job xvii. 14; xxxiii. 18, 30; Psal. xxxv. 7; lv. 23; Jonah ii. 6, and is so rendered by the seventy Jewish interpreters, Psal. cvii. 20; Prov. xxviii. 10; Jer. xvi. 14; xv. 3; Lam. iv. 20; Ezek. xix. 4; xxi. 31. And so it must be understood here, although some of the Jews, to avoid the force of this argument, render it *the pit*. But in that sense it is not true; for whether it be meant of David, as they say, or of Christ, it is confessed that both of them did see the pit, i. e. were laid in the grave. And therefore it must necessarily be taken in the other sense now mentioned; and so it is properly and literally true in Christ alone, although it may in a lower and metaphorical sense be applied to David, who had a just and well-grounded confidence, that although God might bring him into great dangers and distresses, which are called *the sorrows of death*, and *the pains of hell*, Psal. cxvi. 3; yet God would not leave him to perish in or by them.

n Matt. 7. 14. o Ps. 17. 15. & 21. 6. Matt. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 John 3. 2. p Ps. 36. 8.

11 Thou wilt shew me the [n]path of life: [o]in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; [p]at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

Thou wilt shew me, i. e. give me an exact and experimental knowledge of it, for my own comfort, and the benefit of my people. *The path of life*, i. e. the way that leadeth to life; not to a temporal and mortal life here, for he is supposed to be dead and buried, ver. 10; but to an endless, and immortal, and blessed life after death in the presence of God, as it followeth; the way to which is by the resurrection of the body. So the sense is, Thou wilt raise me from the grave, and conduct me to the place and state of everlasting felicity. *In thy presence*, Heb. *with* or *before thy face*, i. e. in that heavenly paradise, where thou art graciously and gloriously present, where thou dost clearly and fully discover thy face, and the light of thy countenance; whereas in this life thou hidest thy face, and showest us only thy back parts, and we are in a state of absence from thee, and see thee only through a glass darkly, and enjoy thee but in part. *Fulness of joy*, i. e. full and perfect joy and satisfaction, which it is in vain to expect in this life, and is only to be found in the sight of thee. See Exod. xxxiii. 14; Psal. xvii. 15; Matt. v. 8; 1 John iii. 2. *At thy right hand*; which he mentions as a place of greatest honour, as this was, Gen. xlviii. 13, &c.; 1 Kings ii. 19; Psal. xlv. 9, and the place where the elect and saints are placed at the last day, Matt. xxv. 33, &c.; and lastly, at the place where Christ himself is said to sit, Psal. cx. 1; Matt. xxvi. 64; Col. iii. 1; Heb. i. 3. *Pleasures for evermore*; everlasting delights in the contemplation and fruition of God.

PSALM XVII.

¶ A Prayer of David.

David being now grievously persecuted and distressed by Saul and other enemies, and being also bespattered with many calumnies, he appeals to the heart-searching God, makes a solemn protestation of his integrity, earnestly begs of God protection and deliverances; and being made weary of this life by his pressing and manifold calamities, he comforts himself with the contemplation and hope of a happier life.

David, in confidence of his integrity, 1—6, *prayeth to God for defence against his enemies*, 7—9. *He showeth their pride, craft, and cagerness to make a prey of the innocent*, 10—12: *and prayeth against them in confidence of his hope*, 13—15.

HEAR † the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* †not out of feigned lips.

† Heb. *justice.* † Heb. *without lips of deceit.*

The right, Heb. *righteousness*, i. e. me, who, notwithstanding all their accusations and slanders, am righteous. Or, my righteous cause; do thou take notice of it, and give sentence for me. Or, my righteous prayer. I desire nothing that is unreasonable or unjust, but that thou wouldst judge righteously between me and mine enemies, and vindicate thine own honour and faithfulness in making good thy promise to me; which thy righteousness obliges thee to do. *My cry*, i. e. my fervent prayer attended with strong cries. *Not out of feigned lips*, Heb. *not with deceitful lips*, which speak one thing, when my heart knoweth and designeth another. And this profession of his sincerity in his words doth fitly make way for his solemn appeal to God in the following verses.

2 Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

My sentence, Heb. *my right* or *judgment*, i. e. judgment in my cause, or on my behalf. *From thy presence*, i. e. from thee, and from thy tribunal, to which I bring my cause. Do not suspend or delay it, but speedily examine my cause and give sentence in it. *Things that are equal*, or *right*. For though I desire and need thy grace and favour in many other respects, yet I beg only thy justice in this cause between me and them.

a Ps. 16. 7. b Job 23. 10. Ps. 26. 2. & 66. 10. & 139. 2. Zech. 13. 9. Mal. 3. 2, 3. 1 Pet. 1. 7.

3 Thou hast proved mine heart; [a]thou hast visited *me* in the night; [b]thou hast tried me, *and* shalt find nothing; I am purposed *that* my mouth shall not transgress.

Proved, or *searched*, or *tried* it, by many and sore temptations and afflictions, whereby the sincerity or hypocrisy of men's hearts are easily and commonly discovered, and especially by thy all-seeing eye. And that is my great comfort, that thou art witness of my innocency. *Thou hast visited me*; thou hast made an inspection and inquiry into my heart. *In the night*; either, 1. Metaphorically, i. e. in the time of trouble. Or, 2. Properly; when men's minds being freed from the encumbrance and distraction of business, and from the presence and society of men, (which either lays a restraint upon them, or tempts them to use dissimulation,) do act most vigorously and freely, either upon good or evil, according to their several inclinations. *Thou hast tried me*, accurately and severely, as goldsmiths do metals. *Shalt find nothing*, i. e. nothing of unrighteousness. Heb. *shalt not find*, to wit, that whereof mine enemies accuse me, namely, hypocrisy towards thee, and evil design against Saul, covered under fair pretences, as they allege. So this general phrase is to be limited from the context, as other generals most frequently are. For he

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was so far from thinking himself sinless, that he often acknowledgeth his many and great sins, and particularly, that *if God should enter into judgment with him*, and be severe to *mark iniquities, no living man could be justified*, or *stand before him*, Psal. cxxx. 3; cxliii. 2. *I am purposed*, or, *I have resolved* upon deliberation, as the word implies, *that my mouth shall not transgress*; I am so far from practising against Saul's life, as they charge me, that I will not wrong him so much as in a word. Some join these words with the next foregoing, and render the place thus, That which *I have thought, my mouth shall not transgress*, or rather, *hath not transgressed*, i. e. my thoughts and words always agree together. I abhor falsehood and dissimulation.

4 Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept *me from* the paths of the destroyer.

Concerning the works of men: concerning my care and caution about my words. I have now spoken, ver. 3, now I may say the like concerning my works. As for the works which men generally practise. Or, *because of* (as the prefix *lamed* is oft used, as Gen. ii. 23; Numb. xvi. 34; Jer. iv. 31; xxii. 10; xxiii. 9) *the works of men*. So the sense may be this, Observing and considering the quality of the works of the men of this age, with whom I converse, or of all mankind, some few excepted; considering, I say, how wicked, and unreasonable, and pernicious they are, not only to others, but also to themselves; I was resolved to take more care in the ordering of my own actions. *By the word of thy lips*, i. e. by the help of thy blessed word, and the excellent rules, promises, and threatenings thereof, which by deep and frequent meditation I have hid and fixed in mine heart, as the best antidote against sin and temptation, Psal. cxix. 9, 11. *I have kept;* so the same verb is used with the like supplement Josh. vi. 18, which also is in a manner included in the verb. Or. *I have observed*, to wit, so as to avoid them. *The paths*, or *ways*, i. e. the customs and practices, or the imitation of them; as may be gathered from the next verse, where he prays to be kept in God's *paths*, which are opposed to these *paths*. *Of the destroyer;* or, of the *violent man;* such as Saul and his courtiers and soldiers have showed themselves toward me. Although their rage and violence against me might have tempted me to have repaid them in their own coin, yet I forbore it, and spared both others and Saul himself, when his life was at my mercy, 1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi.; and this I did in obedience to thy word, which required me to honour and preserve the Lord's anointed.

c Ps. 119. 133. + Heb. *be not moved.*

5 [c]Hold up my goings in thy paths, *that* my footsteps †slip not.

As by thy word and grace thou hast hitherto kept me from the paths of evil men, and led me into thy paths; so, I pray thee, enable me by the same means to persevere in thy ways, and in mine abhorrency of wicked courses, that I may not fall into that sin of revenging myself upon Saul, to which I may be more and more tempted; nor into any other sin, whereby thou mayst be provoked, or men may be offended, and religion disgraced.

d Ps. 116. 2.

6 [d]I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, *and hear* my speech.

I have called upon thee; it hath been, and still is, and shall be my constant course to apply myself to thee for assistance and for deliverance. *For thou wilt hear me, O God;* for though thou mayst delay for a season, I am well assured that thou wilt hear and answer me.

e Ps. 31. 21. ‖ Or, *that savest them which trust in thee from those that rise up against thy right hand.*

7 [e]Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou ‖that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee* from those that rise up *against them*.

Thy marvellous loving-kindness, to wit, in preserving and delivering me; which, if thou dost, I must ever acknowledge it to be an act of *kindness*, or free grace, or undeserved bounty, yea, and of *marvellous kindness*, because of my extreme and pressing dangers, out of which nothing but a wonder of God's mercy and power can save me. *By thy right hand*, i. e. by thy great power. *In thee*, or, *in it*, i. e. in thy right hand, as was now expressed. *From those that rise up against them;* or, *because of* (as the Hebrew prefix *mem* oft signifies, as Psal. xii. 6, and elsewhere) *those that exalt themselves*, (as this word signifies, Job xx. 27; xxvii. 7; Psal. lix. 1,) not only against me, but against thee, who hast engaged and declared thyself for me. So this prayer is like that Psal. lxvi. 7, *Let not the rebellious exalt themselves*. But this place is otherwise translated in the margin of our Bibles, with which divers others, both ancient and later interpreters, agree, and that more agreeably to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, *O thou that savest* (or *usest to save*) *them which trust in thee* (or, as the Hebrew word may be properly rendered without any supplement, *believers*) *from those that rise up against thy right hand*, i. e. either against thy mighty power, which thou hast already showed in my wonderful preservation; or against thy counsel (which is called God's *hand*, Acts iv. 28) and revealed will concerning my advancement to the kingdom, which divers of these men did knowingly oppose, as may be gathered from 2 Sam. iii. 9, 10. Or, *against* the man (which word is oft understood, whereof examples have been given, and more we shall have in this book) *of thy right hand*, as David is called, Psal. lxxx. 17. According to this translation his prayer is enforced with a double motive, to wit, his trust in God, and his enemies' opposition against God.

f Deu. 32. 10. Zech. 2. 8. g Ruth 2. 12. Ps. 36. 7. & 57. 1. & 61. 4. & 63. 7. & 91. 1, 4. Matt. 23. 37.

8 [f]Keep me as the apple of the eye, [g]hide me under the shadow of the wings,

The apple of the eye; which God hath marvellously fenced on every side, and men use their utmost care and diligence to keep. *Under the shadow of thy wings;* as a hen doth her chickens.

+ Heb. *that waste me.* + Heb. *my enemies against the soul.*

9 From the wicked †that oppress me, *from* †my deadly enemies, *who* compass me about.

From the wicked; or, *because of the wicked*. *From my deadly enemies;* Heb. from *those who are mine enemies in*, or *for*, or *against* my (which pronoun is easily supplied out of the foregoing word, where it is expressed) *soul* or *life*, i. e. whom nothing but my blood and life will satisfy. *Who compass me about;* which shows both their extreme malice and his great danger.

h Deu. 32. 15. Job 15. 27. Ps. 73. 7. & 119. 70. i 1 Sam. 2. 3. Ps. 31. 18.

10 [h]They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they [i]speak proudly.

They live in great splendour and prosperity, whilst I am exercised with many and sore troubles. The like phrase we have Job xv. 27; Psal. lxxiii. 7. *They speak proudly;* not only against us, whom they scorn, but even against God himself, whom they despise, boasting of their own power, and what great things they will certainly effect against me.

k 1 Sam. 23. 26. l Ps. 10. 8, 9, 10.

11 They have now [k]compassed us in our steps: [l]they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth;

In our steps, i. e. in all our ways. We go from place to place, to rocks, and caves, and woods; but wheresoever we go they are at hand, and ready to surround us; of which see an example, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. *They have set their eyes*, to wit, upon or against us, i. e. they have discovered us, and keep their eyes fixed upon us, that we may not escape, or as designing to shoot at us. *Bowing down to the earth*, i. e. couching and casting themselves down upon the earth, that they may not be discovered, and so may watch the fittest opportunity to surprise us; which sense is favoured by the next verse, and by comparing Psal. x. 10. Otherwise, *to cast us down to the earth.*

+ Heb. *The likeness of him* (that is, *of every one of them*) *is as a lion that desireth to ravin.* + Heb. *sitting.*

12 †Like as a lion *that* is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion †lurking in secret places.

Like a lion that is greedy of his prey; when he is hungry, and therefore cruel. See Psal. vii. 2; x. 8—10.

+ Heb. *prevent his face.* m Is. 10. 5. ‖ Or, *by thy sword.*

13 Arise, O LORD, †disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, [m]‖*which is* thy sword:

Disappoint him, Heb. *prevent his face*, i. e. go forth against him, and meet and face him in battle, as enemies use to do. Or, prevent the execution of his mischievous

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designs against me; stop him in his attempt, and give him the first blow. *Which is thy sword;* or, thy hand, as it follows, ver. 14, i. e. thy instrument to execute vengeance upon thine enemies, or to chastise and exercise thy people; for which reason the Assyrian is called God's *rod*, Isa. x. 5, as being ordained for correction, Hab. i. 12. The sense is, Do not punish me by this rod; let me fall into thy hands, and not into the hands of wicked men, 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. Or, by (which preposition is understood Psal. ii. 12, and oft elsewhere) *thy sword*, i. e. by thy power.

14 ‖From men *which are* thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, [b]*which have* their portion in *this* life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid *treasure:* ‖they are full of children, and leave the rest of their *substance* to their babes.

‖ Or, From men which are thy hand. [b] Psa. 73. 12. Luke 16. 25. Jam. 5. 5.

‖ Or, their children are full.

Which are thy hand, wherewith thou dost correct me. *Men of the world*, i. e. who prosper in and set their hearts upon this vain and transitory world, and neither have, nor choose, or desire any other portion or felicity, as it follows. *Whose belly*, i. e. mind or appetite, as that word is used, Job xx. 20; Prov. xx. 30. *With thy hid treasure*, i. e. not only with common mercies, as food and raiment; but with thy choicest and most precious good things, such as men use to hide or keep in their treasures, with extraordinary wealth and glory, and all the delights and comforts of the present life. *They are full of children;* when many of the faithful servants are barren, these are blessed with a numerous posterity. Or, *their children are filled* or *satisfied* as well as their parents. There is abundantly enough, both for them and for their children, and to spare for their children's children, as it follows.

15 As for me, [c]I will behold thy face [d]in righteousness: [d]I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

[c] 1 John 3. 2. [d] Psa. 4. 6, 7. & 16. 11. & 63. 5.

I do not envy this their felicity, but my hopes and happiness are of another nature. I do not place my portion in earthly and temporal treasures, as they do, but in *beholding God's face*, i. e. in the enjoyment of God's presence and favour; which is indeed enjoyed in part in this life, but not fully and to satisfaction, of which David here speaks, as appears from the last clause of this verse; *the sight of God* and *of his face* being frequently spoken of, both in the Old and New Testament, as a privilege denied even to the saints in this life, and peculiar to the next life, as is manifest from Exod. xxxiii. 20; Judg. xiii. 22; Matt. v. 8; 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. iii. 18; 1 John iii. 2. *In righteousness;* with the comfort of a good conscience, bearing me witness that, notwithstanding all the calumnies and censures of mine enemies, I have been and am upright and righteous in the course of my life, both towards thee and towards all men; which testimony will enable me to look God in the face with boldness, when mine enemies, being conscious to themselves of gross and manifold unrighteousness towards thee, and me, and others, will be afraid to appear in thy presence. *I shall be satisfied:* I am now greatly distressed and dissatisfied, and mine enemies are filled and satisfied with good things; but my turn will come, the time is coming wherein I shall be abundantly satisfied, to wit, with beholding thy face, which is to me more comfortable and satisfactory than all the possessions of this world. *When I awake;* either, 1. When I shall be delivered from my present distresses and calamities. But these never are in Scripture, nor indeed can fitly be, called by the name of *sleep*, which is every where spoken of as a state of rest and quietness; as Psal. cxxvii. 2; John xi. 12, 13; and consequently deliverance from them cannot be compared to *awaking*. Or rather, 2. When I shall arise from the dead; for *death* is very frequently called *sleep*, both in Scripture, as 1 Kings i. 21; Isa. xxvi. 19; Jer. li. 39, 57; Dan. xii. 2; John xi. 11, 13, and in other authors; and consequently resurrection from the dead is justly and fitly called an *awaking*, as it is Job xiv. 12; Dan. xii. 2; John xi. 11. And since the doctrine of the resurrection of the just to a blessed and endless life was not unknown to the holy men of God in the Old Testament, as it were very easy to prove, nor to David in particular, as appears from Psal. xvi. 10, 11, and from divers other passages, it cannot be imagined but David would support and comfort himself in his greatest agonies with the consideration thereof, this being incomparably the most weighty and effectual argument and ground of comfort which he could possibly use. And this also bests suits with the context; for David is here opposing his hopes and portion to that of his enemies; and having noted, not without a secret reflection and reproach upon them for it, that their portion was in this life, ver. 14, it was most consonant to the place and to the thing itself, that he should seek and have his happiness in the future life. *With thy likeness*, or *image;* by which may be understood either, 1. Christ, the Son of God, who was known to David and other prophets, as is evident, and that under the name of *the Son of God*, Psal. ii. 7, 12; Prov. xxx. 4; Hos. xi. 1, compared with Matt. ii. 15, who being exactly like to his Father, might most fitly be called his *likeness* or *image*, as he is, Heb. i. 3. Or, 2. The image of God stamped upon his glorified soul; which must needs afford him infinite delight and satisfaction. Or, 3. God himself, or the face of God mentioned in the former clause, and explained here by another phrase, as is very usual in these writings. And this interpretation may receive strength from Numb. xii. 8, where *beholding the similitude of the Lord* is evidently the same thing which is elsewhere called *seeing his face;* and from Heb. x. 1, where *the image* doth not note the likeness or representation, but the truth and existence of the thing.

PSALM XVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, with some few and small variations, is written 2 Sam. xxii. It was composed by David towards the end of his reign and life upon the occasion here mentioned.

¶ To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, [*]the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of [*]this song in the day *that* the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said,

[*] Ps. 36. title.

[*] 2 Sam. 22.

The servant of the Lord; who esteemeth it a greater honour to be thy servant, than to be king of Israel, and who doth entirely devote himself to thy service and glory. *In the day that the Lord delivered him*, i. e. after the death of Saul, and the conquest of all his succeeding enemies, and his own firm establishment in his kingdom.

David professeth his love to God, 1, *and his confidence in his attributes*, 2. *He praises God for deliverance out of trouble*, 3—5. *His experience of God's hearing him in an awful manner*, 6—31. *He acknowledgeth God's help against his enemies*, 32—50.

I [a]WILL love thee, O LORD, my strength.

[a] Ps. 144. 1.

Most affectionately and with my whole soul; as the Hebrew word signifies. I can return thee no better thing for all thy favours than my love and heart, which I pray thee to accept. By *loving* him he understands not only his inward affection, but also all the outward expressions and testimonies of it, praising, and glorifying, and serving of him. *O Lord, my strength;* from whom alone I have received all my strength, and success, and settlement, and in whom alone I trust, as it follows, ver. 2.

2 The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, †my strength, [b]in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower.

† Heb. my rock. [b] Heb. 2. 13.

My rock; to which I flee for refuge, as the Israelites did to their rocks. See Judg. vi. 2; 1 Sam. xiii. 6. *The horn;* by which I have both defended myself, and subdued mine enemies. It is a metaphor from those beasts whose strength lies in their horns. The *horn* is oft put for *power*, as Psal. xcii. 10; Amos vi. 13, and elsewhere.

3 I will call upon the LORD, [c]*who is worthy* to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

[c] Ps. 76. 4.

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Or, *I did call—and was sared.* For the future tense is commonly used for that which is past. And this seems best to agree with the whole context, which is to praise God for mercies already received.

d Ps. 116. 3. 4 [d]The sorrows of death compassed me,
† Heb. *Belial.* and the floods of †ungodly men made me afraid.

The sorrows of death, i. e. dangerous and deadly troubles. Or, *the bands* or *cords of death*, which had almost seized me, and was putting its bands upon me. Compare Psal. lxxiii. 4. *The floods of ungodly men;* their great multitudes, and strength, and violent assaults, breaking in upon me like a flood.

‖ Or, *cords.* 5 The ‖ sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.

Of hell; or, *of the grave*, which brought me to the brink of the grave. *Prevented me;* had almost taken hold of me, ere I was aware of my danger.

6 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

Out of his temple; either, 1. Out of his sanctuary; whence he promised to hear and answer the prayers of his people, which are either made there or directed thither. Or, 2. Out of his heavenly habitation, which is oft called his temple: see on Psal. xi. 4.

e Acts 4. 31. 7 [e]Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

Then God appeared on my behalf in a miraculous and glorious manner, and with the great terror and confusion of all mine enemies, which is here compared to an earthquake. The earthquake was so deep and violent, that it overthrew whole mountains by the roots; whereby he designs his lofty and potent enemies; such being oft compared to mountains, as Psal. xlvi. 2, 3; cxliv. 5; Isa. xli. 15, &c.

† Heb. *by his.* 8 There went up a smoke †out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

Smoke out of his nostrils; as is usual in persons transported with great anger and rage. He manifested his great displeasure against my adversaries. *Coals were kindled by it;* which notes the fervency, constancy, and efficacy of his anger.

f Ps. 144. 5. 9 [f]He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness *was* under his feet.

He bowed the heavens, by producing thick and dark clouds, by which the heavens seem to come down to the earth. *Came down;* not by change of place, but by the manifestation of his presence and power on my behalf.

g Ps. 99. 1. 10 [g]And he rode upon a cherub, and
h Ps. 104. 3. did fly: yea, [h]he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

Upon a cherub; or, *upon the cherubims*, by an enallage of number; that is, upon the angels, who are so called, Gen. iii. 24; Heb. ix. 5, who are also called God's *chariots*, Psal. lxviii. 17, upon which he is said to sit and ride; all which is not to be understood grossly, but only to note God's using of the ministry of angels in raising such storms and tempests as are here described. *Upon the wings of the wind;* as swiftly as the wind. He came to my rescue with all speed.

11 He made darkness his secret place;
i Ps. 97. 2. [i]his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies.

His secret place; or, *his hiding-place;* i. e. he covered himself with dark clouds, from whence he secretly shot at his enemies, as it follows. *Dark waters*, i. e. watery vapours and thick clouds, as the next words expound these.

k Ps. 97. 3. 12 [k]At the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, hail *stones* and coals of fire.

At his glorious and powerful appearance *his thick clouds passed away*, i. e. vanished, (as this word is oft taken, as Psal. xc. 5, 6; Isa. xxix. 5; Hab. iii. 10,) being dissolved into showers of hail-stones, &c.

13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave [l]his voice; hail *stones* and coals of fire. l Ps. 29. 3.

The Lord also thundered, to wit, against my adversaries. *Thunder* is a sign of God's anger, 1 Sam. ii. 10; vii. 10. *His voice*, i. e. thunder, oft so called. The same thing expressed in other words.

14 [m]Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them. m Josh. 10. 10. Ps. 144. 6. Is. 30. 30.

His arrows, to wit, *lightnings*, as it is explained in the next clause. *Scattered them*, to wit, mine enemies; which is sufficiently understood from ver. 3, 17, and from the whole context.

15 [n]Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils. n Ex. 15. 8. Ps. 106. 9.

By mighty and terrible earthquakes, which overturned the earth, and made its lower parts uppermost and visible.

16 [o]He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of ‖many waters. o Ps. 144. 7. ‖ Or, *great waters.*

He sent angels, or assistance otherwise.

17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.

From them that wanted neither malice nor power.

18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

They were too cunning for me, and had almost surprised me; but they could not prevent thee.

19 [p]He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me. p Ps. 31. 8. & 118. 5.

He brought me forth out of my straits and difficulties, out of the little caves in which I was shut up and imprisoned. *Into a large place;* into a state of freedom, and plenty, and comfort. *Because he delighted in me*, or *loved me*, or *had a good will to me*, as this phrase commonly signifies; whereby he ascribes all his mercies and blessings to God's good pleasure and free grace, as the first spring of them; which he thought fit to premise, lest the following expressions should seem to favour of boasting of his own merits, which he oft disclaims.

20 [q]The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. q 1 Sam. 24. 20.

As I had a just cause, and made it my care and business to deal righteously with God, and with Saul, and all others; so God (who hath engaged himself by his promise to succour and reward them that are such) was graciously pleased to own me, and to plead my cause against my unrighteous enemies. And because I would not deliver myself from straits and miseries by unrighteous means, namely, by killing Saul, as I was advised to do, God was pleased to deliver me in a more honourable and effectual manner. *The cleanness of my hands*, i. e. the innocency of my actions and carriage towards Saul, from whose blood I kept my hands pure.

21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

I have observed and obeyed his precepts, and made mine own will, and passions, and interest stoop to them. And I have not knowingly and wilfully forsaken God, and broken his laws, as wicked men do; which he adds by way of correction and explication, lest the former or following clauses should be interpreted as a profession of such a perfect and sinless righteousness, whereby he might in strict justice be justified by and before God, which he elsewhere utterly disowns, Psal. cxxx. 3; cxliii. 2, and which David, especi-

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ally towards the end of his days, (when this Psalm was composed, as the title shows,) could not pretend to without great arrogancy and falsehood, as having been guilty of those great sins of murder and adultery, and many other errors, as he confesseth, Psal. xix. 12, and oft elsewhere.

22 For all his judgments *were* before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

Before me, i. e. before the eyes of my mind; I diligently studied and considered them, that I might govern my whole life by them. *From me*, i. e. out of my view, as ungodly men do; who like not to retain God nor his word in their hearts or thoughts.

† Heb. with. 23 I was also upright †before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.

I did not pretend religion before men for my own ends, but did approve my heart and ways to the all-seeing God. *And I kept myself from mine iniquity*, i. e. from that sin which I was most inclined or tempted to; either, 1. From my hereditary and natural corruption, so far that it should not have dominion over me, nor break forth into any presumptuous or scandalous sins. Or rather, 2. From the sin of killing Saul, which might be called *his sin*, because this might seem most agreeable and desirable to him, both as a man and as a soldier, and as anointed to be king, as being a likely way both to revenge, and to preserve, and to advance himself; to which also he might seem to be both invited by the fair opportunity which Providence had put into his hand, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4; xxvi. 8, and necessitated by Saul's implacable malice, and his own perpetual and extreme dangers and distresses; and to which he was so strongly tempted by his own followers, in the place now quoted.

f 1 Sam. 26. 24 [f]Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands † Heb. before his eyes. †in his eyesight.

g Lev. 26. 23. 25 [g]With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;

Upright, or *sincere*, to wit, in performing what thou hast promised to such persons, this being a great part or act of sincerity, when one's deeds and words, or professions, agree together; as, on the contrary, for those that deal hypocritically and wickedly with thee, thou wilt make them to *know thy breach of promise*, as it is expressed, Numb. xiv. 34. The sense of the verse is, Thou metest to every one the same measure which he meteth out to others, and givest to him the fruit of his own doings, and therefore thou wilt perform mercy and truth to those who are merciful and true to others, as through thy mercy I have been.

h Lev. 26. 23, 24, 27, 28. ‖ Or, *perverse*. 26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and [h]with the froward thou wilt ‖ shew thyself froward.

Pure; free from the least mixture or appearance of unrighteousness, or unfaithfulness, or unkindness; or simply and sincerely, such as thou usest and hast promised to be to them that are such; for *purity* is oft put for *sincerity*. *Froward*, or *perverse*, i. e. thou wilt cross him, and walk contrary to him, as thou hast threatened, Lev. xxvi. 23, 24. See also Prov. iii. 34. Man's *perverseness* here is moral and sinful, but God's *perverseness* is judicial and penal.

i Ps. 101. 5. Prov. 6. 17. 27 For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down [i]high looks.

The afflicted people; such as I and my poor followers were. *High looks*, i. e. proud persons, who discover the pride of their hearts by their haughty looks and carriages, Psal. ci. 5; Prov. vi. 17, such as mine enemies were.

k Heb. Ps. 4. ‖ Or, *lamp*, Jer. 25. 10. 28 [k]For thou wilt light my ‖ candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

Or, *thou dost light*, or *hast lighted, my candle*, i. e. given me safety, and comfort, and prosperity, and glory, and posterity also; all which are oft signified by a *candle* or a *light*, as Esth. viii. 16; Job xxi. 17; xxix. 3; Psal. xcvii. 11; cxxii. 17, &c.

‖ Or, *broken*. 29 For by thee I have ‖ run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.

By thee I have broken through the armed troops of mine enemies. I have scaled the walls of their strongest cities and castles, and so taken them.

l Deut. 32. 4. Dan. 4. 37. Rev. 15. 3. z Ps. 12. 6. & 119. 140. Prov. 30. 5. † Or, *refined*. a 1 Sa. 17. 7. 30 *As for* God, [l]his way *is* perfect: [z]the word of the LORD is ‖ tried: he *is* a buckler [a]to all those that trust in him. † Or, *refined*.

His way is perfect; his counsel and providence, though it may sometimes be dark and hard to be understood, yet is always wise and just, and every way perfect or unblamable. *The word of the Lord is tried*; the truth of God's promises is certain, and approved by innumerable experiences, and mine among the rest.

b Deut. 32. 31, 39. 1 Sam. 2. 2. Ps. 86. 8. Is. 45. 5. 31 [b]For who *is* God save the LORD? or who *is* a rock save our God?

It must needs be as I have said, because our Lord is the only God, and therefore there is none, neither God nor creature, that can hinder him from accomplishing his own word and work, or from defending those that trust him: he is unchangeable and invincible. Or this is an amplification, As God is what I have now described him to be, so he only is such, and there is no other God or Rock in which they may safely trust.

c Ps. 91. 2. 32 *It is* God that [c]girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

That girdeth me with strength; that gives me strength both of mind and body for battle. It is a metaphor taken either from a military girdle, or from a common girdle, wherewith their loose garments were girt about them, whereby they were rendered fitter for any action. *Perfect*, i. e. perfectly plain and smooth, and clear from impediments, as pioneers use to prepare the way for the march of an army. He guided me in all my counsels and enterprises, so that I neither miss my way, nor stumble in it, nor come short of my end.

d 2 Sam. 2. 18. Hab. 3. 19. e Deut. 32. 13. & 33. 29. 33 [d]He maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*, and [e]setteth me upon my high places.

Like hinds' feet, i. e. most swift and nimble. As he made me wise in counsel and contrivance, (which he elsewhere saith,) so he made me speedy and expeditious in the execution; which are the two great excellencies of a captain. He gave me great agility, either to flee and escape from mine enemies, when prudence required it; or to pursue them, when I saw occasion. *Setteth me*, Heb. *maketh me to stand*, i. e. either he placeth me in safe and strong places, out of the reach of mine enemies; or he confirms and establisheth me in that high and honourable estate into which he hath advanced me, and gives me wisdom to improve my victories.

f Ps. 144. 1. 34 [f]He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

To him I owe all that military skill, or strength, or courage which I have. My strength is sufficient, not only to bend *a bow of steel*, but to break it.

35 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and ‖ thy gentleness hath made me great. ‖ Or, *with thy meekness thou hast multiplied me*.

The shield of thy salvation; thy safeguard and protection, which hath been to me like a shield to defend me. *Holden me up*; kept me from falling into those snares and mischiefs which mine enemies designed, and I feared. *Thy gentleness*, or *meekness*, as this word signifies, Numb. xii. 3; Psal. x. 17; xlv. 4; Zeph. ii. 3, i. e. thy clemency, whereby thou hast pardoned my sins, which might otherwise have undone me, and mitigated thy corrections which I have deserved; thy grace and benignity, which thou hast freely showed to me and for me.

g Prov. 4. 12. † Heb. *mine ancles*. 36 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, [g]that † my feet did not slip.

Thou hast enlarged my steps; which before were straitened and confined to a little compass, and entangled with the narrowness and difficulty of the way. *Thou hast set my feet in a large room*, Psal. xxxi. 8; cxviii. 5, i. e. thou hast brought me out of all my straits and difficulties into a state of freedom and safety. *Slip*, or *stumble*, as they are apt to do in narrow and uneven ways.

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37 I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.

38 I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

i. e. Cast down to the ground, so as I may tread upon their necks, after the manner of conquerors, Deut. xxxiii. 29; Josh. x. 24.

39 For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast †subdued under me those that rose up against me.

† Heb. *caused to bow.*

He repeats what he had said ver. 32, lest he should seem to arrogate to himself his great achievements and victories mentioned ver. 37, 38, and that he might give God the whole praise and glory of them.

40 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.

Either, 1. That I might smite or behead them. Or, 2. That I might put my yoke upon their necks, or bring them into subjection. Or rather thus, *Thou hast made them turn their backs to me*, i. e. flee away from me; for so this very phrase is used and rendered, Exod. xxiii. 27; Josh. vii. 8, 12, and elsewhere. So far are they mistaken, that say this Hebrew word *oreph* is only used for the *neck*, and not for the *back*. *That I might destroy them*; that I might have opportunity to destroy them.

41 They cried, but *there was* none to save *them*: [h]*even* unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

h Job 27. 9. & 35. 12. Prov. 1. 28. Is. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11. & 14. 12. Ezek. 8. 18. Micah 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13.

He speaks of his Israelitish enemies, who in their distresses prayed to God for help against him.

42 Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did [i]cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

i Zech. 10. 5.

Or, *rid them away*, as dirt is usually swept or carried out of houses or streets. Or, *tread them down*, or *bruise them*, as men do dirt when they walk in the streets.

43 [k]Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; *and* [l]thou hast made me the head of the heathen: [m]a people *whom* I have not known shall serve me.

k 2 Sam. 2. 9, 10. & 3. 1. l 2 Sam. 8. m Is. 52. 15. & 55. 5.

From the strivings of the people; from contentions, and seditions, and tumults of my own people under Saul, and Ish-bosheth, and Absalom. *The head of the heathen*; of the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Syrians, and others. *Whom I have not known*; whom I had no acquaintance with, nor relation to, no, not by thy promise or grant; even barbarous and remote nations.

44 †As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: †the strangers [n]shall ‖† submit themselves unto me.

† Heb. *At the hearing of the ear.* † Heb. *the sons of the stranger.* n Deut. 33. 29. Ps. 66. 3. & 81. 15. ‖ Or, *yield feigned obedience.* † Heb. *lie.*

As soon as they hear of me; either, 1. At the fame of my name and victorious arms. Or, 2. At the first tidings of my coming towards them. Or rather, 3. As soon as they understand my will and pleasure, they shall instantly comply with it. *Submit themselves unto me*, Heb. *shall lie unto me*, i. e. shall submit themselves to me not willingly and cheerfully, as they will pretend, but only out of fear, and by constraint; by which it appears that this is spoken with reference to David, and not (as some would have it) to Christ, because Christ's people are a willing people, Psal. cx. 3, and those whom he conquers do freely obey him.

45 [o]The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.

o Mic. 7. 17.

Shall fade away, i. e. shall wither and decay in their hopes and strength. *Be afraid*, i. e. shall come trembling; one verb being put for two, as Psal. xxii. 21, *thou hast heard me*, i. e. having delivered me; and xiii. 1, *panteth*, i. e. panting hasteneth; and in many other places. *Out of their close places*; out of their strong holds, where they shall lurk and keep themselves for fear of me, and whence they dare not stir without trembling. Or, *for* (as the particle *mem* is oft used) *their close places*, i. e. lest I should assault and take them.

46 The LORD liveth; and blessed *be* my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

He and he only is the true living God, and he hath manifested himself to be for my comfort, and for the confusion of mine enemies, when other gods are dead and impotent idols. Or, *Let the Lord live*. So it is a joyful and thankful acclamation, spoken after the manner of earthly princes. *Blessed be my rock*; let him have all blessing and praise, for he is worthy of it.

47 *It is* God that †avengeth me, [p]and ‖subdueth the people unto me.

† Heb. *giveth avengements for me.* p Ps. 47. 3. ‖ Or, *destroyeth.*

That avengeth me; that executed vengeance both by me against malicious enemies, and for me against Saul, of whom I would not avenge myself.

48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, [q]thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the †violent man.

q Ps. 59. 1. † Heb. *man of violence.*

Above those that rise up against me; above their malice and power. *From the violent man*; from Saul, whom for honour's sake he forbears to mention.

49 [r]Therefore will I ‖give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.

r Rom. 15. 9. ‖ Or, *confess.*

Among the heathen; or, *among the Gentiles* or *nations*; i. e. either, 1. In the great congregations, consisting of the Israelites of all tribes; of whom this very word is used, Josh. iii. 17; iv. 1; Ezek. ii. 3, and elsewhere, as hath been noted before. Or, 2. In the presence of those Gentiles, who resorted to Jerusalem in great numbers, or before others of them, who are either subject to me, or confederate with me, as I have occasion of speaking or writing to any of them. But this was but an uncertain and inconsiderable business. And therefore David is here transported beyond himself, even to his seed for ever, as it is expressed ver. 50, and speaks this in special relation to Christ, who was to be his Seed, and of whom he was an eminent type, and by whom alone this was done to any purpose. And therefore this is justly applied to him, and to his preaching to and calling of the Gentiles, Rom. xv. 9.

50 [s]Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed [t]for evermore.

s Ps. 144. 10. t 2 Sam. 7. 13.

To his king; to the king whom God himself chose, and anointed, or constituted. *To his seed*; to all his posterity, and especially to the Messias, who is called *David's Seed*, Acts xiii. 23; Rom. i. 3; and his *Son*, Psal. lxxxix. 27; cx. 1, compared with Matt. xxii. 42; and *the Seed* by way of eminency, Gal. iii. 16; and *God's Anointed* and *King*, Psal. ii. 2.

PSALM XIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The design of this Psalm is to adore and magnify the name of God, for the discovery of his wisdom, and power, and goodness, both by his great and glorious works of creation and providence, and especially by his word and the Holy Scripture; which he prefers before the former.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God, 1. *So do night and day*, 2, 3, *and the sun*, 4—6. *The perfection, purity, and extent of God's law; its effects*, 7—12. *He prayeth against presumptuous sins*, 13.

THE [a]heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

a Gen. 1. 6. Is. 40. 22. Rom. 1. 19, 20.

The heavens; these visible heavens, so vast and spacious, richly adorned with stars, so various and admirable in their course or station, so useful and powerful in their influences. *Declare*; not properly, but objectively, as *the earth*, and *trees*, and *stars* are said to speak, Job xii. 8; xxxviii.

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7; Isa. lv. 12; they demonstrate or make it evident and undeniable to all men of sense or reason; they are as a most legible book, wherein even he that runs may read it. *The glory of God*, i. e. his glorious being or existence, *his eternal power and Godhead*, as it is particularly expressed, Rom. i. 20; his infinite wisdom and goodness; all which are so visible in them, that it is ridiculous to deny or doubt of them, as it is esteemed ridiculous to think of far meaner works of art, as a house or a book, &c., that they were made without an artist, or without a hand. *The firmament*; or, *the expansion*, i. e. all this vast space extended from the earth to the highest heavens, with all its goodly furniture, the same thing which he called *heavens*. *Showeth his handywork*; the excellency of the work discovers who was the author of it, that it did not come by chance, nor spring of itself, but was made by the Lord God Almighty.

2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

Day unto day; or rather, *after* (as the Hebrew *lamed* oft signifies, as Exod. xvi. 1; xxix. 38; 2 Chron. xxx. 21; Psal. xcvi. 2) *day*; for the day doth not utter this to the day, but to us upon the day. The sense is either, 1. That orderly, and constant, and useful succession of days and nights one after another declare this. But of the course of the sun, the effect whereof this succession is, he speaks ver. 5. Or rather, 2. Every day and night renews or repeats these documents and demonstrations of God's glory. He that neglects them one day, may learn them the next day. *Uttereth*, or, *poureth forth*, to wit, constantly, and abundantly, and forcibly, as a fountain doth water, as this Hebrew verb signifies. *Speech*; or *the word*, or *discourse*, to wit, concerning God. It hath as it were a tongue to speak the praises of its Maker, i. e. it gives men occasion to magnify and adore him. *Showeth knowledge*, i. e. gives us a clear and certain knowledge or discovery of God their author.

Or, without their voice is heard. † Heb. without their voice heard.

3 *There is* no speech nor language, †*where* their voice is not heard.

Or, *understood*, as the verb oft signifies, as Gen. xi. 7; xlii. 23; 2 Kings xviii. 26; 1 Cor. xiv. 2; for the *hearing* of it would have been insignificant without the understanding of it, in which the force of the argument lies. The sense is, There are divers nations in the world, which have several languages, so that one cannot discourse with or be understood by another; but the heavens are such a universal and admirable teacher, that they can speak to all people under them, and be clearly understood by all. *No nation*, or *people*, saith that wise and learned heathen, Tully, *is so barbarous and sottish, as, when they look up to the heavens, not to perceive that there is a God, or to imagine that those things are the effect of blind chance, which are made with such wonderful art and wisdom, that it requires extraordinary art to understand their excellent orders and course.* But this verse is by divers learned men otherwise translated, not without an elegant gradation, as some observe. *They have no speech nor word, nor* is any *voice* or *sound heard* in or from them. Then follow the next verse by way of opposition, yet *their line*, &c. Or thus, *They have no speech nor words*, (which is supposed to be here said by way of prolepsis, to soften and explain his former expressions of the heavens, *declaring* and *speaking*,) *yet* (or, but *without* them) *their voice is heard* or *understood*.

b Rom. 10. 18. Or, Their rule, or, direction.

4 b ‖Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

Their line; either, 1. Their admirable structure made exactly, and as it were by line: see Job xxxviii. 5; Zech. i. 16. Or, 2. *Their lines*, the singular number being put for the plural, for the line answereth to the *words* in the next clause. And by *line* or *lines* he may understand their writing, as this very word is taken, Isa. xxviii. 10, which is made up of several lines. And this expression may seem to be very fit and proper, because the heavens do not teach men audibly, or by speaking to their ears, but visibly, by propounding things to their eyes, which is done in lines or writings. *Is gone out*, i. e. is spread abroad or drawn forth. *Through all the earth*; so as to be seen and read by all the inhabitants of the earth. *Their words*, i. e. their magnificent structure, and their exquisite order, and most regular course, by which they declare their author, no less than if they used many words or long discourses to that purpose, or no less than men discover their minds by their words. See more concerning this verse upon Rom. x. 18, where it is applied to the preaching of the gospel by the apostles in the several parts of the world. *A tabernacle*; which is a movable habitation, and therefore fitly applied to the sun, which is here described to be in constant and perpetual motion, ver. 5, 6. *For the sun*; which being the most illustrious and useful of all the heavenly bodies, is here particularly mentioned.

5 Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, c*and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

c Eccles. 1. 5.

As a bridegroom; gloriously adorned with light as with a beautiful garment, and smiling upon the lower world with a pleasant countenance. *Coming out of his chamber*; in which he is poetically supposed to have rested all night, and thence to break forth as it were on a sudden, as both sacred and profane poets represent the matter. *As a strong man*; who being conscious and confident of his own strength, and promising to himself victory and the glory which attends it, sets upon his work with great pleasure.

6 His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

His course is constant from east to west, and thence to the east again. There is no part of the earth which doth not one time or other feel the comfort and benefit of its light and heat.

d Ps. 111. 7. ‖ Or, *doctrine.* § Or, *restoring.*

7 d The ‖ law of the LORD *is* perfect, ‖ converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

The law of the Lord, i. e. the doctrine delivered by God to his church, whether by Moses or by other prophets, and holy men of God after him; for the title of *law* is given not only to the ten commandments, or the moral law, as it is Rom. ii. 23, 25, 27; iii. 31, but also to the whole word of God, as Psal. i. 2; cxix. 70, &c.; Jer. viii. 8; Mal. ii. 6; to the Psalms, as John x. 34; xv. 25, compared with Psal. lxxxii. 6; xxxv. 19; and to the writings of the prophets, 1 Cor. xiv. 21, compared with Isa. xxviii. 11; yea, even to the gospel itself, as Isa. ii. 3; xlii. 4; li. 4, 7; Rom. iii. 27; Gal. ii. 21. And in this general sense it must be here understood, because the effects here following do not flow from one, but from all the parts of it, precepts, and counsels, and threatenings, and promises, and God's gracious covenant made with man therein revealed. Having discoursed hitherto of the glory of God shining forth in and demonstrated by the visible heavens, and the heavenly bodies, he now proceeds to another demonstration of God's glory, which he compares with and prefers before the former; which he doth, partly, to prevent that excessive admiration of the splendour and beauty of the sun and stars, by the contemplation whereof the heathens were brought to adore them, an error which the Israelites were not free from the danger of, Deut. iv. 19; partly, to make the Israelites sensible of their singular obligations to God, who, besides that common light and influence of the heavenly bodies, had given them a peculiar and a more necessary and beneficial light; and partly, to awaken and provoke the Gentiles (into whose hands these Psalms might come) to the study and love of God's law, by representing those excellent advantages which they no less than the Jews might obtain by it.

Perfect; without fault or defect, fully and completely discovering both the nature and will of God, and the whole duty and business of man, whom and how he is to worship and serve, what he is to believe and practise, and whatsoever is necessary to his present and eternal happiness; wherein there seems to be a secret reflection upon the former and natural discovery of God by his works of creation, as that which is defective and insufficient for the great and glorious ends here following, which although it did declare so much of God's being and nature as left all men without excuse, Rom. i. 20, yet did not fully nor clearly manifest the mind and will of God, nor direct and bring

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men to eternal salvation. *Converting*, to wit, from the errors of mind and conversation, in which men without this light do generally wander and perish, unto God. from whom all men are naturally revolted. Or, *comforting* or *reviving*, as this word is used, Ruth iv. 15; Psal. xxiii. 3; Lam. i. 11, 16. Heb. *restoring* or *bringing back the soul*, which was drooping and even going out of the body, through grievous troubles of the outward man, and terrors of the mind and conscience. *The testimony of the Lord*, i. e. his law, so called because it is a witness between God and man, what God requires of man, and what upon the performance of that condition he will do for man. *Is sure*, Heb. *faithful* or *true*, which is most excellent, and proper, and necessary in a witness. It will not mislead or deceive any man that trusteth to it or followeth it; but will certainly and infallibly bring him to happiness. *Making wise* unto salvation, as is expressed, 2 Tim. iii. 15; which is the only true wisdom. *The simple:* this is added either, 1. By way of commendation, or as a qualification of the person whom God's word will make wise; he must be humble, and foolish, and little in his own eyes, and willing to be taught: see Matt. xi. 25; 1 Cor. i. 25, &c. For God resisteth the proud and scornful, and will not give this wisdom to them. Or rather, 2. By way of contempt, which seems most agreeable both to the use of the words, Prov. i. 4; ix. 6; xiv. 15; xxii. 3, and to the scope of the place, which is to set forth the excellency and efficacy of God's law in the general, without any restriction to this or that sort of men. So it may note the weak and foolish, even persons of the lowest capacities, and such as are apt to mistake and are easily seduced, as the word implies. And yet these, if they will hearken to the instructions of God's word, shall become wise, when those who *profess themselves wise* shall, by leaning to their own understanding, and despising or neglecting the directions of God's word, *become and prove themselves to be fools*, Rom. i. 22. But this is not spoken exclusively, as if no men of better abilities were thus made wise; but by way of amplification, to show the usefulness of God's word to men of all sorts and sizes.

8 The statutes of the LORD *are* right,
e Ps. 12. 6. rejoicing the heart: [e]the commandment
f Ps. 13. 3. of the LORD *is* pure, [f]enlightening the eyes.

Statutes, another word signifying the same thing with *law* and *testimonies*, *are right;* both in themselves, as being free from crookedness or error; and in their effect, as guiding and directing men in the right and ready way to eternal happiness: which also reflects upon that knowledge of divine things, which men have by the light of nature and works of God, or by the doctrines of the philosophers or others, that wanted or neglected the light of God's word, wherein there is a great deal of darkness, and uncertainty, and error, and danger. *Rejoicing the heart;* partly by that clear and certain knowledge of divine things which it gives, for *knowledge is pleasant to the soul*, Prov. ii. 10; and partly by the discoveries of God's love and grace to sinful men, in offers and promises of mercy therein contained. *The commandment of the Lord*, i. e. all his commands. *Is pure;* without the least mixture of error, or injustice, or deceit; which cannot be said of human laws. *Enlightening the eyes*, to wit, of the mind, with an evident and complete manifestation of God's will and man's duty; both which the works of nature and all the writings of men discover but darkly and imperfectly.

9 The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the
† Heb. truth. LORD *are* †true *and* righteous altogether.

The fear of the Lord; by which he understands not the grace of God's fear, as this phrase is commonly taken; nor the whole worship of God, as it is taken Psal. xxxiv. 9, 11; Matt. xv. 9; but the law and word of God, which is the only thing that is here commended, and which is meant by all the other parallel titles of his *testimony*, and *statutes*, and *commandments*, and *judgments*, and consequently by this of his *fear*, which is as it were hemmed in within them. And this may well be so called by a usual metonymy, because it is both the object, and the rule, and the cause of this grace of holy fear, as God himself is called *fear* for the like reason, Gen. xxxi. 53, and in the Hebrew, Psal. lxxvi. 11. *Clean*, i. e. sincere, not adulterated with any mixture of vanity, or falsehood, or vice; not requiring nor allowing any uncleanness or wickedness, as the religion of the Gentiles did. *Enduring for ever;* constant and unchangeable, the same for substance in all the ages of the church and the world; which is most true, both of the moral law, and of the doctrine of God's grace and mercy to sinful and miserable man; which two are the principal parts of that law, of which he here speaks, as is evident from the whole context. For as for the difference between the Old and the New Testament, that lies only in circumstantial, and ceremonial, or ritual things, which are not here intended; and that alteration also was foretold in the Old Testament, and consequently the accomplishment of it did not destroy, but confirm, the certainty and constancy of God's word. This also is opposed to human laws, wherein there are and ought to be manifold changes, according to the difference of times, and people, and circumstances. *The judgments of the Lord*, i. e. God's laws, frequently called his *judgments*, because they are the declarations of his righteous will, and as it were his legal or judicial sentence by which he expects that men should govern themselves, and by which he will judge them at the last day.

10 More to be desired *are they* than
g Ps. 119. 72, 127. Prov. 8. 10, 11, 19. gold, [g]yea, than much fine gold: [h]sweeter
h Ps. 119. 103. also than honey and † the honeycomb.
† Heb. *the dropping of honeycombs.*

Than much fine gold; than gold of the best quality, and in the greatest quantity. *Sweeter also than honey;* which was most sweet in those Eastern countries. *The honeycomb;* than that honey which the bees have most diligently wrought in their combs, and which freely flows from them; which is sweeter than the rest.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant
i Prov. 29. 18. warned: *and* [i]in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

Thy servant; I thy servant, though a king and a prophet, and of some repute for wisdom and knowledge, yet I am daily taught by them. *Warned*, or, *enlightened*, as Dan. xii. 3; or *clearly admonished*, as this word signifies, Exod. xviii. 20; 2 Kings vi. 10; Eccles. iv. 13; Ezek. iii. 17, &c.; xxxiii. 3, 9. It is a faithful and excellent monitor to show me my duty in all conditions, and to preserve me from falling into sin, and danger, and mischief. *In keeping of them;* to those that make it their great design and care to conform their whole lives to them. For he speaks not of a legal and perfect keeping of them, which no man attaineth to in this life, Eccles. vii. 20; Gal. iii. 10—12; 1 John i. 8; but of doing it in an evangelical sense, with the allowances which God through Christ makes for human infirmities. *There is great reward* in this life, and especially in the next.

12 [k]Who can understand *his* errors?
k Ps. 40. 12. 1 Lev. 4. 2, &c. m Ps. 90. 8. [l]cleanse thou me from [m]secret *faults*.

Who can understand? this may be here added, either, 1. As a further proof of the excellency and necessity of God's law, because men's errors are so many and hard to be discovered and prevented, that they indispensably need such a friend and counsellor as the law is, to give them the true knowledge of themselves and of their sins. Or, 2. As a just and sorrowful censure of himself, upon the consideration of the exact purity of God's law, and the comparing of his life with it. Thy law, O Lord, is holy, and just, and good. But I am a poor sinful wretch, falling infinitely short of it, and condemned by it. Or, 3. As a signification of the insufficiency of God's law, strictly so called, for the healing and saving of men's souls, and of the necessity of further supplies of the gospel and grace of God; whereby the eyes of their minds may be enlightened to see that light which shines in God's law, and their hearts may be renewed to yield universal obedience to it, for which therefore he prays in the following words. And withal, he implies that he did not expect that *reward* which he last mentioned as a just recompence to his obedience, which he confesseth to need a pardon more than to deserve a reward, but only as an effect of God's grace and goodness. *His errors;* either, 1. His sins of ignorance, of which this word is used, Lev. iv. 2, 22, 27; Eccles. v. 6. Or rather, 2. His sins in general, (which afterwards he divides into *secret* and *presumptuous sins*,) or all deviations from God's

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law, which are thus called, 1 Sam. xxvi. 21; Psal. cxix. 67, 118; Heb. ix. 7; James v. 20. The sense is, I cannot comprehend the numbers, or the several kinds, or all the heinous aggravations of my sins. *Cleanse thou me;* both by justification, or the pardon of my sins, through the blood of thy Son, which is to be shed for me; and by sanctification through thy Holy Spirit, co-working in and with thy word, to the further renovation of my heart and life; for these are the two ways of *cleansing* sinners most frequently mentioned both in the Old and New Testament; though the first may seem to be principally, if not only, intended, because he speaks of his past sins, which could be cleansed no other way but by remission. *From secret faults*, i. e. from the guilt of such sins as were secret, either, 1. From others; such as none knows but God and my own conscience: or, 2. From myself; such as I never observed, or did not discern the evil of. Pardon my unknown sins, of which I never repented particularly, as I should have done.

n Gen. 20. 6. 1 Kings 8. 32. 2 Pet. 4. 18. o Psa. 119. 133. 1 Cor. 6. 12; 14. 1 Or, much.

13 [n] Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins*: [o] let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from [1] the great transgression.

Keep back, or *restrain*, or *withdraw*; which word is emphatical, and signifies man's natural and great proneness even to the worst of sins, and the necessity of God's grace, as a bridle, to keep men from rushing upon them. Having begged pardon for his former errors, he now begs grace to keep him from relapses for the time to come. *From presumptuous sins*; from known and evident sins, such as are committed against knowledge and deliberation, with design, and resolution, and eagerness, with resistance against the checks of conscience, and the motions of God's Spirit, and with contempt both of God's commands and judgments, and so with *pride* and *insolency*, which this word signifies. See Exod. xxi. 14. And such a sin was that of David's in the matter of Uriah, to which he seems to have an eye, and prayeth to be kept from such miscarriages. *Let them not have dominion over me*; if I be at any time tempted to any such sins, Lord, let them not prevail over me; and if I do fall into them, let me speedily rise again, and not willingly give up myself to the customary practice of them. *Then shall I be upright*; that will be an evidence of my sincerity, and I shall have this comfort, that although I am not absolutely perfect, but encompassed with many infirmities, yet I am an upright person, and such as thou wilt accept. *I shall be innocent*; thou wilt hold me for innocent. Or, *I shall be cleansed*, or *kept pure*, as this word primarily signifies. *From the great transgression*, i. e. from the guilt of such presumptuous sins, which are indeed very great transgressions, and such as, if accompanied with obstinacy and impenitency, thou wilt not pardon. But as for other sins of ignorance or infirmity, thou wilt graciously remit them for thy covenant's sake, made with me in and through thy Christ. Otherwise, *from much transgression*, or from innumerable sins, which usually follow the commission of one presumptuous sin, as David found by his own sad experience.

p Ps. 51. 15. 2 Heb. my mark. Ps. 19. 1. q Ps. 74. 34. & 78. 35. 1 Thess. 1. 10.

14 [p] Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, † my strength, and my [q] redeemer.

Having prayed that God would keep him from sinful actions, he now prays that God would govern and sanctify his words and thoughts, wherein he had many ways offended, as he here implies, and oft in this book confesseth and bewaileth. And this he the rather doth, because this caution was very necessary to preserve him from presumptuous sins, which have their first rise in the thoughts, and thence proceed to words and expressions, before they break forth into actions. *Be acceptable in thy sight*, i. e. be really good and holy, and so well-pleasing to thee. *My strength*: O thou who hast hitherto strengthened me, both against my temporal and spiritual enemies, and whose gracious and powerful assistance is absolutely necessary to keep me from my own corrupt inclinations, and from all temptations to sinful thoughts, and words, and actions. *My redeemer*: this expression seems to be added emphatically, and with special respect to Christ, who was certainly much in David's eyes, to whom alone this word *Goel* can here properly belong, as may appear by my notes on Job xix. 25, to which I refer the reader, and by whose blood and Spirit alone David could and did expect the blessings and graces for which he here prayeth.

PSALM XX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a prayer to be used by the people, both now on the behalf of king David, when he was undertaking some great expedition, going forth, as is supposed, against the Ammonites and Syrians, 2 Sam. x., or some other potent enemies, and hereafter in like cases.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The church prayeth God to hear and defend the king, 1; *and for a blessing on all his designs*, 2—6; *and showeth wherein the confidence of some is; but theirs is in God*, 7—9.

a Prov. 18. 10. † Heb. *set thee on an high place.*

THE LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; [a] the name of the God of Jacob † defend thee.

In the day of trouble; in this time of war and danger. *Name of the God of Jacob*, i. e. God himself; for *names* are oft put for persons, as Numb. xxvi. 53; Acts i. 15; iv. 12; and *the name of God* for God, as Deut. xxviii. 58; Neh. ix. 5; Psal. xliv. 8, 20; Prov. xviii. 10, and oft elsewhere. He calls him *the God of Jacob*, or Israel, partly to distinguish him from false gods; and partly as an argument to enforce the prayer, because God had made a league or covenant with Jacob and his posterity, who are called by the name of *Jacob*, Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20; Isa. xliv. 2, and whose cause David was now pleading against their enemies.

† Heb. *thy help.* b 1 Kings 8. 16. 2 Chr. 20. 8. Ps. 73. 17. † Heb. *support thee.*

2 Send † thee help from [b] the sanctuary, and † strengthen thee out of Zion.

From the sanctuary; either, 1. From heaven, as it is expressed, ver. 6. Or rather, 2. From the tabernacle in Zion, as it is explained in the next words, where the ark then was; toward which the Israelites directed their prayers, and from which God heard and answered them.

† Heb. *turn to ashes*: or, *make fat.*

3 Remember all thy offerings, and † accept thy burnt sacrifice. Selah.

Remember, to wit, with acceptance, as it follows. *Thy offerings*; offered either by thee at thy entrance upon this expedition; or by us thy people on thy behalf, or by thine appointment. *Accept*, Heb. *turn to ashes*, by fire sent from heaven in token of his acceptance, as was usual; of which see Lev. ix. 24; 1 Kings xviii. 38.

c Ps. 21. 2.

4 [c] Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

According to thine own heart, i. e. that good success which thy heart desires. *All thy counsels*; thy present design for God, and for his and thy people.

d Ps. 19. 4. e Ex. 17. 15. Ps. 60. 4.

5 We will [d] rejoice in thy salvation, and [e] in the name of our God we will set up *our* banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

We will rejoice: hereby they show their confidence in God, and their assurance of the victory. *In the name of our God*, i. e. to the honour of God, as the Conqueror. *We will set up our banners*, in way of triumph; which among other ways was celebrated by the setting up of banners or trophies.

f Ps. 2. 2. † Heb. *from the heaven of his holiness.* ‖ Heb. *by the strength of the salvation of his right hand.*

6 Now know I that the LORD saveth [f] his anointed; he will hear him † from his holy heaven † with the saving strength of his right hand.

We are already sure of victory, by the consideration of God's power, and faithfulness, and love to David, and to his people. They speak as one person, because they were united and unanimous in this prayer. *Saveth*, i. e. will certainly save. *His anointed*; our lord and king. *With*

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the saving strength of his right hand: this shows how God will hear him, even by saving him with a strong hand.

g Ps. 33. 16, 17. Prov. 21. 31. Is. 31. 1. h 2 Chron. 32. 8.

7 [g]Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: [h]but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

Some trust; or, *remember;* which may better be supplied out of the next clause. *We will remember;* or, *make mention of,* to wit, so as to boast of it, or trust in it; for such things men oft remember or mention.

8 They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

They are brought down from their horses and chariots, to which they trusted. Heb. *They bowed down,* as being unable to stand longer, because of their mortal wounds. Compare Judg. v. 27. *But we* stand firmly upon our legs, and keep the field, as conquerors use to do.

9 Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.

Either, 1. David. So the sense is, O Lord, preserve and assist the king, that when we are distressed and cry to him for help, he may be able and ready to help us. Or, 2. God, the supreme Monarch, the King of kings, and in a peculiar manner the King of Israel, hear and answer us, when we pray for our king and people. And for the change of persons in this verse, nothing is more common. Or, 3. Christ, called *the King* both in the Old and New Testament. But this verse is by divers learned men rendered thus, *Lord, save the king; he* (i. e. the Lord) *will hear us* (or, *let him hear us;* for the future tense is oft put imperatively) *when we cry* or *call* upon him. And this version is very agreeable to the Hebrew text. For whereas the only ground of the other translation is, that the Hebrew accent called *athnach* is put under the word *save,* which is supposed to stop the sense there, it is sufficiently evident that *athnach* doth not always make such a distinction in these poetical books, as appears from Psal. xi. 5; xvii. 10; xix. 4; xxii. 31, and therefore this may seem to be the better version.

PSALM XXI.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The subject of this Psalm is the same with the former, both being made for the people's use, concerning the king; only the prayers there used are here turned into praises for the blessings received in answer to their prayers. And as David was an illustrious type of Christ, so in many of these expressions he may seem to look beyond himself unto Christ, in whom they are more properly and fully accomplished, and of whom divers of the ancient Hebrew doctors understand it.

David, out of a sense of God's answering his prayers for all he asked, professeth his joy and gladness in him, 1—6. *His confidence for further success,* 7; *that God will find out and consume his enemies,* 8—12. *He prayeth that God would exalt his strength, that he might praise his power,* 13.

THE king shall joy in thy strength, O
a Ps. 20. 5, 6. LORD; and [a]in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!

In thy strength conferred upon him, and put forth by thee on his behalf against his enemies.

b Ps. 20. 4, 5.

2 [b]Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

3 For thou preventest him with the
c 2 Sam. 12. 30. 1 Chron. 20. 2. blessings of goodness: thou [c]settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

Preventest him; or, *didst prevent him;* crowning him with manifold blessings, both more and sooner than he either desired or expected; surprising him with the gift of the kingdom, and with many happy successes. *With the blessing of goodness,* i. e. with excellent blessings. Or, *with abundance* (as this word both in Hebrew and Greek is sometimes used, as Psal. lxxxiv. 6; Rom. xv. 29; 2 Cor. ix. 5, 6) *of good. A crown of pure gold;* either, 1. In token of victory. Or rather, 2. As an ensign of royal majesty conferred upon him.

4 [d]He asked life of thee, *and* thou
d Ps. 61. 5, 6. gavest *it* him, [e]*even* length of days for ever and ever.
e 2 Sam. 7. 19. Ps. 91. 16.

He asked only the preservation of that short and mortal life, which was oft exposed to utmost perils. *For ever and ever;* either, 1. In his posterity, in whom parents are commonly said to live. Thou gavest the kingdom not only to himself for a season, as thou didst to Saul; but to him and to his seed for ever. Or rather, 2. In his person; for this *giving* answers to *David's asking.* And the thing which David asked of God was not the kingdom, (wherein God had prevented his prayers, and granted what David durst not have presumed to ask,) but only *life,* or the saving and prolonging of his life, which his enemies designed to take away. Thou gavest him a long life and reign here, and after that thou didst translate him to thy heavenly kingdom, to live with thee for ever. But this was more eminently fulfilled in Christ, who asked of his Father life, or *to be saved from death,* Heb. v. 7, though with submission to his will. But his Father, though he saw it fit and necessary to take away his temporal life, yet he instantly gave him another, and that far more noble, instead of it, even the perfect possession of an everlasting and most glorious life, both in his soul and body, at his right hand.

5 His glory *is* great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

His glory; his fame or renown in the world. *In thy salvation;* by reason of those great and glorious deliverances which thou hast wrought both for him and by him. *Hast thou laid upon him;* or, *fitted to him,* or *upon him,* as the Hebrew verb signifies; or, *made it adequate to him.* Thou hast given him a large and noble soul, very capable of and fit for that high and honourable estate to which thou hast advanced him, and thou hast given him honour and power suitable to so excellent a person, and to such rich endowments.

6 For thou hast †made him most blessed for ever: [f]thou hast †made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.
† Heb. *set him to be blessings.* Gen. 12. 2. Ps. 72. 17. f Ps. 16. 11. & 45. 7. Acts 2. 28. † Heb. *gladded him with joy.*

Thou hast made him most blessed, Heb. *thou hast set* (or, *made,* as this verb is used, Psal. xl. 5; lxxxix. 42; xci. 9; Lam. iii. 45) *him blessings;* i. e. either, 1. The author or instrument of manifold blessings to the world, and especially to thy people; which David was in a good measure, but Christ much more truly and eminently. Although this may not seem very suitable to the context, which only speaks of the blessing conferred by God upon this king, and not at all of the blessings flowing from him to others. Or, 2. The great example of all blessings, whom the Israelites in all ages shall propound to themselves, in all their forms and pronunciations of blessings. They shall say, *God make thee as blessed as this king,* either David or the Messias; compare Gen. xii. 2; xlviii. 20; or rather *most blessed,* as we translate it; the abstract form and the plural number being here used emphatically, as they commonly are, as Ezek. xxxiv. 26; Psal. v. 10; xix. 10; xxxv. 6, to note a man in whom all sorts of blessings are united and met together, filled with blessings, and as it were a man of blessings, made up altogether of blessings, as Christ upon a like reason was called *a man of sorrows,* Isa. liii. 3. And possibly the word *man* may be understood here, as it is in many other places, as I have showed before, and the place rendered thus, *thou hast made him* a man *of blessings. For ever;* of which see on ver. 4. *With thy countenance,* to wit, smiling upon him, as it must necessarily be understood from the foregoing words, i. e. by thy grace and favour manifested and imparted to his soul, and by the effects of it in saving him from all his enemies and calamities.

7 For the king trusteth in the LORD,
and through the mercy of the most High
g Ps. 16. 8. he [g]shall not be moved.

Or *removed,* from his kingdom, as Saul was.

h 1 Sam. 31. 3.

8 Thine hand shall [h]find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

When they seek to hide themselves or flee away from

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thee, shall discover, and overtake, and destroy them. Or, *shall be sufficient* (as this verb sometimes signifies, as Numb. xi. 22; Judg. xxi. 14) *for all thine enemies*, to wit, to conquer them; thou shalt need no foreign succours to help thee.

Heb. 4 1.

9 [i]Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the

i Ps. 58. 12. Heb. 6. 8. Is. 5. 11.

LORD shall [k]swallow them up in his wrath, [l]and the fire shall devour them.

Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven; or, *thou shalt put them*, (as the Hebrew word properly signifies,) *as it were*, into (so there is only an ellipsis of the preposition *beth*, which is most frequent) *a fiery oven*, i. e. like wood, which when it is cast in there, is quickly consumed. *Shall swallow them up*, i. e. destroy them, as this phrase is oft used, as 2 Sam. xx. 19, 20; Psal. lvi. 1, 2; Prov. i. 12.

m Deut. 28. 18. Job 18. 16. Ps. 37. 28. & 109. 13. Is. 14. 20.

10 [m] Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

Their fruit; either, 1. The fruit of their labours. Or rather, 2. Their seed or children, as it is explained in the next branch, oft called a man's *fruit*, as Deut. xxviii. 4; Psal. cxxvii. 3; cxxxii. 11; Lam. ii. 20. God will take away both root and branch, the parents and all that wicked race.

11 For they intended evil against thee: they [n] imagined a mischievous device, *which* they are not able *to perform*.

n Ps. 2. 1.

Against thee, i. e. against God, not directly, but by consequence, because it was against David, whom God had anointed, and against the Lord's people, whose injuries God takes as done to himself, Zech. ii. 8. *To perform;* such supplements are usual after this verb, as Exod. viii. 18; Psal. ci. 5; cxxxix. 6; Isa. i. 13. Or, for which *they were unable* or *insufficient*. Or, but *they did not prevail*, as this verb signifies, Psal. xiii. 4; cxxix. 2. This clause seems to be added to teach us this great and necessary lesson, that men are justly punished by God for their wicked intentions, although they be hindered from the execution of them, contrary to what some Jewish doctors and others have taught.

Heb. thou shalt set them as a butt. See Job 7. 20. & 16. 12. Lam. 3. 12.

12 Therefore ‖ shalt thou make them turn their † back, *when* thou shalt make ready *thine arrows* upon thy strings against the face of them.

‖ Heb. shalt thou make them † Heb. shoulder

Turn their back, i. e. flee away at the first sight of thee, whereby also they will be a fit mark for thine arrows. Or, *thou shalt set them* as a *butt* to shoot at, as the like phrase is used. Deut. vii. 10; Job vii. 20; xvi. 12. *Against the face of them;* or, *against them*, the word *face* being oft redundant.

13 Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: *so* will we sing and praise thy power.

In thine own strength; by thy own power, or by the manifestation thereof, whereby thou wilt have the whole glory of the work.

PSALM XXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

That question mentioned Acts viii. 34, is very proper here, *Of whom speaketh the prophet this* (Psalm)? *of himself, or of some other man?* It is confessed that David was a type of Christ, and that many Psalms, or passages of the Psalms, though properly and literally understood of David, yet had a further and mystical reference to Christ, in whom they were accomplished. But there are some other Psalms, or passages in the Psalms, as also some chapters or passages in other prophets, especially in Isaiah, who lived not very long after David, which either by those sacred penmen, or at least by the Holy Ghost inspiring them, which is one and the same thing, were directly, primarily, and immediately intended for, and are properly and literally to be understood of, the Messias; though withal there may be some respect and allusion to the state of the penman himself, who being a type of Christ, it is not strange if there be many resemblances between them. And this seems to be the state of this Psalm, which is understood of the Messias by the Hebrew doctors themselves, and by Christ himself, and by his apostles, as we shall see. And there are many passages in it, which are most literally accomplished in him, and cannot in a tolerable sense be understood of any other, as we shall see in the particular verses. And therefore I doubt not that David, though he had an eye to his own condition in divers passages here used, yet was carried forth by the Spirit of prophecy beyond himself, and unto Christ, to whom alone it truly and fully agrees.

¶ To the chief Musician upon ‖ Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.

‖ Or, *the hind of the morning.*

Aijeleth Shahar; or, *the hind of the morning*, to note that the person here designed was like a *hind*, comely and meek, and every way lovely, but withal persecuted by wicked men, and that oftentimes is *in the morning*, when she comes out of her lurking and lodging place, and when the hunters use to go abroad to their work. Or this was the title of some musical instrument, or tune, or song, which was usually sung in the morning.

The prophet, as a type of Christ, complaineth that God had forsaken him, 1, and heard not his prayers, 2. He showeth that he heard his fathers, and delivered them, 3—5; but owns himself a worm, 6, and the reproach of men, 7. He showeth the language of the enemy against him; yet his trust is in God, 8—21. He calleth all Israel to praise him, 22—25. He showeth the happiness of the meek, 26; and of all the Gentiles, 27—31.

MY [a]God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so* far † from helping me, *and from* [b]the words of my roaring?

a Mat. 27. 46. Mark 15. 34. † Heb. *from my salvation.* b Heb. 5. 7.

My God; whom, notwithstanding thy forsaking me, I heartily love, and in whom I trust; who art my Friend and Father, though now thou frownest upon me. *My God;* the repetition notes the depth of his distress, which made him cry so earnestly, and the strugglings of his faith with his fears and sorrows. *Why hast thou forsaken me*, i. e. left me in the hands of malicious men, withdrawn the light of thy countenance, and the supports and comforts of thy Spirit from me, and filled me with the terrors of thy wrath, so that I am ready to sink under my burden? This was in part verified in David, but much more fully in Christ, who applies these words to himself, Matt. xxvii. 46. *From the words of my roaring*, i. e. from regarding, or pitying, or answering my strong prayers, and lamentable outcries, forced from me by my intolerable distresses and miseries.

2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and † am not silent.

† Heb. there is no silence to me.

i. e. I continue praying day and night without intermission. Or thus, *I have no silence*, i. e. no quietness or rest, as this word signifies, Judg. xviii. 9; in which respect also the sea and waves thereof are said to *be silent*, i. e. still and quiet, Psal. cvii. 29; Mark iv. 39. And so this last clause answers to and expounds the former, *thou hearest not*, which is most usual in this book.

3 But thou *art* holy, *O thou* that inhabitest the [c]praises of Israel.

c Deu. 10.21.

Thou art holy, i. e just and true in all thy ways, and therefore hearing prayers, and keeping thy covenant; a true lover of holiness, and of all holy men. This he adds, either, 1. To aggravate his misery, that such a God should neglect and forsake him. Or rather, 2. To strengthen his faith, and to enforce his prayers, and prevail with God, for the honour of his holy name, to hear and help him. *That inhabitest the praises of Israel;* either, 1. That dwellest in thy tabernacle and ark, which is called *Israel's glory*, 1 Sam. iv. 21, and the place *where God was praised*, Isa. lxiv. 11. Or, 2. That receivest and rightly possessest the praises of Israel, whom thy people are perpetually praising for one mercy or another; and therefore I trust I also shall have occasion to praise thee. But because this Hebrew verb, when it is used transitively, and is taken for *inhabiting*, is generally, as far as I have observed, construed with a preposition, which here it is not, this verse may seem to be better rendered thus, as it is by divers learned men, *But thou abidest*, or *perseverest*, or *continuest to be* (as this verb is used, Psal. ix. 7; lv. 19; cii. 12) *holy*, (notwithstanding thy present neglect of my prayers and miseries,) *O the praises*, or, *O thou who art the praises*, (or, and *the praises*, i. e. the great cause and object of the *praises,*) *of Israel*,

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i. e whom Israel solemnly and usually praised, Deut. x. 21; Jer. xvii. 14.

4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

This he adds for the reasons mentioned in the first note, ver. 3.

d Ps. 25. 2,3. & 31. 1. & 71. 1. Is. 49. 23. Rom. 9. 33.

5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: [d]they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

i. e. Not disappointed of that for which they prayed and hoped.

e Job 25. 6. Is. 41. 14. f Is. 53. 3.

6 But I *am* [e]a worm, and no man; [f]a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

Our fathers were honoured by thee and by others, because of thy appearance for their defence and deliverance; but I am treated like a worm, i. e. neglected and despised, both by thee, who dost not afford me help, and by the men of my age and nation, as it follows. For the phrase, see Job xxv. 6; Isa. xli. 14. *Despised of the people;* not only of the great men, but also of the common people; which doth not so truly agree to David (who, though he was hated and persecuted by Saul and his courtiers, was honoured and beloved by the body of the people) as to Christ: compare Isa. liii. 2, 3.

g Mat. 27. 39. Mark 15. 29. Luke 23. 35. † Heb. *open.* h Job 16. 4. Ps. 109. 25.

7 [g]All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they †shoot out the lip, [h]they shake the head, *saying*,

Laugh me to scorn; instead of pitying or helping, deride me, and insult over me; such is their inhumanity. *They shoot out the lip;* they gape with their mouths, and put forth their tongues, in mockery. See Job xvi. 10; Isa. lvii. 4. *They shake the head;* another posture of scoffers. See Job xvi. 4; Psal. xliv. 14; Isa. xxxvii. 22. This and the next verse are applied to Christ, Matt. xxvii. 39, 43. *Saying:* this supplement is very usual, and here it is necessary, because the next words are the expressions of his insulting enemies.

i Mat. 27. 43. † Heb. *He rolled himself on the LORD.* k Ps. 91. 14. ‖ Or, *if he delight in him.*

8 [i]†He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: [k]let him deliver him, ‖seeing he delighted in him.

He trusted on the Lord; he rolled himself *upon the Lord;* where they seem to scoff not only at the thing, but at the expression. Their sense is, He pretended that he did wholly lean, and rest himself, and cast his cares upon God, and quietly and confidently commit all his affairs to his providence, assuring himself of a happy issue from him. *That he would deliver him;* or, without any supplement, *let him deliver him*, as it follows, though the Hebrew words be differing. And so the same thing is twice repeated, to show both the vehemency of their hatred, and their confidence of success against him. They thought his case desperate, and past all hope and remedy. *Seeing he delighted in him*, as he useth to allege and boast, but how vainly the event now showeth.

l Ps. 71. 6. ‖ Or, *kept me in safety.*

9 [l]But thou *art* he that took me out of the womb: thou ‖didst make me hope *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

This is noted as an effect of God's wonderful and gracious providence. And although this be a mercy which God grants to all mankind, yet it may well be alleged here, partly in way of gratitude for this great, though common, mercy; nothing being more reasonable and usual than for David and other holy men to praise God for such blessings; and partly as an argument to encourage himself to expect and to prevail with God, to grant him the deliverance which now he desires, because he had formerly delivered him; this being a very common argument: see 1 Sam. xvii. 37; 2 Cor. i. 10. But this is applicable to Christ in a singular manner, not as a late learned writer takes it, that God separated him from the womb, but that God did *bring him out* (as the word properly signifies) *of the womb*, to wit, immediately and by himself, and without the help of any man, by the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost, which made him there, or else he could never have been brought thence. *Thou didst make me hope*, or *trust*, i. e. thou didst give me sufficient ground for hope and trust, if I had then been capable of acting that grace, because of thy wonderful and watchful care over me in that weak and helpless state; which was eminently true of Christ, whom God so miraculously preserved and provided for in his infancy; the history whereof we read Matt. ii. It is not strange that *hope* is figuratively ascribed to infants, seeing even the brute creatures are said to *hope*, Rom. viii. 20, and to *wait* and *cry to God*, Psal. cxlv. 15; cxlvii. 9. *When I was upon my mother's breasts*, i. e. when I was a sucking child; which may be properly understood,

m Is. 46. 3. & 49. 1.

10 I was cast upon thee from the womb: [m]thou *art* my God from my mother's belly.

I was like one forsaken by his parent, and cast wholly upon thy providence. I had no father upon earth, and my mother was poor and helpless.

† Heb. *not a helper.*

11 Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* †none to help.

Be not far from me, to wit, as to affection and succour. *Trouble is near* at hand, and ready to swallow me up; and therefore if thou dost not speedily deliver me, it will be too late; which is an argument that David oft useth, as Psal. vi. 5; lxxxviii. 11, &c. *There is none to help;* thy help therefore will be the more seasonable, because it is most necessary, and thou wilt have the more of glory by it, because it will appear that it is thy work alone.

n Deu. 32. 14. Ps. 68. 30. Ezek. 39. 18. Amos 4. 1.

12 [n]Many bulls have compassed me: strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

Bulls; wicked, and violent, and potent enemies; for such are so called, Ezek. xxxix. 18; Amos iv. 1. *Strong bulls of Bashan*, i. e. fat and lusty, as the cattle there bred were, Deut. iii. 13; xxxii. 14, and therefore fierce and furious.

o Job 16. 10. Ps. 35. 21. Lam. 2. 16. & 3. 46. † Heb. *opened their mouths against me.*

13 [o]They †gaped upon me *with* their mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion.

Partly to affright me, and principally to tear and devour me, as the following metaphor explains it. Otherwise it might be understood of their crying out with loud and earnest voices, that he might be condemned and put to death.

p Dan. 5. 6. ‖ Or, *sundered.* q Josh. 7. 5 Job 23. 16.

14 I am poured out like water, [p]and all my bones are ‖out of joint: [q]my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

I am poured out like water; my heart faileth, my spirits are spent and gone like water, which once spilt can never be recovered; my very flesh is melted within me, and I am become as weak as water. See the like phrase Josh. vii. 5, and compare 2 Sam. xiv. 14; Job xiv. 11. *All my bones are out of joint;* I am as weak and unable to move or help myself, and withal as full of torment, as if I were upon a rack, and all my bones were disjointed. Or, *all my bones are separated*, one from another; as they were in some sort in Christ, by the stretching of his body upon the cross. *My heart;* the seat of life, and fountain which supplies spirits and vigour to the whole body. *Is like wax;* melted, as it follows, through fear and overwhelming grief: compare Psal. lxviii. 2; xcvii. 5.

r Prov. 17. 22. s Job 29. 10. Lam. 4. 4. John 19. 28.

15 [r]My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and [s]my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

I have in a manner no more radical moisture left in me than is in a dry potsherd. *My tongue cleaveth to my jaws*, through that excessive thirst and drought. See John xix. 20. *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death;* partly by thy providence delivering me into the power of mine enemies, and partly by thy terrors in my mind and soul.

t Rev. 22. 15. u Mat. 27. 35. Mark 15. 24. Luke 23. 33. John 19. 23, 37. & 20. 25.

16 For [t]dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: [u]they pierced my hands and my feet.

He calls his enemies *dogs* for their vileness and filthiness, for their insatiable greediness and implacable fury and fierceness against him. He explains what he means by *dogs*, even wicked men, who are oft so called, not some few of

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them singly, but the whole *company* or *congregation* of them; whereby may be noted either their great numbers, or their consulting and conspiring together, as it were, in a lawful assembly; which was most literally and eminently fulfilled in Christ.

They pierced my hands and my feet: these words cannot with any probability be applied to David, nor to the attempts of his enemies upon him; for their design was not to torment his hands or feet, but to take away his life. And if it be pretended that it is to be understood of him in a metaphorical sense, it must be considered, that it is so uncouth and unusual a metaphor, that those who are of this mind cannot produce any one example of this metaphor, either in Scripture or in other authors; nor are they able to make any tolerable sense of it, but are forced to wrest and strain the words. But what need is there of such forced metaphors, when this was most properly and literally verified in Christ, whose hands and feet were really pierced and nailed to the cross, according to the manner of the Roman crucifixions, to whom therefore this is applied in the New Testament. See Matt. xxvii. 35; Mark xv. 24; Luke xxiii. 33; John xix. 18, 23, 37.

17 I may tell all my bones: [x]they look *and* stare upon me.

x Luke 23. 27, 35.

I may tell all my bones; partly through my leanness, caused by excessive grief, which is much more credible of Christ than of David; and partly by my being stretched out upon the cross. *They look and stare upon me,* to wit, with delight and complacency in my calamities, as this phrase is used, Psal. xxxv. 21; xxxvii. 34; liv. 7; lix. 10; Obad. 12. Compare Luke xxiii. 35.

18 [y]They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

y Luke 23. 34. John 19. 23, 24.

This also cannot be applied to David without an uncouth and strained metaphor, but was literally fulfilled in Christ, Matt. xxvii. 35; John xix. 24.

19 But [z]be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

z ver. 11. Ps. 10. 1.

20 Deliver my soul from the sword; [a]†my darling †from the power of the [b]dog.

a Ps. 35. 17. * Heb. *my only one.* † Or, *from the hand.* b ver. 16.

From the sword, i. e. from the rage and violence of mine enemies, as the next clause explains it, and as *the sword* is oft taken in Scripture. See Jer. xxv. 16, 27, 29; Ezek. xxxviii. 21. *My darling,* Heb. *my one,* or *only one,* to wit, *his soul,* as he now said; which he so calls, either because it was very dear to him; or rather, because it was left alone, and destitute of friends and helpers; for so this word is used. Psal. xxv. 16; xxxv. 17. *From the power,* Heb. *the hand;* which is oft put for *power,* and in that sense is ascribed to a *flame,* Isa. xlvii. 14, and to *evil,* Hab. ii. 9.

21 [c]Save me from the lion's mouth: [d]for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

c 2 Tim. 4. 17. d Is. 34. 7. Acts 4. 27.

The lion; either the devil, that raging and roaring lion, who did many ways assault and annoy him; or his lion-like enemies. *Heard me,* i. e. answered and delivered me. *Unicorn;* a strong, and fierce, and untamable wild beast; though the learned are not agreed about the kind of it. See of it Deut. xxxiii. 17; Job xxxix. 9, 10; Psal. xcii. 10; Isa. xxxiv. 7, and my Latin Synopsis on Numb. xxiii. 22. For it is not worth while to trouble the unlearned reader with such disputes.

22 [e]I will declare thy name unto [f]my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

e Heb. 2. 12. Ps. 40. 9. f Gen. 29. 17. Rom. 8. 29.

I will declare, i. e. publish or celebrate it; when thou hast delivered me, thou shalt have the glory of it, as now thy honour is eclipsed by my calamities. *Thy name,* i. e. that power, and faithfulness, and goodness, and those perfections which thou hast manifested on my behalf. *My brethren;* the same whom he calls *the congregation* in the next clause, and *the seed of Jacob* and *Israel* in the next verse; which also doth not so fitly agree to David, who never to my remembrance gives this title to any but such as were near akin to him, as it doth to Christ, who extendeth this name to all his disciples and believers, Matt. xii. 48, 49; xxv. 40; xxviii. 10, and to whom this very text is applied, Heb. ii. 11, 12. Not only privately, but even in the public congregation.

23 [g]Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

g Ps. 135. 19, 20.

Praise him; partly for my sake, and chiefly for your own benefit received by my deliverance., *All ye the seed of Israel:* the two universal particles seem to intimate that he speaks not only of the carnal, but also of the spiritual seed; which also is more than probable, by comparing this with ver. 27, 28.

24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but [h]when he cried unto him, he heard.

h Heb. 5. 7.

He hath not despised: I was despised by the people, ver. 6, but not by God. *Nor abhorred,* i. e. he did not turn away his face from it, as men do from things which they abhor, but looked upon it with compassion. *Neither hath he hid his face from him,* to wit, for ever; for he did so for a time; but now, saith he, he hath lift up upon me the light of his countenance.

25 [i]My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation: [k]I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

i Ps. 35. 18. & 40. 9, 10. & 111. 1. k Ps. 66. 13. & 116. 14. Eccles. 5. 4.

In the great congregation; either in the general assemblies of the Israelites at their solemn feasts; or in the universal church, made up of Jews and Gentiles, as the following verses explain it. *My vows,* i. e. those praises and services which in my distress I vowed to return unto thee when thou didst deliver me.

26 [l]The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart [m]shall live for ever.

l Lev. 7. 11, 12, 15, 16. Ps. 69. 32. Is. 65. 13. m John 6. 51.

The meek, i. e. faithful or godly persons, who are frequently called *meek* ones, as Psal. xxv. 9; lxxvi. 9; cxlix. 4; Isa. xi. 4; lxi. 1; Zeph. ii. 3, because the grace of God doth soften and sweeten the hearts of sinners, and subdues their pride, and passion, and rebellion against God, and their fierceness towards men. Or, *the poor,* as this word is oft rendered; which seems well to suit this place, partly, because these are opposed to the *fat* ones *upon* earth, ver. 29; partly, because the following *eating* and *satisfaction* may seem most proper and acceptable to such as were in want; partly, because here is an allusion to the legal feasts, made of the remainders of the sacrifices, in which the poor had a share; and partly, because this well agrees to the time of Christ's coming, when the body of the Jewish nation were a poor and afflicted people, and *the poor* especially *did receive the gospel,* Matt. xi. 5. *Eat and be satisfied;* which is mentioned as a great blessing, Joel ii. 26, as it is threatened as a grievous curse that men should *eat and not be satisfied,* Lev. xxvi. 26; Micah vi. 14. But because it was comparatively a poor and mean thing to have one's belly filled and satisfied with that food which perisheth and passeth away presently after it is received, this magnificent promise is doubtless to be understood spiritually, of those spiritual blessings, that grace, and peace, and comfort, and full satisfaction, which all believing and pious souls have in the sense of God's love, and the pardon of their sins, and in the influences of God's Spirit into their souls. *That seek him;* that seek his favour; or that inquire after him, and labour to know and discern him; wherein possibly the Spirit of God may intimate to us the necessity of seeking, and the difficulty of finding or discovering God, when he shall appear in the flesh, and in the form of a servant; which was likely to hide him from the eyes of the carnal and careless Jews, and not to be discerned but by those that were studious and inquisitive concerning the mind of God revealed in the Scriptures concerning that matter. *Your heart,* i. e. their; for he speaks of the same persons still, though there be a change from the third to the second person, as is usual in these poetical and prophetical books of Scripture. *Shall live,* i. e. shall be greatly refreshed and comforted; *life* being oft put for a happy and comfortable life, as 1 Kings i. 25; Psal. xxxiv. 12; in which respect Jacob's heart or

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spirit is said to have *revived*, Gen. xlv. 27; as, on the contrary, Nabal's heart was said to have *died within him*, 1 Sam. xxv. 37, when it was oppressed with great sadness. *For ever;* your comfort shall not be short and transitory, as worldly comforts are, but everlasting.

n Ps. 2. 8. & 72. 11. & 86. 9. & 98. 3. Is. 49. 6. o Ps. 22. 7.

27 [n]All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: [o]and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

All the ends of the world, i. e. all nations, from one end of the world to the other. So this is an evident prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles to the knowledge of God and Christ by thy gospel, and consequently a clear proof that this Psalm doth directly and immediately speak of Christ; to whom alone, and not to David, this and divers other passages of it do manifestly belong. *Shall remember:* it is not particularly expressed what they should remember, because there were several things that should and would be remembered by them, which were likely to occasion their turning to the Lord. They shall remember their former and manifold wickedness with grief, and shame, and fear; and particularly their sin and folly in worshipping dead and impotent idols that never did nor could do them either good or hurt. They shall remember that God who did make lively impressions upon their minds, which yet they had in great measure blotted out and forgotten, but now by the preaching of the gospel they shall be revived. They shall remember their great and manifold obligations to God, which they had quite forgotten; his patience and goodness in sparing them so long in the midst of all their impieties, and in revealing his gospel to them, and giving his Son for them. They shall remember the gracious words and glorious works of Christ, and what he did and suffered for them; which possibly divers of them had been eye and ear witnesses of in Judea, (although, with the unbelieving Jews, they despised and misconstrued them,) and others had heard the fame and tidings of them. *Unto the Lord;* unto the only true God, and unto Jesus Christ, to whom this name of Jehovah is ofttimes ascribed in Scripture. *All the kindreds*, Heb. *all the families;* which is not to be understood strictly of every particular person and family, but of all sorts and of great numbers of them; as such universal phrases are very frequently taken in Scripture.

p Ps. 47. 8. Obad. 21. Zech. 14. 9. Matt. 6. 13.

28 [p]For the kingdom *is* the LORD's: and he *is* the governor among the nations.

This is added as a reason why the Gentiles should be converted, because God is not only the God and Lord of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles, and of all nations, Rom. iii. 29, 30. And therefore though for a time he thought fit to confine his kingdom to Israel, yet he had resolved in due time to enlarge his kingdom, and to set up his throne and government in the Gentile world, which were no less created and redeemed by him than the Jews. Compare Zech. xiii. 2; xiv. 9.

q Ps. 45. 12. r Is. 26. 19. Phil. 2. 10.

29 [q]All *they that be* fat upon earth shall eat and worship: [r]all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

All, i. e. many of them, as the word *all* is oft used, as Psal. lxxii. 11; Matt. iii. 5; xvii. 11; Luke vi. 26; John iii. 26; 2 Tim. iii. 9. *They that be fat upon earth*, i. e. kings and princes, and the great men of the world, who are oft described by this metaphor, as Psal. lxxviii. 31; Isa. x. 16; compare Job xv. 27; Psal. xvii. 10; lxxiii. 7; whose conversion to Christ is also foretold in other places, as Psal. xlv. 12; lxxii. 10, 11; Isa. lx. 3, 5, 10; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; Rev. xxi. 24. These are opposed to the poor and miserable part of the world, of whom he speaks in the next words, as also ver. 26, where see the first note. So the sense of the place is, that both poor and rich should embrace the gospel. But the Syriac interpreter renders these words otherwise, *the hungry of the earth*. And another, to the same purpose, *those that are turned to ashes* (for which I should rather say, *they that lie down in ashes*, which is a usual description of poor, afflicted, and humbled persons) *on the ground;* for the first Hebrew word, rendered *fat*, with the change but of one point, signifies *ashes*. *Shall eat*, and be satisfied, as it was more fully expressed, ver. 26; shall feed upon the Bread of life, Christ and all his benefits. *And worship:* this is added to explain the word, and to show what kind of eating he spoke of, not of a carnal, but of a spiritual feast. *They that go down to the dust;* they that languish and draw nigh to death, through poverty, or misery, or anguish of mind and conscience; for such are oft said to *go down into* or to *sit in the dust*, as Job xxx. 19; Psal. xliv. 25; cxiii. 7; Isa. xxix. 4; xlvii. 1. These may be opposed to the *fat* ones mentioned in the first clause of the verse. *None can keep alive his own soul:* this may seem to be a further description of the same persons, and an aggravation of their miserable condition, from this circumstance, that it was not in their power to help themselves; their soul was going down to the dust, as he said in the last foregoing clause, and now he adds that none of them could stop it, or keep himself alive; so that their case was wholly desperate as to themselves; and this drove them out of themselves to seek relief from God, and to receive Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation gladly. Heb. *and* he who (the pronoun relative being here understood, as it is in very many places) *doth not* or *cannot quicken* or *enliven his own soul*, i. e. himself, as *the soul* is oft taken; and *quickening* may be put either for *nourishing*, as Isa. vii. 21, or for *comforting*, as here, ver. 26, or *preserving life*, whether temporal or spiritual and eternal, as Gen. xix. 19; Ezek. xiii. 19; xviii. 27. But these words are and may be rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, and the scope of the place. Having said that all nations should *bow before him*, i. e. before Christ and unto Christ, whom they should own as their Lord and Saviour, he now adds these words, either, 1. As a reason why they did receive him, or believe in him, because (for so the particle *vau* is frequently rendered, as 1 Kings i. 21; xviii. 3, 4; Psal. lx. 12; Isa. xvi. 2; lxiv. 5, and oft elsewhere) *he did not keep alive his own soul*, as he could easily have done, by his Divine power, in spite of all that his enemies could do, but freely gave himself to death for them. Because he laid down his life for sinners, which the Father had commanded him, and he had promised to do, therefore God loved him, John x. 17, 18, and glorified him, and performed his promise made to him upon that condition, that *if he did make his soul an offering for sin, he should see his seed*, &c., Isa. liii. 10. Or, 2. As an amplification or commendation of the faith of the Gentiles in coming and bowing to Christ, *although* (for so also the Hebrew *vau* is often used, as Psal. xcix. 8; Prov. xxvi. 24; Eccles. ix. 16) *he did not keep alive his own soul*, but laid down his own life, and suffered himself to be killed by wicked men; which was one principal reason why the Jews would not believe on him, as is noted, Matt. xxvii. 40, 42, 43, and therefore was a just commendation to the Gentiles, that, notwithstanding this great stumbling-block, believed on him. But this I propose with submission. Only it may be observed that this last clause of the verse in the Hebrew is in the singular number, and therefore more likely to belong to *him*, immediately going before it, which is of the same number, than to the other preceding clauses, which are all expressed in the plural number. And though I know enallage of numbers be very usual, yet they are not to be supposed without necessity.

s Ps. 87. 6.

30 A seed shall serve him; [s]it shall be accounted to the LORD for a generation.

Christ shall not want a seed or posterity, Heb. ii. 13; for though the Jewish nation should generally reject and forsake him, which may seem to be here implied, Christ shall have many disciples or followers, and the Gentiles shall come in their stead. Compare this promise with that, *he shall see his seed*, Isa. liii. 10. Or, their *seed*, i. e. the seed of the Gentile worshippers last mentioned. Christian religion shall not be the business of one age, but, as the Gentiles shall believe in Christ, so shall their posterity in succeeding generations; this being God's usual method, to take children into covenant with their parents, of which see Deut. x. 15; xxx. 19; Psal. lxix. 36; Isa. xliii. 5; xliv. 3. And as when the Jews refused Christ, their children were cast out of the covenant with them; so when the Gentiles embraced the gospel covenant, their children were admitted with them. *It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation;* that believing seed shall be reputed, both by God and men, *the generation*, or *children*, or *people of the*

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Lord, as the Jews formerly were. But upon the Jews' contempt of Christ and the gospel, the Gentiles shall come in their stead, and enjoy their titles and privileges. Compare this place with Psal. lxxxvii. 5.

[a] Ps. 78. 6. & 102. 18. & 145. 4. Isa. 38. 19. Joel 1. 3. See Rom. 4. 11, 22.

31 [a]They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

They; either the converts and worshippers, ver. 27, 29; or their seed last mentioned, ver. 30. Or this may be indefinitely spoken, as such verbs are oft used, *they shall come*, i. e. some or other shall come, and do the work here mentioned, to wit, the apostles and ministers of the gospel. *Shall come*, to wit, from Judea and Jerusalem (from whence the gospel was first to go forth) to the Gentile world, to the several parts whereof the apostles went upon this errand. *His righteousness;* God's righteousness; either, 1. His wonderful grace and mercy to mankind, in giving them Christ and the gospel; for *righteousness* is oft put for *mercy* or *kindness*, as hath been noted again and again. Or, 2. That righteousness which God hath appointed for the justification of sinners, called *the righteousness of faith*, Rom. iii. 21, 22; Phil. iii. 9, which the Jews were ignorant of, and would not submit to, Rom. x. 3, but the Gentiles joyfully embraced. Or, 3. His truth or faithfulness, (which is very frequently and fitly called *righteousness*,) in the performance of those exceeding great and precious promises made and recorded in the Old Testament, and especially those two concerning the sending of the Messias, and concerning the calling of the Gentiles. *That shall be born;* either, 1. Spiritually, i. e. born again; for regeneration is oft called a *birth*, as Psal. lxxxvii. 4, 5; John i. 13; 1 Pet. i. 23, and a creation, Psal. cii. 18. Or rather, 2. Naturally, i. e. unto succeeding generations; whereby David gives us a key to understand this Psalm, and teacheth us that he speaks not here of himself, or of the occurrences of his times, but of things which were to be done in after-ages, even of the spreading of the gospel among the Gentiles, in the time of the New Testament. *That he hath done this*, i. e. they shall declare that this is the work of God, and not of man, and carried on by his only power in the world, against all the wit and force of men. Or rather, *because* (this being added as a proof or demonstration of that *righteousness* of God now mentioned) *he* (i. e. the Lord, plainly understood here, and expressed in the foregoing verse) *hath done* or *wrought it*, to wit, his righteousness; i. e. he hath executed with his hand what he spake with his mouth; he hath demonstrated the truth of his promises by his actions, and by the accomplishment of them.

PSALM XXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter of this Psalm gives us some general discovery of the time of its writing; which was when David was delivered out of his distresses, and quietly settled in his kingdom.

¶ A Psalm of David.

David describeth his own happiness, 1, both in temporal, 2, and in spiritual things, 3—5. His confidence in God's mercy, and vows to dwell in his house for ever, 6.

[a] Jer. 50. 11. Jer. 23. 4. Ezek. 34. 11, 12, 23. [b] Deut. 10. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 25. Rev. 7. 17. [b] Phil. 4. 19.

THE LORD *is* [a]my shepherd; [b]I shall not want.

He hath showed himself to be so by his gracious providences towards me and for me; and he hath taken upon him that office and relation to me by his entering into covenant with me, whereby he hath engaged himself to rule, and feed, and preserve, and heal me, and do all which shepherds do, or are obliged to do, to their flocks; which David very well understood, and had doubtless carefully performed his duty to his sheep; and therefore he strengthens his faith by this consideration, that God was his Shepherd; and as God was a much better Shepherd than he or any man could be, so he might confidently expect more than ordinary benefits from his conduct. *I shall not want*, to wit, any thing which is really necessary for me, either for this life or for the next. But foolish man may think many things to be necessary for him, which the all-wise God knoweth to be not only unnecessary, but hurtful, and therefore mercifully denies what men ignorantly desire to their hurt.

[c] Ezek. 34. 14. † Heb. *pastures of tender grass.* [d] Rev. 7. 17. † Heb. *waters of quietness.*

2 [c]He maketh me to lie down in †green pastures: [d]he leadeth me beside the †still waters.

To lie down; to rest and repose myself at noon, as the manner was in those hot countries. See Cant. i. 7; Isa. xiii. 20; Ezek. xxxiv. 15. *In green pastures;* where there is both delight and plenty of provisions. *He leadeth me*, lest I should wander and perish. Heb. *he leadeth me sweetly* and *gently*, accommodating himself to mine infirmities, as shepherds do to their sheep, Gen. xxxiii. 13; Isa. xl. 11; xlix. 10. *Beside;* or, *to;* the particle *al* being oft put for *el*, as Gen. i. 30; xvi. 7. *The still waters;* quiet and gentle waters, either put into watering-troughs, or running in small and shallow channels; which are opposed to great rivers, which both affright the sheep with their noise, and expose them to the danger of being carried away by their swift and violent streams whilst they are drinking at them.

[e] Ps. 5. 8. & 31. 3. Prov. 8. 20.

3 He restoreth my soul: [e]he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

He restoreth, Heb. *he bringeth it back;* either, 1. From its errors or wandering; or, 2. Into the body, out of which it was even departing and fainting away. He reviveth or comforteth me. Compare Ruth iv. 15; 1 Sam. xxx. 12; Lam. i. 11. *In the paths of righteousness;* in straight, and plain, and safe paths, where the sheep is neither hurt, nor wearied, nor in danger of wandering. By his word he directs me to the right ways of truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and by his Spirit he inclines and enables me to choose them, and to continue to walk in them. *For his name's sake;* not for any worth in me, but merely for the demonstration and glory of his justice, and faithfulness, and goodness.

[f] Job 3. 5. & 10. 21, 22. & 24. 17. Ps. 44. 19. [g] Ps. 3. 6. & 27. 1. & 118. 6. [h] Is. 43. 2.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of [f]the shadow of death, [g]I will fear no evil: [h]for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Through the valley of the shadow of death; through a dark and dismal valley, full of terrors and dangers, as this phrase signifies, Job xxiv. 17; Psal. xliv. 19; cvii. 10, 14; Jer. ii. 6. *I will fear no evil;* I will not give way to my fears, but confidently rely upon God. *Thy rod and thy staff;* two words noting the same thing, and both designing God's pastoral care over him, expressed by the sign and instrument of it. *They comfort me;* the consideration thereof supports me under all my fears and distresses.

[i] Ps. 104. 15. † Heb. *makest fat.* [k] Ps. 92. 10

5 [i]Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou †[k]anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Thou furnishest me with plenty and variety of provisions and comforts, *mine enemies* seeing, and envying, and fretting at it, but not being able to hinder it. *With oil;* or, *ointment*, as the Syriac and Arabic interpreters render it; with aromatical ointments, which were then used at great feasts, Psal. xcii. 10; Amos vi. 6; Matt. vi. 17; Luke vii. 38. The sense is, Thy comforts delight my soul: compare Psal. xlv. 7. *My cup runneth over;* thou hast given me a very plentiful portion, signified by the cup given to the guests by the master of the feast.

† Heb. *to length of days.*

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD †for ever.

Goodness and mercy, i. e. God's favour, and the blessed and comfortable effects and benefits of it. *Shall follow me;* by which emphatical expression he signifies God's admirable freeness and readiness to do good to his people, and his preventing them with blessings. *All the days of my life;* which he justly concludes from the former instances of God's favour to him, because of the unchangeableness of God's nature, and the stability of his covenant and promises. Whereas I have formerly been driven from God's house, I rest assured that I shall now constantly enjoy that blessed privilege of serving and enjoying God in his sanctuary, which I prize more than all my dominions.

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PSALM XXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is generally and probably thought to have been composed by David, upon that solemn occasion of bringing the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the tabernacle which David had built for it, 2 Sam. vi.; wherein he hath a further prospect, even to the temple, which he earnestly desired and intended to build, and which he knew would be built by his son. And when this was done, and the ark brought into it, this Psalm was to be sung, and indeed to this time it seems chiefly directed. For David's Psalms were not only used by himself upon the first occasions for which he made them, but they were committed to the prefects of sacred music, for the use of the church in all succeeding times. And being a prophet, he speaks, as the prophets used, of things to come as if they were already present, and turns his speech to the temple and its gates, as if they were now built. Moreover, because the tabernacle, and temple, and ark were manifest types of Christ, and of his church, and of the place and state of heavenly glory, David extended his thoughts to them also, or at least the Holy Ghost designed to comprehend them under these typical expressions.

¶ A Psalm of David.

David acknowledgeth God's sovereignty over the world, 1, 2. *A description of the persons that shall be of his spiritual kingdom*, 3, 4. *Their blessing*, 5, 6. *An exhortation to receive it*, 7—9. *Who the King of glory is*, 10.

1017.
a Ex. 9. 29. & 19. 5. Deut. 10. 14. Job 41. 11. Ps. 50. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28.

1 THE [a]earth *is* the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

The fulness thereof; all the creatures, and especially the inhabitants wherewith it is replenished. God's general dominion over and interest in all persons and places seems to be here premised and asserted, either, 1. To show his right to choose any nation whom he pleased to be his peculiar people; which privilege being conferred upon the Israelites, was a great stumbling-block to the heathen nations. Or, 2. To set forth the singular kindness and mercy of God to Israel, who chose them out of all the nations of the world to be near to him, and to have special acquaintance with him, although otherwise he had no other relation to them than what he had to all mankind, to wit, that of a Creator and Governor. Or, 3. To demonstrate the excellency of the Jewish worship and religion above all others, because the God whom they served was the God and Maker of the whole world, when the gods of the Gentiles were sorry idols, and esteemed by themselves to be but local and confined deities.

b Gen. 1. 9. Job 38. 6. Ps. 104. 5. & 136. 6. 2 Pet. 3. 5.

2 [b]For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Justly have I said that *the earth is the Lord's*, for he made it, and laid the foundation of it, and that in a wonderful manner. By the *seas* and *floods* he means the whole collection of waters, as well the sea and rivers running into it, as that great abyss of waters which is contained in the bowels of the earth, of which see Gen. vii. 11; xlix. 25; 2 Pet. iii. 5. This is here mentioned as an evidence of God's wise, and powerful, and gracious providence, that he hath built so vast a building upon so weak a foundation as the waters are, Micah vi. 2; and that although the waters are lighter than the earth, and therefore are naturally inclined to be above it, as they were at first; yet God hath so far overruled the inclinations of nature, that the waters shall as it were deny themselves, and run down into channels and caverns of the earth, that so the earth may be a convenient habitation for men and beasts. See Gen. i. 9; Exod. xx. 4; Psal. civ. 6.

c Ps. 15. 1.

3 [c]Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

The hill of the Lord, to wit, Zion or Moriah, the place of God's sanctuary and special presence. This is here subjoined, either, 1. By way of opposition; though God is the God of the whole world, yet he is in a peculiar manner the God of Israel, and to be worshipped no where but in their holy place. Or, 2. As an inference. Having asserted and proved God's authority and dominion over all mankind, and consequently their obligations to serve and worship him, he now proposeth a most necessary and important question, especially in those times, when all nations except Israel were under deep ignorance and errors herein, namely, where, and how, and by whom God will be served, and his favour and blessing may be enjoyed? The place is here described, and the qualification of the persons in the following verses. *Who shall stand*, to wit, to minister before him, as this word is commonly used with respect either to men, as 1 Kings i. 2, compared with x. 8; Dan. i. 5, 19; or to God, as Deut. x. 8; xviii. 7; Dan. vii. 10; Zech. iii. 4. *Standing* is the posture of ministers or servants. So the sense is, Who shall serve God, to wit, with God's acceptation, and to his own advantage? *In his holy place;* in the place which he hath sanctified for his service.

d Is. 33. 15, 16. † Heb. *The clean of hands.* e Job 17. 9. 1 Tim. 2. 8. f Matt. 5. 8. g Ps. 15. 4.

4 [d]†He that hath [e]clean hands, and [f]a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor [g]sworn deceitfully.

Whose actions and conversations are holy and unblamable. It is here very observable, that the character of a right and acceptable worshipper of God is not taken from his nation and relation to Abraham, nor from all those costly and laborious rites and ceremonies of the law, in which the generality of the Israelites pleased themselves, but in moral and spiritual duties, which most of them grossly neglected. *A pure heart;* purged from hypocrisy and inward filthiness, and careful to approve itself to God as well as to men, ordering a man's very thoughts and affections according to God's word. This is fitly added, because a man may keep his hands clean in good measure upon mere worldly motives, or with an evil design, or without any respect to God. *Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity;* either, 1. Who doth not worship idols, which are oft called *vanities* in Scripture. Or, 2. Who doth not swear vainly or falsely, the phrase here being much the same with that in the third commandment, of *taking God's name in vain.* But that seems to be a quite differing phrase, and the *name of God* there mentioned determines the sense of that general phrase to oaths, which without that addition, or something equivalent, is never to my knowledge used in Scripture in that sense. Nor do all those learned men who so expound this place give one instance of that signification of this phrase. And for their other argument for that sense, that this clause is conjoined with the next by the conjunction *vau*, and therefore is to be explained by it, it seems to have no weight, because the same conjunction joins the two first characters together, and yet it is confessed that *clean hands* and *a pure heart* are two distinct and very differing things. Or rather, 3. Who doth not immoderately value and affect, or ardently desire, (as this very phrase of *lifting up the soul* doth oft signify, as Deut. xxiv. 15; Psal. xxv. 1; Jer. xxii. 27; xliv. 14; Ezek. xxiv. 25; Hos. iv. 8,) the vain things of this present life and world, such as honours, riches, pleasures, and the like, which are oft called *vain things* or *vanities* in Scripture, as Psal. iv. 2; cxix. 37; Eccles. i. 2; xii. 8. And this is very fitly mentioned as a character of a truly good man, because hereby he is distinguished from all ungodly men whatsoever, whose inseparable property this is, both in the Old and New Testament, noted to be, to *love vanity*, and to set their hearts chiefly upon the *good* things of this life, such as *corn and wine*, Psal. iv. 2, 6, 7; and to *have their portion in this life*, Psal. xvii. 14; and to *mind earthly things*, Phil. iii. 19; and to be *friends of the world*, James iv. 4; and to *love the world, and the things of the world*, 1 John ii. 15. Whereas good men are every where described to be such as make God *their portion*, Psal. xvi. 5; and prize and desire his favour and service infinitely more than all the enjoyments of this life, yea, even than life itself, Job xxiii. 12; Psal. iv. 6, 7; lxiii. 3; cxix. 72; and such as are *weaned* from earthly things, Psal. cxxxi. 1, 2; and have *their affections set on things above, not on things of the earth*, Col. iii. 2; and *lay not up their treasure in earth, but in heaven*, Matt. vi. 19, 20; all which is directly opposite to this *lifting up the soul to vanity*. *Deceitfully*, Heb. *unto* or *with deceit*, i. e. falsely, or with a purpose of deceiving or injuring others thereby. Under this negative the contrary affirmative is included, that he is one who, when he is called to swear, doth *swear in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness*, Jer. iv. 2.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

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The blessing, i. e. the blessings which God hath promised to his church and people, to wit, *grace and glory, and all other good things*, as they are summed up, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. He and he only shall be truly blessed. *From the Lord;* which is added significantly, by way of opposition to the *blessings* which men received, either from the priests or from other men, which were oftentimes given unto unworthy persons, and in that case were without any effect or benefit; whereas God's blessings are given only to good men, and are always effectual for their good. *Righteousness*, i. e. the blessed fruit or reward of his righteousness, as the *work* is oft put for the reward of it, as Lev. xix. 13; Job vii. 2; Psal. cix. 20. Or, kindness or mercy, and those benefits which flow from it, which are oft called by the name of *righteousness*, as Judg. v. 11; 1 Sam. xii. 7; Psal. xlviii. 10; cxii. 9.

h Ps. 27. 8. & 105. 4. ‖ O God of Jacob.

6 This *is* the generation of them that seek him, that [h] seek thy face, ‖ O Jacob. Selah.

The generation; the true progeny which God regards; whereby he reflects upon them, who boasted and trusted to their carnal generation or descent from Jacob. *That seek him*, to wit, God, mentioned in the end of ver. 5, or his face, as it is more fully expressed in the next clause; i. e. that make it their care and study to know him, and his mind and will, and to please and serve him, as this phrase is usually understood. *Thy face*, i. e. his face, by a familiar change of the person; of which many instances have been already noted; and *his face*, i. e. his grace and favour, which is oft called God's *face*, as Gen. iv. 14; Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15; Psal. xvi. 11; xvii. 2; xliv. 3. And so this phrase is used 2 Chron. vii. 14; Psal. xxvii. 8; Hos. v. 15. *O Jacob;* so the sense is, that seek the true church, here called *Jacob;* that desire the knowledge of it, and conversation with it; in which sense many are said to *seek Solomon's face*, as the phrase is in the Hebrew, 1 Kings x. 24; 2 Chron. ix. 23, and the harlot to *seek* her lover's *face*, Prov. vii. 15. And so this is by some expounded of the Gentiles, who inquired after the true church, and finding it in Jacob, were desirous to become proselytes, and to join themselves to the church of Jacob or Israel. But it must be remembered that the psalmist is not here speaking of the calling of the Gentiles, but only of the character or qualification of the true Jacobites or Israelites, who cannot conveniently be said to *seek the face of Jacob*, i. e. their own. And the phrase of *seeking the face of Jacob*, or *of the church*, is no where used in Scripture. Or, as it is in the margin, *O God of Jacob*. But that seems to be too large a supplement. Or, this is *Jacob*, the pronoun *this* being easily understood out of the beginning of the verse. Or, the generation (which may in the same manner be supplied) of *Jacob*, *Jacob* being here put not for the person, but for the posterity of Jacob, as it is Gen. xlix. 7; Numb. xxiii. 7, 10, 23; Deut. xxxii. 9; Psal. xiv. 7; or for the church or people of God, which is oft called *Jacob* or *Israel*, as Isa. xiv. 1; xli. 8; xliv. 1, 5, 21, &c. So the sense is, This and this only is the true Jacob or Israel, or church of God, and all others are so only in name and title, although they be descended lineally from him. Or, in *Jacob*, the particle *in* being here understood, as it is in Psal. ii. 12; xvii. 12, and in many other places. So the sense of the place is, This is the true generation of them that seek God's face in Jacob, i. e. either in Jacob's land or sanctuary, the only place where God was to be sought; or among the Jacobites or Israelites; by which he insinuates what is expressed Rom. ix. 6, that *all are not Israel that are of Israel*, and that all were not Israelites indeed that were sprung from Jacob, but only those of them who were such as he described, ver. 4. Compare John i. 47; Rom. ii. 28, 29.

i Heb. 9. 8. k Heb. 9. 7. Rev. 11. 19. 15. 5.

7 [i] Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; [k] and the King of glory shall come in.

The question was put, Who shall ascend into God's hill and holy place? ver. 3; to which answer hath been given, and the persons described, ver. 4—6. But because there still were impediments in the way, and there were *gates* and *doors* to this holy place, to shut out those who would ascend thither, therefore he poetically speaks to those *gates* to open and let in the King of glory, who would make way for his subjects and followers. Here is a representation of a triumphant entrance of a king into his royal city and palace; for which the gates use to be enlarged, or at least wide opened. He speaks here of the *gates* and *doors*, either, 1. Of his royal city of *Zion*, through which the ark was at this time to be brought to the tabernacle, which David had built for it, called *everlasting*, either from the solidity and durableness of the matter, or from David's desires and hopes that God would make them such in some sort, because he *loved the gates of Zion*, Psal. lxxxvii. 2. Or rather, 2. Of the temple, which by faith and the Spirit of prophecy he beheld as already built, and accordingly addresseth his speech to it, whose *doors* he calls *everlasting*, not so much because they were made of strong and durable materials, as in opposition of those of the tabernacle, which were removed from place to place, whereas the temple and its doors were constantly fixed in one place; and if the sins of Israel did not hinder, were to abide there for ever, i. e. as long as the Mosaical dispensation was to last, or until the coming of the Messias, as that phrase is very commonly taken in the Old Testament. These gates he bids *lift up their heads*, or tops, either by allusion to those gates which have a portcullis at the top of them, which may be let down or taken up, and accordingly makes the entrance either higher or lower; or that by this figurative address to the gates he might signify the duty of the people to make their gates higher and wider, to give their king a more magnificent entrance. But though this be the literal sense of the place, yet there is also a mystical sense of it, and that too designed by the Holy Ghost. And as the temple was undoubtedly a type of Christ, and of his church, and of heaven itself; so this place may also contain a representation, either of Christ's entrance into his church, or into the hearts of his faithful people, who are here commanded to set open their hearts and souls, which are not unfitly called *everlasting doors*, for his reception; or of his ascension into heaven, where the saints or angels are poetically introduced as preparing the way, and opening the heavenly gates, to receive their Lord and King, returning to his royal habitation with triumph and glory. Compare Psal. xlvii. 5; lxviii. 25; Acts ii. 33; Eph. iv. 8.

The King of glory; the glorious King Jehovah, who dwelt in the temple and between the cherubims; or the Messias, the King of Israel, and of his church, called *the King* or *Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8; James ii. 1, both for that glory which is inherent in him, and that which is purchased by him for his members.

8 Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

This seems to be a prolepsis, or removal of an objection. You will say, What is the cause of this imperious call? and why or for whom must those gates be opened in so solemn and extraordinary a manner? *The Lord strong and mighty:* this contains an answer to the question; He is no ordinary person, no meaner and no other than Jehovah, who hath given so many proofs of his almightiness, who hath subdued all his enemies, and is now returned in triumph. Here is in this and the foregoing verse a sacred dialogue between several persons. And some suppose that the sacred musicians, which attended upon the service of the ark and tabernacle, and were doubtless employed in this solemnity, 2 Sam. vi. 5, were divided into two choirs, whereof one spake the former, and the other the latter verse.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

The same verse is repeated again, partly to shame and awaken the dulness of mankind, who are so hardly brought to a serious preparation for such solemnities; and partly to signify the great worth and importance of the matter, contained under these expressions.

10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

Under whose command are all the hosts of heaven and earth, angels and men, and all other creatures.

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PSALM XXV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed when David was under some straits and pressures, when his outward afflictions were accompanied with inward horrors of conscience for his sins, by which he had forfeited God's favour, and procured these calamities to himself.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David, being distressed by his enemies, taketh his refuge in God, 1—6; *prayeth for the remission of the sins of his youth,* 7. *He showeth the goodness of the Lord to the meek, to such as keep his covenant, to such as fear him,* 8—15. *He prayeth for help in affliction,* 16—18; *and against his enemies,* 19—21; *and to redeem his church from trouble,* 22.

a Ps. 86. 4. & 143. 8. Lam. 3. 41. 1 UNTO [a]thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

i. e. I direct my desires and prayers (which are expressed by this phrase, Psal. xxiv. 4; Jer. xxii. 27; Lam. iii. 41) with hope or expectation of a gracious answer, which also it implies, Deut. xxiv. 15.

b Ps. 22. 5. & 31. 1. & 34. 8. Is. 28. 16. & 49. 23. Rom. 10. 11. c Ps. 13. 4. 2 O my God, I [b]trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, [c]let not mine enemies triumph over me.

Ashamed, i. e. disappointed of my hope, which will be reproachful to me, not without reflection upon thee, of whose power and faithfulness I have made my boast.

3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

Let none that wait on thee be ashamed, with me and for me; for if I be frustrated, all that trust in thee will be discouraged and upbraided with my example. *Let them be ashamed;* blast their wicked designs and hopes. *Which transgress*, or *prevaricate*, or *deal perfidiously* with me, violating their faith given to me. *Without a cause;* without any provocation of mine, or without any sufficient reason.

d Ex. 33. 13. Ps. 5. 1. & 27. 11. & 86. 11. & 119. & 143. 8, 10. 4 [d]Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

Thy ways, i. e. the way of thy precepts, which I ought to do in my circumstances and difficulties; by what methods I may obtain thy favour and help. Whatsoever thou dost with me as to other things, grant me this favour, teach me my duty, and cause me to keep close to it, notwithstanding all temptations to the contrary.

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

In thy truth, i. e. in the true and right way prescribed in thy word, which is oft called *truth*, as Psal. cxix. 30; John viii. 45, 46; xvi. 13, &c. Or, *by* or *because of thy truth*, i. e. because thou art faithful, do thou lead or guide me as thou hast promised to do. *The God of my salvation*, i. e. who hast saved me formerly, and hast engaged to save me, and from whom alone I expect salvation.

e Ps. 103. 17. & 106. 1. & 107. 1. Is. 63. 15. Jer. 33. 11. † Heb. *thy bowels.* 6 Remember, O LORD, [e]†thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they *have been* ever of old.

O consider thy own merciful nature, and thy former manifold favours vouchsafed to me, and to other miserable sinners, and do like thyself. Thou hast been gracious to such as I am from the beginning of the world to this day, and to me in particular from my very infancy, as he oft acknowledgeth in this book; yea, from all eternity thou hast had a good will to me, and therefore do not now desist and desert me.

f Job 13. 26. & 20. 11. Jer. 3. 25. g Ps. 51. 1. 7 Remember not [f]the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: [g]according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

Remember not, so as to lay to my charge, the sins committed in my young and tender years, Eccles. xi. 9, 10; which God frequently punisheth in riper age, Job xiii. 26; Jer. iii. 25, and therefore he now prays that God would not deal so with him. *Nor my transgressions;* my succeeding or other sins, which either have been acted by me, or may be imputed to me. Being a sinner, I have nothing to plead for myself but thy free *mercy* and goodness, which I now implore.

8 Good and upright *is* the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

Good, i. e. bountiful and gracious to sinners, ready to do good, and delighting in it. *Upright*, or, *right*, i. e. holy and true, sincere in making promises, and in all his declarations and offers of mercy to sinners, and faithful in fulfilling them. Being such a one, he will not be wanting to such poor sinners as I am, but will guide them by his word, and Spirit, and gracious providence into the way of life and peace. By *sinners* he doth not understand all that are so; not such as are obstinate, and proud, and scornful, whom God hath declared that he will not teach nor direct, but will leave them to the errors and lusts of their own hearts, and will blind and harden them to their ruin, as is often expressed in Scripture; but only such as, being truly sensible of their sins, do humbly and earnestly seek God for his grace and mercy, or such as are *meek*, as the next verse explains it; for these he will not fail to assist and relieve.

9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

The meek, i. e. the humble and lowly, such as meekly submit themselves to God's hand and word, and are willing and desirous to be directed and governed by him. *In judgment*, i. e. in the paths of judgment; or in the right way wherein they should walk, as the next clause explains this; or by the rule of his word, which is oft called his *judgment*, or *judgments*. Or, *with judgment*, i. e. with a wise and provident care, and a due regard to all their circumstances. See Jer. x. 24; 1 Cor. x. 13. *His way;* either God's way, which God prescribes; or his own way, in which he ought to walk.

10 All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

All the dealings of God with them, yea, even those that are afflictive and grievous to the flesh, are done in kindness and faithfulness to them, as being very necessary for them, and tending to their great advantage. *His covenant*, i. e. the laws or conditions required of them by his covenant; or, as it follows, his testimonies, i. e. his precepts, which are the testimonies or witnesses of God's will, and of man's duty.

h Ps. 31. 3. & 79. 9. & 109. 21. & 143. 11. i See Rom. 5. 20. 11 [h]For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; [i]for it *is* great.

For thy name's sake, i. e. for the honour of thy goodness and truth, which is concerned herein. *For it is great;* and therefore none but such a God can pardon it, and nothing but thy own name can move thee to do it; and the pardoning of it will well become so great and good a God, and will tend much to the illustration of thy glory, as the greatness and desperateness of the disease advanceth the honour and praise of the physician. Or this may be urged, not as an argument to move God, but as the reason that moved him to pray so earnestly, and that for God's name's sake. Or, *though* (as this particle is oft rendered, as Exod. xxxiv. 9; Psal. xli. 4, and elsewhere) *it be great.* Possibly he speaks of his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba. Or, *for* or *though it be much* or *manifold;* for the Hebrew word signifies both *great* and *much.*

12 What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? [k]him shall he teach in the way *that* he shall choose. k Ps. 37. 23.

What man is he, i. e. whosoever he be, whether Jew or Gentile, whether more innocent, or a greater sinner, which is my case. *That he shall choose*, i. e. which God appointeth or approveth. Or, which *he*, i. e. such person, *should* choose; for the future tense is oft put potentially, and so as to express a man's duty, as Gen. xx. 9; Mal. i. 6; ii. 7.

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13 [l] His soul † shall dwell at ease; and [m] his seed shall inherit the earth.

[l] Prov. 19. 23.
[m] Deut. 11. 22, 29.

Shall dwell, Heb. *shall lodge*, i. e. continue, as this word signifies. Job xvii. 2; Prov. xix. 23. It notes the constancy and stability of his happiness, both whilst he lives, and when he is dead; which the next clause seems to suppose. *At ease*, Heb. *in good*, i. e. in the possession and enjoyment of the true good. *The earth*, or, *the land*, to wit, Canaan; which was promised and given, as an earnest of the whole covenant of grace, and all its promises, and therefore is synecdochically put for all of them. The sense is, his seed shall be blessed.

14 [n] The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; ‖ and he will shew them his covenant.

[n] Prov. 3. 32. Neh. 1. 7. Ps. 111. 5. Heb. *and his covenant to make them know it.*

The secret of the Lord; either, 1. His word and counsel, to direct and guide them in the right way, which he oft mentions here as a singular blessing, ver. 8, 9, 12, to show them their duty in all conditions, and the way to their eternal salvation. And so this may seem to be explained by the following words, *he will show them his covenant.* And this, though it was revealed, yet might be called a *secret*, because of the many and deep mysteries in it, and because it is said to be hid from many of them to whom it was revealed, Matt. xi. 25; 2 Cor. iii. 13—15; iv. 3; and it is not to be understood to any purpose without the illumination of their minds by God's Spirit, as is manifest from Psal. cxix. 18, 19, and many other places of Scripture. Or rather, 2. His love and favour, which is called his *secret*, Job xxix. 4; Prov. iii. 32, and that very fitly, because it is known to none but him that enjoyeth it, Prov. xiv. 10; Rev. ii. 17. Or his gracious and fatherly providence, which is here said to be *with them;* or, as it is in the Hebrew, *towards them*, taking care of them, and working for them; even then when God seems to frown upon them. *He will show them his covenant*, or, *and he will make them to know* (for the infinitive is here thought to be put for the future tense of the indicative, as it is Eccles. iii. 14, 15, 18; Hos. ix. 13; xii. 3) *his covenant*, i. e. he will make them clearly to understand it, both its duties or conditions, and its blessings or privileges; neither of which ungodly men rightly understand. Or, he will make them to know it by experience, or by God's making it good to them; as, on the contrary, God threatens to make ungodly men to *know his breach of promise*, Numb. xiv. 34. Or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *and his covenant* (is, i. e. he hath engaged himself by his promise or covenant) *to make them know* it, to wit, his secret, i. e. that he will manifest either his word or his favour to them.

15 [o] Mine eyes *are* ever toward the LORD; for he shall † pluck my feet out of the net.

[o] Ps. 141. 8.
† Heb. *bring forth.*

i. e. My trust is in him, my expectation of relief is from him only, and he will deliver me out of all my temptations and tribulations.

16 [p] Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I *am* desolate and afflicted.

[p] Ps. 69. 16. & 86. 16.

Turn thee unto me; turn thy face and favour to me. O thou who now hast turned thy back upon me, and forsaken me. *I am desolate;* destitute of all other hopes and succours; persecuted by mine enemies, and forsaken by the most of my friends; as he was in Absalom's rebellion.

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: *O* bring thou me out of my distresses.

The troubles of my heart; my outward troubles are accompanied with grievous torments of my mind and heart for my sins, which have procured them, and thy great displeasure manifested in them.

18 [q] Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

[q] 2 Sam. 16. 12.

Look upon with compassion, as Exod. iii. 7, 8; Psal. xxxi. 7; cvi. 44. *My sins;* the procuring and continuing causes of my trouble.

19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with † cruel hatred.

† Heb. *hatred of violence.*

Consider, Heb. *look upon*, as ver. 18, to wit, with a revengeful eye, as Exod. xiv. 24; 1 Chron. xii. 17; Psal. civ. 32. For this general expression of *looking upon* is taken several ways in Scripture, and is to be determined by the context. *Cruel*, Heb. *violent* or *injurious*, either without any cause given by me; or without any bounds, or in an implacable manner.

20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: [r] let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

[r] ver. 2.

My soul, i. e. myself or my life, as that word is commonly taken; for his soul was out of his enemies' reach, who could only *kill* his *body*, Luke xii. 4.

21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

Though I have greatly offended thee, yet remember that I have dealt honestly and sincerely with mine enemies, whilst they have dealt falsely and injuriously with me; and therefore judge between them and me, and deal with me according to the righteousness of my cause, and carriage towards them.

22 [s] Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

[s] Ps. 130. 8.

If thou wilt not pity and help me, yet spare thy people, who suffer for my sake, and in my sufferings.

PSALM XXVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was certainly made by David when he was in distress, and particularly when he was falsely accused and defamed by his adversaries, as he frequently was by Saul and his courtiers; and therefore for his vindication he makes a solemn appeal to God, and a protestation of his own innocency, to which he was forced by their clamours and reproaches.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David declareth his integrity and innocency, 1—3. *His hatred to the congregation of the wicked*, 4, 5. *He publisheth God's works*, 7; *loves to dwell in his house*, 8. *He prays for deliverance from his enemies*, 9, 10, *and promises thankfulness to God*, 11, 12.

JUDGE [a] me, O LORD; for I have [b] walked in mine integrity: [c] I have trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* I shall not slide.

[a] Ps. 7. 8.
[b] ver. 11. 2 Kin. 20. 3. Prov. 20. 7.
[c] Ps. 26. 7. & 31. 14. Prov. 29. 25.

Judge me, i. e. plead my cause, or give sentence for me; as this phrase is commonly used, as Psal. x. 18; xliii. 1; lxxii. 4; Isa. i. 17. I can obtain no right from men. The supreme and subordinate magistrates are mine implacable and resolved enemies. Do thou therefore do me justice against them, *for I have walked in mine integrity;* though they accuse me of many crimes, they can prove none of them, and thou and mine own conscience, and theirs too, are witnesses for me, that my carriage towards them hath been innocent and unblamable. I have committed my cause and affairs to thee, as to a just Judge and merciful Father, and my hope and trust is fixed upon thee alone; therefore thou wilt not deceive my trust, but wilt uphold me against all mine enemies; for thou hast promised to save those that trust in thee. Or, that *I shall not slide* or *fall*. So this declares the matter of his trust.

2 [d] Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

[d] Ps. 7. 9. & 17. 3. & 66. 10. & 139. 23. Zech. 13. 9.

Because it is possible that I may deceive myself, and be partial in my cause, or at least mine enemies will so judge of me, I appeal to thee, O thou Judge of hearts, and beg that thou wouldst search and try me by such ways and means as thou seest fit, and make me known to myself, and to the world, and convince mine enemies of mine integrity.

3 For thy lovingkindness *is* before mine eyes: and [e] I have walked in thy truth.

[e] 2 Kings 20. 3.

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but of one
ied, as it was

more fully expressed, ver. 26; shall feed upon the Bread of life, Christ and all his benefits. *And worship:* this is added to explain the word, and to show what kind of eating he spoke of, not of a carnal, but of a spiritual feast. *They that go down to the dust;* they that languish and draw nigh to death, through poverty, or misery, or anguish of mind and conscience; for such are oft said to *go down into* or to *sit in the dust*, as Job xxx. 19; Psal. xliv. 25; cxiii. 7; Isa. xxix. 4; xlvii. 1. These may be opposed to the *fat* ones mentioned in the first clause of the verse. *None can keep alive his own soul:* this may seem to be a further description of the same persons, and an aggravation of their miserable condition, from this circumstance, that it was not in their power to help themselves; their soul was going down to the dust, as he said in the last foregoing clause, and now he adds that none of them could stop it, or keep himself alive; so that their case was wholly desperate as to themselves; and this drove them out of themselves to seek relief from God, and to receive Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation gladly. Heb. *and* he who (the pronoun relative being here understood, as it is in very many places) *doth not* or *cannot quicken* or *enliven his own soul*, i. e. himself, as *the soul* is oft taken; and *quickening* may be put either for *nourishing*, as Isa. vii. 21, or for *comforting*, as here, ver. 26, or *preserving life*, whether temporal or spiritual and eternal, as Gen. xix. 19; Ezek. xiii. 19; xviii. 27. But these words are and may be rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, and the scope of the place. Having said that all nations should *bow before him*, i. e. before Christ and unto Christ, whom they should own as their Lord and Saviour, he now adds these words, either, 1. As a reason why they did receive him, or believe in him, because (for so the particle *vau* is frequently rendered, as 1 Kings i. 21; xviii. 3, 4; Psal. lx. 12; Isa. xvi. 2; lxiv. 5, and oft elsewhere) *he did not keep alive his own soul*, as he could easily have done, by his Divine power, in spite of all that his enemies could do, but freely gave himself to death for them. Because he laid down his life for sinners, which the Father had commanded him, and he had promised to do, therefore God loved him, John x. 17, 18, and glorified him, and performed his promise made to him upon that condition, that *if he did make his soul an offering for sin, he should see his seed*, &c., Isa. liii. 10. Or, 2. As an amplification or commendation of the faith of the Gentiles in coming and bowing to Christ, *although* (for so also the Hebrew *vau* is often used, as Psal. xcix. 8; Prov. xxvi. 24; Eccles. ix. 16) *he did not keep alive his own soul*, but laid down his own life, and suffered himself to be killed by wicked men; which was one principal reason why the Jews would not believe on him, as is noted, Matt. xxvii. 40, 42, 43, and therefore was a just commendation to the Gentiles, that, notwithstanding this great stumbling-block, believed on him. But this I propose with submission. Only it may be observed that this last clause of the verse in the Hebrew is in the singular number, and therefore more likely to belong to *him*, immediately going before it, which is of the same number, than to the other preceding clauses, which are all expressed in the plural number. And though I know enallage of numbers be very usual, yet they are not to be supposed without necessity.

30 A seed shall serve him; [a] it shall be [a] Ps. 87. 6.
accounted to the LORD for a generation.

Christ shall not want a seed or posterity, Heb. ii. 13; for though the Jewish nation should generally reject and forsake him, which may seem to be here implied, Christ shall have many disciples or followers, and the Gentiles shall come in their stead. Compare this promise with that, *he shall see his seed*, Isa. liii. 10. Or, their *seed*, i. e. the seed of the Gentile worshippers last mentioned. Christian religion shall not be the business of one age, but, as the Gentiles shall believe in Christ, so shall their posterity in succeeding generations; this being God's usual method, to take children into covenant with their parents, of which see Deut. x. 15; xxx. 19; Psal. lxix. 36; Isa. xliii. 5; xliv. 3. And as when the Jews refused Christ, their children were cast out of the covenant with them; so when the Gentiles embraced the gospel covenant, their children were admitted with them. *It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation;* that believing seed shall be reputed, both by God and men, *the generation*, or *children*, or *people of the*

[illegible] But upon the Jews' con-
[illegible] the Gentiles shall come in
[illegible] privileges. Compare

[illegible] shall come, and shall declare
[illegible] into a people that shall
[illegible] hath done *this.*

[illegible] 29; Or this may be in-
[illegible] *they shall come,*
[illegible] to the work here men-
[illegible] ministers of the gospel.
[illegible] and Jerusalem (from
[illegible] in the Gentile world.
[illegible] proofs went upon this
[illegible] righteousness; either, 1.
[illegible] in giving them
[illegible] is oft put for *mercy*
[illegible] and again. Or, 2.
[illegible] appointed for the justi-
[illegible] *righteousness of faith*, Rom.
[illegible] the Jews were ignorant of,
[illegible] but the Gentiles joy-
[illegible] (which is
[illegible] righteousness,) in the per-
[illegible] and precious promises
[illegible] Testament, and especially
[illegible] of the Messias, and con-
[illegible] *That shall be born;*
[illegible] for regeneration is
[illegible] 3; John i. 13; 1 Pet.
[illegible] Or rather, 2. Naturally,
[illegible] ; wherefore David gives
[illegible] and teacheth us that he
[illegible] of the occurrences of his
[illegible] to be done in after-ages,
[illegible] among the Gentiles, in
[illegible] *That he hath done this,*
[illegible] the work of God, and not
[illegible] his only power in the world,
[illegible] of men. Or rather, *because*
[illegible] declaration of that *right-*
[illegible] e. the Lord, plainly
[illegible] in the foregoing verse; *hath*
[illegible] righteousness; i. e. he hath
[illegible] spoken with his mouth; he
[illegible] promises by his actions,
[illegible] of them.

PSALM XXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

[illegible] several discovery of the
[illegible] was delivered out of his
[illegible] exile.

A Psalm of David.

[illegible] 1, *both in temporal,* 2,
[illegible] *His confidence in God's*
[illegible] *he is sure for ever,* 6.

1 [illegible] [b] my shepherd; [b] I shall

[illegible] by his gracious provi-
[illegible] and safe path taken upon
[illegible] by his entering into co-
[illegible] and so all which sheep-
[illegible] their flocks: which David
[illegible] carefully performed
[illegible] he stirreth his faith
[illegible] he was Shepherd; and as
[illegible] in he or any man could
[illegible] more than ordinary
[illegible] *not want,* to wit, any
[illegible] me, either for this life or
[illegible] may think many things to
[illegible] God knoweth to be
[illegible] and therefore mercifully
[illegible] are to their hurt.

2 [c] He maketh me to lie down in † green [c] Ezek. 34. 14.
pastures; [d] he leadeth me beside the † still
waters. [d] Rev. 7. 17. † Heb. waters of rests.

To lie down; to rest and repose myself at noon, as the manner was in those hot countries. See Cant. i. 7; Isa. xiii. 20; Ezek. xxxiv. 15. *In green pastures;* where there is both delight and plenty of provisions. *He leadeth me,* lest I should wander and perish. Heb. *he leadeth me sweetly* and *gently,* accommodating himself to mine infirmities, as shepherds do to their sheep. Gen. xxxiii. 13; Isa. xl. 11; xlix. 10. *Beside;* or, *to;* the particle *al* being oft put for *el*, as Gen. i. 30; xvi. 7. *The still waters;* quiet and gentle waters, either put into watering-troughs, or running in small and shallow channels; which are opposed to great rivers, which both affright the sheep with their noise, and expose them to the danger of being carried away by their swift and violent streams whilst they are drinking at them.

3 He restoreth my soul: [e] he leadeth [e] Psa. 5. 8.
me in the paths of righteousness for his
name's sake.

He restoreth, Heb. *he bringeth it back;* either, 1. From its errors or wandering; or, 2. Into the body, out of which it was even' departing and fainting away. He reviveth or comforteth me. Compare Ruth iv. 15; 1 Sam. xxx. 12; Lam. i. 11. *In the paths of righteousness;* in straight, and plain, and safe paths, where the sheep is neither hurt, nor wearied, nor in danger of wandering. By his word he directs me to the right ways of truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and by his Spirit he inclines and enables me to choose them, and to continue to walk in them. *For his name's sake;* not for any worth in me, but merely for the demonstration and glory of his justice, and faithfulness, and goodness.

4 Yea, though I walk through the val- [f] Job 3. 5. Psa. 44. 19. Psa. 107. 10. Jer. 2. 6.
ley of [f] the shadow of death, [g] I will fear [g] Psa. 27. 1, 3. Psa. 46. 1, 2.
no evil: [h] for thou *art* with me; thy rod [h] Psa. 71. 21. Isa. 41. 10. Isa. 43. 2.
and thy staff they comfort me.

Through the valley of the shadow of death; through a dark and dismal valley, full of terrors and dangers, as this phrase signifies, Job xxiv. 17; Psal. xliv. 19; cvii. 10, 14; Jer. ii. 6. *I will fear no evil;* I will not give way to my fears, but confidently rely upon God. *Thy rod and thy staff;* two words noting the same thing, and both designing God's pastoral care over him, expressed by the sign and instrument of it. *They comfort me;* the consideration thereof supports me under all my fears and distresses.

5 [i] Thou preparest a table before me [i] Psa. 104. 15.
in the presence of mine enemies: thou
† [k] anointest my head with oil; my cup [k] Heb. 92. 10. † Heb. maketh fat.
runneth over.

Thou furnishest me with plenty and variety of provisions and comforts, *mine enemies* seeing, and envying, and fretting at it, but not being able to hinder it. *With oil;* or, *ointment*, as the Syriac and Arabic interpreters render it; with aromatical ointments, which were then used at great feasts, Psal. xcii. 10; Amos vi. 6; Matt. vi. 17; Luke vii. 38. The sense is, Thy comforts delight my soul: compare Psal. xlv. 7. *My cup runneth over;* thou hast given me a very plentiful portion, signified by the cup given to the guests by the master of the feast.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall fol- † Heb. to length of days.
low me all the days of my life: and I will
dwell in the house of the LORD † for ever.

Goodness and mercy, i. e. God's favour, and the blessed and comfortable effects and benefits of it. *Shall follow me;* by which emphatical expression he signifies God's admirable freeness and readiness to do good to his people, and his preventing them with blessings. *All the days of my life;* which he justly concludes from the former instances of God's favour to him, because of the unchangeableness of God's nature, and the stability of his covenant and promises. Whereas I have formerly been driven from God's house, I rest assured that I shall now constantly enjoy the blessed privilege of serving and worshipping him in his sanctuary, which I [illegible]

2 [c]He maketh me to lie down in †green pastures: [d]he leadeth me beside the † still waters.

[c] Ezek. 34. 14
† Heb. *pastures of tender grass.*
[d] Rev. 7. 17. † Heb. *waters of quietness.*

To lie down; to rest and repose myself at noon, as the manner was in those hot countries. See Cant. i. 7; Isa. xiii. 20; Ezek. xxxiv. 15. *In green pastures;* where there is both delight and plenty of provisions. *He leadeth me,* lest I should wander and perish. Heb. *he leadeth me sweetly* and *gently,* accommodating himself to mine infirmities, as shepherds do to their sheep. Gen. xxxiii. 13; Isa. xl. 11; xlix. 10. *Beside;* or, *to;* the particle *al* being oft put for *el,* as Gen. i. 30; xvi. 7. *The still waters;* quiet and gentle waters, either put into watering-troughs, or running in small and shallow channels; which are opposed to great rivers, which both affright the sheep with their noise, and expose them to the danger of being carried away by their swift and violent streams whilst they are drinking at them.

3 He restoreth my soul: [e]he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

[e] Ps. 5. 8. & 31. 3. Prov. 8. 20.

He restoreth, Heb. *he bringeth it back;* either, 1. From its errors or wandering; or, 2. Into the body, out of which it was even departing and fainting away. He reviveth or comforteth me. Compare Ruth iv. 15; 1 Sam. xxx. 12; Lam. i. 11. *In the paths of righteousness;* in straight, and plain, and safe paths, where the sheep is neither hurt, nor wearied, nor in danger of wandering. By his word he directs me to the right ways of truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and by his Spirit he inclines and enables me to choose them, and to continue to walk in them. *For his name's sake;* not for any worth in me, but merely for the demonstration and glory of his justice, and faithfulness, and goodness.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of [f]the shadow of death, [g]I will fear no evil: [h]for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

[f] Job 3. 5. & 10. 21, 22. & 24. 17. Ps. 44. 19.
[g] Ps. 3. 6. & 27. 1. & 118. 6.
[h] Is. 43. 2.

Through the valley of the shadow of death; through a dark and dismal valley, full of terrors and dangers, as this phrase signifies. Job xxiv. 17; Psal. xliv. 19; cvii. 10, 14; Jer. ii. 6. *I will fear no evil;* I will not give way to my fears, but confidently rely upon God. *Thy rod and thy staff;* two words noting the same thing, and both designing God's pastoral care over him, expressed by the sign and instrument of it. *They comfort me;* the consideration thereof supports me under all my fears and distresses.

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[i] Ps. 104. 15.
† Heb. *makest fat.*
[k] Ps. 92. 10

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6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD † for ever.

† Heb. *to length of days*

Goodness and mercy, i. e. God's favour, and the blessed and comfortable effects and benefits of it. *Shall follow me;* by which emphatical expression he signifies God's admirable freeness and readiness to do good to his people, and his preventing them with blessings. *All the days of my life;* which he justly concludes from the former instances of God's favour to him, because of the unchangeableness of God's nature, and the stability of his covenant and promises. Whereas I have formerly been driven from God's house, I rest assured that I shall now constantly enjoy that blessed privilege of serving and enjoying God in his sanctuary, which I prize more than all my dominions.

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Israel were under deep ignorance and errors herein, namely, where, and how, and by whom God will be served, and his favour and blessing may be enjoyed? The place is here described, and the qualification of the persons in the following verses. *Who shall stand*, to wit, to minister before him, as this word is commonly used with respect either to men, as 1 Kings i. 2, compared with x. 8; Dan. i. 5, 19; or to God, as Deut. x. 8; xviii. 7; Dan. vii. 10; Zech. iii. 4. *Standing* is the posture of ministers or servants. So the sense is, Who shall serve God, to wit, with God's acceptation, and to his own advantage? *In his holy place*; in the place which he hath sanctified for his service.

4 [d]†He that hath [e]clean hands, and [f]a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor [g]sworn deceitfully.

[d] Is. 33. 15, 16. [*] Heb. *The clean of hands.* [e] Job 17. 9. 1 Tim. 2. 8. [f] Matt. 5. 8. [g] Ps. 15. 4.

Whose actions and conversations are holy and unblamable. It is here very observable, that the character of a right and acceptable worshipper of God is not taken from his nation and relation to Abraham, nor from all those costly and laborious rites and ceremonies of the law, in which the generality of the Israelites pleased themselves, but in moral and spiritual duties, which most of them grossly neglected. *A pure heart*; purged from hypocrisy and inward filthiness, and careful to approve itself to God as well as to men, ordering a man's very thoughts and affections according to God's word. This is fitly added, because a man may keep his hands clean in good measure upon mere worldly motives, or with an evil design, or without any respect to God. *Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity*; either, 1. Who doth not worship idols, which are oft called *vanities* in Scripture. Or, 2. Who doth not swear vainly or falsely, the phrase here being much the same with that in the third commandment, of *taking God's name in vain*. But that seems to be a quite differing phrase, and the *name of God* there mentioned determines the sense of that general phrase to oaths, which without that addition, or something equivalent, is never to my knowledge used in Scripture in that sense. Nor do all those learned men who so expound this place give one instance of that signification of this phrase. And for their other argument for that sense, that this clause is conjoined with the next by the conjunction *vau*, and therefore is to be explained by it, it seems to have no weight, because the same conjunction joins the two first characters together, and yet it is confessed that *clean hands* and *a pure heart* are two distinct and very differing things. Or rather, 3. Who doth not immoderately value and affect, or ardently desire, (as this very phrase of *lifting up the soul* doth oft signify, as Deut. xxiv. 15; Psal. xxv. 1; Jer. xxii. 27; xliv. 14; Ezek. xxiv. 25; Hos. iv. 8,) the vain things of this present life and world, such as honours, riches, pleasures, and the like, which are oft called *vain things* or *vanities* in Scripture, as Psal. iv. 2; cxix. 37; Eccles. i. 2; xii. 8. And this is very fitly mentioned as a character of a truly good man, because hereby he is distinguished from all ungodly men whatsoever, whose inseparable property this is, both in the Old and New Testament, noted to be, to *love vanity*, and to set their hearts chiefly upon the *good* things of this life, such as *corn and wine*, Psal. iv. 2, 6, 7; and to *have their portion in this life*, Psal. xvii. 14; and to *mind earthly things*, Phil. iii. 19; and to be *friends of the world*, James iv. 4; and to *love the world, and the things of the world*, 1 John ii. 15. Whereas good men are every where described to be such as make God *their portion*, Psal. xvi. 5; and prize and desire his favour and service infinitely more than all the enjoyments of this life, yea, even than life itself, Job xxiii. 12; Psal. iv. 6, 7; lxiii. 3; cxix. 72; and such as are *weaned* from earthly things, Psal. cxxxi. 1, 2; and have *their affections set on things above, not on things of the earth*, Col. iii. 2; and *lay not up their treasure in earth, but in heaven*, Matt. vi. 19, 20; all which is directly opposite to this *lifting up the soul to vanity*. *Deceitfully*, Heb. *unto* or *with deceit*, i. e. falsely, or with a purpose of deceiving or injuring others thereby. Under this negative the contrary affirmative is included, that he is one who, when he is called to swear, doth *swear in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness*, Jer. iv. 2.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

glory, who would make way for his subjects and followers. Here is a representation of a triumphant entrance of a king into his royal city and palace; for which the gates use to be enlarged, or at least wide opened. He speaks here of the *gates* and *doors*, either, 1. Of his royal city of *Zion*, through which the ark was at this time to be brought to the tabernacle, which David had built for it, called *everlasting*, either from the solidity and durableness of the matter, or from David's desires and hopes that God would make them such in some sort, because he *loved the gates of Zion*, Psal. lxxxvii. 2. Or rather, 2. Of the temple, which by faith and the Spirit of prophecy he beheld as already built, and accordingly addresseth his speech to it, whose *doors* he calls *everlasting*, not so much because they were made of strong and durable materials, as in opposition to those of the tabernacle, which were removed from place to place, whereas the temple and its doors were constantly fixed in one place; and if the sins of Israel did not hinder, were to abide there for ever, i. e. as long as the Mosaical dispensation was to last, or until the coming of the Messias, as that phrase is very commonly taken in the Old Testament. These gates he bids *lift up their heads*, or tops, either by allusion to those gates which have a portcullis at the top of them, which may be let down or taken up, and accordingly makes the entrance either higher or lower; or that by this figurative address to the gates he might signify the duty of the people to make their gates higher and wider, to give their king a more magnificent entrance. But though this be the literal sense of the place, yet there is also a mystical sense of it, and that too designed by the Holy Ghost. And as the temple was undoubtedly a type of Christ, and of his church, and of heaven itself; so this place may also contain a representation, either of Christ's entrance into his church, or into the hearts of his faithful people, who are here commanded to set open their hearts and souls, which are not unfitly called *everlasting doors*, for his reception; or of his ascension into heaven, where the saints or angels are poetically introduced as preparing the way, and opening the heavenly gates, to receive their Lord and King, returning to his royal habitation with triumph and glory. Compare Psal. xlvii. 5; lxviii. 25; Acts ii. 33; Eph. iv. 8.

The King of glory; the glorious King Jehovah, who dwelt in the temple and between the cherubims; or the Messias, the King of Israel, and of his church, called *the King of glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8; James ii. 1, both for that glory which is inherent in him, and that which is purchased by him for his members.

8 Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

This seems to be a prolepsis, or removal of an objection. You will say, What is the cause of this imperious call? and why or for whom must those gates be opened in so solemn and extraordinary a manner? *The Lord strong and mighty*; this contains an answer to the question: He is no ordinary person, no meaner and no other than Jehovah, who hath given so many proofs of his almightiness, who hath subdued all his enemies, and is now returned in triumph. Here is in this and the foregoing verse a sacred dialogue between several persons. And some suppose that the sacred musicians, which attended upon the service of the ark and tabernacle, and were doubtless employed in this solemnity, 2 Sam. vi. 5, were divided into two choirs, whereof one spake the former, and the other the latter verse.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

The same verse is repeated again, partly to shame and awaken the dulness of mankind, who are so hardly brought to a serious preparation for such solemnities; and partly to signify the great worth and importance of the matter, contained under these expressions.

10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

Under whose command are all the hosts of heaven and earth, angels and men, and all other creatures.

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glory, who would make way for his subjects and followers. Here is a representation of a triumphant entrance of a king into his royal city and palace; for which the gates use to be enlarged, or at least wide opened. He speaks here of the *gates* and *doors*, either, 1. Of his royal city of *Zion*, through which the ark was at this time to be brought to the tabernacle, which David had built for it, called *everlasting*, either from the solidity and durableness of the matter, or from David's desires and hopes that God would make them such in some sort, because he *loved the gates of Zion*, Psal. lxxxvii. 2. Or rather, 2. Of the temple, which by faith and the Spirit of prophecy he beheld as already built, and accordingly addresseth his speech to it, whose *doors* he calls *everlasting*, not so much because they were made of strong and durable materials, as in opposition of those of the tabernacle, which were removed from place to place, whereas the temple and its doors were constantly fixed in one place; and if the sins of Israel did not hinder, were to abide there for ever, i. e. as long as the Mosaical dispensation was to last, or until the coming of the Messias, as that phrase is very commonly taken in the Old Testament. These gates he bids *lift up their heads*, or tops, either by allusion to those gates which have a portcullis at the top of them, which may be let down or taken up, and accordingly makes the entrance either higher or lower; or that by this figurative address to the gates he might signify the duty of the people to make their gates higher and wider, to give their king a more magnificent entrance. But though this be the literal sense of the place, yet there is also a mystical sense of it, and that too designed by the Holy Ghost. And as the temple was undoubtedly a type of Christ, and of his church, and of heaven itself; so this place may also contain a representation, either of Christ's entrance into his church, or into the hearts of his faithful people, who are here commanded to set open their hearts and souls, which are not unfitly called *everlasting doors*, for his reception; or of his ascension into heaven, where the saints or angels are poetically introduced as preparing the way, and opening the heavenly gates, to receive their Lord and King, returning to his royal habitation with triumph and glory. Compare Psal. xlvii. 5; lxviii. 25; Acts ii. 33; Eph. iv. 8.

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Under whose command are all the hosts of heaven and earth, angels and men, and all other creatures.

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which God frequently punisheth in riper age, Job xiii. 26; Jer. iii. 25, and therefore he now prays that God would not deal so with him. *Nor my transgressions;* my succeeding or other sins, which either have been acted by me, or may be imputed to me. Being a sinner, I have nothing to plead for myself but thy free *mercy* and goodness, which I now implore.

8 Good and upright *is* the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

Good, i. e. bountiful and gracious to sinners, ready to do good, and delighting in it. *Upright*, or, *right*, i. e. holy and true, sincere in making promises, and in all his declarations and offers of mercy to sinners, and faithful in fulfilling them. Being such a one, he will not be wanting to such poor sinners as I am, but will guide them by his word, and Spirit, and gracious providence into the way of life and peace. By *sinners* he doth not understand all that are so; not such as are obstinate, and proud, and scornful, whom God hath declared that he will not teach nor direct, but will leave them to the errors and lusts of their own hearts, and will blind and harden them to their ruin, as is often expressed in Scripture; but only such as, being truly sensible of their sins, do humbly and earnestly seek God for his grace and mercy, or such as are *meek*, as the next verse explains it; for these he will not fail to assist and relieve.

9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

The meek, i. e. the humble and lowly, such as meekly submit themselves to God's hand and word, and are willing and desirous to be directed and governed by him. *In judgment*, i. e. in the paths of judgment; or in the right way wherein they should walk, as the next clause explains this; or by the rule of his word, which is oft called his *judgment*, or *judgments*. Or, *with judgment*, i. e. with a wise and provident care, and a due regard to all their circumstances. See Jer. x. 24; 1 Cor. x. 13. *His way;* either God's way, which God prescribes; or his own way, in which he ought to walk.

10 All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

All the dealings of God with them, yea, even those that are afflictive and grievous to the flesh, are done in kindness and faithfulness to them, as being very necessary for them, and tending to their great advantage. *His covenant*, i. e. the laws or conditions required of them by his covenant; or, as it follows, his testimonies, i. e. his precepts, which are the testimonies or witnesses of God's will, and of man's duty.

11 [h] For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; [i] for it *is* great.

[h] Ps. 31. 3. & 79. 9. & Jer. 14. 7. & 23. 6.

[i] See Rom. 5. 20.

For thy name's sake, i. e. for the honour of thy goodness and truth, which is concerned herein. *For it is great;* and therefore none but such a God can pardon it, and nothing but thy own name can move thee to do it; and the pardoning of it will well become so great and *good* a God, and will tend much to the illustration of thy glory, as the greatness and desperateness of the disease advanceth the honour and praise of the physician. Or this may be urged, not as an argument to move God, but as the reason that moved him to pray so earnestly, and that for God's name's sake. Or, *though* (as this particle is oft rendered, as Exod. xxxiv. 9; Psal. xli. 4, and elsewhere) *it be great.* Possibly he speaks of his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba. Or, *for* or *though it be much* or *manifold;* for the Hebrew word signifies both *great* and *much*.

12 What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? [k] him shall he teach in the way *that* he shall choose.

[k] Ps. 37. 23.

What man is he, i. e. whosoever he be, whether Jew or Gentile, whether more innocent, or a greater sinner, which is my case. *That he shall choose*, i. e. which God appointeth or approveth. Or, which *he*, i. e. such person, *should* choose; for the future tense is oft put potentially, and so as to express a man's duty, as Gen. xx. 9; Mal. i. 6; ii. 7.

shall dwell at ease; and
shall inherit the earth.

which is continue, as this word
in Psa. 21. It notes the constancy
which he loves, and when
these seems to suppose. *At*
possession and enjoyment
of the land, to wit, Canaan;
is an earnest of the whole
promises and therefore is
them. The sense is, his seed

The secret of the LORD *is* with
him; and he will shew
COVENANT.

Heb. sod. His word and counsel,
the right way, which he oft
ver. 8, 9, 12, to show
the way to their
may seem to be explained
shew them his covenant.
must be called a *secret*,
enemies in it, and because
them to whom it was
15—16; iv. 3; and it is
purpose without the illu-
Spirit, as is manifest
other places of Scripture.
favour, which is called his
and that very fitly, be-
him that enjoyeth it, Prov.
gracious and fatherly pro-
with them; or, as it is in
care of them, and work-
seems to frown upon
covenant, or, *and he will make*
here thought to be put
as it is Eccles. iii. 14.
his covenant, i. e. he will
it, both its duties or con-
penalties; neither of which
Or, he will make them to
making it good to them;
to make unholy men to
Numb. xiv. 34. Or, as it is
and his covenant (is, i. e. he
promise or covenant) *to make*
i. e. that he will manifest
them.

My eyes *are* ever toward the
for he shall pluck my feet out

My preservation of relief is from
hand me out of all my temptations

Turn thee unto me, and have
me; for I *am* desolate and

Look upon my face and favour to me, O
and look back upon me, and forsaken
multitude of all other hopes and suc-
my enemies, and forsaken by the
as in Absalom's rebellion.

The troubles of my heart are enlarged; *O*
bring thou me out of my distresses.

Look upon my outward troubles are ac-
companied with inward pangs of my mind and heart
which grieve them, and they great dis-
tress.

Look upon mine affliction and my
pain; and forgive all my sins.

Look upon mine affliction, as Exod. iii. 7, 8; Psal. lxxxviii. 9, and the mourning and continuing

19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with † cruel hatred.

† Heb. *hatred of violence.*

Consider. Heb. *look upon*, as ver. 18, to wit, with a revengeful eye, as Exod. xiv. 24; 1 Chron. xii. 17; Psal. civ. 32. For this general expression of *looking upon* is taken several ways in Scripture, and is to be determined by the context. *Cruel*. Heb. *violent* or *injurious*, either without any cause given by me; or without any bounds, or in an implacable manner.

20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: [l] let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

[l] Psa. 86. 2.

My soul, i. e. myself or my life, as that word is commonly taken; for his soul was out of his enemies' reach, who could only *kill* his *body*, Luke xii. 4.

21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

Though I have greatly offended thee, yet remember that I have dealt honestly and sincerely with mine enemies, whilst they have dealt falsely and injuriously with me: and therefore judge between them and me, and deal with me according to the righteousness of my cause, and carriage towards them.

22 [l] Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

[l] Psa. 130. 8.

If thou wilt not pity and help me, yet spare thy people, who suffer for my sake, and in my sufferings.

PSALM XXVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was certainly made by David when he was in distress, and particularly when he was falsely accused and defamed by his adversaries, as he frequently was by Saul and his courtiers; and therefore for his vindication he makes a solemn appeal to God, and a protestation of his own innocency, to which he was forced by their clamours and reproaches.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David declareth his integrity and innocency, 1—3. *His hatred to the congregation of the wicked*, 4, 5. *He publisheth God's works*, 7; *loves to dwell in his house*, 8. *He prays for deliverance from his enemies*, 9, 10, *and promises thankfulness to God*, 11, 12.

JUDGE [a] me, O LORD; for I have [b] walked in mine integrity: [c] I have trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* I shall not slide.

[a] Psa. 7. 8. & 35. 24. & 43. 1. & Lam. 3. 59.

[b] Psa. 15. 2. & 101. 2. & Prov. 20. 7.

[c] Psa. 25. 2. & 28. 7. & Prov. 28. 25.

Judge me, i. e. plead my cause, or give sentence for me; as this phrase is commonly used, as Psal. x. 18; xliii. 1; lxxii. 4; Isa. i. 17. I can obtain no right from men. The supreme and subordinate magistrates are mine implacable and resolved enemies. Do thou therefore do me justice against them, *for I have walked in mine integrity*; though they accuse me of many crimes, they can prove none of them, and thou and mine own conscience, and theirs too, are witnesses for me, that my carriage towards them hath been innocent and unblamable. I have committed my cause and affairs to thee, as to a just Judge and merciful Father, and my hope and trust is fixed upon thee alone; therefore thou wilt not deceive my trust, but wilt uphold me against all mine enemies; for thou hast promised to save those that trust in thee. Or, that *I shall not slide* or *fall*. So this declares the matter of his trust.

2 [d] Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

[d] Psa. 7. 9. & 17. 3. & 139. 23. Jer. 11. 20. & 17. 10. & 20. 12.

Because it is possible that I may deceive myself, and be partial in my cause, or at least mine enemies will so judge of me, I appeal to thee, O thou Judge of hearts, and beg that thou wouldst search and try me by such ways and means as thou seest fit, and make me known to myself and to the world, and convince mine enemies of mine integrity.

3 For thy lovingkindness *is* before mine eyes: and [e] I have walked

[e] 2 Kings 20. 3.

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19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with † cruel hatred.

† Heb. *hatred of violence.*

Consider, Heb. *look upon*, as ver. 18, to wit, with a revengeful eye, as Exod. xiv. 24; 1 Chron. xii. 17; Psal. civ. 32. For this general expression of *looking upon* is taken several ways in Scripture, and is to be determined by the context. *Cruel*, Heb. *violent* or *injurious*, either without any cause given by me; or without any bounds, or in an implacable manner.

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JUDGE [a]me, O LORD; for I have [b]walked in mine integrity: [c]I have trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* I shall not slide.

a Ps. 7. 8. & 17. 1. & 35. 24. & 43. 1. & 54. 1. & 72. 2. & 82. 3. & 140. 12. & 146. 7. Lam. 3. 59. b 1 Kings 9. 4. Prov. 10. 9. c 1 Ps. 28. 7. & 31. 14. Prov. 29. 25.

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2 [d]Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

d Ps. 7. 9. & 17. 3. & 66. 10. & 139. 23. Zech. 13. 9.

Because it is possible that I may deceive myself, and be partial in my cause, or at least mine enemies will so judge of me, I appeal to thee, O thou Judge of hearts, and beg that thou wouldst search and try me by such ways and means as thou seest fit, and make me known to myself, and to the world, and convince mine enemies of mine integrity.

3 For thy lovingkindness *is* before mine eyes: and [e]I have walked in thy truth.

e 2 Kings 20. 3.

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I dare appeal to thee with this confidence, because thou knowest that I have a true and deep sense of thy loving-kindness to me upon mine heart, by which I have been obliged, and in a manner constrained, to love and obey thee, and in all things to approve my heart and ways to thee, and to abstain from all such evil practices as mine enemies charge me with, whereby I should have forfeited thy loving-kindness, which I prize more than life, Psal. lxiii. 3, and exposed myself to thy just displeasure. My experience of and trust in thy goodness doth fully satisfy and support me, that I neither do nor need to use any indirect or irregular courses for my relief. *In thy truth*, i. e. according to thy word, which is oft called *truth*, as Psal. cxix. 142, 151; John xvii. 17, 19; believing its promises, and observing its precepts and directions; and not according to the course of the world, as it follows.

f Ps. 1. 1. Jer. 15. 17.

4 [f]I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

I have not sat, i. e. chosen or used to converse with them; for *sitting* is a posture of ease and of continuance. I have been so far from an approbation or imitation of their wicked courses, (wherewith mine enemies reproach me,) that I have avoided even their company; and if accidentally I came into it, yet I would not abide in it. *With vain persons*, i. e. with liars, or false and deceitful persons, as the next clause explains it. And *vanity* is very frequently put for falsehood or lying. *Neither will I go in;* into their company, or with design to join in their counsels or courses, as the same word is used, Josh. xxiii. 7. And conversation is oft expressed by *going out and coming in*. *With dissemblers*, Heb. *with such as hide themselves*, covering their crafty and wicked designs with fair pretences. I abhor such persons and practices, though I am accused to be such a one.

g Ps. 31. 6. & 139. 21, 22. h Ps. 1. 1.

5 I have [g]hated the congregation of evil doers; [h]and will not sit with the wicked.

The congregation of evil-doers; either, 1. Their whole rank or society. I have an antipathy against all such persons, without any exception. Or, 2. To meet and join with them in their assemblies and consultations, or *sit* with them, as it follows.

i See Ex. 30. 19, 20. Ps. 73. 13. 1 Tim. 2. 8.

6 [i]I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:

In innocency, or, *with integrity*, or with a pure heart and conscience. I will not do as my hypocritical enemies do, who content themselves with those outward washings of their hands or bodies prescribed in the law, Exod. xxix. 4, &c.; Deut. xxi. 6; Heb. ix. 10, whilst their hearts and lives are filthy and abominable; but *I will wash*, or *I have washed, my hands*, and withal purged my heart and conscience from dead works. Compare Isa. i. 15, 16; 1 Tim. ii. 8. *Compass thine altar*, i. e. approach to thine altar with my sacrifices; which I could not do with any comfort or confidence, if I were conscious to myself of those crimes whereof mine enemies accuse me. By the phrase of *compassing the altar*, either, 1. He alludes to some Levitical custom of going about the altar, as the priests did in the oblation of their sacrifices, and the people, especially those of them who were most devout and zealous, who possibly moved from place to place, but still within their own court, that they might discern what was done on the several sides of the altar, and so be the more affected with it. Or rather, 2. He implies that he would offer many sacrifices together, which would employ the priests round about the altar; and so he is said to *compass* it, because the priests did it in his name, and upon his account, as persons are very oft said in Scripture to *offer* those sacrifices which the priests offer for them.

7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

Publish, or, *proclaim*, to wit, *thy wondrous works*, as it here follows. *With the voice of thanksgiving;* accompanying my sacrifices with my own solemn thanksgivings and songs of praise.

k Ps. 27. 4. † Heb. *of the tabernacle of thy honour.*

8 LORD, [k]I have loved the habitation of † thy house, and the place † where thine honour dwelleth.

The habitation of thy house, i. e. thy sanctuary and worship; which is an evidence of my piety to thee, as I have given many proofs of my justice and integrity towards men. Nothing is more grievous to me than to be hindered from seeing and serving thee there. *Thine honour*; or, *thy glory;* either, 1. The ark so called, 1 Sam. iv. 22; Psal. lxxviii. 61. Or, 2. Thy glorious and gracious presence, or the manifestation of thy glory, or of thy glorious power, and faithfulness, and goodness.

9 ‖ [l]Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with † bloody men:

l Or, *Take not away.* l See 1 Sam. 25. 29. Ps. 28. 3. † Heb. *men of blood.*

My soul, i. e. my life, as it is explained in the next clause. Do not bind me up in the same bundle, nor put me into the same accursed and miserable condition, with them. Seeing I have had so great an antipathy against them in the whole course of my life, ver. 4, 5, let me not die their death; as Balaam on the contrary desired to *die the death of the righteous*, Numb. xxiii. 10. And seeing I have loved thy house and worship, and endeavoured to serve thee acceptably, not only with ceremonial cleanness, but with moral purity of heart and life, ver. 6—8, do not deal with me as thou wilt with those that are filled with ungodliness and unrighteousness; do not destroy me with them, *the righteous with the wicked*, Gen. xviii. 23, but save me in the common calamity, as thou hast promised and used to do in like cases. The Hebrew word *asaph*, rendered *gathering*, is oft put for *taking away*, as Gen. xxx. 23; Isa. iv. 1; Jer. viii. 13; xvi. 5, and that by destruction and death, as 1 Sam. xv. 6; Isa. lvii. 1; Jer. viii. 13; Ezek. xxxiv. 29; Hos. iv. 3. The ground of which phrase may be either, because by death men's souls or spirits are gathered and returned to God, Eccles. xii. 7, who had dispersed them all the world over; or because the several sorts of men, good and bad, which live here together promiscuously, are there severed, and all of one sort of them gathered together *unto their fathers* or *peoples*, as it is expressed, Gen. xv. 15; Numb. xx. 24; 2 Kings xxii. 20: compare Heb. xii. 23. *With sinners;* profligate and obstinate sinners, as the following words describe them, such being oft called *sinners* by way of eminency, as 1 Sam. xv. 18; Psal. i. 1; civ. 35. Isa. i. 28; xxxiii. 14.

10 In whose hands *is* mischief, and their right hand is † full of [m]bribes.

† Heb. *filled with.* m Ex. 23. 8. Deut. 16. 19. 1 Sam. 8. 3. Is. 33. 15.

In whose hands is mischief; who not only imagine mischief in their hearts, but persist in it, and execute it with their hands. *Their right hand;* which should be stretched out to execute justice, and punish offenders.

11 But as for me, I will [n]walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.

n ver. 1.

12 [o]My foot standeth in an [p]even place: [q]in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

o Ps. 40. 2. p Ps. 27. 11. q Ps. 22. 22. & 107. 32. & 111. 1.

In an even place, Heb. *in rectitude*, or *in a right*, or *straight*, or *plain*, or *even place;* which may be understood either, 1. Civilly, or in regard of his outward condition. So this is opposed to the *slippery places*, in which wicked men are said to be, Psal. xxxv. 6; lxxiii. 18; Jer. xxiii. 12; and the sense is, I stand upon a sure and solid foundation, where I fear no fall, nor to be overthrown by the assaults of mine enemies, being under the protection of God's promise, and his almighty and watchful providence. Or, 2. Morally, or in regard of his conversation. So the sense is, I do and will persist or continue (which is oft signified by *standing*, as Psal. i. 1) in my plain, and righteous, and straight course of life, not using those frauds, and wicked arts, and perverse and crooked paths, which mine enemies choose and walk in, or whereof they do falsely accuse me. And so this is the same thing for substance with his *walking in his integrity*, expressed in the foregoing verse, as also ver. 1. *In the congregations will I bless the Lord;* I will not only privately acknowledge, but publicly, and in the assemblies of thy people, celebrate thy praises, both for thy grace enabling and inclining me to choose, and love, and persevere in the ways of holiness and righteousness, and for thy protection hitherto afforded to me in the midst of all my dangers and troubles, and for that well-grounded assurance which thou hast given me, of thy favour, and of thy future deliverance.

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PSALM XXVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

It is apparent from the body of this Psalm, that David was not yet fully delivered from the trouble which his enemies gave him, both by their slanders and other ways. But whether it belong to that history which is recorded 2 Sam. xxi. 15—17, as the Jews conceive, whom some others follow, is wholly uncertain, and not necessary for us to know.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David declareth that God is his only comfort and confidence in all danger, 1—3. *His hearty desire to be in the house of God.* 4. *The advantage of it*, 5, 6. *He prayeth for the light of God's face, and his salvation*, 7—12; *and from experience exhorts others to wait upon him*, 13, 14.

a Ps. 36. 11. Is. 60. 19, 20. Mic. 7. 8. b Ex. 15. 2. c Ps. 62. 2, 6. & 118. 14, 21. Is. 12. 2.

THE LORD *is* [a]my light and [b]my salvation; whom shall I fear? [c]the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

My light, i. e. my counsellor in all my difficulties, and my comforter and deliverer in all my distresses. *The strength of my life*, i. e. the supporter and preserver of my life.

† Heb. approached against me. d Ps. 14. 4.

2 When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, †came upon me to [d]eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

To eat up my flesh; greedy to devour me at one morsel. Compare Job xix. 22; xxxi. 31.

e Ps. 3. 6.

3 [e]Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I *be* confident.

In that which I have now said, that God *is my light*, &c., ver. 1, and in the experience of his favour and protection, ver. 2.

f Ps. 26. 8. g Ps. 65. 4. Lev. 2. 37. || Or, *the delight.* h Is. 33. 17.

4 [f]One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may [g]dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold ‖ [h]the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

Though I am exercised with many troubles, there is but one thing that I am very solicitous for, or desirous of, and that is not victory and triumphs over all mine enemies, assured peace and settlement in my throne, the wealth, and pleasure, and glory of enlarging or ruling my empire: or if I have any desire to any of those things, it is chiefly that I may not be disturbed in or driven from the sanctuary and worship of God as I have been, but may have opportunity of constant attendance upon God; that there I may exercise and delight myself in the contemplation of thy amiable and glorious majesty, and of the infinite wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, grace, and mercy, and other perfections, which though hid in a great measure from the world, are clearly manifested in thy church and ordinances. *To inquire*; or, *diligently to seek*; either God's face and favour; or his mind and will, and my own duty; or *the Lord's beauty*, last mentioned, which is discovered more or less, as men are diligent or negligent in seeking or inquiring into it. *In his temple*, i. e. in his tabernacle; which he here and elsewhere calls his *temple*, because it was the same thing for substance; and because his thoughts and affections did constantly and eagerly run out upon the temple: and since he was not permitted to build the thing, he would at least take occasion to solace himself with the name, and thereby to enter his protest of his earnest desire to build it, if God had seen it fit.

i Ps. 31. 20. & 91. 1. k Ps. 40. 2.

5 For [i]in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall [k]set me upon a rock.

He shall hide me; or, *hath hid me*; or, *useth to hide me.* Justly do I prize the house and service of God so highly, both because I have such vast obligations to him for his former protection and favours, and because all my hope, and confidence, and security depends upon him. *In the secret of his tabernacle*; in his tabernacle, into which mine enemies cannot come; and in a secret place in it, where, if they come, they cannot find me. Or, as it were (for the note of similitude is oft understood) *in the secret of his tabernacle*, i. e. in as safe a place as the holy of holies, which is called God's *secret*, Ezek. vii. 22, where none might come but the high priest, and he but one day in a year. He alludes to the ancient custom of offenders, who used to flee to the tabernacle or altar, where they esteemed themselves safe, 1 Kings ii. 28. *Upon a rock*; a place high and inaccessible, strong and impregnable.

1 Ps. 3. 3.

6 And now shall [l]mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices †of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

† Heb. *of shouting.*

Mine head shall be lifted up above mine enemies; he will advance me above them, and give me a complete victory over them. *Sacrifices of joy*, or *of shouting* or *resounding*, i. e. of thanksgiving; which were accompanied with the sound of trumpets and other instruments, Numb. x. 10; 1 Chron. xvi. 41, 42; Psal. xxxiii. 3.

7 Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

‖ Or, *My heart said unto thee, Let my face seek thy face, &c.* m Ps. 24. 6. & 105. 4.

8 ‖ *When thou saidst*, [m]Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

When thou saidst; either by thy word, commanding and inviting me so to do; or by thy Spirit, directing and inclining me to it. *Seek ye my face*, i. e. seek my presence, and favour, and help, by fervent and faithful prayer. *My heart said unto thee*; my heart readily and thankfully complied with the motion; and upon the encouragement of this command, or invitation and promise couched in it, I resolved I would do so, and do so at this time. But this verse is a little otherwise rendered by divers learned men. And the words lie in another order in the Hebrew text, which runs thus: *To thee my heart said*, Thou hast said, (which verb may well be understood here, as it is also 1 Kings xx. 34, and as divers other verbs are understood in the sacred text, as Lev. xxiv. 8; 2 Sam. xviii. 12; xxiii. 17, compared with 1 Chron. xi. 19, and in many other places; which is not strange in so concise and short a language as the Hebrew is,) *Seek ye my face* (this is thy great command, so oft and so vehemently urged, as containing the very substance and foundation of all true piety). *Thy face, Lord, I will seek*; I cheerfully do and will obey thy command therein. Or the verse may be thus translated without any supplement, which, where it can be done, is confessedly the best way of translation: *Concerning thee* (as the particle *lamed* is oft used; or, *for* or *instead of thee*, as it is unquestionably used, Gen. xi. 3; Exod. xiii. 16; Prov. xxi. 18, i. e. in thy name and words, and according to thy mind) *my heart said*, (to wit, to or within myself, as the word *said* is frequently taken, i. e. I seriously consider within myself this following command of thine oft inculcated in thy word, and press it upon my own conscience,) *Seek ye my face. Thy face, Lord, will I seek.* Thou commandest it, and I will obey thee therein.

n Ps. 69. 17. & 143. 7.

9 [n]Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

Hide not thy face; which I in obedience to thy command am now seeking. *Put not thy servant away*, to wit, from thy face or presence, or from the place of thy worship, from which he either now was or formerly had been driven. Two ways God and he might be parted; either by God's departure or withdrawing from him, which he might do even in the place of his worship; or by God's putting him away from his presence. Against the first he seems to direct his prayer in the first clause, and against the latter in this.

o Is. 49. 15.

10 [o]When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD †will take me up.

† Heb. *will gather me.* Is. 40. 11.

Forsake me; or, *leave me*; as being unable to help me, and rather a burden than a help to me; for which reason Da-

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vid desired them to leave him, and disposed of them in another place, 1 Sam. xxii. Or his father and mother were now dead. Or by his *father and mother* he may signify his near relations and friends, which forsook him in the time of trouble, as men usually do. Or the words may be rendered, *though my father and mother should forsake me. Then*; or, *yet*, as the Hebrew *vau* frequently signifies. *Will take me up*; or, *will receive me*, to wit, to himself, as this verb is used, Josh. xx. 4; Judg. xix. 15; Matt. xxiii. 37.

p Ps. 25. 4. & 86. 11. & 119. † Heb. *a way of plainness.* Ps. 26. 12.

11 [p]Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in †a plain path, because of †mine enemies.

† Heb. *those which observe me.* Ps. 5. 8. & 54. 5.

Thy way, i. e. what course I shall take to please thee, and to discharge my duty, and to save myself from ruin. *A plain path*; of which see the note on Psal. xxvi. 12, where the Hebrew words are the same. *Because of mine enemies*; that I may neither open their mouths against me or religion by my miscarriages, nor fall into their hands by my folly, nor give them any occasion of triumphing over me.

q Ps. 35. 25.

12 [q]Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for [r]false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as [s]breathe out cruelty.

r 1 Sam. 22. 9. 2 Sam. 16. 7, 8. Ps. 35. 11. s Acts 9. 1.

The will, or *lust*, or *desire*, Heb. *soul*; which is so taken, Psal. xli. 2; lxxviii. 18; Ezek. xvi. 27. *Such as breathe out cruelty*; he presseth his request upon the quality of his enemies, who were both false and cruel, and in both respects hateful to God and men.

t Ps. 56. 13. & 116. 9. & 142. 5. Jer. 11. 19. Ezek. 26. 20.

13 *I had fainted*, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD [t]in the land of the living.

I had fainted: these words are added to complete the sense; for the speech is abrupt and imperfect, as is very usual, not only in the Holy Scripture, but in many other authors, in all vehement passions or commotions of mind, such as David was in at this time. Having declared what perfidious and cruel enemies did now assault and encompass him, he now subjoins what impression the thoughts thereof made upon him, and speaks like one that wanted words to express how sad and desperate his condition would have been, if he had not been supported by faith in God's promises. *To see the goodness of the Lord*; to enjoy (which is oft expressed by *seeing*) the mercy which God hath promised me. *In the land of the living*, i. e. in this world, which is oft so called, as Job xxviii. 13; Psal. lii. 5; cxvi. 9; cxlii. 5; Isa. xxxviii. 11; liii. 8; Jer. xi. 19; Ezek. xxxii. 32, and is opposed to the grave, which is the place of the dead. And David was thus earnestly desirous of this mercy in this life, not because he placed his portion in these things, which he so solemnly disclaims, Psal. xvii. 14, but because the truth and glory of God were highly concerned in making good the promise of the kingdom made to him.

u Ps. 31. 24. & 62. 1, 5. & 130. 5. Is. 25. 9. Hab. 2. 3.

14 [u]Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Wait on the Lord, O my soul; to which he now turneth his speech; as he frequently doth in this book. *He shall strengthen thine heart*; he will uphold thee, and keep thee from fainting and sinking under thy burdens.

PSALM XXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to be made upon the same occasion with the former, and is mixed, as many others of his Psalms are, of hopes and fears, of prayers and praises.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David prayeth earnestly for himself, 1, 2, *that he might not be led away with the wicked*, 3, 4. *The reason of his prayer*, 5. *He blesseth God for hearing him*, 6—8; *and prayeth for the people*, 9.

UNTO thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; [a]be not silent †to me: [b]lest, *if* thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

a Ps. 83. 1. † Heb. *from me.* b Ps. 84. 4. & 143. 7.

Be not silent; be not deaf to my prayers, nor dumb as to thy answers to them: lest I be in the like or same condition with them *that go down into the pit*, i. e. a lost creature; as I shall certainly be, if thou dost not succour me.

c 1 Kings 6. 22, 23. & 8. 28, 29. Ps. 5. 7. ‖ Or, *toward the oracle of thy sanctuary.* d Ps. 138. 2.

2 Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, [c]when I lift up my hands ‖[d]toward thy holy oracle.

i. e. Towards the holy of holies, which is so called, 1 Kings vi. 23, compared with 2 Chron. iii. 10: compare also 1 Kings vi. 5; viii. 6, because there the ark was; from whence God gave oracular answers to his people; and to which they accordingly directed their prayers, not only when they drew near to it, but when they were at a distance from it, as Dan. vi. 10.

e Ps. 26. 9. f Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. & 62. 4. Jer. 9. 8.

3 [e]Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, [f]which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief *is* in their hearts.

Draw me not away with the wicked: the sense is, either, 1. Do not suffer me to be drawn away by their counsel or example to imitate their evil courses. For God is oft said to do that which he doth not effect, but only permit and order, as 2 Sam. xii. 12. Or, 2. Do not draw me into the same snares and mischief with them; do not drag me, as thou dost or wilt do all these malefactors, to execution and destruction. Let me not die the death of the wicked. Compare Psal. xxvi. 9. Thus *drawing* is used for drawing to death, Job xxi. 33; Ezek. xxxii. 20. This seems best to suit with the following context, wherein he imprecateth and foretelleth that destruction upon his enemies which he deprecated for himself. *Mischief is in their heart*; which are hypocritical and perfidious persons, whilst I, through thy grace, am upright and sincere. Seeing then I am so unlike them in disposition and practice, let me not be made like them in their ruin.

g 2 Tim. 4. 14. Rev. 18. 6.

4 [g]Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

David useth these imprecations, partly, to vindicate himself from the slanders of his enemies, who reported him to be as wicked as they were, only more close and cunning therein; which, if he had been, he had bitterly cursed himself; which it could not reasonably be presumed that he would do; partly, from his great and long experience of their implacable and incorrigible malignity, not only against him, but against God, and his declared will, and against all truly good men, and that covered with pretences of piety to God, and of peaceableness towards their neighbours, ver. 3, which made their wickedness more inexcusable and detestable; partly, by the instinct and direction of God's Spirit, by whose inspiration he uttered this as well as the rest of the Psalm; and partly, that hereby he might provoke them to repentance; for this curse belongs only to those who shall obstinately persist in their wicked courses. Add to all this, that as verbs of the imperative mood are oft used by the Hebrews for futures, so these may not be proper imprecations, but predictions of their destruction.

h Job 34. 27. Is. 5. 12.

5 Because [h]they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.

The works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, i. e. the providential works of God, both for and towards his church and people in general; the serious observation whereof would have made them afraid of opposing them, and desirous to join themselves with them; and for and towards me in particular, concerning whose succession to the kingdom God hath so expressly declared his mind and will, and to whom he hath given so many and such wonderful preservations, that they who will not acknowledge it, but continue to oppose it, may well be presumed to be guilty of rebellion against God's will, and of the contempt of his providence. *He shall destroy them, and not build them up*, i. e. destroy them utterly and irrecoverably, because they

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wilfully shut their eyes against the light of God's word and works.

6 Blessed *be* the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

He speaks of it as past, either because God had in part heard and answered him already, or because God assured him by his Spirit that he had heard and accepted his prayers, and would assuredly answer him in due time.

i Ps. 18. 2.
k Ps. 13. 5. & 22. 4.

7 The LORD *is* [i]my strength and my shield; my heart [k]trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

Or, *his strength.*
Or, *strength of his anointed.*
l Ps. 20. 6.

8 The LORD *is* ‖their strength, and he *is* the †[l]saving strength of his anointed.

Their strength, i. e. the strength of his people, mentioned in the next verse; the relative being put before the antecedent, which is left to be gathered out of the following matter, as it is Numb. xxiv. 17; Psal. lxxxvii. 1. Or, *his strength*; for the Hebrew affix *mo*, which commonly is plural, is sometimes taken singularly; of which see my Latin Synopsis here, and on Isa. liii. 8. And *his*, i. e. of his anointed, as the next clause explains it. Or the words may be thus rendered, *Strength is* or *belongs to the Lord.* Heb. *The Lord, strength is his*, or *to him.* It is a Hebrew pleonasm. *The saving strength*, Heb. *the strength of the preservations*, or *deliverances*, or *victories*, or *salvations*, i. e. he by whose strength alone he hath got these victories, &c. *Of his anointed*, i. e. of me, whom he hath anointed to be king, whom therefore he will defend; he speaks of himself in the third person, which is usual in the Hebrew tongue.

m Deut. 9. 29. 1 Kings 8. 51. Neh. 1. 10. Isa. 19. 25. n Deut. 1. 31. & Ezra 1. 4.

9 Save thy people, and bless [m]thine inheritance: ‖feed them also, [n]and lift them up for ever.

Thine inheritance; Israel, for whom I pray; partly because thou hast in some sort committed them to my charge, and partly because Saul did not take due care of them. *Lift them up*; raise them out of their low and afflicted condition, in which they are, by reason of Saul's weakness and neglect, and by the prevailing power of the Philistines, and advance them to a state of safety and honour, and that not for a season, but with constancy and perpetuity, as it follows.

PSALM XXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

It is supposed that this Psalm was made upon the occasion of some terrible tempest of thunder and rain; which God might possibly send in the time of battle to assist David, and discomfit his enemies; as he had done formerly upon like occasions. It contains an admonition to the potentates of the earth, and especially to those who bordered upon the land of Israel, that they would own and worship the true God; which he presseth from the great majesty and power of Israel's God above all other gods, and particularly from that great and glorious instance thereof in thunder; which hath struck the proudest monarchs with the dread of that God, whom at other times they despised.

¶ A Psalm of David.

David exhorteth the mighty of this world to give glory to God, 1, 2; who manifesteth his power by thunder, lightning, and by other creatures, 3—10. He showeth God's protection and blessing of his people, 11.

a 1 Chron. 16. 28, 29. Ps. 96. 7, 8. *sons of the mighty.*

[a]GIVE unto the LORD, O †ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

O ye mighty; ye potentates and rulers of the earth. To these he addresseth his speech; partly because they are most apt to forget and contemn God, and insolently to assume a kind of deity to themselves; and partly because their conviction and conversion was likely to have a great and powerful influence upon their people. *Give unto the Lord*, by a humble and thankful acknowledgment of it; for otherwise we can give nothing to God. *Glory and strength*, i. e. *the glory of his strength*, or power, which is the attribute set forth in this Psalm; or, *his glorious strength.*

2 Give unto the LORD †the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD ‖in [b]the beauty of holiness.

† Heb. *the honour of his name.*
‖ Or, *in his glorious sanctuary.*
b 2 Chron. 20. 21.

The glory due unto his name, i. e. the honour which he deserves; which is to prefer him before all other gods, and to forsake all others, and to own him as the Almighty, and the only true God. *In the beauty of holiness*; or, *of the sanctuary*, which is commonly called by this name: in his *holy and beautiful house*, as it is called, Isa. lxiv. 11, the only place where he will receive worship. So he exhorts them to turn proselytes to the Jewish religion; which was their duty and interest.

3 The voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: [c]the God of glory thundereth: the LORD *is* upon ‖many waters.

c Job 37. 4, 5.
‖ Or, *great waters.*

The voice of the Lord, i. e. thunder, as is manifest from the next clause, and the following effects; which is oft called *the Lord's voice*, as Exod. ix. 23, 28, 29; Job xxxvii. 4, 5; Psal. xviii. 14; xlvi. 6. *Upon the waters*; either, 1. Upon the seas; where its noise spreads far and wide, and is very terrible. But the following verses speak of the effects of it upon the earth only. Or rather, 2. Above in the clouds, which are called *waters*, Gen. i. 7; Psal. xviii. 11, because they are of a watery substance. And this circumstance is considerable here, to magnify the Divine power, which displayeth itself in those high places, which are far above the reach of all earthly potentates, and from whence he can easily and unavoidably smite all that dwell upon the earth, and will not submit to him. *Upon many waters*, i. e. upon the clouds, in which there are vast treasures of water, and upon which God is said to sit or ride, Psal. xviii. 10, 11; civ. 3.

4 The voice of the LORD *is* †powerful; the voice of the LORD *is* †full of majesty.

† Heb. *in power.*
† Heb. *in majesty.*

Is an evident proof of God's glorious majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh [d]the cedars of Lebanon.

d Is. 2. 13.

By thunder-bolts; which have oft thrown down trees and towers. *Lebanon*; a place famous for strong and lofty cedars. See 2 Chron. ii. 8; Cant. iii. 9; v. 15.

6 [e]He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and [f]Sirion like a young unicorn.

e Ps. 114. 4.
f Deut. 3. 9.

He maketh them; the cedars last mentioned; which being broken by the thunder, the parts of them are suddenly and violently hurled about hither and thither. *Sirion*; a high mountain beyond Jordan joining to Lebanon; of which see Deut. iii. 9; iv. 48. Lebanon and Sirion are here understood, either, 1. Properly; and so they are said to *skip* or *leap*, both here and Psal. cxiv. 4, by a poetical hyperbole, very usual both in Scripture and other authors; which is so known, that it is needless to give any instances of it. Or, 2. Metonymically for the trees or people of them, as *the wilderness*, ver. 8, may seem to be taken; and as *the earth*, by the same figure, is frequently put for the people which dwell in it. *Unicorn*, Heb. *reem*; of which see on Numb. xxiii. 22; Psal. xxii. 21.

7 The voice of the LORD †divideth the flames of fire.

† Heb. *cutteth out.*

Divideth, Heb. *heweth out*, i. e. it breaketh out of the clouds, and thereby makes way for the lightnings, which are suddenly dispersed over the face of the earth.

8 The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of [g]Kadesh.

g Num. 13. 26.

The wilderness, i. e. either the trees, or rather the beasts of the wilderness, by a metonymy, as before, ver. 6. Compare this with the next verse. *Kadesh*; which he mentions as an eminent wilderness, vast and terrible, and well known to the Israelites, Numb. xx. 1, 16, and wherein possibly they had seen and observed some such effects of thunder as are here mentioned.

9 The voice of the LORD maketh [h]the hinds ‖to calve, and discovereth the

h Job 39. 1, 2, 3.
‖ Or, *to be in pain.*

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‖ Or, *every whit of it uttereth, &c.* forests: and in his temple ‖ doth every one speak of *his* glory.

Maketh the hinds to calve, through the terror which it causeth, which hastens the birth in these and other places: see 1 Sam. iv. 19. He nameth the *hinds*, because they bring forth their young with difficulty, Job xxxix. 1, 2. *Discovereth*, Heb. *maketh bare;* either of its trees, which it either breaks or strips off their leaves; or of the beasts, which it forceth to run into their dens. *And in his temple;* or, *but*. Having showed the terrible effects of God's power in other places, he now shows the blessed privilege of God's people, that are praising and glorifying God, and receiving the comfortable influences of his grace in his temple, when the rest of the world are trembling under the tokens of his displeasure; by which he secretly invites and persuades the Gentiles, for their own safety and comfort, to own the true God and to worship him in his sanctuary, as he did exhort them, ver. 2. Or, *therefore*, i. e. because of these and such-like discoveries of God's excellent majesty and power, his people fear, and praise, and adore him in his temple.

i Gen. 6. 17. Job 38. 8, 25. k Ps. 10. 16.

10 The LORD [i]sitteth upon the flood; yea, [k]the LORD sitteth King for ever.

He moderateth and ruleth (which is oft signified by *sitting*, this being the posture of a judge, or ruler; of which see Psal. ix. 7—9; xlvii. 8; Joel iii. 12) the most abundant and violent inundations of waters, which sometimes fall from the clouds upon the earth; where they would do much mischief if God did not prevent it. And these are here fitly mentioned, as being many times the companions of great thunders. And this may be alleged as another reason why God's people did praise and worship him in his temple, because as he sendeth terrible tempests, and thunders, and floods, so he also restrains and overrules them. But most interpreters refer this to Noah's flood, to whom the word here used is elsewhere appropriated. And so the words may be rendered, *The Lord did sit upon*, or *at, the flood* in Noah's time, when it is probable those vehement rains were accompanied with terrible thunders. And so having spoken of the manifestation of God's power in storms and tempests in general, he takes an occasion to run back to that ancient and most dreadful example of that kind, in which the Divine power was most eminently seen. And having mentioned that instance, he adds, that as God showed himself to be the King and the Judge of the world at that time, so he doth still *sit*, and will sit, as *King for ever*, sending such tempests when it pleaseth him. And therefore his people have great reason to worship and serve him.

l Ps. 28. 8.

11 [l]The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

The Lord will give strength, to support and preserve them in the most dreadful tempests, and consequently in all other dangers, and against all their enemies. *The Lord will bless his people with peace*, though now he sees fit to exercise them with some troubles.

PSALM XXX.

1042. * Deut. 20. 5. 2 Sam. 5. 11. & 6. 20.

¶ A Psalm *and* Song **at* the dedication of the house of David.

A Psalm and Song; or, *A Psalm of Song;* i. e. either, 1. A Psalm to be sung with the voice to an instrument. Or, 2. A Psalm of joy and praise; for so this is. And this Hebrew word *schir* may be here taken not simply for a *song*, but for *a joyful song*, as it is Gen. xxxi. 27; Exod. xv. 1; Psal. xxxiii. 3; xlii. 8; Prov. xxv. 20; Isa. xxx. 29; Amos viii. 3, 10. *At the dedication of the house of David;* either, 1. At the dedication of the temple, called *the house*, or *that house*, eminently and emphatically. So the Chaldee paraphrast and the Hebrew doctors understand it. And then the last words, *of David*, are to be joined with the first, *a Psalm and Song*. But this seems not probable, because the temple was not built by David, nor in his days, although he might prescribe a Psalm to be used afterwards upon that occasion. Or, 2. At the dedication of David's house, which was built, 2 Sam. v. 11, and doubtless was dedicated, as God had commanded. See Deut. xx. 5; Neh. xii. 27. Or, 3. At the second dedication of David's house, after it had been polluted by Absalom and his concubines. But there is no law of God for any re-dedication of houses in such cases, nor any evidence that David did so. And indeed it seems strange, if this Psalm was made upon this occasion, or upon any of these dedications here mentioned, that there should not be one line in it suitable to that occasion. Others therefore make these words, *the dedication of the house*, not to note the matter of this *Psalm* or *Song;* but either, 1. The name of the tune to which this song was sung, which was the same that David used at the dedication of his house; and so this gives us a reason why the word *Song* is added to that of *Psalm*, and why this Psalm was called *the Song of the dedication*. Or, 2. The time when it was sung; which was at the dedication of David's house. For such dedications were performed in a very solemn manner, with divers rites and prayers, and praises to God, as the nature of that business required. And it seems probable from the matter of this Psalm, compared with the title, that David had about this time been delivered from some eminent distresses, and particularly from some dangerous sickness; for which he here gives thanks to God, taking advantage of this public and solemn occasion.

The psalmist praiseth God for deliverance out of great danger, 1—3; *and exhorteth others to do the same*, 4, 5. *He acknowledgeth to God that his prayer was heard, and himself girded with gladness*, 6—11. *He will give thanks to God for ever*, 12.

I WILL extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast [a]lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to [b]rejoice over me.

a Ps. 28. 9. b Ps. 25. 2. & 35. 19, 24.

Lifted me up; or, *drawn up*, to wit, out of the deep pit, or waters; to which great dangers and afflictions are frequently compared. *To rejoice over me;* which they both desired and confidently expected an occasion to do.

2 O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast [c]healed me.

c Ps. 6. 2. & 103. 3.

i. e. Delivered me from the fears and troubles of my mind, which are oft compared to diseases, and from very dangerous distempers of my body.

3 O LORD, [d]thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not [e]go down to the pit.

d Ps. 86. 13. e Ps. 28. 1.

Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; my deliverance is a kind of resurrection from the grave, upon the very brink whereof I was. *Thou hast kept me alive:* this he adds to explain the former phrase, which was ambiguous. *To the pit*, i. e. into the grave, which is oft called *the pit*, as Psal. xxviii. 1; lxix. 15; lxxxviii. 4; Isa. xxxviii. 17.

4 [f]Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks ‖ at the remembrance of his holiness.

f 1 Chr. 16. 4. Ps. 97. 12. ‖ Or, *to the memorial.*

Or, *at the mention*, &c.; when you call to mind, or when others celebrate, as I do, this day, the holiness of God's nature; which he demonstrates by his works, by his faithfulness, care, and kindness towards his holy ones.

5 For [g]† his anger *endureth but* a moment; [h]in his favour *is* life: weeping may endure † for a night, [i]but † joy *cometh* in the morning.

g Ps. 103. 9. Is. 26. 20. & 54. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 4. 17. † Heb. there is but *a moment in his anger.* h Ps. 63. 3. † Heb. *in the evening.* i Ps. 126. 5. † Heb. *singing.*

His anger endureth but a moment; commonly the afflictions which he sends upon his people are short, and last but for a few moments of their lives. *In his favour is life;* or, *life*, i. e. our whole life, is *in his favour*, i. e. he heapeth his favours upon them, for the greatest part of their present lives, and in the next life, which endures for ever; of which the Chaldee paraphrast expounds this place. And indeed without the consideration of eternal life, the difference between the duration of the afflictions and of the happiness of God's people, were neither so evident nor considerable as David here makes it. *Life* is oft put for a long and happy time, as Psal. xxxiv. 12; cxxxiii. 3; Prov. iii. 2; and for an eternal and immortal duration, 2 Tim. i. 10; James i. 12.

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And in civil affairs estates for life are opposed to those that are but for a short time. *Joy cometh in the morning*, i. e. it comes speedily and in due season.

[k] Job 29. 18. 6 And [k] in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.

I thought myself past all danger of further changes, forgetting my own frailty, and the uncertainty of all worldly things.

7 LORD, by thy favour thou hast [*] Heb. *settled strength to my mountain.* †made my mountain to stand strong: [l] Ps. 104. 29. [l] thou didst hide thy face, *and* I was troubled.

Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou hast so firmly settled me in my kingdom; which he calls his *mountain*, partly because kingdoms are usually called mountains in prophetical writings, as Psal. xlvi. 3, 4; Isa. ii. 2; Jer. li. 25; Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44, 45; and partly with respect to Mount Zion, where he built his royal palace, the dedication whereof is mentioned in the title of the Psalm. *Thou didst hide thy face*, i. e. withdraw thy favour and help, and I was quickly brought into such distresses of body, and anxiety of mind, that I saw the vanity of all my carnal confidences.

8 I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.

9 What profit *is there* in my blood, [m] Ps. 6. 5. & 88. 11. [n] Isa. 38. 18. [o] Psa. 115. 17. [p] Jer. 8. 22. when I go down to the pit? [m] Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

What profit is there, to wit, unto thee? as the latter part of the verse explains it. What wilt thou gain by it? *In my blood*, i. e. in my violent death, as *blood* is frequently used, as Gen. xxxvii. 26; Numb. xxxv. 33; Josh. xx. 3; 1 Sam. xxv. 26, 33; Matt. xxvii. 6. *When I go down to the pit;* when I die. See above on ver. 3. Shall they that are dead, or gone down into the dust, celebrate thy faithfulness and goodness in the land of the living? Or, shall my dust or dead corpse praise thee? No, Lord, shouldst thou cut me off in the beginning of my reign, thy name would lose the praises which many will return to thee for my life, and be exposed to reproaches, as if thou hadst not kept thy word with me; and I should lose those opportunities of praising thy name, and serving my generations, which I prize above my life.

10 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.

[n] 2 Sam. 6. 14. [o] Ps. 6. 5. Isa. 38. 18. Jer. 31. 4. 11 [n] Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

Having related his prayer, he now declares the gracious answer which God gave him. *Put off my sackcloth*, i. e. given me occasion to put off that sackcloth, which they used to wear in times of mourning. See Esth. iv. 1; Psal. xxxv. 13; Isa. xxxii. 11; Joel i. 13. *With gladness;* either with garments of gladness or rejoicing; or with joy, as with a garment surrounding me on every side; as he is for the like reason said to be *girded with strength*, Psal. xviii. 32.

[*] That is, my tongue, which used to sing praises. See Lam. 3. 24. [q] Ps. 16. 9. & 57. 8. 12 To the end that ‖ *my* glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

My glory; my soul; or rather, my tongue, to which both *singing* and *silence* most properly belong. See on Psal. vii. 5; xvi. 9.

PSALM XXXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed either when David was in great distress, or afterwards, in remembrance thereof, and of God's singular goodness in delivering him out of it, whence it is mixed of prayer and praises, of hopes and fears. But what those particular troubles were which David here speaks, is only matter of conjecture, and therefore I shall rather omit than confidently determine.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

David prayeth for preservation, according to his confidence which he putteth in God, 1—6, *that he might rejoice in his mercy,* 7, 8. *He declareth what he suffered from his enemies and friends,* 9—13; *but magnifieth the care and tenderness of God,* 14—18; *and praiseth him for his goodness to himself and to the faithful,* 19—24.

IN [a] thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: [b] deliver me in thy righteousness. [a] Ps. 22. 5. & 25. 2. & 71. 1. Is. 49. 23. [b] Ps. 143. 1.

Let me never be ashamed, to wit, of my confidence in thy promises. *In thy righteousness*, i. e. by or for; or, according to thy faithfulness and goodness; both which come oft under the name of *righteousness*.

2 [c] Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou †my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me. [c] Ps. 71. 2. † Heb. *to me for a rock of strength.*

Deliver me speedily, because of the greatness and urgency of my danger, which is even ready to swallow me up.

3 [d] For thou *art* my rock and my fortress; therefore [e] for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me. [d] Ps. 18. 1. [e] Ps. 23. 3. & 25. 11.

For thy name's sake; for the glory of thy name, i. e. of thy power, and truth, and mercy to thy miserable servant. *Lead me, and guide me;* two words expressing the same thing with more emphasis. Direct me clearly and continually in a right and safe path; for without thy conduct I can neither discern the right way, or continue in it.

4 Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou *art* my strength.

5 [f] Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth. [f] Luke 23. 46. Acts 7. 59.

Into thine hand, i. e. to thy care and custody, *I commit my spirit*, i. e. my soul or life, called a man's *spirit*, as Eccles. iii. 21; xii. 7, &c. Either, 1. To receive it; for my case is almost desperate, and I am ready to give up the ghost. Or, 2. To preserve it from the plots and malice of mine enemies. *Thou hast redeemed me;* thou hast delivered me formerly in great dangers, and therefore I willingly and cheerfully commit myself to thee for the future. *O Lord God of truth;* who hast showed thyself to be so to me, in making good thy promises.

6 I have hated them [g] that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD. [g] Jonah 2. 8.

I have hated them; their very persons, not simply, but for their wickedness. Compare Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. *That regard*, Heb. *that observe*, to wit, with respect to them, dependence upon them, or expectation of any good from them. *Lying vanities*; or, *most vain vanities;* such as are foolish, and deceitful, and fruitless. By which he understands, either, 1. All human or carnal helps, any arm of flesh; for he that trusteth therein is pronounced *cursed*, Jer. xvii. 5, and therefore is hateful. Or, 2. Idols, which are oft called *vanities*, as Deut. xxxii. 21; Jer. ii. 5; viii. 19, &c. Or, 3. Curious arts, and all sorts of divinations by stars, or the motions or inwards of living creatures, or by the dead; which practices were common and prevalent among those Eastern people, and by their example were too rife among the Israelites also, Isa. ii. 6, of whom he here speaks; for the Gentiles that observed these vanities he rather pitied than hated; but the Israelites that did so were apostates from God, and professed enemies to him and his laws, and therefore were the proper objects of just hatred.

7 I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast [h] known my soul in adversities; [h] John 10. 27.

Thou hast known, i. e. loved me, and cared for me; for words of knowledge commonly imply affection.

8 And hast not [i] shut me up into the hand of the enemy: [k] thou hast set my foot in a large room. [i] Deut. 32. 30. 1 Sam. 17. 46. & 24. 18. [k] Ps. 4. 1. & 18. 19.

Hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy; whereof

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I was in great and imminent danger, if thou hadst not delivered me. See 1 Sam. xxiii. 7. *Thou hast* made way for me to escape, when I was encompassed by them, and set me at liberty.

9 Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for
1 Ps. 6. 7. I am in trouble: [1]mine eye is consumed with grief, *yea*, my soul and my belly.

With grief; with continual weeping. See on Psal. vi. 7. *My soul;* my sorrows are not counterfeit or slight, but inward and hearty; my mind is oppressed, my heart is ready to sink under my burden. *My belly*, i. e. my bowels contained in my belly; which are the seat of the affections, and fountains of support and nourishment to the whole body. Thus the whole man, both soul and body, inside and outside, are consumed.

10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength fail-
m Ps. 32. 3. & 102. 3. eth because of mine iniquity, and [m]my bones are consumed.

My life, i. e. the time of my life, as the next clause explains it. *Because of mine iniquity;* either through my deep and just sense of my sins, which have provoked God to afflict me in this manner; or for the punishment of mine iniquity, as this word is frequently used. *My bones*, in which my chief strength lies. *Are consumed;* the juice and marrow of them being almost dried up with excessive grief.

n Ps. 41. 8. Is. 53. 4. o Job 19. 13. Ps. 38. 11. & 88. 8, 18. p Ps. 64. 8. 11 [n]I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but [o]especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: [p]they that did see me without fled from me.

A reproach, i. e. the matter of their reproaches and scorns. This, said they, is David, anointed to be king of Israel, a goodly monarch indeed, forsaken by God and men, and in a perishing and desperate condition; he pretends great piety to God, and loyalty to Saul, but in truth he is a great impostor, and a traitor and rebel to his king. *Especially among my neighbours;* which aggravates their sin, and his misery, partly because they were obliged by the laws of neighbourhood to perform all friendly offices to him; and partly because they were daily witnesses of his integrity, and therefore sinned against their own knowledge. *A fear;* or, *a terror*. They were afraid to give me any countenance or assistance, or to be seen in my company; being warned by Ahimelech's punishment for it, 1 Sam. xxii. *Fled from me;* either loathing me as a monster of men, and an unlucky spectacle, and such a villain as mine enemies represented me, and they believed me to be; or to prevent their own danger and ruin, which might be occasioned by it.

q Ps. 88. 4, 5. + Heb. *a vessel that perisheth.* 12 [q]I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like †a broken vessel.

Whatsoever good service I have done to the king, or kingdom, or to any particular persons, neighbours, friends, or others, which sometimes they have acknowledged and highly commended, is now quite forgotten by all of them; or, at least, they carry themselves to me as if it were so. *As a dead man;* whose name and memory is quite lost within a few days. See Psal. lxxxviii. 12; Eccles. ix. 5. *Like a broken vessel*, made of earth; which is irreparable, and useless, and therefore despised by all.

r Jer. 20. 10. 13 [r]For I have heard the slander of
s Jer. 6. 25. & 20. 3. Lam. 2. 22. t Matt. 27. 1. many: [s]fear *was* on every side: while they [t]took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

I have heard, partly with my own ears, and partly by the information of others. *The slander of many*, who reproach and defame me as a turbulent and seditious person, an enemy to the public peace, a conspirator against the king's life or dignity. *Fear*, i. e. just cause of fear, even of the loss of my life, as appears from the next clause. *They devised to take away*, to wit, unjustly and violently; as this word is used, Gen. xxxiv. 2; xxiv. 11.

14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my God.

Mine by paternal relation, and care, and affection, and by thy promise or covenant made with me.

15 My times *are* in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

My times; either, 1. The time of my life, how long I shall live. Or, 2. *My opportunities* or *fit seasons* for working out my deliverance. Or rather, 3. All the affairs and events of my life; for *time* is oft put for things done or accidents happening in time, as 1 Chron. xxix. 30; Job xi. 17; Psal. xxxvii. 18; Eccles. ix. 11; Dan. ii. 21; Acts xvii. 26. *Are in thy hand*, i. e. are wholly in thy power, to dispose and order as thou seest fit, and not at all in mine enemies' power, who can do nothing against me, unless it be given them from above.

16 [u]Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake. u Num. 6. 25, 26. Ps. 4. 6. & 67. 1.

Manifest thy love and favour to me, by answering my prayers, and saving me from all mine enemies.

17 [x]Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, *and* [‖]let them be silent in the grave. x Ps. 25. 2. & 1 Sam. 2. 9. Ps. 115. 17. ‖ Or, *let them be cut off for the grave.*

I have called upon thee; and therefore thy honour will be eclipsed in my disappointment, as if thou didst not hear prayers, nor keep promise, nor make any difference between good and bad men. *Let the wicked be ashamed;* frustrated in their wicked designs and carnal confidences. Seeing they are implacable in their malice and rage against innocent and good men, do thou cut them off by thy just judgment; and since either the righteous or the wicked must be cut off, let destruction fall upon them, who most deserve it.

18 [z]Let the lying lips be put to silence; z Ps. 12. 3. a 1 Sam. 2. 3. Ps. 94. 4. Jude 15. + Heb. *a hard thing.* which [a]speak †grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

Lying lips; slanderous tongues. *Be put to silence*, either by thy vindication and discovery of my integrity; or by some eminent judgment, which may either convince them, or cut them off. *Grievous things*, Heb. *hard words*, or *things*, the singular number being put for the plural. Of this expression, see 1 Sam. ii. 3; Psal. lx. 3; xciv. 4; Jude 15. He means such as were grievous, and hard to be borne, as bitter calumnies, cruel mockings, terrible threatenings, and the like. *Proudly and contemptuously;* with great arrogancy, and confidence of success, and contempt of me and mine, whom they look upon as few in number, and impotent and fugitives, and such whom they can blow away with a breath. *Against the righteous;* against us, whom thou knowest to be righteous, notwithstanding all their false accusations; and therefore for thy love to righteousness save us, and silence our unjust enemies.

19 [b]*Oh* how great *is* thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; *which* thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! b Is. 64. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

How great is thy goodness! no words can express the greatness of thy love and blessings. *Laid up*, or *hidden*, to wit, with thyself, or in thy own breast. The word is very emphatical, and removes an objection of ungodly men, taken from the present calamities of good men. His favour, it is true, is not always manifested to or for them, but it is laid up for them in his treasure, whence it shall be drawn forth when they need it, and he sees it fit. *Thou hast wrought;* or, *hast prepared*, as Exod. xv. 17. Or, *wilt work;* the past time being put for the future, to note the certainty of it, as is common in the prophetical writings. *Before the sons of men*, i. e. publicly, and in the view of the world, their very enemies seeing, and admiring, and envying it, but not being able to hinder it.

20 [c]Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: c Ps. 27. 5. & 32. 7.
[d]thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. d Job 5. 21.

In the secret of thy presence; or, as *in the secret of thy*

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presence; either, 1. As if they were in thy presence-chamber, where thine own eye and hand guardeth them from all the assaults of their enemies; called his *secret*, partly because the greatest part of the world are strangers to God and his presence; and partly because it is a safe and secure place, such as secret and unknown places are. Or, 2. As if they were *in the secret of* God's *tabernacle*, as it is called, Psal. xxvii. 5, the place of God's special presence, where none might enter save the high priest. Or, 3. With thy secret favour and providence, which works mightily, yet secretly, for them, and saves them by hidden and unknown methods. This is opposed to those caves, or other obscure and unsafe places, where David was forced to hide himself. *From the pride of man;* from their vain-glorious boasts and threats, and from their bold and insolent attempts. *In a pavilion;* or, as *in* thy *pavilion*, or *tabernacle;* and so this clause explains the former, and the pronoun *thy* is here easily and aptly understood out of the foregoing branch. *From the strife of tongues*, i. e. from the mischief of contentious and slanderous tongues.

e Ps. 17. 7. f 1 Sam. 23. 7. ‖ Or, *fenced city.*

21 Blessed *be* the LORD: for [e]he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness [f]in a ‖ strong city.

To wit, in Keilah; where God wonderfully preserved me: of which see 1 Sam. xxiii. 7. Others, as *in a strong city*. He hath kept me as safe in woods and caves, as if I had been in a fenced city.

g 1 Sam. 23. 26. Ps. 116. 11. h Is. 38. 11, 12. Lam. 3. 54. Jonah 2. 4.

22 For [g]I said in my haste, [h]I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

In my haste, i. e. in my hasty flight from Saul, when he and his men had almost encompassed me, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26, which happened presently after his deliverance in and from the strong city of Keilah. Or, *in my fear*, or *trembling*, when my passion took away my consideration, and weakened my faith. *Cut off from before thine eyes*, i. e. cast out of thy sight, and out of the care of thy gracious providence; my case is desperate. Or, cut off whilst thou lookest on, and dost not pity nor help me. *Thou heardest the voice of my supplications;* my fears were quickly confuted by thy gracious answer to my prayers.

i Ps. 34. 9.

23 [i]O love the LORD, all ye his saints: *for* the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

The Lord preserveth the faithful; or, *keepeth faithfulness*, or *faithfulnesses*, i. e. is faithful in fulfilling his promises; or rather, *the faithful*, who is opposed to the *proud doer* in the next clause of the verse. *Plentifully*, Heb. *with* (for so the Hebrew *al* sometimes signifies) *abundance*. *The proud doer;* the enemies and persecutors of God's faithful ones before mentioned, whom he calls here *proud doers*, because of their rebellion against God's will, and their contempt of his threatenings and judgments, and their most insolent and contemptuous carriage towards his people; all which proceeds from the pride of their heart, Psal. x. 4.

k Ps. 27. 14.

24 [k]Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

Be of good courage; or, *be strong* in the Lord, and by confidence in his promises, which will not fail you; as I have found by experience.

PSALM XXXII.

(Or, *A song of David giving instruction.*)

¶ ‖ *A Psalm* of David, Maschil.

Maschil; or, *an instructor*. This Psalm is most fitly so called, because it was composed for the information of the church, in that most important doctrine, concerning the way to true blessedness.

They are blessed whose sins are forgiven, 1, 2. *Confession of sins giveth ease to the conscience*, 3—7. *God's promise to them that trust in him*, 8—11.

a Ps. 65. 2. Rom. 4. 6, 7, 8.

BLESSED *is he whose* [a]transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered.

I did indeed say that they, and they only, were blessed, that did *not walk in the counsel of the ungodly*, &c., but *did delight in and meditate on God's law*, Psal. i. 1, 2. And it is true, this is the only way to blessedness. But if inquiry be made into the cause of man's blessedness, we must seek that elsewhere. All men having sinned and made themselves guilty before God, and fallen short of the glory of God, and of that happiness which was conferred upon their first parents, now there is no way to recover this lost felicity, but by seeking and obtaining the favour of God, and the pardon of our sins; which is the very doctrine of the gospel; to the confirmation whereof this text is justly alleged, Rom. iv. 6, 7. Our sins are debts, and they need *forgiving;* they are filthy and abominable in God's sight, and need *covering*.

2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD [b]imputeth not iniquity, and [c]in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

b 2 Cor. 5. 19. c John 1. 47.

Whom God doth not charge with the guilt of his sins, as he might justly do, but graciously accepts and pardons him in Christ, and deals with him as if he had not sinned. *In whose spirit there is no guile;* who freely confesseth all his sins without dissembling and concealing of them; which may seem to be the main thing here intended, by comparing this with the following verses; and who is sincere in his professions of repentance, turning from sin to God with all his heart, and not feignedly.

3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

When I kept silence, to wit, from a full and open confession of my sins, as appears from ver. 5, and from pouring out my soul to God in serious and fervent prayers for pardon and peace. Whilst I concealed my sins, or smothered my fears, and stifled the workings of my own conscience. *My bones waxed old;* my spirits failed, and the strength of my body decayed. *Through my roaring all the day long;* because of the continual horrors of my conscience, and sense of God's wrath, wherewith I was as yet rather oppressed and overwhelmed, than brought to thorough repentance.

4 For day and night thy [d]hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

d 1 Sam. 5. 6, 11. Job 33. 7. Ps. 38. 2.

Thy hand; thy afflicting hand bringing my sins to remembrance, and filling me with thy terrors for them. My very radical moisture was in a manner dried up, and wasted through excessive fears and sorrows.

5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. [e]I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

e Prov. 28. 13. Is. 65. 24. Luke 15. 18, 21, &c. 1 John 1. 9.

At last I took up a full resolution, that I would no longer dally nor deal deceitfully with God, nor vainly seek to hide my sins from the all-seeing God, but that I would openly and candidly confess and bewail all my sins with all their aggravations, and humbly implore the pardon of them. *The iniquity of my sin*, i. e. the guilt of my sin. Or, *Thou didst take away the punishment* (as this Hebrew word oft signifies) *of my sin;* or, *my exceeding sinful sin;* two words signifying the same thing, being here put together by way of aggravation, according to the manner of the Hebrews.

6 [f]For this shall every one that is godly [g]pray unto thee † in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

f 1 Tim. 1. 16. g Is. 55. 6 John 7. 34. † Heb. *in a time of finding.*

For this, i. e. upon the encouragement of my example, and thy great mercy vouchsafed to me, in answer to my humble confession and supplication. *In a time when thou mayest be found*, Heb. *in the time of finding thee;* the pronoun *thee* being easily and fitly repeated out of the next foregoing clause, i. e. *while he may be found*, as it is expressed, Isa. lv. 6, or while he is near, Psal. lxix. 13, in an acceptable and seasonable time, while God continues to offer grace and mercy to sinners, *before the decree bring*

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forth, Zeph. ii. 2, and sentence be passed or executed upon them. By which clause he seems to intimate the difference between the godly, who pray and cry earnestly to God for mercy in its season; and the wicked, who will do so when it is too late, and the season is lost. *In the floods of great waters,* i. e. in the time of great calamities, which are frequently compared *to great waters. They shall not come nigh unto him,* to wit, so as to overwhelm or hurt him. Or God will set him in a high and safe place, out of the reach of them, as he provided an ark for Noah when the deluge came; to which peradventure he alludes in this place.

h Ps. 9. 9. & 27. 5. & 31. 20. & 119. 114. i Ex. 15. 1. Judg. 5. 1. 2 Sam. 22. 1.

7 [h]Thou *art* my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with [i]songs of deliverance. Selah.

i. e. With such great deliverances on all sides, as will give just occasion to sing forth thy praises.

† Heb. *I will counsel thee, mine eye* shall be *upon thee.*

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: †I will guide thee with mine eye.

This and the next verse are the words, either, 1. Of God; whom David brings in as returning this answer to his prayers, and the profession of his trust in God. Or rather, 2. Of David himself; who having received singular favours from God, and having declared what the godly would do upon that occasion, ver. 6, he now undertakes to instruct the wicked what they should do; which he doth, partly, to express his thankfulness to God for delivering himself, and his zeal to advance the honour and service of God in the world; partly, as an act of justice, that he might make some amends to those whom he had injured, and provoke them to repentance, whom by his sins he had scandalized, and either drawn to sin, or encouraged and hardened in sin, which he was obliged and did promise to do upon this or the like occasion, Psal. li. 13; and partly, for the discharge of his office and duty, as he was both a king and a prophet, and a good man; in all which capacities he was obliged to endeavour the conversion and salvation of sinners. *Thee;* thee, O sinner, whosoever thou art, who hast no understanding, but art a wicked man, as the two following verses explain it. He speaks this to the generality of impenitent sinners, as the next verse shows, which begins in the plural number, *Be not ye,* &c.; only he expresseth it here singularly, as appealing and applying himself particularly to the conscience of every individual person, which he thought the most effectual way of proceeding, as he had found in himself, when Nathan applied his indefinite discourse to him, saying, *Thou art the man. In the way which thou shalt go,* i. e. in which thou oughtest to walk; the future tense oft noting a man's duty, as Gen. xx. 9; Mal. i. 6. *I will guide thee with mine eye;* I will lend thee the eyes of my mind. Or, I will be to thee *instead of eyes,* as the phrase is, Numb. x. 31, to advise, and direct, and caution thee; which I am able to do, not only by those gifts and graces which God hath given me, but also from my own experience. I will guide thee as the rider doth his horse, to which the person to be guided is compared, ver. 9; or as a master doth his scholar; or as a guide doth him who knoweth not the right way. Or the words may be thus rendered, *I will give* thee *counsel, mine eye* shall be *upon thee,* as it is more fully expressed, Gen. xliv. 21; Jer. xxiv. 6; xl. 4, i. e. I will watch over thee, and instruct or admonish thee, as I have occasion.

k Prov. 26. 3. Jam. 3. 3. l Job 35. 11.

9 [k]Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have [l]no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule; be not such brutish and sottish creatures as I have been, not having reason or grace to govern yourselves, nor hearkening to the counsels and admonitions of others. *Lest they come near unto thee;* lest they should come too near to thee, so as to bite or kick thee. But neither is this the common practice of horses or mules, of which he seems to speak; nor is this the proper use of a bit or bridle, to keep them from so doing; but rather to bring them nearer to the rider for his use, and to keep them under his conduct and power, from whom they are otherwise apt to run away. The words therefore are and may be otherwise rendered, *because they do not* or *will not come near unto thee,* to wit, for thy service, unless they be forced to it by a bit or bridle. And so all the ancient translators understand it.

m Prov. 13. 21. Rom. 2. 9. n Ps. 34. 8. & 84. 12. Prov. 16. 20. Jer. 17. 7.

10 [m]Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked: but [n]he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: this is an argument to enforce the foregoing admonition; if any men will be refractory and unruly, God hath many ways to curb and chastise them, and bring them to his will. *He that trusteth in the Lord;* who relies upon his providence and promise for his preservation and deliverance, and commits himself to God's care and conduct, waiting upon him in his way, and not turning aside to crooked or sinful paths for safety or satisfaction.

o Ps. 64. 10. & 68. 3.

11 [o]Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all *ye that are* upright in heart.

PSALM XXXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a celebration of God for his great and glorious works, both of creation and providence.

God is to be praised by reason of his goodness, 1—5; *of his power,* 6—11; *and of his providence,* 12—15. *And they that fear him shall find mercy and rejoice in him,* 16—22.

a Ps. 32. 11. & 97. 12. b Ps. 147. 1.

REJOICE [a]in the LORD, O ye righteous: *for* [b]praise is comely for the upright.

Rejoice in the Lord; let his excellency discovered in his works be the matter of your joy and praise. *Praise is comely for the upright;* it well becomes them to exercise themselves in this work of praising and blessing of God; partly because they have such singular and abundant obligations and occasions to do so; and partly because they will praise God worthily and heartily, and with due reverence and thankfulness, as God requires, and deserves to be praised; whereas ungodly men do indeed disparage and pollute the holy name of God, while they pretend to praise it, and therefore God rejects their praises and prayers. See Psal. l. 16; cix. 7; Prov. xxviii. 9.

c Ps. 92. 3. & 144. 9.

2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery [c]*and* an instrument of ten strings.

He mentions these instruments, because they were used in the public worship and praises of God in the tabernacle.

d Ps. 96. 1. & 98. 1. & 144. 9. & 149. 1. Is. 42. 10. Rev. 5. 9.

3 [d]Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

A new song; either, 1. Newly composed. As God gives you fresh occasions, so do not you content yourselves with the old songs or psalms, made by the holy men of God, but make new ones suited to the occasions. But neither had all the *righteous,* to whom he speaks, ver. 1, the gift of composing songs, nor was it of any necessity or importance that they should make new songs to praise God, at least for the works here mentioned, when there were so many made by David, and other holy prophets, for the use of God's church and people, when they had any such occasion. Or, 2. Renewed, or repeated, or sung again; in which sense Job saith his *glory* was *new,* or *fresh in him,* Job xxix. 20, i. e. renewed or continued from day to day; and the command of love is called *new,* John xiii. 34, because it was renewed and reinforced by Christ. So this song is here called *new,* not so much from the matter, as from the singing of it; because it was sung afresh, or again.

4 For the word of the LORD *is* right; and all his works *are done* in truth.

All God's counsels and commands, either contained in the Scriptures, or given forth in his providence, for the government of the world, are wise, and just, and good, without deceit or defect; and all his works of providence agree with his word, and are no other than the accomplishment of his promises or threatenings, or other declarations of his mind and will in his word, although sometimes for a season they may seem contrary to it.

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e Ps. 11. 7. & 45. 7. f Ps. 119. 64. ‖ Or, mercy.

5 eHe loveth righteousness and judgment: fthe earth is full of the ‖goodness of the LORD.

Judgment, i. e. just judgment, by a figure called *hendiadis*, as Jer. xxii. 3. Or *justice* relates to the sentence, and *judgment* to the execution of it. He not only doth justice to all men, as was implied, ver. 4, but, which is more, he loves it, and delights in it. *The goodness of the Lord;* he not only doth no man wrong, but he is very kind and merciful to all men in the world, to whom he gives many favours and invitations to his love and service. See Matt. v. 45; Acts xiv. 17; Rom. i. 20, 21.

g Gen. 1. 6, 7. Heb. 11. 3. 2 Pet. 3. 5. h Gen. 2. 1. i Job 26. 13.

6 gBy the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and hall the host of them iby the breath of his mouth.

By the word of the Lord; either, 1. By the hypostatical Word, Christ, who is oft called God's *Word*, even by the Chaldee paraphrast; as also John i. 1—3, where he is said to be that *Word* by whom *all things were made*. So that which is here spoken more darkly and doubtedly, according to that state of the church, is more clearly declared in the New Testament. Or, 2. By his will or command, as this very phrase is here used, ver. 4, and as it seems to be explained, ver. 9. And so it hath a great emphasis in it, that God made this admirable structure of the heavens, and all its glorious stars, not with great pains and time, and help of many artists and instruments, as men do far meaner works, but with one single word; which is much to the glory of the Creator. *All the host of them;* the angels; or the stars: see on Gen. ii. 1. *By the breath of his mouth;* either, 1. By the Holy Ghost, so called Job xxxiii. 4. And so here are all the persons of the Trinity, Jehovah the Father, and the Word, and the Spirit; to each of which this work of creation is elsewhere ascribed, as was noted on Gen. i. 26. Or, 2. By his word, as it was expressed in the last clause, which is so called Isa. xi. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 8.

k Gen. 1. 9. Job 38. 10. Ps. 104. 9.

7 kHe gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

He gathereth; or, *gathered;* for he speaks of the first creation, when this was done, Gen. i. *As an heap;* by which expression he brings to our minds this great work of God, that the sea, which is lighter and higher than earth, is yet confined within its bounds, that it might not overflow the earth. *In storehouses;* either in the clouds, or in the bowels of the earth; whence he can draw them forth when he sees fit.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

All the earth; all the people of the earth, as the next clause expounds this; not only Jews, but Gentiles, who equally enjoy the benefit of this great and glorious work of God.

l Gen. 1. 3. Ps. 148. 5.

9 For lhe spake, and it was *done;* he commanded, and it stood fast.

It was done; the work here mentioned, ver. 6, 7. *Stood fast;* or, *stood forth*, as a servant at his master's command; or, *was* or *did* exist.

m Is. 8. 10. & 19. 3. † Heb. *maketh frustrate.*

10 mThe LORD †bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

Of the heathen; or, *of the nations;* though nations combine themselves and their counsels together, yet he defeats them when he pleaseth. Thus he passeth from the work of creation to the works of providence, and from the instances of his power in senseless and unreasonable creatures, to manifest his power in overruling the thoughts, and wills, and actions of all men, whether single or united.

n Job 23. 13. Prov. 19. 21. Is. 46. 10. † Heb. *to generation and generation.*

11 nThe counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart †to all generations.

All his purposes and designs, and especially those which concern his chosen people, of whom he speaks in the next verse, are always successful and irresistible.

o Ps. 65. 4. & 144. 15.

12 oBlessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath pchosen for his own inheritance.

p Ex. 19. 5. Deut. 7. 6.

Seeing the Lord is so great and glorious in wisdom, and power, and goodness, as hath been hitherto said, as they must needs be very miserable who are strangers or enemies to him; so thrice happy is that people of Israel, who, though they be despised by the Gentiles, are chosen by this Almighty God, to be his peculiar portion, and friends, and servants.

q 2 Chron. 16. 9. Job 28. 24. Ps. 11. 4. & 14. 2. Prov. 15. 3.

13 qThe LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.

14 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

Although he hath a special relation to Israel, yet he hath a general care and inspection over all mankind, all whose hearts and ways he discerns and observes.

r Job 34. 21. Jer. 32. 19.

15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; rhe considereth all their works.

Fashioneth, or *fashioned*, or *made*, or *formeth*. For this may relate either, 1. To the work of creation. So he proves what he said ver. 13, 14, that God beheld all men, because he made them; yea, even their hearts, the most secret piece of them. Or, 2. To the works of his providence. Having said that God sees and observes all men, he now adds that he rules and governs them; yea, even their hearts, which are most masterless and unmanageable, and yet he frameth and disposeth and inclineth them, this way or that, according to the counsel of his will: see Exod. xxxiv. 24; Psal. cv. 25. *Alike;* or, *equally*, one as well as another; whether they be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, princes or peasants; all are alike subject to his jurisdiction. *All their works*, both outward and inward; all the workings of their minds and affections, and all their endeavours and actions.

s Ps. 44. 6.

16 sThere is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

King; he instanceth in these, as the most potent and uncontrollable persons in the world, and most confident of themselves, and least sensible of their dependence upon God; by which he strongly proves his general proposition, of God's powerful providence over all men. *By the multitude of an host;* but only by God's providence, who disposeth of victory and success as he pleaseth, and that frequently to the weakest and most foolish side, Eccles. ix. 11.

t Ps. 20. 7. & 147. 10. Prov. 21. 31.

17 tAn horse *is* a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver *any* by his great strength.

An horse; though he be strong, Job xxxix. 19, &c., and *fit for battle*, Prov. xxi. 31; or for flight, if need requires. And so this is put for all warlike provisions; of which horses were and are a very considerable part. *A vain thing*, Heb. *a lie*, because it promiseth that help and safety which it cannot give.

u Job 36. 7. Ps. 34. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 12. x Ps. 147. 11.

18 uBehold, the eye of the LORD *is* xupon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

Whosoever therefore would have safety and deliverance, must seek and expect it only from the watchful eye and almighty hand and mercy of God. *Them that fear him;* these are the chief objects of his care and favour. *Them that hope in his mercy;* that place their hope, and trust, and happiness not in any creature, but only in God, and in his mercy and blessings. The conjunction and order of these two qualifications of the person whom God careth for is observable here, they must be such as *fear God*, and so make conscience of keeping his commands, Eccles. xii. 13, and then they may and must *hope in* or rely upon his *mercy* for their safety and happiness.

y Job 5. 20. Ps. 37. 19.

19 To deliver their soul from death, and yto keep them alive in famine.

Their soul, i. e. their life, when he sees it to be expedient for them: sometimes it is better for them to die than to live, as both good and bad men have declared; and when it is so, it is known to God, but not to us. And therefore the constant accomplishment of this and the like promises in a

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literal sense is not to be expected, nor simply desired, but with submission to God's wise and gracious will.

x Ps. 62. 1,5. & 130. 6. a 1 Is. 115. 9, 10, 11.

20 [x]Our soul waiteth for the LORD: [a]he *is* our help and our shield.

The help of us Israelites, to whom he hath made many promises and glorious discoveries of his goodness.

b Ps. 13. 5. Zech. 10. 7. John 16. 22.

21 For our [b]heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

For; or. *therefore;* for this seems to be an inference either from the foregoing or from the following sentence.

22 Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

PSALM XXXIV.

¶ *A Psalm* of David, when he changed his behaviour before ‖ Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.

‖ Or, *Achish*, 1 Sam. 21. 13.

A Psalm made upon that occasion, though not at that time. *His behaviour;* or, *his habit* or *posture*, or *his reason*, as this word is taken, 1 Sam. xxv. 33; Psal. cxix. 66; Prov. xi. 22. When he counterfeited madness. Wherein, whether he sinned or not, is matter of dispute; but this is undoubted, that God's favour and his deliverance at that time was very remarkable, and deserved this solemn acknowledgment. *Abimelech*, called *Achish*, 1 Sam. xxi. 10. But Abimelech seems to have been the common name of the kings of the Philistines, Gen. xx. 2; xxvi. 1, as Pharaoh was of the Egyptians, and Cæsar of the Romans.

David praiseth God, 1, 2, *and exhorteth others thereto from his own experience of God's kindness*, 3—7. *He showeth that they are blessed who trust in God*, 8—10. *He exhorteth others to learn to fear him*, 11, *and showeth the way to happiness*, 12—14. *The privileges of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked*, 15—22.

a Eph. 5. 20. 1 Thess. 5. 18. 2 Thess. 1. 3. & 2. 13.

I WILL [a]bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

I will never forget to bless God for this miraculous deliverance.

b Jer. 9. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 31. 2 Cor. 10. 17. c Ps. 119. 74. & 142. 7.

2 My soul shall make her [b]boast in the LORD: [c]the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad.

My soul shall glory in this, that I have so powerful and so gracious a Lord and Master. *The humble;* or, *the meek*, i. e. the godly, oft called in Scripture by that title; and particularly my friends and favourers in Israel, whom he thus calls in opposition to his proud and furious adversaries in Saul's court and camp. *Be glad;* both for their love to me and to the public good of Israel, which they know that I design and seek above all things; and for the comfort and benefit of my example to them in like straits and difficulties.

d Ps. 69. 30. Luke 1. 46.

3 O [d]magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

Join your praises with mine, O all ye humble ones. *Together;* not in place, for David was now banished from the place of God's public worship, but in affection and work: let our souls meet, and let our praises meet in the ears of the all-hearing God. Or, *alike*, i. e. with equal zeal and fervency; let none be willing to be outstripped by another.

e Matt. 7. 7. Luke 11. 9.

4 I [e]sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

‖ Or, *They flowed* unto him.

5 ‖ They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.

They looked; the humble, ver. 2; or they that fear him, ver. 7, when they were in distress. Or it is an indefinite expression. *Unto him;* either, 1. Unto the Lord, expressed ver. 4, i. e. they sought and expected help from him. Or rather, 2. Unto *this poor man*, as it follows, ver. 6, or unto David. So he speaks of himself in the third person, which is usual. So the sense is, when I was delivered, ver. 4, men looked upon me with wonder and astonishment, as one saved in a prodigious manner. *Lightened*, i. e. comforted and encouraged by my example. But these and the foregoing words are by the ancient interpreters read imperatively, as an exhortation to others, to whom he oft addresseth his speech, as ver. 3, 8, 9, 11. *Look unto him*, (with an eye of faith and prayer,) *and be ye enlightened*, i. e. take comfort in the expectation of mercy from him. And then the last words they render thus, *and your*, Heb. *their*, (but the change of persons is very frequent in this book,) *fear shall not be ashamed. Their faces were not ashamed;* they were not disappointed of their hope, but found relief, as I did.

f Ps. 3. 4.

6 [f]This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and [g]saved him out of all his troubles.

g ver. 17, 19. 2 Sam. 22. 1.

i. e. David, of whom they that *looked*, &c., ver. 5, spake these words.

h Dan. 6. 22. Heb. 1. 14. i See Gen. 32. 1, 2. 2 Kin. 6. 17. Zech. 9. 8.

7 [h]The angel of the LORD [i]encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

The angel, i. e. the angels; the singular number being put for the plural, as it is Psal. lxxviii. 45; cv. 33, 40; for it is both improper and unusual to ascribe *encamping*, and that *round about* all good men, to one created angel. And we find many angels employed in this work, Gen. xxxii. 1, 2; 2 Kings vi. 17. *Encampeth round about them;* guardeth them from dangers on every side; to which work they are appointed by God, Heb. i. 14.

k 1 Pet. 2. 3. l Ps. 2. 12.

8 O [k]taste and see that the LORD *is* good: [l]blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.

Taste, i. e. consider it seriously, and thoroughly, and affectionately; make trial of it by your own and others' experiences. This is opposed to those slight and vanishing thoughts which men have of it. *Good*, i. e. merciful and gracious, to wit, to all his people.

m Ps. 31. 23.

9 [m]O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for *there is* no want to them that fear him.

i. e. Reverence and serve him, and trust in him; for *fear* is commonly put for all the parts of God's worship.

n Job 4. 10, 11. o Ps. 84. 11.

10 [n]The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: [o]but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

The young lions; either, 1. Properly: see Job iv. 11. Or, 2. Metaphorically so called, the great potentates of the earth, who are oft so called, as Jer. ii. 15; Ezek. xxxviii. 13; Nah. ii. 13. *Shall not want any good thing*, which is necessary and truly good for them, all circumstances considered; of which God alone is a competent judge. And therefore although God doth usually take a special care to supply the wants of good men, and hath oft done it by extraordinary ways, when ordinary have failed, yet sometimes he knows, and it is certainly true, that wants and crosses are more needful and useful to them than bread, and in such cases it is a greater mercy of God to deny them supplies than to grant them.

p Ps. 32. 8.

11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: [p]I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

Ye children; whom I love as mine own children, and who own me as your civil father, your prince; see 2 Kings v. 13; and as your spiritual father, a prophet; for the disciples of the prophets were called their *sons*, 2 Kings ii. 3. *The fear of the Lord*, i. e. the true and principal way of worshipping and serving God with his acceptation, and to your own salvation.

q 1 Pet. 3. 10, 11.

12 [q]What man *is he that* desireth life, *and* loveth *many* days, that he may see good?

Desireth, to wit, seriously and in good earnest, so as to be willing to use any endeavours which shall be prescribed to him: for otherwise the question were needless: for there is no man but desires it, at least coldly and faintly. *Life;* a long and happy life, begun in this world, and continued for ever in the next. And thus *life* is oft used, as Psal. xvi. 11; xxx. 5. *Loveth many days, that he may see good*,

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Heb. *loveth days to see* (i. e. in which he may see, i. e. enjoy) *good*, to wit, prosperity or happiness.

13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy
r 1 Pet. 3. 10. lips from [r]speaking guile.

From evil; from all manner of evil-speaking, from all opprobrious, injurious, false, and deceitful speeches; which, though men commonly use to ease and gratify their own minds, or to compass their designs, do frequently fall upon their own heads, by provoking both God and men against them. *Guile;* or guileful words, contrary to thy intentions, and with a purpose of deceiving men by them.

s Ps. 37. 27. Is. 1. 16, 17. 1 Pet. 3. 11. Heb. 12. 14. 14 [s]Depart from evil, and do good; [t]seek peace, and pursue it.

Depart from evil, i. e. from all sin, and especially from all wicked and injurious acts and practices against thy neighbour. *Do good;* be ready to perform all good and friendly offices to all men, as thou hast opportunity. *Seek peace;* study by all means possible to live peaceably and quietly with all men, avoiding grudges, debates, dissensions, strifes, and enmities. *Pursue it;* do not only embrace it gladly when it is offered, but follow hard after it when it seems to flee away from thee, and use all possible endeavours, by fair words, by condescensions, and by the mediation or assistance of others, to recover it, and to compose all differences which may arise between thee and others. It is here observable, that whereas he said he would *teach* them *the fear of the Lord*, ver. 11, the lessons he teacheth them, ver. 13, 14, are only such as concern men. Not that he meant to exclude duties of piety towards God, which he every where enjoineth and presseth as most necessary, but only to teach us what is oft inculcated both in the Old and New Testament, that sincere religion towards God is always accompanied with a conscientious discharge of our duties to men; and to convince the hypocritical Israelites, and particularly his adversaries, that so long as it was their daily course and practice to speak and act all manner of evil against him, and other good men, all their pretences to religion were but vain.

u Jer. 32. 7. Ps. 32. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 12. v ver. 6, 17. 15 [u]The eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their [v]cry.

This is added to prove his last assertion, to wit, that the practice of these duties, ver. 13, 14, is the true and best, and indeed the only, way to *see* that *good* proposed and promised ver. 12; both because such righteous persons, howsoever they may meet with affronts and injuries from men, are under the special care and favour of God, in this verse; and those who do the evils there forbidden shall find to their cost that God is their enemy, ver. 16.

x Lev. 17. 10. Jer. 44. 11. Amos 9. 4. a Deut. 10. 7. 16 [x]The face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, [a]to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The face of the Lord, i. e. his anger, oft called his *face*, as Lev. xvii. 10; xx. 5; Jer. xliv. 11; Lam. iv. 16, because anger discovers itself in the face. *Them that do evil*, i. e. whose common course, and study, and business it is to do evil; for else *there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not*, Eccles. vii. 20. *To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth;* utterly to deprive both them and their children of that worldly happiness, which is the only thing that they desire, and seek by their wicked courses.

a ver. 6, 15. Is. Ps. 145. 18, 19. 17 *The righteous* cry, and [a]the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

Heb. *They cry*, to wit, the righteous, as is manifest both from the nature of the thing, and from ver. 15, where they are so called, and with which this verse is to be continued, the 16th verse coming in by way of parenthesis, as is very usual in many places of Scripture.

b Ps. 51. 17. Is. 57. 15. & 61. 1 & 66. 2. c Ps. 73. 26. the broken of heart. † Heb. *contrite of spirit.* 18 [b]The LORD *is* nigh [c]† unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth † such as be of a contrite spirit.

Nigh; ready to hear and succour them; though by the severe course of his providence towards them he seems to themselves and others to stand afar off, as David complains, Psal. x. 1. *Such as be of a contrite spirit;* by which he understands either, 1. Those whose spirits are oppressed, and even broken, with the greatness of their calamities. But this may be, and frequently is, the lot of wicked men. And therefore in this sense, and to such persons, this proposition and promise is not true. Or rather, 2. Those whose hearts or spirits are truly and deeply humbled under the hand of God, and the sense of their sins, and God's displeasure for them, which was David's case, Psal. vi. 1, &c.; xxxii. 3, 4, whose proud and self-willed hearts are subdued and made obedient to God's will, and submissive to his providence; for to all such, and to such only, this promise is verified.

d Prov. 24. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 11, 12. e ver. 6, 17. 19 [d]Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: [e]but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

f John 19. 36. 20 He keepeth all his bones: [f]not one of them is broken.

All his bones, i. e. all the parts and members of their bodies, which are synecdochically expressed by the bones, which are the stay and strength of the rest. God will not suffer any mischief to befall him; though he may be oft afflicted, yet he shall not be destroyed. But these words, though they are here spoken of the righteous men in general, of whom they are true in a metaphorical sense; yet they had a further meaning in them, being designed by the Spirit of God (which dictated to David, not only the matter, but the very words and expressions) to signify a great mystery, that none of Christ's bones should be broken; to which purpose they are alleged, John xix. 36.

g Ps. 94. 23. ‖ Or, *shall be guilty.* 21 [g]Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous ‖ shall be desolate.

Evil; either, 1. The evil of sin. His own wickedness, though designed against others, shall destroy himself. Or, 2. The evil of misery. When the afflictions of good men shall have a happy issue, theirs shall end in their total and final destruction. *That hate the righteous;* that persecute them, and plot their ruin; which is an evidence that they hate them, whatsoever they may pretend to the contrary.

h 2 Sam. 4. 9. 1 Kin. 1. 29. Ps. 71. 23. & 103. 4. Lam. 3. 58. 22 The LORD [h]redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

i. e. Their lives or their persons, from the malicious designs of all their enemies, and from desolation or utter ruin, as it follows.

PSALM XXXV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was penned by David when he was slandered and persecuted by Saul and his servants, as is manifest from the whole body of it.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David prayeth for his own safety, 1, 2, *and his enemies' destruction*, 3—10; *showeth their falsehood, and unthankfulness, and malice*, 11—21. *He prayeth for their confusion*, 22—26; *but for the preservation and joy of the godly*, 27, 28.

a Ps. 43. 1. & 119. 154. Lam. 3. 58. b Ex. 14. 25. PLEAD [a]*my cause*, O LORD, with them that strive with me: [b]fight against them that fight against me.

Seeing I am unable to right myself, and the magistrates refuse to do me justice, be thou my Patron and Protector.

c Is. 42. 13. 2 [c]Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

Take hold of shield and buckler; therewith to cover and defend me. Compare Psal. xci. 4; Prov. ii. 7.

3 Draw out also the spear, and stop *the way* against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation.

The spear; thy offensive weapons. He alludes to the practice of soldiers in battle. *The way*, in which they are marching directly and furiously against me. But divers interpreters, both Hebrews and others, take this Hebrew

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word for a noun, and render it *a sword;* or, as the word may signify, *a close weapon;* for the psalmist here representing God as a man of war, and accordingly furnishing him with other weapons, it seems not probable that he would omit this weapon, which was most constantly and universally used. *Say unto my soul*, i. e. unto me; either, 1. By thy Spirit assuring me of it; or, 2. By thy providence effecting it; for God's *saying* or *speaking* is oft meant of his doing, because his word is sufficient for the doing of whatsoever he pleaseth.

d ver. 26. Ps. 40. 14,15. & 70. 2, 3.
4 [d]Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let
e Ps. 129. 5. them be [e]turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

Confounded, i. e. frustrated in their wicked designs and hopes against me. Concerning this, and the like, and following imprecations, which may seem strange and severe, it must be considered, 1. That they did not proceed from any passionate or revengeful spirit in David towards his enemies, (from which how free he was, appears not only from his own words here, ver. 12—14, but from the whole course of his life, and the frequent instances mentioned in his history of his meek and merciful carriage to his enemies when they were in his power,) but from his zeal for God, and for piety and justice, to which they showed themselves to be constant and implacable adversaries, and by the direction of the prophetical Spirit of God wherewith he was endued, which Spirit did exactly know the condition of his enemies, and that those against whom they are levelled were hardened and incurable. 2. That they contain nothing but a prayer to God, that he would accomplish his own threatenings, and execute his own law of retaliation, of *eye for eye, and tooth for tooth*, and so bring upon them the evils which they designed against him; which also was of great and good use, both to glorify God's justice, and to warn and reform other sinners by the terror of their example. 3. That they may be taken only for predictions, as hath been observed before upon the like occasion. *Turned back;* either, 1. Stopped or hindered in the execution of their wicked design. Or rather, 2. (which is more suitable to the context) Discomfited and put to flight, as this phrase is frequently used, as Psal. ix. 3; lxx. 2; lxxviii. 9; Isa. xlii. 17; Jer. xlvi. 5, 21.

f Job 21. 18. Ps. 1. 4. & 83. 13. Is. 29. 5. Hos. 13. 3.
5 [f]Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase *them*.

As chaff before the wind, i. e. dispersed and chased from place to place, finding rest and safety no where. *The angel of the Lord;* whom God useth to defend his people, and to destroy their enemies.

† Heb. *darkness and slipperiness.* g Ps. 73. 18. Jer. 23. 12.
6 Let their way be †[g]dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

Their way, by which they flee, being chased, as was now said. *Dark and slippery;* so as they can neither discern the right path, nor be able to stand in it, and much less to run away, especially from so swift a persecutor as an angel, whereby they must unavoidably fall into their enemies' hands, and be destroyed.

h Ps. 9. 15.
7 For without cause have they [h]hid for me their net *in* a pit, *which* without cause they have digged for my soul.

Out of mere malice, without any injury or provocation on my part, and without any necessity on their parts. They are no common, but the worst of enemies; and therefore I may justly pray against them, as I do. These expressions aggravate their sins, and signify that their persecution of him was not the effect of a sudden passion, but of a deep and habitual hatred and malice, and of an evil design, carried on in a constant and continued course with deliberation, and cunning, and deceit, and that against his soul or life; for nothing less would satisfy them.

i 1 Thess. 5. 3. † Heb. *which he knoweth not of.* k Ps. 7. 15. 16. & 57. 6. & 141. 9, 10. Prov. 5. 22.
8 Let [i]destruction come upon him †at unawares; and [k]let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

Upon him, i. e. upon each of thine and mine implacable enemies, of whom he hath hitherto spoken.

1 Ps. 13. 5.
9 And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: [l]it shall rejoice in his salvation.

In the Lord; in and for his glory and service, which shall be advanced by this means, and for his favour to me, otherwise I am far from rejoicing in their calamities.

m See Ps. 51. 8. n Ex. 15. 11. Ps. 71. 19.
10 [m]All my bones shall say, LORD, [n]who *is* like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

All my bones, i. e. my whole body, by a synecdoche, as Psal. xxxiv. 20, as well as my soul, mentioned ver. 9. I will glorify thee, both with my soul and with my body. *Shall say:* speech is ascribed to the bones figuratively, as elsewhere they are said to *fear* and to *rejoice*, Psal. vi. 2; li. 8, and as *the loins* are said to *bless*, Job xxxi. 20. If they could speak, they would express thy praises, because having been dried up with sorrow, they are now refreshed by thy mercy.

† Heb. *Witnesses of wrong.* o Ps. 27. 12. † Heb. *they asked me.*
11 †[o]False witnesses did rise up; †they laid to my charge *things* that I knew not.

They accused me to Saul of treachery and designs against his crown and life, and other crimes whereof I was wholly innocent and ignorant.

p Ps. 38. 20. & 109. 3, 4, 5. Jer. 18. 20. John 10. 32. † Heb. *depriving.*
12 [p]They rewarded me evil for good *to* the †spoiling of my soul.

For good; for the good offices which I did to divers of them when I had favour and power in Saul's court and camp. *To the spoiling of my soul*, i. e. to the stripping of my person of all my comforts and hopes, and of my life itself.

q Job 30. 25. Ps. 69. 10, 11. ‖ Or, *afflicted.* r Matt. 10. 13. Luke 10. 6.
13 But as for me, [q]when they were sick, my clothing *was* sackcloth: I ‖humbled my soul with fasting; [r]and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

Sick; or in any other great misery. *Sackcloth;* which was the habit of mourners, Gen. xxxvii. 34; Matt. xi. 21; Rev. xi. 3. *I humbled my soul*, Heb. *I afflicted my soul*, (of which phrase see Lev. xvi. 29, 31; xxiii. 27, 32, &c.,) partly with fasting, and partly with compassion and fervent prayers for them. *And my prayer returned into mine own bosom:* according to this translation the sense may be this, *and*, or *but*, or *although my* fastings and *prayers* did them no good, neither abated their malice, nor prevailed with God for them, so far as I desired, but *returned* to me without success, like a gift sent to an uncivil person, who disdainfully rejects it, and returns it to the giver. But, 1. This is not true, that his prayers returned empty to him, and did them no good, for they prevailed with God for their recovery, as appears by the following verses. 2. This doth not seem to suit well with the context; for both in the foregoing and following words he is only describing what he did for them, and not what the effects of it were, which he describes in the succeeding verses. Others therefore render the words otherwise; either, 1. Thus, *and my prayer in my bosom returned*, i. e. I did daily and frequently repeat my prayers for them, and that not only in public, when I joined with others in a fast-day appointed for them, which might be done in policy or for ostentation; but also in secret, between God and my own soul, and that with a sincere and hearty affection: for what is done secretly and affectionately, is said to be done *in the bosom*, Numb. xi. 12; Psal. lxxxix. 50; Prov. xxi. 14, although indeed there is in those places another proposition; which may possibly alter the case. Or, 2. (which seems the truest sense) *And as for my prayer*, (to wit, which I joined with my fasting on their behalf,) *let it return* (nothing being more frequent than for future verbs to be put imperatively) *into my own bosom;* i. e. if any shall think or say that my fasting for them was but counterfeit or politic, and that I did not pray for them, but rather against them, as I do in this Psalm, and that under all this show I secretly wished their death or destruction; my earnest desire is, that the all-seeing and heart-searching God would grant unto me, when I come into their circumstances,

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the same things which I begged for them, whether good or evil. And this sense agrees with the common use of this phrase in Scripture, where whatsoever is repaid to any man is said to be *rendered into his bosom*, as Psal. lxxix. 12; Isa. lxv. 6, 7; Jer. xxxii. 18; Luke vi. 38, as elsewhere it is said to *return upon his head*.

14 I †behaved myself †as though *he had been* my friend *or* brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth *for his* mother.

I behaved myself, Heb. *I walked*; either to him, to visit and comfort him; or *about the streets*, whither my occasions led me. Though *walking* is oft put for a man's carriage or conversation. *I bowed down*; went hanging down my head, as mourners used to do, Isa. lviii. 5. *Mother*; he mentions the *mother* rather than the *father*, either because her tender affection, and care, and kindness to him had more won upon his heart, and made him more sensible of the loss; or because, through the depravation of man's nature, children are many times less sensible of their father's loss or death, because it is compensated with some advantage to themselves; which doth not usually happen upon the mother's death. Some render it, *as a mourning mother*, for the loss of her son. But this doth not seem to suit so well with the order of the Hebrew words.

15 But in mine †adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: *yea*, [a]the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew *it* not; [b]they did [c]tear *me*, and ceased not:

In mine adversity, Heb. *in my halting*, i. e. when I was in great danger of falling into mischief; when I had any sickness, or ill success in my affairs, and was almost lost; for such are said to *halt*, Micah iv. 6, 7; Zeph. iii. 19. See also Psal. xxxviii. 17; Jer. xx. 10. *Gathered themselves together*, to wit, *against me*, as it is expressed in the next clause; either because they were so full of joy at the tidings, that they could not contain it in their own breasts, but sought to communicate it to others: or that they might insult over me, and please and recreate themselves and one another with discourses about it; or that they might consult how to improve the advantage which they now had against me, to my utter destruction. *The abjects*; or, *vile persons*; either for the meanness of their condition, or for their wickedness, for which they were *worthy to be beaten*, as the phrase is, Deut. xxv. 2; where the Hebrew word is of the same root with this. Or, *the lame*, as this very word is rendered, 2 Sam. iv. 4; ix. 3, to wit, *of their feet*, as it is there expressed. The cripples that could not walk without trouble and pain, were as forward as any to go to these meetings upon this occasion. *I knew it not*: this may be added to express either their hypocrisy and pretences of respect and affection to him, by reason whereof he had no suspicion of them, nor of any such practices of theirs; or his own danger, that he did not know, and therefore could not prevent, their plots and conspiracies against him. Heb. *and I knew not*; which is by others, and well may be, rendered thus, *even* they whom *I knew not*, they whom I was so far from provoking by any injury, that I never saw their faces, nor heard of their names. *Tear me*, i. e. my good name, with scoffs, and calumnies, and reproaches, and curses. *Ceased not*, Heb. *were not silent*, i. e. did thus unwearyingly and continually.

16 With hypocritical mockers in feasts, [d]they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

Hypocritical, or *profane*, as this word signifies, Job viii. 13; xiii. 16; xv. 34; xvii. 8, and, as some add, in all other places. *Mockers*; whose common practice it is to scoff at and deride others, and me in particular. *In feasts*; or, *of* or *for a cake*; or, *a morsel of bread*, as this word signifies, 1 Kings xvii. 12, 13; xix. 6; by which he further shows what vile and worthless persons these were, that would *transgress for a morsel of bread*, as it is said, Prov. xxviii. 21. They made themselves buffoons and jesters, and accustomed themselves to mock and deride David, that thereby they might gain admittance to the acquaintance and tables of great men, where they might fill their bellies; which was all that they sought for, or got by it. *They gnashed upon me with their teeth*; they used all expressions of rage and hatred against me, among which this was one, Job xvi. 9; Lam. ii. 16. This they did to curry favour with my great and potent adversaries.

17 LORD, how long wilt thou [x]look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, †[y]my darling from the lions.

Look on, like an idle spectator, without affording me any pity or help. *My darling*, to wit, *my soul*, as it is in the former clause. Heb. *my only one*; which is now left alone and forsaken by my friends, and hath none to trust to but God. See on Psal. xxii. 20.

18 [z]I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among †much people.

When I shall be restored to the liberty of the public assemblies and solemn feasts.

19 [a]Let not them that are mine enemies †wrongfully rejoice over me: *neither* [b]let them wink with the eye [c]that hate me without a cause.

Wink with their eye, i. e. mock me, or insult over me, as this phrase signifies, Prov. vi. 13; x. 10.

20 For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against *them that are* quiet in the land.

They are enemies to all peaceable counsels; they breathe out nothing but threatenings and war. They use not only open violence, but deceit, and subtle artifices, against me and my followers, who desire nothing more than to live quietly and peaceably under Saul's government.

21 Yea, they [d]opened their mouth wide against me, *and* said, [e]Aha, aha, our eye hath seen *it*.

They opened their mouth wide against me; either, 1. To devour me. It is a metaphor taken from wild beasts, when they come within reach of their prey. Or, 2. To pour forth whole floods of scoffs, and slanders, and contumelies. *Aha, aha*; an expression of joy and triumph. See on Job xxxix. 25; Psal. xl. 15. *Hath seen it*, Heb. *hath seen*, to wit, what we have long desired and hoped for. See the same or like ellipsis Psal. liv. 7; lix. 10; cxii. 8.

22 *This* thou hast [f]seen, O LORD: [g]keep not silence: O LORD, be not [h]far from me.

As they say they have seen, so my comfort is, thou also hast seen, and dost observe, all their plots and threats, and all my distresses and calamities, which I suffer for thy sake. *Keep not silence*; or, *be not deaf*, to wit, to my prayers. The same word signifies both *to be silent* and *to be deaf*. See on Psal. xxviii. 1. *Be not far from me*; do not withdraw thy favour and help from me.

23 [i]Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto my cause, my God and my Lord.

At last undertake to plead my cause against mine adversaries.

24 [k]Judge me, O LORD my God, [l]according to thy righteousness; and [m]let them not rejoice over me.

Thy righteousness; whereby thou usest and lovest to defend the innocent, and to punish their oppressors.

25 [n]Let them not say in their hearts, †Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, [o]We have swallowed him up.

Ah, so would we have it; Heb. *Aha, our soul*, i. e. Oh our soul crieth, *Aha*; an expression of mirth, as before, ver. 21. Or, *Aha*, we have *our wish* or *desire*, as the *soul* is taken, Psal. xli. 2. David is now as low as we could wish him.

26 [p]Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be [q]clothed with shame

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r Ps. 38. 16. and dishonour that r magnify *themselves* against me.

As they gathered themselves together to deride and oppose me, so do thou gather them together to destroy them. Or, *in like manner*, one as well as another; let the proud and great ones of them be disappointed and ashamed as well as the meanest among them. *Themselves;* the same ellipsis we have Psal. xxxviii. 16; lv. 12; Jer. xlviii. 26. Or, *their mouth*, as it is expressed, Obad. 12. So Ezek. xxxv. 13. That extol themselves and their power, and look upon me with scorn and contempt.

s Rom. 12. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 26. + Heb. *my righteousness*, Prov. 8. 18. t Ps. 70. 4. u Ps. 149. 4.

27 s Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour † my righteous cause: yea, let them t say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, u which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

That favour my righteous cause; that wish well to it, although they want either strength or courage to plead it. *Magnified*, i. e. exalted and praised for his righteousness, and truth, and goodness manifested in my deliverance. Mine enemies' great design is *to magnify themselves*, ver. 26, but my chief desire is that God may be magnified.

x Ps. 50. 15. & 51. 14. & 71. 24.

28 x And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long.

PSALM XXXVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David when he was persecuted by Saul and his courtiers; upon which occasion he enlargeth his thoughts further, and contemplates the sad state and condition of the world and of the church at that time, in which wickedness of all sorts greatly abounded, and seemed to prosper; and withal, he declares the great felicity and safety of God's people, and gives an account of their supports and comforts, under the sense of these public disorders and mischiefs.

¶ To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David the servant of the LORD.

i. e. One wholly and resolvedly devoted to the service of God, both in my public and private capacity. This title is, as I remember, but twice used in this book, Psal. xviii., (of which see there,) and in this Psalm, where it seems to be prefixed as a public protestation of his resolution to cleave unto the Lord in this time of general corruption, of which he is now going to speak.

David showeth the grievous state of the wicked, 1—4; *the excellency of God's mercy,* 5—9; *and prayeth for favour to the children of God,* 10—12.

a Rom. 3. 18. THE transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, *that* a *there is* no fear of God before his eyes.

When I consider the great and manifold transgressions of ungodly men, I conclude within myself that they have cast off all fear, and sense, and serious belief of the Divine Majesty.

b Deut. 29. 19. Ps. 10. 3. & 49. 18. + Heb. *to find his iniquity to hate.*

2 For b he flattereth himself in his own eyes, † until his iniquity be found to be hateful.

For; so this is the proof of that assertion, ver. 1. Or, *although;* and so it is an anticipation of an objection against it. *He flattereth himself in his own eyes;* he deceiveth himself with vain and false persuasions, either, 1. Concerning God, that he doth not see or mind his sins, or that he will not punish them. Or, 2. Concerning himself and his sins; either that they are not sins, which a mind bribed by passion and interest can easily believe; or that they are but small and venial sins; or that they will be excused, if not justified by honest intentions, or by outward professions and exercises of religion, or by some good actions, wherewith he thinks to make some compensation for them, or some other way. Otherwise thus, *he flattereth him* (i. e. God) *in his eyes*, i. e. openly and publicly makes a show of religion, as if he designed to deceive or mock God, whilst inwardly and secretly he is projecting wickedness. But it seems better to understand the last word reciprocally of *his own eyes*, as the same word is used in the end of the foregoing verse. *Until his iniquity be found to be hateful*, i. e. until God by some dreadful judgment undeceive him, and *find*, i. e. discover or make him and others to find and feel by experience, that it is a sin, and a very hateful one too. Or, *until his abominable iniquity be found out*, i. e. punished, as the same word and phrase is used, Numb. xxxii. 23, *Your sin shall find you out*, i. e. bring you to condign punishment. In the Hebrew it is, *to find out his iniquity to hate.* But active verbs are oft taken passively, of which there are plain instances, Josh. ii. 5; Esth. vi. 6; Psal. xxxii. 9; li. 6, compared with Rom. iii. 4; Psal. cxix. 4; and so here, *to find*, is put for *to be found;* and *to hate*, for *to be hated*, or *to be hateful.*

c Ps. 12. 2. d Jer. 4. 22.

3 The words of his mouth *are* iniquity and c deceit: d he hath left off to be wise, *and* to do good.

Are iniquity and deceit, i. e. are wicked and deceitful. Once he had some shadows or degrees of wisdom, and sometimes did some things that were good in their kind; but now he hath not so much as the appearance of it, and is become an open apostate from that which once he professed.

e Prov. 4. 16. Micah 2. 1. ‖ Or, *vanity.* f Is. 65. 2.

4 e He deviseth ‖ mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself f in a way *that is* not good; he abhorreth not evil.

He deviseth mischief upon his bed; which notes that he doth it, 1. Constantly and unweariedly, preferring it before his own rest. 2. Earnestly and seriously, when his mind is freed from all outward distractions, and wholly at leisure to attend that business about which it is employed: compare Psal. iv. 4. 3. Freely, from his own inclination, when none are present to provoke him to it. *He setteth himself;* he doth not repent of his wicked devices, but resolutely proceeds to execute them, and persists therein. *That is not good*, i. e. which is very bad, as this phrase is used, 1 Sam. ii. 24; Prov. xx. 23; xxiv. 23, and elsewhere. *He abhorreth not evil:* though he sometimes pretends remorse, and desists from his violent practices against me, as Saul did; yet he doth not truly repent of nor abhor his sin, and therefore is ready to return to it, when any occasion offers itself.

g Ps. 57. 10. & 108. 4.

5 g Thy mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens; *and* thy faithfulness *reacheth* unto the clouds.

Though this be the disposition and carriage of mine enemies towards me, and therefore I can expect no good from them, yet thou, O Lord, blessed be thy name, art of another temper; they are cruel and perfidious and unrighteous, but thou art infinite in *mercy*, and *faithfulness*, and *righteousness*, and *loving-kindness*, as it here follows; and therefore though I despair of them, yet I trust in thee, as other men do for these reasons, ver. 7. *Is in the heavens*; or, is *unto* (as the prefix *beth* oft signifies, as Gen. xi. 4, and elsewhere, and as it is here explained in the following clause) *the heavens.* As it is on the earth, of which there was no question, so it reacheth thence to the heavens, i. e. it is infinite and incomprehensible. *Thy faithfulness;* the truth both of thy threatenings against thine and mine enemies, and of thy promises made to me and other good men. *Reacheth unto the clouds*, i. e. is far above our reach, greater and higher than we can apprehend it.

+ Heb. *the mountains of God.* h Job 11. 8. Ps. 77. 19. Rom. 11. 33. i Job 7. 20. Ps. 145. 9. 1 Tim. 4. 10.

6 Thy righteousness *is* like † the great mountains; h thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, i thou preservest man and beast.

Thy righteousness, in all thy counsels and ways in the government of the world, *is like the great mountains;* either, 1. Stedfast and unmovable. Or, 2. Eminent and conspicuous to all men. Or rather, 3. Very high and out of our reach; for so it agrees best with the foregoing and following expressions. *Thy judgments*, i. e. thy executions of thy counsels, or thy administrations of the affairs of the world, and of thy church, *are a great deep*, i. e. unsearchable, as the ocean is in some parts. The worst of men, yea,

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and the brute beasts, have experience of thy care and kindness, and therefore I have no reason to doubt of it.

7 [k] How † excellent *is* thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men [l] put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

[k] Ps. 31. 19. † Heb. *precious.* [l] Ruth 2. 12. Isa. 25. 4. & 31. 4.

Thy loving-kindness; or, *thy mercy;* for it is the same word which is used and so rendered, ver. 5. The sense is, Though all thine attributes now reckoned, and the rest of them, be excellent and glorious, yet above all thy mercy is most *excellent* or *precious* and amiable, as being most necessary and beneficial unto us, poor sinful, miserable men. *Put their trust under the shadow of thy wings*, i. e. cheerfully commit themselves to thy care and kindness, notwithstanding their own sinfulness, and the rage and power of their adversaries, against all which thy mercy is a sufficient security.

8 [m] They shall be † abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of [n] the river [o] of thy pleasures.

[m] Ps. 65. 4. † Heb. *watered.* [n] Jer. 31. 12. Ezek. 47. 1. [o] Ps. 46. 4.

They, i. e. those children of men who trust in thee, as he now said, *shall be abundantly satisfied;* though now they are straitened, oppressed, and persecuted, yet they shall not only be protected and supported for the present, but in due time shall have all their wants and desires fully satisfied. Heb. *shall be made drunk*, i. e. shall be as it were overwhelmed with the plenty of it, which they shall no more be able to comprehend than a drunken man is able perfectly to understand and judge of things; and shall be free, as drunken men also are, from all cares and fears, either of not obtaining it, or of losing it. *With the fatness of thy house;* with those rich and delightful provisions which thou hast prepared for them in thy habitation, i. e. either, 1. In the tabernacle, where they used to feast upon the remainders of the sacrifices; to which also he seems here to allude. Or rather, 2. In heaven; which is called God's *house*, both in Scripture, as John xiv. 2, and in divers ancient heathen authors. For the expressions here used are too magnificent to be bestowed upon those feasts, or indeed upon any of the enjoyments of this life, and do ill become him, who professedly disowns the having of his *portion in this life*, and declares his expectation of happiness in the next life, Psal. xvii. 14, 15. And seeing it is apparent from Heb. xi., and from many other scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, that both David, and Job, and Abraham, and the rest of the holy patriarchs and prophets, had a firm belief and hope of the future life, and their felicity therein; it seems most reasonable to understand all those passages of David and the other prophets of it, which naturally, and without any force, may be so understood; of which number certainly this verse and the following is one. *Drink:* before they had *fatness*, i. e. fat meats; and now *drink*, to note the completeness of their feast. *Of the river;* which notes both their plenty, and their constancy and perpetuity. *Of thy pleasures;* which thou preparest, and which thou enjoyest; whence it is called *the joy of the Lord*, Matt. xxv. 21. Or this notes their great eminency; for things most excellent in their kinds are entitled to God, as the goodliest cedars, mountains, &c., are called *cedars of God, mountains of God*, &c.

9 [p] For with thee *is* the fountain of life: [q] in thy light shall we see light.

[p] Jer. 2. 13. John 4. 10. [q] 1 Pet. 2. 9.

With thee, i. e. in thy power to give it, and in thy presence to be enjoyed. *The fountain;* which notes, 1. Causality. It is in God as in a fountain, and from him is derived to us. 2. Abundance. 3. Excellency. Water is sweetest in the fountain; and fountains were rare and highly prized in those hot countries. *Of life;* of that glorious and blessed, and endless life, which alone is worthy of the name of *life;* this life being only a passage to death, and a theatre of great and manifold calamities. Although it be true, that God is the fountain both of natural and spiritual life. *In thy light;* in the light of thy countenance or glorious presence, which then shall be fully manifested unto us, when we shall see thee clearly, and face to face, and not through a glass, and darkly, as we now see, 1 Cor. xiii. 12: compare Psal. xvii. 15. *See*, i. e. enjoy, as *seeing* frequently signifies; of which see on Psal. xxxiv. 12. *Light;* *the light of life*, as it is called, John viii. 12. *Light* in this branch being the same thing with *life* in the former, i. e. joy, and comfort, and happiness, which is oft signified by *light*, as the contrary is by *darkness*. See Job xxix. 3; Psal. xxvii. 1; Isa. ix. 2. There we shall have pure light without any mixture of *darkness*. The word *light* is elegantly repeated in another signification; in the former clause it is light discovering, in this, light discovered or enjoyed.

10 O † continue thy lovingkindness [r] unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the [s] upright in heart.

† Heb. *draw out at length.* [r] Jer. 22. 16. [s] Ps. 7. 10. & 94. 15. & 97. 11.

Continue; as this word signifies, Psal. lxxxv. 5; Eccles. ii. 3; Jer. xxxi. 3. As thou hast begun, so continue the manifestation and exhibition of it, both in this life, and to the next. Or, *extend*, or *draw forth*. Let it not be like a fountain sealed, but let it be drawn forth for their comfort. *Know thee*, i. e. sincerely love thee, as it is explained in the next clause; for *knowing* implies affection, as Psal. ix. 10, and oft elsewhere. *Thy righteousness;* which will appear in giving them that protection and assistance which thou art by thy nature inclined, and by thy promise engaged, to give them.

11 Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

Of pride, i. e. of my proud and insolent enemies; the abstract being put for the concrete, as Jer. l. 31, 32: so also Prov. xii. 27; xiii. 6. *Against me;* or, *upon me*, to wit, so as to overthrow or remove me, as it is in the next clause. *Remove me;* either, 1. From my trust in thee, or obedience to thee. Or, 2. From my place and station; from the land of my nativity, and the place of thy worship. Or, *shake me*, or *cast me down*, i. e. subdue and destroy me.

12 There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, [t] and shall not be able to rise.

[t] Ps. 1. 5.

There, where they come against me, and hope to ruin me. He seems as it were to point at the place with his finger, as if it were already done, and he could tell all the circumstances of it. Or, *then*, i. e. when they thought all sure, and me irrecoverably lost. *Fallen*, i. e. they shall certainly and suddenly fall; which the prophets use to express in the time past.

PSALM XXXVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The design of this Psalm is to defend the providence of God, and to satisfy the minds of men in that great question, concerning the seeming inequality of God's dispensations, in afflicting good men, and giving prosperity to the worst of men; and to instruct God's people how to demean themselves in their present condition, and what supports and comforts they have in it.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

The psalmist persuadeth to patience and confidence in God, 1—8; *and showeth the different state of the godly and wicked in all their dealings*, 9—40.

FRET [a] not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

[a] ver. 7. Ps. 73. 3. Prov. 23. 17. & 24. 1, 19.

Fret not thyself, give not way to immoderate grief, or anger, or impatience, *because of evil-doers;* because they prosper in their wicked enterprises, whilst thou art sorely afflicted. *Neither be thou envious*, esteeming them happy, and secretly wishing that thou wert in their condition.

2 For they shall soon be cut down [b] like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

[b] Ps. 90. 5, 6.

For their happiness, the matter of thy envy, is but short-lived.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; *so* shalt thou dwell in the land, and † verily thou shalt be fed.

† Heb. *in truth*, or, *stableness.*

Trust in the Lord; depend upon God's providence and promise for thy protection and sustentation, for their infidelity is the root of their wickedness. *Do good;* continue in the practice of that which is good and well-pleasing to God. *So shalt thou dwell in the land*, i. e. upon this con-

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dition shalt dwell safely and quietly in Canaan; as God had oft promised. In the Hebrew it is, *dwell in the land*, as if it were a command to abide in Canaan when troubles come, and not to flee to the Philistines or other heathens for shelter, as he had foolishly done. But it is rather a promise, by comparing this with ver. 27, 29; such promises being oft expressed by imperative verbs put for futures, as Gen. xii. 2; xlii. 18; Psal. cxxviii. 6; Amos v. 4. *Verily thou shalt be fed*, Heb. *thou shalt be fed* (i. e. every way provided for) *in truth*, i. e. truly or assuredly; or with or by faith, as this word signifies, i. e. by thy trusting in the Lord; thou shalt *live by thy faith*, as is said, Hab. ii. 4.

c Is. 58. 14. 4 [c]Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Delight thyself in the Lord; in his favour and service, and in the study of his word and promises. *The desires of thine heart*, i. e. thy just desires, or whatsoever is truly desirable and good for thee; which limitation is necessarily to be understood, both from divers places of Scripture, and from the nature of the things; for it is unreasonable to imagine that God would engage himself to grant their sinful and inordinate desires, and it would also be a curse to them to have them granted.

† Heb. *Roll thy way upon the LORD.* d Ps. 55. 22. Prov. 16. 3. Matt. 6. 25. Luke 12. 22. 1 Pet. 5. 7. 5 †[d]Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass.

Thy way, i. e. all thy cares and business, thy desires and necessities. Commend them to God by fervent prayer, referring them to his good will, and expecting a happy issue of all from him. *He shall bring it to pass*, Heb. *he shall do*, or *work*, to wit, for thee, or what is fit to be done, or what thou desirest in the sense given on ver. 4.

e Job 11. 17. Mic. 7. 9. 6 [e]And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

He shall bring forth thy righteousness to the view of the world; from which it hath hitherto seemed to be hid or eclipsed by reproaches, and by grievous calamities, which most men are apt to mistake for tokens and punishments of great wickedness. *As the light;* it shall be as visible to men as the light of the sun, and that at noon-day, as it is in the next branch. So effectually will he plead thy cause. *Judgment;* the same thing with *righteousness*, as this word is used here below, ver. 28; xcix. 4, and oft elsewhere.

f Ps. 62. 1. † Heb. *Be silent to the LORD.* g Is. 30. 15. Lam. 3. 26. h ver. 1, 8. Jer. 12. 1. 7 [f]† Rest in the LORD, [g]and wait patiently for him: [h]fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

Rest in the Lord, Heb. *Be silent unto*, or *for*, or *because of the Lord*, i. e. do not murmur nor repine at his dealings, but silently and quietly submit to his will, and adore his judgments, and, as it follows, *wait* for his help. This advice and command is pressed again and again, to teach us how hard it is to learn and practise this lesson. *In his way*, i. e. in his evil way, as it is limited in the following words.

i Ps. 73. 3. Eph. 4. 26. 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: [i]fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

Cease from anger; either against the sinner for his success; or against God for so disposing of things, as Jonah was, chap. iv. 1. *To do evil;* or, *at least so far as to do evil.* If any such anger or grief do secretly arise in thee, take care that it do not transport thee, either to reproach or distrust God's providence, or to the dislike of his ways, or to an approbation or imitation of the wicked practices of those men in hopes of the same success.

k Job 27. 13, 14. l ver. 11, 22, 29. Is. 57. 13. 9 [k]For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall [l]inherit the earth.

Shall be cut off, to wit, from the earth, by comparing this with the next clause, and with Psal. xxxiv. 16. Their end shall certainly be most miserable. *Shall inherit the earth*, according to God's promise oft made to such; which also for the most part was literally fulfilled in that state of the church; and if it was not, it was fulfilled with far greater advantage in spiritual and eternal blessings.

m Heb. 10. 36, 37. n Job 7. 10. & 20. 9. 10 For [m]yet a little while, and the wicked *shall* not *be:* yea, [n]thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it *shall* not *be*.

Their time and prosperity is very short, and therefore no matter of envy. *Shall not be*, to wit, in the land of the living. He shall be dead and gone, as this phrase is commonly taken. *Diligently consider his place;* industriously seeking to find him. *It shall not be*, i. e. his place, and estate, and glory shall be gone. Or, *he shall not be*, as before.

o Matt. 5. 5. 11 [o]But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

The meek, i. e. the godly, who are frequently thus called, as Psal. xxii. 26; cxlix. 4; those who patiently bear God's afflicting hand, and meekly pass by injuries from ungodly men. *The abundance of peace;* partly of outward peace and prosperity, which God in his due time will give them; and principally of inward peace and satisfaction of mind, in the sense of God's favour, and the assurance of his own endless happiness.

‖ Or, *practiseth.* p Ps. 35. 16. 12 The wicked ‖plotteth against the just, [p]and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

Out of malice and rage. See on Psal. xxxv. 16.

q Ps. 2. 4. r 1 Sam. 26 10. 13 [q]The LORD shall laugh at him: for he seeth that [r]his day is coming.

Shall laugh at him, i. e. shall despise and deride all their hopes and endeavours against the good, as most vain and foolish. *His day;* either, 1. God's day, which is a usual phrase, as Isa. ii. 12; xiii. 9. Or, 2. His own day, as 1 Sam. xxvi. 10; Ezek. xxi. 25, 29. Both signify the same thing, the day appointed by God for his punishment or destruction, as Isa. ix. 4; Jer. l. 27.

† Heb. *the upright of way.* 14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, *and* to slay †such as be of upright conversation.

They are furnished with all sorts of arms, and are ready to give the deadly blow. *Such as be of upright conversation;* such against whom they have no quarrel for any injury they have done them, but only for their integrity and righteousness, or because they are better than themselves, and will not comply with their wicked counsels and courses.

s Mic. 5. 6. 15 [s]Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

God will not only defend the upright from their mischievous designs, but will make them to fall upon their own heads.

t Prov. 15. 16. & 16. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 6. 16 [t]A little that a righteous man hath *is* better than the riches of many wicked.

Because he hath it with many great and glorious advantages, with God's favour and blessings, with great serenity and satisfaction of his own mind, which is infinitely more desirable and comfortable than all earthly possessions; [with the consolations of God's Spirit, and the assurance of everlasting felicity;] whilst wicked men's riches are loaded with many encumbrances, with the wrath and curse of God, the torment of their own consciences and passions, and the dreadful expectation of an after-reckoning, and of endless miseries.

u Job 38. 15. Ps. 10. 15. Ezek. 30. 21, &c. 17 For [u]the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

This is a proof of what he said ver. 16. For what the wicked have shall suddenly be lost and gone, but God will maintain the righteous in their happy estate.

x Ps. 1. 6. y Is. 60. 21. 18 The LORD [x]knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be [y]for ever.

Knoweth; observeth with singular care and affection. *The days of the upright*, i. e. their condition, and all

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things which do or may befall them, their dangers and fears, and suffering from ungodly men; and therefore will watch over them, and preserve them from all the designs and attempts of their enemies. *Days*, or *years*, or *times* are oft put for things done or events happening in them, as Deut. xxxii. 7; Psal. xxxi. 15; lxxvii. 5; cxliii. 5; Isa. lxiii. 11. *Their inheritance shall be for ever;* to them and their seed for ever: compare ver. 29. And when they die, their inheritance is not lost, but exchanged for one infinitely better.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the
[a] Job 5. 20. Ps. 33. 19. evil time: and [a] in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

They shall not be ashamed, for the disappointment of their hopes, but their hopes and desires shall be satisfied, as it follows.

20 But the wicked shall perish, and the
[*] Heb. the preciousness of lambs. [b] Ps. 102. 3. enemies of the LORD *shall be* as †the fat of lambs: they shall consume; [b] into smoke shall they consume away.

Fat of lambs, which in an instant melteth before the fire. *Consume into smoke*, i. e. utterly and irrecoverably.

21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth
[b] Ps. 112. 5, 9. not again: but [b] the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; either through covetousness and injustice; or rather, because of that great penury into which God shall bring him; whilst the righteous is not only provided sufficiently for himself, but hath abundance and to spare for others. For he is here comparing the wicked and the righteous, not so much in their virtues or moral qualities, as in their outward conditions, which also appears from the following verse, which gives the reason of this.

[c] Prov. 2. 21. 22 [c] For *such as be* blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and *they that be*
[d] ver. 9. cursed of him [d] shall be cut off.

Of him, i. e. of the Lord, as appears both from ver. 20, where he is named, and from the nature of the thing, this being God's prerogative to bless or to curse men. And this he mentions, both as the foundation, and as the proof of the certainty of their future happiness.

[e] 1 Sam. 2. 9. Prov. 16. 9. [‖] *established.* 23 [e] The steps of a *good* man are ‖ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

Of a good man, or, *of* that *man*, to wit, the righteous or blessed man, expressed ver. 21, 22. *Ordered*, or *directed*, or *disposed*, i. e. so governed as to attain the end and happy issue at which he aims. Or, *strengthened*, or *established*, so as he shall not stumble nor fall into mischief; for still he seems to be describing, not their virtue, but their felicity. *And he delighteth in his way;* or, *and he favoureth his way*, i. e. succeeds and prospers his counsels and enterprises.

[f] Job 34. 29. Ps. 55. 22. & 94. 18. Prov. 24. 16. Mic. 7. 8. 24 [f] Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth *him with* his hand.

Fall; either, 1. Into sin, as this word is used, Jer. viii. 4; 1 Cor. x. 12; or rather, 2. Into distress or trouble, as Micah vii. 8. *Not be utterly cast down*, i. e. not totally nor irrecoverably ruined.

25 I have been young, and *now* am
[g] Ps. 34. 22. Prov. 10. 3. & 28. 19. old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed [g] begging bread.

This assertion seems to be contradicted by many experiences; nor can it be denied, that both good men and their children have sometimes been reduced to great want. *Quest.* How then is this true? *Answ.* 1. Some render the last clause thus, *nor* (did I ever see) *his seed*, (to wit, *forsaken*, as was now said,) though *begging bread*. So the sense is, I have seen him brought to beggary, yet even then God did not forsake him. But this sense agrees not with the context nor scope, which is to show the plenty and prosperity wherewith God blesseth him. 2. This is to be understood of the seed of the righteous treading in their fathers' steps, from which if they degenerate, they lose all their privileges, as many places of Scripture witness. 3. Some few exceptions do not destroy the truth of a general proposition. 4. These temporal promises were more express and particular to the Jews in the times of the Old Testament, than to Christians in the New, and therefore were more literally fulfilled. 5. He speaks not of any kind of wanting, or desiring, or receiving relief from others, for so David himself did, 1 Sam. xxi. 3; xxv. 8; but of the customary practice and trade of begging, which was threatened as a curse to the disobedient, Deut. xxviii.; Psal. cix. 10. 6. *Not begging*, to wit, in vain; or so as to be *forsaken*, as was now expressed, and may very well be here understood; or so as to be sustained or relieved by others. 7. David speaks only of his own experience, which if since that time it be contradicted by other men's experiences, it is no more than what happens in all the concernments of human life.

[h] Deut. 15. 8, 10. Ps. 112. 5, 9. † Heb. *all the day.* 26 [h] *He is* †ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed *is* blessed.

He is so far from begging from others, that he hath ability as well as inclination to give or lend to others, as need requires. *His seed is blessed*, not only with spiritual, but with temporal blessings. So far shall he be from wasting his estate, and undoing himself and family by his bounty and charity, as covetous worldlings objected or feared.

[i] Ps. 34. 14. Is. 1. 16, 17. 27 [i] Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

Having therefore these glorious promises and privileges, let no man do any evil or unjust thing to enrich or secure himself, nor abstain from pious and charitable actions for fear of undoing himself by them; but let every man live in the conscionable discharge of all his duties to God and men, committing himself and all his affairs to God's fatherly care and providence, and confidently expecting his blessing thereupon. *Dwell*, i. e. thou shalt dwell, as before, ver. 3, to wit, in the land, as is expressed, ver. 3, and afterwards in heaven. *For evermore;* either properly; or for a long time, of which that word is oft used.

[k] Ps. 11. 7. 28 For the LORD [k] loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: [l] but the seed of the
[l] Ps. 21. 10. Prov. 2. 22. Is. 14. 20. wicked shall be cut off.

Judgment, i. e. just judgment, or righteousness, as that word is oft taken, as hath been showed again and again; either, 1. In himself, i. e. he loveth to execute judgment upon the wicked, and for the righteous; which he doth in the manner expressed in this Psalm. Or, 2. In the righteous themselves, whose justice, and piety, and charity he sees and loves, and will reward it. *His saints;* or, *his favourites;* or, *they to whom he hath a good will;* or, *his bountiful ones*, who exercise benignity and charity to others.

[m] Prov. 2. 21. 29 [m] The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

Inherit the land: see on ver. 3. *Dwell therein for ever:* see on ver. 18.

[n] Matt. 12. 35. 30 [n] The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

Speaketh; and that freely, and customarily, and from his heart, as the next verse shows. Having showed in divers verses God's singular care over and respect to the righteous, he proceeds to give a character of them, and withal to assign one reason of the great difference of God's dealings with them and with other men. *Wisdom and judgment;* either, 1. For the manner of it, with wisdom and judgment. Or rather, 2. For the matter of it, heavenly wisdom, and God's judgment, or word, or law, as it follows, ver. 31. When the discourses of other men are either wicked, or vain and useless, his are serious, and edifying, and pious, concerning the word and ways of God.

[o] Deut. 6. 6. Ps. 40. 8. & 119. 98. Is. 51. 7. ‖ Or, *goings.* 31 [o] The law of his God *is* in his heart; none of his ‖steps shall slide.

According to God's command, Deut. vi. 6, and promise, Heb. viii. 10. His thoughts, and meditations, and affections are fixed upon it. He doth not talk religiously in design, or with ostentation, but out of the abundance of his

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heart, Matt. xii. 35. *None of his steps shall slide:* this passage describes either, 1. His safety, consequent upon his piety; God will uphold and preserve him from falling into that mischief which wicked men plot against him. Or rather, 2. His virtue or piety; which is evidenced by his words, ver. 30. by his heart, in the former part of this verse, and by his actions, in these words. *His steps* or *goings* (i. e. his actions) *shall not* (or rather, *do not;* for this verb, though future, may and should be rendered by the present, as futures frequently are in the Hebrew language, and as the two foregoing future verbs are rendered, ver. 30) *slide*, or *slip*, or *swerve*, to wit, from the rule, or from God's law; which is to be understood as that passage, Psal. cxix. 3, *They do no iniquity*, and some such expressions, not simply and absolutely, as if all good men were sinless; which is abundantly confuted, both by many scriptures and by universal experience; but comparatively, and in respect of his design, and course, or custom. His conversation is ordinarily regular and unblamable. He not only begins well, but constantly perseveres in God's ways, and will not be drawn to forsake God and religion upon any terms.

p Ps. 10. 8. 32 The wicked [p]watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

Watcheth, to find out a fit season or occasion to destroy him.

q 2 Pet. 2. 9. r Ps. 109. 31. 33 The LORD [q]will not leave him in his hand, nor [r]condemn him when he is judged.

Not leave him in his hand, i. e. not give him up to his power and rage. *Nor condemn him*, i. e. nor give his consent to the sentence of condemnation, which the wicked have pronounced against him, but will justify him, and vindicate his innocency and deliver him; for such negatives do oft imply the contrary affirmatives; as God's *not holding* a man *guiltless* commonly implies that he will severely punish him.

s ver. 9. Ps. 27. 14. Prov. 20. 22. t Ps. 52. 5, 6. & 91. 8. 34 [s]Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: [t]when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it*.

Wait on the Lord; seeking and trusting to him, and to him only, for help and deliverance. *Keep his way;* continue in the practice of thy duty, or in those ways which God hath prescribed to thee in his word, and do not use indirect and irregular means to deliver thyself. *Thou shalt see it;* thou shalt not only escape the destruction which they design for thee, but shalt live to see their ruin.

u Job 5. 3. ‖ Or *a green tree that groweth in his own soil.* 35 [u]I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like ‖ a green bay tree.

In great power, or *formidable;* not only himself out of danger, as it seemed, but terrible to others. *And spreading himself;* and therefore firmly and deeply rooted. *Like a green bay tree*, which is continually green and flourishing, yea, even in the winter season. Or, *like a green* tree *in its own native soil*, where trees flourish much better than when they are transplanted into another soil.

x Job 20. 5, &c. 36 Yet he [x]passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

He was gone in an instant, like a tree blasted and blown down, or cut off and rooted out, and carried away in a moment. There was no monument nor remainder of him left.

y Is. 32. 17. & 57. 2. 37 Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for [y]the end of *that* man *is* peace.

Though he may meet with troubles in his way, yet all shall end well with him; he shall be happy at last.

z Ps. 1. 4. & 52. 5. 38 [z]But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

Together; or, *alike*, one as well as another; all, without any exception or respect of persons. *The end of the wicked shall be cut off*, i. e. he shall be cut off at last, or in the end. His prosperity shall end in destruction. Or, *the posterity* (as this word signifies, Psal. cix. 13; Jer. xxxi. 17; Ezek. xxiii. 25; Dan. xi. 4) *of the wicked*, &c.

a Ps. 3. 8. b Ps. 9. 9. 39 But [a]the salvation of the righteous *is* of the LORD: *he is* their strength [b]in the time of trouble.

The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; and therefore it shall certainly come to them.

c Is. 31. 5. d 1 Chr. 5. 20. Dan. 3. 17, 28. & 6. 23. 40 And [c]the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, [d]because they trust in him.

PSALM XXXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This is reckoned one of David's penitential Psalms. It was composed upon occasion of some sore disease, or grievous calamity; which he rightly judged to be inflicted upon him for his sins.

¶ A Psalm of David, * to bring to remembrance. * Ps. 70, title.

Either, 1. To God, that by this humble and mournful prayer he might prevail with God to remember and pity him; for now he seemed quite to have forgotten him. Or, 2. To himself, that by reviewing this Psalm afterwards he might call to mind his former danger and misery, and God's wonderful mercy in delivering him from them; which we are very apt to forget; and that others also might remember and consider what God had done to him, first in chastening, and then in restoring him, and might make use of his example for their benefit.

David, being visited with sickness, rehearseth his woeful condition, 1—3, *by reason of his sins*, 4—8; *prayeth for forgiveness, help, and favour*, 9, 10. *He lays before God the unfaithfulness of his friends*, 11—18, *and the cruelty of his enemies*, 19—22.

a Ps. 6. 1. O [a]LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

I confess I both deserve chastisement and need it, and therefore I desire not that thou wouldst remove it, but only moderate it. See the same expression Psal. vi. 1.

b Job 6. 4. c Ps. 32. 4. 2 For [b]thine arrows stick fast in me, and [c]thy hand presseth me sore.

Thine arrows, i. e. thy judgments inflicted upon my outward and inward man, oft compared to *arrows*, as Deut. xxxii. 23; Psal. vii. 13; xlv. 5; xci. 5. *Presseth me sore;* or, *comes down upon me;* as when a strong man lifts up his hand and weapon, that it may fall down with greater violence, and make the deeper wound.

d Ps. 6. 2. † Heb. *peace*, or, *health.* 3 *There is* no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; [d]neither *is there any* † rest in my bones because of my sin.

My disease or grief hath seized upon all the parts of my body, my very bones not excepted, so that my bed can give me no rest; *because of my sin*, which hath provoked thee to deal thus severely with me.

e Ezra 9. 6. Ps. 40. 12. f Matt. 11. 28. 4 For [e]mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too [f]heavy for me.

Mine iniquities; or, *the punishment of mine iniquities*, as this word is frequently used; which best agrees both with the foregoing and following verses, and with the metaphor here used; which in other places of Scripture is generally applied to afflictions, and not to sins. *Gone over my head*, like deep waters, wherewith I am overwhelmed and almost drowned, Psal. xlii. 7; lxix. 2; cxxiv. 4, 5.

5 My wounds stink *and* are corrupt because of my foolishness.

The bruises and sores caused by my disease are not only painful, but loathsome to myself and to others. *Foolishness*, i. e. sin, which really is, and is commonly called, *folly*, as Psal. lxix. 5; Prov. xiii. 16; xiv. 17; xv. 2, &c.

† Heb. *wried.* g Is. 38. 14. h Job 30. 28. Ps. 42. 9. & 43. 2. 6 I am †troubled; [g]I am bowed down greatly; [h]I go mourning all the day long.

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Troubled, Heb. *distorted*, or *depressed*; or, as it is expressed by another word, signifying the same thing, *bowed down*, to wit, in my body, as diseased persons commonly are, and withal dejected in my mind. *I go mourning*, Heb. *in black*, the sign of mourning, which may here signify the thing, as signs oft do. When for my ease I rise out of my bed and walk, or rather creep about in my chamber, I do it with a sad heart and dejected countenance. Or if he did walk further, his disease had some intervals and mitigations. Or *going* may be here meant of his languishing, or going towards the grave, as this same word is used, Gen. xv. 2, compared with xxv. 32; Josh. xxiii. 14.

[i] Deut. 7. 8. [k] Prov. 3.

7 For my loins are filled with a [i]loathsome *disease*: and *there is* [k]no soundness in my flesh.

Or, *with filthiness*; or, *with scorching heat*. The disease might be some burning fever, being also malignant or pestilential, either burning inwardly, or breaking forth outwardly in carbuncles or boils. It is true, this and the other expressions may be taken figuratively, of some grievous calamity; but we should not forsake the proper and the literal sense of the words without necessity, which seems not to be in this place.

[l] Deut. 28. 34. Ps. 22. 1. Is. 38. 14.

8 I am feeble and sore broken: [l]I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

Roared, like a bear or a lion, through extreme pain and misery. *By reason of the disquietness of my heart*; for the great anxiety and torment of my mind, caused by the deep sense of my sins, and of God's wrath, and of the sad issue of my disease; which being added to my bodily pains, makes them more intolerable.

9 LORD, all my desire *is* before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.

I do not utter all these complaints, nor roar out, that thou mayst hear and know them, for thou hearest and knowest even my lowest groans; yea, mine inward desires, and all my necessities. And therefore, I pray thee, pity and deliver me, as I trust thou wilt do.

[m] Ps. 6. 7. & 31. 9. † Heb. *is not with me.*

10 My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for [m]the light of mine eyes, it also † is gone from me.

Panteth; or, *goes round*; wanders hither and thither, as the word signifies; is perplexed and tossed with many and various thoughts, not knowing what to do, nor whither to go. Mine eyes are grown dim; either through grief and tears, as Psal. vi. 7; or through weakness, as 1 Sam. xiv. 28, 29.

[n] Ps. 31. 11. [o] Luke 10. 31, 32. [p] Heb. *erect.* [q] Heb. *my neighbours.* p Luke 23. 49.

11 [n]My lovers and my friends [o]stand aloof from my † sore; and ‖ my kinsmen [p]stand afar off.

Either through neglect, and contempt, or disdain of me; or through delicacy and abhorrency from loathsome and sadding spectacles; or through fear of infection, or some other inconveniences.

[r] 2 Sam. 17. [s] Ps. 140. 2. [t] Prov. 24. 2. [u] Ps. 35. 20.

12 They also that seek after my life [r]lay snares *for me*: and they that seek my hurt [s]speak mischievous things, and [t]imagine deceits all the day long.

Lay snares for me; that if my disease do not kill me, they may destroy me some other way. *Imagine deceits*; they design mischief, but cover it with fair pretences.

[v] 2 Sam. 16. 5. [w] Ps. 39. 2. [x] Isa. 53. 7.

13 But [v]I, as a deaf *man*, heard not; [w]and *I was* as a dumb man *that* openeth not his mouth.

I carried myself towards them as if I had no ears to hear what they said either to me or for me, nor a tongue to answer or reprove them for their reproaches and calumnies; which he did not for want of just answers to them, but to testify his humiliation for his sins, and his patient submission to and acceptation of the punishment which he had brought upon himself; of which see an instance, 2 Sam. xvi. 10—12; wherein also he was an eminent type of Christ, who, *when he was reviled, reviled not again*, 1 Pet. ii. 23.

14 Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth *are* no reproofs.

Or *arguments*, to convince or confute them, or to defend myself.

[x] Or, *thee do I wait for.* [y] 2 Sam. 16. 12. Ps. 39. 7. ‖ Or, *answer.*

15 For ‖ in thee, O LORD, [x]do I hope: thou wilt ‖ hear, O LORD my God.

I bore their carriage silently and patiently, because I hoped and knew that thou wouldst answer for me, and plead my cause better than myself; which I would not prevent by my impatience, and avenging myself. Or, *but in thee do I hope*, i. e. though friends forsake me, and mine enemies plot and practise against me, yet I do not despair, because I have thee on my side.

[y] Ps. 13. 4.

16 For I said, *Hear me*, [y]lest *otherwise* they should rejoice over me: when my [z]foot slippeth, they [a]magnify *themselves* against me.

[z] Deut. 32. 35. [a] Ps. 35. 26.

I said, to wit, in my heart and prayers; I used this argument, which I knew was prevalent. *Rejoice over me* in my destruction, which also will reflect upon thee; who hast undertaken to defend and save me, and for whose sake I suffer so much from these wicked men, ver. 20. *When my foot slippeth*; when I fall either into any gross sin, or into any misery, or into both, as I have now done. *They magnify themselves against me*; they triumph in the accomplishment of their designs or desires.

† Heb. *for halting.* Ps. 35. 15.

17 For I *am* ready † to halt, and my sorrow *is* continually before me.

Ready to halt; just falling into utter destruction; see Jer. xx. 10; and therefore if thou dost not help me speedily, it will be too late. *My sorrow is continually before me*; I am deeply and constantly sensible of thy just hand, and of my sins, the cause of it; wherewith I shall be overwhelmed, if thou dost not prevent it.

[b] Ps. 32. 5. Prov. 28. 13. [c] 2 Cor. 7. 9, 10.

18 For I will [b]declare mine iniquity; I will be [c]sorry for my sin.

Declare mine iniquity; either to thee; or publicly to the world, because my sin hath been public and scandalous. *I will be sorry*, Heb. *I will be* (or, *I am*; futures being oft so taken) *solicitous* or *anxious*; full of grief for what is past, and of cares and fears for the future; partly lest I should relapse into the same folly upon new temptations; and partly lest thou shouldst cut me off for my sins. Therefore pity, and pardon, and save me. *For my sin*; or, *by reason of my sin*, or upon that occasion.

† Heb. being *living, are strong.* [d] Ps. 35. 19.

19 But mine enemies † *are* lively, *and* they are strong: and they that [d]hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

Lively, Heb. *living*, i. e. thriving, or flourishing, or prosperous, as *life* is used, Psal. xxii. 26; xxxiv. 12, and elsewhere.

[e] Ps. 35. 12. [f] See 1 John 3. 12. & 1 Pet. 3. 13.

20 They also [e]that render evil for good are mine adversaries; [f]because I follow *the thing that* good *is*.

They render evil for good; they hate and persecute me, not only without any injury or provocation on my part, but as it were in requital of the good which I have done to them. *Because I follow the thing that good is*; because I love and diligently practise justice and godliness, which they hate, and which they take to be a reproach to them, and which I did exercise, as I had opportunity, in the punishment of such as they are. Compare John xv. 19; 1 John iii. 12.

[g] Ps. 35. 22. † Heb. *for my help.* [h] Ps. 27. 1. & 62. 2, 6. Is. 12. 2.

21 Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, [g]be not far from me.

22 Make haste † to help me, O LORD [h]my salvation.

PSALM XXXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was written by David when his mind was much discomposed and disquieted with the contemplation of the prosperity of

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sinners, and the afflictions of the godly; which being exemplified in himself and in his enemies, he speaks of the case not in general, but as in his own person.

* 1 Chr. 16. 41. & 25. 1. Ps. 62, & 77, title.

¶ To the chief Musician, *even* to *Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.

Jeduthun; one of the three chief masters of the sacred music; of whom see 1 Chron. xvi. 41, 42; 2 Chron. v. 12.

David taketh care of his thoughts, words, and works, 1—3. *He considereth the brevity and vanity of man's life,* 4—6; *puts his hope in God,* 7; *prayeth for the forgiveness of his sins,* 8—11, *and for favour in his pilgrimage,* 12, 13.

a 1 Kin. 2. 4. 2 Kin. 10. 31. † Heb. *a bridle,* or, *muzzle for my mouth.* b Ps. 141. 3. Jam. 3. 2. c Col. 4. 5.

I SAID, I will [a]take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep †[b]my mouth with a bridle, [c]while the wicked is before me.

I said; I fully resolved. *To my ways,* i. e. to order all my actions aright, and particularly to govern my tongue, which is very hard to do, and especially under these provocations. *That I sin not with my tongue;* that if any evil thoughts or passions do arise in me, I will endeavour to suppress and mortify them, and not suffer them to boil and break forth into sinful and scandalous reflections upon God and his providence, as they usually do upon such occasions. *As with a bridle,* i. e. with all possible care and diligence. The phrase implies the great difficulty of ruling the tongue. *Before me;* either, 1. In my presence. Or rather, 2. In my thoughts, as the same phrase is understood, Psal. li. 3, i. e. whilst I consider the flourishing estate of wicked men.

d Ps. 38. 13. † Heb. *troubled.*

2 [d]I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, *even* from good; and my sorrow was †stirred.

I was dumb with silence; I was so long and so obstinately silent, that I seemed to myself and to others to be dumb. Two words put together expressing the same thing, to aggravate or increase it. Or, *I was dumb with quietness,* i. e. not out of sullenness, but with submissiveness to God's dispensations, which is oft noted by *silence. I held my peace, even from good;* I forbore to speak what I justly might upon that occasion, lest the flood-gates of speech being once opened, and speech stirring up my passion, I should by degrees break forth into some indecent and sinful expressions, to the dishonour of God, the wounding of mine own conscience, and the offence of others. Or this may be a proverbial speech, signifying strict silence; like that Gen. xxxi. 29, *speak to him neither good nor bad,* i. e. nothing at all, to wit, about that matter, to persuade him to return. *My sorrow was stirred;* my silence did not assuage my grief, but increase it, as it naturally and commonly doth.

e Jer. 20. 9.

3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing [e]the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue,

Musing, i. e. considering in my own thoughts the great wickedness and successfulness of mine enemies, and other wicked men; and withal mine own and other good men's integrity, attended with great troubles and miseries in this life. *The fire burned;* my thoughts kindled my passions. *Then spake I with my tongue,* to wit, such words as I had purposed not to speak, ver. 1; rash and impatient words: either, 1. Some words not here expressed; which having uttered to men, he turneth his speech to God, ver. 4. Or, 2. Those which here follow.

f Ps. 90. 12. & 119. 84. ‖ Or, *what time I have here.*

4 LORD, [f]make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is;* *that* I may know ‖how frail I *am.*

This verse contains either, 1. A correction of himself for his impatient motions or speeches, and his retirement to God for relief under these perplexing and sadding thoughts. Or, 2. A declaration of the words which he spake. *Make me to know;* either, 1. Practically, so as to prepare for it. Or, 2. Experimentally, as words of *knowledge* are oft used. And so this is a secret desire of death, that he might be free from such torments as made his life a burden to him. Or, 3. By revelation; that I may have some prospect or foreknowledge when my calamities will be ended; which argued impatience, and an unwillingness to wait long for deliverance. *My end,* i. e. the end of my life, as is evident from the following words. *What it is;* how long or short it is, or the utmost extent or period of the days of my life. *How frail I am;* or, *how long* (or, *how little,* for the word may be and is by divers interpreters taken both ways) *time I have* or *shall continue* here.

g Ps. 90. 4. h ver. 11. Ps. 62. 9. & 144. 4. † Heb. *settled.*

5 Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and [g]mine age *is* as nothing before thee: [h]verily every man †at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah.

As an handbreadth, which is one of the least measures, i. e. very short. These and the following words are either, 1. A continuance of his complaint, that although his days were of themselves very short, yet God seemed to grudge him their natural length, and threatened to make them shorter, and to cut him off before his time. Or rather, 2. A consolation, and correction of his last words, as if he said, Why am I so greedy to know the end of my life, seeing I do already know this, that my life cannot last very long, and therefore if my troubles be sharp, they will be but short? *Nothing;* next to nothing for substance and for continuance. *Before thee,* i. e. in thy judgment, and therefore in truth and reality; or, if compared with thee, and with thy everlasting duration: compare Psal. xc. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 8. *Every man,* prince or peasant, wise or fools, good or bad. *At his best state;* Heb. though *settled* or *established;* when he stands fastest, and likely to continue longest, in regard of his health and strength, and all possible means whereby life may be secured, supported, or prolonged. *Altogether vanity;* all that he is or hath is as light, and vain, and unstable as vanity itself; there is nothing but vanity and uncertainty in all his outward enjoyments, in the constitution of his body, yea, in the very temper and endowments of his mind: by which general condition of all mankind he endeavours to quiet and compose his mind to bear the common lot.

† Heb. *an image.* i 1 Cor. 7. 31. Jam. 4. 14. k Job 27. 17. Eccles. 2. 18, 21, 26. & 5. 5. 14. Luke 12. 20, 21.

6 Surely every man walketh in †[i]a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: [k]he heapeth up *riches,* and knoweth not who shall gather them.

Walketh, i. e. passeth the course of his life; or goeth about busily and restlessly, hither and thither, as this verb in this conjugation signifies, and as the next verb more plainly expresseth. *In a vain show,* Heb. *in a shadow* or *image,* i. e. in an imaginary rather than a real life; in the pursuit of vain imaginations, in which there is nothing solid or satisfactory. Or, as some read it, *like a shadow,* to which man's life is compared, Job xiv. 2. Man and his life, and all his happiness in this world, are rather appearances, and representations, and dreams, than truths and realities. *Disquieted;* or, *troubled;* Heb. *they make a noise,* or *bustling,* or *tumult,* with unwearied industry seeking for riches, as it follows, and troubling and vexing both themselves and others in the pursuit of them, as this word implies. *In vain;* to no purpose; or without any real or considerable benefit to him or his. *He heapeth up;* for his own use, and for his posterity after him. *Who shall gather them;* whether his children, or strangers, or enemies, shall possess and enjoy them.

l Ps. 38. 15.

7 And now, LORD, what wait I for? [l]my hope *is* in thee.

Seeing this life and all its enjoyments are so vain and short to all men, and especially to me, I will never expect nor seek for happiness here from these vanities; I will compose myself patiently and contentedly to bear both my own afflictions, and the prosperity and glory of ungodly men, for both are vanishing and transitory things, and I will seek for happiness no where but in the love and favour of God, in serving and glorifying him here, and in the hope or confident expectation of enjoying him hereafter; and in the mean time, of receiving from him those supplies and assistances which my present condition calls for.

m Ps. 44. 13. & 79. 4.

8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not [m]the reproach of the foolish.

Deliver me from all my transgressions; that I may not be

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disappointed of my hopes of enjoying thee and thy favour, which is the only thing that I desire, pardon all my sins, which stand like a thick cloud between thee and me, and fill me with fears about my condition both here and hereafter. *Make me not the reproach;* let not their prosperity and my misery give them occasion to deride and reproach me for my serving of thee, and trusting in thee, to so little purpose or advantage. *Of the foolish*, i. e. of wicked men, who though they profess and think themselves to be wise, yet indeed are fools, as is manifest from their eager pursuit of fruitless vanities, ver. 6. and from their gross neglect of God, and of his service, who only is able to make them happy.

9 [n]I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because [o]thou didst *it*.

I opened not my mouth, to wit, in way of murmuring or repining against thee, or thy providence, as I promised I would be, ver. 1. For though when I looked only to instruments, I was discomposed, and did at last speak a foolish word; yet when I did recollect myself, and looked up to thee, the First Cause and Sovereign Disposer of this and all other things, I returned to my former silence. *Thou didst it.* What? Either, 1. and particularly, Absalom's rebellion; wherein I acknowledge thy just hand in punishing my sins. Or, 2. and more generally, Whatsoever is done in these matters; all the events which befall all men, whether good or bad: the afflictions of the one, and the prosperity of the other; all which are the effects of thy counsel and providence, in which all men ought to acquiesce.

10 [p]Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the †blow of thine hand.

But although I may not, I will not, open my mouth to complain of thee, yet I may open it to complain and pray to thee, that thou wouldst take off the judgment which thou hast inflicted upon me. *I am consumed;* help me, therefore, before I be utterly and irrecoverably lost.

11 When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest † his beauty [q]to consume away like a moth: [r]surely every man *is* vanity. Selah.

With rebukes, i. e. with punishment, which is oft so called. See Psal. vi. 1; lxxvi. 6. *Dost correct man for iniquity*, i. e. dost punish him as his iniquity deserves. *His beauty*, Heb. *his desire*, i. e. his desirable things, as this word signifies, Lam. i. 11; Dan. ix. 23; x. 3, 11, 19. His comeliness, strength, wealth, and prosperity, and all his present excellencies or felicities. *Like a moth;* either, 1. Passively, as a moth is quickly and easily crushed to pieces with a touch; as this phrase is used, Job iv. 19. Or, 2. Actively, as a moth consumeth a garment, as it is Job xiii. 28; Isa. l. 9; to which God compareth himself and his judgments, secretly and insensibly consuming a people, Isa. xxxi. 9; Hos. v. 12. *Every man is vanity;* and this confirms what I said ver. 5, *that every man is vanity;* which though men in the height of their prosperity will not believe, yet when God contendeth with them by his judgments, they are forced to acknowledge it.

12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: [s]for I *am* a stranger with thee, *and* a sojourner, [t]as all my fathers *were*.

At my tears, joined with my prayers, Heb. v. 7. *I am a stranger:* though I be not only a native, but either anointed or actually king of this land; yet in truth I am but a stranger, both in regard of my very uncertain and short continuance here, where I am only in my journey or passage to my real and long home, which is in the other world; and in respect of the many wants, and hardships, and contempts, and injuries to which I am exposed, as men usually are in strange lands. And therefore I greatly need and desire thy pity and help. O thou who art the patron of strangers, whom thou hast commended to our care and kindness, Exod. xii. 49; Lev. xix. 33; xxv. 35, &c. *With thee;* either, 1. In thy sight or judgment, and therefore truly. We are apt to flatter ourselves, and can hardly believe that we are but strangers here, where we seem to have settled habitations and possessions, but thou knowest the truth of the business, that we are really such. Or, 2. In thy land or territory, in which I sojourn only by thy leave and favour, and during thy pleasure, as this whole phrase is used, Lev. xxv. 23, whence these words are taken, as also ver. 35, 36, 39, 40, 45, 47, where that branch of it, *with thee*, is so meant. And withal this phrase, both here and Lev. xxv. 23, may have a further emphasis in it, implying that every Israelite, and particularly David himself, in respect of men, were the proprietors or owners of their portions, of which no other man might deprive or dispossess them, and therefore David's enemies had done wrongfully in banishing him from his and from the Lord's inheritance; but yet in respect of God they were but strangers, and God was the only Proprietor of it. *As all my fathers were;* both in thy judgment, expressed Lev. xxv. 23, and in their own opinion, Heb. xi. 13, &c; upon which account thou didst take a special care of them, and therefore do so to me also.

13 [u]O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and [x]be no more.

Spare me; or, *cease from me*, i. e. from afflicting me; do not destroy me. My life at best is but short and miserable, as I have said, and thou knowest; sufficient for it is the evil thereof: do not add affliction to the afflicted. *That I may recover strength*, both in my outward and inward man, both which are much weakened and oppressed. Or, *that I may be refreshed*, or *comforted*, eased of the burden of my sins, and thy terrors consequent upon them, and better prepared for a comfortable and happy dissolution. *Before I go hence*, Heb. *before I go*, to wit, unto the grave, as this phrase is used, Gen. xv. 2; xxv. 32; or *the way of all the earth*, as the phrase is completed, Josh. xxiii. 14; or *whence I shall not return*, as it is Job x. 21; or, which is all one, into that place and state in which I shall *not be*, to wit, amongst the living, or in this world, as this phrase is frequently used, both in Scripture, as Gen. v. 24; xxxvii. 30; xlii. 36, and in heathen authors; of which see my Latin Synopsis.

PSALM XL.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is a celebration of God's great goodness and mercy vouchsafed unto him and all his people. It is certain and evident that David speaks some things in this Book of Psalms in his own name and person, and some things in the name and person of Christ, of whom he was an eminent type; and that sometimes he speaks in both these capacities in the same Psalm, as hath been noted before. And this seems to be the condition of this Psalm; wherein there are some passages which cannot belong to Christ, as ver. 13, and some which do not properly belong to David, or to that time and state of the church, but only to Christ, and to the times of the New Testament, as ver. 6, 7.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

David by his own experience showeth the benefit of trusting in God, 1—5. *Christ's obedience and sacrifice*, 6—10. *His sufferings for sin; his fervent prayer*, 11—17.

I †[a]WAITED patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of †an horrible pit, out of [b]the miry clay, and [c]set my feet upon a rock, *and* [d]established my goings.

I waited patiently, Heb. *in waiting I waited;* which doubling of the word notes that he waited diligently and earnestly, patiently and perseveringly, until God should please to help him. *He inclined*, or, *bowed*, to wit, *himself*, as this very word is rendered, Judg. xvi. 30; or, *his ear*, as it is more fully expressed, Psal. xvii. 6; xxxi. 2. Such ellipses or defects are frequent in Scripture, as Psal. iii. 6; x. 1; Eccles. vi. 3; vii. 15. *Out of an horrible pit;* or, *out of a sounding pit*: so called, either from the clamours of men or beasts falling into it; or from the many waters which fall down into it, not without a great noise. I was not only upon the brink, but in the very bottom of the pit, i. e. in desperate dangers and calamities, as this phrase sig-

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nifies, Psal. xviii. 16; lxix. 1, 2. *Out of the miry clay;* in which my feet stuck fast. *Upon a rock;* a place of strength and safety. *My goings*, or, *my steps*, i. e. kept me from stumbling or falling into mischief.

e Ps. 33. 3. 3 [e] And he hath put a new song in my
f Ps. 52. 6. mouth, *even* praise unto our God: [f] many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

He hath put a new song in my mouth; partly by giving me new matter or occasion for a song; and partly by inspiring me with the very words of it. *Shall see it*, i. e. shall observe God's wonderful mercies vouchsafed to me. *And fear*, i. e. shall stand in awe of that God, who by this instance they see to have so great power, either to save or to destroy, and tremble at his judgments, and give him that reverence, and worship, and obedience which he requires. Yet their fear shall not drive them from God, or bring them into despair, but shall draw them to God, and be attended with trusting in God.

g Ps. 34. 8. Jer. 17. 7. h Ps. 101. 3, 7. i Ps. 125. 5. 4 [g] Blessed *is* that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and [h] respecteth not the proud, nor such as [i] turn aside to lies.

His trust, i. e. his only trust or refuge, as appears from the following words: q. d. I said, many *shall trust in the Lord;* and they shall not be losers by it, nor disappointed of their hope, but they are and shall be blessed. *Respecteth not.* Heb. *looketh not towards*, to wit, with love and delight, and desire to imitate them; or with confidence and expectation of relief from thence, as this phrase is oft used, as Psal. xxv. 15; lxix. 3; cxxi. 1; cxli. 8, and as the opposition of this clause to the foregoing seems to imply. *The proud*, or, *the mighty*, i. e. the great and proud potentates of the world, to whom most men are apt to look and trust, and in whom the psalmist forbids us to put our trust, Psal. cxlvi. 3. *Such as turn aside*, to wit, from God, in whom alone they ought to trust. *To lies*, i. e. to lying vanities, such as worldly power, and wisdom, and riches, and all other earthly things or persons in which men are prone to trust; which are called *lies* here, and Psal. iv. 2; lxii. 9; Micah i. 14, and elsewhere, because they promise more than they can perform. See also Psal. vii. 14; cxix. 118; Hos. x. 13; xii. 1.

k Ex. 11. 15. Job 5. 9. & 9. 10. & 71. 15. & 92. 5. & 139. 6, 17. l Is. 55. 8. || Or, *none can order them unto thee.* 5 [k] Many, O LORD my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, [l] and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: || they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

Thy wonderful works; for which I and the rest of thy people, included in the pronoun plural *us*, have abundant cause to praise thee, and to trust in thee, as was said, ver. 3; and by which it will appear that he that trusteth in thee is in a most blessed and safe condition, as he said, ver. 4. And this verse, wherein he passeth from the singular number to the plural, may seem to be interposed as a wall of partition, between that which David speaks in his own person, and that which he speaks in the person of the Messias, in the following verses. *Thy thoughts*, i. e. thy gracious counsels or contrivances. *To us-ward*, i. e. to me and to the rest of thy people, with whom David oft joins himself in this book. But these words may be, and are by some, joined to the following words, and the place thus rendered: It is *not with us*, or *in our power*, i. e. it passeth our skill, (and reach,) *to order* or *to reckon them up in order unto thee*, because indeed they are innumerable, and therefore c nnot be digested into any order. *If I would declare;* so the particle *if* or *when* is wanting, and to be supplied here, as it is Psal. xxxix. 11, and in many other places. Heb. yet *I will declare and speak*, to wit, some part of them; which accordingly he doth in the following verses. *They are more than can be numbered;* although I am not able to express or reckon them all.

m 1 Sam. 15. 22. Ps. 50. 8. & 51. 16. Is. 1. 11. & 66. 3. Hos. 6. 6. Matt. 9. 13. & 12. 7. Heb. 10. 5. † Heb. *digged.* Ex. 21. 6. 6 [m] Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou †opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

These words may in an improper sense belong to the person and time of David; when God might be said *not* to *desire* or *require* legal sacrifices comparatively, as negative expressions are frequently understood, as Matt. ix. 13; 1 Cor. i. 17, and in this very case of sacrifices, as Psal. li. 16; Jer. vii. 22, 23; Hos. vi. 6. So the sense is, Thou didst desire obedience more or rather than sacrifices, as was said, 1 Sam. xv. 22. But in a proper and literal and full sense they belong only to the person and times of the Messias, in whose name David uttereth these words. And so the sense of the place is, God did *not desire* or *require* them for the satisfaction of his own justice, and the expiation of men's sins, which could not possibly be done by the blood of bulls or goats, as is said, Heb. x. 4—6; but only by the blood of Christ, which was typified by them, and which Christ came into the world to shed, in pursuance of his Father's will, as it here follows, ver. 7, 8. So here is a prediction concerning the cessation and abolition of the legal sacrifices, and the substitution of a better instead of them. *Mine ears hast thou opened*, Heb. *bored.* The sense is either, 1. Whereas many men have no ears to hear, as is implied, Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, or stop their ears, as Psal. lviii. 4; Zech. vii. 11, thou hast given me open ears to hear and obey thy precepts, as this phrase is used, Isa. l. 5, although indeed there is another verb in that text, which much alters the case. Or, 2. I have wholly devoted myself to thy perpetual service, and thou hast accepted of me as such, and signified so much by the *boring* of *mine ears*, according to the law and custom in that case, Exod. xxi. 5, 6; Deut. xv. 17. And whereas only one ear was then bored, and here it is *ears*, this may be either an enallage of the plural number for the singular, whereof divers instances have been given; or else it may be so expressed emphatically, to intimate that Christ was more strictly obliged to a more universal obedience, not only active, to which the legal servants were bound, but passive also, to be obedient even unto the death, to which they were not obliged. The seventy Jewish interpreters, whom the apostle follows, Heb. x. 5, translate these words, *a body hast thou prepared me;* wherein though the words differ, the sense is the same; for the *ears* suppose a *body* to whom they belong, and the *preparing* of a *body* implies the preparing or disposing of the ears, and the obligation of the person for whom a body was prepared to serve him who prepared it; which the boring of the ear signifies.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* [n] written of me, n Luke 24. 44.

Then, when I understood and considered thy mind and will therein, expressed ver. 6. *Said I;* either within myself, by a firm purpose; or unto thee by way of promise or engagement. *Lo, I come.* He may seem to speak like a servant, answering to the call of his master, and signifying his readiness to obey him; in which sense it may be accommodated to David. But the servant's answer is usually expressed in Scripture by another phrase, *Here am I*, and never to my remembrance in these words. Besides, this phrase in that sense seems not to be proper in this place, but rather, *Lo, I hear*, which best suits with the foregoing words, *mine ears hast thou opened.* But these words do most literally and truly belong to Christ, and the sense is this: Seeing thou requirest a better sacrifice than those of the law, lo, I do offer myself to *come;* and I will in due time *come*, to wit, *from heaven*, or *in the flesh*, or *into the world*, as this phrase is more fully expressed and explained in divers places of Scripture, and particularly Heb. x. 5, where this place is explained and applied to Christ.

The two words *volume* and *book* are indifferently used of any writing, and both words seem here to express the same thing, as may appear by comparing Jer. xxxvi., where we have the very same words; and what is called *the roll* or *volume of a book*, ver. 2, 4, is called simply a *roll* or *volume*, ver. 6, 20, 21, and *the book*, ver. 10, 13; it being usual with the Hebrews to join two words together in like manner, of which we have an instance here above, ver. 2, *miry clay*, Heb. *clay of mire.* Now this *volume of the book*, is meant, either, 1. Of the book of predestination, in which Christ was written, as being *foreordained before the foundation of the world*, 1 Pet. i. 20. But that is a secret book, not to be read by any man living, and therefore not fitly alleged as an evidence in this matter. Or, 2. Of a

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legal instrument, wherein the contract was drawn between God and him, wherein he did oblige himself to serve God, and to execute his will in all things; it being the manner of the Hebrews to write their contracts in a little *volume* or *book*. But, 1. We read of no such usage among the Hebrews in the contracts between master and servant, but only of the boring of the servant's ear, Exod. xxi. 6. So the foundation of this allusion is destroyed. 2. At least there was no such contract written between God and him. And if it be said that he only speaks thus by way of allusion, that is but a supposition without ground. And when the words may be properly understood as they sound, of a thing really done, why should we forsake the plain sense without necessity? 3. The phrase here used doth not agree to this sense; for then he should have said, *I am written in the volume of the book*, i. e. in the catalogue of thy servants; for in that case the persons or their names are constantly said to be *written*, as Exod. xxxii. 32, 33; Psal. lxix. 28; Dan. xii. 1; Luke x. 20; Heb. xii. 23; Rev. xiii. 8; xx. 15; xxi. 27, and not any thing to be written of them, as it is here. Or, 3. Of the Holy Scriptures; in which something indeed was written concerning David; namely, that he was *a man after God's own heart*, 1 Sam. xiii. 14. But it must be remembered that those books were not written till after David's death, in whose time here was no other book of Scripture extant but the five books of Moses, unless you will except the book of Job. And therefore this is meant of the law of Moses, which is commonly and emphatically called *the book*, and was made up in the form of a roll or volume, as the Hebrew books generally were. See Ezek. iii. 1—3; Zech. v. 1, 2; Luke iv. 17, 20. And so this place manifestly points to Christ, and must necessarily be understood of him, and of him only, concerning whom much is said in the books of Moses, as is evident from Luke xxiv. 27, 44; John v. 46; Acts iii. 22; xxvi. 22; xxviii. 23. And this sense being plain, and natural, and unforced, and exactly agreeing both with the words and with the truth of the thing, and with the belief of all Christians, I see no reason why I may not acquiesce in it.

[o] Ps. 119. 16, 24, 47, 92. [p] Jer. 31. 33. 2 Cor. 3. 3.

8 [o] I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* †[p] within my heart.

† Heb. *in the midst of my bowels*

I delight to do thy will. This, though in a general sense it may be true of David and of all God's people, yet if it be compared with the foregoing verse, and with the explication thereof in the New Testament, (in which those mysteries which were darkly and doubtfully expressed in the Old Testament are fully and clearly revealed,) must be appropriated to Christ, of whom it is eminently true, and is here observed as an act of heroical obedience, that he not only resolved to do, but delighted in doing, the will of God, or what God had commanded him and he had promised to do, which was to die, and that a most shameful, and painful, and cursed death. See Luke xii. 50; John x. 18; Heb. x. 9, 10. *Thy law is within my heart*, i. e. I do not only hear and understand it, but I receive it with heartiest love and affection, delighting both to meditate of it, and to yield obedience to it.

[q] Ps. 22. 22, 25. [r] Ps. 119. 13. [s] Ps. 139. 2.

9 [q] I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, [r] I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, [s] thou knowest.

Righteousness, to wit, *thy righteousness*, as it is expressed in the next verse, i. e. thy faithfulness, as it is there explained; or righteousness properly so called; for both were fully declared and demonstrated in Christ, the former in sending him into the world according to his promise, Acts xiii. 23, and the latter in inflicting death upon him for man's sin, Rom. iii. 25, 26. *In the great congregation;* in the most public and solemn assemblies; not only to the Jews, but also to all other nations; to whom Christ preached by his apostles, as is observed, Eph. ii. 17. *I have not refrained my lips*, to wit, from preaching it, out of sloth, or fear, or self-love, but have preached it publicly, and even to the face of mine enemies, though I knew my preaching would cost me my life. *Thou knowest;* I call thee to witness the truth of what I say.

[t] Acts 20. 20, 27.

10 [t] I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I had it there, ver. 8, but I did not smother or shut it up there, but spread it abroad for thy glory, and the good of the world; which thou hast wrought both for me and by me.

11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: [u] let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

[u] Ps. 42. 3. & 57. 3. & 61. 7.

This prayer is uttered by David, either, 1. In the person of Christ; to whom it may agree. Or, 2. In his own person. Having been transported and carried forth by the Spirit of God to the contemplation and commemoration of the great mystery of the Messias, of whom he was an illustrious type, now he seems to be led back by the same Spirit to the consideration of himself and his own particular case.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: [x] mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore [y] my heart †faileth me.

[x] Ps. 38. 4. [y] Ps. 73. 26. † Heb. *forsaketh.*

Mine iniquities; either, 1. The punishment of mine iniquities, as Gen. iv. 13; 1 Sam. xxviii. 10; Psal. xxxi. 10. Or, 2. The iniquities themselves. This phrase cannot be understood of Christ. For although our sins are said to be *laid upon Christ*, Isa. liii., and upon that account he is said to be *made sin for us*, 2 Cor. v. 21; yet the Scripture every where represents him as one that never *knew* nor *did* any sin, as in that place, and 1 Pet. ii. 22, and elsewhere; and even when his punishment is described, yet it is expressly noted, that he did not suffer for himself, or for his own sins, but only for us, and for our sins, as Isa. liii. 4, 5; Dan. ix. 26; 1 Pet. ii. 24. And therefore it is not probable that the Holy Ghost would use such an expression concerning the sinless Christ of God, as is never used in Scripture, but either of a man's own sins, or of the punishment deserved by his own sins. *Have taken hold upon me:* men's sins are figuratively said to *follow* them, 1 Tim. v. 24, and to *find* them *out*, Numb. xxxii. 23, and here to *take hold* of them, as a serjeant takes hold of a man whom he arrests. *To look up* unto God or men, with any comfort and confidence; I am ashamed and confounded, by reason of my numberless sins. Or, *so that I was not able to see;* either because he was as it were drowned or overwhelmed with his sins; or because his eyes did fail or were consumed through grief, as he complains, Psal. vi. 7; xxxviii. 10. Or he means that he could not foresee them; the simple verb being put for the compound, as it is frequently among the Hebrews. They came upon him unawares, and therefore were the more grievous to him. *They*, to wit, *mine iniquities* here mentioned, properly so called; for God's people are more apt to aggravate their sins than the punishments of them. See Ezra ix. 13, 14.

13 [z] Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

[z] Ps. 70. 1, &c.

Deliver me from my sins, and the punishments due to them.

14 [a] Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

[a] Ps. 35. 4, 26. & 70. 2, 3. & 71. 13.

Let them be ashamed, for the disappointment of their hopes and designs. *My soul*, i. e. my life, as Exod. iv. 19; 1 Sam. xx. 1.

15 [b] Let them be [c] desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

[b] Ps. 70. 3. [c] Ps. 73. 19.

Desolate, or *amazed*, or *dismayed*, or *overthrown:* of such imprecations I have spoken before. *Their shame*, i. e. their sinful and shameful actions, as *shame* is put for a shameful idol, Hos. ix. 10, and as *fear* is oft put for the evil feared.

16 [d] Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as

[d] Ps. 70. 4.

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• Ps. 35. 27. love thy salvation • say continually, The LORD be magnified.

Such as love thy salvation; either, 1. Such as desire and rejoice in the salvation and deliverance which thou givest to me and to others of thy people, which was a great eye-sore and grief to the wicked. Or, 2. Such as expect and seek for their salvation and happiness not from idols, nor from their wicked courses, nor from any creatures, as other men do, but from thee only, and gladly accept and embrace that salvation which thou hast promised, together with the conditions required to it, to wit, faith and repentance. Or, 3. Such as love thy Messias, upon whom both David's and other holy prophets' and saints' thoughts and affections were much fixed, as is evident from many places of Scripture, as John viii. 58; Acts ii. 30, 31; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11; who is called *the desire of all nations*, Hag. ii. 7, and *the glory* and *consolation of Israel*, Luke ii. 25, 32, yea, and by the very title here used, God's *salvation*, Isa. lxii. 11; Luke ii. 30; whose appearance or coming the godly of all ages did love and long for; and of whom David had so lately and clearly spoken, ver. 6, 7, &c.; all which considered, this cannot seem a forced or very far-fetched interpretation. *The Lord be magnified:* let them have continual occasion to magnify God for his mercies vouchsafed to them.

f Ps. 70. 5. 17 f But I *am* poor and needy; *yet*
g 1 Pet. 5. 7. g the LORD thinketh upon me: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

PSALM XLI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The occasion of this Psalm was manifestly some sore disease or affliction which God had inflicted upon David, and which gave his enemies opportunity to discover their hatred and malice against him.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

David showeth God's care of the poor, 1—3. *He confesseth his sins, and complaineth of his enemies' treachery,* 4—9; *but fleeth to God for succour,* 10—13.

a Prov. 14. 21. || Or, *the weak*, or, *sick.* † Heb. *in the day of evil.* BLESSED a *is* he that considereth || the poor: the LORD will deliver him † in time of trouble.

That considereth; or, *that carries himself wisely and prudently with* or *towards* him, not rashly and foolishly censures and condemns him, as my pretended friends dealt with me, ver. 8; nor insulteth over him, which is a foolish as well as wicked thing; but considereth that it may be his own case, and therefore pitieth and helpeth him; which is the likeliest way to obtain the like pity for himself in his trouble. *The poor;* or rather, *the weak*, or *sick*, or *languishing person*, as may be gathered by comparing this with ver. 3, where the mercy which he is supposed to have afforded to him is returned upon himself, and with ver. 8. *The Lord will deliver him;* either, 1. The poor afflicted man. Though his enemies conclude his case to be desperate, ver. 8, God will confute them, and deliver him. Or, 2. The considerer of the poor, of whom also this same pronoun *him* is confessedly meant, ver. 2, 3. And so it is a promise of recompence, the wise and merciful man shall find mercy.

2 The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be blessed
b Ps. 27. 12. || Or, *do not thou deliver.* upon the earth: b and || thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

Keep him alive, Heb. *quicken him*, i. e. revive and restore him. Either he will *preserve him* from trouble; or if God see trouble necessary or fit for him, and therefore suffer him to fall into it, he will raise him out of it. *Unto the will of his enemies*, i. e. to destruction, which they earnestly desire and endeavour to procure.

3 The LORD will strengthen him upon
† Heb. *turn.* the bed of languishing: thou wilt † make all his bed in his sickness.

Either, 1. Change or overturn his bed of sickness; which is done when a man is restored to health. Or rather, 2. Give him ease and comfort, which sick men receive by the help of those who turn and stir their whole bed, to make it soft and easy for them; for the words foregoing and following these suppose him to be and continue in a state of sickness. Thus the Lord elsewhere compares himself to a servant, waiting upon his people at table, Luke xii. 37; as here, to one that makes their bed; metaphors implying strange condescension.

4 I said, LORD, be merciful unto me:
c 2 Chro. 30. 20. Ps. 6. 2. & 147. 3. c heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

My soul, i. e. either, 1. Myself, to wit, my body. So it is a double synecdoche. And *the soul* is so taken Psal. xvi. 10. Or, 2. My soul properly so called; which is said to be *healed*, when it is pardoned and purged, as 2 Chron. xxx. 20; Isa. liii. 5, compared with 1 Pet. ii. 24; Matt. xiii. 15, compared with Mark iv. 12; James v. 16. So he strikes at the root of his misery, and prays for the removal of the sin of his soul, as the cause of the disease of his body. *For I have sinned against thee:* this may be added, either, 1. As a reason or motive to God; Grant this request, *for I have sinned*, and therefore thy grace in healing me will be more glorious and admirable. Or, for I acknowledge that I have sinned; for the act is oft put for the declaration of it, as Exod. xxxiii. 13; Psal. li. 5. Or, 2. As a reason moving him thus to pray, *I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul;* and great reason I had to say so, *for I have sinned against thee.*

5 Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?

Speak evil of me; vent their ill wishes against me, in the following words.

6 And if he come to see *me*, he d speak-
d Ps. 12. 2. Prov. 26. 24, 25, 26. eth vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; *when* he goeth abroad, he telleth *it*.

To see me; to visit me in my sickness, according to the custom. *He speaketh vanity*, or *falsehood;* pretending sympathy with me, and friendship to me, whilst they plot mischief in their hearts against me. *His heart gathereth iniquity to itself;* even when he is with me, and pretends hearty affection to me, his heart cannot forbear its customary practice of meditating and devising mischief against me; for which he watcheth and seeketh for all occasions from my speeches, or carriage, or the circumstances of my condition, which he observes. *He telleth it*, partly to delight his companions, and partly to encourage them to and direct them in their malicious designs against me.

7 All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise
† Heb. *evil to me.* † my hurt.

Whisper together against me, i. e. secretly defame me, and closely plot against me.

8 † An evil disease, *say they*, cleaveth
† Heb. *A thing of Belial.* fast unto him: and *now* that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

An evil disease, Heb. *a word* or *thing of Belial*, i. e. either, 1. Some wicked calumny which they had raised, and which stuck close to him. Or, 2. His great wickedness, whereof this is a sign. Or rather, 3. This sore disease or mischief; either sent upon him in way of vengeance for his horrid crimes; or such as God useth to inflict upon the sons of Belial, to show that he is in truth such a one, whatsoever he pretends to the contrary. *He shall rise up no more;* seeing God hath begun to punish him, he will make an end of him.

9 e Yea, † mine own familiar friend, in
e 2 Sam. 15. 12. Job 19. 19. Ps. 55. 12, 13, 20. Jer. 20. 10. † Heb. *the man of my peace.* whom I trusted, f which did eat of my bread, hath † lifted up *his* heel against me.
f Obad. 7. John 13. 18. † Heb. *magnified.*

Mine own familiar friend; he means either Ahithophel, or some other perfidious counsellor or courtier, who was a type of Judas, to whom therefore it is applied, John xiii. 18, as David was a type of Christ in being thus betrayed. So these words were literally fulfilled in David, and yet the Holy Ghost, which dictated them, looked further in them,

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even to Christ and Judas, in whom they received a further and fuller accomplishment. *Hath lifted up his heel;* a phrase implying injury, joined with insolency and contempt; taken from an unruly horse, which kicks at him that owns and feeds him.

10 But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

Be merciful unto me: they censure me grievously, and conclude my case to be desperate; but, Lord, do thou vindicate me, and confute them. *That I may requite them;* or, *and I will requite them.* i. e. punish them for their malicious, and perfidious, and wicked practices; which, being now a magistrate, he was obliged to revenge, Rom. xiii. 4; although when he was a private person, he was so far from revenging evil, that he rendered good for it, as we see, Psal. xxxv. 12, 13. and elsewhere.

11 By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

Thou favourest me; bearest a good will to me, and art resolved to make good thy promises to me, and wilt plead my righteous cause against them. *Because mine enemy doth not triumph over me;* because hitherto thou hast helped and supported me, and prolonged my days to the disappointment of their hopes and designed triumphs. This mercy I thankfully receive as a token of further mercy. Compare 1 Sam. xvii. 37; 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

12 And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and [g] settest me before thy face for ever.

[g] Job 36. 7. Ps. 34. 15.

In mine integrity; as I have kept my integrity, so thou hast kept me in and with it. Or, *for mine integrity;* because thou hast seen my innocency, notwithstanding all the calumnies of mine enemies; and thou hast promised and used to afford thy protection to the innocent and upright. *Settest me before thy face for ever;* or, *hast confirmed* or *established me in thy presence* (i. e. either under thine eye and special care; or to minister unto thee, not only in thy temple, but as a king over thy people, or in that land, where thou art peculiarly present) *for ever;* either, 1. Properly; and so this was done to David, either in his own person, partly here, and partly in the next *life;* or in regard of his posterity, in whom the kingdom was established for ever. Or, 2. For my whole life, or for a long time, as that phrase is commonly used.

[h] Ps. 106. 48.

13 [h] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

From everlasting, and to everlasting; or, *from age to age,* as long as the world lasts, and to all eternity. *Amen* signifies a hearty assent and approbation, and withal an earnest desire and confidence, of the thing to which it is annexed. And as the Psalms are divided into five books, so each of them is closed with this word; the first here, the second Psal. lxxii., the third Psal. lxxxix., the fourth Psal. cvi., the last in the end of Psal. cl.: the doubling of the word shows the fervency of his spirit in this work of praising God.

PSALM XLII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The penman of this Psalm is uncertain, as not being named in the title. It was composed either, 1. By David, when he was banished from the house of God, either by Saul's tyranny, or by Absalom's rebellion; or, 2. By the sons of Korah, in the time of the captivity of Babylon; whence some read the words of the title of this Psalm, *Maschil of the sons of Korah.* But this is not usual in this book, to name the author of a Psalm so obscurely and indefinitely; for the sons of Korah were a numerous company, and it is not likely that either all or divers of them did join in the inditing of this and the following Psalms so called. Nor is there any one Psalm where the author is named, but he is one certain and single person. And therefore it seems more probable that David penned this, as it is confessed he did some other Psalms which have not his name in the title.

To the chief Musician, ‖Maschil, for the sons of Korah.

‖ Or, A Psalm giving instruction of the sons, &c. See 1 Chron. 6. 33, 37. & 25. 5.

Who were an eminent order of singers in the house of God; of whom see 1 Chron. vi. 33; ix. 19; xxvi. 1.

The psalmist being deprived of God's service, ardently desires to be in his house again, 1—4; *rouseth up his soul unto a firm hope and confidence in God,* 5—9. *His enemies reproach him,* 10. *His faith in God,* 11.

AS the hart †panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

† Heb. *brayeth.*

The hart is naturally hot and thirsty. And this thirst is increased, partly by its dwelling in desert and dry places, to which it retireth for fear of men and wild beasts; and partly by its long and violent running, when it is pursued by the hunters; and some add, by eating of serpents. *After thee;* after the enjoyment of thee in thy sanctuary, as it appears from ver. 4.

2 [a] My soul thirsteth for God, for [b] the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

[a] Ps. 63. 1. & 84. 2. John 7. 37. [b] 1 Thess. 1. 9.

Thirst is more vehement than hunger, and more impatient of dissatisfaction. *For the living God:* this he mentions as a just cause of his thirst. He did not thirst after vain, useless idols, but after the only true and living God, who was *his life, and the length of his days,* as is said, Deut. xxx. 20, and without whose presence and favour David accounted himself for a dead and lost man, Psal. cxliii. 7. *Appear before God;* in the place of his special presence and public worship. See Exod. xxiii. 15; xxv. 30. What is called *before the Lord,* 1 Chron. xiii. 10, is *before* or *with the ark,* 2 Sam. vi. 7.

3 [c] My tears have been my meat day and night, while [d] they continually say unto me, Where *is* thy God?

[c] Ps. 80. 5. & 102. 9. [d] ver. 10. Ps. 79. 10. & 115. 2.

My tears have been my meat; which notes both the great abundance and constant course of his tears, and the secret satisfaction and ease which he found in giving vent to his passion this way. Possibly his tears and grief took away his appetite, and so were to him instead of food. *Where is thy God,* of whom thou hast so often boasted, as of one so able and ready to help all that trust in him and call upon him, and particularly as one engaged to thee by many great and special promises? He is gone and departed from thee, and no where to be found of thee. He is either unable or unwilling to help thee, or regardless of thee.

4 When I remember these *things,* [e] I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, [f] I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

[e] Job 30. 16. Ps. 62. 8. [f] Is. 30. 29.

These things; either, 1. Which follow, to wit, my former freedom. Or rather, 2. Last mentioned, my banishment from God's presence, and mine enemies' scoffs and triumphs upon that occasion. *I pour out my soul:* this phrase notes either, 1. His fervent prayer, as it is taken, 1 Sam. i. 15; Psal. lxii. 8. Or, 2. His bitter sorrows, whereby his very heart was almost melted or dissolved, and his spirits spent, and he was ready to faint away; as it is used Job xxx. 16; Lam. ii. 12. Compare Psal. xxii. 14. Or rather, 3. Both together; that he breathed out his sorrows and sad complaints unto God by fervent prayers. *In me,* i. e. within my own breast, between God and my own soul; not openly, lest mine enemies should turn it into matter of rejoicing and insulting over me. *I had gone,* to wit, in the way to Jerusalem. And my sorrow was increased by the remembrance of my former enjoyments. Compare Lam. i. 7. *With the multitude;* according to the custom, and in the company of Israelites, who went thither in great numbers. Compare Psal. lxxxiv. 6, 7. *I went with them;* or, *I led them,* encouraging them by my presence and forwardness. *That kept holyday;* or, *that kept the feast,* to wit, the three solemn festival solemnities, which they kept holy unto the Lord.

5 [g] Why art thou †cast down, O my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me? [h] hope thou in God: for I shall yet ‖praise him ‖*for* the help of his countenance.

[g] ver. 11. & Ps. 43. 5. † Heb. *bowed down.* [h] Lam. 3. 24. ‖ Or, *give thanks.* ‖ Or, *his presence is salvation.*

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Why art thou cast down with excessive sorrow and despair? *For the help of his countenance*, Heb. *for the salvations of his face*, i. e. for those supports, deliverances, and comforts which I doubt not I shall ere long enjoy, both in his presence and sanctuary, to which he will restore me, and from his presence, and the light of his countenance, which he will graciously afford to me.

6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from ‖ the hill Mizar.

‖ Or, *the little hill*, Ps. 133. 3.

That I may revive my drooping spirits, I will consider thy infinite mercy, and power, and faithfulness, and thy gracious presence in the sanctuary, from whence thou dost hear and answer all those that call upon thee, in all the parts of the land. *From the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar*, i. e. from all the places and parts of the land to which I shall be driven; whether from the parts about or beyond Jordan on the east: or, the *Hermonim*, i. e. either the people inhabiting Hermon; or the mountain of Hermon, which was in the northern parts, Numb. xxxiv. 7; Deut. iii. 8; Psal. lxxxix. 12, here called *Hermonim*, in the plural number, because of its great largeness, and many tops and parts of it, which are called by several names: or, *the hill Mizar*; a hill so called, though not mentioned elsewhere, which is supposed to have been in the southern parts of the land; but peradventure it was in the east and beyond Jordan; and David might mention these places, because when he was banished by Absalom, he had been successively at all of them, and in all of them had remembered God, and directed his prayer to him.

7 [i]Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; [k]all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

i Jer. 4. 20. Ezek. 7. 26. k Ps. 88. 7. Jonah 2. 3.

Deep calleth unto deep, i. e. one affliction comes immediately after another, as if it were called for and invited by the former; which he expresseth by a metaphor taken either, 1. From the old flood, when *the upper deep*, or *abyss of waters*, (in the clouds,) *called for the lower deep*, or abyss of waters in the sea and rivers, that both might unite their forces together to drown the world. And thus the Chaldee understands it. Or, 2. From the sea, when its waves rage, and it is full of deep furrows, into which ships and passengers sink down, and then rise and sink again, successively and continually. But these tempests are caused in the sea by God's mighty winds, rather than by his water-spouts. Or, 3. From violent and successive showers of rain; which frequently come down from heaven, as it were, *at the noise* or call *of* God's *water-spouts*, to wit, the clouds; which by their rattling noises and terrible thunders do in a manner invite and call forth the showers which are contained in their bowels. *All thy waves and thy billows*; thou hast sent one sharp trial or affliction upon me after another. *Are gone over me*, i. e. are gone over my head, as this same verb is used, Psal. xxxviii. 4. They do not lightly sprinkle me, but almost overwhelm me.

8 *Yet* the LORD will [l]command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and [m]in the night his song *shall be* with me, *and* my prayer unto the God of my life.

l Lev. 25. 21. Deut. 28. 8. Ps. 133. 3. m Job 35. 10. Ps. 32. 7. & 63. 6. & 149. 5.

Will command, i. e. will effectually procure or confer upon me, as this verb is used, Lev. xxv. 21; Psal. vii. 6, &c. The verb is future, but some render it by the time past, *the Lord hath commanded*; making this rehearsal of his former experiences of God's goodness his argument to support himself, and to prevail with God in prayer; which may seem to suit best with the foregoing and following verses. But we must remember that David's hopes and fears were strangely mixed, and his expressions of them are commonly interwoven in the same Psalm, and sometimes in one and the same verse, as it is here, ver. 5, 11. And therefore there is no necessity of departing from the proper signification of the verb. *His loving-kindness*, i. e. his blessings, the effects of his loving-kindness, which God is oft said to *command*, as Deut. xxviii. 8; Psal. cxxxiii. 3. *And in the night*; both day and night, i. e. continually. *His song shall be with me*, i. e. I shall have constant matter of singing and praising God for his loving-kindness. *My prayer shall be unto the God*; and therefore I will boldly and believingly direct my prayers to him, of whose readiness to hear and help me I have had such ample experience. *The God of my life*; the giver and preserver of my life from time to time.

9 I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? [n]why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

n Ps. 38. 6. & 43. 2.

I will say unto God; I will expostulate the case with him. *My rock*; who hath formerly been a sure refuge to me. *Why hast thou forgotten me?* why dost thou now seem quite to forget and neglect me? *Why go I mourning?* why dost thou leave me in this mournful state, and not succour me speedily?

10 *As* with a ‖ sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; [o]while they say daily unto me, Where *is* thy God?

‖ Or, *killing*. o ver. 3. Joel 2. 17. Mic. 7. 10.

In my bones, or *in my body*, the *bones* being oft put for the *body*, whereof they are a very considerable part. Or, as a sword, which pierceth and cutteth my flesh even to the bones, and cutteth or breaketh the very bones also. So painful and vexatious are their reproaches. *Where is thy God?* of which see above on ver. 3.

11 [p]Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

p ver. 5. & Ps. 43. 5.

The health of my countenance, Heb. *the salvations of my face*, i. e. either, 1. Which are present and manifest, being before my face. Or, 2. Which will make my face to shine, and my countenance cheerful, which supposeth the gladness of the heart, and the bettering of his condition. Or, 3. Of his person; as *the face* sometimes signifies, as 2 Sam. xvii. 11; Isa. iii. 15. As also the Greek word signifying *face*, is very frequently put for the *person*, whereof the face is an eminent part. *My God*: as he formerly was, so he still is, and ever will be, and will suddenly show himself to be, my God, although for a season he may hide his face, or withdraw his help from me.

PSALM XLIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by the same author, and upon the same occasion, with the former.

David, praying against his fierce and crafty enemies, 1; *and to be restored to the temple*, 2, 3; *promiseth to serve God joyfully*, 4. *He encourageth his soul to trust in God*, 5.

1023.

[a]JUDGE me, O God, and [b]plead my cause against an ‖ ungodly nation: O deliver me †from the deceitful and unjust man.

a Ps. 26. 1. & 35. 24. b Ps. 35. 1. ‖ Or, *unmerciful*. † Heb. *from a man of deceit and iniquity*.

Judge me; or, *judge* or *give sentence* for me, as this phrase is used, Psal. xxvi. 1, and elsewhere. *Ungodly*, or *unmerciful*, i. e. cruel or inhuman; for it is a meiosis. *Nation*; so he calls the company of his enemies for their great numbers, and because they were the far greatest part, and almost the whole body of the nation. *Deceitful and unjust*; who covereth his wicked designs with fair and false pretences; which sort of men are hateful to thee, and to all good men. *Man*; either Saul; or rather, Ahithophel or Absalom. For he speaks of *the holy hill* of Zion, ver. 3, which was not so till after Saul's time. Or *man* may be put collectively for the men of that time.

2 For thou *art* the God of [c]my strength: why dost thou cast me off? [d]why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

c Ps. 28. 7. d Ps. 42. 9.

3 [e]O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto [f]thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

e Ps. 40. 11. & 57. 3. f Ps. 3. 4.

Send out, i. e. actually impart and discover them; for at

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present thou seemest to conceal and withhold them from me. *Thy light and thy truth*, i. e. thy favour, or the light of thy countenance, and the truth of thy promises made to me; as God's *mercy* and *truth* oft go together, as 2 Sam. xv. 20; Psal. lxi. 7; lxxxix. 14, &c. Or this may be a figure called *hendiadus*, whereby *light and truth* is put either for *the light of God's truth*; or rather, for *true light*, the illumination of God's Spirit, and the direction of his gracious providence, whereby he might be led (as it follows) in the right way, which would bring him to God's holy hill. *Unto thy holy hill*, to wit, of Zion, the place of God's presence and worship. *To thy tabernacles*, i. e. tabernacle; which he calls *tabernacles*, either, 1. Because there were now two tabernacles, one at Zion, where the ark was; and another at Gibeon, 1 Chron. xvi. 37, 39. Although he here seems to speak but of one of them, even of that which was upon God's holy hill. Or, 2. Because of the several parts of it, the most holy, and the holy place, and the church. These indeed were in that of Gibeon, but not in that of Zion. Or rather, 3. By a mere enallage of the number, the plural for the singular; which is frequent, as in other words, so in those which belong to this matter, as *tabernacles*, Psal. xlvi. 4, and *sanctuaries*, Lev. xxvi. 31; Psal. lxxiii. 17, &c.; lxxiv. 7; Jer. li. 51. Nay, the most holy place, though but one simple part, is by the Greeks called *holies*. So in other authors, we read *the rivers of Nilus*, of that one river; and *right hands*, for one right hand; and many like phrases.

4 Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God † my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

† Heb. *the gladness of my joy.*

Then will I go unto the altar of God, to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving for my deliverance. *My exceeding joy*; the principal author and matter of all my joy and comfort.

[f] Ps. 42. 5, 11. 5 [g] Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

PSALM XLIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

There is no certainty, either concerning the author or the particular occasion of this Psalm. This is evident, that it was composed with respect unto the calamitous condition of the church and people of Israel, whom it supposeth to be in a state of captivity and persecution. But whether it was made by David, who foresaw and foretold by the Spirit of God their future captivity, and framed this for their use in that estate, or by some other holy man of God, when they were actually in this condition, is not determined, nor necessary to know for the understanding of it.

¶ To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

The church commemorates past mercies, 1, 2. *The arm of God, not the sword of Israel, put them in possession of the land*, 3. *Their trust is in God, not in their bow*, 4—8. *They complain of divers troubles*, 9—16. *They profess their integrity*, 17—22. *A fervent prayer for help*, 23—26.

WE have heard with our ears, O God, [a] our fathers have told us, *what* work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.

[a] Ex. 12. 26, 27. Ps. 78. 3.

What work thou didst in their days: they allege their former experience, as encouragements to their faith, and motives to God to continue to be gracious to them.

[b] Ex. 15. 17. Josh. 24. 12. Ps. 78. 55. & 80. 8.

2 *How* [b] thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; *how* thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

The heathen; the Canaanites. *Plantedst them*, to wit, our fathers, easily understood both from the matter, and from ver. 1, where they are expressed; the pronoun being referred unto the remoter antecedent, as it is Gen. x. 12; xix. 13; Psal. xviii. 15, and oft elsewhere. *Cast them out*: so *them* must be *the people*, or *heathens*. But because the comparing of this branch of the verse with the former, *plantedst them*, to which this answers, and with the following *they*, makes it more than probable that this *them* belongs to the fathers, this is to be otherwise rendered; either, 1. Thus, *send them out*, to wit, free or manumitted out of Egypt, of which this same verb is used, Exod. v. 1; xii. 33. And then the foregoing *people* are the Egyptians, not the Canaanites; which yet seems not to agree with the foregoing and following passages, both which speak of the Canaanites only; nor with the order of the words in this verse, it being improper to mention their coming out of Egypt, after their being planted in Canaan. Or rather, 2. Thus, *make them send or shoot forth*, to wit, *branches*, as it is more fully expressed, Psal. lxxx. 11; Ezek. xvii. 6, where this verb is used. And this most naturally and properly follows upon and after their *planting* mentioned in the former clause.

3 For [c] they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, [d] because thou hadst a favour unto them.

[c] Deut. 8. 17. Josh. 24. 12.

[d] Deut. 4. 37. & 7. 7, 8.

By their own sword, i. e. by their arms or valour. *The light of thy countenance*, i. e. thy favour, as the next words explain it; thy gracious and glorious presence, which went along with us.

4 [e] Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.

[e] Ps. 74. 12.

My King; Jacob's or Israel's King, in a peculiar manner. The whole people speak like one man, as being united together in one body. *Command*, i. e. effectually procure by thy commanding word.

5 Through thee [f] will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.

[f] Dan. 8. 4.

Push down, Heb. *smite with the horn*, i. e. subdue and destroy. The phrase is taken from Deut. xxxiii. 17, and is borrowed from horned beasts. Compare 1 Kings xxii. 11. *Through thy name*, i. e. by the help of thy power.

6 For [g] I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.

[g] Ps. 33. 16. Hos. 1. 7.

But I will trust in thee only, as the next verse implies; and therefore do not frustrate my hope and confidence fixed upon thee.

7 But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast [h] put them to shame that hated us.

[h] Ps. 40. 14.

8 [i] In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.

[i] Ps. 34. 2. Jer. 9. 24. Rom. 2. 17.

In God we boast, as in a most sure rock, and our only refuge.

9 But [k] thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.

[k] Ps. 60. 1, 10. & 74. 1. & 88. 14. & 89. 38. & 108. 11.

Thou hast cast us off; but now thy countenance and course is quite changed to us. *Put us to shame*; made us ashamed of our boasting, and trust in thee, which we have oft professed to the face of our enemies. *Goest not forth with our armies*, to lead them, and fight for them, as this phrase signifies, Judg. iv. 14; 1 Sam. viii. 20. He seems to allude to God's marching with and before the Israelites in the wilderness, and afterwards, as occasion was offered. Compare Psal. lxviii. 7.

10 Thou makest us to [l] turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us spoil for themselves.

[l] Lev. 26. 17. Deut. 28. 25. Josh. 7. 8, 12.

Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy, by withdrawing thy help and our courage, according to thy threatenings, Lev. xxvi. 36. *Spoil for themselves*, i. e. take away our estates to their own use, and for their only benefit, not in compliance with thy will, which was to punish us for our sins, nor for thy service and glory. They minded nothing but their own advantage.

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m Rom. 8. 36. † Heb. *as sheep of meat.* n Deu. 4. 27. & 28. 64. Ps. 60. 1.

11 m Thou hast given us † like sheep *appointed* for meat; and hast n scattered us among the heathen.

Those of us who were not slain are carried into captivity, and dispersed in several places.

o Is. 52. 3, 4. Jer. 15. 13. † Heb. *without riches.*

12 o Thou sellest thy people † for nought, and dost not increase *thy wealth* by their price.

For nought; for a thing of nought. Or, *without money, and without price,* as it is said, Isa. lv. 1; for a very small, or for no price; *for a pair of shoes,* as we read, Amos ii. 6. *Dost not increase thy wealth by their price;* thou hast not advanced thy honour and service thereby; for thy enemies do not serve thee more and better than thy people, nor yet so much.

p Deut. 28. 37. Ps. 79. 4. & 80. 6.

13 p Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.

They contemn our persons, and sport themselves in our miseries.

q Jer. 24. 9.

14 q Thou makest us a byword among the heathen, r a shaking of the head among the people.

r 2 Kings 19. 21. Job 16. 4. Ps. 22. 7.

A by-word, or *a proverb.* They used to say proverbially, *More despicable* or *miserable than an Israelite. A shaking of the head;* a gesture of scorn and insultation. See on Psal. xxii. 7.

15 My confusion *is* continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,

Before me; before the eyes of my mind and body too. They vilify me, not only behind my back, but even before my face. *The shame of my face hath covered me,* i. e. I am filled with shame of my face on every side, being ashamed to show my face in any place or company.

s Ps. 8. 2.

16 For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; s by reason of the enemy and avenger.

That reproacheth and blasphemeth; that doth not only reproach me, which I could better bear; but blaspheme God and our religion for our sakes, which is intolerable to me. *The enemy and avenger;* who executeth both God's and his own vengeance upon me, persecuting me with a despiteful hatred, and with great cruelty.

t Dan. 9. 13.

17 t All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.

Although we cannot excuse ourselves from many other sins for which thou hast justly punished us, yet this we must say for ourselves, that through thy grace we have kept ourselves from apostacy and idolatry, notwithstanding all the examples and provocations, rewards proposed and promised, or punishments threatened to induce us thereunto; which we hope thou wilt graciously consider, and not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear.

u Job 23. 11. Ps. 119. 51, 157. ‖ Or, *goings.*

18 Our heart is not turned back, u neither have our ‖steps declined from thy way;

Is not turned back, to wit, from thee, or thy worship and service, unto idols, as it follows, ver. 20. *Neither have our steps declined from thy way:* because it is easy and ordinary falsely to pretend sincerity of heart, which men cannot discern nor confute, they prove it from the unblamableness of their lives and actions.

x Is. 34. 13. & 35. 7. y Ps. 23. 4.

19 Though thou hast sore broken us in x the place of dragons, and covered us y with the shadow of death.

z Job 11. 13. Ps. 68. 31.

20 If we have forgotten the name of our God, or z stretched out our hands to a strange god;

In the place; or rather *into,* as others render it; which seems much more emphatical. And so this verb may be rendered, *thou hast humbled,* or *brought us down,* as all the ancients rendered it. Or this is a pregnant verb, as they call them, or one verb put for two; of which there are many instances, as hath been showed. So it may be rendered, *thou hast sore broken us,* casting us *into;* or, *thou hast by sore breaking* brought *us into.* By inflicting upon us one breach after another, thou hast at last brought us to this pass. *The place of dragons;* which signifies a place extremely desolate, such as dragons love, Isa. xiii. 21, 22; xxxiv. 13; xxxv. 7, and therefore full of horror, and danger, and mischief. Thou hast thrown us among people as fierce and cruel as dragons. *With the shadow of death,* i. e. with deadly horrors and miseries. See on Job iii. 5; Psal. xxiii. 4. *The name of God,* i. e. either God himself; or his worship and service; which we have denied that we have done, ver. 17. *Stretched out our hands,* in way of prayer or adoration, whereof this is a gesture, Exod. ix. 29; 1 Kings viii. 22; Psal. cxliii. 6.

a Job 31. 14. Ps. 139. 1. Jer. 17. 10.

21 a Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

We appeal to the heart-searching God, concerning the sincerity of this profession of ours.

b Rom. 8. 36.

22 b Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

Yea; or, *but.* We do not suffer for our apostacy, but because we will not apostatize from thee. *For thy sake;* because we are thy people, and continue constantly and resolutely in the profession and practice of thy worship, which they abhor, and from which they seek to draw or drive us.

c Ps. 7. 6. & 35. 23. & 59. 4, 5. & 78. 65. d ver. 9.

23 c Awake, why sleepest thou, O LORD? arise, d cast *us* not off for ever.

e Job 13. 24. Ps. 13. 1. & 88. 14.

24 e Wherefore hidest thou thy face, *and* forgettest our affliction and our oppression?

Hidest thou thy face, i. e. dost not regard our miseries, nor affordest us any pity or help. *Forgettest our affliction and our oppression,* when we have not forgotten thee. This seems not well to become thy faithfulness and goodness.

f Ps. 119. 25.

25 For f our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

Our soul, i. e. either our lives or persons; or rather bodies, as it is explained in the next clause, and as *the soul* is oft taken by a synecdoche, as Numb. xi. 6; Psal. xvi. 10; cvi. 15, &c. *To the dust;* either to the ground, where we lie prostrate at our enemies' feet, or to the grave. *Our belly cleaveth unto the earth;* we are not only thrown down to the earth, but we lie there like dead carcasses fixed to it, without any ability or hope of rising again.

† Heb. *a help for us.*

26 Arise † for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake.

We mentioned our sincerity and constancy in thy worship only as an argument to move thee to pity, and not as a ground of our trust and confidence, or as if we merited deliverance by it; but that we expect and implore only upon the account of thine own free and rich mercy.

PSALM XLV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject matter of this Psalm is by the consent both of Jewish and Christian, ancient and modern, interpreters agreed to be the Messias, and his marriage with the church of God; of which it treats either, 1. Remotely, under the type of Solomon and his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, of which it is to be primarily and literally understood, and then mediately and ultimately of Christ. Or rather, 2. Immediately and directly; although the words be so ordered, that they carry a manifest allusion either to that or some other royal marriage; which seems more than probable from the following arguments: 1. From the great congruity of the matter and style of this Psalm with that of the book of Canticles; whereof this seems to be a kind of abridgement. 2. From the magnificent preface, ver. 1, which seems too sublime and spiritual for such carnal and earthly matters. 3. And especially from the matter of the Psalm. For here are many things which do not agree to Solomon; such as the warlike posture and exploits, ver. 3—5, and the title of God, ver. 6, which is appropriated to Christ, and affirmed to be incommunicable to any mere creature, Heb. i. 8, compared with ver. 6, and that numerous posterity, and the amplitude of their dominion, ver. 16, and divers other passages, as we shall see in the progress.

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* Ps. 69. & 80. titles. Heb. to the overseer.

¶ To the chief Musician * upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, ‖ Maschil, A Song of loves.

To the chief musician upon Shoshannim; which title is also prefixed to Psal. lxix., and with some small addition, Psal. lxxx., and with a little variation, Psal. lx. It seems to be the name of a song or tune, or instrument of music. It properly signifies *lilies* or *roses;* which some apply to the subject of the Psalm, because these flowers were used in garlands, or otherwise in nuptial solemnities, and because Christ calls himself the *lily* and *the rose*, Cant. ii. 1. *A Song of loves*, to wit, of Christ and his church. Or, *of the beloved ones*, to wit, the virgins, who waited upon the bride, as some men did upon the bridegroom, who thence were called his *friends*, John iii. 29; in whose name and person this Psalm may seem to be uttered.

The psalmist singeth of the beauty of Christ above that of the children of men, 1, 2; *of his terribleness and conquest over his enemies*, 3—5; *of his everlasting throne, and unction above his fellows*, 6—9. *The church is invited to forsake her father's house, that Christ might delight in her*, 10—12. *Her glory and excellency by his graces, which shall be remembered and praised for ever*, 13—17.

† Heb. boileth up a good matter.

MY heart † is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

My heart; I am about to utter not vain, or rash, or foolish, or false words, but such as proceed from my very heart, and most serious thoughts, and cordial affections. *Is inditing.* Heb. *boileth*, or *bubbleth up*, like water in a pot over the fire. This phrase notes that the workings of his heart in this matter were frequent and abundant, fervent and vehement, free and cheerful, and withal kindled by God's grace, and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. *A good matter;* either, 1. Pleasant or delightful, and fit for the nuptial solemnity here expressed; as a feast day is sometimes called *a good day*. Or, 2. Excellent, as this word is oft used, as Numb. xxiv. 5; Deut. viii. 12; or, holy and spiritual, as it is most commonly used. This is no vain, or carnal, or wanton love song, but sublime and heavenly, and full of majesty, as is manifest from the body of this Psalm. *Which I have made;* which I by Divine inspiration have composed. *Touching the king;* or rather, *to the king;* for to him he addresseth his speech in the following verses; and this Hebrew prefix *lamed* generally signifies *to*, though sometimes it be rendered *of*, or *concerning*. *The pen;* or, as *the pen;* whereby he intimates that he was only the pen or instrument in uttering this song, and that it had another and a higher original, to wit, the Spirit of God, by whose hand this pen was guided and managed. *Of a ready writer;* whereby he understands either, 1. God's Spirit, who writ or spoke this by the pen or mouth of the psalmist; or, 2. Himself; whom he so calls, not out of vain ostentation, or self-commendation, but to teach us that this song was not the effect of his own deep and serious study, but did freely flow into him by Divine inspiration, and did as freely and readily flow from him.

2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: [a] grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

[a] Luke 4. 22.

Fairer, or, *more beautiful*, i. e. lovely and amiable. He speaks not here so much of his outward beauty, which, though it be an ornament both to a bridegroom and to a king, yet is not very considerable in either, nor is much admired or applauded by wise men, as of the inward and glorious endowments of his mind or soul, such as wisdom, and righteousness, and meekness, &c., as the particulars of this beauty are declared, ver. 4, 7. *Than the children of men;* than all other men: which is most true of Christ, but not of Solomon; whom many have excelled, if not in wisdom, yet in holiness and righteousness, which is the chief part of this beauty, and most celebrated in this Psalm. *Grace is poured into thy lips;* God hath plentifully poured into thy mind and tongue the gift of speaking with admirable grace, i. e. most wisely and eloquently, and therefore most acceptably, so as to find grace with and work grace in thy hearers. This was in the same sort true of Solomon, but far more eminently and effectually in Christ; of which see Isa. l. 4; Luke iv. 22; John vii. 46. The former clause noted his inward perfections, and this signifies his ability and readiness to communicate them to others. *Therefore;* which notes not the meritorious cause, for that beauty and grace now mentioned are declared to be the free gifts of God, and were the effects, and not the causes, of God's blessing him; but rather the final cause, or the end for which God endowed him with those excellent qualifications; and so the sense of the place is, Because God hath so eminently adorned and qualified thee for rule, therefore he hath trusted and blessed thee with an everlasting kingdom. Or, *because*, as this particle is used, Gen. xxxviii. 26; Psal. xlii. 6, and elsewhere. And so God's blessing him with such solid and everlasting blessings, is noted as the cause of this singular beauty and grace here expressed.

3 Gird thy [b] sword upon *thy* thigh, [c] O *most* mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

[b] Is. 49. 2. Heb. 4. 12. Rev. 1. 16. & 19. 15. [c] Is. 9. 6.

Gird thy sword upon thy thigh; either, 1. As an ensign of royal majesty. But that is usually and much better expressed in Scripture by *putting a crown upon his head*. Or rather, 2. As an instrument for war and battle, to smite his enemies, as it is declared, ver. 4, 5. And *the sword* is here put synecdochically for all his arms, as it is in many other places, as appears from ver. 5, where we read also of his *arrows*. And this sword of the Messias is nothing else but the word of God coming out of his mouth; which is fitly compared to a sword, as may appear from Isa. xlix. 2; Eph. vi. 17; Heb. iv. 12; Rev. i. 16, which is elsewhere called *the rod of his mouth*, Isa. xi. 4, and *the rod of* his *power*, Psal. cx. 2. *With thy glory and thy majesty;* or, which is *thy glory and thy majesty;* or, *magnificence* or *beauty;* for these words are joined with the *sword*, by way of apposition; which sword or word is the great instrument of maintaining and propagating thy honour, and glory, and kingdom.

4 [d] And in thy majesty † ride prosperously because of truth and meekness *and* righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

[d] Rev. 6. 2. † Heb. prosper thou, ride thou.

In thy majesty; being thus gloriously or magnificently girt and armed. *Ride prosperously;* march on speedily (which is signified by *riding*) and successfully against thine enemies, i. e. thou shalt do so, as it is in the last clause, *shall teach thee*. So imperatives are oft put for futures, and predictions are expressed in the form of commands or exhortations. *Because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness;* or, *because of* thy *truth*, &c., i. e. because thou art worthy of this dominion and success; for thou neither didst obtain nor wilt manage thy kingdom by deceit or violence and unrighteousness, as the princes of the earth frequently do, but with truth and faithfulness, with meekness and gentleness towards thy people, and to all that shall submit to thee; with impartial justice and equity, whereby thy throne will be established, Prov. xvi. 12; xx. 28. Or, as it is in the Hebrew, word for word, *upon the word of truth*, &c.; which may seem best to suit with the foregoing words, which according to the Hebrew are, *prosper thou, ride thou*, and then immediately follows, *upon the word of truth*, &c., to wit, the gospel; which is oft called *truth*, as John viii. 32; Col. i. 5, &c., and *the word of truth*, Eph. i. 13; and may no less truly be called *the word of meekness*, because it is not delivered with terror, as the law was at Sinai, but meekly and sweetly by Christ, and by his ministers, Matt. xxi. 5; 2 Tim. ii. 25; and *the word of righteousness*, because it brings in everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24, and strongly obligeth and exciteth all men to the practice of righteousness and holiness. And so the gospel is compared to a horse or chariot, upon which Christ is said to ride, when the gospel is preached, and carried about from place to place, Rev. xix. 11. And this may be here added, to show the great difference between the kingdoms of the world, that are managed with outward pomp and glory, and the kingdom of Christ, which is a spiritual kingdom, and, like a spouse, ver. 13, *all glorious within*, as consisting in spiritual virtues

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and graces, *truth, meekness, and righteousness. Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things*, i. e. thou shalt do great and glorious exploits, which shall be grievous and terrible to thine enemies, as the next verse explains it, and this not by great forces, and the assistance of others, but by thine own single power; compare Isa. lxiii. 3; which doth by no means agree to Solomon, who was a man of peace, and not engaged in any martial actions against his enemies; and if he had done any thing considerable in that kind, he could not do it by his own right hand, but by the help of his soldiers. But this doth excellently agree to the Messias, and to him only. *Object.* The things which were done by the Messias at his first coming were rather comfortable than terrible. *Answ.* They were indeed comfortable to all good men, but withal they were terrible to the ungodly, and particularly to the body of the Jewish nation, to whom Christ was a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, and an occasion of their utter destruction. And upon that and other accounts, not only Christ's second, but even his first coming, is represented as dreadful, as Joel ii. 30; Mal. iii. 2, and elsewhere. For the phrase, *thy right hand shall teach thee*, it is not to be taken properly, for so he taught his hand, and not his hand him; but the meaning is, that his hand should *show him*, i. e. discover and work before him; for verbal words are oft understood really; as *calling* is put for *being*, as Isa. i. 26; ix. 6; so *teaching* or *showing* is put for *doing*, as Psal. xvi. 11; lx. 3.

5 Thine arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; *whereby* the people fall under thee.

Thine arrows; the same thing for substance with *the sword*, ver. 3, both noting the instruments by which he conquers his enemies; which is no other than his word, which is sharp and powerful, and pierceth the hearts of men, Heb. iv. 12; which also first wounds sinners, and then heals them; and which is *for the fall* as well as *for the rising of many*, Luke ii. 34, and *for judgment* as well as for mercy, John ix. 39; *to some a savour of death*, and *to others a savour of life*, 2 Cor. ii. 16; and therefore is fitly compared to *arrows;* which title is sometimes given to words, as Psal. lxiv. 3, and frequently to God's plagues or judgments, Deut. xxxii. 23; Psal. xviii. 14; lxiv. 7, such as the word becomes to ungodly men by their own fault. And these metaphorical weapons are oft ascribed to Christ, who hath a *bow*, Rev. vi. 2, and *weapons of warfare*, 2 Cor. x. 4, and whose *mouth* God is said to *make a sword* and an arrow, Isa. xlix. 2. *Of the king's enemies*, i. e. of thine enemies; the third person being put for the second, as is usual in prophetical writings; which here may seem to have some emphasis, as describing the persons against whom he shot his arrows, and the reason why he did so, because they were the enemies of his kingdom, and *would not have him to reign over them*, Luke xix. 27. *The people fall under thee;* either as slain by thine arrows; or as prostrate at thy feet, after the manner of conquered persons, Psal. xviii. 38; xx. 8. According to this and many other translations the words are transplaced, which in the Hebrew lie thus, *Thine arrows are sharp*, whereby *the people do fall under thee, in the heart* (i. e. in the midst, which is oft called *the heart*, as Exod. xv. 8; Deut. iv. 11. And so it may be here; for the army, as such, hath no heart, properly so called. And so this is fitly alleged, as a proof of the sharpness and force of his arrows, that they not only wound those who march in the front, but even those who are in the midst of the army, where they may seem secure, and out of their reach) *of the king's enemies*. But the middle words may be, and are by many, included within a parenthesis, and so they may agree with our translation thus, *Thine arrows are sharp* (for *the people fall under thee*, which is an evidence of their sharpness) *in the heart* (or, *against the heart;* or, piercing *into the heart;* which is an easy and usual ellipsis) *of the king's enemies*.

e Ps. 93. 2. Heb. 1. 8.

6 [e]Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.

O God: it is most evident that the speech is still continued to the same person, whom he calls *King*, ver. 1, 11, and here *God;* which change of the title was very expedient, and in some sort necessary, to give us a true understanding of this Psalm, and to assure us that he doth not speak of Solomon, (to whom neither these, nor the foregoing, nor the following words agree, because his reign was peaceable and short, and stained with many and great iniquities,) but a far greater King, even of the Messias, who is not only a man, but also *the mighty God*, as he is called, Isa. ix. 6, and as the apostle solidly proves from this place, Heb. i. 8. For though the name of *Elohim*, or *God*, be sometimes given in Scripture to some creatures, yet in those cases it is always clogged with some diminishing expression, signifying that they are only made or called *gods*, and that only for a certain time and purpose, as is manifest from Exod. iv. 16; vii. 1; Psal. lxxxii. 6; and it is no where put simply and absolutely for any person, but him, who is *God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. *Is for ever and ever*, to wit, properly and in thine own person, in which as he lives for ever, so he must necessarily reign for ever; whereas David, whose *throne* is said to be *established for ever*, 2 Sam. vii. 16, was a mortal man, and therefore that promise was not intended of, nor could be fulfilled in, his person, without including his posterity. And as he here gives to the Messias the name of *God*, which was never given to David nor Solomon, so he ascribes an everlasting kingdom to him in such a sense as it was never given to them. So Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14. *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre;* it is not strange that thy throne is not liable to the same uncertainties and casualties with the thrones of earthly princes, because their sceptres are commonly managed with great injustice and manifold iniquities, which lay the foundation of their overthrow; whereas thou rulest with exact righteousness and equity, whereby thy throne is established, Prov. xvi. 12.

7 [f]Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore ‖ [g]God, thy God, [h]hath anointed thee with the oil [i]of gladness above thy fellows.

f Ps. 33. 5.
‖ Or, *O God.*
g Is. 61. 1.
h 1 Kings i. 39, 40.
i Ps. 21. 6.

Thou dost not only do that which is good, and avoid that which is evil; which even bad princes and men may do, and sometimes actually do, for politic or prudential reasons; but thou dost this sincerely, and from an inward principle, even from a true love to God, and goodness, and from an implacable hatred against all wickedness. *Therefore;* so this particle is commonly used. And so it denoteth, either, 1. The reward of Christ's righteous administration of his kingdom. So the sense is, Because thou hast given so many and great proofs of thy love to righteousness, and of thy hatred of sin, and that not only by the constant course of thy life, but also by thy death and passion, therefore God hath raised and exalted thee far above all men and angels, to a state of joy and endless glory at his right hand; which is fitly expressed by *the oil of gladness*. For *anointing* doth not always signify the conferring of inward gifts or endowments, but sometimes only notes the designation or inauguration of a person to some high dignity or employment, as Ezek. xxviii. 14, and elsewhere. Or, 2. The final cause or end of Christ's unction. So the sense is, To that end, i. e. that thou mightest love righteousness, and hate wickedness, and govern thyself and thy kingdom accordingly, God *hath anointed thee*, &c., i. e. hath endowed thee with all the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, Acts x. 38, in an eminent and peculiar manner, to the comfort and refreshment of thine own and all thy people's hearts; and hath solemnly called thee to be the Priest and Prophet and King of all his people. But the former sense seems to be the truest, and is for substance the same thing which is said in other words, Phil. ii. 8—10. *God, thy God*, according to thy human nature, John xx. 17, though in respect of thy Divine nature thou art his *fellow*, Zech. xiii. 7, and his *equal*, Phil. ii. 6, and one with him, John x. 30. *The oil of gladness;* so called here, as also Isa. lxi. 3; partly because it not only makes the countenance fresh and pleasant, Psal. civ. 15, but also *rejoiceth the heart*, Prov. xxvii. 9; and partly because it was a token of gladness, and used in feasts and other solemn occasions of rejoicing; of which see Psal. xxiii. 5; Dan. x. 3; Amos vi. 6. *Above thy fellows*, i. e. above all them who partake with thee in this unction; either, 1. Above all that ever were anointed for priests, or prophets, or kings. Or, 2. Above all believers, who also have received this same unction, 1 John ii. 20, 27, and are made *priests and kings unto God*, Rev. i. 6.

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1 Cant. 1. 3. 8 [k] All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

With *myrrh, and aloes, and cassia* they used to perfume their garments: see Gen. xxvii. 27. This may denote those glorious and sweet-smelling virtues, which as they were treasured up inwardly in Christ's heart, so did they manifest themselves outwardly and visibly, and give forth a grateful smell in the whole course of his life and actions; his doctrine also was a sweet savour unto God and men, 2 Cor. ii. 14, 15. *Out of the ivory palaces;* which may be referred, either, 1. To the garments, which were usually kept in, and now upon this extraordinary solemnity were brought out of, *palaces*, or houses, or wardrobes *of ivory;* so called here, as also Amos iii. 15, not because they were wholly made of ivory, but because they were adorned or covered here and there with it. Or rather, 2. To the king himself, who is here supposed to reside in his ivory palaces; and his garments are so fragrant, that they do not only perfume the whole palaces in which he is, but the sweet savour thereof is perceived by those that pass by them, or are at some distance from them; all which is poetically said, and with a manifest allusion to Solomon's glorious garments and palaces. By these *ivory palaces* he may mean either, 1. His human nature, in which Christ *dwelt, as in a tabernacle*, as the Greek word signifies, John i. 14; in which all these fragrant virtues were, and from whence they were diffused every where. Indeed the body is called *a temple*, John ii. 19, and *a house* or *tabernacle*, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, and so it might be called *a palace*. But why it should be called *palaces*, and that of ivory, seems not so plain. Or rather, 2. Those glorious and heavenly mansions, John xiv. 2, which may not unfitly be called *ivory palaces*, as elsewhere in the same figurative manner they are said to be made of or adorned with *gold* and *precious stones*, Rev. xxi. 18, 19; from which mansions Christ came into the world, John iii. 13, and into which Christ went, and where he settled his abode, after he went out of the world, John xiii. 1; Acts i. 11, and from whence Christ poured forth all the fragrant gifts and graces of his Spirit into the world and church, Acts ii. 33. Although there is no necessity to strain every particular circumstance in such poetical descriptions, nor to find out some particular thing in Christ to which it agrees; for some expressions may be used only as ornaments in such cases, as they are in parables; and it may suffice to know and say, that the glories and excellencies of the King Christ are described by such things in which earthly potentates do place their glory. *Whereby;* or, *from which;* either, 1. From which place or palaces. Or rather, 2. From which thing, i. e. from the sweet smell of thy garments out of those ivory palaces, or from the effusion of the gifts and graces of thy Spirit from thy Father's right hand in heaven; which as it is a great blessing and comfort to those who receive them, so doth it rejoice the heart of Christ, both as it is a demonstration of his own power and glory, and as it is the happy instrument of doing much good in the world, and of bringing souls to God, which is Christ's great work and delight. *They have made thee glad*, i. e. thou art made glad; such phrases being oft used indefinitely and impersonally, as Luke xv. 32, and in many other places.

1 Cant. 6. 8. 9 [l] Kings' daughters *were* among thy honourable women: [m] upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

[l] See 1 Kin. 7. 8.

Among thy honourable women, i. e. amongst them that attend upon thy spouse, as the manner was in nuptial solemnities; as men attended upon the bridegroom, whence they were called *friends*, John iii. 29. In reference to Christ, as the spouse or queen is the church in general, so these honourable women are particular believers, who are daily added to the church, Acts ii. 47, and submit themselves to it. And although the church is made up of particular believers, yet she is distinguished from them, for the decency of the parable, as the whole is oft distinguished by our minds from the parts of which it consists, and as the daughters of Jerusalem are distinguished from the spouse in the book of the Canticles, though the spouse be wholly made up of them. And these believers may be said to be *kings' daughters*, either because amongst others many persons of royal or princely races did embrace the faith, as was prophesied of them, Isa. xlix. 7; lx. 10, 11, &c., or because they are in a spiritual sense *kings unto God*, Rev. i. 6. *Upon thy right hand;* the most honourable place next to the king's. See 1 Kings ii. 19; Matt. xxvi. 64. *Did stand;* which is the posture of a servant; to show that as she is a queen, she is also his subject to serve and obey him. Or, *is placed*, or *seated;* which seems more agreeable to the person of a queen, 1 Kings ii. 19, and of a spouse at the nuptial solemnity. *In gold of Ophir;* clothed in the richest garments made of the choicest gold; by which he designs the graces wherewith the church is accomplished.

10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; [n] forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

[n] See Deut. 21. 13.

Hearken: these words are spoken, either, 1. In the person of the attendants upon the bride or bridegroom. Or, 2. Of the bridegroom. Or rather, 3. By the prophet himself; who having hitherto spoken to the bridegroom, or king, now addresseth his speech to the bride, or queen. *O daughter:* so he calls her, partly in token of his respect and affection to her, and partly because she is supposed to be young and beautiful; and therefore the prophet speaks like an elder and graver person, and as her spiritual father and counsellor. *Consider, and incline thine ear:* he useth several words, signifying the same thing, to show his serious and vehement desire of her good, and the great importance and difficulty of practising the following counsel. *Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;* not simply, but comparatively, so far as they oppose or hinder the discharge of thy duty to thy husband; or so far as they are corrupted in doctrine, or worship, or practice. He alludes to the law of matrimony, Gen. ii. 24, and to what Solomon did say, or should have said, to Pharaoh's daughter, to wean her from the idolatry and other vices of her father's house. But this, as well as the rest of the Psalm, respects Christ, and is a seasonable and necessary advice and command to all persons that desire to come to Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, that they would cast off all their inveterate errors and prejudices, all those superstitious, or idolatrous, or wicked opinions or practices, which they had received by long and ancient, and therefore venerable, tradition from their fathers, and entirely give up themselves to Christ to be instructed by him, and to receive his doctrine, though it would seem new to them. And by these words he seems to intimate, and tacitly to foretell, that not only the superstitious inventions and traditions of men, but even the legal worship appointed by Moses, and delivered to them from their parents successively for many generations, should be relinquished by the believing Jews, and abolished by Christ's coming.

11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: [o] for he *is* thy Lord; and worship thou him.

[o] Ps. 95. 6. Is. 54. 5.

So doing thou shalt be amiable and acceptable to thy Husband; which will abundantly recompense thee for the loss of thy father's house. *He is thy Lord;* as he is thy Husband, and also as he is thy King and God, as he was called, ver. 6. And this is added as a reason, not of the last words, why *the King* would *desire her beauty*, but of the advice given to her, ver. 10. *Worship thou him;* by which he implies that her Husband was no mere man, but God also, and therefore might be adored without any violation of that known and immutable precept of worshipping God only.

12 And the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* with a gift; *even* [p] the rich among the people shall intreat † thy favour.

[p] Ps. 22. 29. & 72. 10. Is. 49. 23. & 60. 3.
† Heb. *thy face.*

The daughter of Tyre, i. e. the people or citizens of Tyre; as *the daughter of Zion*, or Jerusalem, or Babel, &c., are put for their inhabitants, 2 Kings xix. 21; Psal. cxxxvii. 8; Zech. ix. 9. He mentioneth the Tyrians, partly because they did give presents to Solomon, 1 Kings v. 1, &c., to whom here is a continued allusion through the whole Psalm; and partly because they among others, and before many others, were to be converted to Christ, as they were. See Matt. xi. 21, 22; Mark iii. 8; vii. 24; Acts xxi. 3—5. But they are here put synecdochically for all the Gentiles,

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whom that city fitly represents, as being *the mart of the nations*, as she is called, Isa. xxiii. 3. And being a very rich and proud, and therefore a self-conceited and a stiff-necked people, their *merchants being princes*, Isa. xxiii. 8, they may in a particular manner represent all those great and proud princes and stubborn people of the Gentile world, which should be subdued to Christ by the preaching of the gospel. *With a gift;* partly to testify their homage, which was done by gifts or presents, as appears from 1 Sam. x. 27; 2 Sam. viii. 2, &c.; and partly to procure thine, and consequently thy husband's, favour, as it here follows. *The rich among the people* of other nations.

q Rev. 19. 7, 8.

13 [q] The king's daughter *is* all glorious within: her clothing *is* of wrought gold.

The king's daughter, i. e. the spouse; so called, either because she was the daughter of one king, and the wife of another; or because the spouse or wife is sometimes called the husband's *daughter;* partly because she is supposed to be younger than he; and partly because of that respect and subjection which she oweth to him, and that fatherly care and affection which he oweth to her. See 2 Sam. xii. 3; Jer. iii. 4. So the bridegroom calls his *spouse* his *sister*, Cant. iv. 9. Thus Livia, the wife of Augustus, is called his *sister* in ancient coins. *Within;* either, 1. Even in her retiring chambers in the king's palace, and not only when she showeth herself abroad. Or rather, 2. In her mind and soul, or in spiritual endowments, the excellent virtues and graces wherewith she is accomplished. For, 1. This is opposed to her outward clothing. 2. This being so great and so necessary a qualification of a worthy spouse, it is not likely it should be omitted in her description and commendation, especially when the bridegroom is commended for his inward accomplishments as well as for his outward glory, ver. 4, 7. 3. The church is this bride, as hath been said and proved before, whose true and chief beauty is inward and spiritual, and not consisting in outward pomp and glory. *Her clothing is of wrought gold;* her inward perfections do not rest within her, but break forth into virtuous and honourable actions, wherewith she is adorned in the view of the world. This suits well with the style of the Holy Scriptures, wherein the saints are oft said to be clothed with virtues and virtuous actions. See Psal. cxxxii. 9; 1 Pet. v. 5.

r Cant. 1. 4.

14 [r] She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

He alludes to the custom of conducting the bride to the bridegroom's house. *Her companions*, i. e. her bridemaidens attending upon her, called her *honourable women*, ver. 9, (where see the notes,) and here *virgins*, because of their spiritual purity and chastity, 2 Cor. xi. 2.

15 With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.

Full of joy for the glory and felicity of the bride and bridegroom, and for the comfort and benefit which redoundeth to themselves from it.

s 1 Pet. 2. 9. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 20. 6.

16 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, [s] whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.

Having directed his speech to the bride, he now returns to the bridegroom, as may be gathered both from the Hebrew words, which are of the masculine gender; and from the next verse, which unquestionably belongs unto him; yet so that he supposeth the bride to be concerned and partaker with him in the privilege here mentioned, and the children to be common to them both. And therefore this verse and Psalm cannot be understood of Solomon, and his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, because he had no children by her, and but very few by all his wives and concubines; and his children were so far from exceeding their parents in the largeness of their dominions, or being made *princes in al the earth*, as is here said, that they enjoyed but a small part of their father's dominions, and that with many tribulations, and but for a short time. But this was most truly and fully accomplished in Christ; who instead of his fathers of the Jewish nation, from whom he descended, and by whom he was forsaken and rejected, (which here seems to be implied, and elsewhere is expressly affirmed,) had a numerous posterity of Gentile Christians of all the nations of the earth, which here and elsewhere are called *princes* and *kings*, because of their great power with God and with men, because they subdued a very great part of the world to the obedience of Christ, and ruled them in his name and stead.

t Mal. 1. 11.

17 [t] I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

As he began the Psalm with the celebration of the king's praises, so now he endeth with it, and adds this important circumstance, that this nuptial song should not only serve for the present solemnity, as others of that kind do, but that it should be remembered and sung in all successive generations; which plainly showeth that it was not composed upon such a slight and transitory occasion as that of Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, which was soon forgotten, and the Israelites had little cause to remember it with any satisfaction; but upon that great and glorious and everlasting marriage between Christ and his church, of which this is most properly and literally verified.

PSALM XLVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The occasion of this Psalm is thought to be that happy success, and settlement, and peace which God granted to the people of Israel in David's time, and by his means, 2 Sam. viii.

‖ Or, of. Ps. 42. & 66. * 1 Chron. 15. 20.

¶ To the chief Musician ‖ for the sons of Korah, *A Song upon *Alamoth.

The confidence and safe condition of the church under God's care, 1—5; *manifested in his wonderful deliverance from her enemies*, 6—9. *He exhorteth all to consider it, to the magnifying his name*, 10, 11.

a Ps. 62. 7, 8. & 91. 2. & 142. 5. b Deut. 4. 7. Ps. 145. 18.

GOD *is* our [a] refuge and strength, [b] a very present help in trouble.

God is our refuge, i. e. he hath now manifested himself to be so by the course of his providence. *A very present;* or, *a sufficient*, as this word is sometimes used, as Josh. xvii. 16; Zech. x. 10.

† Heb. *the heart of the sea.*

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into †the midst of the sea;

Though there should be nothing but shakings, and confusions, and desolations in all the nations round about us; which are oft expressed by such metaphors, as Jer. li. 25; Hag. ii. 21, 22; Rev. vi. 14.

c Ps. 93. 3, 4. Jer. 5. 22. Matt. 7. 25.

3 [c] *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

Though the sea be very tempestuous, and its waters (by which a multitude of people is oft signified, as Rev. xvii. 1, 15) rage, to wit, against us, as appears from the following verses. Though its raging waves assault mighty princes and kingdoms, and make them shake and be ready to fall down.

d See Is. 8. 7.

4 *There is* [d] a river, the streams whereof shall make glad [e] the city of God, the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the most high.

e Ps. 48. 1, 8. Is. 60. 14.

He either speaks of, or at least alludes to, the river of Kidron, 2 Sam. xv. 23; John xviii. 1, and its two streams or rivulets flowing from it, Gihon and Shiloah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 30; Isa. viii. 6, which being small and contemptible, or still or gentle waters, are not unfitly opposed to the vast and unruly waters of the sea. He insinuates the weak condition of God's church as to outward advantages, that they had not one sea to oppose to another, but only a small river; which though in itself despicable, yet was sufficient to re-

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fresh and defend them in spite of all their enemies. And as *the sea* and *waters* thereof, ver. 2, 3, are to be understood metaphorically, as all agree, so also in all probability are this river and streams; which therefore may design the gracious presence, and assistance, and blessing of the Lord, (which is very frequently described under the name of *waters*, as Isa. xi. 9; xii. 3; Zech. xiv. 8. &c.,) or the Lord himself, who is expressly said to be unto the city of Zion, for its defence, *a place of broad rivers and streams*, Isa. xxxiii. 20, 21. which probably alludes to this text, or at least explains it. *Shall make glad*, i. e. shall not barely defend it from utter ruin, but preserve it from danger, and give great occasion for rejoicing and thanksgiving. *The city of God*, i. e. Zion or Jerusalem, so called also Psal. xlviii. 1; Isa. lx. 14. *Of the tabernacles*, i. e. of the tabernacle, the plural number for the singular, as Psal. xliii. 3; the place where God's holy tabernacle is settled.

5 God *is* [f]in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, †*and that* right early.

[f] Psa. 2. 6. & 132. 13. & 135. 21. Isa. 8. 18. & 12. 6. Jer. 50. 5. Zech. 2. 5, 10, 11. & 8. 3. — † Heb. *when the morning appeareth*: See Ex. 14. 24, 27. 2 Chron. 20. 20. Psa. 90. 5. & 143. 8.

Heb. *as soon as the morning appeareth*, i. e. speedily, after a short night of affliction; compare Psal. xxx. 5; and seasonably, when the danger is greatest, and the enemies prepare to make the assault; which is commonly done in the morning.

6 [g]The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, [h]the earth melted.

[g] Psa. 2. 1. [h] Josh. 2. 9. Psa. 76.

The heathen raged, to wit, against God, and against his people. *He uttered his voice*; either he thundered, or he spake to them in his wrath, as is said, Psal. ii. 5. *The earth melted*; the inhabitants of the earth who were combined against Zion were dispirited and consumed.

7 [i]The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* †our refuge. Selah.

[i] Num. 14. 9. Psa. 46. 11. [k] Isa. 33. 13. [l] Psa. 48. 8. & 59. 5. & 67. 1. & 80. 7. & 84. 8. & 85. 4. & 89. 46.

8 [k]Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

i. e. Among those people of the earth who were neighbouring and vexatious to God's people, and therefore were cut off by David, and their lands and cities in great part wasted.

9 [l]He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; [m]he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; [n]he burneth the chariot in the fire.

[l] Psa. 2. 4. [m] Psa. 76. 3. [n] Ezek. 39. 9.

He hath ended our wars, and settled us in a firm and well-grounded peace. *The end of the earth*, or *of this land*, to wit, of Israel; from one end of it to the other.

He speaks of the *bows*, and *spears*, and *chariots* of their enemies; for he preserved those which belonged to his people.

10 Be still, and know that I *am* God: [o]I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

[o] Isa. 2. 11, 17.

He speaks either, 1. To the Israelites, *Be still*, i. e. Do you henceforth silently and quietly wait upon me without fear or diffidence. Or rather, 2. *To the heathen*, who had raged, ver. 6; and therefore now he seasonably admonisheth them to *be still*, and to stir no more against God's people. *I am God*, the only true and almighty God; and your gods are but dumb and impotent idols. *I will be exalted*, i. e. I will make myself glorious by my great and wonderful works.

11 [p]The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.

[p] Psa. 7.

PSALM XLVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm may seem to have been composed upon the occasion of that great solemnity of carrying the ark from the house of Obed-edom into the city of Zion; of which see 2 Sam. vi.; 1 Chron. xiii., xvi. But as Zion was a type of the church, and the ark a type of Christ; so this hath a further reference, even to Christ's ascension into heaven, and, as consequent thereunto, to the spreading of his kingdom in all the parts and nations of the world; which is the chief scope and design of the psalmist, or at least of the Holy Ghost, in this Psalm; as will plainly appear from the words and matter of it.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm ‖ for the sons of Korah. ‖ Or, *of*

The church is exhorted to praise God, who subdueth her enemies, 1—3, *and giveth her an excellent inheritance*, 4—7. *A promise of calling and gathering the Gentiles*, 8, 9.

O [a]CLAP your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

[a] Isa. 55. 12.

All ye people; either, 1. All the tribes of Israel; for the several tribes are sometimes called several *people*. See Judg. v. 14; Ezek. ii. 3; Acts iv. 27. Or, 2. All nations, not only Jews, but Gentiles; for all of them either had or might have benefit by the ark, upon their addresses to God there, and especially by Christ and his ascension. *Shout unto God*, in the worship and unto the glory of the God of Israel.

2 For the LORD most high *is* [b]terrible; [c]*he is* a great King over all the earth.

[b] Deu. 7. 21. Neh. 1. 5. Psa. 76. 12. [c] Mal. 1. 14.

Most high is terrible; or, is *most high* (in himself, above all gods) and (which conjunction is oft understood) *terrible*, to all his enemies. *A great King over all the earth*; the universal Monarch of the whole world, and not of Israel only.

3 [d]He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

[d] Psa. 18. 47.

Or, *he shall lead* like *sheep*; or, *bring into the fold*; as divers render the word, by comparing Isa. v. 17; Micah ii. 12. He seems to speak of such a subjugation of them, as was for the good of the people subdued, because this is matter of rejoicing to them, ver. 1; which is true both of these people whom David subdued, who thereby had opportunities, obligations, and encouragements to own and worship the true God, which was the only way to their true and lasting happiness; and especially of those Gentiles who were subdued to Christ by the preaching of the gospel. The Gentile converts were in some sort brought under the Jews, because they were subjected to Christ, and to his apostles, and to the primitive church, which were Jews. Or the psalmist may speak this in the name of the whole church, which then were Israelites only, but afterwards were made up of Jews and Gentiles, unto which all particular believers were to submit themselves in and for the Lord.

4 He shall choose our [e]inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.

[e] 1 Pet. 1. 4.

He shall choose, i. e. he will appoint and bestow upon us. This verb of the future tense may seem to agree well with the Gentiles, because this blessing was not now present, but future, and so the sense designed by the Holy Ghost may be this: Though at present we are wicked and wretched creatures, and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, yet there is a time coming wherein God will choose or take us into the number of his children by gracious adoption. But futures are variously rendered; and accordingly the vulgar Latin, Syriac, and Arabic render this word, *He hath chosen*. The Chaldee renders this and the following words, *He will take pleasure in us, so as to give us our inheritance. Our inheritance*; either the land of Canaan; or heaven, which was typified by that land; or rather, God himself, who is called his people's *portion* or *inheritance*, as Psal. xvi. 5; lxxiii. 26, and elsewhere, or the presence, and worship, and blessing of God. This God had chosen for the Israelites, and resolved to choose or set apart for the Gentiles. *The excellency*, or *glory*; wherein Jacob gloried and excelled all other people. See Ezek. xxiv. 21; Amos vi. 8; viii. 7. *Of Jacob*; either, 1. Of the person of Jacob; who, though he never had the possession of the land of Canaan, yet had the Lord, and his presence and blessing, for his inheritance. Or rather, 2. Of the people of Jacob or Israel, who are frequently called Jacob, as Numb. xxiii. 7, 10, 23; Psal. xiv. 7; xliv. 4, &c., for these did actually enjoy the promised inheritance of Canaan, and the presence of God in his sanctuary. *Whom he loved*: this he adds, partly as the reason

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why he chose such a noble inheritance for them, not for any peculiar worth in them more than in other people, but only for his free love to them, as he declareth, Deut. vii. 7, 8; ix. 5; and partly as an evidence of the excellency of this inheritance, because it was chosen for his beloved people.

f Ps. 68. 24, 25.

5 [f]God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

God is gone up: this is meant literally of the ark, wherein God was present, which went or was carried up to the hill of Zion, where the tabernacle was erected for it, and afterwards to the hill of Moriah into the temple; which solemnity was accompanied with the shouts and acclamations of the people, and with the sound of trumpets: but mystically it respects Christ's ascension into heaven, as may be gathered by comparing this with Eph. iv. 8, where the like words uttered concerning the ark upon the same occasion, Psal. lxviii. 18, are directly applied to Christ's ascension.

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

These words are repeated four times in this verse, to show how vehemently desirous the psalmist was that God might have his due praise and glory; and of how great necessity and importance it was to men to perform this great, though much neglected, duty. *Unto our King;* for so he is in a special manner.

g Zech. 14. 9.
h 1 Cor. 14. 15, 16.
‖ Or, every one that hath understanding.

7 [g]For God *is* the King of all the earth: [h]sing ye praises ‖with understanding.

The King of all the earth; not only ours, as I now said, but also of all the nations of the world; and therefore he may well require, and doth highly deserve, all our praises. *With understanding;* not rashly, or formally and carelessly, but seriously, considering the greatness of this King whom you praise, and what abundant cause you have to praise and admire him; which is an intimation that the matter of this Psalm is more sublime and important than ordinary.

i 1 Chro. 16. 31. Ps. 93. 1. & 96. 10. & 97. 1. & 99. 1. Rev. 19. 6.

8 [i]God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

Over the heathen, i. e. over all heathen nations, as being *the King of all the earth*, ver. 7; which was not true in David's time, but was fulfilled by Christ. *God sitteth upon the throne*, to wit, as Judge and King, exercising dominion, or *reigning*, as he now said; this being only another expression of the same thing. And this *holy throne* is either, 1. The ark, upon which God was said to sit to govern the Israelites. Or rather, 2. Heaven; which is oft called God's *throne*, Psal. xi. 4; Isa. lxvi. 1, whence God is said to behold and to rule all nations; of which general dominion of God he here speaks. And here Christ sits at his Father's right hand for that purpose.

‖ Or, *The voluntary of the people are gathered unto the people of the God of Abraham.*
k Rom. 4. 11, 12. 1 Ps. 89. 18.

9 ‖The princes of the people are gathered together, [k]*even* the people of the God of Abraham: [l]for the shields of the earth *belong* unto God: he is greatly exalted.

The princes of the people; either, 1. The heads of the tribes of Israel, who were gathered together to the tabernacle or temple upon solemn feasts. Or rather, 2. *The princes* (or *the voluntary* or *willing* ones, as this word is rendered, Psal. cx. 3) of the Gentiles, who are here known by the name of the people, ver. 1, 3, who were divided in their principles, and interests, and religions, but are now united and gathered together unto Christ, laying their sceptres at his feet, and jointly owning and promoting his worship and service. So he speaks of the conversion of the Gentiles; although he mentions only their princes, because their conversion might seem to be most difficult in sundry respects, and therefore that being affirmed, the conversion of their people with or after them might very reasonably be supposed. *The people of the God of Abraham;* so he explains the former clause, and shows what people he spoke of; and it is observable, he doth not say *the people of Abraham*, lest this should be appropriated to the Israelites; but *the people of the God of Abraham*, i. e. which worship the God of Abraham, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. So this is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles; which also is intimated by the name here used, which is not his old and first name, Abram, but his new name, Abraham, given to him to signify that he should be *the father of many nations*, Gen. xvii. 5. Or these words with the former may be, and are by divers learned interpreters, rendered thus: *The princes of the people* (i. e. of the Gentiles) *are* (i. e. shall be, as is usual in prophetic style) *gathered* unto (which particle is sometimes understood, as Psal. v. 8; Jer. xxvi. 10; Hos. ii. 14) *the people of the God of Abraham*, i. e. unto the Jews, and so both Jews and Gentiles shall be united in one religion; and so God *shall reign over the heathen*, and *be King of all the earth*, as is here said, ver. 7, 8, and *all people* shall *clap* their *hands* for joy, as it is ver. 1. *The shields of the earth;* either, 1. The protection of the people of all the earth. Or rather, 2. Their princes or rulers, who are fitly called *shields*, Hos. iv. 18, because by their office they are or should be the common parents and protectors of all their people, to defend them from all oppressions and injuries. These, saith he, are *the Lord's*, i. e. at his disposal, or subject to his dominion, both as to their hearts and kingdoms. And so this is here conveniently added, as the reason of that great and improbable event, foretold in the foregoing words, that the princes of the people (which of all others were the most lofty, and wilful, and incorrigible) should join and subject themselves to the Lord, and to his church. *He is greatly exalted;* by this means God shall be greatly glorified, and appear to be far above all the princes of the world, and above all other gods.

PSALM XLVIII

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed upon the occasion of some eminent deliverance vouchsafed by God to the city of Jerusalem from some potent enemy and dreadful danger; either that in Jehoshaphat's time, 2 Chron. xx., or that under Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii., xix.; in both which times there were holy prophets, by some of whom this Psalm might be made.

¶ A Song *and* Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah.

‖ Or, of.

A Song and Psalm; of which see on Psal. xxx., which hath the same title.

The prophet describeth the glory and excellency of the church, 1—3, preserved from her potent enemies, 4—8; for which God is glorified, 9, 10, and the faithful invited to take notice of its beauty and firmness, to transmit it to following generations, 11—14.

a Ps. 46. 4. & 87. 3.
b Is. 2. 2, 3. Mic. 4. 1. Zech. 8. 3.

GREAT *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised [a]in the city of our God, *in* the [b]mountain of his holiness.

In the city of our God; in Jerusalem, which he hath chosen for his dwelling-place. *In the mountain of his holiness*, i. e. in his holy mountain; either Zion, where the ark and tabernacle was; or rather Moriah, where the temple now was. Although both of them are supposed by some to be but one mountain, having two tops; and it is certain that both are frequently called by one name, to wit, Zion.

c Ps. 50. 2. Jer. 3. 19. Lam. 2. 15. Dan. 8. 9. & 11. 16.
d Lev. 20. 6.
e Is. 14. 13.
f Matt. 5. 35.

2 [c]Beautiful for situation, [d]the joy of the whole earth, *is* mount Zion, [e]*on* the sides of the north, [f]the city of the great King.

The joy of the whole earth: Jerusalem may be so called here, as it is also Lam. ii. 15, not actually, as if all people did rejoice in it, or for it; but, 1. Fundamentally or causally, because here was very great cause or ground of rejoicing for the Gentile world, if they had understood themselves, or their true interest; because here God was graciously present and ready to hear and answer the just desires and prayers, not only of the Israelites, but of any stranger, of what nation soever, according to Solomon's prayer, 1 Kings viii. 41, &c.; and here the Gentiles might find that God, whom like blind men they groped for, as the Greek phrase implies, Acts xvii. 27; and here they might be informed of the nature

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and properties, as also of the mind and will, of the almighty and everlasting God, of which they were so grossly ignorant, and of that Messias who was *the desire* of (and consequently matter of great joy unto) *all nations*, Hag. ii. 7. And, 2. Prophetically, because the joyful doctrine of the gospel was to go from thence unto all nations; of which see Isa. ii. 2, 3; Micah iv. 1, 2. Yet these words may be and are by others rendered and understood thus, *the joy of the*, or *this*, (for here is an emphatical article,) *whole land. On the sides of the north*, i. e. which is on the northern part of Jerusalem. But because Josephus and some others affirm that Mount Zion stood southward from Jerusalem, this clause possibly may be added to signify that Zion is not here to be understood strictly and properly for that mountain, or part of the mountain so called, but for that other mountain, or part of the same mountain upon which the temple was built, which was strictly called Moriah, but is here called Zion, because that name was far better known in Scripture, as being oft put for the temple, as Psal. cxxxvii. 3; Isa. xviii. 7; Jer. li. 10; Lam. v. 18, and for the whole city, and for the church of God, in a multitude of places of Scripture. *The city of the great King*, i. e. the city of God, as it was now called, ver. 1, who justly calls himself *a great King*, Mal. i. 14, as being *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, Rev. xix. 16.

3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

God is known to his people by sensible and long experience, and to all neighbouring nations by their own observation. *In her palaces*, i. e in the habitations, or to the inhabitants of that city. Possibly he may here point at the king's palace and the temple, which was the palace of the King of heaven; which two palaces God did in a singular manner protect, and by protecting them he protected the whole city and people. *For a refuge;* under whose shadow we are more safe and secure, than other cities are with their great rivers and impregnable fortifications.

ver. 10. Gen. 16, 18, 19. 4 For, lo, [q]the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

Either those kings confederate against Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx.; or the Assyrian princes, whom they vainglorously called *kings*, Isa. x. 8. *They passed by*, in their march towards Jerusalem. Or, *they passed away*, i. e. departed without the success which they desired and confidently expected.

5 They saw *it*, *and* so they marvelled; they were troubled, *and* hasted away.

They saw it; they did only look upon it, but *not come into it, nor shoot an arrow there,—nor cast a bank against it*, as is said upon this or the like occasion, 2 Kings xix. 32. *So they marvelled*, not so much at the structure or strength of the city, as at the wonderful works wrought by God on their behalf. *They were troubled and hasted away:* see 2 Kings xix. 35.

Exod. 15. 15. Isa. 13. 8. 6 Fear [r]took hold upon them there, [s]*and* pain, as of a woman in travail.

Partly at the tidings of Tirhakah's coming against them, 2 Kings xix. 9, and partly for that terrible slaughter of their army there, ver. 35.

[t] Ezek. 27. 26. Heb. 11. 29. 7 Thou [t]breakest the ships of Tarshish [u]with an east wind.

This is not reported as a matter of fact, for we read of no ships in those expeditions to which this Psalm relates, nor did any ships come near Jerusalem, because that was at a great distance from the sea, and from any navigable river running into the sea; but only added by way of illustration or allusion. The sense is, Thou didst no less violently and suddenly destroy these proud and raging enemies of Jerusalem, than sometimes thou destroyest the ships at sea with a fierce and vehement wind, such as the eastern winds were in those parts, Exod. xiv. 21; Job xxvii. 21; Jer. xviii. 17; Ezek. xxvii. 26. The words are and may be rendered thus, *Thou didst break* them as (such ellipses of the pronoun, and of the note of similitude, being very frequent; as I have again and again showed) *the ships of the sea* (for Tarshish, though properly the name of a maritime place in Cilicia, Ezek. xxvii. 25; Jonah i. 3, is usually put for the *sea*, as 1 Kings x. 22; 2 Chron. ix. 21; Psal. lxxii. 10; Isa. ii. 16; Jer. x. 9) are broken *with an east wind*. Albeit the enemies of Jerusalem, which are compared to the raging waters of the sea in Psal. xlvi. 2, 3, may as fitly be compared to ships upon the sea.

8 As we have heard, so have we seen in [m]the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will [n]establish it for ever. Selah.

[m] ver. 1, 2. [n] Is. 2. 2. Mic. 4. 1.

The predictions of the prophets, either 2 Chron. xx. 14, or 2 Kings xix. 20, &c., have been verified by the events. Or, we have had late and fresh experiences of such wonderful works of God, as before we only heard of by the report of our fathers. From this miraculous deliverance we plainly see that God hath a singular love to it, and care of it, and therefore will defend her in all succeeding ages against all her enemies. And so God would have done, if Jerusalem had not forsaken God, and forfeited his favour and protection.

9 We have thought of [o]thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

[o] Ps. 26. 3. & 40. 10.

It hath been the matter of our serious and deep meditation, when we have been worshipping there in thy temple. For when the priests were offering incense or sacrifice, the religious people exercised themselves in holy meditation or secret prayer to God, as may be gathered from Luke i. 10, and many other places of Scripture, and from the nature of the thing. Or, *we have silently* or *patiently waited for*, as some ancient and other interpreters render it.

10 According to [p]thy name, O God, so *is* thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.

[p] Deu. 28. 58. Josh. 7. 9. Ps. 113. 3. Mal. 1. 11, 14.

For this and such-like glorious actions thou art praised and acknowledged, and evidently proved to be such a one as thou hast affirmed thyself to be in thy word, *God almighty*, or *all-sufficient, the Lord of hosts, the King of thy church and people*, and *a strong Tower to all that trust in thee*, and all other things which thou art called in Scripture. Thy name is not an empty title, but is filled up with honourable and praiseworthy works, answerable to it. *Full of righteousness*, i. e. of righteous actions; by which thou discoverest thy justice and holiness in destroying the wicked and incorrigible enemies of thy people, and in fulfilling thy promises made to thy church.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.

Mount Zion; synecdochically put for Jerusalem. *The daughters of Judah*, i. e. the other and lesser cities and towns or villages (i. e. all the people) of Judah; for such are commonly called *daughters* in respect of the mother city, to which they are subjects: see Josh. xv. 45; xvii. 16; Psal. xlv. 12; cxxxvii. 8. He mentions Judah only, and not all Israel; partly because they were more immediately and eminently concerned in Jerusalem's deliverance; and principally because ten of the tribes of Israel were now cut off from Jerusalem, and from the kingdom of David's house, and possibly carried away captive, 2 Kings xviii. 9—11. *Because of thy judgments* upon thine and their enemies; at which they were glad, not simply, but because it was highly conducible to God's honour, and to the preservation and enlargement of God's church in the world.

12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

He speaketh, either, 1. To the enemies, as triumphing over them. Or rather, 2. To the people of that city and kingdom, who had been eye-witnesses of this glorious work of God, as appears from the following verses. He bids them *mark well* her *towers, bulwarks*, and *palaces*, here, and ver. 13, not with vain ostentation, or carnal confidence, for he had said that *God* only was their *refuge*, ver. 3; but with thankfulness to God, when they should find upon inquiry, that not one of them was demolished or any way defaced by so potent an enemy.

13 †Mark ye well her bulwarks, ‖consider her palaces; that ye may tell *it* to the generation following.

† Heb. *Set your heart to her bulwarks.* ‖ Or, *raise up.*

Consider; or, *exalt*, or *admire*. *Tell it to the generation*

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following, that they may be excited to continue their praises to God for this mercy, by which they hold and enjoy all their blessings, and to trust in God in the like difficulties for the future.

14 For this God *is* our God for ever
[q] Is. 58. 11. and ever: he will [q]be our guide *even* unto death.

This God; who hath done this great work. *Even unto death*, i. e. whilst we have a being. Birth and life, and the several ages of life and death, are oft ascribed to churches and commonwealths, both in Scripture and in other authors. This promise was made to the old and earthly Jerusalem, upon condition of their obedience, wherein they failing so grossly, lost the benefit of it, but it is absolutely made good to the new and heavenly Jerusalem, the church of Christ.

PSALM XLIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is penned upon the same occasion with Psal. xxxix. and lxxiii., to wit, upon the contemplation of the afflictions of God's people, and of the prosperity and glory of ungodly men. The design is to justify God's providence in this dark dispensation, and to show that, all things being considered, good men have no cause for immoderate dejection of spirit, nor wicked men for glorying in their present felicities.

[1] Or, *of.* ¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm [1]for the sons of Korah.

The psalmist having stirred up all men to attention, 1—5, *showeth their vain trust in riches,* 6—14; *and the contrary trust of the faithful in God,* 15; *exhorteth them not to fear the prosperity of the wicked, for it cannot deliver him from the grave,* 16—20.

HEAR this, all *ye* people; give ear, all *ye* inhabitants of the world:

All ye people, Heb. *all people;* Jews or Gentiles; for all are concerned in this matter, as being apt to stumble and murmur at it.

[a] Ps. 62. 9. 2 Both [a]low and high, rich and poor, together.

3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

It concerns you diligently to attend to me, for I am about to speak not of vulgar and trivial things, or such as come suddenly into my mind, and rush as hastily out of my mouth, but of such things as are the result of my most serious and considerate thoughts, and such as, if you observe them and lay them to heart, will make you truly wise, and keep you from those errors, and follies, and mischiefs, which the generality of mankind, for want of a right understanding, do run into.

[b] Ps. 78. 2. Matt. 13. 35. 4 [b]I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

I will incline mine ear: this is another argument to persuade them to hearken to him: I will hearken what God by his Spirit speaks to me, and that and nothing else will I now speak to you; and therefore it is well worth your hearing. I also shall join with you in attending to it, that whilst I teach you, I myself may learn the same lesson. For as ministers now teach themselves whilst they teach others, so the holy prophets did ofttimes search into and study to find out the meaning of their own prophecies, as appears plainly from 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. The phrase is thought to be taken from the musicians, who lay their ear close to the instrument when they tune it, and by their ear try how the voice and instrument agree. *To a parable;* which properly is a figurative and allegorical speech, but is oft more largely taken for any excellent, and important, and withal dark or difficult, doctrine or sentence: see Numb. xxiii. 7; xxiv. 3, 15; Psal. lxxviii. 2, compared with Matt. xiii. 35. *I will open*, i. e. I will not smother it in my own breast, but publish it to the world. *My dark saying;* so he justly calls the following discourse, because the thing in question is and ever hath been thought difficult and hard to be understood

5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, *when* [c]the iniquity of my heels shall com- [c] Ps. 38. 4.
pass me about?

He speaks in his own person, because he had now said that he would *incline* his *ear*, ver. 4, i. e. learn and practise what he was teaching others; but his meaning is more general, that there is no sufficient cause why he or any good man should *fear;* which is to be understood of excessive or immoderate and prevailing fear, causing dejection or despondency, or distrust of God's providence and goodness, or discontent with his condition; in which sense men are bid *not* to *fear*, Gen. l. 19; Matt. xxviii. 5, compared with Mark xvi. 6. Thus Gen. xlv. 5, *Be not grieved*, to wit, inordinately; for otherwise they ought, and he would have had them to grieve for their sin. Thus *to lead a man into temptation*, Matt. vi. 13, is *to suffer* him *to be overcome* by it, by comparing 1 Cor. x. 13. And the object or cause of this forbidden fear is double; the one, the afflictions of good men, here following; the other, the prosperity of the ungodly, as it is declared ver. 16, and of which he begins to treat in the very next verse, and continues the discourse of it to the end of the Psalm. *In the days of evil;* either, 1. Of sin; when iniquity of all sorts abounds; which is many ways grievous and vexatious to every good man. Or, 2. Of misery; in times of great distress and calamity, either public or private, when wicked men flourish, (of which he speaks in all the rest of the Psalm,) and good men are oppressed and persecuted. *The iniquity of my heels;* by which he understands either, 1. His afflictions; which he might justly call the punishment of his sinful actions; for *iniquity* is commonly put for the punishment of it, and *the heels* are put for a man's footsteps, and metaphorically for one's ways or actions, as Psal. lvi. 6; lxxxix. 51. Or, 2. *The iniquity*, i. e. the violent and injurious designs and practices of his ungodly and malicious enemies, who, as he here saith, *did compass him about;* whereby he notes their prosperous success against him, and his being endangered and vexed by them, as this phrase implies, Job xvi. 13; Psal. xvii. 9, 11; xxii. 12; cxl. 9; Hab. i. 4; and withal their intention and endeavour to vex and persecute and destroy him, as this phrase is used, Psal. xvii. 9; xxii. 12, 16, and in many other places. This sense is favoured both by the Syriac and Arabic interpreters; whereof the former renders the words thus, *the iniquity of mine enemies hath compassed me*, and the latter thus, *when mine enemies shall* compass me about; and by the main scope of the Psalm, which is to comfort himself and other good men against that great scandal of the prosperity of the wicked, and the oppressions and miseries of the righteous. But all the difficulty is why or how he calls this *the iniquity of his heels.* For the clearing whereof, it is humbly proposed to consideration, that this genitive case, *of my heels*, seems to note not the efficient or meritorious cause of this *iniquity*, or punishment of it, but the object about which this iniquity is exercised; as nouns in the genitive case are frequently taken. Thus *the spoil of the poor*, Isa. iii. 14, is not that spoil which was made by them, but upon them; and *the violence of the children of Judah*, as it is in the Hebrew text, Joel iii. 19, is that which was done against them, as we truly translate it. See also Dan. iv. 27; Matt. x. 1; Acts iv. 9. In like manner here, *the iniquity of my heels*, is the iniquity wherewith they compass and seek to trip up my heels; for we shall find David oft speaking of the malicious practices of his enemies, with respect to his *heels*, or *feet*, or *steps*. So he tells us they *pierced his hands and feet*, Psal. xxii. 16, they *compassed*, and *marked*, and *prepared a net for* his *steps*, Psal. xvii. 11; lvi. 6; lvii. 6; as Jeremiah also complains of his enemies, that they hid *snares for* his *feet*, chap. xviii. 22. And therefore it is not strange that the iniquity of his enemies is here noted to be exercised about his *heels* or *footsteps*, as this word signifies; either because they did malignantly observe all his steps or ways, that they might find occasion to load him with reproaches in order to his ruin; or because they *purposed* to trip up his heels, or to *overthrow his goings*, as he complains, Psal. cxl. 4. Besides, the words may be rendered, *the iniquity of my supplanters;* for the Hebrew word rendered *heels* may be, and is by some learned interpreters, taken for a particle of that verb, which signifies to *supplant* or trip up the heels, or circumvent, from whence Jacob had his name. And this character fitly agrees to David's enemies, who were

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not only most malicious, but also very deceitful and treacherous, as he every where complains.

d Jer. 31. 34. Ps. 52. 7. & 62. 10. Mark 10. 24. 1 Tim. 6. 17.

6 They that [d]trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

As that which can and will secure them from God's judgments, and from the calamities of human life. The psalmist having said that he and other good men had no sufficient cause of fear from their present sufferings from ungodly men, now he proceeds, on the contrary, to show that his ungodly enemies had no reason to be secure and confident because of their present riches and prosperous success.

e Matt. 16. 26.

7 None *of them* can by any means redeem his brother, nor [e]give to God a ransom for him:

Redeem, to wit, from death, as appears from ver. 9, 10, &c.; neither from the first death, nor from the second, which he points at ver. 14, 19. *His brother;* whom he would do his utmost to preserve in life; and consequently not himself. But he seems to mention *his brother* rather than himself, because when his brother is sick, he being in health hath the full command and free use of all his wealth, and strength, and wit, and all other means of redeeming his brother; which he hath not, when he himself is dangerously or desperately sick. *Nor give to God;* the only Lord of life, and the Judge who hath passed upon him the sentence of death.

f Job 36. 19.

8 (For [f]the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)

Of their soul, i. e. of their life, as soul is commonly used. *Is precious*, i. e. rare, as the word is used, 1 Sam. iii. 1; Dan. ii. 11, hard to be obtained. But he doth not call it simply impossible, because Christ hath purchased this privilege for his true disciples, that in some sense they shall not see death, John viii. 51. *It ceaseth for ever*, i. e. it is never to be accomplished, to wit, by any mere man, for himself or for his brother.

g Ps. 16. 10.

9 That he should still live for ever, *and* [g]not see corruption.

Or, *the pit*, or *the grave*, i. e. not die, as that phrase is oft used, as hath been noted before.

h Eccles. 2. 16. Prov. 11. 4. Eccles. 2. 18, 21.

10 For he seeth *that* [h]wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, [i]and leave their wealth to others.

He seeth; an impersonal expression. Every man sees and knows it; it is visible and evident, both from reason and from universal experience, that all men die, without any difference between wise and fools, good and bad. *To others;* he saith not, to sons or kindred; but indefinitely, *to others*, because he is wholly uncertain to whom he shall leave him, to friends, or strangers, or enemies; which he mentions as a great vanity in riches. They neither can save him from death, nor will accompany him in and after death, and after his death will be disposed he knows not how nor to whom.

k Ps. 73. 11. Isa. 56. 5. & 63. 16.

11 Their inward thought *is*, *that* their houses *shall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling places †to all generations; they [k]call *their* lands after their own names.

Their inward thought is; though they are ashamed to express it, yet it is their secret opinion, and hope, and wish. *Their houses;* either, 1. Their posterity, oft called men's *houses*, as 2 Sam. vii. 11, &c.; Psal. cxiii. 9; cxv. 12. Or, 2. Their mansion houses, as it is explained in the next clause, which also serve for this purpose, to preserve a man's name for ever. *Shall continue for ever;* not to them in their own persons, but to them and theirs in succeeding generations, as it follows. *They call their lands after their own names;* fondly dreaming by this means to immortalize their names and memories.

l Ps. 39. 5. & 62. 9. & 144. 4.

12 Nevertheless [l]man *being* in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts *that* perish.

Notwithstanding all these fine fancies and devices, *man being in honour*, living in all the splendour and glory above mentioned, *abideth not.* The Hebrew word properly signifies *to lodge for a night*, as Gen. xxxii. 21; Judg. xix. 10; and thence to *abide for a long* or *considerable time*, as Psal. xxv. 13; lv. 7; Prov. xv. 31. All his dreams of perpetuating his name and estate shall vanish and be confuted by experience. *That perish*, i. e. that are utterly lost and extinct. So he is in reference to all his wealth and honour, of which he here speaks.

m Luke 12. 20.
† Heb. *delight in their mouth.*

13 This their way *is* their [m]folly: yet their posterity †approve their sayings. Selah.

This their way, i. e. their counsel and contrivance to immortalize themselves. *Is their folly;* though to themselves and some others it seem to be wisdom, yet in truth it is apparent folly and madness. For they neither obtain that immortal name which they seek and hope for; nor, if they do, doth it yield them any comfort or benefit. *Their sayings*, Heb. *their mouth*, i. e. their counsels and suggestions, which they gave them concerning these matters. The *mouth* is oft put for the words which come out of it, as Numb. xxxv. 30; Job vii. 11.

n Ps. 47. 3. Dan. 7. 22. Mal. 4. 3. Luke 22. 30. 1 Cor. 6. 2. Rev. 2. 26. & 20. 4.
o Job 4. 21. Ps. 39. 11.
‖ Or, *strength.*

14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and [n]the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; [o]and their ‖beauty shall consume ‖in the grave from their dwelling.

‖ Or, *the grave* being *an habitation to every one of them.*

Like sheep; which for a season are fed in large and sweet pastures, but at the owner's pleasure are put together in close and comfortless folds, and led away to the slaughter, not knowing nor considering whither they are going. *In the grave;* or, *in hell;* for the Hebrew word signifies both. *Death shall feed on them;* the first death shall consume their bodies in the grave, and the second death shall devour their souls. *The upright;* good men, whom here they oppressed and abused at their pleasure. *In the morning;* either, 1. Suddenly, or within a very little time, as this phrase is oft used, as Psal. xxx. 5; xlvi. 5; ci. 8; cxliii. 8, &c. Or, 2. In the day of general judgment, and the resurrection of the dead. For death being called *the night*, John ix. 4, and *sleep* in many places, that day is fitly compared to the morning, when men awake out of sleep, and enter upon that everlasting day. But whether this or the former be the true meaning of the phrase, it is sufficiently evident the thing here spoken of is not done in this life, but in the next; for, 1. This proposition and privilege being general, and common to all upright persons, is not verified here, it being the lot of many good men to be oppressed and killed by the wicked, as is manifest both from Scripture, as Psal. xliv. 22; Eccles. viii. 14; ix. 2, and from the experience of all ages of the church. 2. This dominion of the just over the wicked happens after the wicked are *laid in their grave*, as is here expressed, and consequently supposeth their future life and resurrection; for when one person rules over another, both are supposed to exist or have a being. Nor is there any argument against this sense, but from a vain and absurd conceit which some men have entertained, that the saints in the Old Testament had no firm belief nor expectation of the recompences of the life to come; which is against evident reason, and against many clear places of the Old Testament that cannot without force be wrested to any other sense, and against the express testimony of the New Testament concerning them, Heb. xi., and in many other places.

Their beauty; or, *their form*, or *figure*, or *image;* all which come to one, and seems to intimate that all their glory and felicity which they had in this life was rather imaginary than real, and indeed but a *shadow*, as it is called, Eccles. vi. 12; viii. 13. *Shall consume*, Heb. *is to consume*, or *to be consumed*, i. e. shall be consumed; the infinitive verb being here put for the future, as it is Psal. xxxii. 8; Zech. iii. 4; xii. 10. *From their dwelling*, i. e. they shall be hurried from their large, and stately, and pleasant mansions, into a close and dark grave. But those words are by divers interpreters rendered otherwise, and that peradventure more truly and fitly, to this purpose, word for word, *the grave* (or rather *hell*, as before, and as this word *sheol* is confessedly oft used in the Old Testament, but no where more conve-

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niently than here) shall be *a dwelling*, or *for a dwelling, unto him*, or *them*, or *every one of them*; which in the prophet's phrase is called *dwelling with everlasting burnings*, Isa. xxxiii. 14, and in the phrase of the New Testament, to *be cast into* and abide in *the lake of fire and brimstone*, Rev. xx. 10.

p Ps. 56. 13. Hos. 13. 14. † Heb. *from the hand of the grave.* ‖ Or, *hell.*

15 But God [p]will redeem my soul †from the power of ‖the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

Though no man can find out a ransom to redeem himself or his brother, yet God can and will redeem me. *My soul;* either properly; or myself or life; for all comes to one. *Of the grave;* or, *of hell;* for he speaks of that *sheol* in which the wicked are left. The grave shall not have power to retain me, but shall be forced to give me up into my Father's hands; and hell shall have no power to seize upon me. *He shall receive me*, or *take me*, out of this vain, mortal, and miserable life, unto himself, or into heaven, as this phrase is used, Gen. v. 24; Psal. lxxiii. 24; Acts vii. 59.

16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;

Afraid, i. e. discouraged or dejected. The prosperity of the sinners is oft matter of fear and dread to good men; partly because it enables them to do more mischief; and partly because it shakes their faith in God's providence and promises, and is apt to engender suspicions in men's minds, as if God did not regard the actions and affairs of men, and made no difference between the good and the bad, and consequently all religion were vain and unprofitable. See Psal. lxxiii. 12, 13.

q Job 27. 19.

17 [q]For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

For as he will shortly die, so all his wealth, and power, and glory will die with him, and thou wilt have no cause either to envy or fear him.

† Heb. *in his life.* r Deut. 29. 19. Luke 12. 19.

18 Though †while he lived [r]he blessed his soul: and *men* will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.

He blessed his soul, i. e. he applauded himself as a wise and happy man: compare Luke xii. 19. *Men will praise thee:* and as he pleaseth and flattereth himself, so he meets with parasites that applaud and flatter him for their own advantage. For he still speaks of the same man, as is manifest from the foregoing and following words, though there be a sudden change of the third into the second person; which is most frequent in these books. *When thou doest well to thyself;* when thou dost indulge and please thyself, and advance thy own worldly interest. For the name of *good* in Scripture is oft ascribed unto the pleasures and profits of this life, as Job xxi. 13; Psal. iv. 6; Eccles. ii. 24; iv. 8; xi. 9.

† Heb. The soul *shall go.* s Gen. 15. 15. t Job 33. 30. Ps. 56. 13.

19 †He shall [s]go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see [t]light.

Now he returns again to the third person. Such sudden and repeated changes are frequent in this book. *To the generation of his fathers*, i. e. to the grave and hell, where he shall meet with his wicked parents, who by their counsel and example led him into his evil courses; as the godly also are said to be *gathered to their fathers*, Gen. xv. 15; Deut. xxxii. 50; Judg. ii. 10. *Never see*, i. e. never enjoy, as *seeing* is oft taken. *Light;* neither *the light of the living*, as it is called. Job xxxiii. 30; Psal. lvi. 13; or of this life, to which they shall never return; nor of the next life, to which they shall never be admitted, but they shall be cast *into utter darkness*, Matt. viii. 12.

u ver. 12. x Eccles. 3. 19.

20 [u]Man *that is* in honour, and understandeth not, [x]is like the beasts *that* perish.

Understandeth not, i. e. hath not true wisdom, to know and consider what he is, and what his true business and interest in this world is, and what use he should make of his life, and of all his riches, and honour, and power, and whither he is going, and what course to take for the attainment of true and lasting happiness. *Is like the beasts that perish;* though he hath the outward shape of a man, yet in truth he is a beast, or a brutish, stupid, and unreasonable creature, and he shall perish like a *brute beast made to be destroyed*, 2 Pet. ii. 12.

PSALM L.

THE ARGUMENT.

The design of this Psalm is, partly, to reprove and protest against the common miscarriages of many professors of religion, who satisfied their own consciences, and fancied that they pleased God, with their external and ceremonial performances, notwithstanding their gross neglect of those more necessary and fundamental duties of piety, and justice, and charity; partly, to instruct men concerning the nature of the true and acceptable worship of God; and partly, to prepare the Israelites for, and tacitly warn them of, that change which would be made in the outward form and way of God's worship under and by the Messias, and of the abolition of the legal sacrifices, which God did not appoint for his own need, nor for his people's perpetual use.

¶ A Psalm ‖of Asaph. ‖ Or, *for Asaph.* See 1 Chron. 15. 17. & 25. 2. 2 Chron. 29. 30.

Asaph was not only the chief of the sacred singers, 1 Chron. xv.; xvi.; xxv. 2, but also a prophet, 1 Chron. xxv. 1, and a composer of some Psalms, as it is apparent from 2 Chron. xxix. 30, and therefore, as is most probable, of those that go under his name.

God cometh with great majesty into his church, 1—4, *and gathereth together his saints*, 5, 6; *testifieth he has no pleasure in ceremonies*, 7—13, *but in sincerity of obedience*, 14, 15; *threateneth the wicked for contemning his word*, 16—22, *and showeth who it is that glorifieth him*, 23.

THE [a]mighty God, *even* the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. a Neh. 9. 32. Is. 9. 6. Jer. 32. 18.

i. e. All the inhabitants of the earth, from one end to the other; whom he here summons to be witnesses of his proceedings in this solemn judgment between him and his people, which is here poetically represented; for here is a tribunal erected, the judge coming to it, the witnesses and delinquents summoned, and at last the sentence given, and cause determined.

2 Out of Zion, [b]the perfection of beauty, [c]God hath shined. b Ps. 48. 2 c Deut. 33. 2. Ps. 80. 1.

The place where he was supposed to reside, and where he would now sit in judgment; or from whence he would come to a more public and conspicuous place, where all the world might see and hear the transactions. *The perfection of beauty;* the most beautiful and amiable place of the whole world, because of the presence, and worship, and blessing of God, which was there, and there only. *God hath shined*, i. e. hath appeared or manifested himself in a glorious manner, as judges do when they come to the judgment-seat.

3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: [d]a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. d Lev. 10. 2. Num. 16. 35. Ps. 97. 3. Dan. 7. 10.

Our God: these words are used here, as they are also Heb. xii. 29, emphatically. The prophet speaks this in the person of the Israelites and worshippers of God, whereof he was one, and thereby takes off their fond pretence, as if because God was *their* God, in covenant with them, and nearly related to them by Abraham his friend for ever, he would bear with their miscarriages, and would not deal so severely with them as some fancied; which also was their conceit, Jer. vii. 4, &c.; Matt. iii. 9, 10. No, saith he, though he be our God, yet he will come to execute judgment upon us. *Shall come;* either, 1. From heaven, his dwelling-place, to Zion, to sit in judgment there. Or, 2. Out of Zion to some other place, as was said on ver. 2. *And shall not keep silence:* so the sense is, he will no longer forbear or connive at the hypocrisy and profaneness of the professors of the true religion, but will now speak to them in his wrath, and will effectually reprove and chastise them. But because the psalmist is not now describing what God did or would say against them, which he doth below, ver. 7, &c., but as yet continues in his description of the prepar-

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ation or coming of the Judge to his throne, it seems more proper to translate the words, as some do, *he will not cease*, (for this verb signifies not only a cessation from speech, but from motion or action, as it doth 2 Sam. xix. 11; Psal. lxxxiii. 1; Isa. xlii. 14, 15,) i. e. not neglect or delay to come. So here is the same thing expressed, both affirmatively and negatively, (as is frequent in Scripture, whereof divers instances have been formerly given,) for the greater assurance of the truth of the thing. *It shall be very tempestuous round about him:* this is a further description of that terrible majesty wherewith God clothed himself when he came to his tribunal, in token of that just severity which he would use in his proceedings with them. He alludes to the manner of God's appearance at Sinai, Exod. xix., and intimates to them, that although Zion was a place of grace and blessing to all true Israelites, yet God would be as dreadful there to the hypocrites among them, as ever he was at Sinai. See Isa. xxxiii. 14.

c Deut. 4. 26. & 31. 28. Isa. 1. 2. & 34. 1. Jer. 6. 19. Mic. 6. 1, 2.

4 [c]He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

Either to *heaven and earth* themselves, and so it is a figure called *prosopopœia;* or to the inhabitants of them, all angels and men, whom he calls in for witnesses and judges of the equity of his present proceedings. Compare Deut. iv. 26; xxxi. 28; xxxii. 1. *That he may judge his people,* to wit, in their presence and hearing.

d Deut. 33. 3. e Ex. 24. 7. f Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

5 Gather [d]my saints together unto me; [f]those that have made a covenant with me [e]by sacrifice.

O ye angels, summon and fetch them to my tribunal; which is poetically spoken; not as if they were actually to do so, but only to continue the metaphor and representation of the judgment here mentioned. *My saints;* the delinquents, the Israelites, whom he calls *saints;* partly, because they were all by profession *a holy people,* as they are called, Deut. xiv. 2; partly, by an irony, intimating how unworthy they were of that name; and partly, as an argument or evidence against them, because God had chosen and separated them from all the nations of the earth, to be a holy and peculiar people to himself, and they also had solemnly and frequently consecrated and devoted themselves to God, and to his faithful service; all which did greatly aggravate their present apostacy. *Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice,* i. e. which have entered into covenant with me, and have ratified that covenant with me by sacrifice, not only in their parents, Exod. xxiv. 4, &c., but also in their own persons from time to time, even as oft as they offer sacrifices to me. This clause seems to be added here, to acquaint them with the proper nature, use, and end of sacrifices, which were principally appointed to be signs and seals of the covenant made between God and his people; and consequently to convince them of their great mistake and wickedness in trusting to their outward sacrifices, when they neglect the very life and soul of them, which was the keeping of their covenant with God; and withal to diminish that overweaning conceit which they had of sacrifices, and to prepare the way for the abolition of them, as being only necessary to confirm the covenant; which being once for all confirmed by the blood of Christ, they might without any inconvenience be laid aside and abrogated.

h Ps. 97. 6. i Ps. 75. 7.

6 And [h]the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for [i]God *is* judge himself. Selah.

The heavens shall declare his righteousness; which they were called to witness, ver. 4. So was the earth also. But here he mentions the heavens only, as I humbly conceive, because they were the most impartial and considerable witness in the case; for men upon earth might be false witnesses, either through ignorance and mistake, or through prejudice, and partiality, and passion: but the angels understand things more thoroughly and certainly, and are so exactly pure and sinless, that they neither can nor will tell a lie for God; and therefore their testimony is more valuable. Or the meaning is, that God would convince the people of his righteousness, and of their own wickedness, by terrible thunders and lightnings, and storms, or other dreadful signs wrought by him in the heaven or the air; by which he did convince his people in two like cases, Deut. v. 22, 23, &c.; 1 Sam. xii. 17—19. *God is Judge himself;* in his own person, or immediately. God will not now reprove them, or contend with them, by his priests or prophets, with whom they may easily strive, as they used to do, but he will do it in an immediate and extraordinary manner from heaven; and therefore they shall be forced to acknowledge his righteousness, and their own unrighteousness; as they must needs do, when the contest is between them and that God who is the great Judge of the world, and cannot possibly do any unrighteous thing, Job xxxiv. 13; Rom. iii. 6, who exactly knows all their hearts and works, and cannot be deceived nor contradicted.

k Ps. 81. 8. l Ex. 20. 2.

7 [k]Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: [l]I *am* God, *even* thy God.

Having brought in God as coming to judgment with them, he now gives an account of the process and of the sentence of the Judge, whose words are contained in this and the following verses. *I will testify against thee;* I will plead with thee, and declare my charge or indictment against thee. *Even thy God;* not only in general, as thou art my creature, but in a special manner, by many singular favours and obligations, and by that solemn covenant made at Sinai; whereby I avouched thee to be my peculiar people, and thou didst avouch me to be thy God, Deut. xxvi. 17, 18.

m Is. 1. 11. Jer. 7. 22. n Hos. 6. 6.

8 [m]I will not reprove thee [n]for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, *to have been* continually before me.

I do not charge thee, or at least this is not the principal matter of my charge, that thou hast neglected sacrifices which thou shouldst have offered; for although thou hast many times omitted thy duty in that kind, yet I have greater things than these to charge thee with. *To have been;* or, *they have been.* I confess thou hast been frequent in that work, and hast laid too great a stress upon it, and satisfied thy conscience with it, as if thereby thou hadst made me amends for the errors of thy life.

o Mic. 6. 6. Acts 17. 25.

9 [o]I will take no bullock out of thy house, *nor* he goats out of thy folds.

But be not so vain and foolish as to imagine that thou dost lay any obligations upon me by thy sacrifices; or that I required them because I had need of them, or took any pleasure in them for themselves, or for my own satisfaction by them.

10 For every beast of the forest *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

I would command or dispose them at my pleasure, without thy leave or assistance, even *the cattle* which feed upon innumerable hills, or in valleys and fields.

† Heb. *with me.*

11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field *are* † mine.

I know where they are, and whence I can easily fetch them when I think good. *The fowls of the mountains;* not only tame and domestic fowls, but even such as are wild and fly up and down upon mountains; which though out of man's reach, are at God's command.

p Ex. 19. 5. Deut. 10. 14. Job 41. 11. Ps. 24. 1. 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: [p]for the world *is* mine, and the fulness thereof.

If I wanted or desired any thing, as I do not, being the all-sufficient God, *I would not tell thee,* that thou mightest supply my wants. *The fulness thereof,* i. e. all those creatures wherewith it is replenished.

13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

If I did want any thing, hast thou such carnal and gross conceptions of me, that I need or delight in the blood of brute creatures?

q Hos. 14. 2. Heb. 13. 15. r Deut. 23. 21. Job 22. 27. Ps. 76. 11. Eccles. 5. 4, 5.

14 [q]Offer unto God thanksgiving; and [r]pay thy vows unto the most high:

If thou wouldst know what sacrifices I most prize, and indispensably require, in the first place, it is that of thankfulness and praise proportionable to my great, and glorious,

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and numberless favours; which doth not consist barely in verbal acknowledgments, but proceeds from a heart truly and deeply affected with God's mercies, and is accompanied with such a course of life as is grateful or well-pleasing to God; all which is plainly comprehended in *thanksgiving*, as that duty is explained in other Scriptures. *Thy vows;* either, 1. Ceremonial vows, the sacrifices which thou hast vowed to God. Or rather, 2. Moral vows; for the things here mentioned are directly opposed unto sacrifices, and preferred before them; for having disparaged, and in some sort rejected, *their sacrifices and burnt-offerings*, ver. 8, it is not likely that he should have a better opinion of, or value for, their vowed sacrifices; which were of an inferior sort. He seems therefore to understand those substantial vows, and promises, and covenants, which were the very soul of their sacrifices, and to which their sacrifices were but appurtenances and seals, as was noted above, on ver. 5, whereby they did *avouch the Lord to be their God, and to walk in his ways*, &c., as it is expressed, Deut. xxvi. 17, and engaged themselves to love, and serve, and obey the Lord according to that solemn vow and covenant which they entered into at Sinai, Exod. xxiv. 3, 7, 8, which they oft renewed, and indeed did implicitly repeat in all their sacrifices, which were appointed for this very end, to confirm this covenant.

15 And [s]call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt [t]glorify me.

s Job 22. 27. Ps. 91. 15. & 107. 6, 13, 19, 28. Zech. 13. 9.
t ver. 23. Ps. 22. 23.

And make conscience of that great duty of constant and fervent prayer to me; which is an acknowledgment of thy subjection to me, and of thy trust and dependence upon me, and therefore is pleasing to me. *In the day of trouble;* when trouble comes, do not avoid it by sinful shifts, nor trust to creatures for relief, as hypocrites generally do, but give glory to me, by relying upon my promises, and expect help from me by hearty and unfeigned prayer. *Thou shalt glorify me:* this is mentioned, either, 1. As a privilege; thou shalt have occasion to praise and glorify me for thy deliverance. Or, 2. As a further duty; thou shalt give me the glory of thy deliverance by praising me for it, and improving it to my service and glory.

16 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or *that* thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?

Unto the wicked, i. e. the same ungodly and hypocritical professors whom he calleth *saints*, ver. 5, in regard of their profession, and here *wicked* in respect of their practice, and the truth of the thing. *God saith:* he told them what he would not reprove them for, ver. 8, and why, ver. 9, 10, &c.; now he tells them for what he did reprove and condemn them, even for a vain and false profession of religion. With what confidence darest thou make mention of or boast of God's grace and favour vouchsafed unto thee, in giving thee such a covenant and statutes, pretending to embrace them, and to give up thyself to the observation of them? This concerns not only the teachers, (of whom some understand these words,) but all the Israelites in general; of whom he rather seems to speak.

17 [u]Seeing thou hatest instruction, and [x]castest my words behind thee.

u Rom. 2. 21, 22.
x Neh. 9. 26.

Seeing thy practice contradicts thy profession, and makes thee a notorious and impudent liar. Though *with thy mouth thou showest much love* (as is said of them, Ezek. xxxiii. 31) to my statutes and counsels, yet in truth thou hatest them, as they are curbs to thy beloved lusts, and instruments of thy just condemnation, and a manifest reproach to thy conversation. Or, *seeing thou hatest reproof*, as this word is oft rendered. And this, above all other parts of God's word, is most hateful to ungodly men, Prov. ix. 8; xii. 1; xv. 10, 12; Amos v. 10. And therefore this is fitly alleged as an evidence of their wickedness. *Castest my words behind thee;* as men do things which they abhor or despise.

18 When thou sawest a thief, then thou [y]consentedst with him, and †hast been [z]partaker with adulterers.

y Rom. 1. 32.
† Heb. *thy portion was with adulterers.*
z 1 Tim. 5. 22.

Sawest; or, *didst observe*, or *consider;* when he came into thy presence and company, and thou didst understand and consider his ways, and his success and impunity, and he invited thee to a participation of his profit. *Thou consentedst with him;* or, as many render it, *then didst run with him;* thou didst readily and greedily associate thyself with him in his unrighteous courses. Thou didst yield to his motions, and that with great complacency and diligence. *Partaker with adulterers*, by joining with them in their lewd and filthy practices.

19 †Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and [a]thy tongue frameth deceit.

† Heb. *Thou sendest.*
a Is. 52. 2.

Thou givest, Heb. *thou sendest forth*, to wit, free; for the word is used of men's dismissing their wives or their servants, whom they left to their freedom. Thou hast an unbridled tongue, and castest off all restraints of God's law, and of thy own conscience, and givest thy tongue liberty to speak what thou pleasest, though it be offensive and dishonourable to God, and injurious to thy neighbour, or to thy own soul; which is justly produced as an evidence of their hypocrisy. *To evil;* either to sinful or mischievous speeches. *Frameth deceit*, i. e. uttereth lies or fair words, wherewith to circumvent those who deal with them.

20 Thou sittest *and* speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.

Thou dost not only speak evil in a sudden passion, or upon some great provocation, but this is thy constant and deliberate practice and business, which thou dost pursue with great facility and complacency; all which this phrase implies. *Thy brother;* strictly so called, as the next clause explains it; which is a great aggravation of the sin, and a proof of his inveterate and obstinate wickedness. *Thou slanderest;* takest away his good name, which is better than all riches; yea, than life itself; which is contrary to my express and oft-repeated commands.

21 These *things* hast thou done, [b]and I kept silence; [c]thou thoughtest that I was altogether *such an one* as thyself: *but* [d]I will reprove thee, and set *them* in order before thine eyes.

b Eccles. 8. 11, 12. Is. 26. 10. & 57. 11.
c See Rom. 2. 4.
d Ps. 90. 8.

I kept silence; I did not express my displeasure against thee in such grievous judgments as thou didst deserve. Or, *I was deaf;* I carried myself like one that did not hear thy sinful speeches, nor see or take any notice of thy wicked actions. And thou didst misconstrue and abuse this my patience and long-suffering, as if it had proceeded from my ignorance, or regardlessness, or approbation of thy evil courses, which I seemed by my connivance to justify or allow, and thereupon didst grow more audacious and impudent in sin. See Eccles. xi. 9; Isa. xxvi. 10; Rom. ii. 4, 5. *I will reprove thee*, not with verbal, but real reproofs, i. e. by severe punishments, as this word is used, Job xiii. 10; Psal. vi. 1; xxxviii. 1; xxxix. 11, and oft elsewhere. I will quickly undeceive and convince thee of the contrary to thy cost. *Set them in order before thine eyes;* I will bring to thy remembrance, and lay upon thy conscience, all thy sins, in full number and in their order, with all their circumstances; and thou shalt then see and know that I diligently observed and hated them all, and that none of them shall go unpunished.

22 Now consider this, ye that [e]forget God, lest I tear *you* in pieces, and *there be* none to deliver.

e Job 8. 13. Ps. 9. 17. Is. 51. 13.

Ye that forget God; ye hypocritical and ungodly Israelites, who have *forgotten* (as Moses foretold you would do, Deut. xxxii. 18) *the God that formed you*, and made you his people, and forgotten his mercies and judgments, by which you should have been instructed, and the covenant which you made with him, and by which you stand obliged to him. *Lest I tear you in pieces;* lest my patience be turned into fury, and I proceed to take vengeance on you. *And there be none to deliver;* or, *for* (as the Hebrew particle is oft rendered) *there is none that can* or *will deliver* you. None can rescue you from the power of mine anger.

23 [f]Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and [g]to him †that ordereth *his* conversation *aright* will I shew the salvation of God.

f Ps. 27. 6. Rom. 12. 1.
g Gal. 6. 16.
† Heb. *that disposeth his way.*

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Praise; or, *thanksgiving*, as this word is rendered, ver. 14. See the note there. *Glorifieth me;* he and he only gives me the honour that I require and prize, and not he who loads my altar with a multitude of sacrifices; whereby you vainly and falsely conceit that you please and glorify me, although in the mean time you live in the gross neglect of the more important duties of piety, and justice, and charity; whereas in truth you greatly dishonour me, and my worship and service, by your infamous lives. *That ordereth his conversation aright*, Heb. *that composeth* or *disposeth* the *way* or manner of *his* (which pronoun is frequently understood) life, i. e. that lives orderly, and according to rule; for sinners are said to walk *disorderly*, 2 Thess. iii. 6, 7, 11, and *by chance*, as it is in the Hebrew text, Lev. xxvi. 21, 23, which is opposed to order; and the Scripture owns no *order* but what God prescribes or approves; and therefore this word *aright* is justly added in our translation. *Will I show*, Heb. *I will make him to see*, i. e. to enjoy, as that verb is oft used, as we have showed again and again. *The salvation of God*, i. e. my salvation; that true and everlasting happiness which I have prepared for all my faithful friends and servants, and for them only. So false is that position of some of the Jewish rabbins, that *every Israelite hath a portion in the world to come.*

PSALM LI.

cir. 1004. ¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, * when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

* 2 Sam. 12. 1 & 11. 2, 4.

To the chief musician; to be sung by him and other sacred musicians publicly in the temple through all ages; that his repentance might be as manifest and public as his crime and scandal was. *When Nathan the prophet came unto him:* after his conscience was awakened by Nathan's words, 2 Sam. xii., and Nathan was gone, David falls very seriously upon the practice of sincere repentance, and digested his meditations into this Psalm.

David prayeth to God for the remission of his original and actual sins, 1, 2, *whereof he maketh a deep confession*, 3—5; *and for the renovation of his Holy Spirit, to support himself and instruct others*, 6—14; *promising him also unfeigned and sincere thankfulness*, 15—17; *with a prayer for the good of the whole church*, 18, 19.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies * blot out my transgressions.

* Isa. 43. 25. & 44. 22. Col. 2. 14.

Have mercy upon me; pity, and help, and answer me, in the desires I am now spreading before thee. *According to thy loving-kindness:* I pretend to no merit, but humbly implore thy free grace and mercy. Thy mercies are infinite, and therefore sufficient for my relief, and such indeed do I need. *Blot out;* either, 1. Out of my conscience and soul, where it hath left a stain and filthy character. Or, 2. Out of thy book of remembrance and accounts, in which all men's sins are written, and out of which all men shall be judged hereafter, Rev. xx. 12; which is spoken of God after the manner of men. See of this phrase Isa. xliii. 25; xliv. 22.

2 * Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

* Heb. 9. 14. 1 John 1. 7, 9. Rev. 1. 5.

Wash me throughly, Heb. *multiply to wash me;* by which phrase he implies the greatness of his guilt, and the insufficiency of all legal washings, and the absolute necessity of some other and better thing to wash him, even of God's grace, and the blood of Christ; which as *Abraham* saw by faith, John viii. 56, so did David, as is sufficiently evident (allowing for the darkness of the dispensation and expressions of the Old Testament) from divers passages of the Psalms, of which I have spoken in their proper places; and his earnest and passionate desire of pardon, which he desires above all other things; wherein he showeth himself to be a true penitent, because his chief care and desire was to obtain God's favour, and the forgiveness of his sins, and not the prevention of those external sore judgments which God by Nathan threatened to bring upon him and his house, 2 Sam. xii. 10, 11, about which here is not one word in this Psalm; whereas the cares and desires of hypocrites chiefly are bent towards worldly things, as we see in Cain, Gen. iv. 13, 16, 17, and Saul, 1 Sam. xv. 30, and others, Hos. vii. 14.

3 For [c]I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.

c Ps. 32. 5. & 38. 18.

I acknowledge, with grief and shame, and abhorrency of myself and of my sins; which hitherto I have dissembled and covered. And being thus truly penitent, I hope and beg that I may find mercy with thee. *My transgressions;* for it was not a single, but a complicated wickedness, adultery, murder, injustice, perfidiousness; and frequent repetition of and long and stupid continuance in abominable filthiness, and that with public scandal. *My sin is ever before me;* that which I had cast behind my back is now constantly in my view, and fixed in my thoughts and memory.

4 [d]Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil [e]in thy sight: [f]that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

d Gen. 20. 6. & 39. 9. Lev. 6. 19. & 6. 2. 2 Sam. 12. 14. e Luke 15. 21. f Rom. 3. 4.

Against thee, thee only; which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, because he had unquestionably sinned against Bathsheba and Uriah, and many others, who were either injured by it, or scandalized at it; but comparatively. So the sense is this, Though I have sinned against my own body and conscience, and against others; yet nothing is more grievous and terrible to me, than to consider that I have sinned against thee; partly upon a general account, because this is the chief malignity and sinfulness of sin, that it offends and injures the glorious and blessed God; and partly upon particular reasons, because I set thee at defiance, and having used all wicked arts to conceal my sins from men, and being free from fear of punishment from them, I went on boldly in sin, casting off all reverence to thy holy and omniscient Majesty, and all dread of thy judgments, and because I sinned against thee, to whom I had such numerous and peculiar and eminent obligations, as thy prophet Nathan truly suggested to me, 2 Sam. xii. 7, 8. *In thy sight;* with gross contempt of God, whom I well knew to be a spectator of my most secret actions. *That thou mightest be justified;* the particle *that* is not taken causally or intentionally, as if this was David's design, but eventually, as it is Exod. xi. 9; Psal. xxx. 12; Hos. viii. 4. This will be the fruit or consequent of my sin, that whatsoever severities thou shalt use towards me and mine, it will be no blemish to thy benignity, or righteousness, or fidelity, but the blame of all will rest upon my head, as I desire it may, and thy justice will be glorified by all men. *When thou speakest*, Heb. *in thy words*, i. e. in all thy threatenings denounced against me by Nathan, and in any further sentence which thou shalt see fit to pass upon me. *When thou judgest;* when thou dost plead or contend with me, or execute thy sentence or judgment upon me. Or, *when thou art judged*, as it is rendered Rom. iii. 4, for the word may be taken passively as well as actively; when any man shall presume to censure thee, as not keeping thy covenant and mercy promised to David.

5 [g]Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; [h]and in sin did my mother †conceive me.

g Job 14. 4. Ps. 58. 3. John 3. 6. Rom. 5. 12. Eph. 2. 3. h Job 14. 4. † Heb. *warm me.*

This verse is both by Jewish and Christian, by ancient and later interpreters, generally and most truly understood of original sin; which he here mentions as an aggravation of his crime: and the sense of the place is this, Nor is this the only sin which I have reason to acknowledge and bewail before thee; for this filthy stream leads me to a corrupt fountain; and upon a serious review of my heart and life I find that I am guilty of innumerable other sins, and that this heinous crime, though drawn forth by external temptations, yet was indeed the proper fruit of my own filthy and vile nature, which, without the restraints of thy providence or grace, ever was, and still is like to be, inclinable and ready to commit these and ten thousand other sins, as occasion offers itself; for which contrariety of my very nature to thine, thou mayst justly loathe and condemn me; and for which I humbly beg thy pardon and grace.

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Conceive me, Heb. *warm* or *cherish me* in the womb, before I was *shapen* or *formed* there.

[i] Job 38. 36. 6 Behold, thou desirest truth [i]in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Thou desirest; or, *delightest in;* or, *requirest;* Heb. *willest. Truth;* either, 1. Sincerity in confessing my sins; which therefore I have now acknowledged, though hitherto I have practised much falsehood and dissimulation in endeavouring to conceal them from men. Or rather, 2. Integrity or uprightness of heart; which seem to be here opposed to that iniquity mentioned in the last verse, in which he was, and all men are, framed and born. And this may seem to be added, partly as a proof or aggravation of the sinfulness of original corruption, because it is contrary to the holy nature and will of God, which requireth not only unblamableness in men's actions, but also universal innocency and rectitude of their minds and hearts; and partly as an aggravation of his actual sin, wherein he had used such gross deceit and treachery. *In the hidden part*, i. e. in the heart, called *the hidden man of the heart*, 1 Pet. iii. 4, and *the secret* part, Rom. ii. 16, which in the former branch he called *the reins* or *inward parts. Thou shalt make me to know:* so he declares his hope that God would pardon and cure his folly, which he had discovered, and make him wiser for the future. But this seems not to suit well with the context, which runs wholly in another strain. The word therefore is and may be rendered otherwise, *thou hast made me to know.* So this is another aggravation of his sin, that it was committed against that wisdom and knowledge, which God had not only revealed to him outwardly in his word, but also inwardly by his Spirit, writing it in his heart, according to his promise, Jer. xxxi. 33. Or thus, *do thou make me to know;* the future verb being here taken imperatively, and as a prayer; as the following futures are here translated, ver. 7, 8. Having now said, for the aggravation of his sin, that God did *desire* or *require truth in the inward parts*, he takes that occasion to break forth into prayer, which also he continues in the following verses. Only as he prays there for justification or pardon of sin, so here he prays for renovation or sanctification. So his meaning is this, *therefore* (as the particle *and* is oft used, as hath been showed) *in the hidden part do thou make me to know wisdom.* Or thus, *thou wouldest have me know;* for futures are oft taken potentially, as Psal. cxviii. 6; Matt. xii. 25, compared with Mark iii. 24, and elsewhere. And verbs which signify *making* or *causing* are sometimes understood only of the will or command; as Jeroboam is said to *make Israel to sin*, 1 Kings xiv. 16, because he commanded them to do so. Hos. v. 11. This I propose with submission; but if this sense be admitted, the last clause of the verse answers very well to the former, as it doth in the foregoing and following verses, and every where in these books: for this, *thou wouldest have me know*, answers to that, *thou willest* or *desirest;* and *in the hidden* part, answers to that *in the inward parts;* and *wisdom* is the same thing for substance with *truth*, only called by another name. *Wisdom*, i. e. true piety and integrity, which is called wisdom, Job xxviii. 28; Psal. cxi. 10. and in many other texts, as sin on the contrary is commonly called, as it really is, *folly.* And to *know wisdom* is here meant of *knowing* it practically and experimentally, so as to approve, and love, and practise it; as words of knowledge are most frequently taken in Scripture, and in other authors.

[k] Lev. 14. 4, 6, 49. Num. 19. 18. Heb. 9. 19. [l] Is. 1. 18. 7 [k]Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be [l]whiter than snow.

With hyssop; or, as *with hyssop;* the note of similitude being frequently understood. As lepers and other unclean persons are by thy appointment purified by the use of hyssop and other things, Lev. xiv. 6; Numb. xix. 6; so do thou cleanse me, a most leprous and polluted creature, by thy grace, and by the virtue of that blood of Christ, which is signified by those ceremonial usages.

[m] Matt. 5. 4. 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken [m]may rejoice.

Send me glad tidings of thy reconciliation to me, and by thy Spirit seal the pardon of my sins to my conscience, which will fill me with joy, that mine heart, which hath been sorely wounded and terrified by thy dreadful message sent by Nathan, and by the dismal sentence of thy law denounced against such sinners as I am, now by this occasion brought home to my conscience, may be revived and comforted by the manifestation of thy favour to my soul.

[n] Jer. 16. 17. [o] ver. 1. 9 [n]Hide thy face from my sins, and [o]blot out all mine iniquities.

Do not look upon them with an eye of indignation and revenge, but forget and forgive them. See ver. 1.

[p] Acts 15. 9. Ephes. 2. 10. [q] Or, *a constant spirit.* 10 [p]Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew [q]a right spirit within me.

Create in me a clean heart; seeing I have not only defiled myself by these actual sins, but also have a most filthy heart, corrupted even from my birth, ver. 5, which nothing but God's almighty and creating power can purify, do thou effectually work in me a holy frame of heart, whereby both my inward filth may be purged away, and I may be prevented from falling into such actual and scandalous sins. *Renew* that good temper which before this apostacy I had in some measure, be pleased graciously to restore it to me with advantage. *Right*, Heb. *firm*, or *constant*, or *stedfast*, that I may not be so easily shaken and cast down by temptation, as I have been, but that my resolution may be more fixed and unmovable. *Spirit;* temper or disposition of soul or spirit; as the word *spirit* is very frequently used in Scripture. *Within me*, Heb. *in my inward parts.* He wisely strikes at the root and cause of all sinful actions.

[q] Gen. 4. 14. 2 Kin. 13. 23. [r] Rom. 8. 9. Eph. 4. 30. 11 Cast me not away [q]from thy presence; and take not thy [r]holy spirit from me.

From thy presence, i. e. from thy favour, and care, and gracious communion with thee. *Thy Holy Spirit;* thy sanctifying Spirit, by which alone I can have acquaintance and fellowship with thee.

[s] 2 Cor. 3. 17. 12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* [s]free spirit.

The joy of thy salvation; the comfortable sense of thy saving grace and help, promised and vouchsafed to me, both for my present and everlasting salvation. *Uphold me;* a weak and frail creature, never able to stand against corruption and temptation without thy powerful and gracious succours. *Free;* or, *ingenuous*, or *liberal*, or *princely;* which he seems to oppose to his own base, and illiberal, and disingenuous, and servile spirit, which he had discovered in his wicked and unworthy practices; and desires a better spirit of God, which may free him from the bondage of sin, and enable and incline him freely, and cheerfully, and constantly to run the way of God's precepts. See Exod. xxxv. 21; Psal. cx. 3; Rom. viii. 15, 16; 2 Cor. iii. 17.

13 *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Thy ways; either, 1. Thy will and their duty, and the way to their eternal happiness; or rather, 2. The manner of thy dealing with sinners; whom thou dost so severely chastise for their sins, and yet so graciously receive to mercy upon their repentance; both which I will show them in my own example, which I will declare unto them, although I shall therewith publish my own shame; which I shall most willingly bear, that I may in some measure repair the injury which I have done to thee and others by my public and scandalous crimes. *Sinners shall be converted unto thee;* and I persuade myself that my endeavours shall not want success; and that either thy justice or severity, or thy goodness and clemency, will bring them to repentance.

[†] Heb. *bloods.* [t] 2 Sam. 11. 17. & 12. 9. [u] Ps. 35. 28. 14 Deliver me from † [t]bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* [u]my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

From blood-guiltiness, Heb. *from bloods*, because he had been the cause of the death, not only of Uriah, but of others of the Lord's people with him, 2 Sam. xi. 17. *Thy right-*

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ousness; either, 1. Thy faithfulness in making good thy promises; or rather, 2. Thy clemency and goodness, as that word is frequently used.

15 O LORD, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Open thou my lips; which are shut with shame, and grief, and horror. Restore unto me the opportunity, and ability, and liberty which formerly I had of speaking to thee with freedom, and boldness, and familiarity, as this phrase signifies, Ezek. iii. 27; xxiv. 27; Eph. vi. 19, 20.

16 For [x] thou desirest not sacrifice; ‖ else would I give *it:* thou delightest not in burnt offering.

‖ Or, *that I should give it.*

Thou desirest not sacrifice; which is not to be understood absolutely, and universally, as appears from ver. 19, but comparatively, of which see on Psal. xl. 6, and with particular respect to David's crimes of murder and adultery, which were not to be expiated by any sacrifice, but by the law of God were to be punished with death. Thou requirest more and better sacrifices, which here follow. *Else would I give it;* else I should have spared no cost in that kind.

17 [y] The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

The sacrifices: this is instead of or of more value than many sacrifices. *Of God;* which God in such cases as mine requires, and will accept; in which sense we read of *the work of God*, John vi. 28. *A broken and a contrite heart*, i. e. a heart deeply afflicted and grieved for sin, humbled under the sense of God's displeasure, and earnestly seeking and willing to accept of reconciliation with God upon any terms. See Isa. lvii. 15; lxi. 1; lxvi. 2; Matt. xi. 28. This is opposed to that *hard* or *stony heart*, of which we read so oft, which signifies a heart insensible of the burden of sin, stubborn and rebellious against God, impenitent and incorrigible. *Thou wilt not despise*, i. e. thou dost highly approve; as such negative phrases oft signify, as hath been formerly proved.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

In thy good pleasure; or, *for* or *according to* (for the Hebrew prefix *beth* is frequently used both those ways) *thy good grace*, or *favour*, or *pleasure*, i. e. thy free and rich mercy, and thy gracious purpose and promise made to and concerning Zion, of which see Psal. cxxxii. 14, and do not repent of it, nor retract it, as I have given thee cause to do. *Unto Zion;* synecdochically put for Jerusalem, as the next clause explains it, and both put for the whole people of Israel and church of God; whom I have highly scandalized and injured already, and exposed to the danger of utter destruction, which thou mightest inflict upon them for the sins of their king, as thou usest to do in like cases. *Build thou the walls of Jerusalem;* perfect the walls and buildings of that city, and especially let the temple be built and established in this city, notwithstanding its pollution by my sins, which I pray thee to purge away.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with [z] the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Then; when thou hast granted my humble requests expressed in the former verses, when thou hast renewed, and pardoned, and comforted me, and restored thy favour unto thy people and this city. *The sacrifices;* which now for our sins thou mayst justly reject and abhor. *Of righteousness;* which I and my people, being justified and reconciled to thee, shall offer with sincere and penitent hearts. These are opposed to *the sacrifices of the wicked*, which God abhors, Prov. xv. 8; Isa. i. 11, &c. *Then shall they offer*, i. e. they who by thy appointment are to do that work, the priests in the name and on the behalf of thy people. *Bullocks;* the best and costliest sacrifices, and that in great numbers, in testimony of their gratitude to God, for thy great favour in pardoning mine and their sins, and preventing that total ruin which we had reason to expect and fear upon that account.

PSALM LII.

¶ To the chief Musician, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, *when Doeg the Edomite came and *told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech. *1 Sam. 22. 9. *Ezek. 22. 9.

Doeg the Edomite; so called, either, 1. Because he was born or bred in Edom. Or, 2. From his treacherous and bloody disposition; for which the Edomites are infamous in Scripture; as the Israelites are called Sodom and Gomorrah, Isa. i. 10.

David reproveth the insolency of Doeg, 1—4; *prophesieth his destruction*, 5. *The righteous rejoice at it*, 6. *He showeth the strength and hope of this wicked man*, 7; *but placeth his own confidence and trust in God, and praiseth him*, 8, 9.

WHY boastest thou thyself in mischief, O [a] mighty man? the goodness of God *endureth* continually. [a] 1 Sam. 21. 7.

Why boastest thou thyself, as if thou hadst done a great exploit, which none else durst undertake; and thereby established the crown upon Saul's head, and thyself in his favour; and broken all David's designs, by striking a terror into all his favourers by this sad example? *O mighty man!* he speak ironically. O valiant captain! O glorious action! to kill a few weak and unarmed persons in the king's presence, and under the protection of his guards! Surely thy name will be famous to all ages for such heroical courage. *The goodness of God endureth continually;* God's love and favour to his people, and in particular to me, is not fading and inconstant, but everlasting and unchangeable, and therefore not to be hindered or defeated by any wicked designs or practices. And therefore though he hath permitted thee, and may do others, to rage for a season, yet he will defend, and in due time deliver, his people.

2 [b] Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; [c] like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. [b] Ps. 50. 19. [c] Ps. 57. 4. & 59. 7. & 64. 3.

Deviseth, i. e. expresseth what thy wicked mind had devised. Thus *skilfulness* is ascribed to those *hands* which are governed by a skilful or prudent man, Psal. lxxviii. 72. This word implies that Doeg's words were not uttered rashly and unadvisedly, but with premeditated malice, and a mischievous design, which he waited for an opportunity to execute; and therefore he readily took the first occasion which offered itself. *Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully;* wherewith a man pretending only to shave off the hair, doth suddenly and unexpectedly cut the throat. So Doeg pretended only to vindicate himself from the imputation of disloyalty, 1 Sam. xxii. 8, but really intended to expose the priests, who were friends to David, to the king's fury and cruelty.

3 Thou lovest evil more than good; *and* [d] lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah. [d] Jer. 9. 4, 5.

Evil and *good* may be here taken, either, 1. Morally; Thou lovest wickedness and not goodness; for so comparative passages are oft meant, as Psal. cxviii. 8, *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man*, i. e. It is good to trust God, but it is not good to trust man; for this is absolutely forbidden, Psal. cxlvi. 3; Jer. xvii. 5. Or, 2. Physically. Thou lovest to speak or act to the hurt and ruin of others, rather than to their benefit. Thou mightest, without any danger to thyself, have been silent concerning Ahimelech's fact, or have put a favourable construction upon it; but thou hast chosen rather to misrepresent and aggravate it. He saith, *thou lovest*, to imply that he did this not by any constraint or necessity, but by choice, and with complacency, and out of a love to mischief. *Lying*, whereof Doeg was guilty, partly in reporting that *he* (i. e. Ahimelech) *inquired of the Lord for him*, (David,) 1 Sam. xxii. 10, which he did not, chap. xxi., where all that history

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is recorded; and partly in putting a false interpretation upon what he did, in *giving him victuals and a sword*, as if he had done it knowingly, and in conspiracy with David, and against Saul, as appears by comparing Doeg's answer with Saul's inquiry, 1 Sam. xxii. 7, 8. *Righteousness*, i. e. the whole and naked truth, without any such lying or malicious comment upon it, which was but an act of justice due from thee to any man, and much more on the behalf of so innocent and sacred a person.

‖ Or, *and the deceitful tongue.*

4 Thou lovest all devouring words, ‖ O *thou* deceitful tongue.

Devouring words, such as might swallow up and destroy a whole family at once.

† Heb. *beat thee down.*

5 God shall likewise †destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck

e Prov. 2. 22.

thee out of *thy* dwelling place, and [e]root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.

Likewise, i. e. totally and unavoidably, as thou didst destroy the priests. *Pluck thee*, i. e. violently, and irresistibly, and suddenly remove thee, as the Hebrew word signifies. *Out of thy dwelling-place;* from thy house and lands, and all the wages of thy unrighteousness. Or, *out of* his (i. e. the Lord's) *tabernacle;* in which thou didst seek and take the matter of thy slanders, and from which thou didst cut off the Lord's priests. Therefore God shall excommunicate thee from his presence, and from the society of the faithful. *Root thee out;* though thou seemest to have taken very deep rooting, and to be the more firmly settled for this barbarous cruelty, yet God shall pluck thee up by the very roots, and destroy thee both root and branch. *Out of the land of the living;* out of this world, as the phrase is taken, Isa. liii. 8; Ezek. xxxii. 32, and elsewhere; which was very terrible to him, who had all his portion in this world.

f Job 22. 19. Ps. 37. 34. & 40. 3. & 64. 9. Mal. 1. 5. g Ps. 58. 10.

6 [f]The righteous also shall see, and fear, [g]and shall laugh at him:

The righteous shall see, to wit, thy remarkable downfal, and consequently shall survive thee in spite of all thy power and malice against them. *Fear;* both reverence God's just judgment upon thee, and be afraid of provoking God to send like judgment upon them. *Shall laugh at him;* not taking pleasure in his ruin as such, but only in the glory of God's justice vindicated thereby, Rev. xviii. 20, and deriding their vain and carnal confidence in their wicked courses.

h Ps. 49. 6.

7 Lo, *this is* the man *that* made not God his strength; but [h]trusted in the abundance of his riches, *and* strengthened

‖ Or, *substance.*

himself in his ‖ wickedness.

The man: these are the triumphant words of the righteous. This is the great and famous man, take special notice of him, and of his doleful end. *That made not God his strength;* that trusted and feared Saul more than God, and was willing to purchase Saul's favour with God's displeasure. *Trusted in the abundance of his riches;* thought himself secure in his great and growing wealth, without God's protection or blessing.

i Jer. 11. 16. Hos. 14. 6.

8 But I *am* [i]like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

I am like a green olive tree; when Doeg and his brethren shall wither and perish, I, who have made God my refuge, I, whom he despised and persecuted, and thought to be in a desperate condition, shall be established and flourish. *In the house of God;* either, 1. In God's church, or among his people. Or, 2. In God's tabernacle, from which Doeg shall be plucked away, ver. 5, and from which I am now banished by the tyranny and malice of this man and his confederates; but, I doubt not, I shall be restored to it, and *dwell in it all the days of my life*, which is the *one thing* that *I desire*, Psal. xxvii. 4.

k Ps. 54. 6.

9 I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done *it:* and I will wait on thy name; [k]for *it is* good before thy saints.

Because thou hast done it, i. e. destroyed Doeg, and all mine and thine implacable enemies, and established me in the throne, and in thy house; of which I am no less assured than if it were already done. *I will wait on thy name;* I will continue in thy way, placing my whole trust and confidence in thy power, and goodness, and faithfulness, all which are called God's *name*, and not turn aside to any crooked paths for my deliverance, as others do, Psal. cxxv. 5. *Before thy saints*, i. e. in the eyes of thy saints. They, whose judgments only are to be valued, approve of this practice, of trusting God and keeping his way, as the wisest and safest course, and have ever found it so to be by their own experience, however Doeg and his accomplices account it mere folly, and the ready way to ruin. But the last words of this clause may very conveniently be joined with the former clause, thus, *I will wait upon thy name before thy saints;* which seems best to suit with the first clause, *I will praise thee;* which surely was meant of praising God publicly, or before the saints; and then it follows conveniently. And in the mean time *I will wait on thy name, in the presence of thy saints*, who shall plainly see that I do so by the whole course of my life. And those words, *for it is good*, may be enclosed within a parenthesis, as is very usual in Scripture, and may be referred, either to God's name, *for thy name is good;* or to *wait on it, for it is good to wait upon it.*

PSALM LIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm, some few words excepted, is wholly the same with Psal. xiv., and therefore the reader must resort thither for the interpretation of it. And it is repeated, partly because the matter of it is so important and necessary to be known and considered; and partly because there arose some new and suitable occasion which made David sing it a second time, and that with some small alterations. And the compiler or compilers of David's Psalms had so great a reverence for their composer, whom they knew to be guided by Divine inspiration, that they would not lose any of his fragments, and therefore repeated this Psalm with the variations which he had made.

¶ To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

Mahalath seems to be the name of a musical instrument, or tune; wherein, as in the rest of them, it is better to confess our ignorance, as the Hebrew doctors themselves do, than to give way to vain and groundless conjectures about them.

David describeth the atheism and corruption of men, &c. See Psal. x. and xiv.

a Ps. 10. 4. & 14. 1, &c.

THE [a]fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: [b]*there is* none that doeth good.

b Rom. 3. 10.

c Ps. 33. 13.

2 God [c]looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did understand, that did [d]seek God.

d 2 Chron. 15. 2. & 19. 3.

3 Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

e Jer. 4. 22.

4 Have the workers of iniquity [e]no knowledge? who eat up my people *as* they eat bread: they have not called upon God.

f Lev. 26. 17, 36. Prov. 28. 1. † Heb. *they feared a fear.* g Ezek. 6. 5.

5 [f]There †were they in great fear, *where* no fear was: for God hath [g]scattered the bones of him that encampeth *against* thee: thou hast put *them* to shame, because God hath despised them.

Where no fear was, i. e. where there was no great nor sufficient cause of fear. See Lev. xxvi. 36; Deut. xxviii. 65; Job xv. 21; Prov. xxviii. 1. They who designed to secure themselves from all fear and danger by their contempt of God, and by the persecution of good men, and by other wicked courses, were by those means filled with the terrors which they sought to avoid. *Hath scattered the bones;* hath not only broken their *bones*, i. e. their strength

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and force, which is oft noted by the bones, as Psal. vi. 2; xxxi. 10; li. 8, but also dispersed them hither and thither, so as there is no hopes of a reunion and restoration. *Against thee*, i. e. against *my people*, expressed ver. 4, or Israel, or Zion, as it is in the next verse. *Thou*, O Zion, or Jerusalem, which they besiege, *hast put them to shame*, for the great and strange disappointment of their hopes and confidence. It was a great reproach to them, for such numerous and mighty forces to be baffled and conquered by those whom they thought to swallow up at a morsel. *Despised them*; or, *rejected them*; cursed them. Therefore it is no wonder if they could not stand before thee.

[b] Ps. 14. 7. [illegible] 6 [b] †Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

PSALM LIV.

[1] 1 Sam. 23. Ps. 54. 1. ¶ To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, * when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?

Of which he speaks 1 Sam. xxiii., when they did seek to betray him a second time.

The psalmist, complaining of his oppressors, prayeth for God's protection; and for the righteous punishment of his enemies, 1—3. *Placing his hope in God's help*, 4, 5, *he promiseth a free sacrifice of thanksgiving to him*, 6, 7.

SAVE me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.

By thy name, i. e. by thy own strength, as the next words explain it, because I have no other refuge. Or, *for thy name*, i. e. for thy own glory, which is concerned in my deliverance. *Judge me*, i. e. judge or give sentence for me, or plead my cause, as this phrase is oft taken, as we have seen.

2 Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

[a] Ps. 86. 14. 3 For [a] strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.

Strangers; the Ziphites, whom, though Israelites, he calls *strangers*, in regard of their barbarous and perfidious disposition and carriage towards him, by which they showed themselves to be *estranged from God*, as the wicked are said to be, Psal. lviii. 3, and from the commonwealth of Israel, and from all the laws of piety and humanity; for which causes he calls such persons *heathens*, Psal. lix. 5, and elsewhere. *They have not set God before them*; they cast off all regard to thy presence and authority, and all fear of thy judgments.

[b] Ps. 118. 7. 4 Behold, God *is* mine helper: [b] the LORD *is* with them that uphold my soul.

Behold; consider it, and see the vanity of all your wicked practices against me. *The Lord is with them that uphold my soul*; he fights for them, and on my behalf, and therefore against all mine enemies.

* Heb. them that observe me. [c] Ps. 27. 13. 5 He shall reward evil unto †mine enemies: cut them off [c] in thy truth.

In thy truth; or, *for* or *according to thy truth*; whereby thou art engaged to fulfil thy promises made to me, and thy threatenings denounced against thine and mine implacable enemies.

[d] Ps. 52. 9. 6 I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; [d] for *it is* good.

Freely sacrifice; not by constraint, as many do, because they are obliged to it, and cannot neglect it without shame and inconvenience to themselves; but with a willing and cheerful mind, which thou lovest in and above all sacrifices. *It*; either thy name; or rather, to praise thy name; *is good*, i. e. an act of justice, and piety, and gratitude.

7 For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: [e] and mine eye hath seen *his desire* upon mine enemies.

[e] Ps. 59. 10. & 92. 11.

He speaks of it as a thing already done, either to express his assurance of it, or because this Psalm was made after it was done. *His desire*; or, *thy vengeance*; which may be understood out of ver. 5. But there is no necessity of any supplement. The words in the Hebrew run thus, *mine eye hath looked upon mine enemies*; either with delight, as this phrase signifies, Psal. xxii. 17; xxvii. 4, and elsewhere; or without fear or shame. I shall not be afraid to look them in the face, having God on my side.

PSALM LV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was certainly composed by David, when he was greatly distressed and persecuted, either by Saul, or rather by Absalom, and betrayed by some pretended or former friend.

¶ To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David. 1023.

David, being surrounded and surprised with danger and distress, complaineth to God, 1—8, *prayeth for the frustrating the practice of his cruel and false enemies*, 9—15, *and strengtheneth himself with God's protection*, 16—18, *and his enemies' utter destruction*, 19—23.

GIVE ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

Turn not away thy face and ear, as one resolved not to hear nor help.

2 Attend unto me, and hear me: I [a] mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

[a] Is. 38. 14.

For my misery is very great, and forceth tears and bitter cries from me.

3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: [b] for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

[b] 2 Sam. 16. 7, 8. & 19. 19.

The voice of the enemy, i. e. their clamours, and threats, and slanders, and insolent boastings; all which are hateful to thee, as well as injurious to me. *They cast iniquity upon me*: the sense is, either, 1. They make me the great object of their wicked, and injurious, and mischievous practices; or, 2. They lay many crimes to my charge falsely, as if by my wickedness I was the cause of all my calamities. *They hate me*; their anger and rage against me is no sudden and transitory passion, but is boiled up into malice and hatred.

4 [c] My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

[c] Ps. 116. 3.

My heart is sore pained within me; with pains like those of a travailing woman, as the word signifies. My heart, which hath commonly supported me in my distresses, is now ready to sink within me; therefore, Lord, pity and help me. *The terrors of death*; either deadly terrors, such as seize upon men in the agonies of death; or fear of death; which is the more grievous to me, because my death will reflect dishonour upon thee, and bring many miseries upon the people.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath † overwhelmed me.

† Heb. covered me.

6 And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away, and be at rest.

7 Lo, *then* would I wander far off, *and* remain in the wilderness. Selah.

Like a dove; which being fearful, and pursued by birds of prey, flies away, and that very swiftly and far, and into

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solitary places, where it hides and secures itself in the holes of the rocks, or in some other secret and safe place; all which fitly represents David's present disposition and desire. *And be at rest*; or, *that I might*, or *where I might, be at rest*, or *dwell*, in some settled and safe place, and be delivered from those uncertainties and wanderings to which I am now exposed. *In the wilderness*; where I might be free from the company, and rage, and treachery of my wicked enemies, who are worse than the wild beasts of the wilderness.

8 I would hasten my escape from the windy storm *and* tempest.

From the force and fury of mine enemies, which now highly threaten me.

9 Destroy, O LORD, *and* divide their
d Jer. 6. 7. tongues: for I have seen [d]violence and strife in the city.

Divide their tongues, i. e. destroy them by dividing. *Their tongues*, i. e. their speech, as thou didst at Babel, Gen. xi.; their votes, and opinions, and counsels; which was eminently done among Absalom's followers, 2 Sam. xvii. *I have seen*; or, *I do see* or *perceive*, by certain and general report. *Violence and strife in the city*; that injustice, and fraud, and oppression, and contention bear rule there, instead of that public justice and peace which I established and maintained in it. *In the city*; either, 1. In Keilah, where David thought to abide, 1 Sam. xxiii. Or, 2. In Gibeah, where Saul had his abode. Or rather, 3. In Jerusalem; which is called *the city* by way of eminency; and which in Absalom's time was the chief seat of rebellion, and a mere sink of all sins. And this circumstance is noted as an aggravation of their wickedness, that it was committed in that city, where the throne and seat of public justice was settled; and where God was in a special manner present and worshipped; and where they had great opportunities, both for the knowledge and practice of their several duties.

10 Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow *are* in the midst of it.

They, i. e. the violence and strife last mentioned, ver. 9, *go about it*; do encompass it, and are as it were the garrison by which they design to defend it. *Upon the walls thereof*; in the more outward parts, as also *in the* very *midst of it*, as it follows. So that all parts were horribly corrupted.

11 Wickedness *is* in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

The places of buying and selling, and of public and common conversation. So their sins were both universal and impudent.

e Ps. 41. 9. 12 [e]For *it was* not an enemy *that* reproached me; then I could have borne *it*: neither *was it* he that hated me *that*
f Ps. 35. 26. & 38. 16. did [f]magnify *himself* against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

Not an enemy; either, 1. Not an open and professed enemy; or rather, 2. Not an old and inveterate enemy, as may be gathered from the following description. *I could have borne it* with more patience, because I could expect nothing else from such persons. *Hated me* with a manifest or old hatred. *I would have hid myself from him*; I could and should easily have prevented or avoided the effects of his hatred.

† Heb. *a man according to my rank.* 13 But *it was* thou, †a man mine
g 2 Sam. 15. 12. & 16. 23. Ps. 41. 9. Jer. 9. 4. equal, [g]my guide, and mine acquaintance.

Mine equal; not in power and dignity, which could not be, but in reputation for his deep wisdom and excellent conduct, and the great influence which he had upon me, and upon all my people. *My guide*; whose counsel I highly prized, and constantly sought and followed: all which agrees very well to Ahithophel. See 2 Sam. xv. 12, 31; xvi. 23.

† Heb. *Who sweetened counsel.* 14 † We took sweet counsel together,
h Ps. 42. 4. *and* [h]walked unto the house of God in company.

We took sweet counsel together; I imparted my secret thoughts and designs to him with great delight and satisfaction. *We walked unto the house of God*; we agreed no less in exercises of piety, than in acts of state and policy. *In company*; or, *in comfort*, or *with consent*; as all the ancients render it. He seemed as forward in religion as I.

15 Let death seize upon them, *and* let
i Num. 16. 30. them [i]go down quick into ‖hell: for wickedness *is* in their dwellings, *and* ‖ Or, *the grave.* among them.

Them, i. e. him and all such false-hearted wretches, that pretended religion with wicked design, and now have manifestly apostatized, both from the profession and practice of it, and fallen into all manner of wickedness; for such are the vilest of men, and most obnoxious to the curse of God. *Into hell*; or, *into the grave*; cut them off by a sudden and violent death, as thou didst those Numb. xvi. 32. But these imprecations used by inspired persons in extraordinary cases is no precedent for our imitation. *Their dwellings*; or, *where they sojourn*. They carry their wickedness along with them from place to place, and leave the impressions and effects of it wheresoever they come. *Among them*, Heb. *in their inwards*. Wickedness is deeply rooted in their hearts, and it breaks forth in all their houses and actions.

16 As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

Whilst he destroys them. As they and I differ in the courses of our lives, so shall we in our ends.

k Dan. 6 10. Luke 18. 1. Acts 3. 1. & 10. 3, 9, 30. 1 Thess. 5. 17. 17 [k]Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

The three stated times of prayer amongst the Jews. See Dan. vi. 10; Acts iii. 1; x. 3, 9, 30.

18 He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me: for
l 2 Chron. 32. 7, 8. [l]there were many with me.

He hath delivered my soul: either this is an argument whereby he encourageth himself now to trust God, because of former deliverances; or he speaks of a future deliverance as a thing done, because of the certainty of it. *In peace*; or, *into peace*. He hath restored me from the state of war to my former peace and tranquillity. *For there were many with me*; for there were more with me than against me; even the holy angels, whom God employed to defend and deliver me. See 2 Kings vi. 16; Psal. xxxiv. 7; lvii. 3. Or, *for* (or rather *though*, as this particle is oft rendered) *there were many with me*, or *about me*, or *against me*, as this particle is rendered, Psal. lxxxv. 3; xciv. 16, and in other places. So he speaks here of his enemies; which seems best to suit with the context; for of them he speaks implicitly in the foregoing words, and expressly in the following.

m Deut. 33. 27. ‖ Or, *With whom also there be no changes, yet they fear not God.* 19 God shall hear, and afflict them, [m]even he that abideth of old. Selah. ‖Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.

God shall hear; either, 1. My prayers against them, mentioned ver. 15. Or, 2. Their reproaches, ver. 12; their deceitful and treacherous speeches, ver. 21. He said God would *hear his voice*, ver. 17; now he adds that God will hear his enemies' voice also, of which he spake ver. 3. *Afflict them*; or, *testify against them*, or *give an answer to them*; not in words, but really, and by dreadful punishments, as this word signifies, Ezek. xiv. 4; which seems best to agree with the next foregoing word, *God will hear and answer them*. *He that abideth of old*, Heb. *he that inhabiteth antiquity* or *eternity*; who is eternal, and therefore unchangeable and almighty; and consequently, as he ever was, so he still is and will be, ready to defend his people, and to destroy their enemies; and none can prevent nor hinder him in either of those designs. *No changes*; either, 1. For the better; because they do not repent nor turn from their sins. But then the next clause must be rendered, as it is in the Hebrew, *and not fear God*. Or rather, 2. For the worse; for of such destructive changes this word, when applied to persons, is generally used in Scripture, as Job x.

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17; xiv. 14, &c., because they meet with no crosses nor disappointments, and hitherto all their counsels succeed well, and the people flow in to them unanimously; as it was in the beginning and progress of Absalom's rebellion. *They fear not God;* their prosperous success makes them go on securely and obstinately in their wicked courses, without any regard to God, or dread of his judgments; there being nothing which more hardens men's hearts, and makes them presumptuous and incorrigible, than uninterrupted prosperity. See Psal. xxx. 6; Prov. i. 32; Jer. xxii. 21.

20 He hath [n]put forth his hands against such as [o]be at peace with him: †he hath broken his covenant.

[n] Or, he hath put forth

He, i. e. they, the persons last mentioned. Before the singular number, ver 13, 14, was suddenly changed into the plural, ver. 15, that the punishment might reach not him only, but his partners, in those treacherous and treasonable actions; and here is as sudden a change from the plural into the singular, and he returns to that person who was the chief contriver and promoter of this rebellion under Absalom, even to Ahithophel, of whom he spoke ver. 13; and though he doth not excuse the rest, as we have seen, yet he lays the chief blame upon him, and here he adds new aggravations of his treason. *Hath put forth his hands*, in way of force or violence, as this phrase is used, Gen. xxxvii. 22; 1 Sam. xxvi. 9; Neh. xiii. 21; Acts xii. 1. *Against such as be at peace with him;* against me, who gave him no provocation nor disturbance, but lived in great peace and security, and friendship with him. *Hath broken his covenant;* all those solemn obligations by which he was tied to me, both as his king and as his friend.

21 [p]*The words* of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war *was* in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet *were* they drawn swords.

He covered his treasonable and bloody design with fair and flattering speeches. *Drawn swords;* pernicious in their design and consequences.

22 [q]Cast thy ‖burden upon the[r] LORD, and he shall sustain thee: [s]he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

Thy burden, or *portion*, Heb. *gift;* whatsoever affliction God giveth or sendeth to thee; for even the sufferings of good men are called God's *gifts* in Scripture, Phil. i. 29; John xviii. 11. So it is a synecdochical expression. Or, whatsoever gift thou desirest from him. Although the following words of the verse seem to restrain it to afflictions. The sense is, All thy affairs, and crosses, and cares, and fears, lay them upon the shoulders of the Almighty by faith and prayer, with a confident expectation of a good issue. He directeth this speech to himself, or his own soul, as he oft doth in this book, and withal to all good men in like circumstances. *To be moved*, i. e. to be removed, to wit, from his sure and happy estate. Or, which agrees as well with the Hebrew, *he shall not suffer the righteous to be moved*, or *fall for ever*, as he doth wicked men; though he may for a season suffer them to be shaken, yet he will not suffer them to be utterly overwhelmed.

23 But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: [t]†bloody and deceitful men †[u]shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

Shall bring them down; my wicked enemies, of whom I have hitherto spoken. *Bloody and deceitful men;* that colour their cruel intentions with specious and deceitful pretences; which are most hateful to God and all men. *Shall not live out half their days;* not half of what others live, and they by the course of nature might live; but shall be cut off by God's just judgment, by an untimely and violent death. *But I will trust in thee;* and in this confidence I will quietly and patiently wait upon thee, for their downfal, and for my deliverance.

PSALM LVI.

¶ To the chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, ‖Michtam of David, when the *Philistines took him in Gath.

‖ Or, *a golden* Psalm *of David.* * So Ps. 16. * 1 Sam. 21. 11.

Jonath-elem-rechokim is supposed to be the name of a song; but many render it, as the words signify, *concerning the dumb dove afar off;* all which agrees very well to David in his present circumstances. He calls himself a *dove* for his innocency, and folly (which is ascribed to the dove, Hos. vii. 11) in casting himself into this snare; and for his vexation and persecution by his enemies, those birds of prey; and for his sad and mournful posture. *Silent* he was, and it was his prudence so to be in this place and condition; and he was in a place remote enough from his father's house, and from God's sanctuary, where his heart was. *When the Philistines took him in Gath;* when being chased by Saul's restless malice, he had put himself into the hands and power of the Philistines at Gath; where when he was the following meditations came into his mind, which after his escape he digested into this order and Psalm.

David, praying to God, complaineth of his sufferings, and magnifieth his word, 1—10; is confident of God's fulfilling it, and promiseth to praise him for it, 11—13.

BE [a]merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.

[a] Ps. 57. 1.

Man, i. e. men, weak and miserable men, as the word signifies, whom thou canst crush in an instant; Saul and his courtiers, who have driven me hither; and now Achish and the Philistines, who have oft sought my ruin, which now they have opportunity to effect. *Would swallow me up;* like wild and ravenous beasts, rather than men. Heb. *hath swallowed me up.* The thing is begun, and in a manner done, if thou dost not miraculously prevent it.

2 †Mine enemies would daily [b]swallow *me* up: for *they be* many that fight against me, O thou most high.

† Heb. *Mine observers.* Ps. 54. 5. b Ps. 57. 3.

Mine enemies, Heb. *my observers*, that narrowly look to all my paths, and watch for my haltings, and for an opportunity to destroy me. *Many that fight against me:* they trust to their great numbers, wherein they know themselves to be much superior to me. *O thou Most High;* who from thine high place beholdest all their plots, and canst most easily disturb and blast them.

3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

When I have the greatest cause of fear, I will rely upon thy providence and promise for my deliverance.

4 [c]In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; [d]I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

c ver. 10, 11. d Ps. 118. 6. Is. 31. 3. Heb. 13. 6.

In God I will praise his word: the sense is, either, 1. I will praise or boast in the Lord's word, or the Lord for his word. Or, 2. *With* or *by the Lord* (i. e. by his favour or help) *I will praise his word.* Or rather, 3. This, as I humbly conceive: There are many things to be praised and celebrated in God, his power and wisdom, &c.; but amongst all, and above all, I shall at this time praise him for his *word*, which he *hath magnified above all his name*, as is said, Psal. cxxxviii. 2, even for his promises of protection and deliverance made to his people in all their exigences, and particularly and especially for that promise of the kingdom made to me; for which I will now praise him, because I am as sure of its accomplishment as if I had it already in mine hand. *Flesh;* infirm and mortal men, altogether unable to oppose thy infinite Majesty; called *flesh* by way of contempt, as Psal. lxxviii. 39; Isa. xxxi. 3; Jer. xvii. 5.

5 Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts *are* against me for evil.

They wrest my words; they misconstrue and pervert my most innocent expressions, and turn them into matter of calumny, wherewith they may incense Saul against me.

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Or, *they perplex my affairs. All their thoughts are against me for evil;* it is their whole study to do me mischief.

c Ps. 59. 3. & 140. 2. 6 c They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, f Ps. 71. 10. f when they wait for my soul.

They gather themselves together; after they have severally employed their thoughts against me, they meet together to compare their thoughts, and to put them in execution. *They hide themselves;* they lurk secretly, either that they may pry into all my most private actions, or that they may surprise me with mischief unawares. Compare Psal. x. 8; Prov. i. 11. *They mark my steps,* i. e. all my goings and doings, that they may find some occasion to reproach or entangle, and so destroy me. *My soul,* or *life,* to wit, to take it away from me.

7 Shall they escape by iniquity? in *thine* anger cast down the people, O God.

Shall they escape by iniquity? shall they secure themselves by such injurious and malicious practices, whereby they do not only vex me, but provoke and despise thee? Shall they have success instead of the punishments which thou hast threatened, and they have deserved? God forbid. But the words may be read without an interrogation, *By their iniquity they* hope to *escape;* or, *they do escape* at present; but, Lord, do not suffer them thus to escape. *Cast down:* this is opposed to their present exaltation and triumphs over poor David, and to their hopes and confidence of safety and success. *The people,* i. e. these people of whom I am speaking, to wit, my malicious and wicked enemies, as well those followers of Saul, as these Philistines, amongst whom I now am.

8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put g Mal. 3. 16. thou my tears into thy bottle: g *are they* not in thy book?

My wanderings: here I have been hunted from place to place, and am now driven hither. *Put my tears into thy bottle;* regard, and remember, and pity them. *Are they not in thy book?* but why do I pray to God to do that which I am well assured he is of himself inclined to do, and hath already done?

9 When I cry *unto thee,* then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; h Rom. 8. 31. for h God *is* for me.

When I have no other arms or force, which is my present case, my prayers shall be sufficient to overthrow mine enemies.

i ver. 4. 10 i In God will I praise *his* word: in the LORD will I praise *his* word.

What I have already engaged to do, ver. 4, that I do again and again promise to do, and I cannot sufficiently praise thy goodness in making promises, and thy faithfulness in keeping them.

11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

12 Thy vows *are* upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

As I have prayed to thee, and am assured that thou wilt deliver me; so in confidence thereof I have made vows to express my gratitude to thee, and I acknowledge myself obliged and do resolve to perform them.

k Ps. 116. 8. 13 For k thou hast delivered my soul from death: *wilt* not *thou deliver* my feet from falling, that I may walk before 1 Job 33. 30. God in l the light of the living?

From death; which my enemies designed, and my extreme dangers threatened. I am confident that thou wilt deliver, because of thy promises, and my former experience. *That I may walk before God,* i. e. that I may please, and serve, and glorify thee, as this phrase implies, Gen. v. 24, compared with Heb. xi. 5, as also Gen. vi. 9; xvii. 1; 1 Sam. ii. 30; which is the great end for which I desire life. *In the light of the living:* either, 1. In heaven. Or rather, 2. In this life, which is here opposed to the *death* last mentioned, as it is Job xxxiii. 30, which is called *light,* Job iii. 20, as death is called *darkness,* Job x. 21, 22, and oft elsewhere, and which is expressed by *beholding the light* and *the sun,* Eccles. xi. 7.

PSALM LVII.

¶ To the chief Musician, ‖ Al-taschith, Michtam of David, * when he fled from Saul in the cave. ‖ Or, *Destroy not, A golden Psalm.* * 1 Sam. 22. 1. & 24. 3. Ps. 142. title.

Al-taschith signifies *destroy not;* which some think to be a preface containing the sum of the Psalm, and reminding David of his great distress, in which he then was; which obliged him to make fervent prayers to God that he would not destroy him, nor give him up into the hands of his enemies, who always designed and desired to destroy him, and now seemed to have a fair opportunity to do it. *The cave;* either, 1. That of Adullam, 1 Sam. xxii. 1; or, 2. That of En-gedi, 1 Sam. xxiv. 1.

The psalmist in prayer fleeth to God for protection and favour in his dangerous condition, 1—5; *describeth the wicked projects of his enemies,* 6, *and encourageth himself from God's mercy to praise him,* 7—11.

BE a merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in a Ps. 56. 1. thee: b yea in the shadow of thy wings b Ps. 17. 8. & 63. 7. will I make my refuge, c until *these* ca- c Is. 26. 20. lamities be overpast.

Be merciful unto me: the repetition implies both the greatness of his danger, and the fervency of his spirit in this request, and withal that his whole trust and hope was in God's mercy. *In the shadow of thy wings,* i. e. of thy protection; to which alone I trust, and not to the shadow of this dark cave, in which I now hide myself. *These calamities;* or, the time *of these calamities,* which I know will shortly have an end.

2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God d that performeth *all things* for me. d Ps. 138. 8.

Heb. *that performeth* (or *perfecteth,* or *finisheth,* as this word is rendered, Psal. cxxxviii. 8, i. e. will certainly perform or finish) *for,* or *towards,* or *concerning me.* He doth not express what he performeth, or perfecteth, or fulfilleth, but leaveth it to be understood, as being easy to be understood. *He performeth,* or *perfecteth,* to wit, all that he hath promised; engageth himself to perform what he hath begun to do, or what is yet to be performed; it being usual in the Hebrew language to understand a verbal noun after the verb. He implies that God is not like men, who make large promises, but either through inability, or carelessness, or unfaithfulness, do not perform them, but will certainly be as good as his word.

c Ps. 144. 5, 7. 3 c He shall send from heaven, and save me ‖ *from* the reproach of him that would f swallow me up. Selah. God g shall send forth his mercy and his truth. ‖ Or, *he reproacheth him that would swallow me up.* f Ps. 56. 1. g Ps. 40. 11. & 43. 3. & 61. 7.

He shall send, either, 1. His angels, as Dan. iii. 28. Or, 2. His help. Or, 3. His hand; which is understood after this verb, 2 Sam. vi. 6, by comparing 1 Chron. xiii. 9, where it is expressed. Or rather, 4. *His mercy and his truth,* as it here follows, where also this verb is repeated before those words. *Save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up,* i. e. from that shameful destruction which they design to bring upon me. Or rather, as it is rendered in the margin of our Bible, and by many others, and as it is in the Hebrew, *he hath reproached* (i. e. he will certainly put to shame or reproach) *him that would swallow me up,* by disappointing his expectation, and delivering me from his rage. *Shall send forth his mercy and his truth,* i. e. shall discover them by their proper fruits, to wit, by affording his gracious help in pursuance of his promises.

4 My soul *is* among lions: *and* I lie *even among* them that are set on fire, *even* the sons of men, h whose teeth *are* spears and arrows, and i their tongue a sharp sword. h Prov. 30. 14. i Ps. 55. 21. & 64. 3.

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I live in the midst of a generation of fierce and bloody men; which both in Scripture and other authors are oft called *lions*. *I lie*, I have my abode and conversation, *even among* (which particle is easily borrowed out of the foregoing clause) *them that are set on fire*, to wit, *of* or *from hell*, as is fully expressed, James iii. 6; who are mere fire-brands and incendiaries, that are continually breathing out their wrath and threatenings, and incensing Saul against me. *The sons of men;* whereby he explains what he meant by *lions*, and tells us they were beasts in the shape of men. *Teeth;* which may be considered, either, 1. As instruments of destruction, as they are in lions. Or rather, 2. As instruments of speech, as they are in men; for it here follows by way of explication, as the manner is, *and their tongue*. And both seem to signify their wicked and pernicious calumnies, of which he every where complains, and particularly in the history to which this Psalm seems to relate, 1 Sam. xxiv. 10, and by which they designed to promote his destruction. *Are spears and arrows*, i. e. they grievously wound my name, and are devised to do me mischief.

[k] ver. 11. Ps. lxxxix. 5. 5 [k]Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

Be thou exalted; glorify thy power, and goodness, and justice, and faithfulness by my deliverance, all which are exposed to censure and reproach, whilst thou sufferest ungodly wretches to oppress and triumph over the innocent and righteous, that put their trust in thee. *Above the heavens*, i. e. higher than the heavens, or to the highest degree possible; or above all the false gods which are supposed to reside in heaven. *Above all the earth*, i. e. above all men upon earth, some whereof do now audaciously lift up themselves against thee, and above thee. Or, *through* (as the Hebrew particle is commonly rendered, and it is no new thing to have the same word or particle diversly taken in the same verse, as hath been formerly showed) *the whole earth;* not only amongst thine own people, but so that even the heathens shall be forced to acknowledge and admire thy glorious deeds.

[l] Ps. 7. 15. & 9. 15. 6 [l]They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah.

Is bowed down; or, *was bowed down:* I was even ready to fall and perish. Or, mine heart was oppressed, and almost overwhelmed. *Before me*, Heb. *before my face;* not in my sight, for that would have been in vain, Prov. i. 17; but in my way, where they thought I would go. *They are fallen themselves:* this was fulfilled in Saul, who by pursuing fell into his hands, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4.

[m] Ps. 108. 1, &c. ‖ Or, prepared. 7 [m]My heart is ‖fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

Fixed, or *established*, in a full assurance of thy merciful help. It was ready to sink with fear, or *bowed down*, ver. 6: but now I have through thy grace conquered my fears, and am fixed in a stedfast belief of thy promises. Or, *is prepared*, to wit, to sing and give praise, as it follows.

[n] Ps. 16. 9. & 30. 12. & 108. 1, 2. 8 Awake up, [n]my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

My glory; either, 1. My soul; or rather, 2. My tongue, the instrument of *singing*, which he was now about to do, ver. 7, 9. *I myself will awake early;* I will rouse up and employ all the powers of my soul and body to set forth God's praises.

[o] Ps. 108. 3. 9 [o]I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

Among the people; in the great congregations; amongst the Israelites of all tribes, who are called by this name, Deut. xxxiii. 19, and amongst the heathens, as I shall have occasion, as he often had.

[p] Ps. 36. 5. & 57. 10. & 108. 4. 10 [p]For thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

i. e. Is most evident, and greatly exalted.

11 [q]Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth. [q] ver. 5.

See the note on ver. 5.

PSALM LVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed, as very many others were, upon the occasion of those wicked calumnies, and unjust censures and sentences, which were passed upon him by Saul and his courtiers.

¶ To the chief Musician, ‖*Al-taschith, Michtam of David. ‖ Or, *Destroy not, A golden Psalm of David.* * Ps. 57, title.

David, reproving wicked judges, describeth their nature, 1—5; *and prayeth God to punish and destroy them,* 6—9, *for his own glory, and the joy of the righteous,* 10, 11.

DO ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?

Do ye indeed speak righteousness? the question implies a denial. You censure me freely, without any regard to truth or justice. *Congregation:* the word signifies a band or company of men, and seems to point at Saul's judges and counsellors; who met together to consult what they should do against David, and probably passed a sentence upon him, as guilty of treason and rebellion. *Sons of men;* so he calls them, either, 1. In contempt and opposition to the sons of God, or good men. Or, 2. By way of admonition, to mind them that they also were men, and must give an account to God for all their hard speeches and unrighteous decrees against him.

2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; [a]ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth. [a] Ps. 94. 20. Is. 10. 1.

In heart; or, *with* your *heart;* with free choice and consent, and not only by constraint, and out of compliance with Saul. *Ye weigh the violence of your hands;* or, *you weigh violence* or *injustice with your hands.* The phrase of *weighing* hath respect to their office, which was to administer justice, which is usually expressed by a pair of balances. So he intimates that they did great wrong under the pretence and with the formalities of justice; and whilst they seemed exactly to weigh and consider the true and fit proportion between the actions and the recompences allotted to them, they turned the scale; and partly to curry favour with Saul, and partly from their own malice against David, pronounced an unjust sentence against him. *In the earth;* or, *in this land*, where God is present, and where you have righteous laws to govern you, and you profess better things.

3 [b]The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray †as soon as they be born, speaking lies. [b] Ps. 51. 5. Is. 48. 8. † Heb. *from the belly.*

Estranged, to wit, from God, Eph. iv. 18, and from all goodness. *From the womb;* either, 1. Hyperbolically; even from their tender years. Or, 2. Strictly and properly. So the sense is, No wonder they act so unrighteously, for their very natures and principles are corrupt, even from their birth; they are the wicked offspring of sinful parents. And this hereditary and native corruption, though too common to all men, he particularly ascribes to these men; either because their immediate parents were such as did not only convey a corrupt nature to them, but greatly improved it by wicked counsel and example; or because they themselves had improved that stock of original corruption, and instead of mortifying it, had made it their great design and constant business to gratify and obey it. *They go astray*, by actual sins, the fruit of their original sin, *as soon as they be born;* from their childhood, as soon as ever they were capable of the exercise of reason, and the practice of sinning.

4 [c]Their poison *is* †like the poison of a serpent: *they are* like [d]the deaf ‖adder *that* stoppeth her ear; [c] Ps. 140. 3. Eccles. 10. 11. † Heb. *according to the likeness.* [d] Jer. 8. 17. ‖ Or, *asp.*

Their poison, their virulent and malicious disposition, *is like the poison of a serpent;* partly in itself, being natural,

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and inveterate, and incurable; and partly in its most pernicious effects.

‖ Or, *he the charmer never so cunning.*

5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, ‖ charming never so wisely.

This similitude doth neither justify the practice of charming, which, in the very word here used, is condemned, Deut. xviii. 11, no more than those which are drawn from the unjust steward, Luke xvi. 1, &c.; xviii. 2. &c., and from *a thief*, Rev. xvi. 15; nor yet affirm the truth of what is reported concerning the asps or adders, which are said to lay one ear close to the ground, and to cover the other with their tail, that so they may avoid the danger of enchantment; but only was taken from the common opinion, which he poetically mentions to this purpose: As they commonly say of the asps or adders, &c., such really are these men; deaf to all my counsels, and to the dictates of their own consciences, and to the voice of God's law. And yet of the *charming* or *enchanting* of serpents, mention is made both in other places of Scripture, as Eccles. x. 11; Jer. viii. 17, and in all sorts of authors, ancient and modern, Hebrew, and Arabic, and Greek, and Latin [of which see my Latin Synopsis]. And particularly the Arabic writers (to whom these creatures were best known) name some sorts of serpents, among which the adder is one, which they call *deaf*, not because they are dull of hearing, but, as one of them expressly saith, because they will not be charmed.

e Job 4. 10. Ps. 3. 7.

6 e Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.

Their teeth; their power and instruments of doing mischief. He mentions *teeth*, partly because the adder's poison lies in its teeth; and partly to make way for the following metaphor. *The great teeth*, called *the grinders;* which are more sharp and strong than the rest, and more used in breaking and tearing what they are about to eat.

f Josh. 7. 5. Ps. 112. 10.

7 f Let them melt away as waters *which* run continually: *when* he bendeth *his bow to shoot* his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

As waters which run continually; as waters arising from melted snow, or great showers, or some other extraordinary cause, which at first run with great force and noise, and throw down all that stands in their way, but are suddenly gone, and run away and vanish, and return no more. *When he bendeth his bow*, to wit, any or every one of mine enemies, as appears from the foregoing and following words. *As cut in pieces*, i. e. like arrows broken asunder whilst a man shoots, which can do no hurt.

8 As a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* pass away: g *like* the untimely birth of a woman, *that* they may not see the sun.

g Job 3. 16. Eccles. 6. 3.

Which melteth; which thrusts forth, and seems to threaten with its horns, but is quickly dissolved; for when it goes out of its shell, it spends its vital moisture, until by degrees it waste away and perish. *The untimely birth of a woman;* which endeavouring violently and unseasonably to break forth from the womb, is choked in the attempt, and doth not live to see the light of the sun.

h Prov. 10. 25. † Heb. *as living as wrath.*

9 Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away h as with a whirlwind, † both living, and in *his* wrath.

Feel the thorns, i. e. the heat of the fire kindled by the thorns put under them for that purpose; before your pots can be thoroughly heated. *Take them away*, to wit, mine enemies; whose sudden destruction he describes under this similitude. *As with a whirlwind*, i. e. violently and irresistibly. *Both living, and in his wrath*, Heb. *as living* (i. e. alive, as he did Korah, Numb. xvi., the particle *as* being here not a note of similitude, but of truth or asseveration, as it is John i. 14, and oft elsewhere, as hath been noted) *as* in (which preposition is frequently understood) *wrath*, i. e. as a man moved with great wrath destroys his enemy without mercy, and is ready to devour him alive, if it were possible; or, *both that which is raw*, (as the Hebrew word *chai* signifies, Lev. xiii. 16; 1 Sam. ii. 15, to wit, the raw flesh, which is supposed to be put into the pot that it may be boiled,) *and the burning fire.* There is indeed great variety of construction and interpretation of these Hebrew words, which is not strange, especially considering the conciseness of the Hebrew language, and that this is a proverbial speech; nor is it of any great importance, because it is not in any great point of faith, and because the sense of it is agreed, the only difference being about the manner and ground of the phrase. The learned reader may see more upon this place in my Latin Synopsis.

10 i The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: k he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

i Ps. 52. 6. & 64. 10. & 107. 42. k Ps. 68. 23.

The vengeance, i. e. the vengeance of God upon his implacable enemies; not simply for himself, but for the blessed effects of it, the vindication of God's honour, and the deliverance of himself and of all good men. *He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked*, i. e. there shall be so great a slaughter of his enemies, that he might, if he so pleased, wash his feet in their blood. See the same or like expressions, Psal. lxviii. 23; Isa. lxiii. 3; Rev. xiv. 20.

11 l So that a man shall say, Verily *there is* † a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that m judgeth in the earth.

l Ps. 92. 15. † Heb. *fruit of the, &c.* Is. 3. 10. m Ps. 67. 4. & 96. 13. & 98. 9.

And these administrations of God's providence shall be so evident and convincing, that not only good men shall be sensible thereof, but any man that sees them, yea, even such as were apt to dispute or doubt of God's providence, shall upon this eminent occasion break forth into such exclamations as this: Now I see that religion is not a vain and unprofitable thing, and that there is a God who doth now observe and govern, and, when he sees fit, judgeth the inhabitants of the earth, and will hereafter judge the whole world in righteousness, and recompense every man according to his works.

PSALM LIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter and design of this Psalm is the same in general and for substance with the former, to wit, a declaration of the cruelty and treachery of his enemies; and a prayer to God to deliver him out of their hands.

¶ To the chief Musician, ‖ * Al-taschith, Michtam of David; * when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

‖ Or, *Destroy not, A golden Psalm of David.* * 1 Sam. 57. title. * 1 Sam. 19. 11.

David, in danger, prayeth unto God for deliverance from his enemies, 1, 2, relating his own innocency and their cruelty, 3. He trusteth in God, and prayeth against them, 4—15; promiseth thankfulness to God for being his defence and refuge, 16, 17.

DELIVER a me from mine enemies, O my God: † defend me from them that rise up against me.

a Ps. 18. 48. † Heb. *set me on high.*

He chiefly understands Saul, but speaks in the plural number, out of reverence to his king, and that he might, as far as he could in truth, derive the envy and hatred of these odious practices upon those that were about him; as he doth 1 Sam. xxvi. 19, and elsewhere.

2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

3 For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: b the mighty are gathered against me; c not *for* my transgression, nor *for* my sin, O LORD.

b Ps. 56. 6. c 1 Sam. 24. 11.

Without any provocation or cause given them by me. I am a sinner before thee, O Lord, but I have done them no injury.

4 They run and prepare themselves without *my* fault: d awake † to help me, and behold.

d Ps. 35. 23. & 44. 23. † Heb. *to meet me.*

They run to and fro, first to receive Saul's commands,

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and then to execute them with all speed and diligence. *Prepare themselves;* or, *dispose themselves*, here and there round about my house, that they may catch me when I go out of it. *To help me*, Heb. *to meet me*, as I come abroad, and to conduct me away with safety.

5 Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

The God of Israel; a God in covenant with all true Israelites, whom thou hast promised to protect and bless. *The heathen;* or, *these heathens*, or *Gentiles;* who though they are called and accounted Israelites by their birth, yet in truth, and in their dispositions and manners, are mere heathens and barbarians; in which respect such men are elsewhere called *strangers*, Psal. liv. 3, men *of Sodom and Gomorrah*, Isa. i. 10, and *as Ethiopians*, Amos ix. 7; as among us ungodly Christians are oft called *Jews*, or *Turks*, or *heathens*. *Be not merciful;* for indeed thou canst not with thine honour, nor according to thy word, be merciful to any such incorrigible offenders. *Wicked transgressors;* or, *perfidious transgressors;* such as persecute me, and other good men, out of malice, and against their own consciences, which tell them that I am innocent, and with pretences of friendship. He might well pray so vehemently against such, not only for his own preservation, but for the just and necessary vindication of God's honour, and for the public good of mankind, whose common interest it was that such vile miscreants should be taken out of the way.

ver. 14. 6 [e]They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

They return at evening, after they have been busy all day, either in plotting against me, or in hunting after me. In the evening, when they should compose themselves to rest, they return to their old trade of watching for me; which they did at this time all the night long, 1 Sam. xix. 11. *They make a noise like a dog;* either when he is hungry and pursuing his prey, and howls for meat: or when he is enraged, and grins and snarls where he cannot or dare not bite. *And go round about the city:* when they did not find him in his own house, they sought for him in other houses and parts of the city, where they supposed him to lurk.

Ps. 10. 4. Prov. 1. 16. Isa. 59. 7. Rom. 3. 13. & 15. 7. 7 Behold, they belch out with their mouth: [f]swords *are* in their lips: for [g]who, *say they*, doth hear?

They belch out; or, *they pour forth*, (to wit, words, for what else should come out of the mouth? even sharp and bitter words, as the next clause explains it,) abundantly and vehemently, as a fountain doth waters, as this word signifies. See Prov. xv. 28; Jer. vi. 7. *Swords*, i. e. words as keen and mischievous as swords, as Psal. lv. 21; lvii. 4. *Who, say they, doth hear?* David doth not hear us, either to discover, and so to prevent our plots, or to punish us for them; and God either doth not hear or not regard what we say and do against David; and therefore we may speak and act what we think fit.

1 Sam. 19. 11. & 23. 8. 8 But [h]thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.

Disappoint their high confidences and hopeful designs, and then deride them, and make them ridiculous and contemptible to others.

Psa. 18. 2. & 144. 2. 9 *Because of* his strength will I wait upon thee: [i]for God *is* †my defence.

His strength, i. e. Saul's strength; because he is too strong for me. Or rather, *O my strength*, as it is ver. 17. And all those ancient and venerable translators, the LXX., and Chaldee, and vulgar Latin, render it *my strength*. In the Hebrew it is *his strength*, i. e. David's. For David speaks of himself in the third person, as he oft doth. And such sudden changes of persons are usual, both in these poetical books (as hath been noted before) and elsewhere, as Dan. ix. 4; Micah i. 2.

h Psa. 21. 3. 10 The God of my mercy shall [k]prevent me: God shall let [l]me see *my desire* upon †mine enemies.

1 Ps. 54. 7. & 92. 11. & 112. 8.

† Heb. *mine observers.* Ps. 56. 2.

The God of my mercy, i. e. the giver of all that mercy and comfort which I either have or hope for. Heb. *of his mercy*. But here also there is (as appears by comparing this with ver. 17) a change of the person, as there was in the foregoing verse. *Shall prevent me*, to wit, *with the blessings of goodness*, as it is more fully expressed, Psal. xxi. 3. Thou shalt help me, and that seasonably, before it be too late, and sooner than I expect. *My desire* in their disappointment and overthrow, as it follows; which was very desirable to David, no less for the public good, than for his own safety and happiness.

11 [m]Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O LORD our shield.

m So Gen. 4. 12, 15.

Slay them not, to wit, suddenly, or at once. *My people;* my countrymen; or those over whom thou hast appointed me to be governor in due time. *Forget* their former danger, and thy glorious mercy in delivering them, and their own duty to thee for it. Hereby it most plainly appears that David, in these and the like imprecations against his enemies, was not moved thereunto by his private malice, or desire of revenge, but by the respect which he had to God's honour and the general good of his people. *Scatter them*, Heb. *make them to wander*. As they wandered about the city and country to do me mischief, ver. 6, so let their punishment be agreeable to their sin; let them wander from place to place, to wit, for meat, as it is expressed, ver. 15, that they may carry the tokens of thy justice and their own shame to all places where they come. *Bring them down* from that power and dignity in which thou hast set them, which they do so wickedly abuse; and from the height of their carnal hopes and confidences of success against me.

12 [n]*For* the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying *which* they speak.

n Prov. 12. 13. & 18. 7.

For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips; for their ungodly, and injurious, and pernicious speeches, of which he speaks ver. 7, and in many other places. *Let them be taken*, as in a snare, in order to their ruin. Let thy judgments overtake them. *In their pride;* for their proud and insolent speeches against thee, ver. 7. *For cursing and lying;* for their execrations and lying reports, which they have raised or spread abroad concerning me. *Which they speak;* which they are ready to utter upon all occasions.

13 [o]Consume *them* in wrath, consume *them*, that they *may* not *be:* and [p]let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.

o Ps. 7. 9.

p Ps. 83. 18.

Consume them by degrees, and after thou hast made them to wander about, ver. 11. *That they may not be*, to wit, in the land of the living, any more; as this phrase is frequently understood, whereof divers instances have been given. *Let them know* experimentally, and to their cost, *that God ruleth* over and above them; that though Saul be king, yet God is his superior in power and authority, and all things among us shall be disposed, not as it pleaseth Saul, which his parasites are always suggesting to him, but as God will; and therefore I shall be preserved, and in fit time crowned, in spite of all that Saul or his forces can do against me. *In Jacob;* in the land and over the people of Israel, whose king and governor he is in a peculiar manner. *Unto;* or, and *unto;* the conjunction *and* being oft understood, as hath been noted before. These words may be referred, either, 1. To God's ruling; let them know *that God ruleth*, not only in Jacob, but also *to the ends of the earth*. Or, 2. To men's knowing; *let them*, or *let men, know, even to the ends of the earth, that God ruleth in Jacob;* let thy judgments be so manifest and dreadful in the destruction of thy wicked enemies, that not only Israelites, but even the remote nations of the world, may see it, and acknowledge thy power and providence in it. *The ends of the earth;* either of this land; or rather, of the world. The sense is, That by those eminent and extraordinary discoveries of thy power, and wisdom, and justice it may be evident, both to

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them and to all that hear of it, that thou art no puny, or inferior, or topical god, like the gods of heathens, whose government is confined to a narrow compass; but the high and mighty God, and the great Ruler of the whole world.

q ver. 6. 14 And [q]at evening let them return; *and* let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

What was their sin and their choice to do with evil design, let it be their punishment to do it by constraint, and for meat, as it follows, ver. 15.

r Job 15. 23. Ps. 109. 10. † Heb. *to eat.* ‖ Or, *if they be not satisfied, then they will stay all night.* 15 Let them [r]wander up and down †for meat, ‖and grudge if they be not satisfied.

Wander up and down for meat, to get a livelihood. *And grudge if they be not satisfied:* when their bodies are hungry, let their minds be discontented. Or, as others render the words, *and lodge,* or *be forced to lodge, all night, when they are not satisfied.* Let them go to their rest with an empty stomach.

16 But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

s Ps. 18. 1. t ver. 9, 10. 17 Unto thee, [s]O my strength, will I sing: [t]for God *is* my defence, *and* the God of my mercy.

Unto thee, i. e. to thy honour; or rather, *of* or *concerning thee,* as that particle is sometimes used.

PSALM LX.

* Ps. 60. ‖ Or, *A golden Psalm.* * 2 Sam. 8. 3, 13. 1 Chr. 18. 3, 12. ¶ To the chief Musician * upon Shushaneduth, ‖ Michtam of David, to teach; * when he strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand.

Shushan-eduth: this, like the rest, seems to be the name of an instrument, or song, or tune, then well known, but now quite unknown and forgotten; it may be and is by some rendered, *the lily* or *rose of the testimony,* or *oracle;* but why it was so called is a matter of mere conjecture, and of small importance to us to know. *To teach,* to wit, in an eminent manner; or for the special instruction of God's church and people in some points of great moment; as, concerning the grievous calamities to which God's church and people were obnoxious, ver. 1—3, and concerning the certainty of God's promises, and of their deliverance out of them, upon condition of their faith and obedience; which doctrines were of great moment, especially to the Israelites, who were, and were likely to be, exercised in the same manner, and with the same variety and vicissitudes of condition, under which their ancestors had been. Or whereas other songs were to be learned only by the Levites, or by some of them, this possibly was one of them, which the people also were to be taught, and were to sing upon occasion, because of the public and general concernment which they all had in the matter herein contained. *Aram-naharaim;* or, *the Syrians* (so called from Aram, the son of Shem, Gen. x. 22) *of the two rivers,* or *of Mesopotamia,* the country between those two great and famous rivers, Tigris and Euphrates. *Aram-zobah,* or, *the Syrians of Zobah,* part of Syria so called, 2 Sam. viii. 5, 12.

This report seems not to agree with the histories to which this Psalm is supposed to relate, 2 Sam. viii. 13; 1 Chron. xviii. 12, neither in the persons slain, who are Edomites 1 Chron. xviii. 12, but Syrians here, and 2 Sam. viii. 13; nor in their numbers, which are here only twelve thousand, and there eighteen thousand; nor in the persons to whom this victory is ascribed, who is Joab here, David 2 Sam. viii. 13, and Abishai 1 Chron. xviii. 12. But these difficulties may easily be resolved by these considerations: 1. That David being king, and Joab lord-general of all his forces, and Abishai his lieutenant-general as to a considerable part of his army, the same victory may well be ascribed to any or every one of them; as it is usually done in like cases in the Roman and Grecian histories. 2. That the Edomites and Syrians were united in this war. 3. That twelve thousand might be slain in the pitched battle, and the rest by the pursuers in their flight. 4. That these several places may speak of several fights. See more of this business in the notes on 2 Sam. viii. 13.

The psalmist, complaining of former sad judgments, 1—3, acknowledgeth God's present mercy, 4. Comforting himself in the promises, he prayeth for help, and therein trusteth, 5—12.

a Ps. 44. 9. † Heb. *broken.* O GOD, [a]thou hast cast us off, thou hast †scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again. cir. 1040.

Cast us off; or, *rejected* or *forsaken us,* as to thy gracious and powerful presence, not only in the time of the judges, but also during Saul's reign. *Scattered us,* Heb. *broken us;* partly by that dreadful overthrow by the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxxi., and partly by the civil war in our own bowels, between me and Ishbosheth.

b 2 Chro. 7. 14. 2 Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: [b]heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

Made the earth to tremble; a poetical and hyperbolical expression, signifying great and dreadful changes among the people, as Hag. ii. 7, compared with Heb. xii. 26, 27. See also 1 Sam. xiv. 15. *Heal the breaches thereof;* reconcile all those differences which our civil wars have made among us.

c Ps. 71. 20. d Is. 51. 17, 22. Jer. 25. 15. 3 [c]Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: [d]thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.

Thou hast showed, Heb. *made* them *to see,* i. e. to experience or feel, as *seeing* is oft put, as Psal. xlix. 10, and oft elsewhere. Thou hast filled us with no less horror and trembling, than men intoxicated with strong and stupifying drink, which they are forced to drink. Compare Isa. li. 17, 21.

e Ps. 20. 5. 4 [e]Thou hast given a banner to them that feared thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.

Thou hast given; either, 1. Formerly. As thou hast sometimes afflicted thy people, so at other times thou hast delivered them. Or rather, 2. Now lately by and under me. *A banner;* which is a sign and instrument, 1. Of union. This people, who were lately divided and under several banners, thou hast now gathered together and united under one banner, to wit, under my government. 2. Of battle. Thou hast given us an army and power to oppose our enemies. We had our banner to set against theirs. 3. Of triumph. We have not lost our banner, but gained theirs, and brought it away in triumph: compare Psal. xx. 5. *To them that feared thee;* or, *for* or *on the behalf of them that feared thee.* An emphatical passage, implying that God gave so great a blessing to the people of Israel, for the sake of those few sincere Israelites which were among them. *Because of the truth;* not for any merit of ours, but to show thy faithfulness in making good thy promises which thou hast made, both to me, concerning the establishing of this kingdom to me and to my seed for ever, and to thy people in general, whom thou hast frequently promised to hear and help when they call upon thee in times of trouble.

f Ps. 108. 6, &c. 5 [f]That thy beloved may be delivered; save *with* thy right hand, and hear me.

Thy beloved people, last mentioned.

g Ps. 89. 35. h Josh. 1. 6. i Gen. 12. 6. k Josh. 13. 27. 6 God hath [g]spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will [h]divide [i]Shechem, and mete out [k]the valley of Succoth.

God hath spoken: having prayed that God would save and hear him, he now intimates that God had done it already, and had prevented his prayers, and *had spoken* to him, and of him, about the stablishing of his throne. *In his holiness;* or, *in the sanctuary* or *holy place,* to which David used to resort to ask counsel, and from whence God usually gave out his oracles. Or rather, *by his holiness,* as this very word

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is rendered, Psal. lxxxix. 35, which carries the form of an oath, and implies that God did not simply speak, but *swore by his holiness* as it is there expressed. *I will rejoice;* therefore I will turn my prayers into praises and rejoicings for what God had already done, and, as I am assured, will further do, on my behalf. *I will divide;* or, *distribute;* which supposeth possession and dominion. *Shechem;* a place within Jordan, in Mount Ephraim. See Gen. xxxiii. 18; Josh. xx. 7. *Succoth;* a place without Jordan. See Gen. xxxiii. 17; Josh. xiii. 27. He mentions Shechem and Succoth, either synecdochically for all the land of Canaan within and without Jordan, which, having been formerly divided between him and Ishbosheth, was now entirely in his possession; or because these two places had been in Ishbosheth's hands, and possibly were extraordinarily devoted to Saul's house, and utterly averse from David; or for some other reason now unknown.

l See Deut. xxxiii. 17. m Gen. xlix. 10.

7 Gilead *is* mine, and Manasseh *is* mine; [l]Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; [m]Judah *is* my lawgiver;

Gilead: all their land beyond Jordan, which was possessed by Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh, Numb. xxxii. 29, 39, 40; Deut. iii. 10, &c.; Josh. xiii. 25, &c. *Manasseh;* the other half of that tribe within Jordan. *Mine head;* either, 1. Mine horns, wherewith I shall push mine enemies, according to Moses's prophecy of that tribe, Deut. xxxiii. 17. Or, 2. *The keeper of mine head,* as Achish spake, 1 Sam. xxviii. 2. A chief part of my strength, either to offend mine enemies, or to defend myself. For this tribe was very numerous, and valiant, and rich. See Gen. xlviii. 19; Deut. xxxiii. 17; Psal. lxxviii. 9. *Judah is my lawgiver;* the chief seat of my throne and kingdom, and of the inferior *thrones of judgment,* Psal. cxxii. 5; the tribe to which the royal sceptre and lawgiver are appropriated by God's appointment, Gen. xlix. 10.

n Psal. cviii. 9. o Psal. lx. 8. p Psal. lxxxiii. 7. ‖ Or, *triumph thou because of me.* q Or, *by an army.* r See Ps. 108. 10.

8 [n]Moab *is* my washpot; [o]over Edom will I cast out my shoe: [p]Philistia, ‖triumph thou because of me.

Moab is my wash-pot, in which I shall wash my feet. I shall bring them into the lowest degree of servitude, and make them contemptible and miserable. See 2 Sam. viii. 2. *Over Edom,* an old, and proud, and insolent, and cruel enemy of Israel, *will I cast out my shoe,* i. e. I will use them like slaves; either holding forth my shoes, that they may pluck them off; or throwing my shoes at them, either in anger or contempt, as the manner of many masters was and is in such cases. Or, *I will take possession of them;* which was done by treading upon their land. Or, *I will tread upon their necks;* as they did in like case, Josh. x. 24. But these notions suit not with this phrase of *casting* or *throwing the shoe. Philistia, triumph thou because of me;* or, *over me,* as thou didst in former years use to triumph and insult over the poor Israelites. It is an ironical expression, signifying that her triumphs were come to an end.

† Heb. *city of strength.*

9 Who will bring me *into* the †strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

Who will bring me? None can do it but God, as he declareth in the following verses. *Into the strong city,* i. e. the cities; the singular number for the plural, which is usual. Having beaten his enemies out of the field, and into their strong cities, from whence they hoped to renew the war, he desires God's assistance, whereby he may take their strong holds, and so secure himself from further attempts against him. *Into Edom;* which was a high and rocky country Obad. 3, fortified by nature as well as by art, and therefore not to be invaded and subdued without a Divine hand.

s Psal. xliv. 9. t Psal. lx. 10.

10 *Wilt* not thou, O God, *which* [s]hadst cast us off? and *thou,* O God, *which* didst [t]not go out with our armies?

To wit, in former times, but now hast graciously returned to us. He brings to his own and people's minds their former calamities, that they may be more thankful for present mercies and deliverances.

u Psal. xxxiii. 12. † Heb. *vanity.*

11 Give us help from trouble: for [u]vain *is* the †help of man.

Though I have some reputation for valour and conduct, and though my people are very numerous, and now united under me, yet all this will avail little or nothing without thy almighty help.

t Num. 24. 18. 1 Chron. 19. 13. u Is. 63. 3.

12 Through God [t]we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall [u]tread down our enemies.

PSALM LXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The occasion of this Psalm was some great distress of David's, either by Saul or by Absalom, though it might be composed some time after it was past.

¶ To the chief Musician upon Neginah, *A Psalm* of David.

David, in great danger, fleeth to God for deliverance, upon experience of his former love, 1—3, *promising him perpetual service for hearing his prayers,* 4, 5; *and assuring himself a long life, he voweth thankfulness,* 6—8.

HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock *that* is higher than I.

Of the earth; or rather, *of the land;* to which David was driven by the tyranny of his enemies. *Lead me to the rock that is higher than I;* convey me into some high and secure fortress, which I could not reach without thy succour, and where mine enemies cannot come at me. He alludes to their custom of securing themselves in rocks, 1 Sam. xiii. 6, &c.

3 For thou hast been a shelter for me, *and* [a]a strong tower from the enemy.

a Prov. 18. 10.

4 [b]I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: [c]I will ‖trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

b Ps. 27. 4. c Ps. 17. 8. & 57. 1. & 91. 4. ‖ Or, *make my refuge.*

I shall, I doubt not, be restored to the tabernacle from which I am now banished, and, according to the desire of my heart, worship and enjoy thee there all my days. In the mean time, whilst I am in danger and trouble, I will cast myself upon thy protection with full confidence.

5 For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given *me* the heritage of those that fear thy name.

My vows; my fervent prayers, attended with many vows and promises, as was usual, especially in cases of great danger or difficulty, Gen. xxviii. 20; Judg. xi. 30, 31. Thou hast allotted me my portion with and amongst them that fear and worship thee, who are the *excellent* ones, *in whom is all my delight;* and upon that account I must acknowledge it to thy praise, that *the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage,* Psal. xvi. 3, 6. Thou hast granted me this singular mercy, to live in God's land, and to enjoy his presence and favour, and to worship in his tabernacle; which is the heritage that I and all that fear thee prize and desire above all things in the world.

d Ps. 21. 4. † Heb. *Thou shalt add days to the days of the king.* † Heb. *as generation and generation.*

6 [d]† Thou wilt prolong the king's life: *and* his years † as many generations.

The king's life, i. e. my life. He calls himself *king,* either, 1. Because he was actually *king,* though Absalom usurped the throne; or, 2. Because he was designed and anointed to be king; and by calling himself *king,* he supports himself under his present straits, and declares his confidence in God's promise of the kingdom to him. Yet we must not think that David did commonly and publicly call or own himself to be *king,* which had neither been true nor convenient for his affairs; but this Psalm either was not composed whilst Saul lived, or at least was penned only for his private use and comfort, and not *committed to the chief musician;* which indeed it could not be till David had the kingdom, and the inspection of the sacred music and service of the tabernacle. *His years,* i. e. the years of my life and reign. *As many generations;* as long as if I had a lease of it for many ages. Thus he speaks, partly because his kingdom was not like Saul's, a matter of one

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age, expiring with his life, but established to him and his heirs for ever; and partly because Christ, his Son and Heir, should actually and in his own person possess the kingdom for ever.

7 He shall abide before God for ever:
[c] Ps. 40. 11. Prov. 20. 28. O prepare mercy [c] and truth, *which* may preserve him.

He shall abide, or *sit*, to wit, in the throne, Jer. xiii. 13. *Before God;* living and ruling as in God's presence, and serving God with his royal power, and worshipping him in his tabernacle. *Prepare*, or *order*, or *appoint*, as this word signifies, Jonah i. 17; iv. 6. *Mercy and truth;* either, 1. The graces of *mercy* or *compassion*, and *truth* or *faithfulness;* which are the great supporters of thrones, Prov. xx. 28; xxix. 14. Or rather, 2. Thy mercy and truth, i. e. the effects of them; thy *truth* in giving me those mercies which thou hast promised to me, and thy *mercy* in giving me such further blessings as I need and thou seest fit to give me.

8 So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

That so I may pay unto thee those services and sacrifices which I vowed to thee when I was in trouble.

PSALM LXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was made in a time of great danger and distress, or at least with respect to it, as is manifest from ver. 3, 4.

1048. ¶ To the chief Musician, to [*] Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.
[*] 1 Chron. 25. 1, 3.

To Jeduthun, a famous musician; of whom see 1 Chron. ix. 16; xvi. 42. Heb. *upon Jeduthun;* which might be the name of a musical instrument or tune invented by that Jeduthun, and therefore called by his name.

David testifieth his safety and quietness in God, to the discouragement of his enemies, 1—7, but to the encouragement of the godly. 8. No trust to be put in man, or worldly things; but in God, 9, 10, to whom power, mercy, and justice belong, 11, 12.

[‡] Or, *Only.* [a] Ps. 33. 20. [†] Heb. *is silent.* Ps. 65. 1. ‖ TRULY [a] my soul [†] waiteth upon God: from him *cometh* my salvation.

Truly; or, *surely*. This is my certain and fixed resolution. Or, *nevertheless*, as this particle is oft rendered. So the beginning of this Psalm is abrupt, as it is in some other Psalms. This seems to be the conclusion of a long and hard conflict, which David had within himself, as he often had, what course he should take to get out of his trouble. *Waiteth*, Heb. *is silent*, as it is also Psal. xxxvii. 7, i. e. silently, quietly, and patiently looks up to God for deliverance, and that in his time and way, without murmuring or despair, or using indirect and sinful practices. *From him cometh my salvation;* I have no hope of deliverance but from and by him.

[b] ver. 6. [†] Heb. *high place*, Ps. 59. 9, 17. [c] Ps. 37. 24. 2 [b] He only *is* my rock and my salvation; *he is* my [†] defence; [c] I shall not be greatly moved.

Though I may be shaken, yet I shall not be overthrown. Compare Psal. xxxvii. 24; 2 Cor. iv. 9.

3 How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you:
[d] Is. 30. 13. [d] as a bowing wall *shall ye be, and as* a tottering fence.

Ye, mine enemies, to whom now he turneth his speech. *Against a man*, i. e. against me, *a man* like yourselves, whom common humanity obligeth you to pity; a single man, who is no fit match for you; a poor, contemptible, miserable, and impotent creature, as the word *man* is oft used, as Psal. ix. 20; lxxxii. 7, &c., *a dead dog*, or *a flea*, or *a partridge*, as upon the same account he calleth himself, 1 Sam. xxiv. 14; xxvi. 20, whom you cannot thus pursue without reflecting disparagement upon yourselves, as he there saith. *Ye shall be slain all of you;* the mischief which you design for me shall fall upon your own heads. And accordingly Saul and the generality of these men were slain, 1 Sam. xxxi. *As a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence*, i. e. as suddenly and easily overthrown as these are.

4 They only consult to cast *him* down from his excellency: they delight in lies:
[e] Ps. 28. 3. [†] Heb. *in their inward parts.* [e] they bless with their mouth, but they curse [†] inwardly. Selah.

Him, to wit, the man mentioned ver. 3, i. e. himself; of whom he continues to speak in the third person. *From his excellency;* from the hopes and attainment of that royal dignity, to which God hath designed and anointed me. *In lies;* in secret slanders and execrations, covered with flatteries and fair speeches, as it here follows.

5 [f] My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation *is* from him.
[f] ver. 1, 2.

6 He only *is* my rock and my salvation: *he is* my defence; I shall not be moved.

7 [g] In God *is* my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God.
[g] Jer. 3. 23.

In God, Heb. *upon* or *with God*. It depends upon him, and his favour and help. *My glory;* either, 1. The matter of my glorying. Or, 2. That honour which I either have or hope for.

8 Trust in him at all times; ye people,
[h] 1 Sam. 1. 15. Ps. 42. 4. Lam. 2. 19. [i] Ps. 18. 2. [h] pour out your heart before him: God *is* [i] a refuge for us. Selah.

Trust in him at all times, ye people; by my example be encouraged, and learn to trust God. *Pour out your heart before him*, i. e. make known all the desires, and cares, and griefs of your hearts to him freely and frequently, with confident expectation of obtaining what you want or desire from him.

9 [k] Surely men of low degree *are* vanity,
[k] Ps. 39. 5, 11. Is. 40. 15, 17. Rom. 3. 4. ‖ Or, *alike.* *and* men of high degree *are* a lie: to be laid in the balance, they *are* ‖ altogether *lighter* than vanity.

Vanity, i. e. most vain, impotent, and helpless creatures in themselves. This he delivers as a reason or argument to enforce his foregoing exhortation; *trust in God*, because there is no other person or thing to which you can safely trust. *A lie*, because they promise much, and raise men's expectations upon consideration of their great power and dignity, but are not able to perform, and generally deceive those who trust in them; in which respect *lying* is ascribed to *a fountain*, Jer. xv. 18, to *wine*, Hos. ix. 2, to *the olive*, Hab. iii. 17, when they do not give what they promise.

10 Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: [l] if riches increase, set not your heart *upon them.*
[l] Job 31. 25. Ps. 52. 7. Luke 12. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 17.

Trust not in oppression; as you may not trust any other men, so neither must you trust to yourselves, nor to your own wit, or industry, or courage, by which you may oppress others, and so think to secure and enrich yourselves. *Become not vain;* lifting up and feeding yourselves with vain hopes, and expectations of safety and felicity, from those riches which you take from others by robbery or violence. *Set not your heart upon them;* so as to please yourselves immoderately in them, to place your hope, and trust, and chief joy in them, or to grow proud and insolent because of them.

11 God hath spoken [m] once; twice have I heard this; that [n] ‖ power *belongeth* unto God.
[m] Job 33. 14. [n] Rev. 19. 1. ‖ Or, *strength.*

Twice, i. e. frequently, as Job xxxiii. 14, both immediately, as at Sinai, and by his holy prophets from time to time. *That power belongeth unto God;* that power is God's prerogative; and consequently all creatures, either against or without him, are poor impotent things, to which no man can trust without certain disappointment, and God alone is fit to be trusted.

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12 Also unto thee, O LORD, *belongeth* [a] mercy: for [b] thou renderest to every man according to his work.

[a] Ps. 86. 15 & 103. 8. & 145. 8. Dan. 9. 9. Joel 2. 13. [b] Job 34. 11. Prov. 24. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Ezek. 7. 27. & 33. 20. Matt. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Eph. 6. 8. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Rev. 22. 12.

Belongeth mercy, or *benignity*, or readiness to do good. Thou art no less willing than able to defend and preserve all that put their trust in thee. *For;* or, *therefore;* for the following words seem to be either a reason or proof of, or an inference from, the two foregoing properties of God, *power* and *mercy*. God is almighty, therefore he can easily subdue and destroy all his and mine ungodly enemies, and recompense unto them all their malicious and wicked practices. He is also mild and merciful, and therefore will pardon good men's failings, and graciously reward me and others of his people according to our integritry. *According to his work;* according to the nature and quality, though not according to the proportion, of their works, whether they be good or bad. And this, as he is obliged to do by his holy nature, and by that respect which he oweth to his own glory, so he is able to do it, being omnipotent, and willing to do it to the godly, (which was the only thing that might be doubted, because of their manifold and great corruptions, and imperfections, and miscarriages,) because he is merciful and gracious.

PSALM LXIII.

[a] 1 Sam. 22. 5. & 23. 14, 15, 16. ¶ A Psalm of David, [a] when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

Where he hid himself from Saul. 1 Sam. xxii. 5; xxiii. 14, 15; xxvi. 1, 2.

David in the wilderness, complaining bitterly of his banishment from God's house, thirsteth and longeth for it, 1—3. *His manner of blessing God. His experience, hope, and delight in God,* 4—8. *Comforteth himself that his enemies shall be destroyed, and that he shall be in safety,* 9—11.

[a] Ps. 42. 2. & 84. 2. [b] Heb. *early.* [c] Heb. *without water.* O GOD, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: [b] my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and †thirsty land, [c] †where no water is;

My God; in covenant with me. *Early*, Heb. *in the morning;* which implies the doing it with greatest diligence and speed, taking the first and the best time for it, as Job viii. 5; Psal. lxxviii. 34; Prov. i. 28. *Thirsteth for thee*, i. e. for the presence and enjoyment of thee in thy house and ordinances, as the next verse declareth it. *Longeth;* or, *languisheth*, or *pineth away*. The desire of my soul after thee is so vehement and insatiable, that my very body feels the effects of it, as it commonly doth of all great passions. *A dry and thirsty land, where no water is;* so called, either, 1. Metaphorically; in a land where I want the refreshing waters of the sanctuary. Or, 2. Properly; I thirst not so much for water (which yet I greatly want) as for thee.

[a] Exod. 33. 18, 19. & 34. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 13. 12. [b] Heb. 9. 24. 1 John 3. 2. & 4. 12. 2 To see [b] thy power and thy glory, so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

To see, i. e. to enjoy, as *seeing* is oft taken. *Thy power and thy glory;* either, 1. The ark, which is called God's *strength* and *glory*. 1 Sam. iv. 21; 1 Chron. xvi. 11; Psal. lxxviii. 61. Or rather, 2. The powerful and glorious effects and evidences of thy gracious presence there. *So as I have seen thee;* whereof I have formerly had great and comfortable experience; which makes me more sensible of my present loss, and more thirsty after those enjoyments.

[c] Ps. 36. 7. 3 [c] Because thy lovingkindness *is* better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

This is the reason of the foregoing thirst after God. *Thy loving-kindness*, i. e. the discoveries and influences of thy grace and favour, which thou usually impartest to thy people in the sanctuary. *Is better than life;* is more durable, and comfortable, and satisfactory than the present life, with all inestimable advantages belonging to it. *My lips shall praise thee*, both for my former taste and experiences of this truth, and for the assurance of my restitution to the same blessed enjoyments.

[d] Ps. 104. 33. & 146. 2. 4 Thus will I bless thee [d] while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.

Thus, i. e. so as I have done and now do. Or, upon that occasion, when I shall be restored. Or, for this reason, being so sensible of the sweetness of thy favour. Or, *certainly;* for this particle is sometimes used as a note of asseveration, as it is Psal. cxxvii. 2; Isa. xvi. 6. *I will lift up my hands* towards thee in heaven, in prayers and praises. *In thy name;* according to thy command. Or, with confidence in thy name.

[e] Ps. 36. 8. † Heb. *fatness.* 5 My soul shall be [e] satisfied as *with* †marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise *thee* with joyful lips:

When thou shalt fulfil my earnest desire of enjoying thee in the sanctuary; though now in my exile I groan and pine away for want of that mercy.

[f] Ps. 42. 6. & 119. 55. & 149. 5. 6 When [f] I remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night* watches.

[g] Ps. 61. 4. 7 Because thou hast been my help, therefore [g] in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

Remember thee: in the mean time, whilst I cannot enjoy thee, I will quiet and comfort myself with the thoughts and remembrance of thy kindness to me. *Upon my bed*, Heb. *upon my beds*, implying that he was frequently forced to change his bed and lodging, being driven from place to place. *In the night watches;* in the several seasons of the night, which was divided into three or four watches; of which see Exod. xiv. 24; Judg. vii. 19; Mark xiii. 35. When others sleep securely, my sleep is interrupted by my perplexity and grief for my absence from thy house, and when I awake my thoughts are fixed upon thee, &c. *I will rejoice;* I will rest securely and joyfully in thy protection.

8 My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.

Followeth hard after thee, i. e. pursueth thee eagerly, diligently, and resolvedly, and as it were step by step, when thou seemest to run away from me; which is the emphasis of this Hebrew word. My soul and spirit cleaveth to thee, as this verb signifies, Gen. ii. 24; Jer. xiii. 11, when my body is absent from thy sanctuary. *Upholdeth me:* I do not lose my labour in following hard after thee; for though I am not yet restored to the enjoyment of thy presence in thy house, yet I have present supports from thee, whereby my spirit is kept from fainting under my manifold pressures, and is enabled with faith and patience to wait upon thee, till thou seest fit to deliver me.

9 But those *that* seek my soul, to destroy *it*, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

To destroy it, i. e. to take away my life. *Into the lower parts of the earth;* either, 1. Into hell. Or rather, 2. Into their grave, as this phrase is used, Ezek. xxxi. 14, 18. But how is this true, when they are supposed to be devoured by foxes, ver. 10? *Answ.* This may be understood, either, 1. Of divers persons. Some of their slain might be buried, and others lie unburied. Or, 2. Of the same persons; they did go into the earth, but not immediately, but were first devoured of foxes, and the remainders of them were buried, as is frequently done in such cases. Or this phrase may note not so much the place as the state of the dead; this being universally said of those that die, whether they are buried or unburied, that they *return to the earth* or *dust*, Job i. 21; Eccles. xii. 7.

† Heb. *They shall make him run out like water by the hands of the sword.* [h] Ezek. 35. 5. 10 †[h] They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.

They shall fall by the sword, i. e. die in battle, as David foretold, 1 Sam. xxvi. 10, and as was accomplished in Saul and his followers, who were David's greatest enemies, 1 Sam. xxxi. *They shall be a portion for foxes;* their carcasses shall be unburied upon the earth, and thereby become a prey to wild and ravenous creatures, and especially to foxes, which were in those parts in great abundance; and which did and do feed not only upon fruits, Cant. ii. 15,

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but also upon flesh, as experience showeth. Besides, some very learned men think that the word rendered *foxes* is more general, and comprehends, besides foxes, another sort of creatures, like unto them called *thoes*, which were very numerous in this country; of which see on Judg. xv. 4.

11 But the king shall rejoice in God; [i]every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

[i] Deut. 6. 13. Is. 45. 23. & 65. 16. Zeph. 1. 5.

The king; I, who am already anointed king, and who shall be actually king, when these mine enemies are fallen by the sword. He speaks of himself in the third person, either out of modesty or out of prudence, because it was ambiguous, and might be understood either of himself or of Saul, whereby he might avoid the envy of the expression, if this Psalm was composed before he was king. *That sweareth by him;* either, 1. By the king; by whom they sometimes did swear, as Gen. xlii. 15; 2 Sam. xv. 21. But they did also swear by some other persons, of eminent place and authority, though under the king, as 1 Sam. i. 26; xx. 3. Nor is it likely that the psalmist would justify those kinds of oaths; this practice of swearing by one's name being accounted a part of that worship which is proper to God, both in the Old and New Testament. If this were meant of the king, it might better be rendered, *that sweareth to* (for so the particle *beth* is sometimes used) *him*, as subjects used to swear homage to their prince. So the sense is, all those that shall own me for their king. Or, 2. By God, who was last mentioned, that sweareth by the name of God, to wit, *in truth, and judgment, and righteousness*, as it is expressed, Jer. iv. 2, i. e. every sincere servant and worshipper of God; *swearing* being oft put for the whole worship of God, whereof it is a considerable part, and *swearers* by God for worshippers of him, as Isa. xix. 18; xlv. 23, compared with Rom. xiv. 11; Isa. lxv. 16. *Shall glory;* shall rejoice in my deliverance and exaltation, both for their respect to the honour and service of God, which I shall advance, and for the benefits which all good men and the whole kingdom shall feel by my government; whereas in Saul's time the vilest men were exalted, and good men oppressed and persecuted, and the whole kingdom groaned under his tyranny. *That speak lies;* that now make it their business to invent or spread lying and slanderous reports concerning me and others of God's people. *Shall be stopped;* I shall severely restrain and punish such wicked practices.

PSALM LXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter of this Psalm plainly declares that it was made in a time when David was greatly distressed and reproached; which he was, both under Saul, and in the time of Absalom's rebellion.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The psalmist complaining of his enemies, and describing their crafty and wicked practices, prayeth unto God for guard and deliverance, 1—6; foretelleth also their utter ruin, to the honour of God, and joy of the righteous, 7—10.

HEAR my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

From fear, i. e. from danger; the act or passion of *fear* being oft put for its object, *danger*, as Psal. xiv. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 14, and oft elsewhere.

2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

From the secret counsel, i. e. from the ill effects of their plots against me.

3 [a]Who whet their tongue like a sword, [b]*and* bend *their bows to shoot* their arrows, *even* bitter words:

[a] Ps. 11. 2. & 57. 4. [b] Ps. 58. 7. Jer. 9. 3.

Bend their bows to shoot their arrows; of which phrase see the notes on Psal. lviii. 7. *Bitter words;* slanderous and pernicious speeches against me.

4 That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

In secret; lying in ambush, or hiding themselves in secret places, as fowlers commonly do. *The perfect;* or, *upright man;* i. e. at me, who in spite of all their calumnies dare avow that my heart is perfect with God, and that I am blameless as to them, having given them no just provocation. *Suddenly;* at the very first opportunity. *Fear not;* neither men, because they conceal it from them, as appears from the foregoing and following words; nor God, whose judgments they despise.

5 [c]They encourage themselves *in* an evil ‖matter: they commune †of laying snares privily; [d]they say, Who shall see them?

[c] See Prov. 1. 11. ‖ Or, *speech.* † Heb. *to hide snares.* [d] Ps. 10. 11. & 59. 7.

They encourage themselves, Heb. *they strengthen* or *fortify themselves*, by firm resolutions, by assured confidence of success, by uniting their counsels and forces together, and by mutual encouragements and exhortations. *Who shall see them?* their snares are so secretly laid that David cannot discern, and therefore not avoid them.

6 They search out iniquities; ‖they accomplish †a diligent search: both the inward *thought* of every one *of them*, and the heart, *is* deep.

‖ Or, *we are consumed by that which they have throughly searched.* † Heb. *a search searched.*

They search out iniquities; they study diligently and constantly to find out either matter which they may lay to my charge, or new ways and means of doing me mischief. *They accomplish a diligent search;* they have long and accurately searched, till at last they have ripened and perfected their thoughts, and found out a very cunning and deep plot. Or, they say, *We have accomplished* our *accurate search.* By long searching we have at last found what we desired. *The heart is deep;* mine enemies are not only cruel and malicious, but also very cunning, both to contrive and conceal, and to execute their plots.

7 [e]But God shall shoot at them *with* an arrow; suddenly †shall they be wounded.

[e] Ps. 7. 12, 13. † Heb. *their wound shall be.*

God shall shoot at them; though I can neither search out or prevent their subtle devices, yet God can and will certainly do it. *Suddenly;* shortly and unexpectedly.

8 So they shall make [f]their own tongue to fall upon themselves: [g]all that see them shall flee away.

[f] Prov. 12. 13. & 18. 7. [g] Ps. 31. 11. & 52. 6.

The mischief of their hard speeches, and threats, and crafty counsels against me shall be turned against themselves. *Shall flee away;* partly through abhorrency of them, and partly through fear of being involved in their destruction.

9 [h]And all men shall fear, and shall [i]declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

[h] Ps. 40. 3. [i] Jer. 50. 28. & 51. 10.

All men, i. e. the greater number of those who shall see these events. *The work of God*, i. e. this admirable work of Divine power, and wisdom, and faithfulness. *Wisely consider of his doing;* learning wisdom by their folly and misery, and avoiding those evil courses which brought them to ruin.

10 [k]The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

[k] Ps. 32. 11. & 58. 10. & 68. 3.

In the Lord; or, *for the Lord*, i. e. not out of malice or ill will to the persons of their enemies, but for the honour of God, which by this means is fully vindicated and greatly advanced. *Shall glory*, to wit, in God, as their sure Rock and all-sufficient Portion.

PSALM LXV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The design of this Psalm seems to be to declare the great and glorious work of Divine Providence, both towards his church and the land of his people, and towards the rest of mankind.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm *and* Song of David.

David praiseth God for spiritual blessings, as hearing prayer, and purging away sin, 1—3, and for the blessedness of

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those that dwell in his courts, 4; *and also for temporal blessings, as governing the world, and the abundance of all worldly enjoyments*, 5—13.

PRAISE †waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

Waiteth, Heb. *is silent*, or *silence*, i. e. quietly waits, as this phrase is used also Psal. lxii. 1. And *praise* may be here put for the person or persons who use to praise God upon all occasions, and who are now prepared and ready to do so; as *deceit* is put for *a deceitful man*, as Prov. xii. 24, and *sin* for *the sinner*, Prov. xiii. 6, and *dreams* for *dreamers*, Jer. xxvii. 9. So the meaning may seem to be this, God's people patiently and believingly wait for an opportunity to offer their praises to God; for at present they seem to be in some straits, as divers passages of this Psalm do intimate. *In Zion:* though all the people of the world have great cause to praise thee, yet none pay thee this tribute, but thy people in *Zion;* and they indeed have many peculiar and eminent obligations and occasions to perform this duty. *Unto thee shall the vow be performed;* all the thank-offerings which thy people vowed unto thee in the time of their danger shall be faithfully paid, to wit, *in Zion;* which is to be repeated out of the first clause of the verse.

2 O thou that hearest prayer, [a]unto thee shall all flesh come.

[a] Is. 66. 23.

That hearest prayer; that usest and delightest to hear and answer the prayers of thy people in Zion; which he justly mentions as one of the chiefest of God's favours and privileges vouchsafed to his church. *All flesh*, i. e. men of all sorts and nations, who were allured by this and other singular benefits to join themselves to the Jewish church, according to Solomon's prediction, 1 Kings viii. 41—43. Withal this may be a tacit prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles.

3 [b]†Iniquities prevail against me: *as for* our transgressions, thou shalt [c]purge them away.

[b] Is. 59. 4. & 64. 12. ‖ Heb. *Matters of iniquities.* [c] Ps. 51. 2. & 79. 9. Is. 6. 7. Heb. 9. 14. 1 John 1. 7, 9.

Iniquities prevail against me; they are a burden too heavy for me, as he complains, Psal. xxxviii. 4. They are so many and great, that for them thou mightest justly reject my prayers, and destroy my person. But this is another glorious privilege granted to thy people, and that, in answer to their prayers, thou dost graciously pardon and purge away their sins.

4 [d]Blessed *is the man whom* thou [e]choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: [f]we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.

[d] Ps. 84. 4. & 144. 15. [e] Ps. 33. 12. [f] Ps. 36. 8.

Thou choosest, out of the lump of mankind, to be one of thy peculiar people. *Causest*, i. e. permittest and commandest, and by the disposal of thy providence, and the influences of thy grace, procurest and orderest. *To approach unto thee;* to draw near to God in his house and ordinances by prayer and praises, and other acts of acquaintance and communion with him. *In thy courts;* in the courts of thy house. He mentioneth *courts*, because the people were permitted to go no further into God's house. *Shall be satisfied;* for they only get that solid satisfaction which all men desire, but no other persons or people can find elsewhere. *With the goodness of thy house;* with the spiritual and everlasting blessings there conferred upon thy people, the grace, and favour, and fellowship of God, remission of sins, renovation of heart and life, the knowledge of God, and of ourselves, and of our duty and true interest, joy, and peace, and well-grounded hopes or assurance of eternal life; in comparison whereof all the enjoyments of this world are but dross and dung.

5 *By* terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; *who art* the confidence of [g]all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off *upon* the sea:

[g] Ps. 22. 27.

By terrible things; or, *in a terrible manner*, i. e. so as to strike thy people with a holy awe and reverence of thee and of thy judgments, and thine enemies with dread and horror. Or, *in a wonderful manner*, as this word is rendered in the Chaldee, Deut. x. 21; *things wonderful* and *terrible* being put together, as expressing the same thing, Psal. cvi. 22. *In righteousness*, i. e. by virtue of thy justice, or faithfulness, or goodness; whereby thou art inclined and engaged to help thy people when they are in distress, and resort unto thee by prayer. *Wilt thou answer us;* thou wilt graciously answer and grant our prayers and desires. *The confidence*, i. e. the only object of a safe and undeceiving confidence; for there is no other person or thing in the world that any man living can trust to without fear and certainty of disappointment. Or, thou art the stay and support of all mankind, by thy powerful and gracious providence, Psal. civ. 27; Acts xvii. 28; Heb. i. 3. Others refer this to the calling of the Gentiles. But that seems not to suit with the following verses, which manifestly speak of God's general providence. *Of all the ends of the earth;* not only of thy people Israel, but of all persons and nations, even as far as to the end of the earth, or of this vast continent in which we live. *Upon the sea;* or, in *the sea*, i. e. in the islands of the sea, which are here distinguished from the continent; and under those two heads are comprehended all the inhabitants of the world.

6 Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; [h]*being* girded with power:

[h] Ps. 93. 1.

Settest fast the mountains; that they are not overthrown by floods, or winds, or earthquakes, or other natural or violent causes; which stability they have only from God's providence, which sustains all persons and all things. *Being girded with power;* this our God being able to do it, and that with one single word.

7 [i]Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, [k]and the tumult of the people.

[i] Ps. 89. 9. & 107. 29. Matt. 8. 26. [k] Ps. 76. 10. Is. 17. 12, 13.

The noise of their waves, when the sea is tempestuous, and threatens to swallow up ships and men that are in it, or to overflow the earth. *And the tumult of the people;* and as he stills the natural, so also he quiets the metaphorical seas, tumultuous and unruly people; for multitudes of people are oft called *seas* in prophetical writings, as Isa. xvii. 12, 13; Jer. li. 42; Rev. xvii. 15.

8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening ‖to rejoice.

‖ Or, *to sing.*

The uttermost parts, to wit, *of the earth*, which is added to this word, ver. 5. *Thy tokens*, or *signs;* either, 1. At the sun, and moon, and stars, which are called *signs*, Gen. i. 14. But these are not matter of terror, but of delight to men; and the commonness and constancy of their courses makes most men neither fear nor much regard them. Or, 2. At the great and terrible judgments which God inflicts upon wicked men, and particularly upon the enemies of his people. Or rather, 3. At those terrible thunders, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and comets, or other strange meteors or works of God in the air; for he is here speaking of the natural works of God. *The outgoings of the morning and evening;* by which he understands, either, 1. The east, from whence the morning, or the sun, the cause of it, goeth forth, as it is expressed, Psal. xix. 6; and the west, from whence the evening or night is poetically supposed to come forth. So the meaning is, that God gives all the people of the world, from east to west, occasion to rejoice in the effects of his bounty and goodness to them. But if the psalmist had meant this, it is not probable that he would have expressed it in such a dark and doubtful phrase, which is never used in that sense, but rather by those known and usual expressions, *from east to west*, or, *from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof*, which phrase he useth Psal. l. 1; cxiii. 3. Or rather, 2. The successive courses of the morning and evening; or of the sun and moon, which go forth at those times, thereby making the morning and evening; both which are said to *rejoice* poetically, because they give men occasion of rejoicing, which the sun or the morning doth, because it gives them opportunity for the despatch of business, and for the enjoyment of manifold recreations and delights; and the moon or evening doth so, because it invites men to

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that rest and sleep which is both refreshing and necessary for them. Thus this whole verse speaks of the natural works of God; the former clause of such as are extraordinary and terrible, the latter of such as are ordinary and delightful.

l Deu. 11. 12. | Or, *after thou hadst made it to desire* rain. m Ps. 68. 9, 10. & 104. 13. Jer. 5. 24. n Ps. 46. 4.

9 Thou [l]visitest the earth, and [‖][m] waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it [n]with the river of God, *which* is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

Visitest, to wit, in mercy, or with thy favour, as this word is oft used. *The earth;* the whole earth, which is full of thy bounty. So he continues to declare the general providence of God to all men and people. Or rather *the land*, or *this land*, for here is an emphatical article. And so he comes from God's general providence over all places and nations, to his particular and special providence over his people in the land of Canaan, whereof he gives one eminent and considerable instance, to wit, his giving them rain and fruitful seasons, and that after a time of drought and scarcity, to which it is not improbably supposed that this Psalm relates. And this may be the particular occasion for which the psalmist said that *praise waited for God in Zion*, ver. 1. *Waterest it:* this is added to determine and explain the former general word, or to show how or wherein God visited it. *With the river of God;* either, 1. With the rivers which God hath made in the several parts of the earth, to make it moist and fruitful; although the fertility of the greatest part of the earth doth not depend so much upon the rivers below, as upon the rains from above. Or, 2. With the river Jordan, which sometimes overflowed its banks. But that overflow reached only to a small part of the land. Or rather, 3. With showers of rain, which he very significantly calls a *river* for their plenty, and *the river of God*, i. e. of God's immediate making and providing when he sees fit; which is opposed both to those little rivulets or channels which husbandmen or gardeners cut for the watering of their grounds; and to those greater rivers which run with a constant course, and by their little channels derived from them, or by their overflows, do water and enrich the earth, as Nilus did Egypt; to which these words may seem to have a special reference, especially if they be compared with Deut. xi. 10—12, &c. *Thou preparest;* by this means thou preparest the earth for bringing forth corn, and ripenest the corn in the earth. *Preparest them;* for them, to wit, the inhabitants of the earth or land here mentioned, for their use and benefit. *Provided for it;* or, *disposed*, or *ordered*, or *prepared it*, to wit, the earth, which without this would be hard and barren.

‖ Or, *thou causest* rain *to descend into the furrows thereof.* † Heb. *thou dissolvest it.*

10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: ‖thou settlest the furrows thereof: †thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

Thou settlest, to wit, in that condition which is fit for fruit. Or, *thou bringest down;* for the rain dissolves the high and hard clods of earth. When all is done, the fruitfulness of the earth must not be ascribed to the rain or sun, or any second causes, but to thy blessing alone.

† Heb. *the year of thy goodness.*

11 Thou crownest †the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

Thou, by thy powerful goodness, dost enrich and adorn all the seasons of the year with their proper fruits and blessings. *Thy paths;* the clouds, upon which God is frequently said to walk or ride, as Job xxxvi. 28; xxxviii. 26, 27; Psal. civ. 3; Nah. i. 3; which sense is favoured by the next verse, where these paths are said to *drop*, &c. *Drop fatness;* make the earth fat and fruitful.

† Heb. *are girded with joy.*

12 They drop *upon* the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills †rejoice on every side.

They, God's paths, *drop upon the pastures of the wilderness;* which, though neglected by men, are furnished by God with food for wild beasts, which, being his creatures, he careth for by this means. *The little hills;* the hills of Canaan, which for the generality of them were but small, if compared with the great and high mountains in divers parts of the world. He mentions *the hills*, because these being most dry and parched with the sun, most need and are most refreshed with the rain. *Rejoice on every side;* as being moistened and satisfied with rain in all parts and sides of them.

13 The pastures are clothed with flocks; [o]the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

o Is. 65. 10.

This is added as the effect of these comfortable rains, that they fill the pastures with grass for cattle, and the valleys (which he mentions as the most fruitful places, though he doth not exclude the rest) with corn for the use of man. *They shout for joy, they also sing*, i. e. they are abundantly satisfied with thy goodness, and in their manner sing forth the praises and declare the goodness of their Creator and Benefactor. Compare Psal. cxlvii. 8. Such passions or actions as these are oft figuratively ascribed to lifeless creatures, both in sacred and profane poetical writings; which are said to *rejoice* or *mourn*, &c., when their condition is such as calls for rejoicing or mourning, and would cause them to do so, if they were capable of such actions

PSALM LXVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The author and time of the composing of this Psalm are uncertain. This is manifest, and sufficient for our understanding of it, that it was made upon the occasion of some great and glorious deliverance afforded to the Israelites, after and out of some grievous and general calamity, and, as some not improbably conceive, that out of Babylon.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Song *or* Psalm.

The prophet exhorteth all to praise God for his wonderful works, 1—8, *especially for delivering his church out of all trouble*, 9—12. *He promiseth unto God thanksgiving, and to pay the vows he made in trouble*, 13—15; *calling to others to see God's goodness to his soul, blesseth him for it*, 16—20.

a Ps. 100. 1. † Heb. *all the earth.*

[a]MAKE a joyful noise unto God, †all ye lands:

Ye people of all nations, who have seen the wonderful power, and wisdom, and fidelity, and goodness of God in our deliverance, it becomes you to acknowledge it with admiration and rejoicing. Or, *all the land*, or *this land*. But the former sense is more probable from ver. 4, where this word is so used. And it is very proper in this place, and usual in other places of Scriptures, to invite the Gentile world to the contemplation and celebration of God's works to and for his people. See Deut. xxxii. 43; 1 Chron. xvi. 23, 24

2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

i. e. Praise him in an extraordinary and eminent degree, so as he may have much glory from you.

b Ps. 65. 5. c Ps. 18. 44. | Or, *yield feigned obedience.* 1 s. 18. 44. & 81. 15. † Heb. *lie.*

3 Say unto God, How [b]terrible *art thou in* thy works! [c]through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies ‖†submit themselves unto thee.

How terrible art thou in thy works! to wit, to thine enemies, as it follows. *Submit themselves unto thee*, Heb. *lie unto thee*, i. e. profess subjection to thee, not sincerely and freely, but by constraint, and out of a servile fear.

d Ps. 22. 27. & 67. 3. & 117. 1. e Ps. 96. 1, 2.

4 [d]All the earth shall worship thee, and [e]shall sing unto thee; they shall sing *to* thy name. Selah.

Many people of divers nations shall be so affected with thy stupendous works, that they shall worship and praise thee for them, and all people shall do so, and shall have just cause to do so; and the time will come when all nations will actually do so, to wit, in the days of the Messias.

f Ps. 46. 8.

5 [f]Come and see the works of God: *he is* terrible *in his* doing toward the children of men.

See the works of God; consider them wisely and seriously, for God's glory, and for your own good. *Toward the children of men;* to all his enemies; whom he calls *the chil-*

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dren of men, partly in way of contempt, to show how unable they are either to avoid or resist the great God; and partly in opposition to his own people, who are frequently called *the children of God*.

e Ex. 14. 21. 6 [e]He turned the sea into dry *land*:
a Josh. 3. 14. [a]they went through the flood on foot:
there did we rejoice in him.

The flood, or *river*, to wit, Jordan. *We*, i. e. our nation, or our ancestors, in whose loins we then were, and the benefit of which ancient deliverance we at this day enjoy. See the like expressions Psal. lxxxi. 5; Hos. xii. 4. The whole people of Israel are oft considered as one body, continued through all succeeding generations, united in the bond of the same covenant and worship, and in the possession of the same promises, and privileges, and blessings, and acted by one and the same spirit; and therefore several and contrary things may reasonably be ascribed to them, in regard of their several parts and ages, and what was done in one age may be imputed to another by virtue of their strict conjunction with the same body.

7 He ruleth by his power for ever;
i Ps. 11. 4. [i]his eyes behold the nations: let not the
rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

The same power which God had and put forth for his people in ancient time, he still hath in as great vigour as ever, and is not at all weakened by age, and is as able and ready to act for them now as ever he was; which he hath showed by this late and glorious instance. *His eyes behold the nations*; he sees all their secret and subtle devices, and can and will defeat them, when he sees fit. *Let not the rebellious exalt themselves*; lift up their hands against God, or against his people. Or, *the rebellious* (i. e. those people which rebel against this almighty God and his laws) *shall not exalt themselves*, as they vainly hope and design to do; but shall be brought down and destroyed, as is hereby implied.

8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the
voice of his praise to be heard:

Ye people of other nations, that have served or yet do serve other gods.

† Heb. *putteth*. Ps. 121. 3. 9 Which † holdeth our soul in life, and
k suffereth not our feet to be moved.

Which holdeth our soul in life; who by a succession of miracles of mercy hath kept us alive in the midst of a thousand deaths, to which we were exposed, and hath restored us to life, when we were like dead men, and dry bones scattered at the mouth of the grave. *To be moved*, to wit, so as to fall into mischief and utter ruin, as our enemies designed.

l Isa. 17. 3. & 48. 10. m Zech. 13. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. 10 For [l]thou, O God, hast proved us:
[m]thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

For, or *yet*, or *nevertheless*. Though thou hast hitherto helped us, and now delivered us, yet for a season thou hast sorely afflicted us. *Tried us, as silver is tried*, i. e. severely, as if it were in a burning furnace; and with a design to try our sincerity, and to purge out the dross, or the wicked, from among us.

n Lam. 1. 13. 11 [n]Thou broughtest us into the net;
thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

Thou broughtest us into the net which our enemies laid for us, and which could never have taken or held us but by the permission and disposal of thy providence, which gave us into their hands.

o Is. 51. 23. p Is. 43. 2. 12 [o]Thou hast caused men to ride over
our heads; [p]we went through fire and
through water: but thou broughtest us
† Heb. *moist*. out into a † wealthy *place*.

Men; weak, and mortal, and miserable men, as the word signifies, no better nor stronger than we, if thou hadst not given them power over us. *To ride over our heads*; to ride upon our shoulders. By thy permission they have used us like slaves, yea, like beasts, to carry their persons or burdens. Compare Isa. li. 23. *Through fire and through water*, i. e. through various and dangerous trials and calamities. See Psal. xxxii. 6; lxix. 2; Ezek. xv. 7; xxx. 8. *Into a wealthy place*, Heb. *into a moist* or *well-watered place*; such as Canaan was, both in a proper sense and figuratively, as being replenished with Divine graces and blessings.

q Ps. 109. 4. & 116. 14, 17, 18, 19. r Eccles. 5. 4. 13 [q]I will go into thy house with burnt
offerings: [r]I will pay thee my vows,
+ Heb. *opened*. 14 Which my lips have † uttered, and
my mouth hath spoken, when I was in
trouble.

Hitherto he spoke in the plural number, but now he begins to speak in the singular number; but still the speech is continued of the same person or persons; only sometimes the whole body speaks, and sometimes one man speaks in the name of all the rest.

+ Heb. *marrow*. 15 I will offer unto thee burnt sacri-
fices of † fatlings, with the incense of
rams; I will offer bullocks with goats.
Selah.

With the incense of rams; with the fat of rams, which in these peace-offerings was burnt upon the altar, and so vanished into smoke like incense, and which is no less pleasing to God than incense.

s Ps. 34. 11. 16 [s]Come *and* hear, all ye that fear
God, and I will declare what he hath done
for my soul.

All ye that fear God; whether Israelites, or Gentiles proselyted to them. Let every Israelite take notice of what God hath done for the nation in general, and let the Gentiles observe God's goodness to the children of Israel. *What he hath done for my soul*; which he hath held in life, as he said, ver. 9, in the greatest dangers of death.

17 I cried unto him with my mouth, and he
was extolled with my tongue.

With my mouth; with a loud voice and great fervency: or it is a pleonasm, as Psal. xliv. 1, *We have heard with our ears*. *Extolled*, i. e. praised by me, to wit, for answering my prayers.

t Job 27. 9. Prov. 15. 29. & 28. 9. Is. 1. 15. John 9. 31. Jam. 4. 3. 18 [t]If I regard iniquity in my heart,
the LORD will not hear *me*:

If I regard, Heb. *if I have or had seen*, or *looked upon*, to wit, with approbation and affection, as Job xxxi. 26; Hab. i. 13. Men look upon what they like, and turn away their face from what they loathe or hate. *Iniquity*; any sin whatsoever, and especially idolatry, which is oft expressed by this word, to which the Israelites were very prone, and to which they had most powerful temptations from the examples, and counsels, and promises, and threats of the idolaters, in whose land and power they had been. And so this is a purgation of themselves from that crime, somewhat like that Psal. xliv. 20, 21, and in general from those gross and reigning sins whereof they had been guilty formerly. *In my heart*; if my heart was false to God, and did cleave to idols or to any wickedness, although I might for some prudential reasons forbear the gross and outward acts. Compare Psal. xliv. 17, 18. If I had been guilty of that hypocrisy wherewith mine enemies charged me, and had been a secret favourer of wickedness when I pretended great piety. Or, If I did not cry unto God with my heart, but only howled for corn and wine, &c.; and whilst I cried to God with my tongue, my heart was set upon sin, or I desired only that which I resolved in my heart to spend upon my lusts. *Will not hear me*; or, *would not have heard me*; as divers learned interpreters translate it; the future being put potentially, as is usual among the Hebrews. For God heareth not sinners, John ix. 31, nor hypocrites, Job xxvii. 8, 9; Prov. xv. 29.

u Ps. 116. 1, 2. 19 *But* verily God [u]hath heard *me*; he
hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

Which is a public vindication and a Divine testimony of my integrity against all my false accusers.

20 Blessed *be* God, which hath not turned away
my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

Turned away, or *rejected*, or *removed*, to wit, from his sight and audience, but hath received and granted it. *His mercy*: though he had now asserted his own innocency and sincere piety, yet he imputeth not God's hearing of his prayers to that, but solely unto God's grace and mercy.

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PSALM LXVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a prayer for the church of Israel, as also for the Gentile world, whose conversion he prophetically describes.

¶ To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm *or* Song.

The church prayeth for the enlargement of the kingdom of God, 1, 2, *to the joy of the nations,* 3—5; *and for the increase of spiritual and temporal blessings,* 6, 7.

a Num. 6. 25. Ps. 4. 6. & 31. 16. & 80. 3, 7, 19. & 119. 135. † Heb. *with us.*

1 GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* [a]cause his face to shine †upon us. Selah.

Unto us, thy people of Israel. As thou hast hid thy face and favour from us, so now do thou manifest it to us. For the phrase, see Numb. vi. 25, 26; Psal. xxxi. 16.

b Acts 18. 25. c Luke 2. 30, 31. Tit. 2. 11.

2 That [b]thy way may be known upon earth, [c]thy saving health among all nations.

Nor do we desire this mercy only for our comfort, but also for the advancement of thy glory, and the propagation of the true religion among all nations, who by the contemplation of thy gracious and wonderful works to and for us will be induced to love and serve thee, and to list themselves among thy people. By God's *way* he understands, either, 1. That way wherein God walks; or the manner of his dealing with his people: How gracious and bountiful a Master thou art to all thy servants! Or rather, 2. That way wherein God requires men to walk, the way of God's precepts, the way of truth, or the true religion; as *the way* or *ways of the Lord* are frequently taken, Gen. xviii. 19; Judg. ii. 22; Psal. xviii. 21; cxix. 1; Acts xviii. 25, 26, &c.; the same which in the next clause is called his *saving health*, Heb. *salvation;* and both together signify the way of salvation, which the psalmist desires may be known among all nations; which was expected by the ancient and godly Jews at the coming of the Messias, who is called *the way*, John xiv. 6, and God's *salvation*, Luke ii. 30. And so the sense of the place is this, Deal so graciously with thy people Israel, that thereby the Gentile world may at last be allured to join themselves with them, and to embrace their religion and Messias; according to that famous prophecy, Zech. viii. 23, *In those days ten men—out of all—nations—shall take hold of the skirt of—a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard* that *God is with you.*

d Ps. 66. 4.

3 [d]Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O hasten that time, when all the Gentiles shall forsake their dumb idols, and serve and praise thee the living God, as they will have abundant cause to do.

e Ps. 96. 10, 13. & 98. 9. † Heb. *lead.*

4 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for [e]thou shalt judge the people righteously, and †govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Be glad and sing for joy, for thy transcendent mercy to them, in rescuing them from the vanities and damnable errors of their fathers, and in bringing them to the knowledge of the true God, and of eternal life. *Shalt judge,* i. e. rule and govern them, as it is explained in the next clause, and as this phrase is used. *Righteously;* which is the great commendation of any government, and the greatest argument and encouragement to the Gentiles to put themselves under it; the rather, because they had found the misery of living under the unrighteous and tyrannical government of the devil, and of their idolatrous and heathenish rulers. *Govern,* Heb. *lead,* to wit, gently, as a shepherd doth his sheep; and not rule them with rigour, as other lords had done.

5 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

f Lev. 26. 4. Isa. 55. 12. Ezek. 34. 27.

6 [f]*Then* shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, *even* our own God, shall bless us.

When the people of the earth shall be converted to the worship and service of the true God, God will take away his curse from the earth, and cause it to yield them abundance of all sorts of fruits; under which one blessing promised under the law to them that obey God, all other blessings both temporal and spiritual are comprehended, as is very usual in the Old Testament. *Our own God;* he who is Israel's God in a peculiar manner, by that everlasting covenant which he hath made with us.

g Ps. 22. 27.

7 God shall bless us; and [g]all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

PSALM LXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The occasion of this Psalm seems to have been David's translation of the ark to Zion, which was managed with great solemnity and devotion, and celebrated with some Psalms, and this among the rest. For the first words are the very same which Moses appointed for such occasions, Numb. x. 35, and the following verses pursue the same matter with the first. Thence he falls into a description of some of the excellent properties and glorious works of the God to whom this ark belonged. But because David very well knew that both himself and the ark were types of Christ, and that the church and people of Israel were a type of the catholic church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, and that the legal administrations and actions were types of those of the gospel, he therefore, by the Spirit of prophecy, looked through and beyond the present actions and types, unto the great mysteries of Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven, and of the special privileges of the Christian church, and of the conversion of the Gentiles unto God, and therefore intermixeth some passages which directly and immediately belong to these things, although the words be so ordered that they carry a manifest allusion to the present actions, and may in some sort be applied to them, though in a more obscure and improper and secondary sense. Nor is it at all strange that in the same Psalm there is such a mixture of things, whereof some belong only to the actions or events of that time, and some only to Christ and the gospel times, if it be considered that the psalmist in himself doth frequently express divers, and those contrary, passions and dispositions, as hope and fear, &c., in the same Psalm, and sometimes in the same verse, and especially that the sacred penmen in the composition of these writings were men wholly inspired, and governed, and moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. i. 21, by whom they were variously transported, as he saw fit, and sometimes carried away to speak of the highest mysteries of the gospel, even such things as they themselves did not fully understand, as appears from 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm *or* Song of David.

At the removing of the ark, David exhorteth to praise the Lord, 1—5, *for his wonderful power and love in delivering his people out of Egypt,* 6; *leading them through the wilderness,* 7—11; *subduing their enemies,* 12; *and choosing Zion for his habitation,* 13—18. *He blesseth God for his judgments on the church's enemies,* 19—21; *for his promises to his people,* 22—29; *and for his threats to the cruel,* 30. *The kingdoms of the earth are called to sing to the Lord, whose power and majesty is heard in the heavens, and whose strength and excellency is over Israel,* 31—35.

a Num. 10. 35. Is. 33. 3. † Heb. *from his face.*

1 LET [a]God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee †before him.

Let God arise; oh that God would arise from his seat, and bestir himself and go forth to fight with his enemies! who, if he do so, will easily and suddenly be scattered. Or, *God will arise.* And so the other verbs following may be rendered, as being of the future tense, *shall be scattered, shall flee,* &c. Although the futures are frequently rendered imperatively; and so they are truly rendered Numb. x, 35, whence this verse is taken. *Hate him.* All God's enemies are here said to *hate* God, not directly and formally, for there are few such persons, but because they hate his laws and government, and his people and image, and because they fight against him and his, which is justly taken for an evidence of hatred.

b Is. 9. 18. Hos. 13. 3. c Ps. 97. 5. Mic. 1. 4.

2 [b]As smoke is driven away, *so* drive *them* away: [c]as wax melteth before the fire, *so* let the wicked perish in the presence of God.

As smoke is driven away; as smoke at first mounts high and fills a great space of air, but speedily vanisheth into air, or is dispersed with the wind.

d Ps. 32. 11. & 58. 10. & 64. 10.

3 But [d]let the righteous be glad; let

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[a] Heb. rejoice with gladness.

them rejoice before God: yea, let them †exceedingly rejoice.

For God's gracious appearance on their behalf, and for his settled presence with them.

[c] Ps. 66. 4. [d] Deut. 33. 26. ver. 33. [e] Ex. 6. 3.

4 [c]Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: [d]extol him that rideth upon the heavens [e]by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

Extol him, by praising him; of which this verb is used, Prov. iv. 8. Or rather, *raise up* or *prepare* the way *for him*; for so this word is commonly used, as Isa. lvii. 14; lxii. 10, and elsewhere. And this doubtless they did for this solemnity of bringing the ark to Zion. Compare Isa. xl. 3. *That rideth upon the heavens*; which phrase is used below, ver. 33, though in differing words. Or, *that did ride in the desert*, where the ark was carried, and God marched along with it in the cloudy pillar. Or, *that* now *rideth* as (which particle is frequently understood) *in the desert*, i. e. that is now carried from place to place as it was in the desert. The word here rendered *heavens* doth generally signify *the desert* or *plain fields*, as Numb. xxxiii. 48, 50; xxxvi. 13; Josh. v. 10; 2 Sam. iv. 7; Isa. xl. 3, compared with Luke iii. 4. *By his name Jah*; whereby he is known and distinguished from all false gods; for *Jah* is generally conceived to be an abbreviature of the name Jehovah, which the heathens pronounced *Jao*. *Before him*; before the ark, where he is present, as David himself is said to *dance before the Lord* upon this occasion, 2 Sam. vi. 14.

[b] Ps. 10. 14. 146. 9.

5 [b]A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, *is* God in his holy habitation.

He now enters upon some of the matters or reasons for which God is to be extolled; whereof this is one, that he is the patron of such as are injured and oppressed, and have not power to help themselves. *In his holy habitation*; either in his tabernacle, or in heaven. Though he dwells there, yet the eyes of his fatherly providence and care run to and fro to help his people when they are distressed.

[i] 1 Sam. 2. 5. Ps. 113. 9. [k] Heb. in a house. [l] Ps. 107. 10, 14. 116. 16. Acts 12. 6, &c. Ps. 107. 34. 107.

6 [i]God setteth the solitary †in families: [k]he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but [l]the rebellious dwell in a dry *land*.

Setteth the solitary in families; such as were single and solitary he blesseth with a wife and children, as he did Abraham. *Houses* are oft put for posterity, as Exod. i. 21; Ruth iv. 11; 2 Sam. vii. 11. *Bringeth out those which are bound with chains*; he setteth captives and prisoners at liberty, as he did the Israelites, &c. *The rebellious*; those who rebel against God, as the Egyptians did. *Dwell in a dry land*; are deprived of all true comfort, and plagued with manifold calamities.

[m] Ex. 13. 21. Deut. 1. 19. Josh. 8. 15.

7 O God, [m]when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:

In the cloudy pillar, as their Captain leading them out of Ezypt.

[n] Ex. 19. 16, 18. Judg. 5. 4, 5. Ps. 77. 16. Isa. 64. 1, 3.

8 [n]The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: *even* Sinai itself *was moved* at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

The earth; either, 1. Metonymically, the inhabitants of those parts of the earth, by comparing Exod. xv. 14. Or, 2. Properly, by comparing Psal. cxiv. 5—7. There was a great earthquake, as a token of God's dreadful presence. *Dropped*, i. e. poured down great showers, which accompanied those mighty thunders, as usually it doth. *Was moved*; or, *dropped*; which may be repeated out of the former clause; was even melted or dissolved with fear. It is a poetical representation of the terribleness of God's appearance.

[o] Deut. 11. 11, 12. Ezek. 34. 26. [p] Heb. moved. [q] Heb. dropped.

9 [o]Thou, O God, didst †send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst †confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

Send a plentiful rain; either, 1. In the wilderness; where they oft wanted water, and were by God's extraordinary care supplied with it. Or rather, 2. In the land of Canaan, which he calls God's *inheritance* in the next words; as also Exod. xv. 17, and in many other places of Scripture; *in* which God's people are said to *dwell* in the next verse, of which, and the things done in it, he speaks in the following verses, and which, being destitute of those constant supplies from the overflowings of a great river which Egypt enjoyed, God took a special care to supply with rain as occasion required; of which see Deut. xi. 10, 11. *Confirm*; or, *stablish*, or *support*, or *sustain*. *Thine inheritance*; either thy people; or rather thy land, as was now said. *Weary*; dry and thirsty, and parched with excessive heat, and ready to faint for want of rain: compare Psal. lxiii. 1.

10 Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: [p]thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

[p] Deut. 26. 5, 9. Ps. 74. 19.

Thy congregation; thy people of Israel, who are all united in one body under thee, their Head and Governor. For though this word commonly signifies *living creatures*, yet sometimes it signifies a *company* of men, as here below, ver. 31, and 2 Sam. xxiii. 13, compared with 1 Chron. xi. 15; Psal. lxxiv. 19. Or the proper signification of the word may be retained, and it may be rendered *thy flock*; for God oft compares himself to a *shepherd*, and his people to *sheep*, and particularly he is said *to have led his people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron*, Psal. lxxvii. 20, to wit, in the wilderness; and consequently he may be here said to have brought his sheep into and made them to dwell in Canaan, as in a *green* and good *pasture*, as God speaks of his people under this very metaphor, Psal. xxiii. 2. *Prepared*; or, *prepared* it; which pronoun is oft understood, and here most easily out of the foregoing clause of this verse, where it is expressed. *Prepared* it, to wit, this land, for the use of thy people; which God did many ways; partly by designing it for them, and expelling the old inhabitants to make way for them; and partly by furnishing it with all sorts of provisions, both for necessity and delight, and making it fruitful by his special blessing, in giving rain in its proper seasons. *Of thy goodness*; by thy free and singular goodness; which may be referred both to the cause of this preparation, God did it not for their righteousness or worthiness, but out of his mere mercy, as God oft telleth them; and to the manner and measure of it, God did wonderfully increase the fruits of it, that it might suffice for the supply of such a numerous people; which without his extraordinary blessing it would not do, as appears by the state of that land at this day, as it is reported by travellers and eye-witnesses of it. *For the poor*, to wit, for thy people of Israel, whom he here calls *poor*, partly to repress that pride and arrogance to which they are exceeding prone, and to mind them of the dependence upon God for all that they have and hope for; and partly because they really were, when God undertook the conduct of them into Canaan, a very poor and beggarly people, and so they would have still been, if God had not provided for them in a singular manner.

11 The Lord gave the word: great *was* the †company of those that published *it*.

+ Heb. *army*.

Gave the word, i. e. the matter of the word or discourse here following. He put this triumphant song into their mouths; he gave his people all those successes and victories which are here celebrated. Or, *gave the matter* or *thing* which was published. *Great was the company of those that published it*: the works of God on the behalf of his people were so glorious and wonderful, that all sorts of persons, both men and women, that heard of them, broke forth into songs of praise to God for them. The Hebrew word is of the feminine gender, because it was the manner of the Hebrews, that when the men returned victorious from the battle, the women went out to meet them with songs of triumph, ver. 25; Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34; 1 Sam. xviii. 6.

[q] Num. 31. 8, 9, 54. Josh. 10. 16, & 12. 8.

12 [q]Kings of armies †did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

+ Heb. *did flee, did flee.*

Kings of armies; the kings of Canaan and other nations which came forth against the Israelites, accompanied with great and numerous armies. *The spoil* was so much, that

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there was enough, not only for the proper use of those who took it, but also to be divided to their wives and children when they came home. This verse and that which follows may be taken, either, 1. For the triumphant song sung by those publishers mentioned ver. 11. Or, 2. For the words of David, continuing the relation of the victories granted by God to Israel over their enemies.

r Ps. 81. 6. a Ps. 105. 37.

13 r Though ye have lien among the pots, a *yet shall ye be as* the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

Though ye, ye Israelites, to whom he now turneth his speech, *have lien among the pots;* like scullions, that commonly lie down in the kitchen among the pots or hearth-stones, whereby they are very much discoloured and deformed; which is fitly opposed to the following beauty. Though you have been filled with affliction and contempt. *Shall ye be;* or, *ye have been;* which may seem more suitable to the context, both foregoing and following, wherein he doth not speak prophetically of things to come, but historically of things past. So the sense of the verse is, Though you have formerly been exposed to great servitude, and reproach, and misery, to wit, in Egypt, yet since that time God hath changed your condition greatly for the better. *As the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold;* beautiful and glorious, like the feathers of a dove, which according to the variety of its postures, and of the light shining upon it, look like silver or gold.

t Num. 21. 3. Josh. 10. 10. & 12. 1. &c. ‖ Or, *for her, she was.*

14 t When the Almighty scattered kings ‖ in it, it was *white* as snow in Salmon.

In it; in Canaan, at the coming of the Israelites thither. The land was as white as Mount Salmon is with the snow, which falls and lies for a long time upon it; which is opposed to the native obscurity of that mountain by the many shady trees which were there, Judg. ix. 48. But because there is nothing certain, either concerning the great height of this mountain, or concerning its snow, as we do read of *snow of Lebanon*, Jer. xviii. 14. other interpreters, both Hebrew and Christian, and the Chaldee among the rest, take this word Salmon for a common, and not a proper name, signifying *darkness* or *a shadow*, as the root from whence it comes unquestionably signifies. Nor is it strange if this word be no where else taken in that sense but here, because that is the lot of many Hebrew words, or of some significations of them, that they are to be found but in one text of Scripture. This being granted, the words are or may be rendered thus, *it was snow-white*, or *thou madest it snow-white in darkness*, or, as the Chaldee renders this word, *in the shadow of death*, i. e. thou didst cause light to shine out of darkness. When the state of thy people, and of the land of Canaan which thou hadst given to them, was dark and dismal or bloody, by reason of the wars raised against them by the Canaanitish kings, thou didst quickly change it; and whereas it was red like scarlet or crimson, thou madest it whiter than snow.

15 The hill of God *is as* the hill of Bashan; an high hill *as* the hill of Bashan.

The hill of God, i. e. *of Zion*, the seat of God's ark. *As the hill of Bashan;* equal to it, to wit, in height, as the next clause explains it; which yet is not to be understood of an external and visible height, for Zion was a low and little hill, and Bashan a very high hill; but of its spiritual height, or exaltation, in regard of the glorious privileges of God's presence, and worship, and blessing conferred upon it, in which respect *the mountain of the Lord's house* is said to be *established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills*, Isa. ii. 2.

u Ps. 114. 4, 6. x Deut. 12. 5, 11. 1 Kin. 9. 3. Ps. 87. 1, 2. & 132. 13, 14.

16 u Why leap ye, ye high hills? x *this is* the hill *which* God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell *in it* for ever.

Why leap ye? why do you triumph and boast of your height, and look upon poor Zion with scorn and contempt, as an obscure and inconsiderable hill, if compared with you? He speaks to the hills by a usual figure called *prosopopœia*. This hill, though despicable in your eyes, is precious and honourable in God's eyes, and chosen by him for his settled and perpetual residence. For though the ark was removed from this particular place, in which it was now to be placed, to the hill of Moriah, upon which the temple was built, yet it must be remembered that Zion and Moriah stood one near to the other, being both in Jerusalem, and are by some said to have been but two tops of one and the same hill.

y Deu. 33. 2. 2 Kings 6. 16, 17. Dan. 7. 10. Heb. 12. 22. Rev. 9. 16. ‖ Or, even *many thousands.*

17 y The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, ‖ *even* thousands of angels: the LORD *is* among them, *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*.

The chariots of God, i. e. the hosts or armies (whereof chariots were a great and eminent part in those times and places) which attend upon God to do his pleasure, and to fight for him and for his people. *Twenty thousand*, i. e. an innumerable company; a certain number being put for an uncertain, as Psal. iii. 6; xci. 7, and in many other places. *The Lord is among them;* here is not only the presence of the angels, but of the great and blessed God himself. And here the psalmist seems to be transported by the prophetical spirit, from the narration of those external successes and victories of which he had been speaking in the former part of the Psalm, unto the prediction of higher and more glorious things, even of the coming of the Messiah, and of the happy and transcendent privileges and blessings accruing to mankind by it, described in the next verse. And the connexion of this new matter with the former is sufficiently evident. For having preferred Zion before other hills, ver. 15, 16, he now proves its excellency by an invincible argument, because this is the place to which the Lord of hosts himself, the Messiah, God manifested in the flesh, was to come, as is manifest from Psal. ii. 6; cx. 2; Isa. ii. 3; xxviii. 16, compared with 1 Pet. ii. 6; Isa. lix. 20, compared with Rom. xi. 26, and many other places of Scripture. And when he did come into the world, he was attended with a multitude of holy angels, which celebrated his birth, Luke ii. 13, 14. *As in Sinai, in the holy place;* God is no less gloriously, though less terribly, present here than he was in Sinai, when the great God, attended with thousands of his angels, solemnly appeared there to deliver the law. Heb. *Sinai* is *in the sanctuary*, or *holy place;* which is a poetical and a very emphatical expression, and very pertinent to this place. For having advanced Zion above all other hills, he now equals it to that venerable hill of Sinai, which the Divine Majesty honoured with his glorious presence. Here, saith he, you have in some sort Mount Sinai itself, to wit, all the glories and privileges of it, the presence of Jehovah attended with his angels, and the same law and covenant, yea, and a greater privilege than Sinai had, to wit, the Lord Jehovah descending from heaven into a human body, as appears by his ascending thither again, which the next verse describes, and visibly coming into his own temple, as it was prophesied concerning him, Mal. iii. 1.

z Acts 1. 9. Eph. 4. 8. a Judg. 5. 12. b Acts 2. 4, 33. † Heb. *in the men.* c 1 Tim. 1. 13. d Ps. 78. 60.

18 z Thou hast ascended on high, a thou hast led captivity captive: b thou hast received gifts † for men; yea, *for* c the rebellious also, d that the LORD God might dwell *among them*.

Thou hast ascended on high; having spoken of the Lord, and of his presence upon earth, he now turneth his speech to him, as is most usual in this book. And the contents of this verse do not agree to the present occasion of carrying the ark to Zion, but have a manifest reference to Christ, and to his ascension into heaven, in whom, and in whom alone, they are literally and fully accomplished, and to whom therefore they are ascribed, Eph. iv. 8. Although the expressions here used are borrowed from the ancient custom of princes, or generals of armies, who, after some glorious achievements and victories, used to go up into their royal cities in triumphant chariots, being attended by their captive enemies, and afterward to distribute divers gifts to their soldiers and subjects, and sometimes to do some acts of grace and clemency even to their rebels and enemies, and to receive them into the number of his own people. *Captivity;* either, 1. Those who did formerly take thy people captives. Or rather, 2. Those whom thou hast taken captive, as this word is most commonly used, as Numb. xxi. 1; Deut. xxi. 10; Judg. v. 12, &c. So *poverty*

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is put for the poor, 2 Kings xxiv. 14. This is meant of death, and sin, and the devil, and all the enemies of Christ and of his people, whom Christ led in triumph, having *spoiled them*, and *making a show of them openly*, as it is expressed, Col. ii. 15. *Thou hast received gifts;* though as thou art God thou art uncapable of receiving any thing more than thou hast, yet according to thy manhood thou hast received from God all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and all those gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit which are necessary either to the perfection of thy nature, or to the discharge of thine office, or to the service and good of thy church and people. *For men:* not for thyself, for thou didst not need them, having *the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in thee bodily*, Col. ii. 9; but for the sons of men, or which thou mightest give unto men; whence for *receiving for men*, the apostle justly saith *gave unto men*, Eph. iv. 8, because he received them for no other end but to give them, and in such cases *receiving* or *taking* is oft put for *giving*, or for *taking and giving*, as Exod. xxv. 2; Judg. xiv. 2; 1 Kings iii. 24; xvii. 10, &c. *For the rebellious also:* nor didst thou only receive gifts for and give them to thy friends and people, as the manner of other conquerors is, but also to thy most stubborn and rebellious enemies, whether Jews or Gentiles, who resolved to *break thy bands asunder, and to cast away thy cords from them*, as is said, Psal. ii. 3; and *would not have thee to reign over them*, Luke xix. 14; who crucified him, and put him to open shame; and yet to these, as well as others, thou didst give those saving gifts and graces, as we read, Acts ii., and elsewhere. *That the Lord God might dwell among them;* that having received such gifts, and thereby being made fit habitations for God, he who as man is ascended into the highest heavens, might as God come down to them, and dwell with them, not only in and by his ordinances, in which he is present, but also by his Spirit dwelling in their hearts by faith. Or, *that they might dwell* with *the Lord God;* the particle *with* being either understood, as it is in many places, or being contained in the Hebrew verb *shecan*, which, as some Hebrew critics observe, signifies not only to *dwell*, but *to dwell with* another; of which the learned may see many instances in Forsterus's Hebrew Lexicon. So the sense is, that they who were estranged and at a distance from God, and enemies to him, might draw near to him, and dwell with him both here and in heaven.

19 Blessed *be* the LORD, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, *even* the God of our salvation. Selah.

Who daily loadeth us with benefits; and besides that great and glorious blessing of his ascension which once he wrought for us, he is daily conferring new favours upon us. Heb. *who layeth load upon us;* which may be understood either, 1. Of the burden of afflictions, for which God's people have cause to bless God upon many accounts. Or rather, 2. Of mercies and favours, which is more agreeable to the context; wherewith in common speech men are said to be loaded by another when they receive them from him in great abundance. *The God of our salvation;* the only Author and Finisher both of our present and of our eternal salvation.

20 *He that is* our God *is* the God of [a] salvation; and [c] unto GOD the Lord *belong* the issues from death.

[a] Psa. 78. 22. [c] Psa. 141. 8.

Belong, i. e. they are only in his hand and power to dispose them as he pleaseth. *The issues*, Heb. *the outgoings or exasions*, escapes or deliverances, as a Greek word of the same signification is used, 1 Cor. x. 13. *From death;* or, in (as the Hebrew *lamed* is used, Psal. xvi. 10; xxxi. 17) *death*, i. e. the most deadly dangers, yea, even death itself, in and from which God through Christ delivers his people.

21 But [f] God shall wound the head of [g] his enemies, *and* the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

[f] Psa. 110. 5, 6. [g] Psa. 110. 1.

The head; either, 1. The political head, their ruler or rulers, the devil or other wicked Christians. Or rather, 2. The natural head, as appears from the following expression, added to explain this, and *the hairy scalp;* and he speaks of the heads or hairy scalps not of one, but of all his enemies; the singular number being put for the plural, than which nothing is more frequent. *The hairy scalp*, i. e. his most fierce and terrible enemies. For in ancient times many people used to wear long and shaggy hair, that their looks might be more terrible to their enemies. *Of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses;* of those who persist in their enmity and rebellion against him; whereby he opens a door of hope and mercy to his very enemies, if they return and submit themselves to him.

22 The LORD said, I will bring [h] again from Bashan, I will bring *my people* again [i] from the depths of the sea:

[h] Num. 21. 33. [i] Ex. 14. 22.

The Lord said; either within himself, he purposed or he promised; for so he had done by divers of his prophets, though not in the same words which are here used, yet to the same purpose. *I will bring again from Bashan;* I will repeat my ancient favours, and give my people as great deliverances as I formerly did, when I saved them from that great giant Og king of Bashan, who came out against them with all his forces, Deut. iii. 1; whom I delivered into their hand, as it there follows; which deliverance is oft mentioned in succeeding scriptures as one of the most eminent. *From the depths of the sea;* from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, and from the Red Sea itself, through which I brought them with honour and safety, when it overwhelmed their enemies.

23 [k] That thy foot may be ‖dipped in the blood of *thine* enemies, [l] *and* the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

[k] Ps. 58. 10. ‖ Or, *red.* [l] 1 Kings 21. 19.

And as it was at the Red Sea and at Bashan before, so yet again thine enemies shall be slain in such great numbers, that thou mayst wade in their blood, and thy dogs lick it up in the field.

24 They have seen thy goings, O God; *even* the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

They have seen: it is an indefinite expression; men saw and observed it, thy people to their comfort, and thine enemies with terror and astonishment. *Thy goings;* either, 1. How thou didst march before them through the Red Sea and the wilderness, even until thou didst bring them into Canaan, and afterward, as occasion was, and how thou didst subdue their enemies before them. Or rather, 2. The procession of the ark to Zion, the solemnity whereof is particularly described in the following verses. *In the sanctuary;* or, *in holiness;* for it was not a light and carnal, but a holy pomp; or, *in the holy place;* as the ark, in and with which God is supposed to go, might very fitly and truly be called. Or, *into the sanctuary*, or holy tabernacle, prepared for it; whither the ark was now going.

25 [m] The singers went before, the players on instruments *followed* after; among *them were* the damsels playing with timbrels.

[m] 1 Chron. 13. 8. & 15. 16. Ps. 47. 5.

The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; of which see 2 Sam. vi. 15; 1 Chron. xiii. 8. *Playing with timbrels*, according to the usage of those times. See Exod. xv., &c.

26 Bless ye God in the congregations, ‖from [n] the fountain of Israel.

‖ Or, ye that are *of the fountain of Israel.* [n] Deut. 33. 28. Is. 48. 1.

Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by many others, ye that are *of* or *from the fountain of Israel*, or *Jacob*, i. e. all ye people of Israel, who are called *the fountain of Jacob*, Deut. xxxiii. 28, and said to *come forth out of the waters of Judah*, Isa. xlviii. 1, and consequently *of Jacob* or *Israel*. See also Prov. v. 18; Isa. li. 1. And this sense seems to be confirmed by the following verse, wherein this fountain is distributed into its several streams, the tribes of Israel. But these words may be and are by some joined with the former, either thus, *Bless—the Lord for the fountain of Israel*, i. e. for that *fountain* which God hath *opened to Israel for* the purging away of *sin* and *uncleanness*, as it is expressed Zech. xiii. 1, even the blood and Spirit of Christ, and all those spiritual blessings which God confers upon his people in his sanctuary, and by his ordinances; which are oft compared to *waters*, as Isa. xii. 3; Ezek. xlvii. 1; and to a *fountain* or *well*, as Joel iii. 18; John iv. 14. See also

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Prov. xiv. 27; Jer. ii. 13. Or thus, *Bless—the Lord* who is *of the fountain of Israel*, i. e. who though he be the most high God, yet according to the flesh is descended from Israel, as is noted, Rom. ix. 5. But the first sense seems most natural and easy.

o 1 Sam. 9. 21.
‖ Or, with their company.

27 There *is* °little Benjamin *with* their ruler, the princes of Judah ‖*and* their council, the princes of Zebulun, *and* the princes of Naphtali.

There is present in this solemn pomp of carrying the ark to Zion, under the conduct of David their king, *little Benjamin*. That tribe is called *little*, partly because it was the youngest, as being descended from Jacob's youngest son Benjamin; and principally because it was exceedingly diminished, and almost extinguished, under the judges, Judg. xx., xxi. He mentions this tribe, partly because they were nearest unto Judah, and to the place whither the ark was going; and partly to note their reconciliation and submission to David, against whom they had stood out with more obstinacy than any other tribe, as having been so long used to govern, and loth to part with the regal dignity which was by God's appointment first seated among them. *With their ruler;* with the prince of their tribe, who marched in the head of them. Heb. *the ruler*, i. e. the tribe which had lately swayed the sceptre, but now submitted themselves to David, and waited upon him in this expedition. But the first sense seems the truest, because *the princes* of all the following tribes are here mentioned. *Their council;* their counsellors; or rather, *their company*, as it is in the margin, the people of that tribe who waited upon them in that action; which may seem to be here noted, to intimate that though the princes only of the following tribes be named, yet the people are comprehended under them, and were present with them in that solemnity. *Zebulun and Naphtali:* he mentions these tribes, either, 1. Because they excelled in learning and knowledge, as is gathered from Gen. xlix. 21; Deut. xxxiii. 19; Judg. v. 14. Or, 2. Because they were more hearty and forward in complying with David and in his service than the rest, as may seem from the great number of them which came from the ends of the land to David in Hebron, 1 Chron. xii. 33, 34. Or, 3. Because they lived in the remotest parts of the land of Canaan. And so by naming two of the nearest tribes, and two of the furthest, he leaves it to be understood that the other tribes also did come upon this occasion, as is manifest from 2 Sam. vi. 15, 19; 1 Chron. xiii. 2, 5, 6, 8; xv. 3, 28.

p So Ps. 42. 8

28 Thy God hath ᵖcommanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

Having spoken of Israel, and of their several tribes, ver. 26, 27, he now directeth his speech to them. *Hath commanded*, i. e. hath ordained or effectually procured, as this word is oft used, as Lev. xxv. 21; Deut. xxviii. 8; Psal. xlii. 8; xliv. 4. *Thy strength;* all that strength and power which thou hast put forth at any time in fighting with thine enemies, and which is now greatly increased by the re-collection and union of all the tribes under one head, which is the work of God himself, without whom all the differences and animosities which had for many years been among them could never have been composed and quieted. Seeing therefore all our strength is in thee and from thee alone, we pray unto thee for the continuance and increase of our strength, and that thou wouldst proceed to finish that good work which thou hast begun among us, by preserving, and confirming, and perpetuating this blessed union, and by giving us a more full and universal deliverance from our enemies.

q 1 Kings 10. 10, 24, 25. 2 Chron. 32. 23. Ps. 72. 10. & 76. 11. Is. 60. 16, 17.

29 Because of thy temple at Jerusalem ᵠshall kings bring presents unto thee.

Thy temple; either, 1. The old tabernacle which then was; which is oft called by this name. But that was now at Gibeon, not at Jerusalem. Or rather, 2. The temple which Solomon should build, which David knew should be *very magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries*, as he saith, 1 Chron. xxii. 5; and such as would command esteem and reverence even from heathenish princes and people, and that not only for its most splendid and glorious structure, but especially for the wonderful works of the God of that temple wrought by him on the behalf of his people, and in answer to the prayers made in the temple; of which see 1 Kings viii. 41—43. *Kings;* kings of the Gentiles; which was done in part in the times of Solomon and Hezekiah, 1 Kings x. 11, 24, 25; 2 Chron. xxxii. 23, and afterwards by others; but more fully when the Lord Christ was come into his temple, according to that prophecy, Mal. iii. 1, and had built a better temple instead of it, even the Christian church, to which the kings and nations of the earth were to flow in great abundance, according to the tenor of many prophecies in the Old Testament.

‖ Or, *the beasts of the reeds*, Jer. 51. 32, 33.
r Ps. 22. 12.
s 2 Sam. 8. 2, 6.
‖ Or, *he scattereth.*

30 Rebuke ‖the company of spearmen, ʳthe multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till every one* ˢsubmit himself with pieces of silver: ‖scatter thou the people *that* delight in war.

Rebuke, to wit, really; humble and chastise those that will not bring presents to thee, as the kings did, ver. 29, till they see their error and submit themselves, as it here follows. *The company;* so this word signifies here above, ver. 11; 2 Sam. xxiii. 11; Psal. lxxiv. 19. Or, *the beast*, or *wild beast*, as this word is elsewhere used, i. e. the beasts; the singular being put for the plural: so the sense is the same. *Spear-men*, Heb. *of the reed*, i. e. that use spears or arrows; which may be called *reeds*, either because in length and form they resemble *reeds*, or because anciently they were made of *reeds*. And this sense seems favoured by the last words of this verse, in which he explains this and the other metaphors of warriors. Or the *reed* may be taken properly; and by *the beast of the reed* he may understand the king of Egypt, who then was a very potent and a most idolatrous king, and a great and old enemy to the true religion, and to the people of Israel, whom therefore he desires God to rebuke and humble, that he may acknowledge the true God, which is foretold that he shall do, ver. 31. As for this enigmatical designation of this king, that is agreeable enough both to the usage of the prophets in such cases, and to the rules of prudence; and upon the same account the prophet Jeremiah, threatening destruction against Babylon, calls it enigmatically *Sheshach*, Jer. xxv. 26; li. 41, and St. Paul calls Nero *the lion*, 2 Tim. iv. 17. But then this one king, being eminent in his kind, is by a usual synecdoche put for all of them which were enemies to God's people. *Bulls;* by which he doubtless understands men of war, as the following words expound it; the great, and potent, and fierce, and furious adversaries of God, and of his church, as this word is used, Psal. xxii. 12; Isa. xxxiv. 7. And consequently *the calves* must be their people or soldiers depending upon them, and joining with them in these acts of hostility against thine Israel. *Submit himself with pieces of silver:* this he adds as a limitation of his request; Rebuke them, O Lord, not to utter destruction, but only till they be humbled and submit themselves, and in token thereof bring pieces of silver for presents, as was foretold, ver. 29. For *submit himself*, it is in the Hebrew *cast himself down*, or *offer himself to be trod upon*. But because this supplement may seem too large, and not necessary, the words are and may be rendered otherwise, *that tread upon*, or *walk proudly in* or *with*, *fragments* or *pieces of silver*, wherewith eminent captains used to adorn themselves and their very horses. And so this belongs to the *bulls* and *calves*, whose pride, and wealth, and power is described in this manner. *Scatter thou*, Heb. *he hath scattered*, i. e. he will certainly scatter, according to the prophetical style. So this may contain an answer, or his assurance of an answer, to his prayer: I prayed, *Rebuke* the *company*, &c., and God hath heard my prayer, and I doubt not will rebuke or scatter them. *That delight in war;* that without any necessity or provocation, and merely out of a love to mischief and spoil, make war upon others, and upon us particularly. Now that thou hast given thy people rest, and settled the ark in its place, O Lord, rebuke all our malicious and bloody enemies, and give us assured peace, that we may worship the Lord without disturbance. And withal David may seem to utter this for his own vindication. It is true, O Lord, I have been a man of war, and therefore have lost the honour of building the temple,

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and am now forced to lodge the ark in a mean tabernacle, which I have erected for it; but this thou knowest, that I have not undertaken any of my wars out of wantonness, or ambition, or love to war and mischief, but only by constraint and necessity, for the just defence of myself and of thy people; and therefore do not lay my wars to my charge.

31 [t] Princes shall come out of Egypt; [u] Ethiopia shall soon [x] stretch out her hands unto God.

[t] Is. 19. 19, 21
[u] Ps. 72. 9. Is. 45. 14. Zeph. 3. 10. Zech. 14. 16.
[x] Ps. 44. 20.

Egypt. Ethiopia: he names only these, as the great and ancient enemies of God, and of his people, and as a most wicked, and idolatrous, and incorrigible sort of men; see Jer. xiii. 23; Amos ix. 7; but by them he synecdochically understands all other nations and people of the like character. *Stretch out her hands unto God;* either in way of humble supplication and submission, begging mercy of him; or to offer up the presents expressed, ver. 29. But this prophecy, as also the next verse, evidently belongs to the times of the Messiah, when the Gentiles were to be brought in to the knowledge and worship of the true God; with the thoughts and hopes whereof David oft comforteth himself in that confined and afflicted state of the church in his time.

32 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the LORD; Selah:

Not only Egypt and Ethiopia, but other kingdoms and nations also, who shall partake of the same grace with them.

33 To him [y] that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, *which were* of old; lo, [z] he doth †send out his voice, *and that* a mighty voice.

[y] Deut. 33. 26. Ps. 104. 3.
[z] Heb. *give.*

Upon the heavens; upon the highest heavens, as Deut. x. 14, his truest and best sanctuary; by which expressions he prevents all mean and carnal conceptions of God, as if he were confined to the ark or tabernacle, and lifteth up the minds, both of Jews and Gentiles, to heaven, and representeth God as dwelling there in infinite glory and majesty, and from thence looking down upon all the inhabitants of the earth, and ruling them by his almighty power, and therefore most fit to be owned and received by all kings and kingdoms, as their Lord and Governor. *Of old,* i. e. from the very beginning of the world; whereas the ark was only some hundred years old. Or, *which are everlasting;* for this Hebrew word answers to *olam,* which looks not only backward to time past, but forward to the future, of which this word is by divers understood, Deut. xxxii. 15. This is also opposed to the condition of the ark, and tabernacle, and temple; all which, as David by the Spirit of prophecy well knew, would be abolished and dissolved. *A mighty voice;* by which he understands, either, 1. The thunder, called God's *voice,* Psal. xxix. 3, and elsewhere. Or rather, 2. His word, to wit, the gospel, published by Christ and by his apostles, assisted by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven; which might well be called God's *voice,* and that *a mighty voice,* because it produced such great and wonderful *effects,* as are here above mentioned, in converting all the kings and kingdoms of the earth.

34 [a] Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency *is* over Israel, and his strength *is* in the ‖clouds.

[a] Ps. 29. 1.
‖ Or, *waters.*

Ascribe ye strength unto God; acknowledge that he is mighty and able to do whatsoever he pleaseth for his people, or against his and their enemies. *His excellency;* his excellent power and goodness. *Is over Israel;* dwells among them, and is employed for them, as occasion requires. He is indeed the universal Lord of the whole heaven and earth, but in a special and excellent manner he is the God of Israel. *In the clouds;* or, *in the heavens.* He hath two dwellings and thrones, the one in his church and people, and the other in heaven. See Isa. lvii. 15.

35 O God, [b] *thou art* terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel *is* he that giveth strength and power unto *his* people. Blessed *be* God.

[b] Ps. 47. 2. & 66. 5. & 76. 12. & 89. 7. & 96. 4. & 99. 3. & 145. 6.

Terrible; or, *venerable;* deservedly to be both reverenced and feared. *Holy places;* or, *sanctuaries.* He useth the plural number; either, 1. Of the sanctuary in Zion, because the tabernacle and temple consisted of three parts; the court, the holy place, and the holy of holies. Or rather, 2. With respect to that twofold sanctuary here mentioned, one in Zion, and the other in heaven. And out of both these holy places God appeared, and put forth such acts of his power as might justly terrify his enemies. *God giveth strength and power unto his people;* the strength which the kingdom of Israel now hath, is not to be ascribed to my valour or conduct, nor to the courage or numbers of the people, nor to that happy union now made, and established among all the tribes, but only to the might and grace of God.

PSALM LXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm of David consists of his complaints and fervent prayers, and comfortable predictions of his deliverance, and of the ruin of his enemies. But the condition of this Psalm is like that of divers others, wherein although the matter or substance of it agree in some sort to David, yet there are some singular passages, which he delivers with a particular respect unto Christ, of whom he was an eminent type, and upon whom his thoughts were much and often fixed, and of whom they are more fitly and fully understood; and therefore they are justly applied to him in the New Testament, as we shall see.

¶ To the chief Musician *upon Shoshannim, *A Psalm* of David.

*Ps. 45. title.

David (as a type of Christ) complaineth of his heavy and manifold afflictions, 1—12; *fervently prayeth for help and deliverance,* 13—21; *giveth over his enemies to destruction,* 22—29; *and praiseth God in confidence of being accepted,* 30—34, *and Zion saved,* 35, 36.

SAVE me, O God; for [a] the waters are come in unto *my* soul.

[a] ver. 2, 14, 15. Jonah 2. 5.

Waters, i. e. tribulations, which are oft expressed by *waters;* as hath been observed. *Unto my soul,* i. e. to my vital parts; so that I am ready to be choked with them. My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.

2 [b] I sink in †deep mire, where *there is* no standing: I am come into †deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

[b] Ps. 40. 2.
† Heb. *the mire of depth.*
† Heb. *depth of waters.*

In deep mire, Heb. *in the mire of the deep* waters. I am not in the shallows, or nigh the bank, but in the middle and deepest parts, and in the very mire, which is at the bottom of the waters. *No standing;* no firm and sure footing, but I sink in deeper and deeper, and, without thy speedy and almighty help, shall be overwhelmed and destroyed.

3 [c] I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: [d] mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

[c] Ps. 6. 6.
[d] Ps. 119. 82, 123. Is. 38. 14.

I am weary of my crying; I have prayed and cried to God long and fervently, and yet God seems to neglect and forsake me. *My throat is dried* with loud and frequent cries. *Mine eyes fail* with looking to God for that assistance which he hath promised, and I confidently expected, but in vain.

4 They that [e] hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away.

[e] Ps. 35. 19. John 15. 25.

Without a cause; without any injury or occasion given them by me. *Restored that which I took not away;* either because they unjustly and violently forced me to it, or because I was willing to do it to my own wrong for peace sake. By this one kind of wrong he understands all those injuries and violences which they practised against him.

5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my †sins are not hid from thee.

† Heb. *guiltinesses.*

This is added, either, 1. As a proof of his innocency,

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which he had now asserted by way of appeal to God. Do thou, O Lord, judge between me and them, whether I be guilty of those follies and sins which they lay to my charge. And such appeals indeed David useth, Psal. vii. 3, 4, and elsewhere; but then they are delivered in form of a supposition, and not a positive assertion, as this is. Or rather, 2. As an exception to what he last said. But, O Lord, although I have been innocent to mine enemies, and have given them no cause to hate or persecute me, as they do; yet I must confess I am guilty of many sins and follies against thee, and have given thee just cause to punish me, and to give me up into their hands, and to deny or delay thine help unto me. By foolishness he means *sin*, as he explains it, which is commonly so called in Scripture; or by his *foolishness* he means lesser sins, committed through ignorance or inconsiderateness, and by *sins* those of a grosser nature.

6 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

Them that wait on thee, i. e. thy godly people, who rely upon thy promises which thou hast made to all thine in general, and to me in a special manner, wherein they also are concerned. *Ashamed*, i. e. frustrated of their just hopes; which will make them ashamed, either to look up upon God, or to look upon their enemies, when they shall reproach them for their confidence in God. *For my sake;* either, 1. For the sake of my sins last mentioned; let not all good men suffer for my sins. Or, 2. Because of my sad disappointments. For if they see me rejected and forsaken of God, whom they have esteemed a great example of faith, and prayer, and all virtue and piety, they will be exceedingly discouraged by this example; which will tend much to thy dishonour and disservice.

7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

For thy sake; for my trust in thy promise, and obedience to thy commands, and zeal for thy glory, and against all wickedness; all which they turn into matter of derision and reproach. *My face;* in which man's majesty and glory is most evident, which I am in a manner ashamed to show amongst men.

8 [f] I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

f Ps. 31. 11. Is. 53. 3. John 1. 11. & 7. 5.

My nearest kinsmen estranged themselves from me; partly out of fear, lest they should be involved in my sufferings; and chiefly out of dislike of his piety and excessive zeal in religion, as it here follows.

9 [g] For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; [h] and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

g Ps. 119. 139. John 2. 17. h See Ps. 89. 50, 51. Rom. 15. 3.

For: this is the reason of that alienation of my brethren and others from me, because there is a vast difference and contrariety in our tempers. They mind not the concerns of God and of religion, but are wholly intent upon wealth, and honour, and worldly greatness. *The zeal of thine house;* that fervent passion which I have for thy house, and service, and glory, and people. *Eaten me up;* exhausted and wasted my natural moisture and vital spirits, which is oft effected by grief and anger, and fervent love and desire; of which passions zeal is composed. *That reproached thee:* that speak contemptuously or wickedly of thy name, or providence, or truth, or worship and service. *Fallen upon me;* either, 1. By imputation. They reflect upon me, because I am engaged in the defence of thy cause and glory, which wicked men oppose and despise, and therefore must needs suffer in it, and with it. Or, 2. By choice and affection. I have been as deeply affected with thy reproaches as with mine own. This whole verse, though truly belonging to David, yet was also directed by him, or at least by the Spirit of God in him, to a higher use, to represent the disposition and condition of Christ, in whom this was more truly and fully accomplished than in David; to whom therefore it is applied in the New Testament, the first part of it, John ii. 17, and the latter, Rom. xv. 3.

10 [i] When I wept, *and chastened* my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

i Ps. 35. 13, 14.

Wept for their impiety and reproaches which they cast upon God and godliness. *Chastened;* which word is here understood out of Psal. xxxv. 13; as it is also in 2 Chron. x. 11, 14, out of 1 Kings xii. 11, where it is expressed. *My soul;* either my body, or myself; *the soul* being oft used both ways. *That was to my reproach;* they derided me for my piety and devotion, and for my faith in God's promises, and hopes of assistance from him.

11 I made sackcloth also my garment; [k] and I became a proverb to them.

k 1 Kings 9. 7. Jer. 24. 9.

My garment; wearing it next to my skin, in token of my humiliation and hearty sorrow, as the manner then was in days of fasting. *A proverb to them;* they used my name proverbially of any person whom they thought vainly and foolishly religious.

12 They that sit in the gate speak against me; and [l] I *was* the song of the †drunkards.

l Job 30. 9. Ps. 35. 15, 16. † Heb. *drinkers of strong drink.*

They that sit in the gate; either, 1. Vain and idle persons, that spend their time in the gates and markets, in which there used to be a confluence of people. Or rather, 2. The judges and magistrates, who used *to sit* (which was their posture, Exod. xviii. 14; Prov. xx. 8, &c.) *in the gates* of cities, the usual places of judicature; for David oft complains of his hard usage from these men, as Psal. lviii. 1, 2; cxix. 23, and elsewhere; which was the more grievous, because these, who were obliged by their office to protect and right him, did join with others in reproaching and oppressing him. *Of the drunkards;* of the scum of the people; of all lewd and debauched persons. Thus both high and low conspired against him.

13 But as for me, my prayer *is* unto thee, O LORD, [m] *in* an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

m Is. 49. 8. & 55. 6. 2 Cor. 6. 2.

But my prayer is unto thee; but whilst they scoff I will pray, and not be driven from God, and from my prayers and other duties, by all their reproaches or other discouragements. *In an acceptable time*, Heb. *in a time of acceptation*, or *grace*, or *thy good will*, or *good pleasure*. These words may be joined, either, 1. With the following words, by way of limitation: *Hear me in thy accepted time*, i. e. I do not limit thee to a day or time, but when thou seest fit hear and help me. Or rather, 2. With the foregoing, as an argument to enforce his prayer: *I pray in a time of grace* or *acceptation;* I seek thee when *thou mayest be found*, as Psal. xxxii. 6; Isa. lv. 6; *in a good day*, as they said, 1 Sam. xxv. 8, in the day of grace and mercy, in a time of great trouble, which is the proper season for prayer, Psal. l. 15; and whilst I have thee engaged to me by promises, which thy honour and truth oblige thee to perform. I come not too late, and therefore do thou hear me. *In the truth of thy salvation;* or, *for* or *according to thy saving truth* or *faithfulness;* whereby thou art obliged to grant unto me that salvation which thou hast graciously promised.

14 Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: [n] let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of [o] the deep waters.

n Ps. 144. 7. o ver. 1, 2, 15.

Them that hate me; whereby he explains his meaning in these metaphors of *mire*, and *waters*, and *deep*, and *pit*.

15 Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit [p] shut her mouth upon me.

p Num. 16. 33.

16 Hear me, O LORD; [q] for thy loving-kindness *is* good: [r] turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

q Ps. 63. 3. r Ps. 25. 16. & 86. 16.

Is good, i. e. is eminently and unspeakably good: the positive degree being put for the superlative, as it is Luke i. 28; 1 Cor. xii. 23, &c. It is most ready to communicate itself to indigent and miserable creatures.

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17 And [a]hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: †hear me speedily.

[a] Ps. 27. 9. & 102. 2. & 143. 7. Heb. make haste to hear me.

18 Draw nigh unto my soul, *and* redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies.

Draw nigh unto my soul, to support and relieve it, O thou who seemest to be departed far away from me. *Because of mine enemies;* partly because they persecute it, and greedily seek to destroy it; and partly because they are thine as well as mine enemies, and if they succeed, will triumph not only over me, but in some sort over thee, and over religion.

[b] Ps. 22. 6, 7. & 31. 11. & 44. 13. & 89. 41. Heb. a reproach.

19 Thou hast known [b]my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries *are* all before thee.

Thou hast known my reproach, &c.; thou seest how much of it I suffer, and that for thy sake; as he said, ver. 7. *Are all before thee;* thou knowest them thoroughly, and all their injurious and wicked devices and implacable malice against me, and all their impiety and contempt of thee; for which they deserve to be utterly and speedily destroyed.

[c] Ps. 22. 6. & 142. 4. Heb. *I looked on my right hand, and beheld.* [d] Job 16. 2.

20 Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and [c]I looked *for some* †to take pity, but *there was* none; and for [d]comforters, but I found none.

Hath broken my heart: for reproach is most grievous to the most generous and noble souls; and besides, this was the highest degree and the worst kind of reproach, being cast upon him for God's sake, and upon God also for his sake. *None*, i. e. few or none, as that word is frequently used, both in sacred and profane writers. For whether you understand it of David, or of Christ, there were some who pitied both of them.

[e] Matt. 27. 34, 48. Mark 15. 23, 36. John 19. 28, 29.

21 They gave me also gall for my meat; [e]and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Gall, or *poison*, or *bitter herbs*, Hos. x. 4. See Deut. xxix. 18; Jer. ix. 15; Lam. iii. 19. Instead of giving me that pity and comfort which my condition required, they barbarously added to my afflictions. These things were metaphorically fulfilled in David, but properly and literally in Christ, the description of whose sufferings was principally intended here by the Holy Ghost, who therefore directed David's pen to these words, and possibly informed him that this should be accomplished in Christ; which may not seem improbable to him that considers the following imprecations, which are so many and so severe, that they may seem to exceed the bounds of justice and charity, if they be applied to David's enemies, as a recompence for their injuries done to him; whereas they most deservedly and fitly belong to the enemies and murderers of Christ.

[f] Rom. 11. 9, 10.

22 [f]Let their table become a snare before them: and *that which should have been* for *their* welfare, *let it become* a trap.

These and the following words, which are expressed in the form of imprecations, are thought by divers to be only predictions, and that the imperatives are put for the futures, as sometimes they are. And accordingly they translate the words thus, *Their table shall become a snare, &c.* But if they be imprecations, here was sufficient cause for them. And besides, it is apparent that they were not the dictates of human passion, but of Divine inspiration, and proceeded from a just zeal for God's glory, as hath been observed before. *Their table*, i. e. their food, and all their provisions for necessity or delight, either for body or soul; for the curses here following are spiritual and eternal as well as temporal. And so this may comprehend their sacrifices and other legal ordinances, and the word of God; all which became to the Jews through their own default a great occasion of stumbling at Christ. And this punishment in their *table* exactly answers to their sin in giving Christ *gall for his meat*, ver. 21. *Become a snare before them*, Heb. *before them* (i. e. their table or meat, which is set *before them*, which is the usual expression in this case, as Gen. xviii. 8; 2 Kings vi. 22) *become a snare*, i. e. the occasion or instrument of their destruction. It is a metaphor taken from birds or fishes, that are commonly insnared and taken with their baits. *And that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap;* Heb. *and as for their great peace*, (which the plural number seems to import, all that tranquillity and prosperity which they do or may enjoy,) let it be *a trap;* or, *and their peace-offerings* (which sacrifices may be here mentioned, because the offerers did partake of them, and feast upon them; and so this agrees with the *table* expressed in the former clause) *a trap.* And so they were to the unbelieving Jews, whose false conceit of the everlastingness of the Mosaical dispensation was one cause of their rejection of Christ. Or thus, *and for recompences*, (i. e. an abundant compensation of all their injuries,) and *for a trap.* For thus it is rendered by divers, both ancient and modern, interpreters, and, which is more considerable, by the apostle, Rom. xi. 9.

[a] Is. 6. 9, 10. John 12. 39, 40. Rom. 11. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 14.

23 [a]Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.

Their eyes; not the eyes of their bodies, (for so this was not accomplished in David's nor in Christ's enemies,) but of their minds, that they may not discern God's truth, nor their own duty, nor the way of peace and salvation. Punish them in their own kind; as they shut their eyes and would not see, so do thou judicially blind them. This was threatened and inflicted upon the Jews, Isa. vi. 10; John xii. 39, 40. *Their loins:* this also belongs to the loins of their minds or souls; of which we read Luke xii. 35; 1 Pet. i. 13. The loins of the body are the seat of strength, and the great instrument of bodily motions and actions; which being applied to the mind, the sense may be, either, 1. Take away their courage and alacrity, and give them up to pusillanimity, and terror, and despair; or rather, 2. Take away their strength and ability for spiritual actions. In the former branch, he wisheth that they may not be able to see or choose their way; and here, that they may not be able to walk in it, nor to execute the good counsels which others may give them. As, on the other side, when God gives men strength, they are able not only to walk, but to *run* in the ways of God, Psal. cxix. 32; Cant. i. 4. Isa. xl. 31.

[b] 1 Thess. 2. 16.

24 [b]Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

In such other ways and judgments as thou shalt think fit.

[c] Mat. 23. 38. Acts 1. 20. † Heb. *their palace.* † Heb. *let there not be a dweller.*

25 [c]Let †their habitation be desolate; *and* †let none dwell in their tents.

Their habitation, Heb. *their palace*, as this word signifies, Gen. xxv. 16; Numb. xxxi. 10; Cant. viii. 9. Either, 1. Their temple, in which they place their glory and safety. Or rather, 2. and more generally, Their strongest and most magnificent buildings and houses, in which they dwelt, as it follows in the next clause, which explains this. *None;* either, 1. None of their posterity. Destroy them both root and branch. Or, 2. None at all. Let the places be accounted execrable and dreadful.

[d] See 2 Chro. 28. 9. Zech. 1. 15. [e] Is. 53. 4. † Heb. *thy wounded.*

26 For [d]they persecute [e]*him* whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of †those whom thou hast wounded.

Smitten; which is an act of barbarous cruelty and inhuman malice. *They talk;* reproaching them with and insulting and triumphing in their calamities.

[f] Rom. 1. 28. ‖ Or, *punishment of iniquity.* [g] Is. 26. 10. Rom. 9. 31.

27 [f]Add ‖iniquity unto their iniquity: [g]and let them not come into thy righteousness.

Add iniquity to their iniquity; give them up to their own vain minds and vile lusts, and to a reprobate sense, and take off all the restraints of thy grace and providence, and expose them to the temptations of the world and of the devil, that so they may grow worse and worse, and at last may fill up the measure of their sins; as is said, Matt. xii. 32: compare Rom. i. 28, 29. Or, *Add punishment to their punishment;* as this word is oft taken. Send one judgment upon them after another, without ceasing. *Let them not come into thy righteousness;* let them never partake of thy righteousness, i. e. either, 1. Of thy faithfulness, in making

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good thy promises to them. Or, 2. Of thy mercy and goodness. Or rather, 3. Of thy righteousness, properly so called, of that *everlasting righteousness* which the Messiah shall bring into the world, Dan. ix. 24, which is called the *righteousness of God*, Rom. i. 17; Phil. iii. 9, &c., which is said to be *witnessed by the law and the prophets*, Rom. iii. 21, by and for which God doth justify or pardon sinners, and accept them in Christ as righteous persons. For this was the righteousness which the Jews rejected to their own ruin, Rom. x. 3, according to this prediction. Thus as the first branch of the verse maketh or supposeth them guilty of many sins, so this excludes them from the only remedy, the remission of their sins. And that justifying rather than sanctifying righteousness is here meant seems most probable from the phrase, which seems to be a judicial phrase, as we read of *coming* or *entering into judgment*, Job xxii. 4; xxxiv. 23, and *into condemnation*, John v. 24, opposite unto which is this phrase, of *coming into justification*; or, which is all one, *into thy righteousness*.

h Ex. 32. 32. Phil. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 5. & 13. 8. i Ezek. 1. 39. Luke 10. 20. Heb. 12. 23.

28 Let them [h]be blotted out of the book of the living, [i]and not be written with the righteous.

Of the living; or, *of life*: either, 1. Of this life. Out of the number of living men; which anciently used to be written in catalogues, out of which the names of those who died were blotted. Or rather, 2. Of eternal life, as both Jewish and Christian interpreters commonly understand it; which agrees best, 1. To the use of this phrase in Scripture; for in this sense men are said to be *written in the book*, Dan. xii. 1, or *in God's book*, Exod. xxxii. 32, or *in the book of life*, Phil. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 5; xiii. 8; xvii. 8; xx. 12; xxi. 27. 2. To the last clause of the verse, which explains it of that book, wherein none but *the righteous* are written; whereas this life, and that attended with health and prosperity, is promiscuously given to and taken from good and bad men. 3. To the quality of the persons of whom this is said; which are the malicious enemies of God, and of his people, and the murderers of the Lord of glory, who shall be punished with eternal death. In this book men may be said to be written, either, 1. In reality, by God's election or predestination. Or, 2. In appearance, when a man is called by God to the profession and practice of the true religion, and into covenant with himself, and professeth to comply with it; and so is *written in the writing of the house of Israel*, which is said of all that are *in the assembly of God's people*, Ezek. xiii. 9, and so seems to others, and it may be to himself, to be really written in the book of life. And when a man renounceth this profession and religion, he may be said to be *blotted out of* that *book*, because his apostacy makes it evident that he was not written in it, as he seemed to be. For this is a known and approved rule for the understanding of many texts of Scripture, that things are oft said to be done when they only seem to be done, and are not really done; as he is said to *find his life*, Matt. x. 39, who falsely imagined that he did find it, when in truth he lost it; and to *have*, Matt. xiii. 12, who only *seemed to have*, as it is explained in the parallel place, Luke viii. 18; and to *live*, Rom. vii. 9, when he vainly conceited himself to be alive. And in like manner men may be said to be *written in* or *blotted out of this book*, when they seem to be so by the course of their lives and actions. But that this *blotting out* is not meant properly and positively, is clear from the last branch of this verse; which, after the manner of these books, expounds the former, wherein this doubtful phrase is explained by one which is evident and unquestionable, even by his *not* being *written* in it; for it is impossible that a man's name should be properly blotted out of that book in which it was never written. The sense of the verse seems to be this, Let their wickedness be so notorious, and the tokens of God's wrath upon them so manifest, that all men may discern that they are blotted out; that is, that they never were written in the book of life, in which the righteous are written. *With the righteous*, i. e. in the book of life, in which all righteous or holy persons, and only they, are written; whereby it may appear that whatsoever show or profession they once made, yet they neither are nor were truly righteous persons.

29 But I *am* poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

Out of the reach of mine enemies; or, lift me out of the deep waters, and the mire, in which I was sinking, ver. 14.

30 [k]I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

k Ps. 28. 7.

31 [l]*This* also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

l Ps. 50. 13, 14, 23.

This sincere and hearty sacrifice of praise is and shall be more grateful to God than the most glorious legal sacrifices, for so such moral services ever were, 1 Sam. xv. 22; Hos. vi. 6, and such sacrifices shall be accepted when those legal ones shall be abolished. *That hath horns and hoofs*: this is added as a description and commendation of the sacrifice, or bullock, which he supposeth to be of the best sort, both tender and mature, as it is when the horns bud forth, and the hoofs grow hard.

32 [m]The ‖humble shall see *this*, *and* be glad: and [n]your heart shall live that seek God.

m Ps. 34. 2. ‖ Or, meek. n Ps. 22. 26.

Be glad; those pious persons who are grieved for my calamities shall have occasion to rejoice, and they will heartily rejoice in my deliverance and exaltation. *Shall live*, or *be revived*, to wit, with joy, which were dejected, and in a manner dead with sorrow. Compare Gen. xlv. 27; Psal. xxii. 26; cix. 21.

33 For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not [o]his prisoners.

o Eph. 3. 1.

Those who are in prison, or any straits and afflictions for his sake; which is my case, ver. 7.

34 [p]Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, [q]and every thing that †moveth therein.

p Ps. 96. 11. & 148. 1. Is. 44. 23. & 49. 13. q Is. 35. 12. † Heb. *creepeth*.

The heaven and earth; either, 1. Angels and men. Or rather, 2. The heaven and earth themselves, as in the next branch, *the seas, and every thing that moveth therein*: all which by a usual figure he invites to praise God, as he doth elsewhere, because they all give men occasion to praise God.

35 [r]For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

r Ps. 51. 18. Is. 44. 26.

Zion; the city of Zion or Jerusalem; and his church and people, which are frequently expressed under that title. *They*; *the humble* and *poor*, ver. 32, 33, or *his servants*, as is explained in the following verse. *Dwell there*; in the literal Canaan for a long time, and in the heavenly Canaan for ever.

36 [s]The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

s Ps. 102. 28.

Their posterity shall flourish after them, and partake of the same happiness with them.

PSALM LXX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The contents of this Psalm are almost all to be found Psal. xl. 13, &c. Nor is it strange that they are here repeated, because the same or like occasions were oft repeated; and David's returning distresses might well make him sometimes repeat the same words. And as these things were joined with many other passages in Psal. xl., so they are distinctly repeated, as a form of prayer, which himself or others might use in such a condition. What is necessary for the understanding of this Psalm, the reader may find in the notes on Psal. xl.

¶ To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, *to bring to remembrance.

* Ps. 38, title.

David prayeth to God for speedy help, to the shame of his enemies, 1—3, the joy of the godly, and the magnifying of his name, 4, 5.

MAKE haste, [a]O God, to deliver me; make haste †to help me, O LORD.

a Ps. 40. 13, &c. & 71. 12. † Heb. *to my help*.

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2 [b] Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.

3 [c] Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha.

4 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

5 [d] But I *am* poor and needy: [e] make haste unto me, O God: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

PSALM LXXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter of this Psalm plainly showeth that it was written in a time of David's great distress, and his old age, mentioned ver. 9 and 18, which proves that it belongs not to Saul's time, but rather to the time of Absalom's rebellion, which happened in his old age.

The psalmist, in confidence of his faith, and in experience of past favours, prayeth unto God to deliver him, but consume his enemies, 1—13; *promising constancy of hope in him,* 14—16; *praying for his persevering strength and power,* 17, 18; *acknowledgeth his troubles to be from God,* 19—21; *promiseth thankfulness to him for his deliverance,* 22—24.

IN [a] thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

This verse and the next are taken out of Psal. xxxi. 1, 2.

2 [b] Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: [c] incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

3 [d] † Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given [e] commandment to save me; for thou *art* my rock and my fortress.

Commandment; by which he understands God's purpose and promise, and his providence watching to execute them; all which are as certain and powerful as a command.

4 [f] Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

5 For thou *art* [g] my hope, O Lord GOD: *thou art* my trust from my youth.

6 [h] By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise *shall be* continually of thee.

From the womb, i. e. from the time when I came out of the womb. *My mother's bowels,* i. e. out of her womb; which he justly mentions as a great and wonderful, though a common and neglected, work of God's power and goodness.

7 [i] I am as a wonder unto many; but thou *art* my strong refuge.

A wonder, or *prodigy;* either, 1. Of mercy, for the wonderful protections and deliverances which God hath given me. Or rather, 2. Of judgment, for my many and sore calamities, as appears from the next words. They wondered both at the calamities themselves which befell me; which were great, and various, and strange; and that they should befall me, one who have made it the chief care and business of my life to please, and serve, and glorify God; and one whom God hath owned in so eminent a degree, and crowned with such a constant succession of blessings and deliverances from time to time. That such a man should be forsaken by so gracious a God; and persecuted even to death by his own son, whom he had so tenderly loved; and deserted by the body of his own people, who had generally expressed so great an opinion of him and affection to him, and had so many obligations to him, and such singular benefits by his wise, and just, and pious government; this was indeed cause of wonder. *But thou art my strong refuge;* but although men desert me, and look askew at me, God is a sure refuge to me.

8 Let [k] my mouth be filled *with* thy praise *and with* thy honour all the day.

Give me occasion to multiply my praises to thee, for delivering me out of my present distress.

9 [l] Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.

When I am most feeble, and most need thy help, and one who is grown old in thy service.

10 For mine enemies speak against me; and they that † lay wait for my soul [m] take counsel together,

Lay wait for my soul, or *watch* it, that they may find occasion to destroy it, and that it may not escape their hands.

11 Saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for *there is* none to deliver *him.*

God hath forsaken him, for his adultery, and murder, and other wickednesses, and therefore we shall certainly prevail against him.

12 [n] O God, be not far from me: O my God, [o] make haste for my help.

13 [p] Let them be confounded *and* consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered *with* reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

14 But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

For which I know thou wilt yet give me abundant occasion.

15 [q] My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness *and* thy salvation all the day; for [r] I know not the numbers *thereof.*

i. e. Of thy salvations and mercies vouchsafed to me, which being innumerable, oblige me the more to celebrate thy praises.

16 I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, *even* of thine only.

I will not sit down in despair, but *I will go on* or proceed in my business courageously and cheerfully, in making necessary provisions for my own defence; relying only upon thy strength, and not upon my own military preparations. *Make mention;* partly to praise and celebrate it, and partly to support and comfort myself with the remembrance of it. *Of thy righteousness;* either, 1. Of thy mercy and goodness. Or rather, 2. Of thy faithfulness in making good all thy promises to me, as this word is commonly used in this book. *Of thine only;* not of my subjects' and friends', who are false and perfidious to thee and to me; nor of my own; for I have been most unfaithful to thee, and have broken my covenant with thee.

17 O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

Taught me; partly by thy word and Spirit, convincing and assuring me; and partly by my own experience *of thy righteousness* last mentioned, the wondrous effects whereof I have received and declared from time to time, as it here follows.

18 [s] Now also † when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed † thy strength unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that* is to come.

Thy strength; either, 1. This further act or instance of thy strength. Or rather, 2. Thy great power, which will more

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eminently appear in this than it hath done in former deliverances, as my danger is now greater, because this is a civil war, and the generality of mine own people are engaged against me, and my forces are very inconsiderable to theirs, and without thy help my case is desperate. *To every one that is to come*, i. e. to all succeeding generations, to whom I will leave a lasting monument of this glorious example of all-sufficiency, such as this Psalm is.

t Ps. 57. 10. 19 [t]Thy righteousness also, O God, *is*
u Ps. 35. 10. & 86. 8. & 89. 6, 8. very high, who hast done great things: [u]O God, who *is* like unto thee!

Very high, i. e. most eminent and evident, as high things are.

x Ps. 60. 3. 20 [x]*Thou*, which hast shewed me great
y Hos. 6. 1, 2. and sore troubles, [y]shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

i. e. From the grave; for I was like one dead and buried, and past all hope of deliverance, without thy almighty assistance.

21 Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.

I am assured that thou wilt not only restore to me that royal majesty which my son hath invaded, but also increase my honour and power.

† Heb. *with the instrument of psaltery.* z Ps. 92. 1, 2, 3. & 150. 3. a 2 Kings 19. 22. Is. 60. 9. 22 I will also praise thee †[z]with the psaltery, *even* thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou [a]Holy One of Israel.

b Ps. 103. 4. 23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and [b]my soul, which thou hast redeemed.

c ver. 8, 15. d ver. 13. 24 [c]My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for [d]they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

PSALM LXXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

That this Psalm was made by David is evident from ver. 20, and that it was made with respect to Solomon is no less certain from the very title of it; and that David, or at least the Holy Ghost, which dictated this Psalm, did look beyond Solomon, and unto the Messiah, of whom Solomon was an illustrious and unquestionable type, seems as manifest from divers passages of this Psalm, which do not agree to Solomon, nor to any other king but the Messiah, and from the confession of the Jewish doctors themselves, who so understand it. It must therefore be acknowledged, that, as many others are, so this Psalm is also a mixed Psalm, belonging to Solomon in part, and obscurely and imperfectly, but unto Christ more clearly and fully; divers expressions being designedly so ordered, that the reader might be led by them to the contemplation of Christ and of his kingdom upon this occasion; which was the more necessary, for the support and comfort of God's true Israel, because the Spirit of God foresaw Solomon's dreadful apostacy, and the great miscarriages and calamities of his successors, and of the kingdom under their hands, and therefore was pleased to fortify their hearts with that glorious condition which they should certainly enjoy under the Messiah, who should certainly come.

‖ Or, *of.* * Ps. 127. title. ¶ *A Psalm* ‖*for Solomon.

David, praying for Solomon, showeth the blessed and glorious state of his kingdom (as typifying Christ's) in its duration. 1—7, *largeness*, 8—11, *and graciousness*, 12—17; *and concludeth all with a hearty thanksgiving*, 18—20.

1015. GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

The king; Solomon, who was now anointed king, his father yet living, 1 Kings i. 39. And this Psalm may seem to be made for that great and solemn occasion. *Thy judgments*, i. e. either, 1. Thy statutes and precepts, which are oft called God's *judgments;* which as thou hast given already in thy book, so give them to him a second and a better way, by writing them upon his heart, or by giving him a solid knowledge of them, and a hearty love and obedience to them. Or rather, 2. Thy manner of government or administration, which is oft called *judgment*, as Psal. xciv. 15; Isa. xxviii. 6, &c.; that he may follow thy example in governing thy people, as thou governest them, to wit, in *righteousness*, as it follows. He saith *judgments*, in the plural number, because though the office of judging and ruling was but one, yet there were divers parts, and branches, and acts of it; as to acquit the innocent, to condemn the guilty, &c.; in all which he begs that Solomon may be directed to do as God doth, or would have him to do in such cases. *Thy righteousness;* that grace of *righteousness* which is a part of thine image, and is absolutely necessary for good government.

2 [a]He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. a Is. 11. 2, 3, 4. & 32. 1.

He shall judge, to wit, if thou givest him what I have desired. And by this prediction he doth tacitly admonish him of, and oblige him to, the performance of his duty herein. Or, *Let him judge;* the future being put for the imperative, as hath been oft observed. So it is a prayer. *Thy people;* for they are thine more than his; and therefore he must not govern them according to his own will and pleasure, but according to the rules of thy word, and for thy service and glory. *Thy poor;* or, *thy afflicted* or *oppressed ones*, for such are *thine* in a special manner; thou art their Judge and Patron, Psal. lxviii. 5, and hast commanded all thy people, and especially kings and magistrates, to take a singular care of them, because they have few or no friends.

3 [b]The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. b Ps. 85. 10. Is. 32. 17. & 62. 7.

He mentioneth the *mountains* and *hills*, as bringing forth this blessed fruit; either because such places are usually barren, and therefore this was an evidence of extraordinary fruitfulness, and a special blessing of God; or because they are dangerous to passengers, in regard of the robbers and wild beasts, which commonly abide there; whereby it is implied that other places should do so too, and that it should be common and universal. *Peace;* all manner of prosperity and felicity, which the Hebrews frequently express by that word.

4 [c]He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. c Is. 11. 4.

Judge, i. e. vindicate them from their potent oppressors, as *judging* is used, Psal. xliii. 1, and oft elsewhere. *The children of the needy;* whom the rich peradventure did seize upon for bondmen, upon some pretence or other.

5 They shall fear thee [d]as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. d ver. 7, 17. Ps. 89. 36, 37.

Fear; or, *reverence*, or *worship*, as this word is used, Isa. xxix. 13, compared with Matt. xv. 9, and elsewhere. *Thee;* either, 1. Thee, O king, to whom he suddenly turneth his speech. And so this is hyperbolically true of Solomon, but truly and literally of Christ. Or rather, 2. Thee, O God, of whom he had spoken before, and that in the second person, ver. 1, 2, as it is here; whereas he never speaks of the king in the whole Psalm in the second person, but constantly in the third. And so the sense is, This shall be another blessed fruit of this righteous government, that together with peace true religion shall be established, and that *throughout all generations*, as it here follows; which was begun in Solomon's days, and continued, though not without interruption, in the time of his successors, the kings of Judah, and afterwards until Christ, in and by whom this prediction and promise was most fully accomplished. *As long as the sun and moon endure*, Heb. *with the sun and before the moon*, i. e. whilst they continue in the heavens. Others expound it thus, both day and night, as the *twelve tribes* are said to *serve God*, Acts xxvi. 7. But the former interpretation seems more probable, by comparing this verse with ver. 17.

6 [e]He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers *that* water the earth. e 2 Sam. 23. 4. Hos. 6. 3.

Come down, to wit, by the influences of his government

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upon his people under him. But this phrase doth much better agree to Christ, who was yet to come, and who did come down from heaven, and brought or sent down from heaven his doctrine, which is oft compared to rain, and the sweet and powerful influences of his Spirit. *Rain upon the mown grass;* which it both refresheth and improveth, or causeth to grow and flourish, and therefore was very acceptable, especially in Canaan, where rain was more scarce and more necessary than in many other places, because of the scorching heat, and the natural dryness of the soil, and the want of rivers to overflow or water the land.

7 In his days shall the righteous flourish; [f] and abundance of peace † so long as the moon endureth.

[f] Heb. till there be no more.

Shall the righteous flourish; as the wicked shall be discountenanced and punished, so good men shall be encouraged, and advanced, and multiplied. *So long as the moon endureth,* i. e. as long as time and the world shall last; which neither was nor could be true of Solomon, who lived not long, and the peace of whose kingdom was sadly disturbed, and in a manner wholly lost, presently after his death, but was undoubtedly and eminently accomplished in Christ, who brought *peace upon earth,* Luke ii. 14, and left it as his legacy to his disciples, John xiv. 27.

8 [g] He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

[g] See Ex. 23. 31. 1 K. 4. 21, 24. Ps. 2. 8. & 80. 11. & 89. 25. Zech. 9. 10.

From sea to sea; either, 1. From the Dead Sea or the Lake of Sodom, or from the Red Sea, to the Midland Sea; for so far did Solomon's dominion extend: but so did David's also; and therefore in that respect Solomon hath not that pre-eminence which this promise plainly seems to give him above his predecessors. Or, 2. More generally from one sea to another, or in all the parts of the habitable world. So it was truly and fully accomplished in Christ, and in him only. *The river,* to wit, Euphrates, which was the eastern border of the kingdom of Canaan allotted by God, Exod. xxiii. 31; Numb. xxxiv. 3, but enjoyed only by David and Solomon, and afterwards by Christ; of whose kingdom this may be here mentioned, as one of the borders; partly because the kingdom of Christ is here described under the type and shadow of Solomon's kingdom, whose bound this was; and partly because though Christ's kingdom did for a time extend itself beyond Euphrates, yet the chief part, and almost the whole body of it, both did and doth lie on this side of it; and things do generally receive their denomination from the greatest part. *The ends of the earth;* either, 1. Of the land of Canaan. Or, 2. Of the world.

9 [h] They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; [i] and his enemies shall lick the dust.

[h] Ps. 74. 14. Is. 49. 23. Mic. 7. 17.

In the wilderness; in solitary places; even rude and barbarous people, who lived without order and government among themselves; of which sort great numbers submitted to Christ, and received the gospel. *Shall lick the dust,* i. e. shall prostrate themselves to the ground, in token of reverence and subjection, as the custom of the Eastern people was. See Isa. xlix. 23; Micah vii. 17.

10 [k] The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

[k] 1 Chron. 2. 7. 1 K. 10. 22. 2 Chron. 9. 21. Is. 60. 6, 9.

Of Tarshish and of the isles; or, *of the sea* (as Tarshish is understood, 1 Kings xxii. 48; Psal. xlviii. 7) *and* (or, that is; for that conjunction is oft used exegetically) *of the isles,* i. e. of remote countries, to which they used to go from Canaan by sea; all which are frequently called *isles* in Scripture, as hath been noted before. The kings that rule by sea (where Solomon had no great power) or by land. *Sheba and Seba;* two Arabian countries; unless the one be Arabia, and the other Ethiopia beyond Egypt.

11 [l] Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

[l] Is. 49. 23. Zech. 14. 16.

Which cannot be said of Solomon with any truth or colour, but was unquestionably verified in Christ; of whom therefore this must be understood. For what is said 1 Kings iv. 21, that *Solomon reigned over all kingdoms,* is there limited to them that reigned *from the river unto—Egypt;* whereas the expressions here are unlimited and universal.

12 For he [m] shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and *him* that hath no helper.

[m] Job 29. 12.

The fame of his just and merciful government shall induce multitudes either to put themselves under him, or to show great respect and reverence to him.

13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

The souls, properly so called; this being Christ's proper work to save souls; or, *the lives,* which oppressors shall endeavour to take away.

14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and [n] precious shall their blood be in his sight.

[n] Ps. 116. 15.

Deceit and violence; the two ways whereby the souls or lives of men are usually destroyed. *Precious shall their blood be in his sight;* he will not be prodigal of the lives of his subjects, casting them away merely to gratify his own revenge, or covetousness, or insatiable desire of enlarging his empire, as earthly kings commonly do, but, like a true father of his people, will tenderly preserve them, and severely avenge their blood upon those who shall shed it.

15 And he shall live, and to him † shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; *and* daily shall he be praised.

† Heb. one *shall give.*

He shall live, to wit, long and prosperously, as Solomon did; yea, eternally, as Christ did. Other kings must lose both their lives and kingdoms; but this King, whom Solomon typified, shall live for ever, and his kingdom shall have no end. *Of the gold of Sheba;* as a present, or tribute. This was done to Solomon, 1 Kings x. 15, and to Christ, Matt. ii. 11, and afterwards as need required. Although such expressions as these, being used of Christ and his kingdom, are commonly understood in a spiritual sense. *Prayer shall be made for him;* his subjects shall be obliged and excited by his righteous and happy government to pray heartily and frequently for him; either, 1. For Solomon. Or, 2. For Christ; not so much for his person, which needed not their prayers, as for the protection and propagation of his kingdom, and gospel, and interest in the world.

16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: [o] and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

[o] 1 Kings 4. 20.

An handful of corn; which intimates the small beginnings of this kingdom; and therefore doth not agree to Solomon, whose kingdom was in a manner as large at the beginning of his reign as at the end; but it exactly agrees to Christ and his kingdom, Matt. xiii. 31, 32. *In the earth;* sown in the earth. *Upon the top of the mountains;* in the most barren grounds; and therefore this was an evidence of extraordinary and prodigious fertility. *Shake like Lebanon;* it shall yield such abundance of corn, that the ears, being thick, and high, and full of corn, shall, when they are shaken with the wind, make a noise not unlike that which the tops of the trees of Lebanon sometimes make upon the like occasion; which expressions, as well as many others of the like nature in the prophets, being applied to Christ, are to be understood in a spiritual sense, of the great and happy success of the preaching of the gospel. *They of the city;* the citizens of Jerusalem, which are here synecdochically put for the subjects of this kingdom. *Shall flourish like grass of the earth;* shall both increase in number, that there may be mouths to receive the meat provided, and enjoy great prosperity and happiness.

17 [p] His name † shall endure for ever: † his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and [q] *men* shall be blessed in him: [r] all nations shall call him blessed.

[p] Ps. 89. 36. † Heb. *shall be.* † Heb. *shall be as a son to continue his father's name for ever.* [q] Gen. 12. 3. & 22. 18. Jer. 4. 2. [r] Luke 1. 48.

His name; the honour and renown of his eminent wis-

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dom, and justice, and goodness; which agrees but very obscurely and imperfectly to Solomon, who stained the glory of his reign by his prodigious luxury and oppression, and apostacy from God, into which he fell in the latter part of his days. *Shall be continued;* or, *shall be propagated* or *transmitted to his children;* which suits much better to Christ, from whom we are called Christians, than to Solomon. *As long as the sun,* Heb. *before the sun;* either, 1. Publicly, and in the face of the sun. Or, 2. Perpetually; as a constant and inseparable companion of the sun; as long as the sun itself shall continue. See before on ver. 5. *Be blessed in him;* either, 1. As a pattern of blessedness. When any man shall wish well to a king, he shall say, The Lord make thee like Solomon. See on Gen. xxii. 18. Or rather, 2. As the cause of it, by and through his merits and mediation.

s 1 Chro. 29. 10. Ps. 41. 13. & 106. 48. t Ex. 15. 11. Ps. 77. 14. & 136. 4.

18 sBlessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel, twho only doeth wondrous things.

Who hath given to his people such a glorious and excellent king and governor, and such wonderful blessings as they do and shall enjoy under his government.

u Neh. 9. 5. x Num. 14. 21. Zech. 14. 9.

19 And ublessed *be* his glorious name for ever: xand let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory; Amen, and Amen.

Heb. *the whole earth shall be filled with his glory.* For this may be either a prayer for or a prophecy of the spreading of the true religion in the Gentile world; which evidently relates to Christ and his kingdom.

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

This Psalm is called the last of David's Psalms; (which are called *prayers*, because they consist very much of prayers;) either, 1. The last of that part or book of the Psalms, which reached from the beginning of the Psalms hitherto, whereof the far greatest number were composed by David, and all of them digested into this order; the rest of which follow, being collected by some other holy man or men of God after David's death, and composed part by David, and part by other prophets. Or rather, 2. The last Psalm which David composed; for this was done but a little before his death, of which see the first note on this Psalm.

PSALM LXXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject of this Psalm is the same with Psal. xxxvii., concerning the promiscuous carriage of God's providence towards good and bad men.

|| Or, *A Psalm for Asaph.* * Ps. 50. title.

¶ ||A Psalm of *Asaph.

Or, *for Asaph*, the famous musician, to whom divers of David's Psalms were committed, as Psal. l., &c. But because Asaph was not only a skilful musician, but also was divinely inspired, and the author of some Psalms, as is manifest from 2 Chron. xxix. 30, and the style of this Psalm may seem to be something differing from that of David, it may be thought not improbable that Asaph was the author or penman of it.

The prophet under temptation by reason of wicked men's prosperity, 1—12. *His diffidence thereupon,* 13—16. *His way to overcome such temptations, i. e. the knowledge of God's purpose in destroying the wicked,* 17—20, *and that the faithful might be contented alone with God, and communion with him,* 21—28.

1 Or, *yet.* † Heb. *clean of heart.*

TRULY ||God *is* good to Israel, *even* to such as are † of a clean heart.

Truly; or, *nevertheless.* The beginning is abrupt, and sufficiently intimates that he had a great conflict within himself about this matter, and that many doubts and objections were raised in his mind concerning it. But at last he breaks forth like the sun out of a cloud, and having by God's grace silenced and conquered his scruples, he lays down this following conclusion. *God is good to Israel;* though he may sometimes seem negligent of, and harsh and severe to, his people, yet, if all things be considered, it is most certain, and another day will be made manifest, that God is really and superlatively *good*, i. e. most kind and bountiful, and a true friend to them, and that they are most happy in him, and have no reason to envy sinners their present and seeming felicity. *To such as are of a clean heart;* to all true Israelites, who love God with their whole heart, and serve him in spirit, and truth, and uprightness. See John iv. 23; Rom. ii. 28, 29. So this clause limits the former, and takes off a great part of the force of the objection, even all that concerns the calamities which befell the profane or false-hearted Israelites, which were vastly the greatest number of that people.

2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

Yet I must acknowledge this with grief and shame concerning myself, notwithstanding all my knowledge of this truth, and my own experience and observation of God's gracious dealings with me, and other good men, *my feet were almost gone;* my faith in God's promises and providence was almost overthrown by the force of this temptation; and I was almost ready to repent of my piety, ver. 13, and to follow the example of ungodly men. *Had well nigh slipped,* Heb. *were almost poured forth,* like water upon the ground, which is unstable, and runs hither and thither, with great disorder and uncertainty, till it be irrecoverably lost. So was I almost transported by my own unruly passions into unworthy thoughts of God, and a sinful course of life.

a Job 21. 7. Ps. 37. 1. Jer. 12. 1.

3 a*For* I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

I grudged and murmured at it, and had a secret desire to partake of their delicates.

4 For *there are* no bands in their death: but their strength *is* †firm.

† Heb. *fat.*

There are no bands in their death; they are not dragged to death, neither by the hand and sentence of the magistrate, which yet they deserve; nor by any lingering and grievous torments of mind or body, which is the case of many good men; but they enjoy a sweet and quiet death, dropping into the grave, like ripe fruit from the tree, without any violence used to them. Compare Job v. 26; xxi. 13. *But their strength is firm,* Heb. *and their strength is fat,* i. e. sound and good; the best of any thing being called *fat* in Scripture, as Gen. xli. 2; Dan. i. 15. And in their lifetime they have great ease, and health, and content, till they expire like a lamp, merely for want of moisture.

b Job 21. 6. † Heb. *in the trouble of other men.* † Heb. *with.*

5 b*They are* not †in trouble *as other* men; neither are they plagued †like *other* men.

Either, 1. As good men frequently are. Or, 2. As men generally are. They do by a secret and favourable providence of God escape even common calamities.

c So Ps. 109. 18.

6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them c*as* a garment.

Pride compasseth them about as a chain: this phrase notes both the extent of their pride, which appears on every side of them, in their countenances, discourses, gestures, &c., and their glorying in it. The like may be said of the next phrase.

d Job 15. 27. Ps. 17. 10. & 119. 70. Jer. 5. 28. † Heb. *they pass the thoughts of the heart.*

7 d*Their* eyes stand out with fatness: †they have more than heart could wish.

Their eyes stand out with fatness; as they do in some fat persons, though not in others. The meaning is, they live in great plenty and prosperity, as the next clause explains it.

e Ps. 53. 1. f Hos. 7. 16. g 2 Pet. 2. 18. Jude 16.

8 e*They* are corrupt, and fspeak wickedly *concerning* oppression: they gspeak loftily.

They are corrupt; or, *dissolved* in pleasure. Or, *they corrupt* themselves. *Speak wickedly concerning oppression;* wickedly boasting of their oppressions; either of what they have done, or of what they intend to do, in that kind. *They speak loftily;* arrogantly presuming upon their own strength, and despising both God and men.

9 They set their mouth hagainst the h Rev. 13. 6

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heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

Against the heavens, i. e. against God, blaspheming his name, denying or deriding his providence, reviling his saints and servants. *Walketh through the earth;* using all manner of liberty, introducing and reproaching all sorts of persons, not caring whom they displease or hurt by it.

10 Therefore his people return hither:
[i] Ps. 75. 8. [i]and waters of a full *cup* are wrung out to them.

His people; either, 1. The people of those wicked blasphemers; all their children, and servants, and friends, encouraged by their example. Or rather, 2. The people of God, who is oft understood under the pronoun relative *he* or *his*, though he be not expressed, as Psal. cv. 19; Isa. xxx. 23. See the like Psal. lxxxvii. 1; Cant. i. 2. But then as God's *people are of two sorts*, some that are so really and sincerely, and others that are so only in profession and show, in which sense the whole body of the Israelitish nation, yea, even the wicked among them, are called his *people*, as Psal. lxxxi. 11; Isa. i. 3; Jer. ii. 11, &c.; so this may be understood, either, 1. Of those true Israelites, ver. 1. Even the godly were startled and stumbled at this, as David was, Psal. xxxvii., and Jeremiah, chap. xii. But although they might have some murmuring thoughts about this matter, it seems not probable that they would either give way to such thoughts, or break forth into such expressions, as are here ascribed to them, ver. 11; nor are such things to be imputed to them without necessity; nor did either David or Jeremiah in their conflicts utter any thing of this nature. Or rather, 2. Of the carnal, hypocritical Israelites, who perceiving the impunity and prosperity of these ungodly wretches, were easily drawn to the approbation and imitation of their courses. And this may seem most suitable to the context; for the description of the condition, and carriage, and words of these ungodly men, which begins ver. 4, seems to be continued to ver. 13; then follows the psalmist's reflection and consideration upon the whole matter, from ver. 13 to the end. *Return hither*, or, *turn hither*, i. e. to this wicked company, or to their course. *Waters of a full cup are wrung out to them: waters*, in Scripture, do oftimes signify afflictions, and as oft comforts and mercies. So the sense may be, either, 1. And whilst the wicked prosper, God doth wring out waters out of the cup of tribulation, and causeth his holy ones to drink them up: compare Psal. lxxv. 8; lxxx. 5; Isa. li. 17; Jer. xxv. 15, &c. Or rather, 2. And those hypocritical Israelites find themselves gainers by their apostacy, and they partake of the same prosperity with their leaders, and God seems to give them a full cup of consolation, and to pour forth his mercies upon them in such abundance, as if he would wring or squeeze out all his blessings out of his stores to bestow upon them. And meeting with such success to their wickedness, it is not strange if they put that question, ver. 11.

[k] Job 21. 14. Prov. 1. 22. [k]11 And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most high?

They; either, 1. The godly. Or rather, 2. Those wicked ones, whose words and actions he hath been hitherto describing, or the *people* confederate with them. For these and such-like opinions are oft ascribed to the wicked in Scripture, but never, as far as I know, to any good man. And Job, though he used many intemperate speeches, and though some such expressions as this were charged upon him by his friends, as Job xxii. 13, yet he utterly disowned them. *Is there knowledge in the Most High?* seeing these cursed and impudent blasphemers of God, and enemies of all goodness, are crowned with so many blessings, how is it credible that there is a God who sees and orders the affairs of this lower world? for if God did know these things, certainly he neither could nor would suffer them to be thus managed.

[l] Job 12. 6. [l]12 Behold, these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches.

These are the ungodly; this is their condition and carriage in it. These seem to be the words of the psalmist, summing up the matter, and preparing his passage to the other part of the Psalm.

[m] Job 21. 15. & 34. 9. & 35. 3. Mal. 3. 14. [n] Ps. 26. 6. 13 [m]Verily I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, and [n]washed my hands in innocency.

Hence I was sometimes tempted to think that religion was a vain and unprofitable thing, at least as to the happiness of this life, which yet God had promised as a reward to piety. True religion is here fitly and fully described by its two principal parts and works, the cleansing of the heart from sinful lusts and passions, and of the hands, or outward man, from a course of sinful actions. And although it be God's work to cleanse the heart, yet he saith, *I have cleansed it*, because every good man doth co-operate with God's grace in cleansing it. Compare 2 Cor. vi. 1; vii. 1. *Washed my hands in innocency*, i. e. kept my hands (the great instruments of action, and consequently the rest of the members of my body) innocent and pure from evil practices. I have washed my hands, not only ceremonially with water, wherewith hypocrites satisfy themselves, but also morally, or with the waters of God's grace and Spirit, innocency or purity.

† Heb. *my chastisement was.* 14 For all the day long have I been plagued, and †chastened every morning.

Whilst their ungodliness hath been attended with constant prosperity, my piety hath been exercised with continual afflictions.

15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend *against* the generation of thy children.

I will speak thus; I will give sentence for the ungodly in this manner. *I should offend against the generation of thy children*, by grieving, and discouraging, and condemning them, and by tempting them to revolt from God and godliness. But because the Hebrew verb *bagad* in this sense is always, so far as I have observed, construed with the preposition *beth*, which is not here, and is constantly put before that preposition and word which it governs, and not after, as here it is, I rather join with them who render the place thus; which is more agreeable to the words and order of the text; *Behold the generation of thy children*, (or, *Behold*, these are *the generation of thy children*, as appears by thy fatherly care of and indulgence and kindness to them, whilst thou dost at present seem to treat them like bastards who are more truly called thy children, dealing roughly and severely with them,) *I shall* (or rather, *should*, to wit, in speaking so) *transgress*, or *prevaricate*, speak against the truth, and against my own conscience, which assureth me that these are the haters of God, and hated and cursed by him.

[o] Eccles. 8. 17. † Heb. *it was labour in mine eyes.* 16 [o]When I thought to know this, †it *was* too painful for me;

To know this; to find out the reason of this mysterious course of thy providence. *It was too painful for me;* I was gravelled with the difficulty.

[p] Ps. 77. 13. [q] Ps. 37. 38. 17 Until [p]I went into the sanctuary of God; *then* understood I [q]their end.

Till I consulted with the oracle, or word of God. He alludes to the practice of those times, which was, in dark and difficult cases, to resort to God's sanctuary, and the oracle in it, for satisfaction. *Then understood I their end;* there I learned that their posterity was short, and would quickly have an end, and that a most dismal and terrible one; that their fair morn would be followed with a black and dreadful evening, and an everlasting night.

[r] Ps. 35. 6. 18 Surely [r]thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction.

Their happiness hath no firm foundation; it was very unstable, like a man's standing in very slippery ground. The same hand which raised them will cast them down into the pit of utter destruction.

19 How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

Their fall is wonderful, both for its soreness and for its suddenness. *Consumed with terrors;* either, with the horrors of their own minds; or rather, with God's dreadful judgments unexpectedly seizing upon them.

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s Job 20. 8. Ps. 90. 5. Is. 29. 7, 8. t Ps. 78. 65.

20 sAs a dream when *one* awaketh; *so*, O Lord, twhen thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

Their happiness is like that in a dream, wherein a man seems to be highly pleased and transported with ravishing delights, but when he awakes he finds himself deceived and unsatisfied. *Awakest*, i. e. stirrest up thyself to punish them. Or rather, *when they shall awake* out of the pleasant dream of this vain, sinful life by death, and the torments following it. For this seems to agree best with the metaphor here before mentioned. And the Hebrew words being only these, *in awaking*, may be applied either to God or to them, as the context directs. *Despise their image;* not so much really, for so God ever did despise it, in the height of all their glory; but declaratively, things being oft said to be done in Scripture when they appear, or are manifested: as hath been more than once noted. Thou shalt pour contempt upon them; make them despicable, both to themselves and to all others; and raise them *to shame and everlasting contempt*, as is said, Dan. xii. 2. *Their image*, i. e. all their felicity and glory, which as indeed it ever was, so now it shall be evidently discerned to be, no real or substantial and solid thing, but a mere image, or shadow, or vain show, which can neither abide with them, nor yield satisfaction to them. See Psal. xxxix. 6; Acts xxv. 23, where what is rendered *pomp*, in the Greek signifies a mere *fancy* or *imagination*, 1 Cor. vii. 31.

u ver. 3.

21 Thus my heart was ugrieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

Thus; so as I have above expressed; for this particle so taken, doth not belong to what he had now wisely and piously said in the next foregoing verses, but to what he had unadvisedly spoken in the former verses, as is evident from the following verse. Or, *nevertheless*, as this particle is oft used. Although I knew very well that the prosperity of sinners would have a sudden and dismal end, yet I was so foolish as to be grieved at it. *I was pricked in my reins;* was heartily and deeply wounded with disquieting thoughts, and tormenting passions, envy, and sorrow, and anger.

x Ps. 92. 6. Prov. 30. 2. † Heb. *I knew not.* † Heb. *with thee.*

22 xSo foolish *was* I, and † ignorant: I was *as* a beast † before thee.

As a beast. Heb. *beasts*, which may signify a great beast; a most stupid and sottish creature, like one not only void of grace, but of reason too; for reason itself, especially assisted by the Holy Scriptures, did sufficiently discover that, all things considered, I had no sufficient cause to envy the prosperity of wicked men. I minded only present things, as the brutes do, and did not consider things to come, as reasonable creatures do, and ought to do. *Before thee;* in thy sight or judgment, and therefore in truth, Rom. ii. 2, howsoever I seemed to myself or others to have some degree of reason and discretion.

23 Nevertheless I *am* continually with thee: thou hast holden *me* by my right hand.

Nevertheless; notwithstanding all my temptations, and my gross folly in yielding to them. *I am continually with thee;* either, 1. In a way of duty. Yet I did not depart from thee, nor from thy ways; but did at last conquer them, and firmly cleave unto thee by faith. Or rather, 2. In a way of mercy and favour, of which he speaks in the next clause of this and in the following verse. Although I gave thee just cause to cast me off, yet thou didst continue thy gracious presence with me, and thy care and kindness to me. And this phrase, *with thee*, seems to have some emphasis in it, as being opposed to the other *with thee*, ver. 22. I was a beast with thee, such was my folly and wickedness; and yet I was in favour with thee, such was thy goodness: thou didst pardon and cure it. *Thou hast holden me by my right hand*, that my faith might not fail, and I might not be overthrown by this or any other temptations.

y Ps. 32. 8. Is. 58. 8.

24 yThou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory.

Thou shalt guide me: as thou hast kept me hitherto in all my trials, so I am assured thou wilt lead me still into right paths, and keep me from wandering or straying from thee, or falling into mischief. *With thy counsel;* partly, by thy gracious providence, executing thy purpose of mercy to me, and watching over me; partly, by thy word, which thou wilt open mine eyes to understand, as Psal. cxix. 18; and principally, by thy Holy Spirit, sanctifying and directing me in the whole course of my life. *Receive me to glory;* either, 1. Advance me to honour here. Or rather, 2. Translate me to everlasting glory in heaven. For, 1. Thus God doth for his people most constantly and certainly, whilst all the occurrences of the present life do happen indifferently to good and bad; which was the common observation of Job, and David, and Solomon, and other holy men of God in Scripture. 2. This is far more considerable than the former, and the more satisfactory relief against the present prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of good men. 3. This future glory is that mystery which was to be learned only in God's sanctuary, ver. 17. 4. As the destruction of the wicked, mentioned ver. 18—20, looks beyond this life, so doth the glory of God's people.

25 zWhom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee.

z Phil. 3. 8.

Whom have I in heaven, or *in earth?* as it follows. There is no other person nor thing in the world from which I can seek or hope for happiness, or which I am willing to accept as my portion. Let sinners have an earthly prosperity, I am satisfied with thee, and with thy favour. Since thou givest me support and conduct here, and carriest me safe from hence to eternal glory, what do I need more? or what can I desire more? *But thee;* which words must necessarily be understood here from the next clause, where they are expressed.

a Ps. 84. 2. & 119. 81. † Heb. *rock.* b Ps. 16. 5. & 119. 57.

26 aMy flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God *is* the † strength of my heart, and bmy portion for ever.

In myself, I confess I am a poor weak creature, and my body and spirit may fail and be ready to faint under such temptations and tribulations as these, and I know I shall shortly return to the dust, out of which I was taken. But though I have no strength in myself, I have it in God, my never-failing refuge, to whom I will trust whilst I live, and who will be my portion to eternity.

c Ps. 119. 155. d Ex. 34. 15. Num. 15. 39. Jam. 4. 4.

27 For, lo, cthey that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that dgo a whoring from thee.

They that are far from thee; they that forsake thee and thy ways, preferring the prosperity of this present evil world before thy love, and favour, and service; they who estrange themselves from the love, and life, and acquaintance of God; that *say to God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*, as they did, Job xxi. 14. *Thou hast destroyed;* thou will certainly and dreadfully destroy them. *Them that go a whoring from thee;* those who having professed subjection to thee, shall afterwards revolt from thee, and sell themselves to work wickedness; which is called *whoredom* in Scripture. For none are more hateful to God, than wilful and wicked apostates from the principles and practice of the true religion, which once they owned.

e Heb. 10. 22. f Ps. 107. 22. & 118. 17.

28 But *it is* good for me to edraw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may fdeclare all thy works.

But whatsoever they do, I am abundantly satisfied that it is, as my duty, so my interest and happiness, to cleave unto thee, by faith, and love, and obedience, and diligent attendance upon all thine ordinances. *I have put my trust in the Lord God;* I depend upon him alone for all my comfort and felicity. *That I may declare all thy works;* from which I know I shall have this benefit, that I shall have many and great occasions to declare God's acts of mercy and kindness to me.

PSALM LXXIV.

¶ ‖ Maschil of Asaph.

‖ Or, A Psalm for Asaph to give instruction.

i. e. Composed by Asaph; either, 1. By that famous Asaph who flourished in David's time, and by the Spirit of God

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foresaw and foretold the things here mentioned. But the clear, and exact, and particular, and most pathetical description of the thing here expressed, looks much more like a narrative of what is past than a prophecy of what is to come; which usually is delivered more darkly. Besides, such a prophecy of the destruction of the temple before it was built would have been a great discouragement to the building of it, and would probably have been taken notice of by Solomon in his prayer for it, when it was newly built. Or, 2. By some of his posterity, who is called by their father's name, *Asaph*, as the children of Israel are frequently called *Jacob*, or *Israel*, and David's successors *David*; as hath been noted. Or, 3. By some other person of that name, though of another family; who then was a man of renown, though now his memory be lost. Or this may be rendered *for Asaph*, i. e. for his posterity; and it might be said by some other holy man of God. But the former seems more probable. This is evident, that this Psalm speaks of the destruction of the temple, and of Jerusalem, and of God's people, by the Chaldeans; though some think it looks further, even to the pollution of the temple by Antiochus; although the things said to be done, ver. 6—8, agree much better to the former, and were not done by Antiochus.

The church complaineth of the desolation which the enemies had made in the temple and synagogue, 1—9; *prayeth God to help by his great power*, 10—17, *against the reproach and blasphemy of the enemies*, 18. *He prayeth for God's beloved and covenanted ones*, 19—23.

O GOD, why hast thou [a]cast *us* off for ever? *why* doth thine anger [b]smoke against [c]the sheep of thy pasture?

[a] Ps. 44. 9, 23. & 60. 1, 10. & 77. 7. & 89. 38. [b] Deut. 29. 20. Ps. 74. 1. & 79. 5. & 80. 4.

Why hast thou cast us off for ever, so as to leave us no visible hopes of restitution? *Thine anger*; or, *thy nose*; a metaphor from a man who in a great rage sends forth fumes out of his nostrils. *Against the sheep of thy pasture*; against thy chosen and peculiar people.

2 Remember thy congregation, [d]*which* thou hast purchased of old; the ‖ [e]rod of thine inheritance, *which* thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

[d] Ex. 15. 16. Deut. 32. 6. Ps. 78. 54. [e] Deut. 32. 9. Jer. 10. 16.

Remember; show by thine actions that thou hast not utterly forgotten and forsaken them. *Thy congregation*; thy church or people. *Purchased*; or, *redeemed*, as it follows: or, *bought*, as it is Deut. xxxii. 6; or, *procured*, though without price, as this word is used, Ruth iv. 9, 10. *Of old*; when thou broughtest them out of Egypt, and formedst them into a commonwealth, and gavest them laws, and didst enter into covenant with them at Sinai. *The rod of thine inheritance*; that people which thou hast measured out as it were by rod, to be thy portion or inheritance, as they are called also Deut. xxxii. 9. See also Psal. xvi. 5, 6; Jer. x. 16. Or, *the tribe* (as this word commonly signifies) *of thine inheritance*, i. e. the tribe of Judah, which thou hast in a special manner chosen for thine inheritance, and for the seat of the kingdom, and for the birth of the Messiah. And thus here is an elegant gradation from the general to particulars; first the *congregation*, consisting of all the tribes; then the *tribe* of Judah; and lastly, *Mount Zion*. Nor is it strange that he mentions this tribe particularly, because the calamity and captivity here remembered did principally befall this tribe and Benjamin, which was united with it and subject to it, and the most that returned were of this tribe; for the generality of the other tribes were long before dispersed into other lands, and continue in their captivity to this day. *Mount Zion*; which is oft put for the temple, or the hill of Moriah, on which it was built.

3 Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; *even* all *that* the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.

Lift up thy feet, i. e. come speedily for our rescue, and do not sit or stand still, as hitherto thou seemest to do. *Unto the perpetual desolations*; or rather, *because of* (as this prefix oft signifies) *the perpetual desolations*. So it is a powerful motive to God to come to their help, because otherwise our destruction is everlasting and irrecoverable. *In the sanctuary*; or, *against thy sanctuary*; of which see ver. 7.

4 [f]Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; [g]they set up their ensigns *for* signs.

[f] Lam. 2. 7. [g] Dan. 6. 27.

Roar, i. e. make loud outcries; either from their rage and fury against the conquered and captivated Israelites now in their power; or rather, in way of triumph for their success and victory. *In the midst of thy congregations*; in the places where thy people used to assemble together for thy worship; whereby they designed to insult not only over us, but over thee also, as if their gods had been too strong for thee. *Signs*; or, *trophies*, or monuments of their victories obtained over God, and over his people, as conquerors used to do in like cases.

5 *A man* was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

So the meaning is this, The temple was so noble a structure, that it was a great honour to any man to be employed in the meanest part of the work, though it were but in cutting down the trees of Lebanon. And this translation may seem to be favoured by the opposition in the next verse, *But now*, &c. But others understand the words thus translated in another sense, that every one of the enemies got renown accordingly as they showed most barbarous rage in destroying *the thick wood-work* (which in the next verse is called *the carved work*) of the temple. But this seems not to suit well with the opposition between this work and that of the next verse, which is ushered in by *but now*. The words therefore may be (and in part are by some) rendered thus, *It is known*, (or *manifest*, Heb. *It will be known*; it will be published to all posterity, as matter of astonishment and admiration,) that, *as one lifteth up his axe* (Heb. *axes*, the plural number for the singular, as it is elsewhere) *upon thick trees*, to cut them down. This is the first part of the similitude, called the *protasis*; then follows the latter part of it, called the *apodosis*, in the next verse. *So* (Heb. *and*; which is sometimes put for a note of similitude, as in that passage of the Lord's prayer, Matt. vi. 10, *as it is in heaven*; and oft in the book of the Proverbs) *now* (for though this Psalm was composed after the thing was done, yet he speaks of it as if it were now in doing, as the manner of the sacred writers frequently is, that it may be more livelily represented to men's minds) *they break down the carved works*, &c. The meaning is, they neither regard the sacredness of the place, nor the exquisite curiosity and art of the work, but cut it down as indifferently and rashly as men cut down the thick and entangled boughs of the trees of the forest.

6 But now they break down [h]the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers.

[h] 1 Kings 6. 18, 29, 32, 35.

See the note on the former verse. *Axes and hammers*: it hath been ingeniously observed that these two words are not Hebrew, but Chaldee or Syriac words, to point out the time when this was done, even when the Chaldeans brought in their language together with their arms among the Israelites.

7 [i]† They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled [k]*by casting down* the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.

[i] 2 Kin. 25. 9. † Heb. *They have sent thy sanctuary into the fire.* [k] Ps. 89. 39.

First they polluted it, and then they burnt it, and broke it in pieces.

8 [l]They said in their hearts, Let us † destroy them together: they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.

[l] Ps. 83. 4. † Heb. *break.*

Destroy them together, root and branch, one as well as another, or all at once. So they desired, and many of them intended, although afterwards, it seems, they changed their counsel, and carried some away captives, and left others to manage the land. *All the synagogues of God in the land*, i. e. all the public places wherein the Jews used to meet together to worship God *every sabbath day*, as is noted, Acts xiii. 27, and upon other occasions. That the

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Jews had such synagogues is manifest, both from these and other places of Scripture; and from the testimony of the Hebrew doctors, and other ancient and learned writers, who affirm it, and particularly of Jerusalem, in which they say there were above four hundred synagogues; and from the nature and necessity of the thing; for seeing it is undeniable that they did worship God publicly, in every sabbath, and other holy times, even then when they neither did nor could go up to Jerusalem, both conscience and prudence must needs direct them to appoint convenient places for that purpose.

m 1 Sam. 3. 1. Amos 8. 11. 1 Mac. 4. 46.

9 We see not our signs: [m] *there is* no more any prophet: neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

Our signs, i. e. those tokens of God's gracious presence which we and our ancestors formerly used to enjoy; either, 1. Miracles wrought for us, which are called *signs*, Psal. lxxviii. 43; cxxxv. 9. Or, 2. The ordinances of God, the temple, and ark, and sacrifices, and solemn feasts, all which were signs between God and his people. *Any prophet:* either, 1. Any teacher. We have few or no teachers left to us. Or, 2. Any extraordinary prophet, who can foretell things to come, as the next words explain it. For as for Ezekiel and Jeremiah, they might be dead when this Psalm was composed; and Daniel was involved in civil affairs, and did not teach the people as a prophet; and the prophetical Spirit which sometimes came upon him, and made those great discoveries to him which we read in his book, might possibly at this time suspend his influences. Besides, it is not unusual in Scripture, to say that there is none of a sort of persons or things, when there is a very great scarcity of them. But others make this their great argument, that this Psalm speaks of that persecution in the time of Antiochus, when indeed there was no prophet at all. *How long;* either, 1. How long their captivity should continue; for though seventy years were determined, yet there might arise doubts among them, as there now are among us, whence they were to be computed, which might make their end uncertain. Or, 2. How long they should lie under reproach, as it follows, ver. 10, which they really did, and might foresee that they should, even after the expiration of their captivity, Neh. i. 3.

10 O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

Reproach; understand here *thy name*, which is expressed in the next clause of the verse, by saying that thou art either unkind to thy people, or unfaithful in thy covenant, or unable to deliver thine out of their miseries.

n Lam. 2. 3.

11 [n] Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck *it* out of thy bosom.

Why withdrawest thou thy hand? why dost thou suspend or forbear the exercise of that power, which thou hast so oft put forth on the behalf of thy people? *Pluck it out of thy bosom*, in which thou now seemest to hide it, as idle persons use to do, Prov. xix. 24; xxvi. 15. Bestir thyself on the behalf of thy people.

o Ps. 44. 4.

12 For [o] God *is* my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

My King, in a singular manner: it belongs therefore to thine office to protect and save me. *In the midst of the earth;* in the view of the world; so saving thy people so eminently and gloriously, that all people round about them observed and admired it.

p Ex. 14. 21. † Heb. *break.* q Is. 51. 9, 10. Ezek. 29. 3. & 32. 2. ‖ Or, *whales.*

13 [p] Thou didst † divide the sea by thy strength: [q] thou brakest the heads of the ‖ dragons in the waters.

The dragons; or, *the crocodiles*. He means Pharaoh and all his mighty men, who were like these beasts in strength and cruelty. *The waters*, to wit, of the sea, where they were drowned.

r Num. 14. 9. s Ps. 72. 9.

14 Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, *and* gavest him [r] *to be* meat [s] to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

The heads, i. e. the head; called *heads*, partly for the greatness of this beast, as that great monster is called *beasts*, Job xl. 20, for the same reason; and partly for the several heads or princes who were and acted under his influence. *Leviathan;* Pharaoh. *To the people inhabiting the wilderness*, Heb. *to the people in* or *of the desert;* either, 1. To the Israelites then in the wilderness, to whom the destruction of Pharaoh and his host was *meat*, i. e. matter of great support and refreshment. Or, 2. To those savage people to whom they were *meat*, because they lived upon fishes, and might eat those very fishes which had devoured Pharaoh's host in the bottom of the sea. Or rather, 3. To those ravenous birds and beasts of the desert, which after their manner fed and feasted themselves upon the carcasses of the Egyptians, who were cast upon the sea-shore, Exod. xiv. 30, which were properly and immediately *meat* unto them. And when words can be taken properly, we ought to prefer that before the metaphorical sense, as is agreed by interpreters. And this was a very suitable punishment for this proud and insolent people, that they who were so haughty, that they would not own nor submit to the Lord himself, Exod. v. 2, should be devoured by these contemptible creatures, which was a great reproach, 1 Sam. xvii. 44, 46, and oft threatened by God as a grievous curse, as Deut. xxviii. 26; Jer. vii. 33; xvi. 4, &c. Neither let any think it strange that the name of *people* is given to these creatures, for it is given to conies, grasshoppers, pismires, &c., both in Scripture, as Prov. xxx. 25, 26; Joel i. 6, and in Homer, and other ancient profane writers. Nay, here is an elegancy in the expression; for these creatures are significantly called *the people of the wilderness*, because they are the only people that inhabited it, this being *a wilderness wherein* was *no man*, as is said, Job xxxviii. 26.

t Ex. 17. 5, 6. Num. 20. 11. Ps. 105. 41. Is. 48. 21. u Josh. 3. 13, &c. † Heb. *rivers of strength.*

15 [t] Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: [u] thou driedst up † mighty rivers.

Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood, i. e. thou didst by cleaving the rock make a fountain in it, and a flood or stream to flow from it, for the refreshment of thy people in those dry deserts. The phrase is like that Isa. xlvii. 2, *grind meal*, i. e. by grinding the corn make meal. *Mighty rivers;* either, 1. Jordan, which was then more mighty than ordinarily, as having overflowed all his banks, and therefore may be called *rivers*, because it was now equivalent to two or three such rivers; or it is only an enallage of the plural number for the singular, whereof I have given many instances formerly. Or rather, 2. Both Jordan and the Red Sea; for the sea itself, yea, a greater sea than that, is called *a river*, Jonah ii. 3; for the Hebrew word is the same which is here used, though there it be rendered *floods*. And the same title is expressly given to the sea by Homer and other ancient writers. To these the ancient Chaldee interpreter addeth the rivers of Arnon and Jabbok, in or about which some extraordinary work was wrought, yea, something which was like God's work at the Red Sea, as may seem by the conjunction of these together, Numb. xxi. 14.

x Gen. 1. 14. &c.

16 The day *is* thine, the night also *is* thine: [x] thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

It is not strange nor incredible that thou hast done these great and wonderful works, for thou hast made the heavenly bodies, and the vicissitudes of day and night, depending upon them, which is a far greater work. *Prepared;* or rather, *established*, as this word oft signifies; not only created, but settled in a constant and orderly course. *The light;* either, 1. That primitive light, Gen. i. 3, which afterwards was condensed and gathered into the sun. Or rather, 2. The moon, as divers, both ancient and modern, interpreters understand it, called here *the light*, to wit, the lesser luminary or light; wherein there is either a synecdoche of the general for the particular, or an ellipsis of the adjective, both which figures are very usual. And that *the* lesser *light* is here meant, may seem probable, both because it is opposed to the greater light, the sun here following; and because this is to rule the night, as the sun is to rule the day, Gen. i. 16; and so this clause answereth to and explains the former, wherein both *day* and *night* are mentioned.

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17 Thou hast [r] set all the borders of the earth: [s] thou hast †made summer and winter.

[r] Acts 17. 26.
[s] Gen. 8. 22.
† Heb. made them.

Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast fixed the bounds, both of the habitable world in general; so as the seas, though they do encompass and assault them, yet they shall never be able to remove them; and of all the countries and people upon earth, whom thou hast confined to such bounds as thou seest fit. And as this clause of the verse showeth God's power and government over all places, so the next clause displays his dominion over all times and seasons; and both together are fitly alleged as a motive to God, that he would at this time take care of his poor people, and restore them to their ancient land and borders, in which he had been pleased to set them.

18 [a] Remember this, *that* the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and *that* [b] the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

[a] Deut. 32. 27.
[b] Ps. 39. 8.

Though we deserve to be forgotten and destroyed, yet remember thyself, and do not suffer thine and our enemies to reproach and blaspheme the name of that great and glorious God, the Creator and sovereign Lord of the whole world, whom they ought always to reverence and adore. *The foolish people;* who, though they think themselves and are thought by others to be wise, yet in truth are fools, and herein show their stupendous folly, that they vilify and provoke that God whose powerful anger they can neither resist, nor escape, nor endure.

19 O deliver not the soul [c] of thy turtledove unto the multitude *of the wicked:* [d] forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.

[c] Cant. 2. 14.
[d] Ps. 9. 18.

The soul, i. e. the life. Thou hast delivered thy people into captivity; do not deliver them to death, nor suffer their enemies utterly to destroy them. *Of thy turtle-dove,* i. e. of thy church, which is fitly compared to a turtle-dove, because of the great resemblance of their dispositions and conditions, being simple, and harmless, and meek, and faithful, and mournful, and exposed to manifold injuries, and unable to defend itself from them. *Unto the multitude of the wicked;* or, *to the wild beast,* as this word oft signifies; or, *to the troop,* to wit, of her enemies.

20 [e] Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

[e] Gen. 17. 7. Lev. 26. 42. Ps. 106. 45. Jer. 33. 21.

Have respect unto the covenant made with Abraham, whereby thou didst give the land of Canaan to him, and to his seed for ever; and thou didst further promise, that if they people were carried captive into strange lands, and did there humble themselves, and pray and turn unto thee, thou wouldst mercifully restore them, 1 Kings viii. 46—50: do thou therefore now restore us to that pleasant and lightsome land which thou hast given to us. *The dark places of the earth,* i. e. this dark and dismal land in which we live, wherein there is nothing but ignorance and confusion, and all the works of darkness; of which the psalmist speaks in general terms, out of a principle of prudence, because the particular designation of the place was unnecessary, and might have been of ill consequence. *Are full of the habitations of cruelty;* here is nothing but injustice, and oppression, and tyranny, under which we groan in all the parts of this great empire, where we have our abode.

21 O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.

Return ashamed from thee, and from the throne of thy grace, to which they make their resort in this their distressed condition.

22 Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: [f] remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.

[f] Ps. 39. 8.

Plead thine own cause; maintain thy honour, and worship, and service against those that reproach thee, as it here follows, and was noted before, ver. 10, 18. As we are reviled and persecuted for thy sake, so thou art injured in all our wrongs.

23 Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee † increaseth continually.

† Heb. *ascendeth,* Jonah 1. 2.

The voice; their insulting and reproachful expressions against thee, as well as against us. *The tumult,* i. e. the tumultuous noise of the loud clamours. *Increaseth,* Heb. *ascendeth,* to wit, into heaven, being either directed thither by them; *their mouth* being set *against heaven,* as theirs was, Psal. lxxiii. 9; or at least being perceived there by God, whose ears were pierced with the loud cry of their sins. See Gen. iv. 10; xviii. 20. Or *ascending* may be here put for *increasing,* as it is Isa. lv. 13; Jer. xlvi. 7. So the sense is, They grow worse and worse, encouraging and hardening themselves in their wicked courses by their continual success and prosperity, and by thy patience extended to them.

PSALM LXXV.

¶ To the chief Musician, ‖ * Al-taschith, A Psalm *or* Song ‖ of Asaph.

‖ Or, *Destroy not.*
* Ps. 57. title.
‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

Of Asaph; as the author. Or, *to* or *for Asaph;* which may be put by way of opposition to the foregoing and general expression, *to the chief Musician,* which is here limited to and explained of *Asaph.* As Psal. lxii., having said *to the chief Musician,* he adds *to Jeduthun;* and then follows the author, *David.* This Psalm was either composed by David, or by Asaph in David's name and person, as it is not unusual for poets to bring in princes speaking in their poems. It seems to relate to the time when David had entered upon, but not got full possession of, the kingdom.

The psalmist, praising God for his wondrous works, promiseth to judge uprightly, 1—3. *Rebuking the proud and foolish with God's providence,* 4—8, *pulleth them down, but exalteth the righteous,* 9, 10.

UNTO thee, O God, do we give thanks, *unto thee* do we give thanks: for *that* thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

Do we give thanks; I, in my own and in my people's name. *Thy name,* i. e. thyself; or thy power. *Is near;* is present with us, and most ready to help us when we cry unto thee, as this phrase is taken, Psal. xxxiv. 18; cxlv. 18. Thou art not departed from us; thou dost not now *stand afar off,* as once thou didst, Psal. x. 1. *Thy wondrous works,* wrought on my behalf, and for the good of thy people.

2 ‖ When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.

‖ Or, *When I shall take a set time.*

When I shall receive the congregation, to wit, the whole congregation, or body of thy people, to wit, all the tribes; which are now distracted and disordered by a civil war, which is a great hinderance to the administration of justice. Or, *when I shall receive* or *obtain the appointment,* i. e. what God hath appointed and promised to me, to wit, the full and firm possession of the kingdom; or, *the time* or *place appointed* by God for that work. Some make these and the following passages the words of God concerning his church or people; which seems not probable; partly because he speaks of God in the third person, as one distinct from him that speaks these words, ver. 7, 8; and partly because it is evident that one and the same person speaks from hence to the end of the Psalm, and the ninth verse cannot be spoken by God. *I will judge uprightly;* I will not use my power tyrannically and wickedly, as Saul did, and as most other princes do; but holily and righteously, for the good of my people.

3 The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.

Dissolved; or, *melted,* consumed or destroyed; partly by the ill government of Saul and Ish-bosheth, and the great officers of state and war under them; and partly by intestine divisions and wars. *I bear up the pillars of it:* howsoever I am traduced by mine enemies as the great disturber of the land, I must do myself this right, to affirm that, under God, I do support and establish it, by maintaining

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religion and justice. and by setting up good magistrates, and encouraging good ministers, and good men, which are indeed the pillars of a nation.

4 I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, [a]Lift not up the horn:

[a] Zech. 1.21.

I said, with authority and command; I charged them. *The fools*, i. e. *the wicked*, as that is explained in the next clause. *Deal not foolishly*; desist from your impious and injurious practices, which shall not now go unpunished, as they have done. *Lift not up the horn*; do not carry yourselves either arrogantly, boasting of your own strength, or scornfully and maliciously towards me or others of God's people.

5 Lift not up your horn on high: speak *not with* a stiff neck.

Lift not up your horn on high; a metaphor from untamed and stiff-necked oxen, which will not bow their heads to receive the yoke, but lift up their heads and horns to avoid it. Or, *against the High*, i. e. against God, who is mentioned under this same title, Psal. lvi. 2. though there it be rendered *Most High*. *Speak not*, to wit, against me and my government. *With a stiff neck*; with pride and contempt of my person, and with rebellion against God's will declared concerning my advancement, of which you are not ignorant. See 2 Sam. iii. 17, 18.

6 For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the † south.

† Heb. *desert.*

For though you envy and oppose my advancement, because I was but a poor shepherd, and of a mean family; yet you ought to know and consider what is notorious and visible in the world, that the dignities and sceptres of the world are not always disposed according to human expectations and probabilities, but by God's sovereign will and providence, as it follows. It is true, men that expect preferment have their eyes fixed upon the great persons of the world, who are thought to have the disposition of them in their hands, and according to their several inclinations or interests; some look eastward, others westward, and others southward, expecting assistance from some of these quarters; but all in vain.

[b] Ps. 50. 6. & 58. 11. [c] 1 Sam. 2.7. Dan. 2. 21.

7 But [b]God *is* the judge: [c]he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

The judge, to wit, the righteous Judge, and supreme Lord and Governor of all the kingdoms of the world, giving them to whomsoever he pleaseth. It is he who hath rejected Saul and his family, and put me in his stead. And who art thou that disputest with God, and resistest his declared will?

[d] Job 21. 20. Ps. 60. 3. Jer. 25. 15. Rev. 14. 10. & 16. 19. [e] Prov. 23. 30. [f] Ps. 73. 10.

8 For [d]in the hand of the LORD *there is* a cup, and the wine is red; it is [e]full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: [f]but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring *them* out, *and* drink *them*.

This verse is added, either, 1. As a reason or confirmation of the assertion, ver. 7, and to show that God in removing one king to make way for another did not proceed in a way of absolute sovereignty, which yet he might have done, but in a way of justice and equity. Or, 2. As another argument to enforce his advice given ver. 4, 5, which he had now pressed by one argument, ver. 6, 7. God is here compared to the master of a feast, who then used to distribute portions of meats or drinks to the several guests as he thought fit. *A cup*, in Scripture, is sometimes taken in a good sense, for God's blessings, as Psal. xvi. 5; xxiii. 5; and sometimes, and more frequently, in a bad sense, for God's vengeance and judgments, as Psal. xi. 6; Isa. li. 22; Jer. xlix. 12; Matt. xx. 23, &c.; and so it is here understood, as the following words show. *The wine is red*; such as the best wine of Judea was, Deut. xxxii. 14; Prov. xxiii. 31; and so strong, and heady, and intoxicating. Or, *is troubled*; as the word more properly signifies, and is rendered by divers; which may note its newness, when it is in fermentation, not yet cleared nor settled, and so more intoxicating. So he expresseth the power and fierceness of God's wrath and judgments. *It is full of mixture*: the wine is mingled, not with water, as was usual in those hot countries, Prov. ix. 5, but with spices, as Cant. viii. 2; or rather, strengthening and intoxicating ingredients, which drunkards used, Isa. v. 22. *He poureth out of the same*, to wit, to the children of men; promiscuously to good and bad; whereby he removes the scandal which his enemies might take from those troubles which God saw fit to inflict upon David and his followers. *The dregs thereof*; the worst and most dreadful part of those tribulations. *Of the earth*; or, *of the land*, to wit, of Canaan, of which he spoke ver. 3. *Shall wring them out*; which expression may imply, either that they shall be forced to squeeze out the worst for their own drinking, or that this dreadful draught was prepared for them and brought upon them by their own choice and wickedness.

9 But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

Declare, to wit, this great and glorious work of God, or the praises due unto God for it, as the next words imply.

10 [g]All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; *but* [h]the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

[g] Ps. 101. 8. Jer. 48. 25. [h] Ps. 89. 17. & 148. 14.

The horns of the wicked; their honour and power, which they made an instrument of mischief to oppress good men. A metaphor from horned and mischievous beasts. *I will cut off*, when I shall be advanced to the throne, and have power and authority to do what now I can only desire and pray for. *The horns of the righteous shall be exalted*; good men shall be encouraged and promoted, and intrusted with the management of all public affairs, which will be a great blessing to all my people.

PSALM LXXVI.

¶ To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm *or* Song ‖of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

Or, *for Asaph*. Either it was composed by the prophet Asaph; or composed by David, or some other holy prophet of God, and committed to Asaph, or to his posterity; it being usual to put the parent's name for his children, of which I have formerly given divers instances. The special and immediate occasion of this Psalm was unquestionably some eminent deliverance vouchsafed by God to his people of Israel, and especially to Jerusalem, which the psalmist thought fit to celebrate; but which and when it was is both needless to inquire, and hard to determine.

A declaration of God's majesty and gracious presence in his church, 1—5. *At his rebuke the enemy spoils, and by his arm the meek are saved*, 6—10. *An exhortation to serve him with reverence*, 11, 12.

IN [a]Judah *is* God known: his name *is* great in Israel.

[a] Ps. 48. 1, &c.

God's people do not worship an unknown God, as the Athenians did, Acts xvii. 23, but one who hath made himself known, not only by his word and ordinances, but also by the glorious effects of his wisdom and power on their behalf, and against their potent and malicious enemies. *Is great*, i. e. famous and renowned, and greatly to be praised and admired.

2 In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

In Salem; in Jerusalem, which was anciently called *Salem*, Gen. xiv. 18; Heb. vii. 1. *Zion*; largely so called, as it includes Moriah, an adjoining hill, or another branch of the same hill.

3 [b]There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.

[b] Ps. 46. 9. Ezek. 39. 9.

There, i. e. in Judah, or at or near Jerusalem. *The arrows*, Heb. *the sparks*; the sparkling arrows, bright and shining, swift and piercing, like sparks of fire. *The bow, the shield, and the sword*; both offensive and defensive weapons, so as they could neither hurt God's people, nor

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save themselves from ruin. *The battle;* the force and fury of the battle, and all the power of the army, which was put in battle-array.

c Psa. 18. 16 & 24. 4 Thou *art* more glorious *and* excellent [c] than the mountains of prey.

Thou, O God; to whom he directeth his speech here, as also ver. 6—8. *Than the mountains of prey;* either, 1. Than the greatest kings and emperors of the earth, which in prophetical writings are oft compared to mountains, as Psal. xlvi. 2, 3; Isa. xli. 15; Jer. li. 25; Hab. iii. 6. And they are called mountains *of prey,* because then they generally were established by tyranny, and maintained by preying upon their own subjects, or other inferior kingdoms. Or, 2. (which amounts to the same thing) Than the most powerful enemies of thy people, upon whom they used and now desired and expected to prey; such persons being oft expressed by the name of mountains, as Psal. cxliv. 5; Zech. iv. 7, &c.

d Isa. 46. 12. e Psa. 13. 3. Jer. 51. 39. 5 [d] The stouthearted are spoiled, [e] they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.

Are spoiled of all that glory and advantage which they either had already gotten, or further expected, from the success of their present expedition, which they promised to themselves. They became a prey to those upon whom they hoped to prey. *Their sleep;* even a perpetual *sleep,* as Jer. li. 39, 57, or *the sleep of death,* Psal. xiii. 3; called *their sleep* emphatically, as being peculiar to them and such-like men, and not that sleep which is common to the good and bad. Their death he seems to call *sleep,* because they were slain in the night, when they had composed themselves to rest and sleep, and so passed insensibly from one sleep to another. For it is thought by many that this Psalm was composed upon the occasion of that prodigious slaughter of the Assyrians in Judah, 2 Kings xix. 35. *None have found their hands;* they had no more strength in or use of their hands against the destroying angel, than they who have no hands.

f Psa. 104. 7. Jer. 46. 20. Nah. 3. 18. Zech. 12. 4. 6 [f] At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.

The chariot and horse; the men who rode upon and fought from chariots and horses, who fight with most advantage, and usually have most courage; and much more unable were their footmen to resist or avoid the stroke.

g Nah. 1. 6. 7 Thou, *even* thou, *art* to be feared: and [g] who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

Stand in thy sight, to wit, to contend with thee. *Standing* is here opposed to flight or falling before the enemy. See Josh. vii. 12; Dan. viii. 4.

h Exod. 20. 19. i Or, were. Isa. 37. 36. 8 [h] Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; [i] the earth feared, and was still,

Thou didst execute judgment upon thine enemies by an angel sent from heaven; which is said *to be heard,* either because that was accompanied with terrible thunders and earthquakes, which was not unusual in the descent of an angel, as Matt. xxviii. 2, and elsewhere; or because the fame of it was quickly spread abroad in the land, and in the world. The effect of this terrible judgment was, that the rest of the world were afraid to invade or disturb the land and people of Israel, and chose rather to sit still in their own territories.

k Psa. 9. 7, 8. Isa. 2. 19, 21. 9 When God [k] arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.

When God arose to judgment; when God, who for a season had sat still, began to bestir and show himself against his enemies. Or, *after God had risen,* &c. Or, *because God did arise,* &c. *To save all the meek of the earth;* to save all the godly persons (who are oft called *meek* ones, as hath been noted again and again) in Israel, for whose sakes God wrought this great deliverance, which reached to all the people of the land.

l Psa. 78. 38. 10 [l] Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

The wrath of man shall praise thee; the blasphemous speeches and furious attempts of thine enemies shall serve thy glory, and cause thy people and others to praise and magnify thee for that admirable wisdom, and power, and faithfulness, and goodness which thou shalt discover upon that occasion. *The remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain;* thou shalt prevent and disappoint the succeeding malicious designs of thine enemies, who will meditate revenge for those shameful and terrible overthrows. Or, *the remainder of wrath thou shalt gird thyself with,* i. e. put it on as an ornament, which the girdle was; thou shalt adorn thyself with it, as a conqueror doth with the spoils of his enemies.

m Eccles. 5. 4, 5, 6. n 2 Chron. 32. 22, 23. Psa. 68. 29. & 89. 7. † Heb. *to fear.* 11 [m] Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: [n] let all that be round about him bring presents † unto him that ought to be feared.

Vow a sacrifice of thanksgiving; either at this time, for this wonderful deliverance; or hereafter, in all your future straits and troubles. Let this experience encourage you to make such vows to God with confidence of success. But when God hath accepted your vows, and given you the desired deliverance, forget not to *pay* your vows. *All that be round about him;* either, 1. All the tribes of Israel, who have the benefit of this mercy. Or rather, 2. All the neighbouring nations on every side, to whom the fame of this mighty work of God shall come, I advise them for the future, if they love themselves, to cease from all hostilities against God or his people, and to submit themselves to the God of Israel. *Him that ought to be feared;* whom though they do not love, yet they see and feel that they have great reason to fear and to seek his favour.

o Psa. 68. 35. 12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes: [o] *he is* terrible to the kings of the earth.

Cut off; as men do their grapes in time of vintage, as the Hebrew verb implies, to wit, suddenly, violently, and irresistibly. This is all which they shall get by opposing him, and therefore it is their wisdom to bring presents to him. *The spirit of princes;* either, 1 Their courage. Or rather, 2. Their breath and life, as he did in the Assyrian army.

PSALM LXXVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed upon the occasion of some sore and long calamity of God's people; either the Babylonish captivity, or some other.

* Ps. 39, & 62, title. ‖ Or, *for Asaph.* ¶ To the chief Musician, [*] to Jeduthun, A Psalm ‖ of Asaph.

Either that Asaph who lived and prophesied in David's time; or one of his successors long after him, called, as was usual, by his progenitor's name.

The prophet showeth what great striving and combat (though by prayer and watching) he had with diffidence, 1—9. *By the consideration of God's wonderful works and former mercies, he is raised and strengthened,* 10—20.

a Ps. 3. 4. [a] I CRIED unto God with my voice, *even* unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

This verse seems to contain the sum of the whole Psalm, consisting of two parts, to wit, his earnest cry to God in his deep distress; and God's gracious return to his prayers, by supporting him under them, and giving him assurance of a good issue out of them; of both which he speaks more distinctly and particularly, of the first from ver. 2 to 10, of the latter thence to the end.

b Ps. 50. 15. c Is. 26. 9, 16. † Heb. *my hand.* 2 [b] In the day of my trouble I [c] sought the LORD: †my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

My sore ran: the hand in the Hebrew tongue, and Scripture use, is oft put for a blow or stroke given by the hand. Heb. *My hand,* or *hands,* (the singular number being frequently put for the plural,) *flowed* or *poured forth,* i. e. spread abroad to God in prayer. This phrase he useth rather than *were stretched out,* which is frequent in like

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cases, to imply that his case was low and almost desperate, his spirits and strength quite gone, so that he was not able to stretch them out, as he had done. *In the night;* which to others was a time of rest and quietness, but to me of torment. *My soul refused to be comforted;* I rejected all those consolations which either my friends or my own mind suggested to me.

3 I remembered God, and was trou-
d Ps. 142. 3. & 143. 4. bled: I complained, and [d]my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

Yea, the thoughts of God, and of his infinite power, and truth, and goodness, which used to be very sweet and comfortable to me, were now matter of terror and trouble, because they were all engaged against me, and God himself, my only friend, was now very angry with me, and become mine enemy. *I complained* unto God in prayer. *My spirit was overwhelmed;* so far was I from finding relief by my complaints, that they increased my misery.

4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

Thou holdest mine eyes waking, by those sharp and continual griefs, and those perplexing and tormenting thoughts and cares, which from time to time thou stirrest up in me. *I am so troubled that I cannot speak;* the greatness of my sorrows stupifies my mind, and makes me both lifeless and unable to speak; nor can any words sufficiently express the extremity of my misery.

e Deu. 32. 7. Ps. 143. 5. Is. 51. 9. 5 [e]I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.

I have considered, if by that means I could get any comfort, *the days of old*, i. e. the mighty works of God done for his people in former times. *Days* are put for events done in them, as Psal. xxxvii. 13; cxxxvii. 7; Obad. 12; Micah vii. 4.

f Ps. 42. 8. g Ps. 4. 4. 6 I call to remembrance [f]my song in the night: [g]I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.

I call to remembrance my song in the night, the many and great mercies and favours of God vouchsafed by him to me, and to his people, which have obliged me to adore him, and sing his praises not only in the day, the time appointed for that work, but also by night, as oft as they come into my mind. *My spirit made diligent search*, what should be the cause of this strange and vast alteration, and how these sore calamities could come from the hand of so gracious and merciful a God as ours is, and what might be expected as to their continuance or removal.

h Ps. 74. 1. i Ps. 85. 1. 7 [h]Will the LORD cast off for ever? and will he [i]be favourable no more?

Will the Lord cast off his peculiar and chosen people? This doth not seem to agree either with God's nature, or with that everlasting covenant which he hath made with them.

k Rom. 9. 6. † Heb. *to generation and generation.* 8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth [k]*his* promise fail †for evermore?

Are all the stores of his mercy quite spent? Doth he now cease to be what he hath styled himself, the Lord gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness? Will he never more make good those gracious promises upon which he hath commanded us to hope?

l Is. 49. 15. 9 Hath God [l]forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

Hath God forgotten to be gracious, because he hath so long disused it? *Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies*, so as they can never flow forth, no, not to his own people?

m Ps. 31. 22. 10 And I said, This *is* [m]my infirmity: *but I will remember* the years of the right hand of the most high.

I said; I thus answered these objections. *This is my infirmity;* these suspicions of God's faithfulness and goodness proceed from the weakness of my faith, and from the mistake of a diseased mind. *But I will remember;* which words may be understood out of the following verse, as other words frequently are in like cases. *The years of the right hand of the Most High;* the years wherein God hath done great and glorious works, which are oft ascribed to God's right hand, as Psal. xvii. 7; xx. 6; xlv. 4; cxviii. 15. But the word rendered *years* doth also signify *changing*, and accordingly this verse is by other learned interpreters, and may well be, rendered otherwise, without any such supplement as is in our translation, thus, *And I said, This is my affliction* or *grievance*, (the sum of all, and the chief cause of my trouble and anxiety, is this,) *the change of the right hand of the Most High;* that that right hand which formerly hath done such great and wonderful things for his people, is at this time not only hid in God's bosom, and not drawn forth for their defence, but is also stretched forth against them, and is the principal cause of all our present miseries. I could bear the malice and rage of our enemies, from whom we could not expect better things, but that our gracious and covenanted God should forsake and persecute his own people, this is that which makes it intolerable.

11 [n]I will remember the works of the n Ps. 143. 5. LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

And yet upon second and serious thoughts of what God had formerly done for his people, many times far above their expectations, I will take comfort in remembrance of them, because God is still the same that he was in power, and goodness, and love to his people, and therefore will pity and help us in this present calamity, as he hath oft done in others of the same nature.

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

13 [o]Thy way, O God, *is* in the sanc- o Ps. 73. 17. tuary: [p]who *is so* great a God as *our* p Ex. 15. 11. God!

Thy way, i. e. thy doings, or the course of thy providence, which is oft called God's *way;* the various methods and causes of thy dealings with thy people. *In the sanctuary;* is there contained and declared. As the prosperity of wicked men, so also the grievous calamities of God's people, are great riddles and stumbling-blocks to the ignorant and ungodly world; but a full and satisfactory resolution of them may be had from God's sanctuary, as is observed in the former case by this same Asaph, Psal. lxxiii. 16, 17, and here in the latter. Or, is in *holiness*. So the sense is, God is holy, and just, and true in all his works; yea, even in his judgments upon his own people, as will evidently appear from the issue of them. *Who is so great a God as our God?* And although our God at present suspends his power, and doth not put it forth to deliver his people out of the hands of their idolatrous enemies, who thence take occasion to blaspheme his name, and to exalt their idol gods above him; yet he is still infinitely superior in power, both to them and to their gods, and can and will in his due time rescue his people from them.

14 Thou *art* the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

By the mighty effects of it here following.

15 [q]Thou hast with *thine* arm redeem- q Ex. 6. 6. Deut. 9. 29. ed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

Redeemed thy people, to wit, out of Egypt, after a long and hard bondage; which he here mentions to strengthen his faith in their present captivity. *Jacob and Joseph;* whom he mentions, partly, as a most eminent portion of the sons of Jacob, branched forth into two numerous tribes; partly, because the sons of Joseph were born in Egypt, which Jacob's other sons were not; and partly, because he laid the foundation of that redemption by bringing them into Egypt, and preserving and *nourishing* Jacob and his sons there, *as a little child is nourished*, as it is expressed in the Hebrew text, Gen. xlvi. 12; in which respect he was a second father to them, and they might well be called his *sons;* without whose care (to speak humanly) there had been no such redemption, nor people to be redeemed.

16 [r]The waters saw thee, O God, the r Ex. 14. 21. Josh. 3. 15, 16. Ps. 114. 3. Hab. 3. 8, &c waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

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The waters saw thee; they felt the visible effects of thy powerful presence. *They were afraid;* and stood still, as men or beasts astonished commonly do.

[a] Heb. *The clouds were poured forth with water.* [b] Josh. 10. 11. Psa. 18. 12. Isa. 30. 30. Hab. 3. 11.

17 †The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: [a]thine arrows also went abroad.

The clouds poured out water, when the Israelites passed over the sea; in respect whereof the Israelites are said to have been *baptized in the cloud* (i. e. sprinkled with wat poured forth from the clouds) *and in the sea,* 1 Cor. x. 2. *Thine arrows;* either hail-stones, or rather lightnings or thunder-bolts, which are called Gods *arrows,* Psal. xviii. 14; cxliv. 6.

[c] Psa. 97. 4. [d] 2 Sam. 22. 8.

18 The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: [c]the lightnings lightened the world: [d]the earth trembled and shook.

This tempest is not particularly recorded in its proper place, yet it may well be gathered from what is said Exod. xiv. 24, 25, and is in effect acknowledged by Josephus in his history. And this is no new thing in Scripture, for some circumstances of history omitted in the first and properest places to be supplied in following passages; whereof instances have been already given.

[e] Heb. 3. 15. [f] Ex. 14. 28.

19 [e]Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, [f]and thy footsteps are not known.

Is in the sea; or rather *was* at that time; thou didst walk and lead thy people in untrodden paths. *Are not known,* because the waters suddenly returned and covered them.

[g] Ex. 13. 21. & 14. 19. Psa. 78. 52. [h] ver. 1. [i] 6. 11, 12. Hos. 12. 13.

20 [g]Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Thou leddest thy people; first through the sea, and afterwards through the vast howling wilderness to Canaan. *Like a flock;* with singular care and tenderness, as a shepherd doth his sheep. And therefore I hope thou wilt take care of thy poor dispersed and distressed flock, and bring them once again into their own land.

PSALM LXXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The scope of this Psalm is plainly expressed ver. 6—8, and is this, that the Israelites might learn to hope and trust in God, and stedfastly to keep his laws and covenant; which great lesson he presseth upon them, from the sad effects of the contrary practices in their forefathers, of which he gives a brief yet full account in a recapitulation of the most remarkable passages in the history of their church and nation.

[a] Ps. 74. title. [b] Heb. *A Psalm for Asaph to give instruction.*

¶ *‖ Maschil of Asaph.

An exhortation to attend to and instruct others in the word and works of the Lord, 1—8. *A rehearsal of God's love and long-suffering to the unbelieving and obstinate Israelites,* 9—11, *in their journey out of Egypt to the land of Canaan,* 12—66. *Rejecting the rest of the tribes, he chooseth Zion for a place of worship, and David to the kingdom,* 67—72.

[a] Isa. 51. 4.

[a]GIVE ear, O my people, *to* my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

My people: if Asaph was the composer of this Psalm, he might well call the Israelites *his people,* not only as he was their prophet and teacher, but also because they were of the same country and parentage with him; upon which account this very phrase of *my people* is used of them, not only by queen Esther, Esth. vii. 3, 4, but also by the Shunammitish woman, 2 Kings iv. 13. *My law,* i. e. the doctrine which I am about to deliver to you, concerning your duty, and the danger of neglecting it.

[b] Ps. 49. 4. Matt. 13. 35.

2 [b]I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

Open my mouth, speak to you with all freedom and plainness, *in a parable;* uttering divers and weighty sentences (for such are oft called *parables* in Scripture) or passages of great moment for your instruction and advantage. *Dark sayings;* so he calls the following passages, not because the words and sentences are in themselves hard to be understood, for they are generally historical and easy, but because the things contained in them, concerning God's transcendent goodness to an unworthy people, and their unparalleled ingratitude for and abuse of such eminent favours, and their stupid ignorance and insensibleness under such excellent and constant teachings of God's word and works, are indeed prodigious and hard to be believed. *Of old;* of things done in ancient times, and in a great measure worn out of men's minds.

[c] Ps. 44. 1.

3 [c]Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

[d] Deut. 4. 9. & 6. 7. Joel 1. 3. [e] Ex. 12. 26, 27. & 13. 8, 14. Josh. 4. 6, 7.

4 [d]We will not hide *them* from their children, [e]shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

The praises, i. e. his glorious and praiseworthy actions, as the following words explain it.

[f] Ps. 147. 19. [g] Deut. 4. 9. & 6. 7. & 11. 19.

5 For [f]he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, [g]that they should make them known to their children:

He established: this is justly put in the first place, as the chief of all the following mercies, and the foundation both of their temporal and of their eternal felicity. *A testimony,* i. e. his *law,* as it is called in the next clause; which is very oft called a *testimony,* because it is a witness between God and men, declaring both the duties which God expects from man, and the promises and blessings which man in the performance of his duty may expect from God. *In Jacob,* peculiarly; for no other nation enjoyed this privilege, as is more fully expressed, Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20. Which testimony or law God revealed to them, not for their own private use, but for the benefit of all their posterity, whom their parents were obliged to teach, Deut. vi. 7, and all their children to hear, and read, and study; by which we may see how contrary to the mind of God that foolish and wicked assertion is, that ignorance is the mother of devotion.

[h] Ps. 102. 18.

6 [h]That the generation to come might know *them, even* the children *which* should be born; *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children:

7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

That they might set their hope in God; that by the consideration of God's gracious promises, and wonderful works wrought by God for his people, they might be encouraged to trust in him.

[i] 2 Kings 17. 14. Ezek. 20. 18. [k] Ex. 32. 9. & 33. 3. & 34. 9. Deut. 9. 6, 13. & 31. 27. Ps. 68. 6. † Heb. that *prepared not their heart.* 1 ver. 37. 2 Chron. 20. 33.

8 And [i]might not be as their fathers, [k]a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation †[l]*that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

That set not their heart aright; who though they outwardly and seemingly complied with the forms of worship which God had prescribed, yet *did not direct* or *prepare their hearts* to the obedience and service of God. *Whose spirit was not stedfast with God;* who quickly discovered their hypocrisy by their apostacy from God, and from the religion which they had professed.

† Heb. *throwing forth.*

9 The children of Ephraim, *being* armed, *and* †carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.

The children of Ephraim: this passage concerns, either, 1. The tribe of Ephraim, and some exploit of theirs, wherein they met with this disaster; whether it were that mentioned 1 Chron. vii. 21, or some other not particularly related in any other place of Scripture. For we must not think that all the actions and events of the several tribes are recorded in Scripture, but only some of the most

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memorable ones. Or, 2. The ten tribes, who are very frequently called *Ephraim*, because that tribe was the chief of them, and the seat of the kingdom. And so this is referred by some to the captivity of the ten tribes, 2 Kings xvii.; although the historical references of this Psalm seem not to go beyond David's time. Or rather, 3. All the tribes and people of Israel, who are sometimes designed by the name of *Ephraim*, as Jer. xxxi. 9, 18, 20; Zech. x. 7; as well they might be, because of the eminency of this tribe, out of which came Joshua their first governor in Canaan, and in which the ark of God continued for a long time, and whose people were both most numerous and most valiant; and therefore they are fitly named for all, to show that this slaughter was not made amongst them for any defect of power or courage in them, but merely from God's just judgment upon them for their sins here following. And that *Ephraim* is here put for all Israel seems to be evident from the following verses, wherein the sins upon which this overthrow is charged are manifestly the sins of all the children of Israel, and they who are here called *Ephraim*, are called *Jacob* and *Israel*, ver. 21. And so this passage is by divers learned interpreters referred unto that dreadful overthrow related 1 Sam. iv.; wherein they did not stand to fight, but turned their backs and fled, as is there expressed, which though it reached all Israel, yet Ephraim is particularly named, because as the ark, so the fight, was in that tribe; and therefore it may be presumed that the Ephraimites were a very considerable part of that Israelitish army. And the psalmist having related this amazing providence and judgment of God upon his own people, he falls into a large discourse of the causes of it, to wit, the great, and manifold, and continual sins of that and the former generations; which having prosecuted from hence to ver. 60, he there returns to this history, and relates the sad consequences of that disaster, to wit, the captivity of the ark, and God's forsaking of Shiloh and Ephraim, and removing thence to the tribe of Judah and Mount Zion, the reason of which change of place he designed to give in the relation of this passage. *Bows;* which includes arrows; and these being then the chiefest and most common weapons, are put for all other arms.

m 2 Kings 17. 15.

10 [m]They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

Their disobedience was accompanied with obstinacy and contempt of God's laws.

n Ps. 106. 13.

11 And [n]forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

Forgat; not historically, but practically. They did not so remember them, as to love, and serve, and trust that God of whose infinite power and goodness they had such ample experience. Words of knowledge, such as knowing, remembering, &c., in Scripture use frequently comprehend affection and practice, as hath been oft observed.

o Ex. 7, & 8, & 9, & 10, & 11, & 12. p Gen. 32. 3. Num. 13. 22. ver. 43. Is. 19. 11, 13. Ezek. 30. 14.

12 [o]Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, [p]*in* the field of Zoan.

In the field, i. e. in the territory or jurisdiction, not excluding the city itself. In the like sense we read of the *field of Edom,* and *of Moab,* Gen. xxxii. 3; xxxvi. 35; Numb. xxi. 20. *Zoan;* an ancient, and eminent, and the royal city of Egypt. See Numb. xiii. 22; Isa. xix. 11; xxx. 4.

q Ex. 14. 21.

13 [q]He divided the sea, and caused

r Ex. 15. 8. Ps. 33. 7.

them to pass through; and [r]he made the waters to stand as an heap.

s Ex. 13. 21. & 14. 24. Ps. 105. 39.

14 [s]In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

A cloud; which was very comfortable, both for a shadow from the scorching heat of the climate and season, and for a companion and director in their journey.

t Ex. 17. 6. Num. 20. 11. Ps. 105. 41. 1 Cor. 10. 4.

15 [t]He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave *them* drink as *out of* the great depths.

Rocks; he useth the plural number, because it was twice done; once in Rephidim, Exod. xvii. 6, and again in Kadesh, Numb. xx. 1, 11. *The great depths;* in great abundance.

16 He brought [u]streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

u Deut. 9. 21. Ps. 105. 41.

Which did miraculously follow them in all their travels, even to the borders of Canaan. See Deut. ix. 21; Psal. cv. 41; 1 Cor. x. 4.

17 And they sinned yet more against him by [x]provoking the most high in the wilderness.

x Deut. 9. 22. Ps. 95. 8. Heb. 3. 16.

Where they had such strong and singular obligations to obedience, both from the great things which God had then and there done for them, and from their dependence upon God's favour and help for their safety and subsistence. This was a great aggravation of their sin and folly.

18 And [y]they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

y Ex. 16. 2.

Tempted; desired a trial and proof of God's power, as the next verse plainly showeth. See Numb. xi. 4. *For their lust;* not for their necessary subsistence, for which they had manna, but out of an inordinate and luxurious appetite.

19 [z]Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God †furnish a table in the wilderness?

z Num. 11. 4. † Heb. order.

20 [a]Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

a Ex. 17. 6. Num. 20. 11.

The waters gushed out; which, all things considered, seems not so wonderful, since fountains of water sometimes break forth unexpectedly from or through rocks. But it is far more difficult to give us bread and flesh, which we know not whether he can do. Or at least we have just cause to doubt of his good will to us, who hath made such a penurious provision for us, and denies us these common blessings of bread and flesh, which he gives to the worst of men.

21 Therefore the LORD heard *this*, and [b]was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

b Num. 11. 1, 10.

A fire was kindled; either properly, as it was Numb. xi. 1; or figuratively, the fire of God's anger, as it follows.

22 Because they [c]believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

c Heb. 3. 18. Jude 5.

That he both could and would save them from the famine and destruction which they feared.

23 Though he had commanded the clouds from above, [d]and opened the doors of heaven,

d Gen. 7. 11. Mal. 3. 10.

Which he compares to a granary or store-house, whereof God keeps the key, and either shuts or opens the doors of it, either gives or withholds provisions, as he sees fit.

24 [e]And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

e Ex. 16. 4, 14. Ps. 105. 40. John 6. 31. 1 Cor. 10. 3.

Which was made in heaven, or the air, and sent down thence to the earth.

25 ‖ Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

‖ Or, *Every one did eat the bread of the mighty,* Ps. 105. 28.

Angels' food; manna, so called, either, 1. Because it was made by the ministry of angels. Or rather, 2. Because of its excellency, such food as might befit the angels, if they could eat food, and such as hath some resemblance with the blessed angels in regard of its heavenly originals, its pure and spirituous substance, its vigour and efficacy in preserving and nourishing those who used it according to God's appointment. Or this place may be translated as it is in the margin, *every one did eat the bread of the mighty,* i. e. even the common Israelites fed upon as delicious food as the greatest nobles and princes used to do. *Sent them*

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meat to the full; which may belong, either, 1. To the flesh mentioned in the following verses, which God gave them even to satiety or glutting, which he threatened to do, Numb. xi. 18—20. Or rather, 2. To the manna, of which he is here speaking, which he gave them in such plenty, that their desire of other food could not proceed from their necessity, but merely from wantonness and lust.

[r] Num. 11. 31. [†] Heb. *to go.*

26 [r] He caused an east wind † to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.

Either he brought in first an eastern, and afterwards a southern wind, or the wind was south-east; from which quarter these quails might come as well as from the west, where their more common abode is; this work being confessedly miraculous.

[†] Heb. *fowl of wing.*

27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and † feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea:

Feathered fowls, Heb. *winged fowl;* which is noted to shew that it was a supernatural work, whereby God took away from them the use of their wings, and made them to fall into the hands of the Israelites.

28 And he let *it* fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.

Of their camp, Heb. *of his camp;* either Israel's camp, or God's camp; for seeing Israel was God's people, and he dwelt among them, their camp was his camp.

[s] Num. 11. 31.

29 [s] So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;

What they desired both for quality and quantity.

30 They were not estranged from their lust.

The sense is either, 1. Whilst their greedy appetite yet continued, and was not fully satisfied, before they began to loathe it, as they did afterwards, Numb. xi. 20. Or, 2. Before they were deprived or destitute of their desired food, whilst they enjoyed it, and were still feeding upon it, as the next clause explains this. God's patience did not wait upon them till that food was spent, but fell upon them instantly.

[t] Num. 11. 33.

—But [t] while their meat *was* yet in their mouths,

[†] Heb. *made to bow.* [‖] Or, *young men.*

31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and † smote down the ‖ chosen *men* of Israel.

The fattest of them; the most healthy and strong, who probably were most desirous of this food, and fed most eagerly upon it, and grew fatter by it, and least suspected their own danger.

[u] Num. 14. 11. & ver. 22. [x] Num. 14. 23. & 26. 64, 65.

32 For all this [u] they sinned still, and [x] believed not for his wondrous works.

33 [x] Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.

In vanity; in tedious and fruitless marches hither and thither, sometimes forward, and sometimes backward, which they knew would never bring them in their own persons to their promised and much-desired land. *In trouble;* in manifold diseases, dangers, perplexities, and horrors of their own minds and consciences.

[m] See Hos. 5. 15.

34 [m] When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God.

They sought him; they prayed to him to deliver them from their deadly dangers; which even Pharaoh frequently did. *They returned,* to wit, from their idols, unto the outward worship of God; or being moved with fear, they ceased for the present from their grossly wicked courses, which they might easily do without a dram of true repentance or hearty conversion to God. *Inquired early after God;* speedily and earnestly sought to God for ease, and safety, and comfort, as wicked men in such cases frequently do.

[a] Deut. 32. 4, 15, 18. 2 Sam. 22. 2, 32. [b] Lev. 25. 48. & 49. 9.

35 And they remembered that [a] God *was* their rock, and the high God [b] their redeemer.

They considered that God, and God alone, had preserved them in all their former exigences, and that he only could now help them, and not those idols or creatures which they had preferred before him; and therefore being driven by absolute necessity, they fled to him for relief.

[p] Ezek. 33. 31.

36 Nevertheless they did [p] flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

They made glorious but false professions and protestations of their sincere resolutions of future obedience, if God would spare them.

[q] ver. 8.

37 For [q] their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

All their confessions and petitions were but hypocritical and forced, and did not proceed from an upright heart truly grieved for their former offences, and firmly resolved to turn unto the Lord. They discovered their hypocrisy by their apostacy from God as soon as their danger was past.

[r] Num. 14. 18, 20. [s] Is. 48. 9. [t] 2 Kings 21. 29.

38 [r] But he, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and destroyed *them* not: yea, many a time [s] turned he his anger away, [t] and did not stir up all his wrath.

Forgave their iniquity; not simply and absolutely, for so it is undeniably certain from the Holy Scriptures that God pardons none but true penitents, such as these were not; but respectively, and so far as not to destroy them at that time, which he threatened, and was about to do, as the next words limit and explain it. He remitted their punishment, for *iniquity* is oft put for *the punishment* of it. Heb. *he expiated* their *iniquity.* He accepted of their atonement, or of their professed repentance, so far as to compensate it with a removal of this outward and present affliction; as he did also to wicked Ahab upon his hypocritical humiliation, 1 Kings xxi. 29. And this God doth for the encouragement of all true penitents, who may hence learn how much greater and better recompences they may expect and shall receive from God. *Did not stir up all his wrath;* but set bounds to it; and though he chastened them, yet he would not utterly destroy them, as they deserved.

[u] Ps. 103. 14, 16. [x] Gen. 6. 3. John 3. 6. [y] Job 7. 7, 16. Jam. 4. 14.

39 For [u] he remembered [x] that they *were but* flesh; [y] a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

Flesh; which here notes either, 1. The corruption of their natures, which was perpetually inclining them to sin, and consequently exposing them to God's wrath, which must needs have consumed them utterly and speedily, if God had let loose his anger upon them. See the same argument used to a like purpose Gen. viii. 21. Or rather, 2. The frailty or infirmity of their natures, as the next clause interprets this; which is such, that if I should not restrain my wrath, I should quickly cut off the body of this wicked people, and their children with them, whom I have promised to carry into Canaan, Numb. xiv. 31. *A wind that passeth away, and cometh not again;* that are quickly cut off; and when once they are dead, they never return to this life.

[‖] Or, *rebel against him.* [z] ver. 17. Ps. 95. 9, 10. Is. 7. 13. & 63. 10. Ephes. 4. 30. Heb. 3. 16, 17.

40 How oft did they ‖ [z] provoke him in the wilderness, *and* grieve him in the desert!

[a] Num. 14. 22. Deut. 6. 16. [b] ver. 20.

41 Yea, [a] they turned back and tempted God, and [b] limited the Holy One of Israel.

They limited either, 1. God's power, as above, ver. 19, 20. Or, 2. God's will, directing and prescribing to him what to do, and when, and in what manner, and murmuring at him if he did not always grant their particular and various desires.

[‖] Or, *from affliction.*

42 They remembered not his hand, *nor* the day when he delivered them ‖ from the enemy.

His hand; the great and glorious works of his hand on their behalf. *Nor the day;* nor that remarkable and never to be forgotten day, that *self-same day,* as it is called, Exod.

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xii. 41, which God had fixed four hundred years before, Gen. xv. 13, in which God delivered them from their greatest enemy, the tyrant Pharaoh.

c ver. 12. Ps. 105. 27, &c. † Heb. *set.*

43 How [c] he had † wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan:

d Ex. 7. 20. Ps. 105. 29.

44 [d] And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink.

The several branches and streams of the river Nilus, and those many rivulets which they brought from it.

e Ex. 8. 24. Ps. 105. 31. f Ex. 8. 6. Ps. 105. 30.

45 [e] He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and [f] frogs, which destroyed them.

Devoured them; or, *destroyed them;* which they might do by their cruel and numerous stings, for these flies were doubtless extraordinary in their nature and quantity, and poisonous and hurtful qualities. And the like is to be thought concerning the frogs here following, which also might destroy the people by infecting the air with their stink, and corrupting their meats and drinks.

g Ex. 10. 13, 15. Ps. 105. 34, 35.

46 [g] He gave also their increase unto the caterpiller, and their labour unto the locust.

The herbs and grains which were come up by their care and diligent labour.

h Ex. 9. 23, 25. Ps. 105. 33. † Heb. *killed.* ‖ Or, *great hailstones.*

47 [h] He † destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycomore trees with ‖ frost.

Sycomore trees; or, *wild fig trees*, which were there in great plenty. Under these and the vines all other trees are comprehended. And this hail and frost did destroy the fruits of the trees, and sometimes the trees themselves.

i Ex. 9. 23, 24, 25. Ps. 105. 32. † Heb. *He shut up.* ‖ Or, *lightnings.*

48 [i] † He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to ‖ hot thunderbolts.

He gave up, Heb. *he shut up*, as in a prison, that they could not escape them.

49 He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels *among them.*

Indignation and trouble; other most grievous plagues, which were mixed with and were the effects of his anger and wrath; whereby their miseries were greatly aggravated, and distinguished from the afflictions which God sent upon the Israelites in Egypt, which were only fatherly chastisements, and the effects of God's love and occasions of their deliverance. *By sending evil angels*, Heb. *the sending* (or the operation or effects) *of evil angels*, or *of the angels* or *messengers of evil things;* either of the angels whom God employed in producing these plagues; or of Moses and Aaron, who were to the Egyptians messengers of evil, and by whom these judgments were sent to and inflicted upon them.

† Heb. *He weighed a path.* ‖ Or, *their beasts to the murrain,* Ex. 9. 3, 6.

50 † He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave ‖ their life over to the pestilence;

He made a way, Heb. *He weighed a path or causeway*, i. e. he made a most smooth, and even, and exact path, as if he had done it by weight and measure, that so his anger might pass swiftly and freely without interruption. The phrase also seems to note the wisdom and justice of God in weighing out their plagues proportionably to their sins, and exercising great severity towards them answerably to their great and barbarous cruelty towards his people. *He spared not their soul from death*, i. e. he punished them with death or killing plagues, as the next words explain it. *Their life;* or, *their beasts.* So he speaks of the murrain among their cattle. But our translation seems better to agree with the next foregoing and following passages, which plainly speak of the death of persons.

k Ex. 12. 29. Ps. 105. 36. & 136. 10. l Ps. 106. 22.

51 [k] And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of *their* strength in [l] the tabernacles of Ham:

The chief of their strength; another expression noting the first-born, who are so called, Gen. xlix. 3. *Of Ham;* of the Egyptians, the posterity of Ham, Gen. x. 6; which title he there gives them, to intimate that they were the cursed children of a cursed parent, Ham, Gen. ix. 25, and therefore were proper objects for Divine wrath and vengeance.

m Ps. 77. 20.

52 But [m] made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.

n Ex. 14. 19, 20. o Ex. 14. 27, 28. & 15. 10. † Heb. *covered.*

53 And he [n] led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea [o] † overwhelmed their enemies.

They feared not. But it is said that *they were sore afraid*, Exod. xiv. 10. *Answ.* 1. They were afraid at first, but after Moses had encouraged them they grew bold and secure; one evidence whereof was, that they confidently went into the middle of the sea, and passed between the vast heaps of water which were on both sides of them. 2. The meaning may be that they had no just cause to fear; for men are oft said to do not only what they actually do, but also what they ought to do, as Mal. i. 6; ii. 7, &c.

54 And he brought them to the border of his [p] sanctuary, *even to* this mountain, [q] *which* his right hand had purchased.

p Ex. 15. 17. q Ps. 44. 3.

Of his sanctuary; or, *of his holiness*, or *his holy place*, i. e. the land of Canaan, which is so called, Ezra ix. 8; Zech. ii. 12, &c., as being separated by God from all other lands for his people and service, and sanctified by his presence and dwelling in it. *This mountain;* either, 1. The mountain upon which the tabernacle or temple stood. Or rather, 2. The mountainous country of Canaan, which is called *a land of hills and valleys*, Deut. xi. 11. And the word *mountain* is oft used in Scripture for a mountainous country, as Gen. xxxvi. 8; Deut. i. 7; Josh. xi. 21.

r Ps. 44. 2. s Josh. 13. 7. & 19. 51. Ps. 136. 21, 22.

55 [r] He cast out the heathen also before them, and [s] divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

t Judg. 2. 11, 12.

56 [t] Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:

u ver. 41. Ezek. 20. 27, 28.

57 But [u] turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside [x] like a deceitful bow.

x Hos. 7. 16.

Which either breaketh when it is drawn, or shooteth awry, and frustrateth the archer's design and expectation. So when they pretended, and both God and men expected, obedience and gratitude to their great Benefactor, they behaved themselves undutifully and unfaithfully towards him.

y Deut. 32. 16, 21. Judg. 2. 12, 20. Ezek. 20. 28. z Deut. 12. 2, 4. 1 Kings 11. 7. & 12. 31.

58 [y] For they provoked him to anger with their [z] high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

59 When God heard *this*, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:

Heard, i. e. perceived or understood, as *hearing* is oft used, as Gen. xi. 7; xli. 15, &c. It is spoken of God after the manner of men.

a 1 Sam. 4. 11. Jer. 7. 12, 14. & 26. 6, 9.

60 [a] So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent *which* he placed among men;

The tabernacle of Shiloh; which then was placed in Shiloh, from whence, as the Israelites fetched the ark, so God withdrew himself. *Which he placed among men;* whereby he insinuates both God's wonderful condescension and favour to such worthless and wretched creatures, and their stupendous folly and wickedness in despising and sinning away so glorious a privilege.

b Judg. 18. 30.

61 [b] And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.

His strength, to wit, the ark, called God's *strength*, 1 Chron. xvi. 11, and *the ark of his strength*, Psal. cxxxii. 8, because it was the sign and pledge of his strength or power

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put forth on his people's behalf. *His glory;* so the ark is called, as being the monument and seat of God's glorious presence, and an instrument of his glorious works. *The enemy;* namely, the Philistines; of which see 1 Sam. iv.

c 1 Sam. 4. 11.

62 [c]He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

d Jer. 7. 34. & 16. 9. & 25. 10.
* Heb. praised.

63 The fire consumed their young men; and [d]their maidens were not †given to marriage.

Because the young men who should have married them were slain. Heb. *were not praised,* to wit, with marriage songs, which was usual at marriage solemnities among the Jews, as appears from Jer. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv. 10.

e 1 Sam. 4. 11. & 22. 18. f Job 27. 15. Lam. 5. 12.

64 [e]Their priests fell by the sword; and [f]their widows made no lamentation.

Their priests, Hophni and Phinehas, and others. *No lamentation;* no funeral solemnities; either because they were prevented by their own death, as the wife of Phinehas was, or disturbed by the invasion of the enemy; or so overwhelmed with the sense of the public calamity, that the resentment of their private losses was swallowed up by it. See Job xxvii. 15; Ezek. xxiv. 23.

g Ps. 44. 23.

65 Then the LORD [g]awaked as one out of sleep, *and* [h]like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

h Is. 42. 13.

Awaked as one out of sleep; for God, by giving up not only his people, but his ark, to the contempt and insolency of the Philistines, might seem to be asleep, and insensible of his own honour and interest, till by a sudden and unexpected blow he convinced his enemies of the contrary. *Shouteth by reason of wine;* whose spirit and courage is revived and inflamed by a liberal draught of generous wine; which comparison is no more injurious to the Divine Majesty than that of a *thief's coming in the night,* to which Christ's second coming is compared, 1 Thess. v. 2.

i 1 Sam. 5. 6. 12. & 6. 4.

66 And [i]he smote his enemies in the hinder part: he put them to a perpetual reproach.

Smote his enemies in the hinder part, with the disease of the emerods, which was both painful and shameful. He caused them to perpetuate their own reproach by sending back the ark of God with their golden emerods, the lasting monuments of their shame.

67 Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

Moreover; and as he smote his enemies for their sins, so he punished his own people for the same cause. *He refused the tabernacle of Joseph;* either, 1. He rejected the kingdom of the ten tribes, whereof Ephraim was the head. But this Psalm reacheth not so far as the erection of that kingdom. Or rather, 2. He would not have his ark to abide longer in the tabernacle of Shiloh, which was in the tribe of Joseph or Ephraim: see 1 Sam. vi. 12; vii. 1, 2; Jer. vii. 12, 14; xxvi. 6, 9. *And chose not the tribe of Ephraim;* the same thing repeated in other words, after the manner.

68 But chose the tribe of Judah, the

k Ps. 87. 2.

mount Zion [k]which he loved.

Chose the tribe of Judah; either, 1. For the seat of the kingdom. Or rather, 2. For the seat of the ark and of God's worship. *Object.* Jerusalem was in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 28. *Answ.* 1. It was so in part, and part of it was in Judah, as appears from Josh. xv. 63; to which tribe Zion belonged by special reason, because David the head of that tribe conquered and took it. 2. Benjamin, after the division of the two kingdoms, was incorporated with Judah, and is oft comprehended under the name of Judah.

l 1 Kings 6.

69 And he [l]built his sanctuary like high *palaces,* like the earth which he hath †established for ever.

† Heb. founded.

His sanctuary: the temple of Solomon. *High palaces;* magnificent and glorious. *Established for ever;* not now to be removed from place to place, as the tabernacle was, but as a fixed place for the ark's perpetual residence, unless the people by their apostacy should cause its removal.

m 1 Sam. 16. 11, 12. 2 Sam. 7. 8.

70 [m]He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds:

† Heb. From after.
n Gen. 33. 13. Is. 40. 11.
o 2 Sam. 5. 2. 1 Chron. 11. 2.

71 †From following [n]the ewes great with young he brought him [o]to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. .

Following the ewes great with young; by which employment he was inured to that care, and diligence, and self-denial which is necessary in a king or governor; and instructed to rule his people with all gentleness and tenderness.

72 So he fed them according to the

p 1 Kings 9. 4.

[p]integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

He commends David for the two necessary ingredients of a good prince. 1. *Integrity;* whereby he sincerely sought the good and welfare of his people, avoiding and abhorring those counsels and courses which were contrary thereunto. 2. *Skilfulness;* whereby he managed all the public affairs with singular *prudence;* which is here ascribed to *his hands,* not because it was seated in them, but because it was acted and discovered by them, and appeared in all his actions or administrations.

PSALM LXXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was doubtless composed upon the sad occasion of the destruction of Judea and Jerusalem, either by Antiochus, or rather by the Chaldeans; as may be gathered from 1 Mac. vii. 16, 17, where, in the relation of the persecution of Antiochus, the second and third verses of this Psalm are cited.

¶ A Psalm ‖ of Asaph.

‖ Or, for Asaph.

The psalmist, complaining of the desolation and ruin of Jerusalem, 1—4, expostulateth with God about his long anger and jealousy, 5—7; entreateth for the forgiveness of their sins, and speedy help and mercy, 8—12, to the everlasting praise of his name, 13.

O GOD, the heathen are come into [a]thine inheritance; [b]thy holy temple have they defiled; [c]they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

a Ex. 15. 17. Ps. 74. 2.
b Ps. 74. 7. 1 Mac. 1. 31, 39.
c 2 Kings 25. 9, 10. 2 Chr. 36. 19. Mic. 3. 12.

Are come, as invaders and conquerors. *Into thine inheritance;* into Canaan and Judea, which thou didst choose for thine inheritance. *Defiled,* by entering into it, and touching and carrying away its holy vessels, and shedding blood in it, and burning of it. *Heaps,* made of the ruins of those goodly houses which they burned, or threw down.

2 [d]The dead bodies of thy servants have they given *to be* meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.

d Jer. 7. 33. & 16. 4. & 34. 20. 1 Mac. 7. 17.

Of thy servants; either, 1. Of thy faithful and holy servants, whom they used as cruelly as the worst of the people. Or, 2. Of the Jews, whom, though the generality of them were very wicked, he calleth God's *servants* and *saints,* because they were all such by profession, and some of them were really such; and the Chaldeans did never know nor regard those that were so, but promiscuously destroyed all that came in their way. *Given to be meat unto the fowls of heaven,* by casting them out like dung upon the face of the earth, and not suffering any to bury them.

3 Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; [e]and *there was* none to bury *them.*

e Ps. 141. 7. Jer. 14. 16. & 16. 4. Rev. 11. 9.

Like water; plentifully and contemptuously, valuing it no more than common water. *None to bury them,* because their friends, who should have done it, were either slain or fled, or were not permitted, or durst not undertake, to perform that office to them.

4 [f]We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

f Ps. 44. 13. & 80. 6.

We, who were their terror and scourge, are now neither feared nor pitied, but become the matter of their scoffs and

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reproaches. See Psal. lxxx. 6; cxxxvii. 7; Ezek. xxxv. 2, 12, &c.

g Ps. 74. 1, 9, 10. & 85. 5. & 89. 46. h Zeph. 1. 18. & 3. 8.

5 [g] How long, LORD? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy [h] jealousy burn like fire?

i Jer. 10. 25. Thess. 1. 8. k Is. 45. 4, 5. 2 Thess. 1. 8. l Ps. 53. 4.

6 [i] Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have [k] not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have [l] not called upon thy name.

Though we confess that we have deserved thy wrath, yet the heathen, by whom thou hast scourged us, deserve it much more, as being guilty of far greater impieties than we, living in gross ignorance and contempt of God and of his worship; and therefore we pray transfer thy wrath from us to them.

7 For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place.

Jacob; the posterity of Jacob, whom thou didst love, and with whom and his seed thou madest a sure and everlasting covenant; whereby thou didst engage thyself to be *an enemy to their enemies*, Exod. xxiii. 22. Besides, thou hatest cruelty, especially when the wicked devour those who are more righteous than themselves, Hab. i. 13.

m Is. 64. 9. ‖ Or, *the iniquities of them that were before us.* n Deut. 28. 43. Ps. 142. 6.

8 [m] O remember not against us ‖ former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are [n] brought very low.

Former iniquities; the sins committed by our forefathers, and by us, who have filled up the measure of their sins, for which we confess thou hast most righteously brought this desolating judgment upon us. *Thy tender mercies;* upon which all our confidence is fixed; for merit and righteousness we have none. See Dan. ix. 7, 9. *Prevent us;* prevent our utter extirpation, which we have deserved, and have great reason to expect. *Brought very low;* past the hopes of all human help, and therefore the glory of our deliverance will be wholly thine.

o 2 Chron. 14. 11.

9 [o] Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver

p Jer. 14. 7, 21.

us, and purge away our sins, [p] for thy name's sake.

O God of our salvation; from whom we have oft received, and from whom alone we now expect, salvation. *Thy name;* which is now obscured by the insolency and blasphemy of thine enemies, who ascribe this conquest to their idols, and triumph over thee no less than over thy people, as one unable to deliver them out of their hands. See Dan. iii. 15.

q Ps. 42. 10. & 115. 2.

10 [q] Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight *by* the † revenging of the blood of thy servants *which is* shed.

† Heb. *vengeance.*

Their God; he whom they served, and of whom they boasted. He is lost and gone, or grown impotent or idle. *Let him be known among the heathen*, by the execution of his judgments upon them, according to Psal. ix. 16. *In our sight;* that we may live to see it, and praise thy name for it.

r Ps. 102. 20. † Heb. *thine arm.* † Heb. *reserve the children of death.*

11 Let [r] the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of † thy power † preserve thou those that are appointed to die;

Of the prisoner; of thy poor people now in prison, or, at least, in captivity. *Those that are appointed to die*, Heb. *the children of death*, i. e. which were either designed to death, or in manifest danger of it, as being wholly in the power of their cruel and barbarous enemies.

s Gen. 4. 15. Is. 65. 6, 7. Jer. 32. 18. Luke 6. 38. t Ps. 74. 18, 22. & 89. 51.

12 And render unto our neighbours [s] sevenfold into their bosom [t] their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O LORD.

Sevenfold, i. e. either, 1. Abundantly, as this phrase notes, Isa. lxv. 6, 7; Jer. xxxii. 18; Luke vi. 38. Or, 2. Sensibly, so as it may come home to them, and fall heavily upon them in their own persons. *Reproached thee*, as impotent, or unfaithful, or unmerciful to his own people. So they intimate that this desire did not proceed from a revengeful mind, but from a due sense of God's favour.

u Ps. 74. 1. & 100. 3. x Is. 43. 21. † Heb. *to generation and generation.*

13 So [u] we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: [x] we will shew forth thy praise † to all generations.

PSALM LXXX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed either, 1. Upon the same occasion with the former, to wit, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, as most conceive; which yet seems not probable, because here is no mention of the temple, nor of Jerusalem, as there is in the foregoing Psalm; nor of the tribe of Judah, which was most concerned in that desolation; but of Joseph, ver. 1, and of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, which were carried captive long before that time; nor do the expressions of this Psalm import such a desolating judgment as those of the former do. Or, 2. Upon occasion of the captivity of the ten tribes, as some others think. But why then is Benjamin named, which is none of that number, nor went into captivity with them, but was joined with Judah? Or, 3. Upon occasion of some other calamity or calamities which befell the tribes of Israel after their division into two kingdoms, and before the captivity and destruction of either of them; in which time all the evils mentioned in this Psalm bid befall them, sometimes in one tribe or part, and sometimes in another, as is manifest from their history.

* Ps. 45. & 69. title. ‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

¶ To the chief Musician [*] upon Shoshannim-Eduth, A Psalm ‖ of Asaph.

Shoshannim-Eduth seems to be the name of a musical instrument; though many separate the latter part of the word from the former, and expound *Eduth, a testimony*, or witness between God and his people, of his relation to them, and of their dependence upon him.

The psalmist bemoaneth the miseries and sad condition of the church, 1—7; *that God's past manifold mercies are changed into desolating judgments,* 8—13. *He prayeth for deliverance out of them, with a promise of thankfulness,* 14—19.

a Ps. 77. 20. b Ex. 25. 22. 1 Sam. 4. 4. 2 Sam. 6. 2. Ps. 99. 1. c Deut. 33. 2. Ps. 50. 2. & 94. 1.

GIVE ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou [a] that leadest Joseph [b] like a flock; [b] thou that dwellest *between* the cherubims, [c] shine forth.

O Shepherd of Israel; thou who hast undertaken to feed and govern thy people of Israel, as a shepherd doth his flock, now perform thine office, and rescue thy flock from those grievous wolves which devour and destroy them. *That leadest;* or *didst lead* formerly, though now thou hast forsaken them. *Joseph*, i. e. the children of Joseph, or of Israel, as he now said, this clause being but a repetition of the former in other words. Compare Psal. lxxvii. 15. And the name of Joseph, the most eminent of the patriarchs, both for his dignity and piety, and the right of primogeniture transferred upon him from Reuben, 1 Chron. v. 1, is elsewhere put for all the ten tribes, as Ezek. xxxvii. 16, 19; Amos v. 6, 15; vi. 6; Zech. x. 6; and for all the tribes, as Psal. lxxxi. 5; Obad. 18. *Between the cherubims;* which were the mercy-seat above the ark; by which title he prudently and piously minds the ten tribes of their revolt from God, and of the vanity of their superstitious addresses to their calves at Dan and Beth-el, and of the necessity of their returning to the true worship of God before the ark at Jerusalem, if they desired or expected any relief from him. And by this title it seems more than probable that this Psalm was not made upon occasion of the Babylonish captivity, in and after which time there was no ark nor cherubims, nor do I remember that Daniel or any prophets did then apply themselves to God by that title. See Dan. ix. *Shine forth* out of the clouds, wherein thou seemest to hide thyself. Show forth thy power and goodness to and for thy poor oppressed people in the face of thine and their enemies.

d Num. 2. 18.—25. † Heb. *come for salvation to us.*

2 [d] Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and † come *and* save us.

i. e. Before all the tribes of Israel; for whom he men-

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tions only these three tribes, either, 1. Because of their special relation to Joseph here named, ver. 1; Ephraim and Manasseh being his sons, and Benjamin his brother both by his father and mother. Or, 2. Because these were eminent tribes: *Ephraim*, the head of the kingdom of the ten tribes; *Manasseh* was planted and powerful on both sides of Jordan; and *Benjamin*, because the greatest part of Jerusalem and the temple was in its lot. Or, 3. With respect and allusion to the ancient situation of the tabernacle in the wilderness, where these tribes were placed on the west side of the tabernacle, Numb. ii. 18, &c., in which the ark was, which consequently was before them. So the sense is, O thou who didst of old go forth before these tribes, &c., do so again at this time. Or, 4. Because these tribes had a greater share of the calamities here designed than others; which might be very true, though it be not expressed in the sacred history, in which we have only the substance of things, and such circumstances are commonly omitted. *Stir up thy strength;* which seems now to be asleep, or idle and useless.

[c] ver. 7, 19. Lam. 5. 21. [f] Num. 6. 25. Ps. 4. 6. & 67. 1.

3 [c]Turn us again, O God, [f]and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Turn us again; either, 1. To our former quiet and flourishing estate; or, 2. To thyself, from whom Ephraim and Manasseh with the rest of the ten tribes have apostatized. See the like prayer of Elijah for them, 1 Kings xviii. 37.

[†] Heb. *wilt thou smoke*, Ps. 74. 1.

4 O LORD God of hosts, how long † wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?

Thou art so far from answering our prayers whereby we seek to appease thee, that by thy continuance and increase of our miseries thou seemest to be the more incensed against us by them.

[g] Ps. 42. 3. & 102. 9. Is. 30. 20.

5 [g]Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

With the bread of tears; either with tears instead of bread, which they either want, or cannot eat because their grief hath taken away their appetites; or with tears as frequent and constant as their eating it. See the like phrase Psal. xlii. 3.

[h] Ps. 44. 13. & 79. 4.

6 [h]Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.

A strife, i. e. the object or matter of their strife or contention; either, 1. They strive one with another who shall do us most mischief, or take our spoils to themselves; or, 2. They are perpetually quarrelling with us, and seeking occasions against us. *Our neighbours*, who used and ought to live peaceably and kindly with us. *Laugh among themselves;* insult over us, and take pleasure in our miseries.

[i] ver. 3, 19.

7 [i]Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

[k] Is. 5. 1, 7. Jer. 2. 21. Ezek. 15. 6. & 17. 6. & 19. 10. Hos. 10. 1. Ps. 44. 2. & 78. 55.

8 Thou hast brought [k]a vine out of Egypt: [l]thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

A vine; to which the Israel or church of God is oft compared; as Isa. v. 2; Jer. ii. 21; Ezek. xvii. 6; Matt. xxi. 33. *Out of Egypt;* he alludes to the custom of transplanting trees for their more advantageous growth. *The heathen;* the nations of Canaan.

[m] Is. 5. 2. Jer. 24. 12.

9 Thou [m]preparedst *room* before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

Thou preparedst room; or, *didst purge* or *cleanse* the soil; taking out stones or sticks, or other roots or plants, which might hinder its growth or fruitfulness. Thou didst root out those idolatrous and wicked nations which might either corrupt or destroy them. *Didst cause it to take deep root;* thou gavest them a firm settlement in that land.

[*] Heb. *the cedars of God*

10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof *were like* †the goodly cedars.

They grew so numerous, that they filled not only the fruitful valleys, but even the barren mountains. *Goodly cedars;* far differing from ordinary vines, whose boughs are weak and small, and creep upon the walls or ground.

11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches [n]unto the river.

[n] Ps. 72. 8.

They possessed or subdued the whole land from the midland sea to the river Euphrates; which were the bounds allotted to them by God, Gen. xv. 18.

[o] Ps. 89. 40. 41. Is. 5. 5. Nah. 2. 2.

12 Why hast thou *then* [o]broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

Broken down her hedges; taken away thy protection, which was to them for walls and bulwarks. *Pluck her;* pluck up her grapes and boughs, and strike at her very root.

13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

The wood; where boars use to lodge, as it is noted by many authors; by which he understands their fierce and furious enemies.

14 Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: [p]look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

[p] Is. 63. 15.

15 And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch *that* thou madest strong [q]for thyself.

[q] Is. 49. 5.

The vineyard; or, *the root*, or *stock*, or *plant*, as others render it. *Thy right hand hath planted;* which thou hast planted or fixed with thy might and power; whereof the right hand is both a sign or symbol and an instrument. *The branch*, Heb. *the son*, i. e. either, 1. The son of man, as it is more fully expressed, ver. 17. Or rather, 2. The branch; for as yet he continues the metaphor; which is called *the son*, to wit, of the root or stock mentioned in the former clause, as the branches are called *daughters* in the Hebrew text, Gen. xlix. 22. *Thou madest strong;* either, 1. By supporting it with stakes or walls, upon which the vine groweth up. Or rather, 2. By causing it to grow in bulk and thickness, and consequently in strength. *For thyself;* for thy own especial delight, and service, and honour.

16 *It is* burned with fire, *it is* cut down: [r]they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

[r] Ps. 39. 11. & 76. 7.

It is burned with fire, to wit, thy vineyard or branch. *They perish;* thy people of Israel, signified by the vine. So now he passeth from the metaphor to the thing designed by it. *At the rebuke of thy countenance;* through the effects of thine anger, without which their enemies could do them no hurt.

[s] Ps. 89. 21.

17 [s]Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself.

Upon the man, to protect and strengthen him. *Of thy right hand;* whom thy right hand planted, ver. 15; whom thou hast loved and respected even as thy right hand, which is very dear to us, Matt. v. 30; xviii. 8; compare Zech. xiii. 7; thy Benjamin, whom he mentioned ver. 2, to whose name he seems to allude, which signifies *the son of the right hand*, i. e. a dearly beloved son, as Benjamin was to Jacob. *Son of man:* by *man*, or *son of man*, he understands either, 1. The Messias, oft called in Scripture *the Son of man:* let him come, and let his kingdom be established, and so thine Israel shall be saved and delivered out of all its troubles. Or, 2. The royal family, the house of David, in whose safety and welfare the happiness of the whole nation was wrapt up. Or rather, 3. The people of Israel, who are oft spoken of as one person, as God's *son* and *first-born*, Exod. iv. 22, and here as one vine. And seeing all the foregoing complaints have been concerning the calamities of the people of Israel, it seems most reasonable to understand this prayer to be made for them; the rather, because the following clause here applied to the man and son of man, *whom thou madest strong for thyself*, is used of the root or branch of the vine, ver. 15.

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18 So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

This glorious favour of thine shall oblige us to love and serve thee, and trust in thee so long as we have a being, and no more to revolt from thee to idolatry or wickedness, as we have too oft done. *Quicken us;* revive and restore us to our former tranquillity and happiness.

t ver. 3, 7. 19 [t]Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

PSALM LXXXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been made for the use of the church in solemn feasts; particularly either upon every first day of the month, or upon the first day of the seventh month, which was celebrated with a more solemn blast of trumpets, Lev. xxiii. 24; Numb. xxix. 1; because that month was more sacred than others by reason of the concurrence of divers religious solemnities in it.

* Ps. 8, title. † Or, *for Asaph.* ¶ To the chief Musician *upon Gittith, *A Psalm* ‖ of Asaph.

Gittith; of which title see the note on Psal. viii. title.

An exhortation to a solemn praising of God, 1—3; *which he requireth for his manifold mercies and deliverances,* 4—7; *and, exhorting to obedience, and the worshipping of him the true God,* 8—10, *complaineth of their disobedience, which tendeth to their own hurt and affliction,* 11—16.

SING aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

Our strength; who is all our refuge and safeguard against all our enemies.

2 Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

All which instruments were then prescribed and used in their solemn meetings.

3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

The new moon; which was a sacred and festival time, as appears from Numb. x. 10; xxviii. 11, 14; 2 Kings iv. 23; Isa. lxvi. 23. But this may be understood either, 1. Generally of every new moon. Or rather, 2. Specially of *that new moon,* as the word may be rendered, which begun the seventh month; as may be gathered both from the following words, and by comparing this place with Lev. xxiii. 24; Numb. xxix. 1, where this very day is called *a day of blowing of trumpets. In the time appointed, on our solemn feast day;* or, *for the day* or *time of our solemn festivity;* whereby may be understood either, 1. The day of the new moon, on which the trumpets were blown for the celebration of that solemn time. Or, 2. The seventh month, which that new moon did introduce or begin, and in which, besides other solemnities, they kept the feast of tabernacles, which the Hebrew doctors call *the feast* by way of eminency, and Josephus affirms to have been the most sacred and the chief of all the Jewish feasts.

a Lev. 23. 24. Numb. 10. 10. 4 For [a]this *was* a statute for Israel, *and* a law of the God of Jacob.

For this is no human device, but an appointment and command of the great God, and your Lord.

‖ Or, *against.* b Ps. 114. 1. 5 This he ordained in Joseph *for* a testimony, when he went out ‖ through the land of Egypt: [b]*where* I heard a language *that* I understood not.

This he ordained, to wit, the blowing of trumpets. *In Joseph;* among the posterity of Joseph, to wit, the people of Israel, as is evident both from the foregoing verse, where they are called *Israel,* and from the following words in this verse, where they are described by their coming out of Egypt, which was common to all the tribes of Israel, who are sometimes called by the name of *Joseph,* of which see on Psal. lxxx. 1. *For a testimony;* either, 1. For a law, which is oft called a *testimony.* Or rather, 2. For a witness and memorial of that glorious deliverance mentioned in the following words. For, 1. That this was a *statute* and *law* he had expressed, ver. 4, which it is not likely that he would here repeat, especially in a more dark and doubtful phrase. 2. He seems to declare the end of that law, which was to be a *testimony. When he,* to wit, God, *he* who *ordained,* as was now said, *went out,* as a captain at the head or on the behalf of his people, *through the land of Egypt,* to execute his judgments upon that land or people. Or, *against,* &c., to destroy it. Or, *out of* it, as both ancient and other interpreters render this particle *al,* which is elsewhere put for *meal,* and *meal* is put for *min, from* or *out of,* as is manifest by comparing 2 Kings xxi. 8 with 2 Chron. xxxiii. 8. So this text notes the time when this and the other feasts were instituted; which was at or presently after their coming out of Egypt, even at Sinai. *Where I,* i. e. my progenitors; for all the successive generations of Israel make one body, and are sometimes spoken of as one person; *heard a language that I understood not;* either, 1. The language of God himself speaking from heaven at Sinai, which was strange and terrible to me. Or rather, 2. The Egyptian language, which at first was very ungrateful and unknown to the Israelites, Gen. xlii. 23, and probably continued so for some considerable time, because they were much separated both in place and conversation from the Egyptians, through Joseph's pious and prudent design. This exposition is confirmed from Psal. cxiv. 1, where this very thing is mentioned as an aggravation of their misery; and from other places of Scripture, where this is spoken of as a curse and plague, to be with a people of strange language, as Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. v. 15.

c Is. 9. 4. & 10. 27. † Heb. *passed away.* d Ex. 1. 14. 6 [c]I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands † were delivered from [d]the pots.

I delivered him from burdensome slavery. *Pots;* as this word is taken, 1 Sam. ii. 14; 2 Chron. xxxv. 13. Or, *baskets,* as it signifies, 2 Kings x. 7; Jer. xxiv. 2. In the general, it seems to note all those vessels wherein they carried water, straw, lime, bricks, &c.

e Ex. 2. 23. & 14. 10. Ps. 50. 15. f Ex. 19. 19. g Ex. 17. 6, 7. Num. 20. 13. ‖ Or, *strife.* 7 [e]Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; [f]I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I [g]proved thee at the waters of ‖ Meribah. Selah.

Thou calledst in trouble; at the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. 10—12. *In the secret place of thunder;* from the dark and cloudy pillar, whence I thundered and fought against the Egyptians. See Exod. xiii. 21; xiv. 19, 24. Others refer this to the thunder at Sinai. But at that time they were not *in trouble,* but in a safe and glorious condition.

h Ps. 50. 7. 8 [h]Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;

I will testify unto thee, concerning my will and thy duty. I will give thee statutes and judgments, in the execution of which thou mayst live and be happy for ever. This God did presently after he brought them from Meribah, even at Sinai.

i Ex. 20. 3, 5. k Deut. 32. 12. Is. 43. 12. 9 [i]There shall no [k]strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

Thou shalt renounce all false gods and worship, and worship me only.

l Ex. 20. 2. 10 [l]I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: m Ps. 37. 3, 4. John 15. 7. Eph. 3. 20. [m]open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

Open thy mouth wide; either, 1. To pray for mercies. Ask freely, and abundantly, and boldly, (as this phrase oft signifies,) whatsoever you need, or in reason can desire. Or, 2. To receive the mercies which I am ready to give you. *I will fill it;* I will give or grant them all, upon condition of your obedience.

n Ex. 32. 1. Deut. 32. 15. 18. 11 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would [n]none of me.

Or, *did not assent to me,* or *acquiesce in me,* or *obey me,* or my commands.

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a Acts 7. 42. Rom. 1. 24, 26. 12 a So I gave them up ‖ unto their own hearts' lust: *and* they walked in their own counsels.

‖ Or, *to the hardness of their hearts*, or, *imaginations*.

Upon their obstinate and oft-repeated rebellions and rejections of my grace and mercy offered to them, I withdrew all the restraints of my providence, and my Holy Spirit, and grace from them, and wholly left them to follow their own vain and foolish imaginations and wicked lusts. *They walked in their own counsels;* they practised those things, both in common conversation and in religious worship, which were most agreeable, not to my commands or counsels, but to their own fancies and inclinations, as appeared in the golden calf and many other things.

p Deut. 5. 29. & 32. 29. Isa. 48. 18. 13 p Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, *and* Israel had walked in my ways!

14 I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.

Those remainders of the Canaanites whom now for their unbelief and apostacy I have left in the land to be snares and plagues to them.

q Deut. 33. 29. 15 q The haters of the LORD should have ‖ †submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.

‖ Heb. *lied*. † Heb. *yielded feigned obedience*.

The haters of the Lord; all the haters and enemies of God's people, as the neighbouring nations were; whom he calls *haters of God*, partly because they hated the Israelites for God's sake, and for the singularity of their religious worship, as the heathen oft declared; and partly to show the strict league and union which was betwixt God and them, by virtue whereof God had declared all their friends and enemies to be his own, which was a great aggravation of their wickedness. *Should have submitted themselves unto him;* should have professed and owned their subjection to him. For the phrase, see on Psal. xviii. 44. *Their time*, i. e. Israel's time; the relative belonging to the remoter antecedent; as it is in many other places of Scripture, whereof I have formerly given instances. By *their time* he means either, 1. Their happy time, as *life* is oft put for a happy life or state, as Psal. xxxiv. 12; xlix. 18; Deut. iv. 1; v. 33, &c. Or, 2. The duration of their commonwealth. *Endured for ever*, i. e. lasted for a very long time; whereas now their latter and doleful end is hastening towards them.

r Deut. 32. 13, &c. Ps. 147. 14. * Heb. *with the fat of wheat*. 16 He should r have fed them also † with the finest of the wheat: and with honey *out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

With honey; either, 1. Metaphorically, with all pleasant and precious fruits, and with all delights, as all necessaries may be expressed under the name of *wheat*. Or rather, 2. Properly; this land of Canaan being commended for its excellent and plentiful honey; and the bees there did oftimes harbour and make their honey in the holes of rocks and such-like places, from which it flowed down upon the ground. See Deut. xxxii. 13; 1 Sam. xiv. 25, 26.

PSALM LXXXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains an admonition, either, 1. To the chief rulers of Israel, whether judges or kings, or their great council called the Sanhedrim. Or rather, 2. To all the rulers of the several nations of the world, to whom this word might come; as may be gathered, partly from the expressions here used, which are general, and not peculiar to the governors of Israel, and therefore not rashly and unnecessarily to be restrained; and partly from the last verse, where he mentions *the whole earth* and *all nations* as concerned in the contents of this Psalm.

A Psalm for Asaph.

¶ A Psalm ‖ of Asaph.

The psalmist, exhorting and expostulating with the judges, 1—4, reproveth their want of judgment and negligence, 5—7, and prayeth the Lord to judge, 8

b 2 Chron. 19. 6. Ps. 58. 1. & 82. 6. John 10. 34, 35. GOD b standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among b the gods.

Standeth, as a judge, diligently to observe all that is said or done there; and to give sentence accordingly. The judge sits when he heareth causes, but standeth up when he giveth sentence. Or *standing* doth not note the posture, but only the being or presence of a person, as Isa. xi. 10; Dan. xi. 20; John iii. 29; whence this Hebrew word is by some learned interpreters rendered *is present*, and by others, *presideth*, as this word is used, 1 Sam. xix. 20; xxii. 9. *Of the mighty;* or, *of the gods*, as it is explained and expressed in the next clause; the singular number being here, as it is frequently elsewhere, put for the plural. By *gods*, or the *mighty*, he understands kings, or other chief rulers, who are so called, because they have their power and commission from God, and act as his deputies, in his name and stead, and must give an account to him of all their actions. And by their *congregation* he understands not a convention or assembly of such persons which seldom meet together, but either, 1. All congregations or assemblies of people in which magistrates sit to execute justice. Or, 2. All persons whatsoever of this high and sacred order or number; for the Hebrew word here rendered *congregation* doth not always signify an assembly of persons met together in one place, but sometimes notes all the particular persons of or belonging to such a sort and body of men, though dispersed in divers places, as Psal. xxvi. 5, *I have hated the congregation of evil-doers*, i. e. all evil-doers; Prov. xxi. 16, he *shall remain in the congregation of the dead*, i. e. shall be one of that number and state. See also Josh. xxii. 20; Psal. lxxiv. 19. Some render it as it is in the Hebrew, *in the congregation of God*, in his own congregation, the noun being put for the pronoun, as is usual in the Hebrew text, i. e. in the conventions or tribunals of princes or rulers, which he rightly calls *his*, because their authority is wholly derived from him. But the former exposition seems more agreeable, both to the following words, and to the scope and whole body of the Psalm. *Judgeth;* accurately observeth all their carriages, and passeth sentence upon them accordingly. *Gods*, i. e. judges and magistrates, who are called *gods*, below, ver. 6; Exod. xii. 12; xii. 28, compared with Acts xxiii. 5; Psal. cxxxviii. 1, and of whom this is expounded, John x. 34, 35.

2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and c accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. c Deut. 1. 17. 2 Chron. 19. 7. Prov. 18. 5.

The psalmist speaketh to them in God's name, and reproves them for their continued and resolved unrighteousness in their public administrations. *Accept the persons*, by overlooking the merits of the cause, and giving sentence according to your respect or affection to the person.

3 †Defend the poor and fatherless: d do justice to the afflicted and needy. † Heb. *Judge*. d Jer. 22. 3.

Defend the poor and fatherless; so far as justly you may; as this clause must be limited, by comparing this with Lev. xix. 15. *Do justice to*, Heb. *justify*, to wit, when his cause is just, and he is oppressed by a potent adversary.

4 e Deliver the poor and needy: rid *them* out of the hand of the wicked. e Job 29. 12. Prov. 24. 11.

These he recommends to the special care and protection of magistrates, because such are commonly neglected and crushed by men in higher place and power, and they are unable to right themselves.

5 They f know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: g all the foundations of the earth are †out of course. f Micah 3. 1. g Ps. 11. 3. & 75. 3. † Heb. *moved*.

They, the magistrates, of whom this Psalm treats, *know not*, to wit, the truth and right of the cause, nor the duty of their place. Men are oft said in Scripture *not to know* what they do not love and practise. *Neither will they understand:* this their ignorance is wilful and affected; they will not search out the truth, and they shut their eyes lest they should see what they would not. *They walk on;* they persist and proceed; it is not one rash and transient action, but their constant course. *In darkness;* either, 1. In ignorance; or, 2. In their sinful and unrighteous courses, as *darkness* is taken, Eph. iv. 17, 18; v. 8; 1 John i. 6; being blinded by their corrupt affections and interests, Exod. xxiii. 8. *All the foundations of the earth are out of*

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course: this corruption of the supreme rulers doth flow from them to their inferior officers and members, and manifestly tends to the dissolution of all civil societies, partly by subverting that order and honesty by which they are supported, and partly by provoking God the Governor of the world to destroy them for their wickedness.

h Ex. 22. 9, 28. ver. 1. John 10. 34.

6 [h] I have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* children of the most high.

I have said, Ye are gods; I have given you my name and power to rule your people in my stead. *All of you;* not only the rulers of Israel, but of all other nations; *for all powers are ordained by God,* Rom. xiii. 1. *Children of the Most High;* representing my person, and bearing both my name and lively characters of my majesty and authority, as *children* bear the name and image of their parents.

i Job 21. 32. Isa. 40. 12. Ezek. 31. 14.

7 But [i] ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

But ye shall die: but let not this make you insolent and secure; for though you are *gods* by name and office, yet still you are mortal men, you must die and give up your account to me your superior Lord and Governor; and you shall die and fall by the hands of my justice, if you persist in your unjust and ungodly courses. *Like men;* or, *like ordinary men,* as the Hebrew word *adam* sometimes signifies, as it doth Psal. xlix. 2. If it be objected, that there *adam* is opposed to *ish,* which notes persons of a higher rank; in like manner it is here opposed to the same sort of men, who are here called *gods. And fall like one of the princes:* so the sense is, *You* (who are esteemed by yourselves and others gods upon earth) *shall fall* (or *die,* as he said in the former branch; *falling* being oft put for dying, with this addition, that it notes not an ordinary, but a violent and judicial death, as Exod. xix. 21; Jer. xxxix. 18; Hos. v. 5) *like one* (or, *like other,* or *others,* as this very word is rendered, Judg. xvi. 7, 11, which also is expounded there, ver. 17, *like every,* or *any*) *of the princes,* i. e. as other unrighteous or tyrannical rulers have done in all foregoing ages, and still do, your eyes seeing it; even in like manner shall you, to whom now I speak, fall and perish, if you do not learn by their examples. But these words are by some late learned interpreters translated otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew words and accents, *And* you, *O ye princes,* (or, you *that are princes,* before called *gods.*) *shall fall like one,* or *like every,* or *any,* of them, i. e. of the ordinary men last mentioned. So there is only an ellipsis of the pronoun, which is frequent in the Hebrew language. Or, *shall fall together,* as this word is translated, Ezra ii. 64; iii. 9; or *alike,* as it is rendered Eccles. xi. 6, *in like manner,* to wit, as ordinary men do. Your godhead shall be taken away from you, and your death shall show you to be but mortal men, as others are.

k Mic. 7. 2, 7. l Ps. 2. 8. Rev. 11. 15.

8 [k] Arise, O God, judge the earth: [l] for thou shalt inherit all nations.

Seeing the state of the world is so universally corrupt and desperate, and thy vicegerents betray their trust, and oppress and ruin the nations of the earth, whom they were appointed to preserve, do thou therefore, O God, take the sword of justice into thine own hand, and maintain the cause and rights of the oppressed against their potent oppressors, and let truth and justice be established in all the parts of the earth. For as thou wast the Creator, so thou still art the supreme and unquestionable Lord, and Possessor, and Ruler of all nations, and therefore do thou protect and rescue them from all those who invade thine and their rights. And although at present thou seemest in some sort to confine thy care to Israel, and to neglect other nations; yet there is a time coming when thou wilt bring all nations to the knowledge of thyself, and the obedience of thy laws, and govern them by thy Son and Spirit, which thou wilt send into the world for that purpose. Do thou therefore preserve them in the mean time till that blessed day cometh, and hasten the coming of it.

PSALM LXXXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The occasion of the Psalm is manifest from the body of it, and it seems to have been a dangerous attempt and conspiracy of divers neighbouring nations against Israel or Judah. Probably it was that which is mentioned 2 Chron. xx., wherein all the people here mentioned might be engaged, though all of them be not there expressed; this being usual in the sacred historians, for the latter to record some passages which the former omitted. Or it may belong to some other history. Or it may have a more general respect unto the several enterprises and combinations of all these people against them, some at one time, and some at another.

¶ A Song *or* Psalm ‖ of Asaph. ‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

The church's complaint to God of her enemies' conspiracies, 1—8. *Her prayer against oppressors,* 9—15, *that God would fill them with shame, and make them know that he alone is Jehovah,* 16—18.

KEEP [a] not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. a Ps. 28. 1. & 35. 22. & 109. 1.

Keep not thou silence; plead for us, not by words, but by thine actions. *Hold not thy peace;* or, *be not deaf,* to our prayers, and to the blasphemies of thine and our enemies. *Be not still,* i. e. unactive and unconcerned for us.

2 For, lo, [b] thine enemies make a tumult: and they that [c] hate thee have lifted up the head. b Ps. 2. 1. Acts 4. 25. c Ps. 81. 15.

Thine enemies; they are not only enemies to us thy people, but also to thy will, and name, and glory. *Make a tumult;* or, *make a tumultuous noise,* both with their tongues reproaching thee and threatening us, and with their arms. *Have lift up the head;* are grown potent, and insolent, and scornful.

3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted [d] against thy hidden ones. d Ps. 27. 5. & 31. 20.

i. e. Thy people of Israel, as it is explained in the foregoing words, and in the next verse; who are called God's *hidden* or *secret ones,* to intimate the singular care and respect which God hath to them, as to his *peculiar treasure,* as they are called, Exod. xix. 5; Psal. cxxxv. 4, whom he will hide and preserve in the secret of his presence, and under the shadow of his wings; and withal, to note their folly in seeking the destruction of those whom God was engaged and resolved to protect.

4 They have said, Come, and [e] let us cut them off from *being* a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. e See Esth. 3. 6, 9. Jer. 11. 19. & 51. 56.

Whereby they showed both their implacable rage and malice, and their great assurance of success.

5 For they have consulted together with one † consent: they are confederate against thee: † Heb. *heart.*

They have laid aside all their private quarrels and animosities, and agreed together against thee.

6 [f] The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; f See 2 Chr. 20. 1, 10, 11.

The tabernacles, put for the people dwelling in them, as Job xii. 6; Prov. xiv. 11; Hab. iii. 7. *Edom;* called *the children of Seir,* 2 Chron. xx. *The Ishmaelites;* some of the posterity of Ishmael, called by their father's name, as others of them are supposed by divers to be called *Hagarenes,* from their grandmother Hagar. See 1 Chron. v. 10, 20.

7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;

Gebal; either, 1. The Giblites or Gebalites, dwelling near Zidon, of whom 1 Kings v. 18; Ezek. xxvii. 9. Or, 2. An Arabian people, so called by ancient writers, dwelling in the southern border of Canaan, where most of the people here mentioned had their abode. Yet some of these were in the northern parts, and not far from the other Gebal, as some of the Philistines and the Tyrians.

8 Assur also is joined with them: † they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah. † Heb. *they have been an arm to the children of Lot.*

Is joined with them in their counsels, and possibly with some of their forces, though not so openly and powerfully as afterwards. *The children of Lot;* Moab and Ammon, who were the principal parties in that war, 2 Chron. xx.,

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called here the children of Lot, to intimate their horrible degeneration from their pious progenitors.

f Num. 31.7. Josh. 13. 21. g Judg. 6. 33. 7. 12. 8. 10, 11. 26. h 1 Sam. 12. 9. 27. Psa. 106. 17.

9 Do unto them as *unto* the [g]Midianites; as *to* [h]Sisera, as *to* Jabin, at the brook of Kison:

10 *Which* perished at En-dor: [i]they became *as* dung for the earth.

Which perished at En-dor: either, 1. The Midianites. Or rather, 2. Jabin and Sisera, who were overthrown near Taanach and Megiddo, Judg. v. 19, nigh unto which places was this En-dor, as appears from Josh. xvii. 11. *They became as dung for the earth;* they were trodden under foot, and their carcasses left unburied. Compare 2 Kings ix. 37; Jer. viii. 2; xvi. 4.

k Judg. 7. 25. l Judg. 8. 12, 21.

11 Make their nobles like [k]Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as [l]Zebah, and as Zalmunna:

12 Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

The houses of God; the houses and lands of the Israelites, which their God, as they pretend, gave them in Canaan, to which they have no rightful title; for that we see was formerly objected by the Ammonites, Judg. xi. 13, who were a chief party in this war. So they seem to call them *houses of God*, by way of irony and derision.

m Isa. 17. 13, 14. n Psa. 35. 5.

13 [m]O my God, make them like a wheel; [n]as the stubble before the wind.

Whereas they promise to themselves a sure and firm possession in our land, let them be like *a wheel*, or *a round ball*, which being once tumbled down from the top of a hill, runs down with great force and swiftness, and stays not till it comes to the bottom, and there also is very unstable, and soon removed.

o Deut. 32. 22.

14 As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame [o]setteth the mountains on fire;

The mountains; understand by a metonymy the woods or forests upon the mountains, which in those hot countries, when they had once taken fire, either by lightning, or by the design of men, or by any accident, did burn with great speed and irresistible violence.

p Job 9. 17.

15 So persecute them [p]with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.

q Psa. 35. 4, 26.

16 [q]Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

That being disappointed of their hopes, and discerning the impotency of their idols, they may own and worship thee as the only true God.

17 Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:

But those of them that will not humble themselves before thee, let them be utterly destroyed.

r Psa. 59. 13. s Exo. 6. 3. t Psa. 97. 9.

18 [r]That *men* may know that thou, whose [s]name alone *is* JEHOVAH, *art* [t]the most high over all the earth.

That men may know, or *that they may know*, to wit, by costly experience, even by their own ruin, what they would not know by information for their own good, *that thou art the Most High*, the most high God, and the God not only of his people Israel, as the heathen fancied, and as their gods were confined to their particular and several territories, but the God and Governor of all the nations and parts of the earth.

PSALM LXXXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The author of this Psalm seems to have been David, partly because it is ascribed to no other, and partly because it is most agreeable to his style and condition, and the occasion of it, his banishment or absence from the place of God's worship; either, 1. In Saul's time, which suits not with ver. 7, for then the tabernacle was not in Zion. Or rather, 2. During Absalom's rebellion.

¶ To the chief Musician *upon Gittith, * Ps. 8, title.
A Psalm ‖ for the sons of Korah. ‖ Or, *of.*

The prophet, commending the sanctuary, 1, longeth for communion with it, 2, 3; showeth the blessed state and condition of such as dwell therein, 4—7; prayeth to be restored unto it, 8, 9; preferreth one day therein before a thousand elsewhere, 10. What the Lord is to them that trust in him, 11, 12.

1023. a Ps. 27. 4.

HOW [a]amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

Thy tabernacle, called *tabernacles*, either 1. Because it consisted of several parts; or, 2. To note its excellency; as *behemoth*, or *beasts*, is put for one eminent beast, Job xl. 15, and *wisdoms* for excellent wisdom, Prov. i. 20.

b Ps. 42. 1, 2. & 63. 1. & 73. 26. & 119. 20.

2 [b]My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Fainteth, or, *is consumed*, with grief for want of them, and with vehement desire to enjoy them, and with the deferring and disappointment of his hopes. See Prov. xiii. 12. *For the courts;* to enter into the outward court with the people, and to see what is done by the priests in the inner court, and to join with them in their religious exercises. *My heart and my flesh crieth out* with a doleful cry, of which this word is used also Lam. ii. 19, which elsewhere and commonly signifies a joyful shout. The sense is, my soul and body are pained; or the passion of my heart maketh my tongue cry out.

3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

The sparrow hath found an house, i. e. a habitation, to wit, a nest, as it here followeth. *Even thine altar;* or, *nigh* (as this Hebrew particle *eth* is elsewhere used, and as it is rendered by the Septuagint and the Chaldee, Judg. iv. 11) *thine altar*, Heb. *altars*, that of burnt-offerings, and the other of incense; at or near which these birds might well and truly be said to have their nests, because they were either in some part of the tabernacle or temple in which the altars were, or in some buildings belonging, or near at least, to it.

c Ps. 65. 4.

4 [c]Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

They that constantly or frequently resort to and abide in thy house; either the priests and Levites, who kept continual watch there; or other devout Jews who were there perpetually, as Anna, Luke ii. 37. For they are continually employed in that blessed and glorious work of praising and serving thee in the place which thou hast appointed for that end.

5 Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in thee; in whose heart *are* the ways *of them.*

Whose strength is in thee; who trusteth in thee as his only strength, and refuge, and portion. Or, *who hath strength in* (or rather *for*, as the Hebrew prefix *beth* is frequently used, as hath been noted again and again) *thee*, i. e. who hath (or who useth; for *having* is sometimes put for *using;* of which see Matt. xiii. 12; 1 Cor. vii. 2) ability of body and mind for thee, and for thy service; or for that journey which here he seems to insinuate, and in the following words and verses he particularly describes. For it must be considered that all the males of Israel were obliged to come to the tabernacle or temple thrice in a year, Exod. xxxiv. 23, 24, and that some of them lived at a great distance, and consequently were to take a long and troublesome journey, which also might at some times and places be accompanied with hazards and other inconveniences; and therefore such as wanted either courage or bodily strength might be discouraged or hindered from undertaking it, and from the enjoyment of God in his solemn and public worship; which though in some cases it might not be their sin, yet surely it was a great affliction and infelicity; and consequently it was a blessed thing to be freed from those impediments, as the psalmist here observes.

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In whose heart are the ways of them, i. e. of those men; for though *man* be the singular number, it is understood collectively of all that sort or company of men. But these words, *of them*, are not in the Hebrew, and, as some learned men have observed, seem to disturb or darken the sense. Others therefore seem to render the words better and more agreeably to the Hebrew text, *in whose heart are* thy (which pronoun is oft understood) *ways*, to wit, those ways which lead to thy house; or, *the ways*, so called emphatically, or by way of eminency, *the ways of* (or, *to*) *Zion*, as they are called Lam. i. 4, as is evident from the seventh verse of this Psalm. So the meaning is, Blessed are they whose thoughts and affections are much and strongly fixed upon the highways, and their journeys to Zion, who have both strength of body, as is said in the former branch, and readiness of heart, as is here added, to go to Zion; which are the two qualifications requisite for their journey. Blessed are they whose hearts are set upon Zion and their journeys thither; that are continually, or from time to time, stirring up and bespeaking themselves and others, as they did, Jer. xxxi. 6, *Arise ye, let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God.* As when a man's heart is knit in true friendship to one that lives at some distance from him, he is oft thinking with great desire and delight of the place where he dwelleth, and of the way leading to it.

‖ Or, *of mulberry trees make him a well, &c.*
[d] 2 Sam. 5. 22, 23.
† Heb. *covereth.*

6 *Who* passing through the valley ‖[d] of Baca make it a well; the rain also † filleth the pools.

Passing; or, *being used to pass*; for he seems not to speak of one particular act, but of a common course or custom. *Baca*; a place so called, which some Jewish and other writers affirm to have been a very dry place, and therefore incommodious for travellers in those hot countries, and in hot seasons; which place may be here mentioned not exclusively to other ways and passages, for this highway being but one, and on one side of Jerusalem, could not be a general way for all the Israelites thither, but synecdochically for all places of like nature, which made their journey to Jerusalem unpleasant or inconvenient. But their zeal for God's service did easily overcome this and other difficulties. Or, *the valley of tears*, as this valley might be called, for the trouble or vexation which travellers found there by reason of drought, or otherwise. *A well*, or *wells*, i. e. they dig divers little pits or wells in it for their relief. This trouble they willingly undertook rather than to neglect the opportunity of going up to Jerusalem at their solemn times. And possibly they did this, not only for themselves, but for the benefit of other travellers who came after them; whereby they showed both their piety and charity.

The rain also filleth the pools; God recompenseth their diligence in making pits, or little pools, or cisterns with his blessing, sending rain wherewith they may be filled, and the thirsty travellers refreshed. Possibly the words may be thus rendered, which is more agreeable to the order of the Hebrew text, *yea*, or *also*, (and so the Hebrew particle *gam* hath that emphasis which, as some learned interpreters observe, is not given to it in other translations; they do not only make little pits or wells, as it was now said, but also,) *pools* or *cisterns* (for this Hebrew word is by the learned rendered both ways) *which* (so the relative particle is to be understood, as it is very frequently in many texts of Scripture) *the rain filleth*, or *may fill*, i. e. which may receive and keep the rain which God sendeth for the refreshment of these travellers, whose great numbers made the provision of water more necessary. But it is not necessary to understand this and the foregoing clause of what these passengers did for their own use, as they travelled through this or such-like places; but it may be meant of what pious persons did before that time, who, having their hearts set upon God's house, and the pathways leading to it, as was said, ver. 5, and being desirous to advance the worship of God, and to encourage the people to come to Jerusalem, endeavoured to make those ways (some parts whereof were very incommodious) easy and convenient; and particularly, because those Eastern countries were hot and dry, and springs of water were scarce there, as we may learn from Gen. xxvi. 15; Judg. i. 15, and many other passages of sacred Scripture and other authors, which was a great annoyance to travellers, they made these pits and pools or cisterns in such places where they were most necessary, and through which great numbers of people passed in their journey to the house of God.

‖ Or, *from company to company.*
[e] Prov. 4. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 18.
[f] Deut. 16. 16. Zech. 14. 16.

7 They go ‖[e] from strength to strength, *every one of them* in Zion [f] appeareth before God.

They go from strength to strength; the farther they travel onward in that way, instead of being faint and weary, as travellers in such cases use to be, they grow stronger and stronger, being greatly refreshed with the comfortable end of their journey, expressed in the following words. Or, *They go from company to company.* For they used to travel in troops or companies for many reasons, and some companies were before others, accordingly as they were nearer to the place of worship, or more diligent or expeditious in their travel. And such as were most zealous would use their utmost endeavours to outstrip others, and to overtake one company of travellers after another, that so they might come with the first unto God in Zion. *Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God*: this is here added as the blessed design and fruit of their long and tedious journey, as that which put life into them, and made them bear all inconveniences with great cheerfulness, they are all graciously admitted into the presence of God in Zion. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered, until every one of them *appear before the God of gods in Zion*; or, *the God of gods shall be seen* (or *useth to appear*, or *manifest himself*; for the future tense oft notes the continuance of the action) *in Zion*; which is mentioned in the close as the reason of that affection and industry which is described in the foregoing passages.

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

O Lord God of hosts, who canst easily remove and subdue those enemies of mine who banish and keep me from the place of thy worship, *hear my prayer*, in restoring me to thy house and service; which is my chief desire, ver. 2, 3.

9 Behold, [g] O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

[g] Gen. 15. 1. ver. 11.

Look upon the face; do not turn away thine eyes from him, as men do from those whom they hate or despise, but cast a favourable eye towards him. By *face* he means either his person, the word *face* being oft redundant, as it is Gen. xliii. 3, or his state and condition. *Of thine anointed*: either, 1. Of Christ, whose proper name is *the Messiah*, or *the Anointed*. So the meaning may be, Lord, I deserve not one good look from thee, because by my great wickedness I have procured thy just displeasure, and this banishment; but look upon thy Christ, whose coming and meritorious passion, though future to us, is present to thee, and for his sake look upon me. Or, 2. Of me, who, though a vile sinner, am thine anointed king, 2 Sam. xii. 7; xxiii. 1.

† Heb. *I would choose rather to sit at the threshold.*

10 For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. † I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

A thousand; understand *elsewhere*; which is necessary to complete the sense: or, *in the tents of wickedness*; which may be supplied out of the next clause. Such ellipses are usual in Scripture, as Psal. xci. 7, *at thy side*, i. e. left side; Prov. xix. 1, &c. *Door-keeper*; which was generally held a mean and contemptible office, and belonged to the common Levites, 1 Chron. ix. 19; xxvi. 1, and therefore might seem very dishonourable for David. *Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness*; than to live in the greatest glory, and plenty, and pleasure; which is ordinarily the lot of wicked men, as David observed before, Psal. xvii. 14; lxxiii. 6, 7, and elsewhere.

[h] Is. 60. 19. [i] Gen. 15. 1. ver. 9. Ps. 115. 9, 10, 11. & 119. 114. [j] Prov. 2. 7. [k] Ps. 34. 9, 10.

11 For the LORD God *is* [h] a sun and [i] shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: [k] no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

A sun, to enlighten, and quicken, and direct, and comfort all his people; whereas they that live without God in the world *walk in darkness, and know not whither they go*, as is said, John xii. 35. *Shield*, to save his people from all their enemies, and from those dreadful and deadly miseries

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which attend all other men. *Grace;* his favour and friendship, which is better than life, Psal. lxiii. 3. and all the blessed fruits of it. *Glory;* not the vain-glory and splendour of this world, of which David would not have spoken so magnificently, because upon all occasions he expresseth a great contempt of those things; but the honour which comes from God here, and that eternal and ineffable glory laid up for God's people in the future world. *No good thing;* nothing that is truly good in itself, and which is good for them; for sometimes afflictions, which are evil in themselves, are good and necessary, and highly advantageous to good men; and the good things of this world would do them much hurt: which is verified by frequent experiments. *Them that walk uprightly;* that worship God sincerely, and order their conversations aright; which clause David seems to me to add designedly to prevent or remove an objection against what he had now said, which might be taken from his own case, whereby it appeared that God was no such sun or shield to him, but exposed him to great and sore calamities; which being certain and evident, David here assigns the true reason of it, which was not from any defect in God's goodness and sufficiency, but only from his own gross miscarriages, whereby he had clouded this sun, and cast away this shield, and forfeited these privileges by departing from his integrity.

[1] Ps. 2. 12. 12 O LORD of hosts, [1] blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee.

Who, though he be deprived of the opportunity of paying that outward worship to thee which is appropriated to thy house, yet giveth thee that inward worship which is more valuable in thy account, and placeth his chief trust, and hope, and happiness in thee alone.

PSALM LXXXV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is thought to have been made after the people's return from the Babylonish captivity; wherein he partly gives God thanks for that glorious deliverance, and partly implores God's mercy in completing that work, and rescuing his people from the relics of their bondage, and from the vexation which they had by their neighbours after they were returned to Canaan.

* Ps. 42. title. ¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm * || for the sons of Korah.

The psalmist, out of the experience of former mercies, prayeth for the continuance of them, 1—7; resolveth to wait on the Lord, and hear what he will speak, 8. His confidence in his goodness, mercy, and truth, 9—13.

[1] Or, well pleased. Ps. 44. 3. [a] Ezra 1. 11. & 2. 1. Ps. 14. 7. Jer. 29. 14. & 30. 3. & 32. 44. Ezek. 39. 25. Joel 3. 1. LORD, thou hast been || favourable unto thy land: thou hast [a] brought back the captivity of Jacob.

Unto thy land, i. e. unto thy people, in removing the sad effects of thy displeasure. *The captivity;* the captives, as that word is used, Psal. xiv. 7; lxviii. 18, and elsewhere.

[b] Ps. 32. 1. 2 [b] Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

So as not to impute it to them, or to continue the punishment which thou didst inflict upon them for it.

[c] Or, thou hast turned thine anger from thy wrath. Ps. 106. 23. 3 Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: || thou hast turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.

All thy wrath; those calamities which were the effects of thy just wrath conceived against us.

[c] Ps. 80. 7. 4 [c] Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

Turn us; either, 1. Convert us. As thou hast brought back our bodies to thy land, so bring back our hearts to thyself, from whom many of them to this day are alienated. Or rather, 2. Restore us to our former tranquillity, and free us from the troubles which we yet groan under from our malicious neighbours and enemies; for this best suits with the following clause of the verse, which commonly explains the former. *Cause thine anger toward us to cease;* he prudently endeavours to take away the root and cause of their continued miseries, to wit, God's anger procured by their sins.

[d] Ps. 74. 1. & 79. 5. & 80. 4. 5 [d] Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

[e] Hab. 3. 2. 6 Wilt thou not [e] revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

Thou hast once revived us in bringing us out of captivity, give us a second reviving in bringing home the rest of our brethren, and in rebuking and restraining the remainder of our enemies' wrath.

7 Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.

Show us thy mercy, i. e. grant it to us, as the next words explain it, and as *showing* signifies, Psal. iv. 6; so also Psal. lx. 3; lxxi. 20. Or, manifest thy secret purpose of mercy to us by thy providential dispensations.

[f] Hab. 2. 1. [g] Zech. 9. 10. 8 [f] I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for [g] he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not [h] turn again to folly.

[h] 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. *I will hear,* i. e. diligently observe. And the psalmist, by declaring what he would do, teacheth all the Israelites what they ought to do. Or he speaks in the name of all the people of God. *What God the Lord will speak;* either by his prophets or messengers; or by the works of his providence, for that also hath a voice. What answer God will give to these my prayers. For I am assured, from God's gracious nature and declared will and promise, that he will give an answer of peace. *And to his saints;* which clause seems to be added by way of explication and restriction, to show that this glorious privilege did not belong to all that were called God's *people,* but only to those that were truly and really such, even *to his saints* or *holy ones. To folly,* i. e. to sin, which in Scripture is commonly called *folly.* This is added as a necessary caution; but when God shall speak peace to his people, let them not grow wanton and secure, nor return to their former wicked courses; which if they do, they will provoke God to repent of his kindness to them, and to inflict further and sorer judgments upon them. Others render the place, *and they will not,* or *that they may not, return to folly.* But the particle *al* being prohibitive, our translation seems to be better.

[i] Is. 46. 13. [k] Zech. 2. 5. John 1. 14. 9 Surely [i] his salvation *is* nigh them that fear him; [k] that glory may dwell in our land.

His salvation; that complete salvation and deliverance for which all the Israel of God do pray and wait, even the redemption of Israel by the Messiah; of which not only Christian, but even Jewish, writers understand this place; and to which the following passages do most properly and perfectly belong. And the psalmist might well say of this salvation that it was *nigh,* because the seventy weeks determined by Daniel for this work, chap. ix. 24, were now begun, this Psalm being written after Daniel's time. *Them that fear him;* the true Israel of God, even all those that love and fear him; by which words he both excludes all hypocritical Israelites from this salvation, and tacitly assigns it to all that fear God, whether Jews or Gentiles. And when that salvation shall come, we shall be freed from all that scorn and contempt under which we now groan, and shall recover our ancient glory; and the glorious presence of God, the most eminent tokens whereof we have now utterly lost; and the God of glory himself, even Christ, who is called *the brightness of his* Father's *glory,* Heb. i. 3; compare John i. 14; and *the glory of Israel,* Luke ii. 32; shall come and visibly dwell in this now despised land.

[l] Ps. 72. 3. Is. 32. 17. Luke 2. 14. 10 Mercy and truth are met together; [l] righteousness and peace have kissed *each other.*

This is to be understood, either, 1. Of these graces or virtues in men. So the sense is, When that blessed time shall come, those virtues which now seem to be banished from human societies shall be restored, and there shall be

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a happy conjunction of *mercy*, or benignity; *truth*, or veracity; *righteousness*, or faithfulness; and *peace*, or peaceableness and concord. Or rather, 2. Of the blessings of God, of which the whole context speaks. And the sense is, That great work of redemption by Christ shall clearly manifest and demonstrate God's *mercy* in redeeming his people of Israel, and in the calling and conversion of the Gentiles; his *truth*, in fulfilling that great promise of the sending of his Son, which is the foundation of all the rest; his *righteousness*, in punishing sin or unrighteousness in his Son, and in conferring righteousness upon guilty and lost creatures; and his *peace*, or reconciliation to sinners, and that peace of conscience which attends upon it. *Kissed each other;* as friends use to do when they meet. See Exod. iv. 27; xviii. 7. So this is another expression of the same thing.

m Is. 45. 8.

11 [m] Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

Truth shall spring out of the earth; either, 1. Truth among men, which shall be so common amongst all men, as if it grew out of the earth. Or rather, 2. The truth or faithfulness of God; which is most truly and fitly said to *spring out of the earth*, partly because it had long been hid and buried, like a *root in a dry ground*, without any hopes of a reviving; from whence yet God made it to grow, as is noted, Isa. liii. 2; and partly because Christ, who is *the truth*, John xiv. 6, and *a minister of the circumcision* (i. e. of the circumcised, or of the Jews) *for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers*, was born upon the earth of a virgin's womb. *Righteousness shall look down from heaven;* even God's justice, which was offended with men, shall then be satisfied, and shall through Christ look down upon sinful men with a reconciled and smiling countenance.

n Ps. 84. 11. Jam. 1. 17. o Ps. 67. 6.

12 [n] Yea, the LORD shall give *that which is* good; and [o] our land shall yield her increase.

That which is good, i. e. all that is good in itself and for us, all spiritual and temporal blessings.

p Ps. 89. 14.

13 [p] Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set *us* in the way of his steps.

Go before him, as his harbinger or attendant. He shall work and fulfil all righteousness, he shall glorify and satisfy the righteousness of God, and shall advance the practice of righteousness and holiness among men. *Shall set us in the way of his steps*, i. e. shall cause us to walk in those righteous ways wherein he walketh, and which he hath prescribed to us. But this *us* is not in the Hebrew, and may seem too liberal a supplement. And the words may be, and are by almost all other interpreters, rendered otherwise, *he* (i. e. God) *shall set* (which may note his stability and constancy in so doing) *it* (to wit, *righteousness* last mentioned) *in the way of his steps*, i. e. in the way wherein he walketh. So the sense of this last clause is the same for substance with the former, as is very usual in this book; righteousness in that clause goes before him, and in this it goes along with him.

PSALM LXXXVI.

[1] Or, *A Prayer, being a Psalm of David.*

¶ ‖ A Prayer of David.

When he was in some deep distress, either from Saul, or by Absalom, or upon some other occasion.

David strengtheneth himself in prayer by the truth of his religion, 1—4, *and by God's goodness and his readiness to hear*, 5—10; *desireth the continuance of his grace*, 11—13. *Complaining of his proud enemies, he entreateth for some token of his love, to their shame and confusion*, 14—17.

BOW down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I *am* poor and needy.

Forsaken and persecuted by men, and utterly unable to save myself, and therefore a very proper object for thy power and goodness to work upon.

2 Preserve my soul; for I *am* ‖ holy: O thou my God, save thy servant [a] that trusteth in thee.

[1] Or, one whom thou favourest. a Is. 26. 3.

I am holy; sanctified in some measure by thy grace, and sincerely devoted to thy service. This David speaks, not in a way of vain ostentation, but partly as a powerful argument to move God to hear his prayers, because he was one of that sort of men to whom God had engaged himself by his promise and covenant; and partly by way of just and necessary vindication of himself from the censures of his enemies, who represented him to the world as a gross dissembler, and secretly a very wicked man; concerning which he here makes a solemn appeal to God, desiring audience and help from God upon no other terms than upon this supposition, that he was a holy man; which, by the way, savoureth of no more arrogancy than when he elsewhere professeth his great love to and longing after God, his sincere obedience to all God's commands, and his hatred of every false way, and the like. *My God*, by thy covenant and my own choice. *That trusteth in thee;* whereby thou seemest obliged in honour and by promise to help me.

b Ps. 56. 1. & 57. 1.

3 [b] Be merciful unto me, O LORD: for I cry unto thee ‖ daily.

[1] Or, *all the day.*

c Ps. 25. 1. & 143. 8.

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: [c] for unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

The expression notes fervent desire joined with hope or expectation, as appears by comparing Deut. xxiv. 15; Jer. xxii. 27.

d ver. 15. Ps. 130. 7. & 145. 9. Joel 2. 13.

5 [d] For thou, LORD, *art* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Herewith he relieveth himself under the sense of his guilt, whereby he had brought his present calamities upon himself. *Them that call upon thee*, to wit, *in truth*, as it is explained Psal. cxlv. 18. or with an upright heart: for *if* a man *regard iniquity in* his *heart, God will not hear* him, Psal. lxvi. 18.

6 Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

He repeats and multiplies his requests, both to ease his own troubled mind, and to prevail with God, who is well-pleased with his people's importunity in prayer. See Luke xviii. 1, &c.

e Ps. 50. 15.

7 [e] In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

Whereof I have assurance both from the benignity of thy nature, and from the truth and certainty of thy promises, and from my own and others' experiences in former times.

f Ex. 15. 11. Ps. 89. 6. g Deut. 3. 24.

8 [f] Among the gods *there is* none like unto thee, O LORD; [g] neither *are there* *any works* like unto thy works.

There is none like unto thee, either for power or readiness to hear and answer prayers. I am not now calling upon a deaf and impotent idol, for then I might cry my heart out, and all in vain, as they did, 1 Kings xviii. 26, &c; but upon the Almighty and most gracious God.

h Ps. 22. 31. & 102. 18. Is. 43. 7. Rev. 15. 4.

9 [h] All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O LORD; and shall glorify thy name.

So true is that which I have now said of thee, ver. 8, that the time is coming when all the nations of the earth shall acknowledge it, and, forsaking their impotent idols, shall worship thee alone; which being a work of thy power and grace, clearly proves that no God is like to thee, and no works like thine. And those words, *whom thou hast made*, are added to prevent or remove objections concerning the insuperable difficulty and incredibility of this work. The God, saith he, that made them can easily convince and convert them to himself.

i Ex. 15. 11. Ps. 72. 18. & 77. 15. k Deut. 6. 4. & 32. 39. Is. 37. 16. & 44. 6. Mark 12. 29. 1 Cor. 8. 4. Eph. 4. 6.

10 For thou *art* great, and [i] doest wondrous things: [k] thou *art* God alone.

Doest wondrous things: this is added as a reason either why the nations should own the true God, because they

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should see his wonderful works; or why that great work, ver. 9. was not incredible, but should certainly be accomplished. *Art God alone;* and all the idols of the heathen are no gods, but vanities; as the Gentiles themselves shall see and acknowledge.

[1] Ps. 25. 4. & 27. 11. & 119. 33.

11 [1] Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

Thy way; wherein thou wouldst have me to walk. As thou hast taught me by thy word, so also by thy Spirit enlighten my mind, that I may clearly discern thy will and my duty in all conditions and circumstances. *In thy truth;* in the way of thy precepts, which are true and *right in all things*, as he saith, Psal. cxix. 128, and the only true rule of thy worship, and the only true way to man's happiness. *Unite my heart;* engage and knit my whole heart to thyself and service, and deliver me from inconstancy and wavering, that I may not at any time, nor in the least degree, be withdrawn from thee, either to any corrupt worship, or to the love and pursuit of the lusts or vanities of this present evil world.

12 I will praise thee, O LORD my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

Either, 1. If thou grantest my request, ver. 11; or, 2. Because thou hast done what is expressed ver. 13.

13 For great *is* thy mercy toward me: and thou hast [m] delivered my soul from the lowest ‖ hell.

[m] Ps. 56. 13. & 116. 8.

‖ Or, *grave.*

My soul; my person or life, as in the next verse. *From the lowest hell;* either, 1. From hell properly so called. Or rather, 2. From extreme and desperate dangers and miseries, by comparing this with Deut. xxxii. 22, and with Psal. lxxxviii. 6, *Thou hast laid me in the lowest* (the same word in the Hebrew which is here) *pit;* where by the *pit* he means, as is evident and confessed, *the grave*, which is commonly called *scheol*, the word here used.

[n] Ps. 54. 3.

† Heb. *terrible.*

14 O God, [n] the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of † violent *men* have sought after my soul; and have not set thee before them.

They have no reverence nor regard for thee, neither for thy word, which hath conferred the kingdom upon me; nor for thine all-seeing eye, which beholds all their wicked devices and practices against me; nor for thy justice, which will undoubtedly bring their mischief upon their own heads.

[o] Ex. 34. 6. Num. 14. 18. Neh. 9. 17. Ps. 103. 8. & 145. 8. Joel 2. 13.

15 [o] But thou, O LORD, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

To wit, to thy people, and to me in particular; and therefore thou wilt forget and forgive my manifold sins, for which thou mightest justly reject me, and make me to know thy breach of promise; and therefore thou wilt save me from my cruel enemies.

[p] Ps. 25. 16. & 69. 16.

[q] Ps. 116. 16.

16 O [p] turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save [q] the son of thine handmaid.

Give thy strength, to assist, support, and save me. Me, who by thy gracious providence was born not of heathen, but of Israelitish parents, and therefore was in covenant with thee from my birth, and whose mother was thy faithful servant, and did entirely devote me to thy service.

17 Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see *it*, and be ashamed: because thou, LORD, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

Vouchsafe unto me some evident and eminent token of thy good will to me, for the conviction of mine enemies, and mine own comfort.

PSALM LXXXVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was doubtless composed after the building of the temple; and, as learned men think, and it seems probable, when the people were newly returned out of Babylon, and laboured under many discouragements about the return of most of their brethren, and the difficulties which they met with in the rebuilding of their temple and city.

¶ A Psalm *or* Song ‖ for the sons of Korah.

‖ Or, *of.*

The prophet speaketh of the nature and glory of the church, and God's love to it, 1—3; *of the increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof,* 4—7.

HIS foundation *is* [a] in the holy mountains.

[a] Ps. 48. 1.

His foundation: whose foundation? Either, 1. The foundation, i. e. the argument or matter, of this Psalm or Song. So these words are thought to be a part of the title, the words lying thus in the Hebrew text, *For the sons of Korah, a Psalm* or *Song whose foundation is in the holy mountains.* But, 1. The Hebrew word rendered *foundation* is no where used in that sense. 2. There is no example of any such like title in the Book of the Psalms. Or rather, 2. Of the city or temple of God, of which he speaks in the following verses. And whereas the beginning is somewhat abrupt, which seems to be the only ground of the foregoing exposition, that is no unusual thing in Scripture, and the pronoun relative, such as this is, is often put without any foregoing antecedent, and the antecedent is to be fetched out of the following words or verses, as Numb. xxiv. 17, *I shall see him,* or *it,* to wit, the star, which follows afterward; Psal. cv. 19, *his word,* i. e. the Lord's; Prov. vii. 8, *to her house,* i. e. the harlot's, mentioned ver. 10; and especially Cant. i. 2, *let him kiss,* to wit, my beloved, who is there understood, but not expressed till ver. 14. And the ground of that abrupt and imperfect speech there seems to be the same with this here; for as the church was there in deep meditation and a great passion about her beloved, which caused that abruptness of speech, which is usual in such cases, so the psalmist's thoughts were strongly fixed upon the temple and city of God; and therefore this relative *his* had a certain antecedent in his thoughts, though not in his words. The word *foundations* may possibly be emphatical, because this Psalm might probably be composed when the foundations of the second temple were newly laid, and the old men who had seen the glory of the former house were dejected at the sight of this, of which see Ezra iii. 11, 12. And so the meaning of this passage may be this, Be not discouraged, O ye Jews, that your temple is not yet erected and built, but only the foundations of it laid, and those too are mean and obscure in comparison of the magnificence of your former temple; but take comfort in this, that your temple hath its foundations laid, and those sure and firm; sure in themselves, because they are not laid in the sand, nor in boggy or fenny grounds, but in the mountains; and sure by Divine establishment, because those mountains are holy, consecrated to God, and therefore maintained and established by him. Or he may use this word *foundations* in opposition to the tabernacle, which was movable, and without foundations, to note the stability and perpetuity of this building. *In the holy mountains;* or, *among* or *within the holy mountains*, to wit, in Jerusalem, which was encompassed with mountains, Psal. cxxv. 2, and in which were two famous mountains, to wit, Zion and Moriah. Or the plural number is here put for the singular, whereof we have seen examples formerly; and *mountains* are put for *the mountain;* either for Mount Moriah, upon which the temple stood; or for Mount Zion, which is mentioned in the next verse; which is often taken in a large and comprehensive sense, so as to include Moriah, in which sense the temple is said to be in Zion, Psal. lxxiv. 2; lxxvi. 2; Isa. viii. 18.

2 [b] The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

[b] Ps. 78. 67, 68.

The gates, i. e. the city *gates*, being oft put for *cities*, as Deut. xv. 7; xvi. 5; Psal. ix. 14. *Of Zion;* largely so called, as was now said, to wit, of Jerusalem, which was built upon and near Mount Zion. He saith Zion rather than Jerusalem, to intimate that he loved Jerusalem for

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Zion's sake, or for the temple, which is oft said to be in Zion; which place he loved and chose for his peculiar dwelling-place. *More than all the dwellings of Jacob;* more than all other places of the land of Canaan in which the Israelites dwelt. For although the tabernacle was for a season in some other parts of the land, yet the temple, the place of God's fixed residence, was no where but in this city.

c See Is. 60. 3 c Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.

O Jerusalem, though thou and thy temple are yet in some sort in your ruins, and desolate and contemptible not only to thine enemies, but also in the eyes of thine own people, yet comfort thyself with these great and glorious things foretold concerning thee in the holy prophets, as Isa. lxii. 1, 7; lxv. 18, &c.; lxvi. 10, &c.; Zech. i. 14, &c.; ii. 4, 12; viii. 3, &c.; xii. 2, &c. Among other things, it was foretold that *the glory of the latter house should be greater than of the former*, Hag. ii. 9. All which prophecies are to be understood, as this place also is, of a spiritual and evangelical glory accruing to Jerusalem; as by the birth and presence of Christ in it, so also by the accession of all people and nations to it, of which he speaks in the next verse.

d Ps. 89. 10. Is. 51. 9. 4 I will make mention of d Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this *man* was born there.

I will make mention, i. e. I will reckon or account them in the number of my children and subjects. *Rahab*, i. e. Egypt, so called, Psal. lxxxix. 10; Isa. li. 9, but whether from its pride, or natural strength, or figure, or shape, is not material. *And Babylon:* under these two and Philistia, the old and constant enemies of Israel, he seems to understand all the keenest enemies of the Israel or church of God, who shall now be not only reconciled, but united to them; which also was foretold under the similitude of *the wolf's dwelling with the lamb*, &c., Isa. xi. 6. *To them;* or, *with* or *among* them, as the prefix *lamed* is frequently used. *That know me*, to wit, truly, clearly, affectionately, and practically, so as to love, serve, and obey me, as this phrase is very frequently used in Scripture. And upon this account, not only heathens, but wicked Israelites, are said *not to know God*, as 1 Sam. ii. 12, and oft elsewhere. *Behold;* take notice of it as a thing new, and strange, and comfortable. *Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia;* the nations on every side of them; for Tyrus was on the north, Ethiopia or Arabia (for that seems rather to be meant by Cush, as hath been before observed) on the south, those nearest to them, and those more remote from them, that lived in the *uttermost parts of the earth*, as this very land is called, Matt. xii. 42. *This man was born there;* or, saying, *This* man, &c., for this cohereth with the first words thus, *I will make mention of Rahab*, &c., saying, *This* man (i. e. these men or people now mentioned, the singular number put collectively for the plural; and the Scripture oft speaks of a nation as of one man, as Psal. xxv. 22; cxxx. 8) *was born there*, or *in her*, as it is expressed, ver. 5, to wit, in Zion; *born* by adoption and regeneration. See John i. 12; iii. 3, 7; Gal. iii. 26; iv. 26; 1 Pet. i. 23. The Gentiles shall be ingrafted into the Jewish church, and into all their privileges.

5 And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.

Of Zion, i. e. of Jerusalem, or the church of God. *It shall be said;* it shall be mentioned by God, as was said, ver. 4, and it shall be observed and acknowledged by men, as a great and wonderful work of God. *This and that man*, i. e. men of this and that nation, i. e. of every nation, indifferently, Jews or Gentiles, according to that prediction, that Egypt, and Assyria, and Israel should be all joined together, and blessed and owned by God for his people, Isa. xix. 24, 25. Heb. *Man and man*, i. e. every man, or all sorts of men, without difference of nations; as this very phrase *man and man*, Lev. xvii. 10, 13, is rendered *every* or *whatsoever man;* and as by *day and day* is meant every day, or from day to day, Esth. iii. 4; Psal. lxi. 8. *And the Highest himself shall establish her:* and this shall not be a sudden and transient, but a lasting work; Zion shall continue in its strength and fertility because the Almighty God is her Founder and Protector, and will finish the work which he hath begun.

6 e The Lord shall count, when he f writeth up the people, *that* this *man* was born there. Selah.

e Ps. 22. 30. f Ezek. 13. 9.

The people; or, his *people*. So it is only a defect of the pronoun *his*, which is very frequent, and easily understood out of the foregoing word, *the Lord*. The sense is, when God, the Maker and Governor of this city, shall take a survey of all his citizens and subjects. It is an allusion to princes or governors of cities that use to write and keep a register of all their people. Hence holy men and true Israelites are said to be written *among the living in Jerusalem*, Isa. iv. 3; or, *in the writing of the house of Israel*, Ezek. xiii. 9.

7 As well the singers as the players on instruments *shall be there:* all my springs *are* in thee.

There shall be great rejoicing and praising God, both with vocal and instrumental music, for this glorious and stupendous work of the conversion of the Gentiles. He describes evangelical worship by legal phrases and customs, as the prophets frequently do. *In thee*, i. e. in Zion, or the church. These words may be here added as the burden or matter of the song, which these singers are supposed to have sung; and that either, 1. In their own names, and in the name of all the Zionites or people of God. So the sense is, All our desires and delights are in thee, all the springs of mercy, grace, and glory flow to us only in and through thee; for *springs* or *fountains* are oft put for all precious or desirable things, as Psal. xxxvi. 9; Isa. xii. 3; Hos. xiii. 15. Or, 2. In God's name, whose words were frequently sung by the singers in the Old Testament. And so the sense is, All the springs or fountains of good things, or of my blessings, are in Zion, or in the church, out of which no true blessings are to be expected or found. And this seems best to suit with the phrase, *my springs;* partly because it seems more proper to call them God's springs, who is the author and giver of them, than men's springs, who are only the receivers of them; and partly because this is more agreeable to the phrase and usage of Scripture, which every where ascribes and appropriates them to God.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed upon a particular occasion, to wit, Heman's deep distress and dejection of mind almost to despair. But though this was the occasion of it, it is of more general use, for the instruction and consolation of all good men when they come into such despondencies, and therefore was by the direction of God's Spirit made public, and committed to the sons of Korah.

¶ A Song *or* Psalm ‖ for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, ‖ Maschil of *Heman the Ezrahite.

‖ Or, *of*, *to*, *for*. A Psalm of Heman the Ezrahite, giving instruction. * 1 Kings 4. 31. 1 Chron. 2. 6.

Mahalath seems to be the name of the tune or instrument, as Psal. liii. *Leannoth* may be either the latter part of the proper name of the tune or instrument; or an appellative name, and so divers take it, and render it, *to sing*, or *to be sung*, to wit, alternately or by turns. *Heman;* probably the same person who was famous in David's time, both for his skill in music, and for general wisdom; of whom see 1 Kings iv. 31; 1 Chron. vi. 33. *The Ezrahite;* as Ethan also is called, 1 Kings iv. 31.

The psalmist declares his former practice of prayer to God 1; *beggeth present audience*, 2; *acquainteth the Lord with his misery and frailty*, 3, 4, *which he suffereth by God's wrath, and his friends' forsaking him*, 5—8. *His mourning and expostulation*, 9—18.

O Lord a God of my salvation, I have b cried day *and* night before thee:

a Ps. 27. 9. & 51. 14. b Luke 18. 7.

Who hast so often saved me from former distresses, and, I hope, wilt do so at this time.

2 Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

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3 For my soul is full of troubles: and
c Ps. 107. 18. my life [c] draweth nigh unto the grave.

My soul, properly so called; for that he was under great troubles of mind from a sense of God's wrath and departure from him, is evident from ver. 14—16.

d Ps. 28. 1. 4 [d] I am counted with them that go
e Ps. 31. 12. down into the pit: [e] I am as a man *that hath* no strength:

I am given up by my friends and acquaintance for a lost man.

5 Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou remem-
f Ps. 31. 5. berest no more: and they are [f] cut off ‖ from thy hand.

‖ Or, by thy hand.

Free among the dead; well nigh discharged from the warfare of the present life, and entered as a member into the society of the dead; as Israelitish servants, when they were made free, were thereby made denizens of the commonwealth of Israel. I expect no other freedom from my miseries but that which death gives, as Job iii. 17, 18. *Whom thou rememberest no more;* whom thou seemest wholly to neglect and to bury in oblivion; for he speaks of these matters not as they are in truth, for he knew very well that forgetfulness was not incident to God, and that God did remember all the dead, and would call them to an account, but only as to sense and appearance, and the opinion of the world, and the state and things of this life. *From thy hand;* from the care and conduct of thy providence, which is to be understood as the former clause. Or, *by thy hand.* But our translation seems better to agree both with the foregoing branch, which it explains and improves, and with the order of the words; for it seems improper, after he had represented the persons as dead, and in their graves, to add that they *are cut off*, to wit, by death.

6 Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.

Either, first, in the grave; the same thing being expressed in divers words; or, secondly, in hopeless and remediless calamities.

7 Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and
g Ps. 42. 7. [g] thou hast afflicted *me* with all thy waves. Selah.

Thy wrath; either, first, the sense of thy wrath; or rather, secondly, the effects of it; as the next clause explains this. *With all thy waves;* with thy judgments, breaking in furiously upon me like the waves of the sea.

h Job 19. 13. 8 [h] Thou hast put away mine acquaint-
Psa. 31. 11. & 38. 11. ance far from me; thou hast made me an
i Lam. 3. 7. abomination unto them: [i] *I am* shut up, and I cannot come forth.

I am so sad a spectacle of thy vengeance that my friends avoid and detest me, lest by conversing with me they should either be filled with terrors, which men naturally abhor, or be made partakers of my guilt or plagues. *I am shut up;* either in the pit or deep, mentioned ver. 6, or in my own house or chamber, being afraid or ashamed to go abroad.

k Psa. 6. 6. 9 [k] Mine eye mourneth by reason of
l Psa. 3. affliction: LORD, [l] I have called daily
m Job 11. 13. Psa. 143. 6. upon thee, [m] I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

Understand, *without effect;* for thou dost not hear nor answer me.

n Psa. 6. 5. & 30. 9. & 115. 17. Isa. 38. 18. 10 [n] Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise *and* praise thee? Selah.

Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead, to wit, in raising them to live again in this world? as it is in the next clause. I know that thou wilt not. And therefore now hear and help me, or it will be too late. *Praise thee,* to wit, amongst mortal men in this world.

11 Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? *or* thy faithfulness in destruction?

I am not without hopes that thou hast a true kindness for me, and wilt faithfully perform thy gracious promises made to me, and to all that love thee and call upon thee in truth. But then this must be done speedily, or I shall be utterly incapable of such a mercy.

12 [o] Shall thy wonders be known in the
o Job 10. 21. Ps. 143. 3. dark? [p] and thy righteousness in the land
p Ps. 31. 12. ver. 5. Eccles. 8. 10. & 9. 5. of forgetfulness?

In the dark; in the grave, which is called *the land of darkness,* Job x. 21, 22. *In the land of forgetfulness;* in the grave; so called, either, first, Actively, because there men forget and neglect all the concerns of this life, being indeed but dead carcasses without any sense or remembrance. Or rather, secondly, Passively, because there men are forgotten not only by men, as is noted, Job xxiv. 20; Psal. xxxi. 12, but by God himself, as he complained, ver. 5.

13 But unto thee have I cried, O LORD;
q Ps. 5. 3. & 119. 147. and [q] in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.

i. e. Early, come to thee, before the ordinary time of morning prayer, or before the dawning of the day, or the rising of the sun. The sense is, Though I have hitherto got no answer to my prayers, yet I will not give over praying nor hoping for an answer.

14 LORD, [r] why castest thou off my
r Ps. 43. 2. soul? *why* [s] hidest thou thy face from
s Job 13. 24. Ps. 13. 1. me?

This proceeding seems not to agree with the benignity of thy nature, nor with the manner of thy dealing with thy people.

15 I *am* afflicted and ready to die from *my* youth up: *while* [t] I suffer thy terrors
t Job 6. 4. I am distracted.

From my youth up; my whole life hath been filled with a succession of deadly calamities. O Lord, take some pity upon me, and let me have a little breathing space before I die. *I suffer thy terrors* upon my mind and conscience, which do accompany and aggravate my outward miseries.

16 Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.

17 They came round about me ‖ daily
‖ Or, all the day. like water; they [u] compassed me about
u Ps. 22. 16 together.

As the waters of the sea encompass him which is in the midst and bottom of it.

18 [x] Lover and friend hast thou put far
x Job 19. 13. Ps. 31. 11. & 38. 11. from me, *and* mine acquaintance into darkness.

Of which see the note on ver. 8.

PSALM LXXXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm manifestly treats of the declining and calamitous time and state of the house and kingdom of David, either, first, in Rehoboam's reign, as a late judicious interpreter conceives; to which those expressions, ver. 40—42, do not agree; or rather, secondly, in or about the time of the Babylonish captivity.

¶ ‖ Maschil of * Ethan the Ezrahite.
‖ Or, A Psalm *for Ethan the Ezrahite, to give instruction.* * 1 Kings 4. 31. 1 Chron. 2. 6.

Either, first, He who is mentioned 1 Kings iv. 31. And then the Psalm is prophetical of things to come; which yet, after the manner of the prophets, he represents as present. And this prophetical Psalm might be left upon record as a cordial for David's family in their future distresses, which Ethan by the Spirit of prophecy foresaw. Or, secondly, Some other person of the same name, and inspired by the same Spirit, who had lived in the times of which the psalmist here speaketh.

The psalmist praiseth God for making and keeping covenant with David and his seed, 1—4; *for his great power and care over his church,* 5—18; *for his favours to the kingdom of David,* 19—22. *The destruction of his enemies,* 23. *The faithfulness of God to them in covenant with him,*

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21—37. *Complaining of contrary events,* 38—45, *he expostulateth with, prayeth unto, and blesseth the Lord,* 46—52.

a Ps. 101. 1. † Heb. *to generation and generation:* So ver. 4. Ps. 119. 90.

a I WILL sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness †to all generations.

Intending to discourse of the doleful estate of David's family and of the kingdom, he prefaceth this, partly lest the following complaints of present miseries should argue ingratitude for former mercies; and partly to move God to pity from the remembrance of his former mercies. *Thy faithfulness;* whatsoever hath befallen or shall befall David's house, or any other, it proceeded not from thy unfaithfulness, but from some other causes.

2 For I have said, Mercy shall be built

b Ps. 119. 89. up for ever: b thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

I have said within myself. I have been assured in my own mind. *Mercy shall be built up for ever:* as thou hast laid a sure foundation of mercy to David's family, by that everlasting covenant which thou hast made and established with it; so I concluded that thou wouldst carry on the same project of mercy towards it; that thou wouldst build it up, and not destroy it. *Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens:* so the sense may be this, Thou sittest in the heavens, and there thou didst make this everlasting and unchangeable decree and covenant concerning David and his house, and from thence thou beholdest and orderest all the affairs of this lower world, and therefore, I doubt not, thou wilt so order these matters as to accomplish thine own counsel and word. But the Hebrew words are by some others, and may very well be, translated thus, *with* (as the Hebrew prefix *beth* is oft rendered) *the very heavens,* i. e. as firmly and durably as the heavens themselves; as *with the sun,* in the Hebrew text, Psal. lxxii. 5, is by most interpreters rendered, *as long as the sun endureth,* as our translation hath it. And so this phrase in the last branch of this verse answers to *for ever* in the former; as it is also in the foregoing verse, and so in ver. 4; in both which verses *for ever* in the first clause is explained thus in the latter, *to all generations.*

c 1 Kings 8. 16. Is. 42. 1. d 2 Sam. 7. 11, &c. 1 Chron. 17. 10, &c. See Jer. 30. 9. Ezek. 34. 23. Hos. 3. 5.

3 c I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have d sworn unto David my servant,

With my chosen; with David, whom I have chosen to the kingdom.

e ver. 29, 36. f See ver. 1. Luke 1. 32, 33.

4 e Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne f to all generations. Selah.

I will perpetuate the kingdom to thy posterity; which was promised upon condition, and was literally and fully accomplished in Christ, who was of the seed of David.

g Ps. 19. 1. & 97. 6. Rev. 7. 10, 11, 12. h ver. 7.

5 And g the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation h of the saints.

The heavens, i. e. the inhabitants of heaven, the holy angels, as Job xv. 15; who clearly discern and constantly adore thy mercy and faithfulness, when men upon earth are filled with doubts and perplexities about it. *Thy faithfulness also;* understand, *shall be praised,* out of the foregoing clause; which supplements are most usual in Scripture, as hath been already showed by divers instances. *In the congregation of the saints;* either, first, Of thy saints upon earth in their public assemblies; who always acknowledge and celebrate thy truth, although they cannot always discern the footsteps of it. Or rather, secondly, Of the angels of heaven, of whom he speaks in the foregoing clause; who are oft called *saints* or *holy ones,* as Deut. xxxiii. 2; Job xv. 15; Dan. iv. 13. 17; viii. 13.

i Ps. 40. 5. & 71. 19. & 86. 8. & 113. 5.

6 For i who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

Among the sons of the mighty; either, first, among the potentates of the earth; or rather, secondly, among the highest angels; who well may and needs must admire and adore thee, because thou art incomparably and infinitely more excellent than they.

k Ps. 76. 7, 11.

7 k God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him.

God is greatly to be feared; with a fear of reverence; for dread and terror have no place in those blessed mansions and holy spirits. *In the assembly of the saints;* to the whole society of angels, called *saints,* as ver. 5. *Them that are about him;* the angels, which are always in his presence, and encompass his throne.

l Ex. 15. 11. 1 Sam. 2. 2. Ps. 35. 10. & 71. 19.

8 O LORD God of hosts, who *is* a strong LORD l like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

Who is a strong Lord like unto thee? who is equal to thee in power, or, as it follows, in faithfulness? *To thy faithfulness round about thee,* Heb. *and thy faithfulness* is *round about thee,* like a girdle adorning and encompassing thee. It appeareth in all thy paths and actions, in thy words and works.

m Ps. 65. 7. & 93. 3, 4. & 107. 29.

9 m Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

Giving commands and setting bounds to its waves when they are most impetuous and unruly.

n Ex. 14. 26, 27, 28. Ps. 87. 4. Is. 30. 7. & 51. 9. ‖ Or, *Egypt.* † Heb. *with the arm of thy strength.*

10 n Thou hast broken ‖ Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies †with thy strong arm.

Rahab; Egypt, as Psal. lxxxvii. 4. *As one that is slain;* thou didst wound them not slightly, but unto death. See Exod. xiv. 15.

o Gen. 1. 1. 1 Chron. 29. 11. Ps. 24. 1, 2. & 50. 12.

11 o The heavens *are* thine, the earth also *is* thine: *as for* the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

The fulness thereof; all the creatures wherewith it is replenished, as Psal. xxiv. 1; l. 12. *Thou hast founded them;* they are all thy creatures, and therefore wholly subject to thy power and pleasure; and therefore all the monarchs and kingdoms of the earth cannot hinder thee from making good thy promise to the house and kingdom of David.

p Job 26. 7. q Josh. 19. 22. r Josh. 12. 1.

12 p The north and the south thou hast created them: q Tabor and r Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

The north and the south; the northern and southern parts of the world, yea, even the remotest ends thereof, though not yet known to us, were made and are ruled by thee. Or possibly he may understand the northern and southern empires, and people of the world, who have from time to time annoyed and disturbed the kingdom of David and of Israel, of which this Psalm principally treats, such as Syria, Chaldea, and Assyria; which in Scripture phrase are called *the north,* in reference to that kingdom; and Egypt, and Ethiopia, and Arabia, which are southward from it. These, saith he, are all thy creatures, and none of them can withstand thee, if thou wilt undertake to deliver thy people. But this I only propose with submission. *Tabor and Hermon;* two eminent mountains in the land of Canaan; Tabor in the west and within Jordan, Hermon on the east and without Jordan; by which he may understand either, first, The western and eastern parts of the world; and so all the four parts of the world are contained in this verse. But this may seem an uncouth and incongruous description of the east and west, partly because the north and the south here mentioned are not those parts of the land of Canaan, but of the world with respect to it; and therefore the east and west should in reason have been so too; and partly because these places were not so situated in Canaan, for Tabor was not in the west part of Canaan, but rather in the middle space between the sea and Jordan; and Hermon was not so much on the east as on the north, being indeed the northern border of the land without Jordan. Or, secondly, The several parts of the land of

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Canaan, both within Jordan, where Mount Tabor is; and without it, where Hermon lies. And the mountains may be named rather than the valleys, because when their fertility is expressed, the fertility of the valleys is more strongly supposed. *Shall rejoice*, i. e. shall be fruitful and prosperous, and so give their inhabitants cause to rejoice. Joy and singing are oft ascribed to mountains and fields, &c., in a poetical strain. *In thy name;* in or by thy favour, and the fruits thereof.

13 Thou hast †a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, *and* high is thy right hand.

† Heb. *an arm with might*

Thy hand; either thy left hand, because thy right hand seems to be opposed to it; or thy right hand, as it is limited and explained in the next clause. *High is;* or, *is* or *shall be exalted*, or *lifted up*. That strength of thy hand hath been, or shall be, put forth for thy people, as occasion requireth.

14 [a]Justice and judgment *are* the ‖habitation of thy throne: [b]mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

[a] Ps. 97. 2

‖ Or, *seat*

[b] Ps. 85. 13

Justice and judgment, i. e. just judgment, or justice in judging, as Jer. ix. 24; xxii. 3. A common figure, called *hendiadys*. *The habitation;* or, *the basis* or *foundation*, as this word is used Ezra ii. 68; iii. 3; Psal. xcvii. 2; civ. 5; the groundwork of all his proceedings, and the stability of his throne and government. For God could not be the Judge and Ruler of the world if he did not right, Gen. xviii. 25: compare Prov. xvi. 12. The sense and scope of this verse may be this, Though thy present dispensations, in breaking thy covenant with David, and in suffering his posterity and thine own people to be devoured by such as are much more wicked than they, be a great deep and secret, yet I rest satisfied that they are just. In like manner the prophet fortifies himself under the like thoughts, Jer. xii. 1. *Shall go before thy face*, as thy harbingers and companions, wheresoever thou goest. Thou art neither unmerciful nor unfaithful in any of thy dealings.

15 Blessed *is* the people that know the [c]joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the [x]light of thy countenance.

[c] Num. 10. 1 Sam. 4. 5. 2 Sam. 6. 15. 1 Chron. 15. 28. Ps. 47. 5. & 98. 6.

[x] Heb. *face*

The psalmist, intending to describe the doleful estate of the royal family and kingdom of Israel, aggravates it by the consideration of their former felicity. *That know the joyful sound*, i. e. who enjoy the presence of God and his ordinances, and the tokens of his grace and mercy to them, to which they were called and invited by the sound of trumpets, which upon that only reason was very pleasant and grateful to the Israelites. See Numb. x. 9, 10. So the sign is put for the thing signified, as is manifest, both from the following clause of the verse, and because otherwise the hearing of the outward sound of trumpets could never make them blessed. *Walk in the light of thy countenance;* they live under the comfortable influences of thy grace and favour; whereof at present we are bereaved.

16 In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

In thy name; in the knowledge and remembrance of thy name, i. e. of thy infinite power and goodness, revealed and imparted to them. *In thy righteousness;* whereby thou art both inclined and in some sort engaged to hear the prayers of thy people, and to save them from all their enemies.

17 For thou *art* the glory of their strength: [y]and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.

[y] Num. 24. 7. 1 Sam. 2. 1. Ps. 75. 4. & 92. 10. & 112. 9. & 148. 14. Lam. 2. 17.

All that strength in which they do or may glory is not their own, but is a mere vouchsafement of thy grace, and to thee alone belongs the glory of all their valiant achievements. *Our horn shall be exalted*, i. e. our power and honour, which now lies in the dust, shall be raised and recovered.

18 For ‖the LORD *is* our defence; and the Holy One of Israel *is* our king.

‖ Or, *the shield of the* LORD, *and our king is of the Holy One of Israel*, Ps. 47. 9.

This verse gives a reason of the psalmist's confidence that their horn would be exalted. *The Holy One of Israel is our King;* having therefore so potent a Friend, we have no reason to despair of our restitution to our former felicity. Or, as the words may well be, and are by divers, rendered, *Of* or *from the Lord* is or was *our shield*, (to wit, our king, as it is explained in the next branch of the verse, compared with Psal. xlvii. 9,) *and of* or *from the Holy One of Israel*, i. e. the Lord, who is oft so called, is or was *our king*. He gave us our king and royal family at first, and therefore he can easily restore it when he sees it fit.

19 Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty; I have exalted *one* [z]chosen out of the people.

[z] ver. 3. 1 Kin. 11. 34.

Then, i. e. of old; for this particle is sometimes put indefinitely. Or, then, when thou didst set David in the throne. *In vision;* which then was the usual way by which God spake to the prophets, Numb. xii. 6. *To thy holy one:* to thy holy prophets; the singular number being put for the plural; especially to Samuel and Nathan; for part of the following message was delivered to the former, and part to the latter. *I have laid help;* I have provided help and relief for my people, which I have put into safe hands. *Upon one that is mighty;* upon a person of singular courage and wisdom, and every way fit for so great a charge. *One chosen out of the people;* one whom I have picked and chosen out of all the people, as the fittest for the kingly office, one enriched with eminent gifts and graces, &c.

20 [a]I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:

[a] 1 Sam. 16. 1, 12.

I have found: this is spoken of God figuratively after the manner of men, to imply the great scarcity of such persons, and the difficulty of finding them out. *With my holy oil;* both with material oil, 1 Sam. xvi. 13; 2 Sam. v. 3, and with the gifts and graces of my Holy Spirit, which are oft signified by oil or unction, as Psal. xlv. 7, compared with Heb. i. 9; Isa. lxi. 3; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

21 [b]With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.

[b] Ps. 80. 17.

With whom my hand shall be established, i. e. constantly abide to protect and assist him.

22 [c]The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

[c] 2 Sam. 7. 10.

Not exact upon him; not conquer him, or make him tributary. Or, *shall not deceive* or *circumvent him*, as this word is used, Gen. iii. 13; 2 Kings xviii. 29. *Afflict him*, to wit, so as to overthrow or destroy him.

23 [d]And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.

[d] 2 Sam. 7. 9.

24 But [e]my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and [f]in my name shall his horn be exalted.

[e] Ps. 61. 7.

[f] ver. 17.

Faithfulness, in making good all my promises to him, and *mercy*, in doing more for him than I have promised, or in pardoning his sins, for which I might justly make him to know my breach of promise. *In my name;* by my favour and help.

25 [g]I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

[g] Ps. 72. 8. & 80. 11.

I will set his hand, i. e. establish his power and dominion. *In the sea;* the midland sea. *The rivers*, to wit, Euphrates, called *rivers* in the plural number, as Nilus also is, Isa. xviii. 1; Ezek. xxix. 3, 4, in regard of divers branches of it, and rivers which flow into it. So here is a description of the uttermost bounds of the Promised Land, Exod. xxiii. 31; Numb. xxxiv. 3, to which the Israelitish power was extended by David and Solomon.

26 He shall cry unto me, Thou *art* [h]my father, my God, and [i]the rock of my salvation.

[h] 2 Sam. 7. 14. 1 Chron. 22. 10.

[i] 2 Sam. 22. 47.

He shall find me to be a true and a kind Father to him, and shall familiarly and confidently make his addresses to me as such, for all necessary supplies and assistances, which parents willingly afford to their children, as need requires.

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k Ps. 2. 7. Col. 1. 15, 18. l Num. 24. 7.

27 Also I will make him k*my* first-born, lhigher than the kings of the earth.

As he calls me Father, ver. 26, so I will make him my son, yea, my first-born, who had divers privileges above other sons. This and the following passage in some sort agree to David, who may well be called God's *first-born*, as all the people of Israel are, Exod. iv. 22; and so is Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 9. Nor can I see fit wholly to exclude David here, of whom all the foregoing and following verses may, and some of them must be, understood. But this is more fully and properly accomplished in Christ, and seems to be ascribed to David here as a type of Christ, and that our minds might be led through David to him whom David represented, even to the Messias, to whom alone this doth strictly and literally belong. *Higher than the kings of the earth:* this also was in some sort accomplished in David, partly because he had a greater power and dominion than any of the neighbouring kings, yea, than any other kings of his age, and in those parts of the world, except the Assyrian monarch; nor is the expression here universal, but indefinite, and if it had been said *higher than all the kings*, yet even such universal expressions admit of some limitation or exception, as is manifest and confessed: and partly because David had many privileges, wherein he did excel all other kings of the earth of his age without exception; which probably he did in the honour and renown which he got by his military achievements, and by that wisdom and justice wherewith he managed all his dominions; but certainly he did in this, that he was a king chosen and advanced by the immediate order and appointment of God himself, that he was set over God's own peculiar and beloved people, that he was intrusted with the care and patronage of the true religion and the worship of God in the world, and especially that he was not only an eminent type, but also the progenitor, of the Messias, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, and God blessed for ever.

m Is. 55. 3. n ver. 34.

28 mMy mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and nmy covenant shall stand fast with him.

My mercy, declared and promised to him and his seed, as it here follows. *My covenant;* of which see 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13, &c.

o ver. 4, 36. p ver. 4. Is. 9. 7. Jer. 33. 17. q Deut. 11. 21.

29 oHis seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, pand his throne qas the days of heaven.

To endure for ever, i. e. to sit upon the throne for ever, as the next words explain it. This was accomplished only in Christ, the eternal King of the church, and of the world, who was of David's seed according to the flesh. *As the days of heaven*, i. e. for ever, as he now said; as long as the world shall have a being. It shall be as unchangeable and durable as the heavens themselves, which are of an incorruptible nature. See the like expression Deut. xi. 21; Jer. xxxi. 35, 36.

r 2 Sam. 7. 14. s Ps. 119. 53. Jer. 9. 13.

30 rIf his children sforsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;

Of this and the two next verses, see the notes on 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15.

† Heb. *profane my statutes.*

31 If they †break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

By this variety of expressions he implies that God will pardon not only their lesser, but even their greater sins.

t 2 Sam. 7. 14. 1 Kings 11. 31. u 2 Sam. 7. 13. † Heb. *I will not make void from him.* † Heb. *to lie.*

32 Then twill I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

33 uNevertheless my lovingkindness †will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness †to fail.

My loving-kindness; my mercy promised to David.

34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

x Amos 4. 2. † Heb. *I lie.*

35 Once have I sworn xby my holiness †that I will not lie unto David.

Here he gives some reasons why he would not break his covenant with David, though he should have just cause to do so, and though he had upon such just cause broke his covenant made with others; first, Because this covenant was confirmed by his oath, which adds not only more solemnity, but more stability and certainty to it, as is evident from Heb. vi. 17, wherein he showeth that God addeth an oath to his promise or covenant to make and prove it to be immutable; and from Heb. vii. 20, &c., where he proveth the priesthood of Melchisedec to be unchangeable, because it was confirmed by an oath. And though judgments simply threatened have not always been executed, but sometimes were prevented, yet those comminations which were confirmed by oath were thereby rendered and declared to be irrevocable, as we see, Numb. xiv. 28—30; Jer. xliv. 26. Secondly, Because this is said to be sworn *once*, which word and phrase sometimes implies the completeness, certainty, and irrevocableness of the thing said or done, as Prov. xxviii. 18, *shall fall at once.* Thus Christ is said to have *died* or *suffered once*, Rom. vi. 10; Heb. ix. 26, 28. Thirdly, Because God sware by his *holiness;* in or by which God is but seldom read to speak or swear, and when he is, it constantly adds more weight and confirmation to the speech, as Psal. lx. 6, cviii. 7; Amos iv. 2.

y 2 Sam. 7. 16. Luke i. 33. John 12. 34. ver. 4, 29. z Ps. 72. 5, 17. Jer. 33. 20.

36 yHis seed shall endure for ever, and his throne zas the sun before me.

In respect of perpetual duration, as appears both from the foregoing words, and from the following verse.

37 It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

Whereby he understands, either, first, The moon, last mentioned, to which this clause may be added rather than to the sun, to imply that as the moon, though subject to eclipses and frequent and manifold changes, yet doth constantly and perpetually remain in heaven, as a witness of my *covenant of the night*, as it is called, Jer. xxxiii. 20; so shall the house and kingdom of David continue for ever, not withstanding all the changes and calamities which it may undergo. Or, secondly, The rainbow, which though in itself it be unstable and transient, and doth but seldom appear, which learned men object against this opinion, yet in Scripture is mentioned as God's faithful and perpetual witness, being called *a token of God's everlasting covenant between God and every living creature for perpetual generations*, Gen. ix. 12, 16. And although it do not always appear to us, neither do the sun or moon do so, yet its appearances are doubtless very frequent in one or other part of the world, and will be repeated from time to time to the end of the world. Add to this, that the word here rendered *heaven*, may as well be rendered *the cloud* or *clouds*, as it is used Deut. xxxiii. 26; Job xxxv. 5; xxxvi. 28; Psal. xviii. 12; lxxvii. 17; lxxviii. 23; Prov. iii. 20; Isa. xlv. 8. And so the place being thus translated, *and* as *the faithful witness in the cloud* or *clouds*, doth plainly point us to the rainbow.

a 1 Chron. 28. 9. Ps. 44. 9. & 60. 1, 10. b Deut. 32. 19. Ps. 78. 59.

38 But thou hast acast off and babhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.

Having hitherto declared the certainty of God's promises, he now proceeds to show the unsuitableness of the present dispensations of God's providence thereunto, and humbly expostulates with God about it. *Thine anointed;* that person and family which thou hast invested with the kingdom.

39 Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: cthou hast profaned his crown *by casting it* to the ground.

c Ps. 74. 7. Lam. 5. 16.

Made void the covenant; which seems contrary to thy word given ver. 34. *Of thy servant*, i. e. made with him. *Profaned his crown*, by exposing that sacred person, and family, and kingdom to contempt, and giving his sceptre and power into the hands of the uncircumcised.

d Ps. 80. 12.

40 dThou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.

All his hedges; all the means of his protection and safety.

e Ps. 44. 13. & 79. 4.

41 All that pass by the way spoil him: he is ea reproach to his neighbours.

An object of their scorn and reproach. Is this the anointed of the Lord? Is this the everlasting family and kingdom?

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42 Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

Thou hast given them courage, and power, and success.

43 Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.

Turned the edge of his sword; so that he can neither offend his enemies, nor defend himself. *Not made him to stand,* but to flee and fall before his enemies; for more is understood than what is expressed.

44 Thou hast made his †glory to cease, and [f]cast his throne down to the ground.

45 The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.

The youthful and flourishing estate of David's kingdom was very short, and reached not beyond his next successor, and it hath been languishing by degrees till this time, when it seems to be dead and buried.

[g] Ps. 79. 5. [h] Ps. 78. 62. 46 [g]How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? [h]shall thy wrath burn like fire.

[i] Job 7. 7. & 10. 9. & 14. 1. & Ps. 39. 4. & 89. 47. 47 [i]Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?

My time, i. e. our time, the time of our king and kingdom, in whose name the psalmist puts up this petition, and about whom he was much more solicitous than about himself, as is evident, both from the following verses, and from the whole body of the Psalm. The sense seems to be this, Our king, and all his people, and I among the rest, are short-lived and perishing creatures, that of themselves and according to the course of nature must shortly die; and therefore there is no need that thou shouldst add further afflictions to sweep them away before their time. *Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?* wherefore hast thou made us and our king (and consequently all other men, whose condition is in nothing better than ours, and in respect of thy grace and mercy is much worse than ours) in vain, or to so little purpose? Didst thou raise us and him, establish us for thy people, settle the crown upon David and his seed for ever by a solemn and unchangeable covenant, erect a magnificent and glorious temple, and vouchsafe so many and great promises and privileges, and all this but for a few years, that our crown and glory should be taken from us within a little time after it was put upon our heads; that our kingdom should be broken almost as soon as it was firmly established; that thy worship should be so soon corrupted, and thy temple quickly robbed, and not long after frequently abused, and polluted, and wasted, and now at last utterly demolished? It is not strange that such considerations as these did fill the psalmist's mind with amazement, and sad and perplexing thoughts. Nor doth the psalmist accuse or upbraid God herewith, but only useth it as an argument to move God to repair and restore their decayed state, that they might live to praise, and serve, and glorify him, and not be such useless and insignificant creatures as now they were in this forlorn estate of things, and as they should be if they should go into the place and state of the dead before the restitution of their broken state and kingdom.

[k] Ps. 49. 9. [l] 1 Sam. 11. 3. 48 [k]What man *is he that* liveth, and shall not [l]see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

All men at their best estate are mortal and miserable, kings and people must unavoidably die by the condition of their natures; and therefore, Lord, do not increase our affliction, which of itself is more than enough; neither proceed in these violent courses upon us, who, without such severity, must perish of and from ourselves.

[m] 2 Sam. 7. 15. [n] Ps. 43. 3. 49 LORD, where *are* thy former lovingkindnesses, *which* thou [m]swarest unto David [n]in thy truth?

Hast thou forgotten or repented of all that mercy and kindness which thou hast promised and sworn, and sometimes performed, unto David and his family and kingdom?

50 Remember, LORD, the reproach of thy servants; [o]*how* I do bear in my bosom *the reproach of* all the mighty people;

[o] Ps. 69. 9, 19.

I, i. e. we thy servants, as he now said; our king and his people; of whom he speaks as of one person, as is very usual in Holy Scripture. Or the psalmist showeth how particularly and passionately he resented those reproaches which were cast upon their king and kingdom, as if they were cast upon himself. *Bear in my bosom:* this phrase may denote either, first, the multitude of these reproaches, things being said to be given or received into a man's bosom, which are given or received in great plenty, as Isa. lxv. 6; Luke vi. 38; or, secondly, their grievousness, that they pierced him to the very heart, which is sometimes called *the bosom,* as Eccles. vii. 9. *Of all the mighty people;* of the great potentates and princes of the world, who now reproached the house of David with their vain and confident boasting of the everlastingness of their kingdom, which was now in a desperate and lost condition. Or, *all* the reproaches *of many people.*

[p] Ps. 74. 22. 51 [p]Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.

Or, *of thy Messiah;* by whom he seems to understand either, first, the kings of Judah, the singular number being put for the plural; and by their *footsteps* may be meant either their ways or actions, and the sad consequences thereof; or the traces or memorials of their ancient splendour and dominion, wherewith they now upbraid them: or rather, secondly, the Messiah, most properly and eminently so called; of whom not only many Christians, but the Chaldee paraphrast and the Hebrew doctors, understand this place. And this suits very well, both with the singular number here used, which points at one particular and eminent person anointed by God to be the king of his people, and with the matter and occasion of this Psalm. For it was universally believed by the Jews, that the Messiah should come of the seed of David, and that by him the ancient glory and power of David's house should be revived and vastly increased. And this coming of the Messiah the Jews did continually expect for a long time together before he did come, and supported themselves therewith under all their calamities; all which being well known to many of the heathens, they reproached the Jews with the vanity of this belief and expectation. And by *the footsteps* of the Messiah he may understand his coming, as by the *feet* or *footsteps* of ministers, Isa. lii. 7, their coming and bringing the gospel with them is understood.

[q] Ps. 41. 13. 52 [q]Blessed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Let thine enemies reproach thee, and thy promises concerning the sending of the Messiah, and the deliverance of thy people by his hand; I do and will heartily bless and praise thee for them, and encourage myself with them, not doubting but thou wilt consider and take away all our reproaches, and in thine own due time (which is the best) send him who is the consolation and expectation of Israel, and the desire of all nations.

PSALM XC.

¶ ‖ A Prayer * of Moses the man of God.

‖ Or, *A Prayer,* being a Psalm *of Moses.* * Deut. 33. 1.

Who, considering that terrible but righteous sentence of God concerning the cutting off all that sinful generation in the wilderness, of which see Numb. xiv., takes that occasion to publish these meditations concerning man's mortality and misery in this life, which might be useful both to that and to all succeeding generations.

Moses, setting forth the eternity and providence of God, 1, 2, *describeth the misery and shortness of man's life,* 3—11; *prayeth for wisdom to number his days,* 12; *and for the knowledge and sensible experience of God's good providence,* 13—17.

LORD, [a]thou hast been our dwelling place † in all generations.

[a] Deut. 33. 27. Exod. 11. 16. † Heb. *in generation and generation.*

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Although we and our fathers, for some generations, have had no certain and fixed habitation, but have been *strangers in a land that* was *not ours*, and *afflicted* for *four hundred years*, according to thy prediction, Gen. xv. 13; and although we now are, and have been for some time, and still are like to continue, in a vast howling wilderness, having no houses, but dwelling in tents, and wandering from place to place, we know not whither; yet thou, O Lord, hast fully supplied this want, and hast been instead of and better than a dwelling-place to us, by thy watchful and gracious providence over us in all places and exigences. And this is a very proper preface to this Psalm, to intimate that all the following miseries were not to be imputed to God, but unto themselves, who by their own sins had brought these mischiefs upon themselves.

b Prov. 8. 25, 26.

2 [b] Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.

The mountains; which he mentions as the most fixed and stable part of the earth. *Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world*, i. e. from eternity; which is frequently described in this manner, as Prov. viii. 25, 26; John xvii. 24; Eph. i. 4, because there was nothing before the creation of the world but eternity. And thus the words here following do explain it. And this eternity of God is here mentioned, partly that men by the contemplation thereof might be wrought to a deeper sense of their own frailty and nothingness, which is the foundation of humility and of all true piety, and to a greater reverence and admiration of the Divine Majesty; and partly for the comfort of God's people, who notwithstanding all their present miseries have a sure and everlasting refuge and portion. *Thou art God;* or, *thou* art *the strong God.* Thou hast thy power and all thy perfections, not by degrees, as men have theirs, but from all eternity. Or, *thou* art or wast, *O God.*

c Gen. 3. 19. Eccles. 12. 7.

3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, [c] Return, ye children of men.

But as for man, his case is far otherwise, his time is short; and though he was made by thee a happy creature, and should have been immortal, yet upon and for his sin thou didst make him mortal and miserable. *Sayest*, or, *didst say*, i. e. pronounce that sad sentence here following, *Return*, O men, to the dust, out of which you were taken, Gen. iii. 19; Psal. cxlvi. 4; Eccles. xii. 7.

d Eccles. 18. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 8.

4 [d] For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday ‖ when it is past, and *as* a watch in the night.

‖ Or, *when he hath passed* them.

A thousand years, if we should now live so long, as some of our progenitors well nigh did. As he compared man's duration with God's in respect of its beginning, ver. 2, so here he compareth them in respect of the end or continuance. *In thy sight;* in thy account, and therefore in truth; which is opposed to the partial and false judgment of men, who think time long because they do not understand eternity; or in comparison of thy endless duration. *When it is past;* which is emphatically added; because time seems long when it is to come, but when it is past, and men look backward upon it, it seems very short and contemptible, and men value one hour to come more than a thousand years which are past. *A watch*, which lasted but for three or four hours; for the night was anciently divided into three or four watches. See Judg. vii. 19; Mark vi. 48; xiii. 35; Luke xii. 38. *In the night;* which also hath its weight; for the silence and slumbers of the night make time seem shorter than it doth in the day.

e Ps. 73. 20. f Ps. 102. 18. Is. 40. 6. ‖ Or, *is changed.*

5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; [e] they are *as* a sleep: in the morning [f] *they are* like grass *which* ‖ groweth up.

Them, i. e. mankind, of whom he spake, ver. 3. *As with a flood;* unexpectedly, violently and irresistibly, universally, without exception or distinction. *As a sleep;* short and vain, as sleep is, and not minded till it be past. Or like a dream, when a man sleepeth, wherein there may be some real pleasure, but never any satisfaction; or some real trouble, but very inconsiderable, and seldom or never pernicious. Even such an idle and insignificant thing is human life considered in itself, without respect to a future state, in which there is but a mere shadow or dream of felicity, only the calamities attending upon it are more real and weighty. *Which groweth up*, Heb. *which is changed*, either, first, for the worse, *which passeth away*, as some render the word; which having generally affirmed here, he may seem more particularly to explain in the next verse: or rather, secondly, for the better, as this word is sometimes used, as Job xiv. 7; Isa. xl. 31, which sprouteth out of the earth, and groweth more apparent, and green, and flourishing. And this interpretation is confirmed from the next verse, where this same word is used in this sense; where also *the morning* is again mentioned, and that as the time, not of its decay, but of its flourishing.

g Ps. 92. 7. Job 14. 2.

6 [g] In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

The whole space of man's life is compared to one day, and his prosperity is confined to a part of that day, and ended in the close of it.

7 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

We; either, 1. We men; or rather, 2. We Israelites in this wilderness. *Consumed;* either naturally, by the frame of our bodies; or violently, by extraordinary judgments. Thou dost not suffer us to live so long as we might by the course of nature. *Thine anger*, caused by our sinful state and lives.

h Ps. 90. 21. Jer. 16. 17. i Ps. 19. 12

8 [h] Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our [i] secret *sins* in the light of thy countenance.

Thou dost not now cover, or blot out, or pass by our sins, as thou hast usually done to thy people; but thou dost diligently search them out, and accurately observe them, as a severe but righteous Judge, and art now calling us to an account for them. *Our secret sins* · thou dost not only punish us for our notorious and scandalous sins, which thine honour may seem to oblige thee to do, but even for our secret lusts, the murmuring, and unbelief, and apostacy, and idolatry of our hearts; which though hid from the eyes of men, thou hast set before thine eyes, and brought them to light by thy judgments.

† Heb. *turned away.* ‖ Or, *as a meditation.*

9 For all our days are † passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years ‖ as a tale *that is told.*

Are passed away; or, *turn away themselves* or *their face* from us. They do not continue with us, but quickly turn their backs upon us, and leave us. *As a tale that is told;* which may a little affect us for the present, but is quickly ended and gone out of mind, Or, *as a word*, as Job xxxvii. 2, which in an instant is gone, and that irrevocably. Or, *as a thought*, or *a sigh*, or *a breath;* all which come to one sense.

† Heb. *As for the days of our years, in them are seventy years.*

10 † The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

The days of our years; either, 1. Of the Israelites in the desert, who being twenty years old, and some thirty, some forty, some fifty years old, when they came out of Egypt, and dying in the wilderness, as all of that age did, Numb. xiv. 29, a great number of them doubtless died in their seventieth or eightieth year, as is here implied. Or rather, 2. Of the generality of mankind, and the Israelites no less than others, in that and all following ages, some few persons excepted, amongst whom were Moses, and Caleb, and Joshua, who lived a hundred and twenty years; which is therefore noted of them as a thing singular and extraordinary. This sense suits best with the following words, and with the scope of Moses; which was to represent the vain and transitory condition of men in this life, and how much mankind was now sunk below their ancestors, who commonly lived many hundreds of years; and that the Israelites, though God's peculiar people, and endowed with many privileges, yet in this were no better than other

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men; all which may be considered, either as an argument to move God to pity and spare them, or as a motive to awaken and quicken the Israelites to serious preparations for death, by comparing this with ver. 12. *Threescore years and ten;* which time the ancient heathen writers also fixed as the usual space of men's lives. *By reason of strength,* i. e. by the strength of their natural constitution; which is the true and common cause of longer life. *Their strength;* their strongest and most vigorous old age. Or, *their excellency,* or *pride;* that old age which is their glory, and in which men do commonly glory. *Labour and sorrow;* filled with troubles and griefs from the infirmities of age, the approach of death, and the contingencies of human life. *It,* either our age or our strength, *is soon cut off;* it doth not now decline by many degrees and slow steps, as it doth in our young and flourishing age, but decayeth apace, and suddenly flieth away. *We fly away;* we do not now go to death, as we do from our very birth, nor run, but fly swiftly away like a bird, as this word signifies.

11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, *so is* thy wrath.

Who knoweth? few or none sufficiently apprehend it, or stedfastly believe it, or duly consider it, or are rightly affected with it. For all these things are comprehended under this word *knoweth. The power of thine anger;* the greatness, and force, and dreadful effects of thine anger conceived against the sons of men, and in particular against thine own people, for their miscarriages. *According to thy fear,* i. e. according to the fear of thee; as *my fear* is put for *the fear of me,* Mal. i. 6, and *his knowledge* for *the knowledge of him,* Isa. liii. 11. According to that fear or dread which sinful men have of a just and holy God. These fears of the Deity are not vain bugbears, and the effects of ignorance and folly or superstition, as heathens and atheists have sometimes said, but are just, and built upon solid grounds, and justified by the terrible effects of thy wrath upon mankind. *So is thy wrath;* it bears full proportion to it, nay, indeed, doth far exceed it. It cannot be said of God's wrath, which is said of death, that the fear of it is worse than the thing itself. But this verse is by many, both ancient and later interpreters, rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, *Who knoweth the power of thine anger, and thy wrath according to thy fear?* i. e. either, 1. According to the fear of thee, or so as thou art to be feared, or answerably to thy terrible displeasure against sin and sinners. Or, 2. So as to fear and dread thee in such manner and measure as sinful creatures ought to fear the infinite and offended majesty of God, their Creator, and Judge, and Sovereign, and thereby to be moved to humble himself before thee, and fervently to seek thy face and favour; which is the only true wisdom, for which he prayeth in the next verse.

12 [k]So teach *us* to number our days, that we may †apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.

k Ps. 39. 4.

So teach us, by thy Spirit and grace, as thou hast already taught us by thy word. Or, *teach us rightly* (as this word is used, Numb. xxvii. 7; 2 Kings vii. 9) *to number,* &c., as it follows. *To number our days;* to consider the shortness and miseries of this life, and the certainty and speediness of death, and the causes and consequences thereof. *That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom;* that we may heartily devote ourselves to the study and practice of true wisdom, which is nothing else but piety, or the fear of God. And why so? Not that the Israelites might thereby procure a revocation of that peremptory sentence of death passed upon all that generation; nor that other men might hereby prevent their death, both which he very well knew to be impossible; but that men might arm and prepare themselves for death, and for their great account after death, and might make sure of the happiness of the future life; of which this text is a plain and pregnant proof.

13 Return, O LORD, how long? and [l]let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

Return, O Lord, to us in mercy; for thou seemest to have forsaken us and cast us off. *How long;* understand, *wilt thou be angry;* or, *will it be ere thou return to us? Concerning thy servants,* i. e. of thy severe proceedings against us, and change thy course and carriage to us.

14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; [m]that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

m Ps. 85. 6. & 149. 2.

Early; speedily or seasonably, before we be utterly consumed.

15 Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, *and* the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

Our afflictions have been sharp and long, let not our prosperity be small and short.

16 Let [n]thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

n Hab. 3. 2.

Let that great and glorious work of giving thy people a complete deliverance, which thou hast long since designed and promised, be at last accomplished and manifested unto us, and in the sight of the world.

17 [o]And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and [p]establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

o Ps. 27. 4.
p Is. 26. 12.

The beauty of the Lord, i. e. his favourable countenance, and gracious influence, and glorious presence. *Upon us;* or, *in us.* Do not only work for us, but in us. And because the glorious work of thy hands is hindered by the evil works of our hands, be thou pleased by thy Holy Spirit to *direct* or *establish* (for this Hebrew word signifies both) *the works of our hands,* that we may cease to do evil, and learn to do well, and turn and constantly cleave unto thee, and not revolt and draw back from thee, as we have frequently done to our own undoing.

PSALM XCI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The penman of this Psalm is uncertain. The occasion of it seems to have been that great pestilence recorded 2 Sam. xxiv.

The psalmist representeth the state of the godly, 1, 2. *Their safety, and place of habitation,* 3—10. *Comfortable promises of God's preserving them,* 11, *of his support and salvation,* 12—16.

HE [a]that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall †abide [b]under the shadow of the Almighty.

a Ps. 27. 5. & 31. 20. & 32. 7.
† Heb. *lodge.*
b Is. 17. 8.

The secret place; or, *hiding-place.* He that makes God his habitation and refuge, as he is called below, ver. 9, resorting to him, and relying upon him in his dangers and difficulties, shall not be disappointed of his hope, but shall find a quiet and safe repose under the Divine protection. A *shadow* in Scripture phrase commonly signifies protection. See Gen. xix. 8; Judg. ix. 15; Psal. xvii. 8, &c.

2 [c]I will say of the LORD, *He is* my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

c Ps. 142. 5.

Upon that ground I will confidently commit myself and all my affairs to God.

3 Surely [d]he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, *and* from the noisome pestilence.

d Ps. 124. 7.

O thou believing, pious soul, who after my example shalt make God thy refuge, thou shalt partake of the same privilege which I enjoy. *He shall deliver thee* from the pestilence, which like a fowler's snare taketh men suddenly and unexpectedly, and holdeth them fast, and commonly delivers them up to death.

4 [e]He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth *shall be thy* shield and buckler.

e Ps. 17. 8. & 57. 1. & 61. 4.

His truth; whereby he is obliged to fulfil all his gracious promises, and, amongst the rest, that of protection in dangers.

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f Job 5. 19, &c. Ps. 112. 7. & 121. 6. Prov. 3. 25, 24. Is. 43. 2.

5 fThou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; *nor* for the arrow *that* flieth by day;

By night, when evil accidents are most terrible and least avoidable. *The arrow;* the pestilence, or any such common and destructive calamity; for such are frequently called *God's arrows*, as Deut. xxxii. 23, 42; Lam. iii. 12, 13, &c. *By day*, which is the time for shooting of arrows. The sense of the verse is, He shall be kept from secret and open mischiefs at all times.

6 *Nor* for the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness; *nor* for the destruction *that* wasteth at noonday.

This verse explains the former, and showeth what that *terror* and *arrow* signifies. *That walketh;* that spreadeth, or maketh progress. *In darkness;* either invisibly, so as we can neither foresee nor prevent it; or rather, by night, as ver. 5. *That wasteth at noon-day;* that like a bold enemy assaults us openly, and though discovered cannot be resisted.

7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; *but* it shall not come nigh thee.

At thy side; at thy left *side*, because this is opposed to the *right side* here following. See the like ellipsis Numb. ix. 16; Psal. lxxxiv. 11. *It shall not come nigh thee:* this and such-like promises are not to be understood absolutely and universally, as if no truly good man could be cut off by the plague or other common calamities, which is confuted both by other plain texts of Scripture, and by unquestionable experience; but with due limitations and conditions, either on man's part, as if there be a defect in his faith or obedience; or on God's part, when God sees that death is more for his good than life, as it apparently is when righteous men are taken away from the evil to come, as is said, Isa. lvii. 1; in which case, though God doth not give the thing promised, yet he giveth a far greater mercy instead of it, and so fulfils his promise in the best sense, and with most advantage. As, if one man should solemnly promise to another to give him his daily food every day, he not only might, but ought, notwithstanding this promise, to deny and withdraw this food, when his body is so distempered, that in the judgment of the wisest physicians the taking of his food would evidently endanger his life.

g Ps. 37. 34. Mal. 1. 5.

8 Only gwith thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

Thou shalt behold, without any terror or danger to thyself, and with a delightful and thankful reflection upon God's goodness to thee. *The reward of the wicked;* the just recompence of their sins, or the vengeance of God upon them.

9 Because thou hast made the LORD *which is* hmy refuge, *even* the most high, ithy habitation;

h ver. 2. i Ps. 71. 3. & 90. 1.

Or, as the words lie in the Hebrew, and others render them, *Because thou, O Lord, art my refuge, thou,* O my soul, (which is easily understood out of the foregoing words, and to which David oft suddenly turneth his speech,) *hast made the Most High thine habitation;* which is the only ground and reason of that safety last mentioned. As for the variation of persons, that he sometimes speaketh to and of others, and sometimes to and of himself, nothing is more frequent in this book; nor doth it make any alteration in the sense.

k Prov. 12. 21.

10 kThere shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

To wit, so as to destroy thee, as the next verse limits and expounds it. For surely this promise is not made to all that dwell nigh to his children and servants, who may possibly be wicked men, and so strangers from God's covenant and promises. How far this secures his own person, see on ver. 7.

l Ps. 34. 7. & 71. 3. Matt. 4. 6. Luke 4. 10, 11. Heb. 1. 14.

11 lFor he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

His angels; those blessed, and powerful, and watchful spirits whom God hath appointed to mind the affairs of this lower world, and to take care of the heirs of salvation, Heb. i. 14. *In all thy ways;* in the whole course of thy life, and in all thy lawful undertakings.

12 They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, mlest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

m Job 5. 23. Ps. 91. 34.

Shall bear thee up in their hands; sustain or uphold thee in thy goings, as we do a child or a weakly man, especially in uneven or dangerous paths. Or, shall carry thee aloft, as upon eagles' wings, when it shall be needful for thee. *Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone;* so as to hurt thy foot, or to cause thee to fall.

13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and ‖adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

‖ Or, asp.

The lion shall lie prostrate at thy feet, and thou shalt securely put thy feet upon his neck, as the Israelites did upon the necks of the Canaanitish kings, Josh. x. 24. *The dragon;* by which he synecdochically understands all pernicious creatures, though never so strong, and fierce, and subtle, and all sorts of enemies.

14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath nknown my name.

n Ps. 9. 10.

This and the two following verses are the words of God, whom the psalmist here, as oft elsewhere, introduceth as giving an account of the reasons of God's singular care of all believing or pious persons. *I will deliver him;* I will abundantly recompense his love with my favour and blessing. *On high;* in a high and safe place, where no evil can reach him. *Hath known my name*, with a true and saving knowledge, so as to love me and put his trust in me. God's *name* is here put for God himself, as it is also Deut. xxviii. 58; Psal. xx. 1; cxv. 1.

15 oHe shall call upon me, and I will answer him: pI *will be* with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and qhonour him.

o Ps. 50. 15. p Is. 43. 2. q 1 Sam. 2. 30.

He shall call upon me, to wit, in trouble, which is expressed in the following clause. As he knoweth and loveth me, so he will offer up sincere and fervent prayers to me upon all occasions. *I will be with him in trouble*, to keep him from sinking under his burden.

16 With † long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

† Heb. length of days. Prov. 3. 2.

With long life will I satisfy him; either in this world, when it is expedient for my service, and for his benefit; or, at least, in the next world, where he shall live to eternity in the blissful sight and enjoyment of God in glory. *Show him my salvation*, either here or hereafter.

PSALM XCII.

¶ A Psalm *or* Song for the sabbath day.

To be sung upon the weekly sabbath; to which the matter of this Psalm very well agrees. For it celebrates the works of God, both that first and great work of creation, and that succeeding and no less wonderful work of his providence, by which he upholds and governs all his creatures, and especially that by which he ruleth all sorts of men, both good and bad, and that by which he preserveth and manageth his church and people.

The prophet exhorteth to praise God, 1—3, *for his great works,* 4, 5. *His judgments on the wicked,* 6—9. *Gracious promises to the righteous,* 10—12. *They shall be fruitful,* 13—15.

IT is a sgood *thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most high:

s Ps. 147. 1.

It is a good work, and a just debt to God.

2 To tshew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness † every night,

t Ps. 89. 1. † Heb. in the nights.

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To adore and celebrate thy goodness and truth continually, and especially at those two solemn times of morning and evening, which on every day, and especially upon the sabbath day, were devoted to the worship and service of God.

3 [c] Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; ‖upon the harp with † a solemn sound.

4 For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

Which thou didst create by thine almighty power, and dost still govern with infinite wisdom; one instance whereof we have in the following verses.

5 [d] O LORD, how great are thy works! *and* [e] thy thoughts are very deep.

Thy thoughts; thy counsels and methods in the government of the world and of thy church.

6 [f] A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

A brutish man; who cannot or doth not seriously consider things, whose mind is corrupted by his sensual and brutish appetites; who is led by sense, and not by reason and faith. *This;* the depth of God's counsels and works mentioned ver. 5, or that particular work of God described ver. 7.

7 When [g] the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; *it is* that they shall be destroyed for ever:

Their present worldly prosperity is a presage and occasion of their utter and eternal ruin.

8 [h] But thou, LORD, *art most* high for evermore.

So this verse is added by way of opposition to the former, *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure*, as is said in a like comparison, Psal. cii. 26; they flourish for a season, but thou must for ever to judge and punish them. Or, *for* (as this Hebrew particle is not seldom used, whereof instances have been formerly given) *thou, Lord, art*, &c. So this verse gives a reason of the former, as well the first branch of it, why God suffers the wicked to flourish so long, because he is not like man, of short and uncertain continuance here, to whom a little time is long and tedious, who therefore impatiently expects the time of vengeance, and fears lest the offender should escape it; whereas God is unchangeable and everlasting, and therefore long-suffering without any inconvenience, and the longest time of the prosperity of the wicked is but short and inconsiderable in his eyes, *a thousand years being in his sight but as yesterday when it is past*, Psal. xc. 4. and they can never escape out of his hands; as also of the latter branch of the verse, why the wicked shall be destroyed for ever, because God lives and reigns for ever to execute that just sentence of everlasting punishment which he hath pronounced against them.

9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall [i] be scattered.

He represents their destruction as present, and as certain, which the repetition of the words implies.

10 But [k] my horn shalt thou exalt like *the horn of* an unicorn: I shall be [l] anointed with fresh oil.

But as for me and other righteous persons, (of whom he saith the same thing ver. 12,) we shall be advanced to the height of honour, and true and lasting felicity. *Unicorn;* of which see on Deut. xxxiii. 17. *I shall be anointed;* I shall have great cause of rejoicing and testifying my joy by anointing myself, as the manner was in feasts and all joyful solemnities. *Fresh oil;* sweet and uncorrupted.

11 [m] Mine eye also shall see *my desire* on mine enemies, *and* mine ears shall hear *my desire* of the wicked that rise up against me.

My desire, to wit, in the ruin of thine and mine incorrigible enemies. *Shall hear;* what I do not see myself, I shall understand by the certain reports of others.

12 [n] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Like the palm tree; which is constantly green, and flourishing, and fruitful, Cant. vii. 8, and growing even when it is pressed down; and so is a fit emblem of a just man's person and condition. See Rev. vii. 9. *Like a cedar;* which spreads itself wide, and grows very high and strong, and is very durable, and in some sort incorruptible.

13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish [o] in the courts of our God.

Those that be planted; whom God by his gracious providence and Holy Spirit hath planted or fixed there. *In the house of the Lord*, i. e. in its courts, which are a part of the house, and oft come under that name in Scripture. And by this *house* he means the church of God, whereof all just persons are real and living members. *The courts;* which he mentions rather than the house, because he speaks not here of the priests, but of all just men, who were permitted to come no further than into the courts.

14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and † flourishing;

When their natural strength decayeth, it shall be renewed; their last days shall be their best days, wherein as they shall grow in grace, so they shall increase in comfort and blessedness.

15 To shew that the LORD *is* upright: [p] *he is* my rock, and [q] *there is* no unrighteousness in him.

This glorious work of God in compensating the short prosperity of the wicked with everlasting punishments, and of exchanging the momentary afflictions of the just with eternal glory and happiness, doth clearly demonstrate that God is just and blameless in all the dispensations of his providence in the world.

PSALM XCIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains an assertion or declaration of God's sovereign and universal dominion in and over the whole world; which is here set forth, partly for the comfort of God's church and people against all the assaults of their numerous and potent adversaries; and partly to give an intimation and assurance of the accomplishment of that great promise of the kingdom of the Messias, which was not to be confined to the Israelites, but to be extended to all the nations of the earth; which, though wonderful in our eyes, the supreme and almighty Ruler of the world could easily effect. This and the six following Psalms, according to the opinion of the Hebrew doctors, belong to the times of the Messias.

A description of the majesty, 1, and power of God, 2—4. The certainty of God's word, and necessity of holiness in God's house, 5.

THE [a] LORD reigneth, [b] he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, [c] *wherewith* he hath girded himself: [d] the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

The Lord reigneth: he is the King and Governor, not only of Israel, but of the whole world, as the last clause of the verse expounds it; and accordingly he will in his due time set up his empire over all nations, in the hands of his Son the Messias. *Is clothed with strength:* that majesty and strength which he always had in himself, he now hath, and will shortly much more show it forth in the eyes of all people. The effect of God's government of the world shall be this, that he will order and overrule all the confusions, and divisions, and hostilities in the world, so as they shall end in an orderly, peaceable, and happy settlement, and in the erection of that kingdom of the Messias which can never be moved.

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e Ps. 45. 6. Prov. 8. 22, &c.

2 e Thy throne *is* established †of old: thou *art* from everlasting.

† Heb. *from then.*

And this kingdom of thine is no new or upstart kingdom, as it may seem to the ignorant world, but the most ancient of all kingdoms, being from everlasting to everlasting, although it was not always equally manifested in the world.

3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The floods; the enemies of thy kingdom, who are oft compared to floods for their numbers, force, rage, &c. See Isa. viii. 7, 8; xvii. 12, 13; Jer. xlvi. 7, 8. They have both by their words and actions made opposition against it.

f Ps. 65. 7. & 89. 9.

4 f The LORD on high *is* mightier than the noise of many waters, *yea, than* the mighty waves of the sea.

The King of heaven is too strong for all earthly potentates, and will subdue them under his feet.

† Heb. *to length of days.*

5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, †for ever.

Thy testimonies, i. e. thy words; either, 1. Thy precepts, which are commonly called God's *testimonies*. And so having spoken of God's kingdom, he now showeth that the laws of that kingdom are just, and true, and holy; which is a singular commendation of it. Or, 2. Thy promises, as may be gathered from the following words, *are sure*, or *true*, or *faithful*; which attribute properly belongs, and every where in Scripture is ascribed, to promises rather than to precepts. And the promises no less than the precepts are God's *testimonies*, or the witnesses or declarations of his mind and will to mankind. And he seems here to speak of those great and precious promises concerning the erection and establishment of his kingdom in the world by the Messias; which, saith he, are infallibly true, and shall certainly be accomplished in thy time. *Holiness becometh thine house:* this is to be understood, either, 1. Of God's church or people, who are sometimes called God's *house*, and whose business and delight is in God's house and service there performed. So the sense is, It becometh thy people to be holy in all their approaches to thee, and worshippings of thee. Or rather, 2. Of God himself, who dwelt in his house, from whence he gave forth his oracles, and where all his testimonies were kept upon record. This seems better to suit with the context, the business of this Psalm being rather to describe the dominion of God than the duty of his people. And so the sense seems to be this, Holiness is the constant ornament and glory of thy house. Or it becometh thee who dwellest in thy house to be holy in all thy words and actions; and therefore thy testimonies are very sure, and thou wilt undoubtedly fulfil all thy promises. For *holiness* seems to be here taken for God's faithfulness, as it is Psal. lx. 6; lxxxix. 35; or, which comes to the same thing, for his justice or righteousness, whereby he is obliged to make good all his promises, as that word is very commonly used.

• PSALM XCIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter of this Psalm plainly declares the occasion of it to be the oppressions and persecutions of God's people by wicked and cruel tyrants and enemies, against whom he prays for the Divine aid.

The psalmist, calling to God for justice, 1—4, *complaineth of tyranny and impiety,* 5—7; *teacheth fools God's providence,* 8—11; *showeth the blessed effects of affliction,* 12, 13; *and a promise of his presence with the afflicted,* 14, 15. *He is their support,* 16—23.

† Heb. *God of revenges.* a Deut. 32. 35. Nah. 1. 2. † Heb. *shine forth,* Ps. 80. 1.

O LORD †God, a to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, †shew thyself.

As thou art the supreme Judge of the world, the Patron and Protector of the righteous, and the declared enemy of all wickedness and wicked men.

b Ps. 7. 6. c Gen. 18. 25.

2 b Lift up thyself, thou c judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

Lift up thyself; either, 1. Ascend thy tribunal to pronounce the sentence. Or, 2. Arise from thy seat, and bestir thyself to punish thy proud enemies, as it here follows.

d Job 20. 5.

3 LORD, d how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

e Ps. 31. 18. Jude 15.

4 *How long* shall they e utter *and* speak hard things? *and* all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

Utter; or, *pour forth* freely, constantly, abundantly, as a fountain doth waters, as this Hebrew word signifies. *Hard things;* grievous, and insolent, and intolerable words against thee and thy people; blasphemous, malicious, contemptuous, and minatory words. *Boast themselves;* boast of their invincible power, and prosperous success in their wicked designs.

5 They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

Those righteous persons whom thou hast chosen for thy portion or inheritance.

6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

Whom common humanity obliged them to spare, and pity, and relieve.

f Ps. 10. 11, 13. & 59. 7.

7 f Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard *it.*

Their impunity and prosperity in their impious and barbarous practices make them ready to doubt of or to deny the providence of God in the government of his church and of the world. *The God of Jacob;* so they call him sarcastically; he who taketh that name to himself, but hath no regard to his people, but gives up his Jacob to the spoil, and to the rage of their enemies.

g Ps. 73. 22. & 92. 6.

8 g Understand, ye brutish among the people: and *ye* fools, when will ye be wise?

You who, though you think yourselves the wisest of men, yet in truth are the most brutish of all people; for the Hebrews oft express their superlatives in this manner, as Prov. xxx. 30; Cant. i. 8, &c. You that have only the shape, but not the understanding, of a man in you.

h Ex. 4. 11. Prov. 20. 12.

9 h He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

Planted: the word is very emphatical, signifying the excellent structure of the ear, or the several organs or instruments belonging to the sense of hearing, and the exact position and firm settlement of all those parts in their proper places; which is justly admired by all that understand it. *Shall he not hear?* he must necessarily hear. The truth of the inference depends upon that evident and undeniable principle in reason, that nothing can give to another that which it hath not either formally or more eminently in itself, and that no effect can exceed the virtue of its cause. *Formed;* by which word he seems to intimate the accurate and most curious workmanship of the eye, which is observed by all that write upon that subject.

i Job 35. 11. Is. 28. 28.

10 He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that i teacheth man knowledge, *shall not he know?*

He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he who, when he pleaseth, can and doth punish the Gentiles or nations of the world, is he not able to punish you for your wicked speeches and actions? Or, *He that instructeth* or *teacheth* (as this word signifies, Prov. ix. 7; Isa. viii. 11, &c.) *the nations,* (not only the Jews, but all other people, all mankind, as this clause is explained by the next, *he that teacheth man knowledge.*) *shall not he correct* or *reprove?* and therefore must not he discern and know all your hard speeches and wicked actions? Thus the consequent seems to be put for the antecedent, as is frequent in Scripture, and that not without emphasis, to imply that God does not know their sins with a simple or speculative

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knowledge, but so as to proceed upon that knowledge to judge and punish them. *He that teacheth man knowledge*, by giving him understanding, and the knowledge of many excellent things by the light of nature, *shall not he know?* to wit, men's thoughts, of which see ver. 11; and their words and actions, of which he spoke ver. 6, 7. These words are not in the Hebrew text, but are easily understood out of the foregoing clause. And the like defects we find elsewhere, as 2 Sam. v. 8, compared with 1 Chron. xi. 6, especially in vehement commotions of the mind, when a man's passion stops his speech, as it is here, and Psal. vi. 3, and in other authors.

1 Cor. 3. 20. 11 [k]The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.

This is an answer to the foregoing question, *shall not he know?* Yes, he *knoweth* all things, yea, even the most secret things, as *the thoughts of men;* and in particular your atheistical thoughts, and much more doth he know your wicked practices, which you said he did not see, ver. 6, 7. And he knows that they are generally vain and foolish, and that whilst you mock God and applaud yourselves in such thoughts, you do not relieve, but only delude yourselves with them.

Job 5. 17. Prov. 3. 11. Rev. 3. 19. Heb. 12. 5, &c. 12 [l]Blessed *is* the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

And whereas these ungodly persons esteem themselves the only happy men, and conclude thy people to be of all men the most miserable, because of the manifold persecutions and afflictions which they commonly suffer, and upon this account dispute against thy providence, so far is their opinion from the truth, that the contrary is most certain, that as their prosperity is a real mischief to them, so those afflictions of good men which are accompanied with Divine instructions are great and true blessings to them, themselves being judges.

13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

For their present and short troubles prepare them for, and lead them to, true rest and blessedness, whilst the seeming felicities of the wicked make way for those tremendous judgments which God hath prepared for them.

m 1 Sam. 12. 22. Rom. 11. 1, 2 14 [m]For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

Though God may for a time correct his people, yet he will not utterly destroy them, as he will their enemies, but will in his time put an end to all their calamities.

15 But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart †shall follow it.

† Heb. shall be after it.

But although the world is now full of unrighteous judgments, and even God himself seems not to judge and administer things justly, because he suffers his people to be oppressed, and the wicked to triumph over them, yet the state of things shall be otherwise ordered, God will declare himself to be a righteous Judge, and will advance and establish justice in the earth, and especially among his people. *Follow it*, to wit, just judgment restored; they will all approve of it, and imitate this justice of God in all their actions, whereas *the wicked will* still *do wickedly*, as is said, Dan. xii. 10, and *in a land* and state *of uprightness will deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord*, as it is Isa. xxvi. 10. Otherwise, *shall follow him*, to wit, the Lord, expressed ver. 14, whose act is to bring judgment to justice. Whilst the wicked forsake God, these will cleave to him, as being confident that, howsoever he may suffer them to be oppressed for a season, yet he will in due time plead their cause, and bring forth their righteousness.

16 Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers? *or* who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

To defend and help me. I looked hither and thither, and called to my friends for their help, saying, *Who will, &c.?* but none of them appeared, but God alone helped me, as he saith in the next verse.

17 [n]Unless the LORD *had been* my help, my soul had ‖almost dwelt in silence. n Ps. 124. 1, 2. ‖Or, *quickly.*

In the place of silence, to wit, the grave. Compare Job iii. 17, 18; Psal. lxxxviii. 12; cxv. 17.

18 When I said, [o]My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up. o Ps. 38. 16.

My foot slippeth; I am now upon the point of falling into mischief and utter destruction.

19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

In the multitude of my thoughts; whilst my heart was filled with *various and perplexing thoughts*, as this Hebrew word signifies, and tormented with cares and fears about my future state. *Thy comforts;* thy promises contained in thy word, and set home by thy Spirit upon my soul, and the remembrance of my former experiences of thy care and kindness to me. Compare Psal. cxix. 50, 76.

20 Shall [p]the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which [q]frameth mischief by a law? p Amos 6. 3. q Ps. 58. 2. Is. 10. 1.

Wilt thou take part with the unrighteous powers of the world, who oppress thy people? It is true, they partake of thy name, being called *gods*, Psal. lxxxii. 1, but I know thou wilt not afford them thy protection and patronage, but wilt manifest thy justice and displeasure against them. This seems to have been one of those comfortable thoughts wherewith the psalmist delighted his soul, as he now said. *Which frameth mischief;* who devise wicked devices, and lay heavy burdens upon men that are more righteous than themselves. *By a law;* either by virtue of those unrighteous decrees which they have made in form of laws; or by false pretences of law. Or, *against law;* against all right, and the laws both of God and men.

21 [r]They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and [s]condemn the innocent blood. r Matt. 27. 1. s Ex. 23. 7. Prov. 17. 15.

Against the soul; against the life, as *the soul* commonly signifies, and as the next clause explains it. They are not satisfied with the spoil of their estates, but do also thirst after their lives. *Condemn the innocent blood;* they shed the blood of those innocent persons whom they have wickedly condemned. *Innocent blood* is here put for the blood or life of an innocent person, as it is also 1 Sam. xix. 5; Matt. xxvii. 4.

22 But the LORD is [t]my defence; and my God *is* the rock of my refuge. t Ps. 59. 9. & 62. 2, 6.

23 And [u]he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; *yea*, the LORD our God shall cut them off. u Ps. 7. 16. Prov. 2. 22. & 5. 22.

Their own iniquity, i. e. the fruit and punishment of their sins. *In their own wickedness;* either in the midst of their sins; or by their own wicked devices, the mischief whereof he will cause to fall upon their own heads. *The Lord our God;* the God of Jacob, of whom they said that he did *not see nor regard* them, but now they find the contrary proved to their cost.

PSALM XCV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The author of this Psalm was David, as is affirmed, Heb. iv. 7; and although this Psalm be delivered in general terms, as an invitation to mankind to yield unto the true God that praise, and worship, and obedience which he requireth and deserveth, yet it hath a special reference to the days of the Messiah; of which Christians have no great reason to doubt, seeing it is so understood by the Hebrew doctors themselves; as also by the apostle, Heb. iii. 7, &c.; and especially Heb. iv. 3—9, where he not only expounds it of those times, but proves that it cannot be meant of the former times and state of the church.

An exhortation to praise God, 1, 2, *for his great power, goodness, and tenderness to his people*, 3—7. *A caution against hardness of heart*, 8, 9. *It grieves the Lord*, 10. *God's threatening against it confirmed with an oath*, 11.

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a Ps. 100. 1. b Deut. 32. 15. 2 Sam. 22. 47.

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD: [a]let us make a joyful noise to [b]the rock of our salvation.

He speaks to the Israelites, whose backwardness to this work in the times of the gospel was foreseen by the Spirit of God, which dictated this Psalm.

† Heb. *prevent his face.*

2 Let us †come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

His presence; which he will then afford us in a singular manner, in his Son the Messiah, in and by whom he will be visibly present with the sons of men.

c Ps. 96. 4. & 97. 9. & 135. 5.

3 For [c]the LORD *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Above all that are accounted and called *gods*, angels, and earthly potentates, and especially the false gods of the heathens, which upon Christ's coming into the world were struck dumb, and could no more deliver their oracles, as Plutarch and other heathens observed, with admiration, nor deceive the world, but were forced to give place to the true God, and to the knowledge and worship of him alone, which was propagated among all nations by the gospel.

† Heb. *In whose.* ‖ Or, *the heights of the hills are his.*

4 †In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: ‖the strength of the hills *is* his also.

In his hand; under his government. *The deep places;* those parts which are far out of men's sight and reach, and much more those that are at men's disposal. *The strength of the hills;* the strongest or highest mountains are under his feet, and at his disposal. The sense of the verse is, All the parts of the earth, whether high or low, are subject to his power and providence, and therefore it is not strange if all the nations of the earth be brought to the acknowledgment of him, and if the Gentiles receive his gospel.

† Heb. *Whose the sea is.* d Gen. 1. 9, 10.

5 †[d]The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.

e 1 Cor. 6. 20.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let [e]us kneel before the LORD our maker.

By which expressions he teacheth that even in gospel times God is to be glorified and worshipped, as well with the members of our bodies, as with the faculties of our souls.

f Ps. 79. 13. & 80. 1. & 100. 3. g Heb. 3. 7, 15. & 4. 7.

7 For he *is* our God; and [f]we *are* the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. [g]To day if ye will hear his voice,

Our God, in a peculiar manner; and therefore it will be most unreasonable and abominable for us to forsake him, when the Gentiles submit to his law. *The people of his pasture;* whom he feedeth and keepeth in his own proper pasture, or in the land which he hath appropriated to himself. *The sheep of his hand;* which are under his special care, and conduct, or government; which is oft expressed by *the hand,* as Numb. iv. 28; xxxi. 49; Judg. ix. 29. *To-day,* i. e. forthwith or presently, as this word is used, Deut. iv. 4, 8; xxvii. 9; Josh. xxii. 16, 18, &c. Or, *this day;* in this solemn day of grace, or of the gospel, which the psalmist speaks of as present, according to the manner of the prophets. And this word, though belonging to the following clause, as appears from Heb. iii. 7, may seem to be thus placed, to show that it had some respect to the foregoing words also. For the sense of the place may be this, *We* (Jews) are or shall be *the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand;* God will still own us for his people *this day,* i. e. in the days of the Messiah, if *this day* or in that time we *shall hear his voice.* Otherwise God will reject us, and receive the Gentiles in our stead. *If ye will hear his voice;* if you will hearken to his call, and obey his further commands; which may be added as a necessary caution and admonition to the Israelites, that they might understand and consider that God's presence and favour was not absolutely, necessarily, and everlastingly fixed to them, as they were very apt to believe, but was suspended upon the condition of their continued obedience, which if they violated they should be rejected, and the Gentiles performing it should be received to his mercy. And this clause may be connected either, I. With the former words, as the condition of their interest in God as their God, as was now said. Or, 2. With the following verse; If you are willing to hearken to God's call delivered by his Son, take the following counsel.

h Ex. 17. 2, 7. Num. 14. 22, &c. & 20. 13. Deut. 6. 16. † Heb. *contention.*

8 Harden not your heart, [h]as in the †provocation, *and* as *in* the day of temptation in the wilderness:

Harden not your heart, by wilful disobedience and obstinate unbelief, rebelling against the light, and resisting the Holy Ghost, and his clear discoveries of the truth of the gospel. *As in the provocation;* as you did in that bold and wicked contest with God in the wilderness. Or, *as* in *Meribah,* which was the proper name of the place where that happened, and which also was called *Massah,* as is evident from Exod. xvii. 7; Deut. xxxiii. 8. *As in the day of temptation;* in the day in which you tempted me. Or, *as* in *the day of Massah,* i. e. when you were at Massah.

i Ps. 78. 18, 40, 56. 1 Cor. 10. 9. k Num. 14. 22.

9 When [i]your fathers tempted me, proved me, and [k]saw my work.

When; or, in *which place;* which may belong either to Meribah and Massah, or to the wilderness last mentioned. Or, *surely,* as this word is oft used in Scripture, as hath been observed once and again. *And saw;* or, *although* or *after that they saw* or *had seen;* which is added as a just and great aggravation of their unbelief, after such a sensible and evident experience of God's power and goodness to them. *My works;* both my works of mercy, which gave them abundant cause to trust me; and my works of justice, for which they had reason to fear and please me. Heb. *my work,* to wit, that great and stupendous work of bringing my people out of Egypt with a strong hand, and of conducting them safely through the Red Sea into the wilderness, and of destroying the Egyptians. For not many more of God's great works were done before they came to Meribah.

l Heb. 3. 10, 17.

10 [l]Forty years long was I grieved with *this* generation, and said, It *is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

With this generation; or rather, *with* that *generation* which then lived, who were your ancestors. *Do err in their heart;* they do not only sin through infirmity, and the violence and surprisal of temptations, but their hearts are insincere and inconstant, and given to backsliding, and therefore there is no hopes of their amendment. Compare Psal. lxxviii. 8. *They have not known;* or, *they do not know,* to wit, with a practical and useful knowledge, as that word commonly notes in Scripture. They did not rightly understand, nor duly consider, nor seriously lay to heart; they remain ignorant after all my teachings and discoveries of myself to them. *My ways;* either, 1. My laws or statutes, which are frequently called God's *ways.* Or rather, 2. My works, as it is expressed, ver. 9, which also are commonly so called. They did not know nor consider and remember those great things which I had wrought for them and among them.

m Num. 14. 23, 28, 30. Heb. 3. 11, 18. & 4. 3, 5. † Heb. *if they enter into my rest.*

11 Unto whom [m]I sware in my wrath †that they should not enter into my rest.

Being full of just wrath against them, I passed an irreversible sentence, and confirmed it by an oath; of which we read Numb. xiv. *Into my rest;* into the Promised Land, which is called *the rest,* Deut. xii. 9. See also 1 Chron. xxiii. 25; Psal. cxxxii. 14. And this history the psalmist propounds to the men of his age, not as a matter of mere speculation, but as an instruction for all after-ages, and particularly for those Israelites who should live in the times of the Messias, that they should *take heed of falling after the same example of unbelief,* as the apostle infers from this place, Heb. iv. 11.

PSALM XCVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David upon occasion, or at the time, of the bringing of the ark of God into the tabernacle which David had prepared for it in Zion, as may be gathered by comparing it with 1 Chron. xvi. 7, 23, 24, &c., where almost the whole Psalm is to be found.

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But as the ark was an evident type of the Messiah, which David very well knew, as hath been oft noted before: so David's thoughts, or at least the design of God's Spirit, which indited this Psalm, was extended beyond and above it, even to the times of the Messiah, and to his glorious and universal kingdom, in which not the Jews only, but the heathen nations also, should worship the true God, and kiss his Son the Messiah.

All the inhabitants of the earth and sea are called to praise the Lord for his great honour and majesty, 1—7; *for his wise governing the world*, 8—10. *Heaven and earth are called to rejoice before him for his righteous judgment*, 11—13.

a 1 Chron. 16. 23. Ps. 33. 3. O [a]SING unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.

A new song, upon this new and great occasion; not the removal of the ark, wherein there was nothing new but an inconsiderable circumstance of place, and that not yet fixed; but the coming of the Messiah, and the confirming of the new covenant by his blood, and the calling of the Gentiles. *All the earth*; all the nations of the earth, who shall then partake of those great blessings and privileges which are now peculiar to Israel

2 Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

His salvation; that great work of the redemption and salvation of the world by the Messias.

3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

You who shall be called out of all the heathen nations to the knowledge of God and Christ, publish this glorious and wonderful work amongst all the heathen nations to whom you belong or may come.

b Ps. 145. 3. c Ps. 48. 1. d Ps. 96. 4. 4 For [b]the LORD *is* great, and [c]greatly to be praised: [d]he *is* to be feared above all gods.

The gods of the nations, as the next verse expounds it.

e See Jer. 10. 11. f Ps. 115. 15. Is. 42. 5. 5 For [e]all the gods of the nations *are* idols: [f]but the LORD made the heavens.

Idols; or, *nothings*, as they are called, 1 Cor. viii. 4; x. 19; or, *vain things*, as the word signifies, and is translated by others. The sense is, Though they have usurped the name and place of the Divine Majesty, yet they have nothing of his nature or power in them.

g Ps. 29. 2. 6 Honour and majesty *are* before him: strength and [g]beauty *are* in his sanctuary.

Before him, i. e. in his presence, like beams shot out from his face, who is the Sun of righteousness. There is an unconceivable glory and majesty in his countenance, and in the place of his presence. *In his sanctuary*; or, *in his holy place*; where he records his name and affords his presence. There are the manifestations of God's power and grace, or goodness, and all his perfections.

h Ps. 22. 1, 2. 7 [h]Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

O ye kindreds of the people; or, *O ye families of the people* of the world. And the word *families* may be understood either, 1. Strictly and properly; and so it may be intimated that this great blessing of salvation by Christ should not be imparted to whole nations, but only to some persons taken *out of every people and nation*, as it is expressed, Rev. v. 9. Or, 2. More largely for nations, as it is taken, Gen. xii. 3; Jer. xxv. 9; Zech. xiv. 18; and so it may be implied that not only some few of the heathen people should be brought to the acknowledgment and worship of the true God, as was usual in the times of the Old Testament, but that whole nations should come in to the church of God together. *Give unto the Lord*; ascribe to him, or acknowledge to be in him.

† Heb. of his name. 8 Give unto the LORD the glory † *due unto* his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.

Into the courts of his house. But under this one part of worship he comprehends the whole worship of God; and he speaks of the worship of the New Testament under the expressions of legal worship, as the prophets elsewhere do, as Mal. i. 11, and elsewhere.

i Ps. 29. 2. & 110. 3. ‖ Or, *in the glorious sanctuary.* 9 O worship the LORD ‖in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

In the beauty of holiness; either in the holy place which he shall appoint to that end; or clothed with all those holy ornaments, those gifts and graces, which are necessary and required in God's worship.

k Ps. 93. 1. & 97. 1. Rev. 11. 15. & 19. 6. 10 Say among the heathen *that* [k]the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: [l]he shall judge the people righteously.

l ver. 13. Ps. 67. 4. & 98. 9.

Say among the heathen: you converted Gentiles, declare this to those who yet remain in the darkness of heathenism. *That the Lord reigneth*; that God hath now set up his throne and kingdom in the world. And as that *kingdom shall never be destroyed*, but *shall stand for ever*, as is said, Dan. ii. 44; so the nations of the world shall by the means of it enjoy an established and lasting peace; which is every where mentioned as one of the blessings which the Messiah shall give to the world, as Psal. lxxii. 3, 7; Isa. ix. 6, 7; lxvi. 12; Micah v. 5; Zech. ix. 10. *He shall judge the people righteously*; he shall not abuse his invincible power and established dominion to the oppression of his people, as other princes frequently do, but shall govern them by the rules of justice and equity, which is the only foundation of a true and solid peace. See Isa. xxxii. 17.

m Ps. 69. 34. n Ps. 98. 7, &c. 11 [m]Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; [n]let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

It is a figure called *prosopopœia*, whereby he signifies the great felicity of those times, which shall be such that even those lifeless creatures would testify their joy and thankfulness for it, if they were in a capacity so to do.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: [o]he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

o Ps. 67. 4. Rev. 19. 11.

Before the Lord; at the presence and approach of their Lord and Maker. *To judge the earth*; to take to himself that power and authority which belongs to him, to set up his throne and dominion among all the nations of the earth. *With his truth*; or, *in his faithfulness*, i. e. so as he hath promised to do. He will certainly and abundantly fulfil all God's promises made to his people.

PSALM XCVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have both the same author and the same scope with the former. And although the psalmist might take occasion to pen it from those signal manifestations of God's power and righteousness on his behalf, and against his enemies, yet he had a further aim in it, even at the coming of the Messias, which he here describes. And whereas there are two comings of Christ plainly distinguished in the New Testament, these are but confusedly mentioned in the Old Testament; and the prophets sometimes speak of his first coming in words and phrases which seem more properly to agree to the second, as Mal. iii. 1, 2; iv. 1, 2. But whatsoever the psalmist designed or understood, this is certain, that the Holy Ghost meant the last clause of ver. 7 of Christ, as is affirmed, Heb. i. 6, and therefore it is more than probable that all the rest of the Psalm is to be understood of him, and of his coming and kingdom.

A description of the majesty of God's kingdom, 1—6. *The church rejoiceth at his justice and judgment upon idolaters*, 7—9, *with an exhortation to godliness and spiritual rejoicing*, 10—12.

a Ps. 96. 10. † Heb. *many*, or, *great isles.* b Is. 60. 9. THE [a]LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the †multitude of [b]isles be glad *thereof.*

The Lord reigneth: see on Psal. xcvi. 10. *The multitude of isles*; the Gentile nations, as this word, being used Isa. xlii. 4, is expounded Matt. xii. 21, even those which are most remote from Judea, (then the only seat of God's people and worship,) from which they were divided by the

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sea, or to which they usually went by sea; such places being commonly called *isles* in Scripture, as Gen. x. 5; Isa. xi. 11; lxvi. 19; which being mentioned, because there might be some doubt about them, it is sufficiently implied that those countries which were nearer to them should unquestionably partake of the same privilege.

c 1 Kin. 8. 12. Ps. 18. 11.
d Ps. 89. 14.
‖ Or, *establishment.*

2 [c] Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: [d] righteousness and judgment *are* the ‖ habitation of his throne.

Clouds and darkness are round about him; a dark cloud doth encompass him; wherein he seems to allude to that dark cloud in which God did anciently so often manifest his presence for the comfort of his saints, and for the terror and punishment of evil-doers. The design of these words is to describe either, 1. The depth and unsearchableness of God's judgments. Or, 2. The obscurity of Christ's coming, that the Divine Majesty did veil himself with flesh, and came not with that outward splendour which the Jews expected. Or rather, 3. The terror of his presence and coming to his enemies, of which he manifestly speaks in the following verses; and of which the prophets frequently speak when they make mention of his coming, as Joel ii. 31, 32; Mal. iv. 1. *Righteousness and judgment*, i. e. righteous judgment, or righteousness in judgment. *The habitation;* or, *the foundation*, or *establishment;* for *the throne is established* (and the Hebrew verb there is the same from whence this word here comes) *by righteousness*, Prov. xvi. 12. All his decrees and administrations are grounded upon and managed with righteousness.

e Ps. 18. 8. & 50. 3. Dan. 7. 10. Hab. 3. 5.

3 [e] A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

This fire, and lightning, and earthquake, and the sad effects of them, mentioned here, and ver. 4, 5, signify those dreadful judgments of God which should be inflicted upon the Jews and others for their refusal and contempt of the Messias; which was foretold in the Old Testament, and accomplished in the New Testament.

f Ex. 19. 18. Ps. 77. 18. & 104. 32.

4 [f] His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.

His lightnings enlightened the world: this phrase signifies not so much illumination as terror and judgments, as appears both from the following words, and from the constant use of the phrase in that sense, as Psal. xviii. 14; cxliv. 6, &c.

g Judg. 5. 5. Mic. 1. 4. Nah. 1. 5.

5 [g] The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the LORD of the whole earth.

The hills; the strongest and loftiest parts of the earth; whereby he may understand the great potentates of the world who set themselves against the Messias. *The Lord of the whole earth;* whose dominion shall not then be confined in Canaan, as now in a manner it is, but shall be enlarged over the whole earth.

h Ps. 19. 1. & 50. 6.

6 [h] The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

The heavens; either, 1. The thunders, and lightnings, and tempests sent from heaven to plead his righteous cause against his enemies. Or, 2. The angels, yea, God himself from heaven, who gave manifest testimony to the righteousness of the Messias. *All the people see his glory;* both Jews and Gentiles shall see and feel the glorious effects of his coming.

i Ex. 20. 4. Lev. 26. 1. Deut. 5. 8. & 27. 15.
k Heb. 1. 6.

7 [i] Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: [k] worship him, all *ye* gods.

Confounded be all they; let them be ashamed of their former folly herein, and be thereby brought to detest and forsake them; and those who will obstinately persist in their impiety and idolatry, let them be brought to confusion. Or, *they shall be confounded;* for this may be a prediction, and not an imprecation. *All ye gods;* all you whom the Gentiles have made the objects of their worship, and who are capable of giving him worship; which two qualifications agree principally, if not solely, to the angels of God, whom the heathens manifestly worshipped in their images as an inferior sort of gods, of whom therefore this text is expounded, Heb. i. 6.

8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD.

Zion; thy people dwelling in Zion, or Jerusalem, and Judah, to whom Christ came, and among whom the gospel was first preached. Or, thy church and people, who both in the prophetical writings are oft called *Zion*. *Heard* the fame of thy judgments, as the following words declare; the ruin of idolatry and the setting up the kingdom of the Messias in the world. *The daughters of Judah;* particular churches, or rather persons, members of Zion. *Rejoiced;* not that they took pleasure in the ruin of others, but because that made way for the advancement of God's glory and Christ's kingdom in the world.

1 Ps. 83. 18.
m Ex. 18. 11. Ps. 95. 3. & 96. 4.

9 For thou, LORD, *art* [l] high above all the earth: [m] thou art exalted far above all gods.

As thou always wert so in truth, so thou hast now proved and declared thyself to be such in the eyes of the whole world, by subduing them under thy feet.

n Ps. 34. 14. & 37. 27. & 101. 3. Amos 5. 15. Rom. 12. 9.
o Ps. 31. 23. & 37. 28. & 145. 20. Prov. 2. 8.
p Ps. 37. 39, 40. Dan. 3. 28. & 6. 22, 27.

10 Ye that love the LORD, [n] hate evil: [o] he preserveth the souls of his saints; [p] he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

Ye that love the Lord; O all you who love and worship the true God and his anointed, and rejoice in the establishment of his kingdom. *Hate evil;* show your love to him by your abhorrency of all idolatry, which is sometimes called *evil* or *sin* by way of eminency, and of all other wickedness. And although you that love the Lord Christ and his kingdom will meet with many troubles and persecutions, yet be not discouraged, for he will preserve you in troubles, and in his time deliver you out of them all.

q Job 22. 28. Ps. 112. 4. Prov. 4. 18.

11 [q] Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

Light, i. e. joy and felicity, as this word is used, Esth. viii. 16; Psal. cxii. 4, and oft elsewhere. *Is sown;* is prepared or laid up for them, and shall in due time be reaped by them, possibly in this life, but undoubtedly in the next. And therefore bear your afflictions for Christ with patience and cheerfulness.

r Ps. 33. 1.
s Ps. 30. 4.
‖ Or, *to the memorial.*

12 [r] Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; [s] and give thanks ‖ at the remembrance of his holiness.

In consideration of his holy and righteous nature and government, or of his faithfulness in making good that great promise of sending the Messias into the world; for *holiness* is sometimes taken for *faithfulness*, which is one part or branch of it.

PSALM XCVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter and scope of this Psalm is the same with the former, and is an evident prediction of the coming of the Messias, and of the blessed effects thereof.

¶ A Psalm.

The psalmist exhorteth Jews, Gentiles, and all the creatures to praise God for his truth and salvation.

a Ps. 33. 3. & 96. 1. Is. 42. 10.
b Ex. 15. 11. Ps. 77. 14. & 86. 10. & 136. 4. & 139. 14.
c Ex. 15. 6. Is. 59. 16. & 63. 5.

O [a] SING unto the LORD a new song; for [b] he hath done marvellous things: [c] his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

God by his own only power hath overcome all difficulties and enemies, and hath in spite of all set Christ upon his throne, and propagated his kingdom in the world.

d Is. 52. 10. Luke 2. 30, 31.
e Is. 62. 2. Rom. 3. 25, 26.
‖ Or, *revealed.*

2 [d] The LORD hath made known his salvation: [e] his righteousness hath he ‖ openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

His salvation; the redemption or salvation of the world by the Messias; which was hitherto reserved as a secret among the Jews, yea, was not thoroughly known and believed by the most of the Jews themselves. *His righteous-*

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ness; either his faithfulness in accomplishing this great promise of sending the Messias; or his goodness and mercy, oft called by this Hebrew word; or the righteousness of God or of Christ revealed in the gospel.

f Luke 1.54, 55, 72. g Is. 49. 6. & 52. 10. Luke 2. 30, 31. & 3. 6. Acts 13. 47. & 28. 28.

3 He hath [f]remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: [g]all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

He hath now actually given that mercy which he had promised to the Israelites. *All the ends of the earth*; all the inhabitants of the earth, from one end to another. *Have seen*, i. e. enjoyed it, as this word is oft used, as hath been proved again and again.

h Ps. 95. 1. & 100. 1.

4 [h]Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

Because you all do now partake of the same privileges with the Jews, join with them in worshipping and praising of God.

5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

The worship of the New Testament is here described in phrases taken from the rites of the old, as Psal. xcii. 3, and oft elsewhere.

i Num. 10. 10. Neh. 12. 35. 2 Chron. 29. 27.

6 [i]With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.

k Ps. 96. 11, &c.

7 [k]Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

The fulness thereof; all those creatures wherewith it is replenished, which by a poetical strain are invited to praise God. See of this and the next verses the notes on Psal. xcvi. 11—13.

l Is. 55. 12.

8 Let the floods [l]clap *their* hands: let the hills be joyful together

m Ps. 96. 10, 13.

9 Before the LORD; [m]for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

PSALM XCIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is supposed to be David's, and the matter of it seems to suit to his time and the state of affairs which then was; although as David was a type of Christ, so this Psalm may look beyond David unto the Messias. But it doth not speak so fully nor clearly of the Messias as the foregoing Psalms do.

The psalmist setteth forth the weighty power of God in Zion, 1. 2. *God's holiness a reason for our praising him*, 3. *Equity and righteousness executed in Jacob*, 4. *The church exhorted by the example of their forefathers*, 5—8, *to praise and magnify him in his holy hill*, 9.

a Ps. 93. 1. b 1 Sam. 4. 4. Ps. 80. 1. & 99. 1. c Job 26. 11. † Heb. *stagger*.

THE [a]LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: [b]he sitteth *between* the cherubims; let the earth † be moved.

The people, to wit, such as are enemies to God and to his people. *Between the cherubims*; upon the ark. See 1 Sam. iv. 4. He is present with his people to protect them, and to punish their enemies. *The earth*; the people of the earth, by comparing this clause with the former. *Be moved*, to wit, with fear and trembling, as in the former clause.

d Ps. 97. 9.

2 The LORD *is* great in Zion; and he *is* [d]high above all the people.

The Lord is great in Zion: in the Hebrew text the words lie in this order, *The Lord in Zion* (i. e. which dwelleth in Zion, as is said, Psal. ix. 11; Isa. viii. 18; Joel iii. 21) *is great*. *Above all people*; above all the people of the earth, of whom he spake ver. 1, who shall exalt themselves against him.

3 Let them praise [d]thy great and terrible name; *for* it *is* holy.

d Deu. 28. 58. Rev. 15. 4.

Them, to wit, *all people*, last mentioned. *For it is holy*; for it is not only great, but holy, and therefore most praiseworthy.

e Job 36. 5, 6, 7.

4 [e]The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

The King's strength also loveth judgment; though his dominion be absolute and uncontrollable, and his power irresistible, yet he doth not abuse it to tyranny and oppression, as the princes of the world commonly do, but tempers and manageth it with righteousness; and not only doth judge justly, but, which is more, loves to do so. *The King's strength* is by a known Hebraism put for *the strong* or *powerful King*. *Establish equity*, to wit, in all thy proceedings. Equity is thy constant and stable course. *In Jacob*; amongst thine own people; whom, when they do amiss, he punisheth no less than other people, as he notes below, ver. 8, whereby he showeth that he is no respecter of persons, but a righteous and impartial Judge to all sorts of men.

f ver. 9. g 1 Chro. 28. 2. Ps. 132. 7. ‖ Or, *it is holy*. h Lev. 19. 2.

5 [f]Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at [g]his footstool; *for* ‖ [h]he *is* holy.

At his footstool; before the ark, which is so called, 1 Chron. xxviii. 2; Psal. cxxxii. 7. *For he is holy*; or rather, for *it*, to wit, the ark, *is holy*; it is consecrated to be a pledge of God's presence, and the only place of God's public worship.

i Jer. 15. 1. k Ex. 14. 15. & 15. 25. 1 Sam. 7. 9. & 12. 18.

6 [i]Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they [k]called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

He presseth them to perform the duty of praising and worshipping God by the examples of three eminent persons who practised this duty, and that with happy success. He reckoneth Moses among the priests not without cause, partly because before the institution of the priesthood he executed that office, Exod. xxiv. 6; Numb. vii.; and partly because he oft interceded to God for the people; which was a very considerable part of the priest's work. See Numb. vi. 23, &c.; Joel ii. 17. *That call upon his name*; who used frequently and solemnly to intercede with God on the behalf of the people. So the general expression is here used synecdochically for this particular kind of prayer; such synecdoches being very frequent in Scripture. *He answered them*; Moses, Exod. xxxii., and elsewhere; Aaron, Numb. xvi.; Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 9; xii. 19: compare Jer. xv. 1.

l Ex. 33. 9.

7 [l]He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance *that* he gave them.

Unto them, i. e. to some of them; for the expression is only indefinite, and therefore doth not necessarily reach to all of them: to Moses frequently; to Aaron, Exod. xix. 24; xxxiii. 9—11; Numb. xii. 5; and for Samuel, he answered him, if not by words, yet really and by his actions, thundering against the Philistines, 1 Sam. vii. 9, &c., which supposeth a cloud, if not a cloudy pillar. *They kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them*: this is added, not only for their commendation, but for the instruction of the Israelites, to teach them that God will not hear the prayers of them who do not keep his commandments.

m Num. 14. 20. Jer. 46. 28. Zeph. 3. 7. n See Ex. 32. 2, &c. Num. 20. 12, 24. Deut. 9. 20.

8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: [m]thou wast a God that forgavest them, though [n]thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.

Answeredst them; the intercessors before mentioned. *Forgavest them*; either, 1. Moses and Aaron, who did sin, and whose sins God did pardon, yet so that he did punish them with exclusion from the land of Canaan; of which see Numb. xx. 12; Deut. xxxii. 50, 51. Or rather, 2. The people for whom they prayed; which, though not expressed, may be easily understood from the following words, and from the histories to which these words relate. For this *forgiving* was evidently the effect of God's *answering* the prayers of the persons above mentioned. And therefore as

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their prayers recorded in Scripture were not for the pardon of their own sins, but for the pardon of the people's sins; so this forgiveness granted was for the sins of the people. And whereas the people are not here mentioned, it must be remembered that in Scripture the relative is frequently put without the antecedent, as it is Numb. vii. 89; Psal. cxiv. 2; Prov. xiv. 26. *Though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions:* this clause limits and explains the former. Thou didst forgive the sins of the people, not absolutely and universally, for thou didst punish them severely, but so far as not to inflict that total and final destruction upon them which they deserved, and thou hadst threatened. See Exod. xxxii. 10, 14, 34.

o ver. 5. Ex. 15. 2. Ps. 34. 3. & 118. 28.

9 °Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God *is* holy.

At his holy hill; either in Zion; or in his church typified by it, and oft called Zion.

PSALM C.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed for the use of the Israelites in their thank-offerings, or upon other solemn occasions of praising God, as the title speaks; but withal it hath a further prospect, even to the days of the Messiah, as some of the Hebrew doctors acknowledge, and to the calling of the Gentiles, whom he invites to join with them in the praises of God their Lord and Maker.

* Ps. 145, title. ‖ Or, *thanksgiving.*

¶ * A Psalm of ‖ praise.

An exhortation to praise God joyfully, 1, 2, *for his greatness, power,* 3, 4, *goodness, and faithfulness to his church,* 5.

a Ps. 95. 1. & 98. 4. † Heb. *all the earth.*

MAKE °a joyful noise unto the LORD, † all ye lands.

Make a joyful noise; partly with voices and songs of rejoicing and thanksgiving; and partly with musical instruments, as the manner then was. *All ye lands;* all the inhabitants of the earth. Or, *all the land,* i. e. all the people of Israel dwelling in this land. Although his invitation seems to be more general, extending also to the Gentiles, of whom many even in those days joined themselves to the church of God.

2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

b Ps. 119. 73. & 139. 13, &c. & 149. 2. Eph. 2. 10. ‖ Or, *and his we are.* c Ps. 95. 7. Ezek. 34. 30, 31.

3 Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: b*it is* he *that* hath made us, ‖and not we ourselves; c*we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

It is he that hath made us; both by creation, and by adoption and regeneration, whereby he made us his people, which also is called a *creation* or *making,* as Deut. xxxii. 6; Isa. xxix. 23; xliii. 7; Eph. ii. 10. *And not we ourselves;* therefore we owe him homage and service, and him only, and not other gods, who made us not.

d Ps. 66. 13. & 116. 17, 18, 19.

4 dEnter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name.

Enter into his gates; the gates of his courts; for the people might enter no further, and the courts had walls and gates as well as the house.

e Ps. 136. 1, &c. † Heb. *to generation and generation.* Ps. 89. 1.

5 For the LORD *is* good; e his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* † to all generations.

PSALM CI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David between times of God's promising the kingdom to him and his actual and plenary possession of it, as appears both from ver. 2, and from the contexture of the Psalm, wherein he speaks not of his present practice, but of his purpose for the future, and solemnly declares his resolution, and obligeth himself to these things when he shall be in a capacity to put them in execution.

¶ A Psalm of David.

David maketh a vow to praise the Lord, 1; *to walk perfectly for an example,* 2; *to destroy all the wicked,* 3—5; *and to delight in the faithful of the land,* 6—8.

a Ps. 89. 1.

°I WILL sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

Of mercy and judgment; either, 1. Of God towards me; of God's mercy towards me, and of his just judgments upon mine enemies. Or, 2. Of mine towards my people; I will in my song declare my obligation and full purpose to execute mercy and judgment in my dominion; which are the two pillars of government; of which he speaks in the following verses. Interpreters are much divided which to choose. Possibly both may be joined together, and the sense may be this, I will praise thee, O Lord, as for all thy other excellencies, so particularly for those two royal perfections of *mercy* and *justice,* or *judgment,* which thou hast so eminently discovered in the government of the world, and of thy people Israel; and I will make it my care and business to imitate and follow thee, as in other things, so especially in those virtues which are so necessary for the discharge of my trust and the good government of thy and my people.

b 1 Sam. 18. 14.

2 I will bbehave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will cwalk within my house with a perfect heart.

c 1 Kings 9. 4. & 11. 4.

I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way; I will manage all my affairs with wisdom and integrity; which are the two chief qualifications requisite for all men, Matt. x. 16, and most necessary in princes. *O when wilt thou come unto me?* O when wilt thou give me the kingdom which thou hast promised me, that so I may be capable of executing these good purposes, both for my own comfort, and for the benefit of thy people? Or without an interrogation, as this particle is used, Exod. xx. 24, *when thou shalt come to me,* to wit, in the performance of that promise to me. He speaks not exclusively, as if he would not walk wisely and righteously in the mean time, but emphatically, that he would continue to do so when he was advanced to the kingdom, and that he would not suffer himself to be corrupted by his royal power and dignity, as the princes of the world commonly were. Withal, he may intimate that now he could not do as he desired, and that by the necessity of his affairs he was forced to make use of such men as he did not like, and to wink at those miscarriages which it was not now in his power to reform. God is oft said in Scripture to *come* to men when he fulfils a promise to them, or confers a favour or blessing upon them, as Gen. xviii. 10; Exod. xx. 24; Psal. lxxx. 2; Isa. xxxv. 4, &c. *Within my house;* in my own court and family, as well as in my public administrations; knowing how great an influence the example of my private conversation will have upon my people, either to reform or corrupt them. *With a perfect heart:* this clause adds weight to the former; I will not only walk in a perfect or right way, (which a man may do for politic reasons, or with evil design,) but I will do so with an upright and honest heart, which is most acceptable to God.

3 I will set no †wicked thing before mine eyes: dI hate the work of them °that turn aside; *it* shall not cleave to me.

† Heb. *thing of Belial.* d Ps. 97. 10. e Josh. 23. 6. 1 Sam. 12. 20, 21. Ps. 40. 4. & 125. 5.

Before mine eyes, to wit, to look upon it with deliberation and design, or with desire and delight, as this phrase here and elsewhere implies. If any ungodly or unjust thing shall be suggested to me, whatsoever specious pretences it may be covered with, as reason of state or worldly advantage, I will cast it out of my mind and thoughts with abhorrency; so far will I be from putting it in execution. *That turn aside* from God, and from his laws. *It shall not cleave to me,* to wit, such work, or the contagion of such examples. I will neither imitate nor endure such works, nor such workers.

4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not fknow a wicked *person.*

f Matt. 7. 23. 2 Tim. 2. 19.

A froward heart; a man of a corrupt mind and wicked

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life, such as other princes choose and prefer, as being suitable to themselves, and to their wicked designs. *Shall depart from me;* shall be turned out of my court, lest they should tempt me, or infect the rest of my family, or be injurious or scandalous to my people. *I will not know,* i. e. not own nor countenance.

5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: [c]him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

[c] Ps. 18. 27. Prov. 6. 17.

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour; such as by secret and false informations and accusations of others seek to gain my favour, and to advance themselves by the ruin of others; which are the common pests of courts and kingdoms. *An high look and a proud heart:* these he mentions, because pride is the common plague of courts, and the fountain of many enormities in courtiers; it makes them imperious and insolent towards the poor oppressed subjects that resort to them for relief; it inclines them to those counsels and courses, not which are best for the public good, but which are most for their own honour and advantage; it makes them oppressive and injurious to others, that they may have wherewith to satisfy their own lusts.

6 Mine eyes *shall be* upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh ‖in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

‖ Or, *perfect in the way.* Ps. 15. 2.

Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful; either, 1. To find them out. Or, 2. To favour or encourage them, as this phrase is oft used, as Psal. xxxiv. 15; Jer. xxxix. 12; xl. 4. *The faithful;* men of truth, justice, and integrity, who will be faithful, first to God, and then to me and to my people. *Dwell with me;* or, *to sit,* or *abide,* or *converse with me,* in my house, and counsels, and public administrations. *In a perfect way;* in the way of God's precepts, which are pure and perfect. *He shall serve me* in domestic and public employments.

7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies †shall not tarry in my sight.

† Heb. *shall not be established.*

He that worketh deceit; he who shall use any frauds, or cheats, or subtle artifices to abuse or wrong any of my people: which David's courtiers were more likely to endeavour, because he would not permit any open violence. *He that telleth lies;* he that shall abuse me with lies, as courtiers usually do their princes, either to defend and excuse the guilty, or to betray the innocent. *Shall not tarry in my sight;* I will certainly and immediately banish him from my presence.

8 I will [b]early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers [i]from the city of the LORD.

[b] Ps. 75. 10. Jer. 21. 12.

[i] Ps. 46. 2, 5.

Early; speedily, and without delay, as soon as I arise in the morning, or as soon as I am seated in the throne, that so I may both prevent all that mischief which otherwise they might do, and hinder the infection of others by their evil example, and discourage and deter all my subjects from the like practices. Heb. *in the mornings,* i. e. every morning, as the same phrase is used also, Job vii. 18; Psal. lxxiii. 14; Isa. xxxiii. 2. The morning was the time allotted for the exercise of judgment. See Jer. xxi. 12. *From the city of the Lord;* either, 1. From Jerusalem, which, though now in the hands of the Jebusites, he looks upon by an eye of faith as if he had it in possession; which he designed for the chief and royal city of his kingdom, and for the seat of the ark and worship of God. And therefore this place above all others was to be purged and preserved from wickedness and wicked men. Or, 2. From the whole nation or commonwealth of Israel; for David did intend and was obliged to reform, not only that one city, but his whole kingdom, which also may come under the name of a city, as being combined and united under one government; for which reason the name of *city* is given both to the whole church of Christ, as Isa. xxvi. 1; Heb. xii. 22; Rev. xx. 9, and to the great anti-church, the kingdom of mystical Babylon, Rev. xi. 8, 13; xvii. 18, &c.

PSALM CII.

¶ A Prayer ‖of the afflicted, *when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

‖ Or, *for.* Ps. 61. 2. & 142. 2.

This Psalm contains a form of prayer and expostulation with God, composed for the use of all true Israelites, in the name and behalf of their mother the church of Israel. It seems to have been composed in the time of their captivity, and near the end of it, ver. 13, 14. But as the literal Jerusalem was a type of the spiritual, or of the church of God and of Christ, and the rebuilding of the former a type of the reviving and edification of the latter; so the psalmist looks through that mercy of the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and the temple to the further progress and to the end and perfection of that work, which was in the coming of the Messiah, by whom it was to be completed, and by whom the Gentiles were to be brought to the knowledge and worship of the true God.

The church prayeth for audience, 1, 2; *and maketh a grievous complaint of her heavy afflictions,* 3—11; *comforteth herself in the eternal mercy of God,* 12—17; *which is to be recorded for future generations,* 18. *Deliverance from the Babylonian captivity and the restoration of Jerusalem predicted,* 19—28.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry [a]come unto thee.

[a] Ex. 2. 23. 1 Sam. 9. 16. Ps. 18. 6.

2 [b]Hide not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; [c]incline thine ear unto me: in the day *when* I call answer me speedily.

[b] Ps. 27. 9. & 69. 17. [c] Ps. 71. 2. & 88. 2.

3 [d]For my days are consumed ‖like smoke, and [e]my bones are burned as an hearth.

[d] Ps. 119. 83. Jam. 4. 14. ‖ Or, (as some read) *into smoke.* [e] Job 30. 30. Ps. 31. 10. Lam. 1. 13.

Like smoke; which passeth away in obscurity, and swiftly, and irrecoverably. Or, *into smoke;* as wood or any combustible matter put into the fire wasteth away in smoke and ashes. *My bones;* the most strong and solid parts of my body, which seemed safest from the fire. *Are burnt as an hearth;* either as an hearth is heated or burnt up by the coals which are laid upon it; or as the hearth, being so heated, burns up that which is put upon it.

4 My heart is smitten, and [f]withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.

[f] Ps. 37. 2. ver. 11.

Like grass; which is smitten and withered by the heat of the sun, either whilst it stands, or after it is cut down. *I forget to eat my bread,* because my mind is wholly swallowed up with the contemplation of my own miseries.

5 By reason of the voice of my groaning [g]my bones cleave to my ‖skin.

[g] Job 19. 20. Lam. 4. 8. ‖ Or, *flesh.*

My flesh being quite consumed with excessive sorrows.

6 [h]I am like [i]a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

[h] Job 30. 29. [i] Le. 34. 11. Zeph. 2. 14.

Pelican; or, *bittern,* as the same word is translated, Isa. xxxiv. 11; Zeph. ii. 14. It is a solitary and mournful bird, as also the *owl* here following is.

7 I [k]watch, and am as a sparrow [l]alone upon the house top.

[k] Ps. 77. 4. [l] Ps. 38. 11.

A sparrow which hath lost its mate, and then is very sad and solitary, as some report; although that be uncertain and improbable. But this Hebrew word doth not only signify a *sparrow,* but in general any *bird,* as Lev. xiv. 4; Deut. xiv. 11; Dan. iv. 12, 14, 21. And so it may here design any one or more sort of birds which used to sit alone, watching and mourning upon house-tops.

8 Mine enemies reproach me all the day; *and* they that are [m]mad against me are [n]sworn against me.

[m] Acts 26. 11. [n] Acts 23. 12.

Or, and *being mad* or *enraged at* or *against me, they swear against me;* they swear they will do me yet more mischief: or, *they swear by me;* they make use of my name and misery in their forms of swearing and imprecation; as when they

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would express their malicious and mischievous intentions against another, they swear that they will use him or make him as miserable as a Jew. See the like expressions Numb. v. 21; Isa. lxv. 15; Jer. xxix. 22.

o Ps. 42. 3. & 80. 5.

9 For I have eaten ashes like bread, and °mingled my drink with weeping,

For; so this verse gives a reason either of his great sadness, expressed ver. 6, 7, or why they swore by him in the sense last given. Or, *surely*, as this particle is oft used. Or, *therefore*, because of those bitter reproaches last mentioned. *I have eaten ashes like bread:* the sense is, Dust and ashes are as constant and familiar to me as the eating of my bread; I cover my head with them; I sit, yea, lie down and roll myself in them, as mourners oft did, 2 Sam. xiii. 19; Job ii. 8, 12; xvi. 15; Isa. xlvii. 1; Micah i. 10; by which means the ashes might easily be mingled with their meat, as tears were with their drink in the next clause. *Mingled my drink with weeping;* he alludes to the custom of mingling their wine with water.

p Ps. 30. 7.

10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for ᵖthou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

Because of thine indignation and thy wrath; because I do not only conflict with men, but with the Almighty God, and with his anger. *For thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down;* as a man lifts up a person or thing as high as he can, that he may cast it down to the ground with greater force. Or he aggravates his present reproach and misery by the consideration of that great honour and happiness to which God had formerly advanced him, as Job did, chap. xxix., xxx, and the church, Lam. i. 7.

q Job 14. 2. Ps. 109. 23. & 144. 4. Eccles. 6. 12. r ver. 4. Is. 40. 6, 7, 8. Jam. 1. 10.

11 ᵍMy days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and ʳI am withered like grass.

My days; my hopes, and comforts, and happiness; *days* being oft put for happy days, or a happy state, as Psal. xxxvii. 18; Lam. v. 21, as elsewhere they are put more generally for the events which happen in those days; in both which cases it is a metonymy of the adjunct. *That declineth;* or, *that is extended* or *stretched out* to its utmost length, as it is when the sun is setting, when it speedily and totally vanisheth. And just so the hopes of our restitution, which sometimes we have, are quickly cut off and disappointed.

s ver. 26. Ps. 9. 7. Lam. 5. 19. t Ps. 135. 13.

12 But ˢthou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and ᵗthy remembrance unto all generations.

But this is my comfort, although we die and our hopes vanish, yet our God is everlasting and unchangeable, and therefore invincible by all his and our enemies, constant in his counsels and purposes of mercy to his church, stedfast and faithful in the performance of all his promises; and therefore he both can and will deliver his people. *Thy remembrance;* either, 1. The fame and memory of thy wonderful works. Or rather, 2. Thy name, Jehovah, mentioned in the former clause, which is called by this very word, God's *remembrance* or *memorial*, and that *unto all generations*, Exod. iii. 15. Thus this clause exactly answers to the former; and both of them describe the eternity of God's existence, whereby the psalmist relieves and supports himself under the consideration of his own and his people's frailty and vanity.

u Is. 60. 10. Zech. 1. 12. x Is. 40. 2.

13 Thou shalt arise, *and* ᵘhave mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the ˣset time, is come.

Upon Zion; upon Jerusalem, or thy church and people. *The set time;* the end of those seventy years which thou hast fixed; of which see Jer. xxv. 12; xxix. 10; Dan. ix. 2.

y Ps. 79. 1.

14 For thy servants take pleasure in ʸher stones, and favour the dust thereof.

Thy people value the dust and rubbish of the holy city more than all the palaces of the earth, and passionately desire that it may be rebuilt.

z 1 Kings 8. 43. Ps. 138. 4 Is. 60. 3.

15 So the heathen shall ᶻfear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory

Which was in some sort fulfilled when the rebuilding of the temple and city of God was carried on and finished through so many and great difficulties and oppositions, to the admiration, envy, and terror of their enemies, as we read, Neh. vi. 16; compare Psal. cxxvi. 2; but much more truly and fully in building of the spiritual Jerusalem by Christ, unto whom the Gentiles were gathered, and the princes of the world paid their acknowledgments.

a Is. 60. 1, 2.

16 When the LORD shall build up Zion, ᵃhe shall appear in his glory.

His glorious power, and wisdom, and goodness shall be manifested to all the world.

b Neh. 1. 6, 11. & 2. 8.

17 ᵇHe will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

Of the destitute, i. e. of his poor forsaken, despised people in Babylon. *Not despise*, i. e. will accept and answer.

c Rom. 15. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 11. d Ps. 22. 31. Is. 43. 21.

18 This shall be ᶜwritten for the generation to come: and ᵈthe people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

This shall be written; this wonderful deliverance shall not be lost nor forgotten, but carefully recorded by thy people. *For the generation to come;* for the instruction and encouragement of all succeeding generations. The singular number put for the plural, as is ordinary. *The people which shall be created;* which may be understood, either, 1. Of the Jews which should be restored, who were in a manner dead and buried in the grave, and mere dry bones, Isa. xxvi. 19; Ezek. xxxvii.; and therefore their restoration might well be called a creation; or, as it is elsewhere, a resurrection. Or, 2. Of the Gentiles who should be converted, whose conversion is frequently, and might very justly, be called a second *creation*. See Isa. xliii. 1, 7, 15; lxv. 18; Eph. ii. 10, 15.

e Deut. 26. 15. Ps. 14. 2. & 33. 13, 14.

19 For he hath ᵉlooked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

He hath looked down, to wit, upon us, not like an idle spectator, but with an eye of pity and relief, as the next verse declares. *From the height of his sanctuary;* from his higher or upper sanctuary, to wit, heaven, as the next clause explains it, which is called God's *high and holy place*, Isa. lvii. 15.

f Ps. 79. 11. † Heb. *the children of death.*

20 ᶠTo hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose † those that are appointed to death;

To release his poor captives out of Babylon, and, which is more, from the chains and fetters of sin and Satan, and from eternal destruction.

g Ps. 22. 22.

21 To ᵍdeclare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

That they being delivered might publish and celebrate the name and praises of God in his church.

22 When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

When the Gentiles shall gather themselves to the Jews, and join with them in the praise and worship of the true God, and of the Messias. This verse seems to be added to intimate, that although the psalmist in this Psalm respects the deliverance of the Jews out of Babylon, yet he had a further design and a principal respect unto that greater and more general deliverance of his church and people by the Messias.

† Heb. *afflicted.* h Job 21. 21.

23 He † weakened my strength in the way; he ʰshortened my days.

He, to wit, God, to whom he ascribes these calamities, ver. 10; to whom therefore he addresseth himself for relief. *In the way;* either, 1. In the midst of our expectations. Whilst we are expecting the accomplishment of thy promise, either of bringing us out of Babylon, or of sending the Messias, we faint, and one of us perish after another, and our hope is like the giving up of the ghost. Or rather, 2. In the midst of the course of our lives; which sense is confirmed, 1. From the following clause; which, after the manner, explains the former, *he shortened my days;* as also from the next verse, where he begs relief from God against

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this misery in these words, *take me not away in the midst of my days.* 2. From the use of this word *way*, which is used for the course of a man's life, Psal. ii. 12, and (which comes to the same thing) for the course of a journey, as it is opposed to the end of the journey, Gen. xxiv. 27; Exod. xxiii. 20, and elsewhere; the life of man being oft compared to a journeying or travelling, and death to his journey's end. And the psalmist here speaks (as other sacred writers do elsewhere, and as all sorts of writers frequently do) of the whole commonwealth as of one man, and of its continuance as of the life of one man. And so this seems to be the matter of his complaint and humble expostulation with God: O Lord, thou didst choose us out of all the world to be thy peculiar people, and didst plant us in Canaan, and cause a glorious temple to be built to thy name, to be the only place of thy public and solemn worship in the world, and didst make great and glorious promises, that thine *eyes and heart* should be *upon it perpetually*, 1 Kings ix. 3, and that thy people should be planted in thy land, so as not to be moved any more or afflicted, as they had been in the days of the judges, 2 Sam. vii. 10, 11; from whence we promised to ourselves a long and settled prosperity. But, alas, how soon were our hopes blasted! not long after the beginning of our settlement, in Rehoboam's time, and so successively in the course of our affairs under the following kings, till at last thou didst give us up to ruin and desolation, as at this day. And this he doth not allege to accuse God, or excuse himself or his people, but only that he might move the Divine Majesty to show them some pity, considering the shortness of their days, and his own eternity, as he pursues the argument in the following verses. *My days;* the days of my life, or of my prosperous state, as above, ver. 11; for adversity is a kind of death, and is frequently so called.

i Is. 38. 10.
k Ps. 90. 2. Hab. 1. 12.

24 [i]I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: [k]thy years *are* throughout all generations.

Take me not away; do not wholly cut off and destroy thy people of Israel. *In the midst of my days;* before they come to a full age and stature, and to the plenary possession of thy promises, and especially of that great and fundamental promise of the Messias, in and by whom alone their happiness is to be completed, and until whose coming thy church is in its nonage; of which see Gal. iv. 1—4. Possibly the psalmist (whom some learned interpreters suppose to be Daniel) may have respect to that prophecy, Dan. ix. 24, 25, which probably was published before this time; for this time was almost precisely the midst of the days between the building of the material temple by Solomon, and the building of the spiritual temple, or the church, by the Messias; there being about a thousand years distance between those two periods, whereof seventy prophetical weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, were yet to come. And so he prays that God would not root them out in this Babylonish captivity, but would graciously restore them to their own land, and preserve them as a church and nation there until the coming of the Messias. *Thy years are throughout all generations:* though we successively die and perish, yet thou art the everlasting and unchangeable God, and therefore art and wilt ever be able to deliver thy people, and faithful in performing all thy promises; and therefore we beseech thee to pity our frail and languishing state, and give us a more settled and lasting felicity than yet we have enjoyed; and therefore we trust that thy people shall *continue and be established before thee*, as he saith, ver. 28, because as thou art the everlasting God, so thou hast made an everlasting covenant with them, Psal. cv. 10; Isa. lv. 3; Jer. xxxii. 40, to be their God for ever, and therefore thou wilt not now forsake or reject us.

l Gen. 1. 1. & 2. 1. Heb. 1. 10.

25 [l]Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands.

The eternity of God looks both backward and forward, it is both without beginning and without end. The former is affirmed and illustrated ver. 24, 26, 27, the latter is clearly implied in this verse. Thou hadst a being before the creation of the world, when there was nothing but eternity, but the earth and heavens had a beginning given them by thy almighty power.

m Is. 34. 4. & 51. 6. & 65. 17. & 66. 22. Rom. 8. 20. 2 Pet. 3. 7, 10, 11, 12. n ver. 12. † Heb. *stand.*

26 [m]They shall perish, but [n]thou shalt †endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

They shall perish; either, 1. As to the substance of them, which shall be annihilated. Or, 2. As to their present nature and use: see Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22; 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 11. The heavens and the earth, although they be the most permanent of all visible beings, and their continuance is oft mentioned to signify the stability and immutability of things, yet if compared with thee are as nothing; they had a beginning, and shall have an end. *Wax old,* i. e. decay and perish. *Like a garment* which is worn out and laid aside, and exchanged for another. And so shall this present frame of heaven and earth be.

o Mal. 3. 6. Heb. 13. 8. Jam. 1. 17.

27 But [o]thou *art* the same, and thy years shall have no end.

p Ps. 69. 36.

28 [p]The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

Though the heavens and the earth perish, and though we thy servants *pine away in our iniquities*, according to thy righteous sentence and threatening, Lev. xxvi. 39, and die in captivity; yet by virtue of thy eternal and unchangeable nature and covenant, we rest assured that our children, and their children after them, shall enjoy the promised mercies, a happy restitution to and settlement in their own land, and the presence of our and their Messias, whom, being not to come till after four hundred and ninety years, we shall not live to see. The expression here used is general, not without design, partly to show that this promised blessing belongs to the Jews not upon the account of any carnal relation to Abraham, but as they are and continue to be God's servants, from whom, if they revolt, they lose this and all their other privileges; and partly to imply that it belongs to all God's faithful servants, and to their children, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, of whose conversion he spoke, ver. 22. *Before thee;* in the place of thy gracious presence; either here in thy church, or hereafter in heaven, from which we are now banished. And this phrase further intimates that their happiness did not consist in the enjoyment of the outward blessings of the land of Canaan, but in the presence and fruition of God there, which he mentions as the top and upshot of all his desires and their felicities.

PSALM CIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a thankful commemoration and celebration of God's mercies to the psalmist himself, and to the people of Israel, and to all good men.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David stirreth up himself to bless God, 1, 2; *who forgiveth his sins,* 3, *redeemeth and satisfieth his soul,* 4, 5; *for other manifold mercies to himself and the church,* 6—14. *He considereth the frailty of man,* 15, 16; *and showeth God's everlasting mercy to his covenanted ones,* 17—19. *He exhorteth all creatures to praise him,* 20—22.

a ver. 22. Ps. 104. 1. & 146. 1.

BLESS [a]the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

Let all my thoughts and affections be engaged, and united, and stirred up to the highest pitch in and for this work.

b Ps. 130. 8. Is. 33. 24. Matt. 9. 2, 6. Mark 2. 5, 10, 11. Luke 7. 47. c Ex. 15. 26. Ps. 147. 3. Jer. 17. 14.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

3 [b]Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who [c]healeth all thy diseases;

Either, 1. Spiritual diseases, lusts or corruptions, which he subdues and purgeth out by his grace; as this phrase is used, Psal. xli. 4; Isa. vi. 10; liii. 5. Or, 2. Corporal diseases or miseries, of which this word is used, 2 Chron. xxi. 18. 19; Jer. xiv. 18; xvi. 4.

d Ps. 34. 22. & 56. 13. e Ps. 5. 12.

4 Who [d]redeemeth thy life from destruction; [e]who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

From destruction, both temporal and eternal; from deadly

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dangers and miseries. *Crowneth thee*, i. e. encompasseth and adorneth thee, as a crown doth.

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good
f Is. 40. 31. *things; so that* [f] thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Who satisfieth all thy just desires and necessities. *Like the eagle's;* either, 1. As the eagle reneweth her youth by casting all her old feathers, and getting new ones, whereby it seems to grow young again. But this, being common to all birds, would not have been appropriated to the eagle. Or rather, 2. Like the youth of an eagle. As the eagle lives long in great strength and vigour, so that the *old age of* an *eagle* is used proverbially for a lively and vigorous old age; so this is a promise of a long and comfortable life.

g Ps. 146. 7. 6 [g] The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

Which being a singular perfection, and that wherein most of the princes of the world were and are defective, is justly celebrated in God.

h Ps. 147. 19. 7 [h] He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

His ways; either, 1. His laws, which are oft called God's *ways*. Or, 2. The manner and methods of his dealings with men, and especially with his people, called in the next clause his *acts;* his merciful and gracious nature and providence, which is particularly called God's *way*, Exod. xxxiii. 13, compared with ver. 18, 19, and with Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, and which is here described in the following verses. *His acts;* his marvellous and gracious works.

i Ex. 34. 6, 7. Num. 14. 18. Deut. 5. 10. Neh. 9. 17. Ps. 86. 15. Jer. 32. 18. + Heb. *great of mercy.* 8 [i] The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and † plenteous in mercy.

Slow to anger; not speedily punishing sinners, but patiently waiting for their repentance.

k Ps. 30. 5. Is. 57. 16. Jer. 3. 5. Micah 7. 18. 9 [k] He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

He will not always chide, or *contend*, by his judgments with sinners, but is ready to be reconciled to them, to wit, upon their true repentance, as is manifest from innumerable texts, and from the whole scope and design of Scripture. *Anger;* which word is understood here, as also Lev. xix. 18; Jer. iii. 5; Nah. i. 2, as is evident from the thing itself, and from the former clause. The Hebrew is a concise language, and there are many such ellipses in it, as 2 Sam. vi. 6, compared with Exod. ix. 9; and 1 Chron. xviii. 6, compared with 2 Sam. viii. 6; Psal. iii. 7; Eccles. vii. 15.

l Ezra 9. 13. 10 [l] He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

He hath punished us less than our iniquities have deserved, as was confessed, Ezra ix. 13.

m Ps. 57. 10. Eph. 3. 18. + Heb. *according to the height of the heaven.* 11 [m] For † as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

So much above their deserts and expectations, and above the mercy which one man showeth to another. *Toward them that fear them;* which clause he adds here, as also ver. 17, 18, to prevent men's mistakes and abuses of God's mercy, and to dash the vain hopes of impenitent sinners in God's mercy.

12 As far as the east is from the west,
n Is. 43. 25. Mic. 7. 18. *so* far hath he [n] removed our transgressions from us.

The guilt of our sins from our persons and consciences. The sense is, He hath fully pardoned them, so as never to remember them more, as he promiseth, Jer. xxxi. 34; Heb. x. 17.

o Mal. 3. 17. 13 [o] Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

p Ps. 78. 39. q Gen. 3. 19. Eccles. 12. 7. 14 For he knoweth our frame; [p] he remembereth that we *are* [q] dust.

Our frame; either, 1. The corruption of our natures; which God is pleased sometimes to make an argument to pity and spare men, as Gen. viii. 21. So the sense is, He considereth that great and constant propension to evil which is naturally in all mankind, and that therefore if he should deal severely with us, he should immediately destroy us all. So this clause contains one motive of God's pity, and the next another. Or rather, 2. The weakness and mortality of our natures, and the frailty and misery of our condition, as it seems to be explained in the following clause, *that we are but dust.* So the sense is, He considereth that if he should let loose his hand upon us, and pour forth all his wrath, we should be suddenly and irrecoverably destroyed, and therefore he spareth us.

r Ps. 90. 5, 6. 1 Pet. 1. 24. s Job 14. 1, 2. Jam. 1. 10, 11. 15 *As for* man, [r] his days *are* as grass: [s] as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

A flower of the field; which is more exposed to winds and other violences than the flowers of the garden, which are secured by the art and care of the gardener.

† Heb. *it is not.* t Job 7. 10. & 20. 9. 16 For the wind passeth over it, and † it is gone; and [t] the place thereof shall know it no more.

A blasting or stormy wind bloweth upon it, and there is no more any appearance nor remembrance of it in the place where it stood and flourished.

u Ex. 20. 6. 17 But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness [u] unto children's children;

But though we quickly decay and perish, yet God's mercy to us doth not die with us; but as it was from eternity exercised in gracious purposes, so it will be continued unto eternity in that future and endless life. *Upon them that fear him:* see before on ver. 11. *His righteousness;* either his faithfulness, or (that this branch may answer to the former) his mercy or benignity; this word being frequently used in both these senses, as hath been proved before. But it is here called *righteousness*, to intimate that God's kindness to the posterity of his people is not only an act of his goodness, but also a discharge of his obligation under which he put himself to them, as elsewhere, so Exod. xx. 6, to which this place seems to relate. Hence it is called *mercy to Abraham*, and *truth to Jacob*, Micah vii. 20.

x Deut. 7. 9. 18 [x] To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

To such as keep his covenant; to them that perform the condition of God's covenant, that sincerely love and obey him. Such restrictions are oft added, as in the general to overthrow the presumptuous hopes of ungodly men, so particularly to admonish the Israelites not to rest too much upon the privileges of their parents, or the covenant made with them, nor to expect any benefit by it, but upon condition of their continuance in God's covenant. *That remember his commandments to do them;* that have them much in their thoughts, and practise them in the course of their lives.

y Ps. 11. 4. z Ps. 47. 2. Dan. 4. 25, 34, 35 19 The LORD hath prepared his [y] throne in the heavens; and [z] his kingdom ruleth over all.

Prepared; or rather, *established.* Having celebrated God's mercy to his people, he now praiseth him for his excellent majesty and universal dominion. *His throne in the heavens;* which notes the eminency, glory, power, stability, and unchangeableness of God's kingdom. *Over all;* over all creatures both in heaven and in earth.

a Ps. 148. 2. + Heb. *mighty in strength.* See Ps. 78. 25. b Matt. 6. 10. Heb. 1. 14. 20 [a] Bless the LORD, ye his angels, † that excel in strength, that [b] do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Angels; which, though glorious creatures, are but his ministers and messengers, as the word signifies. And by inviting the angels to bless God, he quickens men to the same duty, as having more dependence upon God, and obligation to him. *That excel in strength;* of which see one evidence 2 Kings xix. 35. You are freed from the impotencies and infirmities of mankind. *That do his commandments;* that live in a universal, constant, and perfect

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obedience to all God's commands, which the best of men through the infirmity of the flesh do frequently violate. *Hearkening unto the voice of his word;* that diligently wait for God's commands or errands, and execute them with all cheerfulness and readiness.

21 Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* [c]his hosts; [d]*ye* ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

[c] Josh. v. 14. Psa. ciii. 9, 20. Heb. i. 14. [d] Heb. i. 14.

All ye his hosts; ye angels; to whom he still continues his address, and whom he more particularly describes by the name of *hosts*, a title oft given to the angels, as Gen. xxii. 2; 1 Kings xxii. 19; 2 Chron. xviii. 18; Luke ii. 13; Rev. xix. 14, in regard of their vast numbers, mighty power, unanimous concurrence, and exquisite order. In the former verse the expression was indefinite and general, *ye his angels*, here it is universal and yet particular, *all ye his hosts*. He seems to apply himself to the several orders of angels, of whom see Eph. iii. 10; Col. i. 16, and to each individual angel. *Ye ministers:* this Hebrew word is commonly used of the highest and most honourable sort of servants. *That do his pleasure;* whose constant business and delight it is to execute the will and commands of God.

[e] Ps. 145. 10. [f] ver. 1.

22 [e]Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: [f]bless the LORD, O my soul.

All his works in all places of his dominion; all creatures, both in heaven and earth, according to your several capacities. *Bless the Lord, O my soul;* which thou hast special and abundant reason to do. Thus he ends the Psalm with the same words wherewith he began it.

PSALM CIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

As the next foregoing Psalm treats of the special favours of God to his church and people, so this declares and celebrates the wonderful and gracious works of God to all mankind in the creation of this visible world, and in the wise and powerful disposition of all things therein to man's use and comfort.

The prophet, stirring up himself to praise God for his power manifested in the creation, 1—6, his wonderful wisdom and power in governing of all things, 7—32, voweth perpetually to praise him, 33, 34, and curseth the unthankfulness of the wicked, 35.

[a] Ps. 103. 1. [b] Ps. 21. 5.

BLESS [a]the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; [b]thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

Thou art very great, as in thy own nature and perfections, so also in the glory of thy works. *Clothed;* surrounded and adorned. *With honour and majesty;* with honourable majesty.

[c] Dan. 7. 9. [d] Is. 40. 22. & 42. 5. & 45. 12.

2 [c]Who coverest *thyself* with light as *with* a garment: [d]who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

Coverest, or *adornest,* or *clothest. With light;* either, 1. With that *light which no man can approach unto,* as it is called 1 Tim. vi. 16, wherewith therefore he may well be said to be covered or hid from the eyes of mortal men. Or rather, 2. With that first-created light, Gen i. 3, which the psalmist fitly puts in the first place, as being the first of God's visible works. *Like a curtain;* the use whereof it hath, partly in reference to that glorious mansion of the blessed God and his holy angels, which these visible heavens (far above which it is, Eph. iv. 10) do veil and cover; and partly in reference to the earth, which they enclose and protect.

[e] Amos 9. 6. [f] Is. 51. 13. [g] Ps. 18. 10.

3 [e]Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: [f]who maketh the clouds his chariot: [g]who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

In the waters; in the waters above the heavens, as they are called, Gen. i. 7; or, in the clouds, as it is explained in the next clause, in which he many times resides and rides, and manifests his presence. Who manageth and employeth the clouds and winds in his service.

4 [h]Who maketh his angels spirits; [i]his ministers a flaming fire:

[h] Heb. i. 7. [i] 2 Kings 2. 11. & 6. 17.

Who maketh his angels spirits, i. e. of a spiritual or incorporeal nature, that they might be fitter for their employments. Or, *who maketh his angels winds,* as this last word most commonly signifies, i. e. who made them like the winds, powerful, and active, and nimble in executing God's pleasure. Or, who useth and governeth those glorious creatures at his pleasure, even as he commands the senseless winds. *A flaming fire;* or, like *a flaming fire;* the note of similitude being here understood, as it is Gen. xlix. 9; Deut. xxxii. 22; Psal. xi. 1, and oft elsewhere; to which he compares the angels for their irresistible force, and great agility and fervency in the execution of God's commands. Or the sense is, Who sometimes clotheth his angels with subtile bodies of wind, or air, or of fire, as he sees fit. And the angels may not unfitly be mentioned in this place amongst and in the close of those works of God which were done in the heavens, of which he hath hitherto spoken, ver. 2, 3, because they were made at the same time when the heavens were made, and for the same uses and purposes, and because they are commonly employed by God in managing the clouds, and winds, and meteors, to accomplish God's designs by them. But this verse is otherwise rendered, both by Jewish and some Christian interpreters, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, *He maketh the winds his angels,* and *the flame* or *flames of fire* (i. e. the lightning and thunder, and other fiery meteors in the air) *his ministers;* he maketh use of them no less than of the holy angels, and ofttimes for the same purposes, and they do as certainly and readily obey all his commands as the blessed angels themselves do. This interpretation may seem most agreeable to the scope of the Psalm, and to the context, wherein he is speaking of the evil works of God. The only difficulty is, that this seems to invalidate the allegation and argument of the apostle, who expounds it of the angels, Heb. i. 7. But indeed it doth not; for (to say nothing of other solutions given by other men) when the psalmist saith that God *maketh* or useth *the winds* as *his angels,* &c., he plainly signifies that the angels are God's ministers or servants, no less than the winds; and that is sufficient to justify the apostle's argument, and to prove the pre-eminency of Christ above the angels; which is the apostle's design in that place.

5 †[k]*Who* laid the foundations of the earth, *that* it should not be removed for ever.

† Heb. *He hath founded the earth upon her bases.*

[k] Job 26. 7. & 38. 4, 6. Ps. 24. 2. & 136. 6. Eccles. 1. 4.

He hath founded or *established the earth upon its own basis* or *foundations,* i. e. upon itself, or its own weight, whereby it stands as fast and unmovable, as if it were built upon the strongest foundations imaginable; which is a stupendous work of Divine power and wisdom. *That it should not be removed* out of its proper place, which is the lowest part of the world. *For ever;* as long as the world continues.

6 [l]Thou coveredst it with the deep as *with* a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

[l] Gen. 7. 19.

Thou coveredst it with the deep; either, 1. In the general deluge. Or rather, 2. In the first creation, as we read, Gen. i. 2, 9; of which the psalmist is here speaking. *The waters stood above the mountains;* the mountains were not made by the deluge, as some have thought, who for that reason understand this verse of the said deluge, for it is apparent they were before it, Gen. vii. 19, and most probably were in the first creation, because this variety of mountains and valleys is both ornamental and useful to the world.

7 [m]At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

[m] Gen. 8. 1.

At thy rebuke; upon thy severe command, Gen. i. 9; which he calls a *rebuke,* to imply that there was something in that state of things which might seem to need reproof and correction, even that confusion of earth and water together, which therefore God amended in his second day's work. *They fled;* they immediately went to the place which God had allotted to them. *Of thy thunder;* of thy sovereign command, which as they could not but hear, so they durst

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not disobey. He ascribes sense and reason to inanimate creatures by a figure called *prosopopœia*.

‖ Or, *The mountains ascend, the valleys descend.*
n Gen. 8. 5.
o Job 38. 10, 11.

8 ‖ [n]They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto [o]the place which thou hast founded for them.

In that first division of the waters from the earth, some part of them by God's command, contrary to their own nature, went upwards, and became springs in the mountains, and the greatest part went downwards to the channels made for them. Others, both ancient and later interpreters, read the words thus, *The mountains ascend, the valleys descend;* when the waters were separated, part of the earth went upward, and made the mountains; and part went downward, and made the valleys or low grounds. But our translation seems the best, as being most agreeable to the context, because he speaks of the waters both in the foregoing and following verses. *Unto the place which thou hast founded for them;* unto their proper channels and receptacles which God provided for them.

p Job 26. 10. Ps. 33. 7. Jer. 5. 22.
q Gen. 9. 11, 15.

9 [p]Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; [q]that they turn not again to cover the earth.

A bound; even the sand of the sea-shore, as it is expressed, Jer. v. 22, which, though in itself contemptible, and a very poor defence to the earth against that swelling and raging element, yet by God's almighty power and gracious providence is made sufficient for that purpose; which is noted as a wonderful work of God, Job xxxviii. 8, &c. *The earth*, to wit, the whole earth, as it did in the beginning of the creation. This was God's appointment, and the course of nature settled by him. But when men transgressed their bounds, all the laws of God and men, it is not strange if the waters also transgressed their bounds, and once again overwhelmed the earth in the general deluge.

† Heb. *Who sendeth.*
† Heb. *walk.*

10 † He sendeth the springs into the valleys, *which* † run among the hills.

The springs, and the rivers which come from them. *The hills;* wherewith God hath shut in the rivers where he saw fit, that they might not overflow the land.

† Heb. *break.*

11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses † quench their thirst.

Which he mentions, partly because they are dry and thirsty creatures; and partly because they live in dry and desolate wildernesses, and are neither ruled nor regarded by men, and are most stupid creatures, and yet are plentifully provided for by the care and bounty of Divine Providence.

† Heb. *give a voice.*

12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, *which* † sing among the branches.

By them; either upon the waters, where many fowls have their common abode; or in the ground nigh unto them; or in the trees, which commonly grow by the banks of rivers. *Which sing among the branches;* which, being delighted and refreshed by the waters, send forth their pleasant notes.

r Ps. 147. 8.
s Ps. 65. 9, 10.
t Jer. 10. 13. & 14. 22.

13 [r]He watereth the hills from his chambers: [s]the earth is satisfied with [t]the fruit of thy works.

He watereth the hills; which most need moisture, and have least of it in them. *From his chambers;* from the clouds, as above, ver. 3. *The earth is satisfied;* by this means all the parts of the earth, the mountains as well as the valleys, are made fruitful. *With the fruit of thy works;* with the effects of those sweet showers, which he calls God's *works*, because he alone can and doth give them, as is noted, Jer. x. 13; xiv. 22.

u Gen. 1. 29, 30. & 3. 18. & 9. 3. Ps. 147. 8.
x Ps. 136. 25. & 147. 9. Job 28. 5.

14 [u]He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth [x]food out of the earth;

Herb for the service of man; both for delight, and for necessity, either as food or physic. And this God doth; he watereth the earth, that thereby it may be prepared or disposed for the production of necessary provisions for beasts and for men, *that* so *he* (to wit, God) *may bring forth food out of the earth*, which without this blessing of God the earth would never yield.

y Judg. 9. 13. Ps. 23. 5. Prov. 31. 6, 7.
† Heb. *to make his face shine with oil*, or, *more than oil.*

15 And [y]wine *that* maketh glad the heart of man, *and* † oil to make *his* face to shine, and bread *which* strengtheneth man's heart.

Wine; he also bringeth out of the earth the vines which yield wine. *Oil to make his face to shine:* he alludes to the custom of those times and places, which was upon solemn and festival occasions to anoint their faces with oil. See Psal. xxiii. 5. But these words with the former are by divers learned interpreters rendered otherwise, which seems more agreeable to the order and contexture of the Hebrew text, *And* (he giveth) *wine* that *maketh glad the heart of man, to make* (or, *that he may make*, i. e. that thereby he may also make) *his face to shine more than oil*, i. e. more than it shineth when it is anointed with oil; or, as *with oil.* So he speaks only of the wine, which he commends from two qualities, that it makes the heart cheerful, and the countenance pleasant. *Bread*, i. e. bread corn, by a metonymy. *Which strengtheneth man's heart;* which hath a singular faculty to preserve or renew our strength and vigour; whence it is called *the staff of life.*

z Num. 24. 6.

16 The trees of the LORD are full *of sap;* the cedars of Lebanon, [z]which he hath planted;

The trees of the Lord, i. e. which the Lord hath planted, as the next clause expounds this; which came up and grew, and thrive not by man's art and industry, but merely by the care of God's providence. *Are full of sap*, Heb. *are* or *shall be satisfied*, to wit, with the rain, of whose good effects he is yet speaking. *The cedars of Lebanon;* yea, even the tallest and largest cedars, such as these were, are supported and nourished by it.

17 Where the birds make their nests: *as for* the stork, the fir trees *are* her house.

The stork; which make their nests not only in the tops of houses, but also in the field and in high trees, as Varro and others have noted. *The fir trees;* which also are trees of great height and bigness; and which, being here said to afford the storks a house, are thereby supposed to be preserved and nourished by the rain water.

a Prov. 30. 26.

18 The high hills *are* a refuge for the wild goats; *and* the rocks for [a]the conies.

So he passeth from the rain to other works of God's providence, as that God hath made suitable and sufficient provision for the security of these creatures against their persecutors. Although this verse also may have a reference to the former work, and the barren and rocky hills may be mentioned as receiving benefit by the rain, and it may be thus rendered, And *the high hills*, (understand, *are satisfied*, which is expressed ver. 16, and may very well be carried hither) which (that particle being frequently understood) are *a refuge for wild goats*, and *the rocks* (understand out of the former branch, according to the usual manner, *which are a refuge)* for *the conies;* or, as others translate this word, for the *mountain mice.*

b Gen. 1. 14.
c Job 38. 12.

19 [b]He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun [c]knoweth his going down.

For seasons; to measure and distinguish the times, both months, and, amongst many nations, years also; as also the seasons of divers natural events, as of the ebbing and flowing of the waters, and of the humours in man's body; and other seasons for sacred and civil affairs, which were commonly regulated by the moon, not only amongst the Jews, but among heathens also. See on Gen. i. 14. *His going down*, to wit, the time and place in which he is to set every day of the year, which, though varied from day to day, yet he so regularly and exactly observes, as if he had the understanding of a man or angel to guide him in obeying the laws of his Creator. See Job xxxviii. 12. What is here expressed concerning his setting is necessarily supposed concerning his rising also; but he mentions only his setting, as most agreeable to the context, because that did usher in the rising of the moon, of which he now spake, and the entrance of the night, of which he speaks in the next words.

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20 [a]Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein †all the beasts of the forest do creep *forth*.

[a] Job 38. 12. Psa. 74. 20. † Heb. *creep*.

Darkness; which succeeds the light by virtue of thy decree and established order. *Creep forth*, to look out for prey, which in the day time they dare not do for fear of men. So by this vicissitude of day and night God hath wisely and mercifully provided both for men, that they may follow their day labours without danger from wild beasts, and for the beasts, that they may procure a subsistence.

21 [c]The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

[c] Job 38. 39. Joel 1. 20.

The young lions; which can no more subsist without Divine Providence than those which are most old and decrepit. *Roar after their prey;* they roar when they come within sight and reach of their prey, as naturalists observe; whereby this place may be reconciled with Amos iii. 4. *Seek their meat from God:* this is a figurative and poetical expression: their roaring is a kind of natural prayer to God for relief, as the cries of infants are a kind of prayers to their mothers for the breast. And this is justly noted as an act of God's special providence, because the lions are very ravenous, and need much prey, and also are dull in their scent, and so difficultly find it, and slow in their motion, and unable to reach it; and therefore God hath provided another creature, of quicker sense and motion, which is usually confederate with them, and procures prey for them, partaking of it with or after them.

22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

Or rather, *they retire* or *betake themselves;* for the lions do not commonly go in companies to one place, but severally, each to his own den.

23 Man goeth forth unto [f]his work and to his labour until the evening.

[f] Gen. 3. 19.

With security and confidence, knowing the nature and custom of wild beasts, that they hide themselves by day.

24 [g]O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

[g] Prov. 3. 19.

Of excellent and comfortable things, which are the effects of thy bounty and power.

25 *So is* this great and wide sea, wherein *are* things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

Creeping: this word is common to all creatures that move without feet, touching with their belly the element in which they move, whether they creep upon the earth or swim in the sea.

26 There go the ships: *there is* that [h]leviathan, *whom* thou hast †made to play therein.

[h] Job 41. 1. † Heb. *formed*.

That leviathan; either the whale or the crocodile; of which see the notes on Job xl., xli.; who being of such vast strength and absolute dominion in the sea, tumbles in it with great security, and sports himself with other creatures which he taketh and devoureth at his pleasure.

27 [i]These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give *them* their meat in due season.

[i] Psa. 104. 27. & 145. 15.

These all, both beasts and fishes, *wait upon thee,* expect supplies only from thy providence; which is said of them figuratively, and with an allusion to the manner of tame beasts and fowls, which commonly look after and wait upon those persons who bring their food to them. *In due season;* when it is necessary or convenient for them; by which expression he intimates the moderation of the beasts in their desires of food, and tacitly reproves the intemperance of men who feed themselves in season and out of season.

28 *That* thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

Whatsoever they receive is from thy bounty and gift. *Thou openest thine hand;* thou providest plentifully for them; as this phrase implies, Deut. xv. 1: compare Prov. xxxi. 20.

29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: [k]thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

[k] Job 34. 14, 15. Psa. 146. 4. Eccles. 12. 7.

Thou hidest thy face, when thou withdrawest or suspendest the favour and care of thy providence. *Troubled;* dejected and distressed. *Takest away;* so this word is used, Hos. iv. 3; Zeph. i. 2, and elsewhere. *To their dust;* to the earth, from whence they had their first original.

30 [l]Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

[l] Isa. 32. 15. Ezek. 37. 9.

Thy spirit; either, 1. That spirit by which they live, which is called *the spirit of a beast,* Eccles. iii. 21, which is called *their breath* or *spirit,* (for the word is the same there and here,) ver. 29, and here may be called God's *spirit,* because it was given and preserved by him. Or rather, 2. Thy quickening spirit; for here seems to be an opposition between *their spirit,* ver. 29, and *thy spirit* here, and this latter is mentioned as the creating or productive cause of the former. And this may be understood either, 1. Of the Holy Ghost; to whom, no less than to the Father and the Son, the work of creation is ascribed, Job xxxiii. 4; Psal. xxxiii. 6. Or rather, 2. That quickening power of God by which he produceth life in the creatures from time to time. For he speaks not here of the first creation, but of the continued and repeated production of living creatures. *They are created;* either, 1. The same living creatures which were languishing and dying are strangely revived and restored; which may not unfitly be called a *creation,* as that word is sometimes used, because it is in a manner the giving of a new life and being to a creature. Or, 2. Other living creatures are produced or generated; the word *created* being taken in its largest sense for the production of things out of indisposed matter by second causes, as it is used Isa. xli. 20; liv. 16, &c. *Thou renewest the face of the earth;* and thus by thy wise and wonderful providence thou preservest the succession of living creatures upon the earth, which otherwise would be desolate or without inhabitants.

31 The glory of the LORD †shall endure for ever: the LORD [m]shall rejoice in his works.

† Heb. *shall be.* [m] Gen. 1. 31.

So the sense is, Thus God doth and will advance the glory of his wisdom, and power, and goodness in upholding and continuing the works of his hands from generation to generation, and he doth and will take pleasure both in the preservation and blessing of his works, as also in his reflection upon these works of his providence, as he did rest and delight himself in the contemplation of his works of creation, as is noted, Gen. i. 31; ii. 2, 3. But the words are by divers, and, it may seem, more agreeably to the Hebrew text, rendered thus, *Let* (for the first word is of the imperative mood) *the glory of the Lord endure for ever, and let the Lord have joy* (or, *then shall the Lord rejoice*) *in his works.* So this is added as a convenient doxology or thanksgiving after the commemoration of his great and gracious works; and the sense may be this, Seeing therefore God hath enriched the earth and us with so many fruits of his bounty, let it be our constant desire and endeavour that God may be perpetually served and glorified in and by them, and that God may be no more grieved at the remembrance of his kindness to us, as he was, Gen. vi. 5, 6, and thereby be again provoked to destroy us, but may take pleasure in beholding and cherishing of his own workmanship.

32 He looketh on the earth, and it [n]trembleth: [o]he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

[n] Hab. 3. 10. [o] Psa. 144. 5.

This is a further illustration of God's powerful providence over all the creatures, and their dependence upon him; as when he affords his favour to creatures, they live and thrive, so on the contrary one angry look or touch of his upon the hills or earth makes them tremble and smoke, as once Sinai did when God appeared in it. And this consideration he may possibly suggest to enforce the foregoing exhortation of glorifying God, because if we do not give

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him the glory due to his name, he can quickly right himself, and destroy us and all his works.

p Ps. 63. 4. & 146. 2. 33 [p]I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

But whatsoever others do, I will not fail to give God his glory and due praises.

34 My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.

My meditation; or, *my speech*, or *discourse;* my praising of God, mentioned ver. 33. *Of him;* concerning the glory of his works. *Shall be sweet;* either, 1. To God; he will graciously accept it; praise being his most acceptable sacrifice, as is affirmed, Psal. lxix. 30, 31. Or rather, 2. To myself, as may be gathered from the next clause. He implies that he shall not only do this work, which a man may do unwillingly, or by constraint, but that he will do it cheerfully, and with delight; which is most pleasing to God. *I will be glad in the Lord;* I will rejoice in the contemplation of God's works, and in praising him for them.

q Ps. 37. 38. Prov. 2. 22. 35 Let [q]the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no

r ver. 1. more. [r]Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

But as for those ungodly creatures who do not regard the works of the Lord, which is noted as a most grievous sin, and punished with a grievous imprecation, like this, Psal. xxviii. 4, 5, nor give him the glory due to his name, but dishonour God, and abuse his creatures, and thereby provoke God to destroy the earth, and the men and things which are upon it, it is my prayer for thine honour, and for the safeguard of all mankind, that those sinners who obstinately and resolutely continue in this practice of dishonouring and disobeying their Creator, may be taken out of this world, that they may no longer infect it, nor procure its total destruction. Or it may be a prediction delivered in the form of an imprecation, as hath been noted before in like cases. But thou, O my soul, come not into this wretched society, but employ thyself in this great work of blessing and praising God; and it is my desire and hope that others will follow my example.

PSALM CV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The penman of this Psalm was David, as is manifest from 1 Chron. xvi. 8, &c. It is a thanksgiving to God for his mercies to his people of Israel.

An exhortation to praise God, and to remember his works and wonders, 1—6. *The story of God's promises to and providences over Abraham,* 7—15, *Joseph,* 16—22, *and Jacob in Egypt,* 23—25; *over Moses delivering the Israelites,* 26—36; *and over them whom he fed in the wilderness, and planted in Canaan,* 37—45.

a 1 Chron. 16. 8,—22. Is. 12. 4. b Ps. 145. 4, 5, 11. O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: [b]make known his deeds among the people.

Call upon his name; or, *proclaim his name*, i. e. the fame and glory of his works, as it follows. *Among his people;* each of you amongst his and your people, or even among the heathens, as you have opportunity.

c Ps. 77. 12. & 119. 27. 2 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: [c]talk ye of all his wondrous works.

3 Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

Glory ye in his holy name; glory in the God whom you serve, as the only true God, and one of infinite power and goodness. *That seek the Lord;* that seek his face or presence, as it follows, his acquaintance and favour, above all the world.

d Ps. 27. 8. 4 Seek the LORD, and his strength: [d]seek his face evermore.

The Lord, and his strength, i. e. by a figure called *hendiadus, the Lord in his strength*, to wit, in his sanctuary, or before the ark, which is called God's *strength*, Psal. lxiii. 2; lxxviii. 61, and *the ark of his strength*, Psal. cxxxii. 8. *His face*, i. e. his gracious presence in his sanctuary, and the blessed fruits of it. See on Psal. xxvii. 8.

e Ps. 77. 11. 5 [e]Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

Either, 1. The laws delivered from his mouth. Or rather, 2. The plagues or punishments (as this same word is used here, ver. 7, and every where) which he brought upon Egypt by his mere word or command, as is oft noted in the history of them in Exodus.

6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.

Children of Jacob; to whom he restrains the former more general expression, because these were the only branch of Abraham's seed to whom the following covenant and blessings belong.

f Is. 26. 9. 7 He *is* the LORD our God: [f]his judgments *are* in all the earth.

Either, 1. The fame of his judgments upon the Egyptians is spread over the face of the earth. Or, 2. God executes his judgments upon all nations and people; which may be here noted as a foil to magnify God's grace to them who were the monuments of his mercy, when all the world besides them fell under his just severity.

g Luke 1. 72. 8 He hath [g]remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations.

He hath remembered, practically, so as to perform it; as that word is frequently used in Scripture. *The word;* the word of promise, or the covenant, as is explained both in the foregoing and following words. And so the *word* is taken Judg. xiii. 12; Luke i. 38. *Commanded*, i. e. established, or ordained, or appointed, as this word is oft taken, as Psal. lxviii. 28; lxxi. 3; cxxxiii. 3; Isa. xiii. 3; xxiii. 11. *To a thousand generations;* to all generations; a certain number being put for an uncertain. He seems to allude to that passage, Exod. xx. 6.

h Gen. 17. 2. & 22. 16, &c. & 26. 3. & 28. 13. & 35. 11. Luke 1. 73. Heb. 6. 17. 9 [h]Which *covenant* he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

Wherewith he ratified the covenant with Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 3.

10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* an everlasting covenant:

For a law; either that it might be as firm and irrevocable as a law; or that it might have the use and force of a law towards God, because God did hereby put himself under an obligation of making it good in regard of his own truth and righteousness.

i Gen. 13. 15. & 15. 18. † Heb. *the cord.* 11 Saying, [i]Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, †the lot of your inheritance:

The portion assigned to you by lot and the designation of Divine Providence. See on Deut. xxxii. 9; Psal. xvi. 6.

k Gen. 34. 30. Deut. 7. 7. & 26. 5. l Heb. 11. 9. 12 [k]When there were *but* a few men in number; yea, very few, [l]and strangers in it.

A few men in number, Heb. *men of number*, i. e. few, who could easily be numbered, *very few*, as the next words explain it.

13 When they went from one nation to another, from *one* kingdom to another people;

Both in Canaan, where there were seven nations, Deut. vii. 1, and in Egypt, &c.

m Gen. 35. 5. 14 [m]He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, [n]he reproved kings for their

n Gen. 12. 17. & 20. 3, 7. sakes;

Both verbally, and really, by his judgments. See Gen. xii. 17; xx. 3.

15 *Saying*, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

Touch not; hurt not, as this word is used of these very persons, Gen. xxvi. 11, 29, and elsewhere. *Mine anointed;* my prophets, as the next words explain it, to wit, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, as is evident; who are called God's

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anointed, because they were eminently blessed of God, and consecrated to be his peculiar people, and to be kings and priests in their families, and replenished with the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, in respect whereof many persons are said to be anointed in Scripture who never had any material oil applied to them, as Psal. xlv. 7; Isa. lxi. 1; 2 Cor. i. 21. And they are called *prophets*, because God did familiarly converse with them, and revealed his mind and will to them, and by them to others; and because they were instructors or teachers of others in the true religion. See Gen. xviii. 19; xx. 7.

[c] Gen. 41. 54. [p] Lev. 26. 26. Isa. 3. 1. Ezek. 4. 16.

16 Moreover [c]he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole [p]staff of bread.

He called for, i. e. he effectually procured, as this word is used, 2 Kings viii. 1; Isa. xlvii. 1, 5; lvi. 7; Rom. iv. 17. *The whole staff of bread*, i. e. bread, which is the staff or support of our animal lives. See Lev. xxvi. 26; Psal. cv. 15; Ezek. iv. 16.

[q] Gen. 45. 5. & 50. 20. [r] Gen. 37. 28, 36.

17 [q]He sent a man before them, *even* Joseph, *who* [r]was sold for a servant:

He sent, by the direction of his secret providence.

[s] Gen. 39. 20. & 40. 15. [t] Heb. *his soul came into iron.*

18 [s]Whose feet they hurt with fetters: †he was laid in iron:

Heb. *his soul came into iron*; which seems to be added emphatically to aggravate his imprisonment, and to show how grievous it was to his very soul, which must needs sympathize with his body, and moreover was greatly vexed to consider both the great injury which was done to him, and yet the foul and public scandal which lay upon him.

[u] Gen. 41. 13.

19 Until the time that his word came: [u]the word of the LORD tried him.

The time; till which time his eminent prudence, and innocency, and piety gave him no relief. *His word*; either, 1. Joseph's word, or his prophecy concerning the chief butler and baker; which is said to *come* when it was fulfilled, as that word is used, Judg. xiii. 12, 17; Ezek. xxiv. 24. and elsewhere. But the event confutes this; for Joseph was not delivered at that time, but *two years after* it, Gen. xli. 1. Or rather, 2. *The word of the Lord*, as it follows; the pronoun relative being here put before the substantive, to which it belongs, as it is also Exod. ii. 6; Job xxiii. 20; Prov. v. 22; xiv. 13. He seems to speak of that word or revelation which *came* first to Pharaoh in a dream, Gen. xli. 1, 2, &c.; and then to Joseph concerning the interpretation of it, ver. 15, 16. For the word of the Lord is said to *come*, not only when it comes to pass, but also and most commonly when it is first revealed, as Jer. vii. 1; xi. 1; xviii. 1; and God is said to *come* when he doth reveal it, as Gen. xx. 3; xxxi. 24. *Tried him*; either, 1. Tried his sincerity and constancy. But that was not done by God's word, but by his rod. Or rather, 2. Discovered him, to wit, unto Pharaoh and his courtiers, how innocent, and holy, and knowing a person he was; or *purged* him from those calumnies which were cast upon him, and so prepared the way for his release, which here follows, ver. 20. This verse may well be rendered thus, *Until the time that his word came*, even *the word of the Lord*, which *tried him*; such ellipses being most usual in the Hebrew text.

[v] Gen. 41. 14.

20 [v]The king sent and loosed him; *even* the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

[x] Gen. 41. 40, 41, 43. [y] Heb. *of all his possession.*

21 [x]He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his †substance:

Heb. *of all his possession*, i. e. of his whole kingdom.

22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.

To bind his princes by his commands, and if they were refractory, to punish them. *Teach his senators*; his wisest counsellors, whom he commanded to receive instructions from Joseph upon all occasions.

[z] Gen. 46. 6. & 47. 27, 28. & 50. 22. [a] Psal. 78. 51. & 106. 22.

23 [z]Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned [a]in the land of Ham.

Israel; Jacob in his person, and with his children. *Of Ham*, i. e. Egypt, so called here, also Psal. lxxviii. 51; cvi. 22; from that cursed Ham, Gen. ix. 22, who was the father of Mizraim, or the Egyptians, Gen. x. 6. And the psalmist seems to call it by this name, to intimate that they were the people of God's curse, and thereby to caution the Israelites against returning to that land, which they were particularly forbidden to do, Deut. xvii. 16.

[a] Ex. 1. 7.

24 And [a]he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.

Not really, but according to their enemies' apprehensions and expressions, Exod. i. 9. Or, *more numerous*, as this word is elsewhere used. So this latter branch answers to the former. And this was true; for though they were not simply more in number than the Egyptians, yet they multiplied much faster.

[b] Ex. 1. 8. &c.

25 [b]He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants.

He turned their heart to hate his people; not by putting this wicked hatred into them, which is not consistent either with the holiness of God's nature, or with the truth of his word, and which was altogether unnecessary, because they had that and all other wickedness in them by nature; but partly, by withdrawing the common gifts and operations of his Spirit, and all other restraints and hinderances to it, and wholly leaving them to their own mistakes, and passions, and corrupt affections, which of their own accord were ready to take that course; partly, by ordering the affairs of his people in such manner as might give them occasion of hatred; and partly, by directing and governing that hatred, which was wholly in and from themselves, so as it should fall upon the Israelites rather than upon other people. *To deal subtilly with his servants*; to destroy them by crafty devices; of which see Exod. i. 11, &c.

[c] Ex. 3. 10. & 4. 12, 14. [d] Num. 16. 5. & 17. 5.

26 [c]He sent Moses his servant; *and* Aaron [d]whom he had chosen.

To be the companion and interpreter of Moses in this expedition, of which see Exod. iii. 10; iv. 12, &c. This clause he adds, to show that Aaron was no less called and chosen by God to this work than Moses, which otherwise was not so evident from the history; or this clause may belong to both Moses and Aaron.

[e] Ex. 7, & 8, & 9, & 10, & 11, & 12. Ps. 78. 43, &c. [f] Ps. 105. 22. † Heb. *words of his signs.*

27 [e]They shewed †his signs among them, [f]and wonders in the land of Ham.

His signs, Heb. *the words of his signs*; an emphatical expression. First they boldly declared the word and will of God concerning the several plagues, and then they actually inflicted them.

[g] Ex. 10. 22. [h] Ps. 99. 7.

28 [g]He sent darkness, and made it dark; and [h]they rebelled not against his word.

Either, 1. The darkness and other plagues; which obeyed God's word, and instantly came at God's call. So this may be a reflection upon the Egyptians, that those brutish or unreasonable creatures were more obedient to the will and command of God than they were. Thus diseases are said to *come* or *go* at God's command, Matt. viii. 8. Or rather, 2. Moses and Aaron, mentioned ver. 26, and called *they*, ver. 27, whose obedience in denouncing and inflicting these plagues, and especially that plague of darkness, is noted and commended here as an act of great faith and fortitude, because they inflicted that plague after Pharaoh had threatened them, Exod. x. 10; as the obedience of their parents is commended as a great act of faith, because they preserved and hid their son contrary to the express command of the king of Egypt.

[i] Ex. 7. 20. Ps. 78. 44.

29 [i]He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.

[k] Ex. 8. 6. Ps. 78. 45.

30 [k]Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.

Their land; their country; for otherwise they were produced by their rivers, Exod. viii. 3. *In the chambers*; which entered *into the chambers*. *Of their kings*; of Pharaoh and his sons, and his chief nobles and governors of provinces under him; for such persons are oft called *kings* in Scripture, Judg. i. 7; 1 Kings xx. 1, 12; Isa xix. 2.

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l Ex. 8. 17, 24. Ps. 78. 45.

31 [l] He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, *and* lice in all their coasts.

Or, borders, i. e. in all their land, even to the utmost ends or borders of it.

m Ex. 9. 23, 25. Ps. 78. 48.

32 [m] † He gave them hail for rain, *and* flaming fire in their land.

† Heb. *He gave their rain hail.*

n Ps. 78. 47.

33 [n] He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.

o Ex. 10. 4, 13, 14. Ps. 78. 46.

34 [o] He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillers, and that without number,

35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

p Ex. 12. 29. Ps. 78. 51.

36 [p] He smote also all the firstborn in their land, [q] the chief of all their strength.

q Gen. 49. 3.

To wit, their first-born, as it is in the first clause, who are so called, Gen. xlix. 3; Psal. lxxviii. 51, and *the beginning of* their *strength*, Deut. xxi. 17.

r Ex. 12. 35.

37 [r] He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and *there was* not one feeble *person* among their tribes.

Feeble person; diseased or unable for his journey; which in so vast a body, and in a time of such mortality as it had been in Egypt, and in a people which had been so long and so dreadfully oppressed as the Israelites were, was wonderful; but they all journeyed on foot, Exod. xii. 37.

s Ex. 12. 33.

38 [s] Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.

Of them, i. e. of the Israelites, lest God for their sakes should destroy them.

t Ex. 13. 21. Neh. 9. 12.

39 [t] He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.

For a covering, to protect them from the heat of the sun, which in that hot and open country had otherwise been intolerable to them, especially in so long a journey.

u Ex. 16. 12, &c. Ps. 78. 18, 27.
x Ps. 78. 24, 25.

40 [u] *The people* asked, and he brought quails, and [x] satisfied them with the bread of heaven.

He speaks of the first giving of quails, Exod. xvi. 13, which God gave them as a refreshment, notwithstanding their sin in desiring them, which he graciously pardoned; and not of that second giving of quails, which God gave them in judgment, Numb. xi., and therefore would not have been numbered here amongst God's favours vouchsafed to them. *With the bread of heaven;* with manna which came out of the air, which is commonly called *heaven.*

y Ex. 17. 6. Num. 20. 11. Ps. 78. 15, 16. 1 Cor. 10. 4.

41 [y] He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places *like* a river.

They flowed in channels which God provided for them, and followed the Israelites in their march, as is noted, 1 Cor. x. 4. Hence they complained no more of want of water till they came to Kadesh, Numb. xx., which was many years after this time.

z Gen. 15. 14.

42 For he remembered [z] his holy promise, *and* Abraham his servant.

Or rather, *with* (as this particle is oft used) *Abraham;* made with or to *Abraham.*

† Heb. *singing.*

43 And he brought forth his people with joy, *and* his chosen with †gladness:

a Deut. 6. 10, 11. Josh. 13. 7, &c. Ps. 78. 55.

44 [a] And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people;

The fruits of their labour, their cities, vineyards, oliveyards, &c.

b Deut. 4. 1, 40. & 6. 21, —25.
† Heb. *Hallelujah.*

45 [b] That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. †Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was unquestionably composed in the time of the Israelites' captivity and dispersion, as is manifest from ver. 47, but whether it was that of Babylon, or some other of a later date, is neither easy nor necessary to determine.

The psalmist exhorteth to praise God, 1—3; *prayeth for the remission of his sin,* 4—6. *The story of the Israelites' rebellion, and of God's mercy, in their journey from Egypt to Canaan, rehearsed,* 7—46; *concluding with prayer and praise unto the Lord,* 47, 48.

† Heb. *Hallelujah.*
a 1 Chron. 16. 34. b Ps. 107. 1 & 118. 1. & 136. 1.

PRAISE † ye the LORD. [a] O [b] give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

He deserves our praises, notwithstanding all our sufferings, which are not to be imputed to him, for he is gracious and merciful, but only to our own sins.

c Ps. 40. 5.

2 [c] Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? *who* can shew forth all his praise?

i. e. His praiseworthy actions, by a usual metonymy.

d Ps. 15. 2. e Acts 24. 16. Gal. 6. 9.

3 Blessed *are* they that keep judgment, *and* he that [d] doeth righteousness at [e] all times.

That keep judgment; that observe and practise what is just and right towards God and men; which in the next clause he calls *doing righteousness. At all times;* in adversity as well as in prosperity. And this clause may belong either, 1. To the last foregoing words, *that doeth righteousness at all times*, constantly and perpetually; or rather, 2. To the first words, *they are blessed at all times*, even in the day of their calamity, which therefore ought not to hinder us from this great and just duty of praising God. And so this verse coheres with the former.

f Ps. 119. 132.

4 [f] Remember me, O LORD, with the favour *that thou bearest unto* thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;

Remember me; or, *us;* for he speaks here in the name and on the behalf of the whole nation, as is evident from ver. 6, 7, 47, of which he oft speaks as of one person. *With the favour that thou bearest unto thy people;* with those favours and blessings which thou dost usually and peculiarly give to thy people; such as the pardon of all our sins, by which we have procured our present miseries, and a complete deliverance, and that improved to thy praise and glory, as well as to our own comfort, as is clearly implied, ver. 47. *Visit me with thy salvation;* give me that salvation or deliverance which thou hast promised, and which none but thou canst give.

5 That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.

See, i. e. enjoy, as the next clause explains it, and as this word is frequently used. *Of thy chosen;* of thy chosen people; which thou usest to give to thine elect, or to such as are Israelites indeed. *That I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation;* with such joy as thou hast formerly afforded unto thy beloved nation or people. *That I may glory;* that we may have occasion to glory in God's goodness towards us. *With thine inheritance;* either in the congregation of thy people, that we thy people may jointly and solemnly praise thy name; or, as thy people, who are commonly called God's *inheritance*, in former ages have frequently done, for the particle *with* is sometimes used as a note of comparison, as it is in the very next verse, and Job ix. 26; Eccles. ii. 16; vii. 11.

g Lev. 26. 40. 1 Kings 8. 47. Dan. 9. 5.

6 [g] We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.

With our fathers; as our fathers did, and have not been made wiser or better by their examples, as we should have been.

7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of

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thy mercies; [b]but provoked *him* at the sea, *even* at the Red sea.

[b] Ex. 14. 11, 12.

Understood not; or, *considered not,* to wit, so as to be rightly affected with them, to give thee that love, and praise, and trust, and obedience which they deserved and required. *Even at the Red Sea;* when those wonders of thy power and goodness in Egypt were but newly done, and fresh in memory.

8 Nevertheless he saved them [i]for his name's sake, [k]that he might make his mighty power to be known.

[i] Ezek. 20. 14.
[k] Ex. 9. 16.

For his name's sake; that he might glorify his name, and vindicate it from the blasphemous reproaches which the Egyptians and others would have cast upon it, if they had been destroyed. This argument was urged by Moses, Numb. xiv. 13, &c.

9 [l]He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so [m]he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.

[l] Ex. 14. 21. Ps. 18. 15. Nah. 1. 4.
[m] Is. 63. 13, 14.

As securely as if they had walked upon the dry land.

10 And he [n]saved them from the hand of him that hated *them*, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

[n] Ex. 14. 30.

Of him that hated them; of Pharaoh, who pursued them with cruel rage and hatred.

11 [o]And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left.

[o] Ex. 14. 27, 28. & 15. 5.

12 [p]Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.

[p] Ex. 14. 31. & 15. 1.
[q] Ex. 15. 24. & 16. 2. & 17. 2. Ps. 78. 11.

13 [q]†They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel:

† Heb. *They made haste, they forgat.*

Soon; even within three days, Exod. xv. 22, 23. *They waited not for his counsel;* they did not wait patiently and believingly upon God for supplies from his hand, in such manner and time as he in his own counsel had appointed and thought fit.

14 [r]But†lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

[r] Num. 11. 4, 33. Ps. 78. 18. 1 Cor. 10. 6.
† Heb. *lusted a lust.*

Lusted exceedingly, to wit, for flesh, as the next verse showeth.

15 [s]And he gave them their request; but [t]sent leanness into their soul.

[s] Num. 11. 31. Ps. 78. 29. 1 Tim. 6. 15.

Either into their persons; or rather, their bodies, which are oft understood by this word; of which see the notes upon Psal. xvi. 10. So their inordinate desire of pleasing and pampering their bodies was the occasion of destroying them; whilst God denied his blessing, which alone makes food able to nourish us, and inflicted his curse, which made their food as destructive as poison to them.

16 [u]They envied Moses also in the camp, *and* Aaron the saint of the LORD.

[u] Num. 16. 1, &c.

So called here, not so much for his inherent holiness, whereof Moses had a greater share, but because he was consecrated or set apart by God for that sacred office of the priesthood, in which respect all the priests are said to be *holy*, Lev. xxi. 6—8. Hereby he intimates that their envy and rebellion was not only against Aaron, but against God himself.

17 [x]The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.

[x] Num. 16. 31, 32. Deut. 11. 6.

Dathan, with his company, which is sufficiently understood out of the following clause, and out of the history, Numb. xvi.

18 [y]And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.

[y] Num. 16. 35, 46.

In their company; in their associates or confederates, those *wicked* men, as he calls them in the next clause, to wit, Korah and his company, who were *consumed by a fire from the Lord,* Numb. xvi. 35, compared with ver. 1, 2, 16—19.

19 [z]They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.

[z] Ex. 32. 4.

When they were but very lately brought out of Egypt by such wonderful power and goodness of God, and had seen the dreadful plagues of God upon the Egyptian idolaters, and upon their idols too, as is noted, Numb. xxxiii. 4, and when the law of God was but newly delivered to them in such a solemn and tremendous manner, and the most high God was yet present, and delivering further precepts to Moses for their *benefit* upon the top of that very mount. This greatly aggravated their sin.

20 Thus [a]they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

[a] Jer. 2. 11. Rom. 1. 23.

Changed, as far as in them lay, and in respect of their worship. *Their glory;* their God, who was indeed their glory; for they had this just occasion of triumphing and glorying over all the nations of the world; that whereas all other nations worshipped stocks and stones, or the heavenly bodies, or dead men, they only worshipped the living and true God, who was present and in covenant with them, and with them only. *Into the similitude of an ox;* into the golden image of an ox or calf. *That eateth grass;* which is so far from feeding his people, as the true God did the Israelites, that he must be fed by them. And yet the image of such a creature was preferred by them, before the all-sufficient and ever-blessed God, which was an evidence of their horrid contempt of God, and also of their prodigious folly and stupidity.

21 They [b]forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;

[b] Ps. 78. 11, 12.

22 Wondrous works in [c]the land of Ham, *and* terrible things by the Red sea.

[c] Ps. 78. 51. & 105. 23, 27.

23 [d]Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen [e]stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy *them.*

[d] Ex. 32. 10, 11, 32. Deut. 9. 19, 25. & 10. 10. Ezek. 20. 13.
[e] Ezek. 13. 5. & 22. 30.

He said; he declared his intention in express words, as Exod. xxxii. 10, and elsewhere. *In the breach:* God had made a hedge or wall about them; but they had made a gap or breach in it by their sins, at which the Lord, who was now justly become their enemy, might enter to destroy them; which he had certainly done, if Moses by his prevailing intercession had not hindered him. See Deut. ix. 12; x. 10. It is a metaphor from a besieged city, where the enemy endeavours to make a breach in the walls, and thereby to enter into the city; which he will do, unless some valiant champion stand in the gap to oppose him.

24 Yea, they despised [f]†the pleasant land, they [g]believed not his word:

[f] Deut. 8. 7. Jer. 3. 19. Ezek. 20. 6.
† Heb. *a land of desire.*
[g] Heb. 3. 18.

Despised; preferring Egypt and the former bondage before it, Numb. xiv. 3, 4, and not thinking it worthy of a little hazard and difficulty in taking the possession of it. *The pleasant land,* Canaan; which was so not only in truth, Deut. xi. 11, 12; Jer. iii. 19; Ezek. xx. 6, but even by the relation of those spies who discouraged them from entering into it. *His word,* i. e. his promise of giving them the land, and subduing all their enemies before them; which they knew by late and manifold experience that God was both able and willing to do.

25 [h]But murmured in their tents, *and* hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.

[h] Num. 14. 2, 27.

To God's command, which was, that they should boldly and confidently enter into it.

26 [i]Therefore he [k]lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

[i] Num. 14. 28, &c. Ps. 95. 11. Ezek. 20. 15. Heb. 3. 11, 18.
[k] Ex. 6. 8. Deut. 32. 40.

He lifted up his hand; he sware, as this phrase is commonly used, as Gen. xiv. 22; Deut. xxxii. 40; Neh. ix. 15; Rev. x. 5, 6: of this dreadful and irrevocable sentence and oath of God, see Numb. xiv.

27 †[l]To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.

† Heb. *To make them fall.*
[l] Lev. 26. 33. Ps. 44. 11. Ezek. 20. 23.

To overthrow their seed; he sware also (though not at the same time) that he would punish their sins, not only in their persons, but also in their posterity. See Exod. xx.

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5; xxxii. 34; Lev. xxvi. 33. Others refer this to the same oath and history, Numb. xiv., because God intended at first to destroy both parents and children, even the whole nation, ver. 12, 15, though afterwards upon Moses's intercession he limited the judgment to that generation. But that destruction threatened was by the *pestilence*, ver. 12, not, as here, by captivity and banishment. Besides, God *said* that, ver. 11, but he did not swear it, but the oath came afterward, ver. 21.

m Num. 25. 2, 3. & 31. 16. Deut. 4. 3. & 32. 17. Hos. 9. 10. Wis. 14. 15. Rev. 2. 14.

28 [m]They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

They joined themselves, to wit, in worship, whereby they had a union and communion with him, as God's people have with God in acts of his worship. And this phrase seems also to note their carnal copulation with *the daughters of Moab* in the temple, or to the honour of Baal-peor. *The sacrifices of the dead;* which were offered to idols, which he calls *dead*, in opposition to the true and living God, and by way of contempt, and to note the sottishness of idolaters, who worshipped lifeless things, as stocks and stones, or dead men. And some learned men conceive that this is spoken with particular regard to Baal-peor, or *the lord of Peor*, a place so called, who had been a person of great eminency in those parts, and therefore was worshipped, according to the custom of the heathens, after his death, by sacrifices and feasts appointed for his honour and memory.

29 Thus they provoked *him* to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.

n Num. 25. 7, 8.

30 [n]Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and *so* the plague was stayed.

31 And that was counted unto him

o Num. 25. 11, 12, 13.

[o]for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

And although that action of his might seem harsh, and rash, and irregular, as being done by a private person and a priest, and as allowing the delinquents no space for repentance, it was accepted and rewarded by God as an act of justice and piety agreeable to his mind, and proceeding from a sincere zeal for God's honour, and for the good of God's people; and God gave him a public testimony of his approbation to be recorded to all generations, and the priesthood to be continued to him and his in all succeeding generations, of all which see Numb. xxv.

p Num. 20. 3, 13. Ps. 81. 7.

32 [p]They angered *him* also at the

q Num. 20. 12. Deut. 1. 37. & 3. 26.

waters of strife, [q]so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

Or, *because of them*, upon occasion of their unbelief and murmuring, whereby he was provoked to speak unadvisedly, as it here follows.

r Num. 20. 10.

33 [r]Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

He spake unadvisedly: so this word is thought to signify, Lev. v. 4; Prov. xii. 18. Or, *he spake*, as the word commonly signifies. Not that it was in itself a sin to speak, but because *he spake* when he should have been silent; or *he spake* to the people, when God commanded him only to speak to the rock, Numb. xx. 8—10; or, *he spake*, to wit, the provocation of his spirit, or such words as were agreeable to it, and might be expected from it. He mentions not here what Moses spake, because that was fully known from the history, and because he would throw a veil over Moses's infirmity, and rather imply than express his fault.

s Judg. 1. 21, 27, 28, 29, &c. t Deut. 7. 2, 16. Judg. 2. 2.

34 [s]They did not destroy the nations, [t]concerning whom the LORD commanded them:

Concerning whom, i. e. concerning whose destruction; or rather, *which* thing, to wit, to destroy those Canaanitish nations; for in the Hebrew there is nothing but *asher*, which signifies only either *whom* or *which*.

u Judg. 2. 2. & 3. 5, 6. Is. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 5. 6.

35 [u]But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.

Mingled in their habits and negociations, as also in marriages.

x Judg. 2. 12, 13, 17, 19. & 3. 6, 7. y Ex. 23. 33. Deut. 7. 16. Judg. 2. 3, 14, 15.

36 And [x]they served their idols: [y]which were a snare unto them.

Which idols were an occasion of their falling both into further and greater sins, as it follows, ver. 37, 38; and into utter ruin, as this phrase also notes, Exod. xxiii. 33; Judg. ii. 12, &c.

z 2 Kings 16. 3. Is. 57. 5. Ezek. 16. 20. & 23. 37. a Lev. 17. 7. Deut. 32. 17. 2 Chron. 11. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 20.

37 Yea, [z]they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto [a]devils,

Of which heathenish practice, see the notes on Lev. xviii. 21. *Unto devils;* by which expression he informeth them that they did not worship God, as they pretended and sometimes designed, but devils in their idols; and that those spirits which were supposed by the heathen idolaters to inhabit in their images, and which they worshipped in them, were not gods or good spirits, as they imagined, but evil spirits or devils. See Lev. xvii. 7; Deut. xxxii. 17; 1 Cor. x. 20; Rev. ix. 20.

38 And shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and [b]the land was polluted with blood.

b Num. 35. 33.

Innocent blood; the blood of their children, who, though sinners before God, yet were innocent as to them, from any crime deserving such barbarous usage from them.

c Ezek. 20. 18. 30, 31. d Lev. 17. 7. Num. 15. 39. Ezek. 20. 30.

39 Thus were they [c]defiled with their own works, and [d]went a whoring with their own inventions.

Committed spiritual whoredom, by worshipping those idols which were but human inventions, and that in such an unnatural and bloody manner, as they had devised.

e Judg. 2. 14, &c. Ps. 78. 59, 62. f Deut. 32.

40 Therefore [e]was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred [f]his own inheritance.

g Judg. 2. 14. Neh. 9. 27, &c.

41 And [g]he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.

42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

h Judg. 2. 16. Neh. 9. 27, &c.

43 [h]Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked *him* with their counsel, and were ‖brought low for their iniquity.

‖ Or, impoverished, or, weakened.

Provoked him with their counsel, by forsaking God's counsel and the way which he had appointed, and following after their own inventions and evil inclinations, as he charged them, ver. 39. See the like Numb. xv. 30.

i Judg. 3. 9. & 4. 3. & 6. 7. & 10. 10. Neh. 9. 27, &c. k Lev. 26. 41, 42. l Judg. 2. 18. m Ps. 51. 1. & 69. 16. Is. 63. 7. Lam. 3. 32.

44 Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when [i]he heard their cry:

45 [k]And he remembered for them his covenant, and [l]repented [m]according to the multitude of his mercies.

His covenant; the covenant made with their fathers, which, notwithstanding their horrible violation of it, he made good unto them, and in consideration thereof delivered them. *Repented;* changed his course and dealing with them, as penitent persons usually do. See the note on Gen. vi. 6.

n Ezra 9. 9. Jer. 42. 12.

46 [n]He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.

By changing their opinions of them, and inclining their hearts towards them, which he had alienated from them. See on Psal. cv. 25.

o 1 Chron. 16. 35, 36.

47 [o]Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, *and* to triumph in thy praise.

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Save us, O Lord our God: O thou who hast so often pardoned and saved us, notwithstanding our former and manifold provocations, be thou pleased once more to deliver us. *In thy praise;* in thy praiseworthy work wrought for us; *praise* being put for actions worthy of praise, as it is here, above, ver. 2; 1 Chron. xvi. 35; Psal. ix. 14; Phil. iv. 8, and oft elsewhere.

p Ps. 41. 13. 48 [p]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. †Praise ye the LORD.

† Heb. Hallelujah.

PSALM CVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The most of the Psalms have a peculiar respect unto the church or people of God, or to some eminent members thereof; but there are some few Psalms which have a more general respect to all nations, of which number this is one; wherein the psalmist discourseth of the merciful providence of God towards all mankind, and of his readiness to help them in all their distresses, some few particular instances whereof he mentioneth, and leaveth the rest to be understood, there being the same reason of all. But withal he takes notice also of God's judgments upon wicked persons and people. And by this representation of God's mercies and judgments, he invites all nations to an acknowledgment of the true God, to praise him for his favours, and to tremble at his judgments, which is their just duty and reasonable service.

An exhortation to the redeemed to praise and celebrate the Lord, and to observe his manifold providences, 1—3; *to strangers and captives,* 4—16; *to sick, and sea-men,* 17—32; *and to all others, commending them that carefully observe this,* 33—43.

a Ps. 106. 1. & 118. 1. & 136. 1. Jer. 33. 11. b Ps. 118. 29. & 136. 1. Nah. 1. 7. O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD, for [b]*he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

This whole verse occurs also Psal. cvi. 1; only there the address is made to the Israelites, and here to all mankind.

2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say c Ps. 106. 10. *so,* [c]whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

The redeemed of the Lord; all they whom God hath redeemed, as it is expressed in the next clause, or delivered from all the following calamities. *Say so,* to wit, that *the Lord is good,* &c., as it is ver. 1. *Of the enemy;* of such as had taken them captives, either in battle, or in their travels, to which they were led by their own inclinations, or by their necessary occasions.

d Ps. 147. 2. Isa. 43. 5, 6. Jer. 23. 3. & 31. 8. Ezek. 39. 27. Zech. 10. 8, 10. * Heb. *from the sea.*

3 And [d]gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and †from the south.

Bringing them into their own land, out of the several quarters of the world into which they had been carried. *From the south,* Heb. *from the sea;* which in Scripture commonly notes the west, because the great midland sea was on the west of Canaan; but here, as it appears from the opposition of this to the *north,* it notes the south, so called from the Red Sea, which was on the south, and which is sometimes called *the sea,* simply and without addition, as Psal. lxxii. 8; cxiv. 3.

e ver. 40. f Deut. 32. 10 4 They [e]wandered in [f]the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

They wandered in the wilderness; mistaking their way, which they might easily do in the vast and sandy deserts of Arabia. *No city to dwell in;* or rather, *no city* or *town inhabited,* where they might refresh themselves, as travellers used to do; for they did not go into the wilderness to seek for a city or habitation there, but only intended to pass through it, as appears by the context, and by the nature of the thing.

5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

Partly for want of necessary provisions, and partly through anguish of spirit.

g ver. 19. Deut. 26. 7. 6 [g]Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he delivered them out of their distresses. Ps. 50. 15. Hos. 5. 15.

Unto the Lord, Heb. *unto Jehovah,* to the true God. For the heathens, of whom he speaks, had many of them some knowledge of the true God, and did in their manner worship him with and in their idols; and especially in their distresses, when they discovered the impotency of their idols, they did direct their prayer immediately to the true God, of which there are many instances of heathen writers. *He delivered them out of their distresses,* in answer to their prayers, which he did not because their prayers were acceptable to him, but partly, out of the benignity and compassionateness of his nature to all his creatures; partly, to encourage and preserve the use of prayer and religion among the Gentiles, and to oblige them to a more diligent search after the knowledge of the true God, and of his worship; and partly, to give his own people assurance of his great readiness to hear and answer all those prayers which with upright hearts they offered to him according to his word.

7 And he led them forth by the [h]right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. h Ezra 8. 21.

Led them forth out of the wilderness, where they had lost their way, ver. 4. *A city of habitation:* see before on ver. 4.

8 [i]Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men! i ver. 15, 21, 31.

Oh that men would praise! Heb. *Let them praise.* Or, *They shall praise,* i. e. they are highly obliged to praise. *To the children of men;* not only to his peculiar people, but to all mankind, to whom he is very kind and bountiful.

9 For [k]he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. k Ps. 34. 10. Luke 1. 53.

The longing; either the thirsty, opposed to the hungry here following; or the hungry, as this general phrase is limited and expounded in the next clause. *With goodness;* with the fruits of his goodness; *with good things,* Psal. ciii. 5; *with food and gladness,* Acts xiv. 17; with that good which they wanted and desired.

10 Such as [l]sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, *being* [m]bound in affliction and iron; l Luke 1. 79. m Job 36. 8.

In darkness and in the shadow of death; in a disconsolate and forlorn condition, in dark prisons or dungeons. *In affliction and iron;* with afflicting or grievous irons. Or, *in the cords of affliction,* as they are called, Job xxxvi. 8, and particularly *in iron* fetters.

11 Because they [n]rebelled against the words of God, and contemned [o]the counsel of the most High: n Lam. 3. 42. o Ps. 73. 24. & 119. 24. Luke 7. 30. Acts 20. 27.

Against the words of God; against God's commands, made known either, 1. By his written word delivered to the Jews, of which the Gentiles were not ignorant, which therefore they should have diligently inquired after and searched into, as the queen of Sheba came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and as divers of the heathens travelled into very remote parts to gain a more perfect knowledge of the arts and sciences; which will justly be laid to their charge, and condemn them for their neglect of that Divine wisdom which was treasured up in the Holy Scriptures. Or, 2. By the prophets, who sometimes were sent to the Gentiles. Or, 3. By the law and light of nature, and by its interpreters, their wise and learned philosophers, who delivered many excellent rules and precepts of piety and virtue, which were sufficient, though not for their salvation without Christ, yet for the conduct of their lives in a great measure, and to leave them without excuse for their gross disobedience thereunto.

12 Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and *there was* [p]none to help. p Ps. 22. 11. Is. 63. 5.

Their heart; the pride, and rebellion, and obstinacy of their hearts. *With labour;* or, *with trouble* or *troubles.*

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They fell into their enemy's hands, and into hopeless and remediless miseries.

q ver. 6, 19, 28. 13 [q]Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saved them out of their distresses.

r Ps. 68. 6. & 146. 7. Acts 12. 7, &c. & 16. 26, &c. 14 [r]He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

s ver. 8, 21, 31. 15 [s]Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

t Is. 45. 2. 16 For he hath [t]broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

He restored them to liberty in spite of all impediments and oppositions.

u Lam. 3. 39. 17 Fools [u]because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

Fools, i. e. wicked men, whom he calls *fools*, because of the mischiefs which through their own folly they bring upon themselves. *Because of their transgression*, Heb. *because of the way of their transgression*, i. e. their custom and course of sinning, as the word *way* is used, Psal. i. 1; Prov. ii. 12. They did not fall into sin once or twice, as good men may do, but it was their usual practice, and therefore they are justly punished. *Afflicted* with wasting sickness, as appears from ver. 18, 20. Compare Job xxxiii. 19, &c.; Psal. xxxix. 11, &c.

x Job 33. 20. 18 [x]Their soul abhorreth all manner

y Job 33. 22. Ps. 9. 13. & 88. 3. of meat; and they [y]draw near unto the gates of death.

Their soul; either themselves with all their soul; or their appetite, as *the soul* is taken, Job xxxiii. 20; Isa. xxix. 8. *Abhorreth all manner of meat;* which is a usual effect of great sickness. *They draw near unto the gates of death;* they are sick well nigh unto death.

z ver. 6, 13, 28. a 2 Kings 20. 4, 5. Ps. 147. 15, 18. Matt. 8. 8. b Ps. 30. 2. & 103. 3. c Job 33. 28, 30. Ps. 30. 3. & 49. 15. & 56. 13. & 103. 4. 19 [z]Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saveth them out of their distresses.

20 [a]He sent his word, and [b]healed them, and [c]delivered *them* from their destructions.

His word; his command, or his blessing, which came with power.

d ver. 8, 15, 31. e Lev. 7. 12. Ps. 50. 14. & 116. 17. Heb. 13. 15. f Ps. 9. 11. & 75. 28. & 118. 17. † Heb. *singing.* 21 [d]Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

22 And [e]let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and [f]declare his works with †rejoicing.

Sacrifices of thanksgiving; either properly so called; or praises and thanksgivings to God, which in Scripture are called *sacrifices*, because they are no less acceptable to God than costly sacrifices.

23 They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

Go down to the sea; he saith *go down*, either because the sea or the shore of it is commonly lower than their habitations from whence they come, or than the natural or artificial banks which are raised to prevent the inundation of the waters; or because the sea is lower than the earth, as may be gathered from the rivers which run down into it. *Do business;* whose occupation lies there, either as merchants or as mariners.

24 These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.

His wonderful works, either, 1. Of creation, fishes of various kinds and shapes, and some of prodigious greatness, which are unknown to other men. Or, 2. Of providence, in raising and laying storms, of which he speaks in the following verses

† Heb. *maketh to stand* g Jonah 1. 4. 25 For he commandeth, and †[g]raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

The winds and storms come not by chance, but by the disposition of Divine Providence.

h Ps. 22. 14. & 119. 28. Nah. 2. 10. 26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: [h]their soul is melted because of trouble.

To the depths; towards the bottom of the sea. *Because of trouble;* through the perplexity of their minds, and fear of sudden and violent death.

† Heb. *all their wisdom is swallowed up.* 27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and †are at their wit's end.

Stagger like a drunken man; not so much from the giddiness of their heads, which is not usual in persons accustomed to the sea, as through the violent and various motions of the sea and the ship.

i ver. 6, 13, 19. 28 [i]Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

k Ps. 89. 9. Matt. 8. 26. 29 [k]He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

l ver. 8, 15, 21. 31 [l]Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

m Ps. 22. 22, 25. & 111. 1. 32 Let them exalt him also [m]in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

In the congregation of the people; not only in their own hearts and families, but even in public assemblies, and before all persons, as they have opportunity. *In the assembly of the elders;* the magistrates or rulers; who are here opposed to the people. The sense is, Let them not be ashamed nor afraid to speak of God's wonderful works and praises before the greatest of men, as mean persons commonly are. Compare Psal. cxix. 46. Or he mentions the elders particularly, because they were most apt to neglect and forget God, and to exalt themselves above and against him; and therefore it was meet and necessary that they should be acquainted with the almighty power and universal providence and dominion of God, that they themselves might learn subjection and reverence to God, and might promote it among their people.

n 1 Kings 17. 1, 7. 33 He [n]turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;

Rivers; either, 1. Properly so called; which he can divert or dry up when he pleaseth, as sometimes he hath done. Or rather, 2. Those grounds which are well watered, and therefore very fruitful, as the next verse explains this. And so *the water-springs*, here and ver. 35, and *the standing water*, ver. 35, are taken. *Into a wilderness;* into a dry ground, as it follows, which is like a parched and barren wilderness.

o Gen. 13. 10. & 14. 3. & 19. 25. † Heb. *saltness.* 34 A [o]fruitful land into †barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

Into barrenness, Heb. *into saltness*, which procures barrenness. See Deut. xxix. 23; Judg. ix. 45. *For the wickedness of them that dwell therein;* he doth not inflict these judgments by choice, or without cause, but for the punishment of sin in some, and the prevention of it in others.

p Ps. 114. Is. 41. 18. 35 [p]He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.

Into a standing water; into a well-watered and fruitful land.

36 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;

The hungry; poor people, who could not provide for themselves, or were banished from their own land by potent

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oppressors, and were driven into wildernesses, like them Job xxx. 3, which God in pity to them made fruitful.

37 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.

May yield, Heb. *and they shall make* or *procure* from their fields and vineyards. *Fruits of increase;* such fruits as they use to produce.

38 [q]He blesseth them also, so that they [r]are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

[q] Gen. 12. 2. & 17. 16. 20. [r] Exod. 1. 7.

Preserves them from abortion and deadly diseases, and on the contrary causeth them to increase, as he said in the former branch, which is here repeated in other words, after the same manner.

39 Again, they are [s]minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

[s] 2 Kings 14. 26.

They, these poor men, who, when they are exalted and blessed by God, kick at him, and grow insolent and secure, as the manner of men is, *are minished and brought low;* are by God's just judgment diminished in their numbers and in their blessings. *Through oppression, affliction, and sorrow;* or, *through wicked oppression*, (by the tyranny of others, whom God sends to spoil them of their abused riches,) *and by* other *griefs* or grievous calamities which God inflicts.

40 [t]He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the ‖ wilderness, *where there is* no way.

[t] Job 12. 21, 24. ‖ Or, *trackless place.*

He poureth contempt upon princes; those who were honourable and adored like gods by their people, and terrible to all their enemies, he renders them despicable to their own subjects, and to other nations; and this he doth suddenly, abundantly, and unavoidably, as this phrase of *pouring* it *out upon* them seems to imply. *To wander in the wilderness, where there is no way;* either, 1. He giveth them up to foolish and pernicious counsels, by which they are exposed to contempt, and brought to their wit's end, not knowing what course to take. Or, 2. He banished them from their own courts and kingdoms, and forced them to flee into desolate wildernesses for shelter and subsistence.

41 [u]Yet setteth he the poor on high ‖ from affliction, and [x]maketh *him* families like a flock.

[u] 1 Sam. 2. 8. Ps. 113. 7. [x] Or, *after* Ps. 113. 9.

Yet setteth he the poor on high: and whilst he bringeth down great potentates, at the same time he advanceth those who were obscure and contemptible. *Like a flock*, which increase very much in a little time.

42 [y]The righteous shall see *it*, and rejoice: and all [z]iniquity shall stop her mouth.

[y] Job 22. 19. & 12. 4. & 5. 16. [z] Job 5. 16. & 33. 7. & 36. 7. Rom. 3. 19.

Shall see it; or rather, *these things*, as it is expressed in the next verse. They shall diligently observe these wonderful works of God's mercy and justice. *Rejoice;* not only in the mercies of God vouchsafed to them and to other persons in want and misery, but also in God's judgments upon his implacable enemies, which afford matter of rejoicing to good men, as hath been once and again declared in this book, both for the honour which God hath by them, and for the sins and calamities of others, which by this means are prevented. *Iniquity*, i. e. unrighteous or ungodly men, the abstract being put for the concrete, as *faithfulnesses* for *the faithful*, Psal. xii. 1, and *pride* for *the proud*, Psal. xxxvi. 11. *Shall stop her mouth;* shall be put to silence. So this or the like phrase is used, Judg. xviii. 19; Job v. 16; xxi. 5; xxix. 9. They who used to *speak haughtily* and *wickedly*, and to *set their mouth against the heavens*, as they did, Psal. lxxiii. 8, 9, to reproach God and his providence, as either negligent or unrighteous in the management of the world, shall now be forced to acknowledge his power and justice in those judgments which he hath brought upon them.

43 [a]Whoso *is* wise, and will observe these *things*, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

[a] Ps. 64. 9. Jer. 9. 12. Hos. 14. 9.

Whoso is wise, and will observe these things; or, *who* (for the Hebrew particle *mi* is interrogative) *is wise? for* (as the conjunctive particle is frequently used) *he will observe these* things. All who are truly wise will consider all these events, and lay them to heart, as being very useful for their own instruction. *Even they*, or *each of them*, all such wise and considering persons, *shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord;* will see and acknowledge that God is kind or *good to all, and* that *his tender mercies are over all his works*, as it is said, Psal. cxlv. 9, and singularly kind and gracious to all wise and godly men.

PSALM CVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is almost word for word taken out of two foregoing Psalms, the first five verses out of Psal. lvii. 7—11, and the rest out of Psal. lx. 5, &c., to which the reader must resort for the explication of it. This only is observable, that the psalmist designing to take the body of this Psalm out of Psal. lx., doth industriously lay aside that mournful preface, ver. 1—4, and borrows one more pleasant out of Psal. lvii. The reason of which change is supposed to be this, that Psal. lx. was composed in the time of his danger and distress, and the latter after his deliverance.

¶ A Song *or* Psalm of David.

David rouseth up himself to praise the Lord, 1—4; *praying also for assistance, being fully assured of it, against his enemies*, 5—13.

O [a]GOD, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory. [a] Ps. 57. 7.

Either, 1. With my heart or soul, which is fixed for that work, as he said in the former branch. Or rather, 2. With my tongue, which is called a man's *glory*, Psal. xvi. 9, compared with Acts ii. 26. So the first branch describes the fixedness of his heart, to which this adds the expressions of his mouth.

2 [b]Awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early. [b] Ps. 57. 8, —11.

3 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

4 For thy mercy *is* great above the heavens: and thy truth *reacheth* unto the ‖ clouds. ‖ Or, *skies.*

5 [c]Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth; [c] Ps. 57. 5, 11.

6 [d]That thy beloved may be delivered: save *with* thy right hand, and answer me. [d] Ps. 60. 5, &c.

7 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

8 Gilead *is* mine; Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; [e]Judah *is* my lawgiver; [e] Gen. 49. 10.

9 Moab *is* my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.

10 [f]Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom? [f] Ps. 60. 9.

This he repeats in this place, either because, though the enemies were defeated and subdued, yet there was some strong city or cities which were not yet taken; or in way of thankful commemoration of God's goodness in answering his former requests, as if he had said, I remember this day, to thy glory and my own comfort, my former straits and dangers, which made me cry out, *Who will bring me*, &c.?

11 *Wilt* not *thou*, O God, *who* hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?

12 Give us help from trouble: for vain *is* the help of man.

13 [g]Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies [g] Ps. 60. 12.

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PSALM CIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

It is sufficiently evident from the body of this Psalm, that it was composed by David when he was in a state of persecution, either by Saul or by Absalom; and that amongst and above all the rest of his enemies he takes very particular notice of, and breaks forth into vehement expressions of anger against, one particular person, which whether it were Doeg or Ahithophel is not certain, nor at all necessary to know. But as David was, and very well knew himself to be, a type of Christ, and consequently his enemies did typify or represent the enemies of Christ, and this particular adversary of his did represent some singular and eminent enemy of Christ, which though David might not, yet the Spirit of God which indited this Psalm did, know to be Judas, and accordingly directed all these bitter invectives and imprecations against him, who deserved and received far worse punishments for his monstrous wickedness than all which are here mentioned. And that he was the person principally aimed at in this Psalm, will seem very probable to him who considers David's mild and merciful temper even towards his enemies, which he both professed in words in this very book, as Psal. xxxv. 12—14, and practised in deeds, as 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11; xix. 22, 23, and withal the severity of these imprecations, reaching not only to the persons of his enemies, but to their children, who yet by the law of God were not to suffer for their parents' sins, Deut. xxiv. 16.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

David, complaining of his false accusers, who requited him evil for good, devoteth them and their children to all misery and oblivion, 1—15, because of their unmercifulness and cruelty, 16—20; showeth his great affliction, prayeth for deliverance, and promiseth thankfulness, 21—31.

a Ps. 83. 1. HOLD [a]not thy peace, O God of my praise;

Hold not thy peace; do not neglect me, but take notice of my extreme danger and misery, and deliver me, which thou canst do by the speaking of one word. *O God of my praise;* the author and matter of all my praises; who hast given me continual occasion to praise thee, whom I have used to praise, and will praise whilst I live; do not therefore now give me occasion to turn my praises into lamentations.

2 For the mouth of the wicked and the
† Heb. *mouth of deceit.* † mouth of the deceitful † are opened
† Heb. *have opened themselves.* against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

Of the deceitful; of those who add hypocrisy and perfidiousness to their malice. *Are opened;* they speak freely, boldly, and publicly, without any fear or shame. *Against me;* or, *to* or *with me*, as this particle commonly signifies. *With a lying tongue;* either, 1. With calumnies, or false and malicious reports. Or, 2. With deep dissimulation and professions of friendship and kindness.

3 They compassed me about also with
b Ps. 35. 7. & 69. 4. John 15. 25. words of hatred; and fought against me [b]without a cause.

Words of hatred; which, though covered with specious pretences, proceeded from deep malice and hatred, and were designed to work my destruction. *Without a cause;* without any just provocation given them by me.

4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I *give myself unto* prayer.

For my love they are my adversaries; they requite my love and good will with enmity and mischief, as it is explained, ver. 5. *But I give myself unto prayer*, Heb. *but I prayer*, i. e. I am a man of prayer, or I betake myself to prayer. Thus *I peace* is put for *I am for peace*, as we render it, Psal. cxx. 7; and *thy bread* for *the men of thy bread*, or *that eat thy bread*, Obad. 7. The sense is, Whilst they reproach and curse me, I pray either, 1. For them, as he did, Psal. xxxv. 13; or, 2. For myself: I did not render unto them evil for evil, but quietly committed myself and my cause to God by prayer, desiring him to plead my cause against them; and I had no other refuge.

c Ps. 35. 7, 12. & 38. 20. 5 And [c]they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

d Zech. 3. 1. ‖ Or, *an adversary.* 6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let [d]‖ Satan stand at his right hand.

A wicked man, Heb. *the wicked;* which may be understood either, 1. Of some wicked tyrant, which may rule him with rigour and cruelty. Or, 2. Of Satan, who is mentioned in the next clause. Let him be delivered over to Satan, to be acted and ruled by him at his pleasure. *Over him;* either, 1. All mine enemies; for the singular number is sometimes used in like manner. Or rather, 2. One particular enemy, who was worse than any of the rest, more implacable and inexcusable, whom he thought not fit to express by name, nor was it in the least necessary to do so, because he was speaking to God, who knew his thoughts, and whom he meant. *Stand at his right hand;* either, 1. To molest and vex him, and hinder him in all his affairs; for the right hand is the great instrument of action. Or rather, 2. To accuse him; for this was the place and posture of accusers in the Jewish courts. And as for his condemnation, which is the consequence of this accusation, that follows in the next verse.

7 When he shall be judged, let him † be
† Heb. *go out guilty, or, wicked.* condemned: and [e]let his prayer become sin.
e Prov. 28. 9.

When he shall be judged; when he shall be called to an account, and his cause examined before thy tribunal. *Let his prayer become sin*, i. e. be turned into sin, or be imputed to him as his sin, or be as unavailable with God for his relief as his sins. When he makes supplication to his Judge, as Job speaks, Job ix. 15, for pity and pardon, let him be the more provoked and enraged by it.

8 Let his days be few; *and* [f]let an-
f Acts 1. 20. ‖ Or, *charge.* other take his ‖ office.

Let his days be few; the days of his life. Let him die an untimely death. *His office*, made void by his death. He also implies that his enemy was a man of power and reputation.

9 [g]Let his children be fatherless, and
g Ex. 22. 24. his wife a widow.

Fatherless; whilst they are but children, and so unable to provide for themselves. *A widow;* either made a widow by his death; or constantly a widow; all persons abhorring her who was related to so vile a miscreant.

10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek *their bread* also out of their desolate places.

Vagabonds; having no certain place of abode; which is a grievous curse in itself, Gen. iv. 12, 14; Isa. xvi. 2. *And beg:* this increaseth their misery. *Desolate places;* into which they are fled for fear and shame, as not daring to show their faces amongst men.

11 [h]Let the extortioner catch all that
h Job 5. 5. & 18. 9. he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

Extortioner; or, *usurer*, or *creditor*. *Catch*, Heb. *insnare*, which is an emphatical expression, i. e. take away not only by oppression and violence, but also by cheats and cunning artifices, whereby such persons entangle, and so ruin their debtors. *The strangers;* who have no right to his goods, and will use no pity nor measure in spoiling him. *His labour;* all the fruits of his labours.

12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

Let him and his be unpitied and hated as the public enemies of mankind.

13 [i]Let his posterity be cut off; *and*
i Job 18. 19. Ps. 37. 28. in the generation following let their [k]name
k Prov. 10. 7. be blotted out.

In the generation following, Heb. *in another generation;* either in the third generation, or in the second, or that which next followed the generation of his fathers. So in this clause he limits the time of that destruction which he imprecates or foretells in the former.

14 [l]Let the iniquity of his fathers be
l Ex. 20. 5. remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother [m]be blotted out.
m Neh. 4. 5. Jer. 18. 23.

Be remembered against him, or punished in him, as God hath threatened to deal with great delinquents, Exod. xx. 5.

15 Let them be before the LORD continually,

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n Job 18. 17. Ps. 34. 16. that he may n cut off the memory of them from the earth.

Let them, the sins of his parents last mentioned, *be before the Lord;* in God's sight and memory, to provoke God to punish them: let them not be covered or pardoned.

16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the o Ps. 34. 18. o broken in heart.

Remembered not his duty to God, and his obligation to me for my former kindness, expressed ver. 4, 5. *The poor and needy man;* myself, who was desolate and miserable, whose condition required pity, and not additions of cruelty. *The broken in heart;* whose spirit was grieved, and even broken with the burden of his calamities.

p Prov. 14. 14. Ezek. 35. 6. 17 p As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

Cursing; either, 1. Cursed or sinful courses. Or rather, 2. To curse others, as appears from the blessing here opposed to it, and from the next verse; to wish and to procure mischief to others, and especially to me. *In blessing;* in desiring and promoting the welfare of others, which indeed was an eye-sore and torment to him.

q Num. 5. 22. † Heb. into his bowels. 18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it q come † into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

A garment; which a man wears constantly, and that as an ornament. *Like water;* which when a man drinks, goes into his bowels, and searcheth all the inwards of his belly. *Like oil;* which is more piercing than water, and being applied to outward parts, reacheth even to the bones and marrow.

19 Let it be unto him as the garment *which* covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

Which cleaves closer and faster to a man than a garment, especially than the Eastern garments did, which were large and loose.

20 *Let* this *be* the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

Of mine adversaries; of those who were confederate with that arch-enemy in his wicked enterprise. *Against my soul;* with design to take away my life.

21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy *is* good, deliver thou me.

Do thou for me, to wit, what I desire, which he expresseth in the next clause. Or, *do thou act for me;* be not silent or still, but stir up thyself to work on my behalf. *For thy name's sake;* for the glory of thy faithfulness, which is highly concerned in giving me the deliverance which thou hast promised to me. *Thy mercy is good*, i. e. gracious, and ready to do good to all, but especially to those that love and fear thee. As *sin* is said to be *sinful*, Rom. vii. 13, so God's mercy may be said to be merciful, to wit, in an eminent degree, and above the mercy of all the creatures.

22 For I *am* poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

I am poor and needy; and therefore a very proper object for thy pity and help. I am wounded not slightly, but even to the very heart with soul-piercing sorrows.

r Ps. 102. 11. & 144. 4. 23 I am gone r like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

I am gone, Heb. *I am made to go;* either, 1. From place to place; which was David's case, when he was persecuted by Saul and by Absalom; and Christ's case upon earth, where he had no certain place *where to lay his head*, Matt. viii. 20. Or, 2. Into the grave, as this phrase is used, 1 Chron. xvii. 11; Psal. lviii. 8, and oft elsewhere. *Declineth;* towards the evening, when, the sun setting, it vanisheth instantly, and irrecoverably, until the sun rise again, which it never will do to me in this world, when once I am gone out of it. *As the locust;* which of itself is unstable, continually skipping from place to place, and is easily driven away with every wind; so am I exposed to perpetual and successive changes within myself, and to a thousand violences and mischiefs from other persons and things.

24 My s knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness. s Heb. 12. 12.

Through fasting; either with voluntary fasts, to which the frequency and long continuance of my calamities obliged me; or with forced fasts, sometimes through want of necessary provisions, but most commonly from that loathing of meat, which was occasioned by his excessive sorrows and terrors. See on Psal. cvii. 18. *Of fatness;* or, *for want of fatness.* See the like Hebrew phrases Gen. xviii. 26; Jer. xlviii. 45; Lam. iv. 9.

t Ps. 22. 6, 7. 25 I became also t a reproach unto them: *when* they looked upon me u they shaked their heads. u Matt. 27. 39.

Instead of that pity which either religion or humanity should have taught them to a man in extreme misery, they loaded me with reproaches and scorns. *Shaked their heads;* a gesture of contempt and derision; of which see Job xvi. 4; Psal. xxii. 7.

26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

x Job 37. 7. 27 x That they may know that this *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it.

Know; being convinced of the eminency, and singularity, and strangeness of the work.

y 2 Sam. 16. 11, 12. 28 y Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let z thy servant rejoice. z Is. 65. 14.

Let them curse; I can patiently bear their curses, as being causeless, and fully compensated by thy blessing. Or, *they do and will curse*, I expect nothing else from them. *Arise*, i. e. bestir themselves against me. Both God and men are oft said to *arise* when they enter upon any undertaking, as Josh. xxiv. 9; Judg. viii. 21; 2 Chron. xiii. 6; xxi. 4, &c.

a Ps. 35. 26. & 132. 18. 29 a Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

For the disappointment of their wicked hopes and designs, and for that unexpected destruction which they have brought upon themselves.

b Ps. 35. 18. & 111. 1. 30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, b I will praise him among the multitude.

For that deliverance which I confidently expect. *Among the multitude;* or, *among the mighty*, or *great men*, as this word sometimes signifies. Compare Psal. cxix. 46.

c Ps. 16. 8. & 73. 23. & 110. 5. & 121. 5. + Heb. *from the judges of his soul.* 31 For c he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save *him* † from those that condemn his soul.

At the right hand of the poor, to defend him from his adversary, who stood in that place to accuse him, and to procure his condemnation and destruction. See above on ver. 6. *That condemn his soul;* that pass a sentence of death upon him.

PSALM CX.

THE ARGUMENT.

That the penman of this Psalm was not Eliezer, Abraham's servant, who writ it upon the occasion of Abraham's victory over those kings, Gen. xiv., (as some of the later Jews have devised, out of opposition to Christianity,) nor any other person but David, is manifest from the title of the Psalm, which is a part of the sacred text. That this Psalm belongs to the Messiah is abundantly evident, both from the express testimony of the New Testament, Acts ii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Heb. i. 13; x. 13, and from the consent of the ancient Hebrew doctors, manifested implicitly in Matt. xxii. 44, and expressly from their own mouths. Of which see my Latin Synopsis upon this place; and from

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the matter of the Psalm, which can by no means or arts be made to agree to David, who was not *David's lord*, nor a *priest*, much less a *priest for ever*, or *after the order of Melchisedek*, the priesthood of Aaron being in David's time in use and force, and in the hands of another person and family. And whereas divers other Psalms, though principally directed to and to be understood of the Messiah, yet in some sort may be understood concerning David also, or at least took their rise and occasion from David, or from something relating to him, this Psalm is directly, and immediately, and solely to be understood concerning the Messiah; the Spirit of God wisely so ordering this matter, that it might be a most express and convincing testimony against the unbelieving Jews concerning the true Messiah, and concerning the nature and quality of his kingdom.

¶ A Psalm of David.

Written by David, as is manifest both from this title, which being given to this, as well as to many other Psalms, whereof David is confessed to be the author, either proves this to be David's, or proves none of them to be so; and from Matt. xxii. 43, 44; Mark xii. 36, where also David is said to have spoken this Psalm *in* or *by the Spirit* of God, or by Divine inspiration.

An account of the calling the kingdom of Christ, 1—3; *of his everlasting priesthood,* 4; *of his mighty conquest over his enemies,* 5, 6; *and of his sufferings and triumph,* 7.

a Matt. 22. 44. Mark 12. 36. Luke 20. 42. Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Heb. 1. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 22. See Ps. 45. 6, 7.

a THE LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The Lord; God the Father, the first person in the Trinity, to whom accordingly the original of all things, and especially of the work of man's redemption by Christ, is ascribed. *Said;* decreed or appointed it from eternity, and in due time published this decree, as is noted, Psal. ii. 7, and actually executed it; which he did when he raised up Christ from the dead, and brought him into his heavenly mansion. *Unto my Lord;* unto his Son the Messias, whom David designedly calls *his Lord*, to admonish the Jews and the whole church, that although he was his son according to the flesh, or his human nature, Acts ii. 30; Rom. i. 3, yet he had a higher nature and original, and was also his *Lord*, as being by nature God blessed for ever, and consequently *Lord of all* things, as he is called, Acts x. 36; and by office, as he was God-man, the Lord and King of the whole church, and of all the world for the church's sake. And this was a necessary provision, to prevent that scandal which the Holy Ghost foresaw the Jews and others would be apt to take at the meanness of Christ's appearance in the flesh. The Hebrew word *Adon* is one of God's titles, signifying his *power* and *authority* or *lordship* over all things, and therefore is most fitly given to the Messias, to whom God hath delegated all his power in the world, Matt. xxviii. 18. *Sit thou at my right hand:* thou who hast for many years been veiled with infirm and mortal flesh, despised, and rejected, and trampled upon by men, and persecuted unto the death, do thou now take to thyself thy great and just power; thou hast done thy work upon earth, now take thy rest, and the possession of that sovereign kingdom and glory which by right belongeth to thee: do thou rule with me with equal power and majesty, as thou art God; and with an authority and honour far above all creatures, such as is next to mine, as thou art man; as this phrase is expounded in other places. See Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxii. 69; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Heb. i. 3, 13; viii. 1; x. 12, 13; Eph. i. 20, &c. It is a metaphor from the custom of earthly princes, who place those persons whom they honour most at their right hand; of which see 1 Kings ii. 19; Psal. xlv. 9; Matt. xx. 21. *Sitting* is put for *reigning*, 1 Kings iii. 6, compared with 2 Chron. i. 8, and withal notes the continuance of the reign, 1 Cor. xv. 25. *Until* doth not necessarily note the end or expiration of his kingdom at that time; for in other places it notes only the continuance of things till such time, without excluding the time following, as is evident from Gen. xxviii. 15; Psal. cxii. 8; Matt. i. 25. So here it may signify that his kingdom should continue so long, even in the midst of his enemies, and in spite of all their power and malice, which was the only thing which was liable to any doubt; for that he should continue to reign after the conquest and utter ruin of all his enemies was out of all question. And yet this is a word of limitation, in regard of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ, in respect of which Christ rules with a delegated power, as his Father's viceroy, and with the use of outward means, and instruments, and ordinances, &c., for that manner of administration shall cease; which also seems to be intimated by this word, as it is expounded 1 Cor. xv. 25. *I make*, by my almighty power communicated to thee as God by eternal generation, and vouchsafed to thee as Mediator, to enable thee to the full discharge of thine office. *Thine enemies;* which also are the enemies of thy church; all persecutors and ungodly men, who *will not have* Christ to *rule over them*, Luke xix. 14; sin, and death, and the devil, 1 Cor. xv. 26. *Thy footstool;* thy slaves and vassals to be put to the meanest and basest services, as this phrase implies, 1 Kings v. 3; Psal. xviii. 39; xci. 13; being taken from the manner of Eastern princes, who used to tread upon the necks of their conquered enemies, as we read, Josh. x. 24; Judg. i. 7. And long after those times Sapores the Persian emperor trod upon Valerian emperor of the Romans, and Tamerlane used to tread upon Bajazet the Turkish emperor, whom he kept in an iron cage for that purpose.

2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Send; or, *send forth*, into the world. *The rod of thy strength;* thy strong or powerful rod, by a usual Hebraism. And the *rod* is put for his sceptre, or kingly power, as it is Isa. x. 24; Jer. xlviii. 17; Ezek. vii. 10, 11; xix. 11, 12. But as the kingdom of Christ is not carnal, or of this world, John xviii. 36, but spiritual; so this rod or sceptre is nothing else but his word published by himself, or by his apostles and ministers, and accompanied with his Spirit, by which the Messias did his great exploits, and set up and established his kingdom, converting some of his enemies, and confounding and destroying others of them, by that same instrument, as is manifest by comparing Isa. ii. 3; xi. 4; Micah iv. 2; 2 Cor. x. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 8. Hence this word is called *the word of the kingdom*, Matt. xiii. 19, and *the power of God*, Rom. i. 16. David having spoken of the Messias, ver. 1, now turneth his speech to him. *Out of Zion;* from Jerusalem, which is frequently understood by the name of Zion, which was an eminent and venerable part of it, as Psal. xlviii. 13; lxxxvii. 2; cii. 13, 16, &c.; where the sceptre of the Messias was first to be established according to the predictions of the prophets, Psal. ii. 6, 8; xlviii. 3; Isa. ii. 3, &c.; to which the event exactly answered, Luke xxiv. 47; Acts i. 4; ii. 1, 2, &c.; and from whence it was to be sent forth into all the parts and kingdoms of the world, to bring in the Gentiles, which also the prophets had foretold, as Isa. ii. 3, and in divers of the foregoing Psalms, as hath been already frequently observed and proved. *Rule thou;* thou shalt rule; the imperative being here put for the future, as it is Gen. xii. 12; Psal. xxxvii. 27, and oft elsewhere. For this is not a command, but a prediction or a promise that he shall rule; which he doth partly by his grace, converting some, and so ruling their hearts by his word and Spirit, and subduing their lusts in them, and their external enemies for them; and partly by his powerful providence, whereby he defends his church and people, and subdues and punisheth all their adversaries. *In the midst of thine enemies;* who shall see it, and do what they can to oppose thy dominion, but shall never be able to hinder it, but shall split themselves against it.

b Judg. 5. 2. c Ps. 45. 9. ‖ Or, more than the womb of the morning, &c.

3 b Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, c in the beauties of holiness ‖ from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

Thy people; thy subjects. *Shall be willing*, Heb. *willingnesses*, i. e. most willing, as such plural words are frequently used, as Psal. v. 10; xxi. 7. Or, *free-will offerings*, as the word properly signifies; whereby he may intimate the difference between the worship of the Old Testament and that of the New. They shall offer and present unto thee as their King and Lord, not oxen, or sheep, or goats, as they did under the law, but themselves, their souls and bodies, as living sacrifices, as they are called, Rom. xii. 1, and as free-will offerings, *giving up themselves to the Lord*, 2 Cor. viii. 5, to live to him, and to die and be offered for him. The sense is, Thou shalt have friends and subjects as well as enemies, and thy subjects shall not yield thee a

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forced and feigned obedience, as those who are subject to or conquered by earthly princes frequently do, of which see on Psal. xviii. 44, 45, but shall most willingly, and readily, and cheerfully obey all thy commands, without any dispute, or delay, or reservation; and they shall not need to be pressed to thy service, but shall voluntarily list themselves and fight under thy banner against all thy enemies. *In the day of thy power;* when thou shalt take into thy hands *the rod of thy strength*, as it is called, ver. 2, and set up thy kingdom in the world, and put forth thy mighty power in the preaching of thy word, and winning souls to thyself by it. Or, *in the day of thine army*, or *forces;* when thou shalt raise thine army, consisting of apostles, and other preachers and professors of the gospel, and shalt send them forth to conquer the world unto thyself. *In the beauties of holiness;* adorned with the beautiful and glorious robes of righteousness and true holiness, wherewith all new men or true Christians are clothed, Eph. iv. 24; compare Rev. xix. 8, 14; with various gifts and graces of God's Spirit, which are beautiful in the eyes of God and of all good men. The last clause noted the inward disposition, the willingness, of Christ's subjects, and this notes their outward habit and deportment; wherein there seems to be an allusion either, 1. To the beautiful and glorious garments of the Levitical priests, all Christians being *priests unto God*, Rev. i. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. Or, 2. To the military robes wherewith soldiers are furnished and adorned, all Christians being soldiers in the Christian warfare. But the words are and may well be rendered thus, *in the beauties or glories of the sanctuary*, i. e. by a usual Hebraism, in the beautiful and glorious sanctuary, which is called the *holy and beautiful house*, Isa. lxiv. 11; either in the temple at Jerusalem, which was honoured with Christ's presence, whereby it excelled the glory of the first house, according to Hag. ii. 9, in which both Christ and the apostles preached, and by their preaching made many of these willing people; or in Jerusalem, which is oft called the *holy* place or city, by the same word which is here rendered *sanctuary;* or in the church of God and of Christ, which was the antitype of the old sanctuary or temple, as is evident from 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Heb. iii. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 5. And this place may be mentioned as the place either where Christ's people are made willing, and show their willingness, or where Christ exerciseth and manifesteth that power last mentioned. *From the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.* This place is judged the most difficult and obscure of any in this whole book. The words are diversly rendered and understood. They are to be understood either, 1. Of Christ himself; and that in respect either, 1 Of his Divine and eternal generation, which may be called *the dew of his youth* or *birth*, and which he may be said to have had *from the womb of the morning*, before the first morning or light was created, or brought out of its womb; that is, before the world was, which is a common description of eternity in Scripture. Or, 2. Of his human nature and birth; and so the words may be thus rendered, *from the womb of the morning* (or, as it is rendered by divers others, *from the womb, from the morning*, i. e. from thy very first birth) *thou hast* or *hadst the dew of thy youth*, i. e. those eminent blessings and graces wherewith thou wast enriched, or *thy youth* or *childhood was* like *the dew*, precious and acceptable. Or rather, 2. Of Christ's subjects or people, of whom he evidently spoke in the former part of the verse, wherewith these words are joined. And it seems not probable that the psalmist, after he had discoursed of Christ's advancement to his kingdom, and his administration of it, and success in it, both as to his enemies and friends, would run back to his birth, either Divine or human, both which were evidently and necessarily supposed in what he had already said of him. But then these words may be read either, 1. Separately, as two distinct clauses, as they seem to be taken by our English translators, and by the colon which they placed in the middle. And so the first clause belongs to the foregoing words, as noting the time when *the people should be willing*, which having declared more generally in those words, *in the day of thy power*, he now describes more particularly and exactly, that they should be so even *from the morning*, or in a poetical strain, which is very suitable to this book, *from the womb of the morning*, to wit, of that day of his power, i. e. from the very beginning of Christ's entrance upon his kingdom, which was after his resurrection and ascension into heaven, and from the very first preaching of the gospel after that time, when multitudes were made Christ's willing people by the preaching of the apostles, as we read, Acts ii., iii., iv., v., &c. And for the second clause, it is to be understood thus, *thou hast*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *to thee* is, *the dew of thy youth*, or *of thy childhood;* for the word *jeled*, from which this is derived, signifies sometimes a *young man*, and sometimes a *child* or *infant*. By *youth* or *childhood*, he here seems to understand those young men or children which shall be born to the Messias, who are called his *children*, Heb. ii. 13, and *his seed*, Isa. liii. 10, wherein possibly there might be an allusion to this *dew*. Thus the abstract is here put for the concrete, which is very frequent in the Hebrew tongue, as *circumcision* and *uncircumcision* are put for the circumcised and the uncircumcised, &c. And even in the Latin tongue this very word *youth* is oft used for a *young man*, or for a *company* of young men. By *the dew of youth* he means *youth* or young men like *dew*, the note of similitude being oft understood. And this progeny of Christ is compared to the dew, partly because of their great multitude, being, like drops of dew, innumerable, and covering the whole face of the earth; see 2 Sam. xvii. 12; and partly because of the strange manner of their generation, which, like that of the dew, is done suddenly and secretly, and not perceived till it be accomplished, and to the admiration of those that behold it; of which see Isa. xlix. 21. Or, 2. Jointly, as one entire sentence, *the dew of thy youth* (i. e. thy posterity, which is like the dew, as was noted and explained before) is as the dew (which may very well be understood out of the foregoing clause, as the word *feet* is understood in like manner, Psal. xviii. 33, *He maketh my feet like hinds'* feet) *of* or *from the womb of the morning;* it is like the *morning dew*, as it is called both in Scripture, as Hos. vi. 4, and in other authors. Nor is it strange that a *womb* is ascribed to the morning, seeing we read of *the womb of the sea*, and of *the womb of the ice and frost*, Job xxxviii. 8, 28, 29.

4 The LORD hath sworn, and [d] will not repent, [e] Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

[d] Num. 23. 19.
[e] Heb. 5. 6. & 6. 20. & 7. 17, 21. See Zech. 6. 13.

Hath sworn; which he did not in the Aaronical priesthood, Heb. vii. 21, but did it here, partly because the thing was new and strange, and might seem incredible, because God had already erected another, and that an *everlasting priesthood*, Numb. xxv. 13, and given it to Aaron and his posterity for ever, and therefore this needed all possible assurance; and partly that this priesthood might be *established upon better promises*, as is said, Heb. viii. 6, and made sure and irrevocable, and such that God neither could nor would repent of it, as it follows. *Thou art*, to wit, by my order and constitution; thou shalt be so, and I do hereby make thee so. *A Priest*, as well as a King. Those offices which were divided before between two families, are both united and invested in thee, both being absolutely necessary for the discharge of thine office, and for the establishment of thy kingdom, which is of another kind than the kingdoms of the world, spiritual and heavenly, and therefore needs such a King as is also a minister of holy things. This word plainly discovers that this Psalm cannot be understood of David, as some of the Jews would have it, but only of the Messias. And although this word *cohen* be sometimes used of a prince or great person in the state, as the Jews object, yet it cannot be so understood here, partly, because it signifies a *priest* in Gen. xiv. 18, from whence this expression is borrowed; partly, because that word is never used of a sovereign prince or king, (such as the Jews confess the Messias to be,) but only of inferior princes or ministers of state, as Gen. xli. 45; 2 Sam. viii. 18; partly, because such an inconsiderable assertion would never have been ushered in by so solemn an oath, especially after far greater things had been said of him in the same kind, ver. 1—3; and partly, because the Messias is called a *Priest*, Zech. vi. 13; compare Jer. xxiii. 21; xxxv. 15, 18. *For ever;* not to be interrupted or translated to another person, as the priesthood of Aaron was upon the death of the priest, but to be continued to thee for ever. *After the order of Melchizedek*, or, *after the manner*, &c.; so as he was a priest and also a king, and both without any successor and without end, in the sense intended, Heb. vii. 3.

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f Ps. 16. 8.
g Ps. 2. 5, 12. Rom. 2. 5. Rev. 11. 18.

5 The Lord f*at* thy right hand shall strike through kings g*in* the day of his wrath.

The Lord; either, 1. God the Father, whose words and oath he last mentioned, ver. 4. So this is an apostrophe of the psalmist to Christ, Thy God and Father is at thy right hand, to wit, to defend and assist thee, as that phrase is used, Psal. xvi. 8; cix. 31, and elsewhere. See the notes on ver. 1. And he, to wit, God the Father, *shall strike*, &c., as it follows. Although this latter clause may belong to the Messias; and as in the former he spake to him, so in this he speaketh of him; such changes of persons being very frequent in this book. Or, 2. God the Son, or *the Lord*, who is *at thy right hand*, as was said before, ver. 1, *shall strike*, &c. So this is an apostrophe to God the Father concerning his Son. This seems best to agree with the following verses; for it is evident that it is the same person who *strikes through kings*, and *judgeth among the heathen*, and *filleth*, &c. And so this whole verse, and those which follow, speak of one person, which seems most probable. *Shall strike through kings;* shall mortally wound and destroy all those kings and potentates who are obstinate enemies to him and to his church. *In the day of his wrath;* in the day of battle, when he shall contend with them, and pour forth the floods of his wrath upon them.

6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead
h Ps. 68. 21. Hab. 3. 13.
‖ Or, *great.*
bodies; h*he shall* wound the heads over ‖many countries.

Shall judge; either, 1. Conquer and govern them; or rather, 2. Condemn and punish them, as it is explained in the following clauses, and as this word is used, Gen. xv. 14; Rom. ii. 1, 2; 1 Pet. iv. 6, and elsewhere. *The places;* or, *the place* of battle, which is necessarily supposed in the fight, and therefore may very well be understood. *Dead bodies* of his enemies, slain by his hand, and lying in the field in great numbers and heaps, and that unburied, to their greater infamy. *Shall wound the heads*, Heb. *the head;* which may be understood, either, 1. Of some one person and eminent adversary of Christ, and of his kingdom; either the devil, by comparing this with Gen. iii. 15; Heb. ii. 14, who was indeed the head or ruler of many countries, and indeed of all nations, except that of Israel; or the Roman empire, which was the great enemy and obstructer of Christ's kingdom, and therefore was to be destroyed by him, as is declared, Dan. ii. 44, 45; vii. 7, &c.; or the great antichrist, or the beast after which the whole world wondered, Rev. xiii. 3, which Christ will destroy, as we read, 2 Thess. ii. 8, and in divers places of St. John's Revelation. Or, 2. Of all those heads or princes which opposed him; the singular number *head* being here put collectively for *heads*, as is very usual in the Hebrew tongue and text; and so the meaning is, that none of Christ's enemies, though never so many or great, and their empire be never so large and potent, shall be able to withstand his force, or escape out of his hand; and that he shall not only destroy the common soldiers, but also their greatest commanders and princes, who in such cases do frequently make their escape. But this and the other like passages, both here and in the prophets, are not to be understood grossly and carnally, but spiritually, according to the nature of Christ's kingdom, the weapons of Christ's warfare, by which he accomplished his great works, being spiritual; and therefore such must be his battles and judgments, as is evident from many other scriptures, although these also are followed many times with temporal plagues.
i Judg. 7. 5, 6.
k Is. 53. 12.

7 i He shall drink of the brook in the way: k*therefore* shall he lift up the head.

He shall drink of the brook in the way: this may be understood either, 1. Properly, to express the fervency and diligence of the Messias in the prosecution of his business; who having routed and destroyed the main body of his enemies' forces, pursues those that fled with such eagerness, that he will not lose any time in refreshing himself, as might seem necessary after such hot and hard service, but will content himself with drinking a little water out of the brook which he finds in his way, that being a little refreshed therewith he may proceed with more vigour and efficacy in his work. And so this place alludes to the history of Gideon's three hundred men, who only lapped a little of the water; of whom see Judg. vii. Or, 2. Metaphorically, to express the humiliation and passion of the Messias, and thereby to prevent a great mistake which might arise in men's minds concerning him, from the great successes and victories here ascribed to him, which might induce them to think that the Messias should be exempted from all sufferings, and be crowned with constant and perpetual triumphs. To confute this conceit, he intimates here that the Messias, before he should obtain that power and glory mentioned in the foregoing verses, should have a large portion of afflictions in the way to it, or whilst he was in the way or course of his life, before he came to his end or rest, and to that honour of sitting at his Father's right hand. *Waters* in Scripture do very frequently signify afflictions or sufferings, as Psal. xlii. 7, &c. To *drink* of them, signifies to feel or bear them, as Isa. li. 17; Jer. xxv. 15; xlix. 12; Matt. xx. 22; and in this case it may note Christ's willing submission to them. A *brook* or *river* of water is oft used in Scripture to express a great abundance, either of comforts, as Psal. xxxvi. 8, or of tribulations, as Psal. xviii. 4; cxxiv. 4; and therefore may be more fitly used in this place than a *cup*, by which the afflictions of other men are commonly expressed, to intimate that the sufferings of the Messiah were unspeakably more and heavier than the sufferings of other men, and that he should drink up not a small cup, but the whole river or sea of his Father's wrath due to our sins. *Therefore*, which word may note either the effect or the consequent of his sufferings, *shall he lift up the head*, i. e. shall be delivered from all his sorrows and sufferings, and exalted to great glory, and joy, and felicity, as this phrase usually signifies, as Psal. iii. 3; xxvii. 6; Jer. lii. 31, and oft elsewhere; as, on the contrary, to *hang down the head*, is a signification of great grief and shame, as Lam. ii. 10.

PSALM CXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The excellency of this Psalm appears, as from other things, so from the psalmist's care to digest the several parcels of it into an exact order, according to the order of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, that it might be better fixed in the memories of those who read it. It is a short, yet full, commemoration of God's works.

The psalmist by his own example exhorteth all men to praise God, 1; *rehearseth his glorious and wonderful works,* 2—4; *his keeping covenant with them that fear him,* 5—9; *whose fear is the beginning of wisdom,* 10.

PRAISE †ye the Lord. a I will praise the Lord with *my* whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation.
† Heb. *Hallelujah.*
a Ps. 35. 18. & 89. 5. & 107. 32. & 109. 30. & 149. 1.

Of the upright; of the sincere worshippers of God, of the Israel of God, as this very word is explained, Numb. xxiii. 10; where they who are called Israel in one clause, are called *righteous* or *upright* in the next. And this title he gives to the assembly or congregation of Israelites, partly, because many of them were such, and he was obliged in charity to judge all of them to be so, of whom he had no evidence to the contrary; partly, because upright persons do most exercise and delight themselves in this duty of praising God; and hypocrites, though sometimes they give themselves to prayer, yet are very apt to neglect the duty of thanksgiving; partly, because this duty of *praise is* most *comely for the upright*, Psal. xxxiii. 1; and partly, because David's heart was most united to the sincere Israelites, and his desire was, as far as he could, to associate himself with such in the worship and service of God.

2 b The works of the Lord *are* great, c sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.
b Job 36, & 37, & 40. & 41. Ps. 92. 5. & 139. 14. Rev. 15. 3.
c Ps. 143. 5.

The works of the Lord; either, 1. The works of creation; or rather, 2. The works of his providence in the world, and especially in and for his church and people, of which he speaks in the rest of the Psalm. *Are great*, for the infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness manifested in them. *Sought out;* highly valued and regarded, as this very word and phrase is used, Deut. xi. 12; Isa. lxii. 12; or frequently

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called to mind, and diligently meditated upon, when others either never regarded them, or instantly forget them: or, *found out*, as this word is taken, Isa. lxv. 1; the antecedent being put for the consequent, which is frequent in Scripture, as Rom. xii. 2, where *proving* or *trying* (for so the Greek word there signifies) is put for *approving*, which follows after it. And *found out*, i. e. truly and thoroughly understood, both as to the nature of them, and God's counsels and ends in them; whereas the works of God are oftimes not apprehended or minded, or are mistaken and misconstrued, by ungodly men. *Of all them that have pleasure therein;* of all them who take delight in observing and considering the works of God.

[d] Ps. 145. 4, 5. 10.

3 His work *is* [d]honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

His work; either all his works, of which see the note on ver. 2; or that eminent branch of those works, his providence towards his people, as it is expressed afterwards. *Honourable and glorious;* becoming the Divine Majesty, and bringing glory to him from all that observe and consider it. *His righteousness;* his justice or faithfulness in performing his word. *Endureth for ever;* hath always been, and will still be, evident to his people in all generations, and in all conditions, even when he afflicts them, and seems to deal most severely, and to break his promise with them.

[e] Ps. 86. 5. [f] Joel 2. 13.

4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: [e]the LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion.

To be remembered; either, 1. By those memorials which he hath left of them in his word; or rather, 2. By their own wonderful nature, and the lasting effects and benefits flowing from them, which are such as cannot easily be forgotten. *Is gracious and full of compassion* towards his people, as appears from his works and carriage towards us, in sparing, and pardoning, and restoring, and preserving us when we have deserved to be utterly destroyed.

[g] Heb. prey. [h] Matt. 6. 26, 31.

5 He hath given †[g]meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

Meat; which includes all necessary provisions for their being and well-being. The word signifies *spoil*, and so may relate to the spoil of the Egyptians granted by God to the Israelites; but it is sometimes used for *food*, as Prov. xxxi. 15; Mal. iii. 10. *Unto them that fear him;* to the Israelites, the only people in the world which feared and worshipped the true God according to his will; and especially to those among them that truly feared God, and, for their sakes, to the body of that nation, as well in the wilderness, as in their following straits and miseries. *He will ever be mindful;* or, *he hath ever been;* for both in the first branch of this verse, and in the foregoing and following verses, he is speaking of the former works of God. So the future tense is put for the past, as it is frequently, and as on the contrary the past tense is put for the future. *Of his covenant,* which he made with Abraham and with his seed for ever; whereby he obliged himself to be their God, and to provide all necessaries for them.

6 He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

He hath shewed, not only by words, but by his actions. *The power of his works;* his mighty power in his works, and especially in that which here follows. *The heritage of the heathen;* the land of Canaan, which had been possessed and inherited by the heathens.

[i] Lev. 19. 2. [k] Ps. 33. 4.

7 The works of his hands *are* [i]verity and judgment; [k]all his commandments *are* sure.

The works of his hands; all that he doth, either on the behalf of his people, or against his or their enemies; of both which sorts of works he spoke in the foregoing verse. *Are verity and judgment;* are exactly agreeable to his word or promises, and to the rules of justice. *All his commandments;* either, 1. His laws given to the Israelites, especially the moral law considered with its sanction, the promises made to the observers of it, and the threatenings denounced against transgressors. Or, 2. His works, as it is in the first clause, called his *commands*, because they were done by virtue of his decree, and by his power and authority; as in like manner God is said to *command* those blessings which he purposeth to give, and doth effectually procure, as Deut. xxviii. 8; Psal. xlii. 8; lxviii. 28; cxxxiii. 3, and to *command* those creatures which he moveth and acteth as he pleaseth, as 1 Kings xvii. 4; Matt. viii. 27. *Are sure,* or *faithful,* or *certain;* constant and unchangeable, as his laws are, being grounded upon the immutable rules of justice or equity; infallible and irresistible, as his counsels and ways are.

[l] Is. 40. 8. Matt. 5. 18. † Heb. are *established.* [k] Ps. 19. 9. Rev. 15. 3.

8 [l]They †stand fast for ever and ever, *and are* [k]done in truth and uprightness.

They stand fast, Heb. *they are established* upon the sure foundations of truth and uprightness, as it follows. *Are done;* constituted or ordered.

[l] Matt. 1. 21. Luke 1. 68.

9 [l]He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: [m]holy and reverend *is* his name.

[m] Luke 1. 49.

Redemption; that deliverance out of Egypt, which was a type and pledge of that greater and higher redemption by Christ. *Commanded,* i. e. appointed or established firmly by his power and authority. And so this word is oft used, as Psal. xxxiii. 9; xlii. 8; cv. 31, 34. See also before on ver. 7, the ground of which signification may be taken from hence, that the command of a sufficient authority concerning any thing doth commonly establish and effect it. *For ever;* through all successive generations of his people to the end of the world; for the covenant is the same for substance in all, and differed only in circumstances. *Holy and reverend;* terrible to his enemies, and venerable in his people's eyes, and holy in all his dealings with all men.

[n] Deut. 4. 6. Job 28. 28. Prov. 1. 7. & 9. 10. Eccles. 12. 13. Ecclus. 1. 16. ‖ Or, *good success.* Prov. 3. 4. † Heb. *that do them.*

10 [n]The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: ‖a good understanding have all they †that do *his commandments:* his praise endureth for ever.

The fear of the Lord; piety or true religion, which consists in the fear or worship and service of God. *Is the beginning of wisdom;* is the only foundation of and introduction to all true wisdom. Or, is the chief part of wisdom; those things which are most excellent in their kinds being oft said to be *first,* to wit, in dignity, as Numb. xxiv. 20; Deut. xviii. 4, &c., and in other authors. And *the first command,* Mark xii. 28, is called *the greatest command,* Matt. xxii. 36. *That do his commandments,* Heb. *that do them,* to wit, God's commands, or the things which the fear of God requireth.

PSALM CXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm containeth a description of a good man's gracious disposition and carriage; as also of his blessed condition, even in this life as well as in the next.

The blessedness of them that fear the Lord in this life, and in that to come, 1—9; *for which the wicked envy them, and are grieved,* 10.

† Heb. *Hallelujah.* [a] Ps. 128. 1. [b] Ps. 119. 16, 35, 47, 70, 143.

PRAISE †ye the LORD. [a]Blessed *is* the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* [b]delighteth greatly in his commandments.

The fear of God, as it is man's only wisdom, Psal. cxi. 10, so it is his only way to true happiness. *That delighteth greatly in his commandments;* who makes it his chief delight, care, and business to study and obey God's commandments. He intimates that zeal and fervency in God's service is essential to true piety.

[c] Ps. 25. 13. & 37. 26. & 102. 28.

2 [c]His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

The generation, i. e. the posterity, as this word is oft used, as Lev. xxiii. 43; Numb. ix. 10, &c., called *his seed* in the former branch.

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d Matt. 6. 33. 3 d Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Shall be in his house; possessed by him whilst he lives, and continued in his family after his death. *His righteousness*, i. e. the fruit or reward of his righteousness, which is God's blessing upon his estate; for the work is oft put for the reward of it, as in the Hebrew, Lev. xix. 13; Job vii. 2; Psal. cix. 20. And *righteousness* may be here taken for his bounty or charity, as it is below, ver. 9, and as this Hebrew word is frequently taken.

e Job 11. 17. Ps. 97. 11. 4 e Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: *he is* gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness; and although he is subject to the troubles and calamities of this life, as others are, yet God will give him support and comfort in them, and a happy issue out of them, whereas the wicked sink under their burdens, and their present miseries usher in their eternal destruction. *He;* either, 1. God. And so this is added as a reason why God causeth light to shine to the upright out of darkness, because the Lord is *gracious*, &c. Or rather, 2. The good or upright man, of whom he speaks both in the foregoing and following words. So this is either, 1. A reason why God dealeth thus with good men; it is not from a partial and fond affection to them, but because they are such persons to whom God hath engaged himself by promise and covenant to bless them, they are *gracious*, &c. Or, 2. As an effect of their affliction and deliverance out of it; thereby they learn to be more *merciful*, and *compassionate*, and *just*, or bountiful to others in want and misery.

f Ps. 37. 26. Luke 6. 35. g Eph. 5. 15. Col. 4. 5. † Heb. *judgment.* 5 f A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs g with †discretion.

Sheweth favour, and lendeth; giveth freely to some, and kindly lendeth to others, according to the variety of their conditions. *Guide his affairs;* maintain and manage his estate or domestic affairs. *With discretion*, Heb. *with judgment;* so as is fit and meet, and as God requires, not getting his estate unjustly, nor casting it away prodigally or wickedly, nor yet withholding it uncharitably from such as need it.

h Ps. 15. 5. i Prov. 10. 7. 6 Surely h he shall not be moved for ever: i the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

Shall not be moved for ever; though he may for a season be afflicted, yet he shall not be utterly and eternally destroyed, as wicked men shall. *Shall be in everlasting remembrance;* though whilst he lives he may be exposed to the censures, and slanders, and contradictions of sinners, yet after death his memory will be precious and honourable, both with God and with all men, his very enemies not excepted.

k Prov. 1. 33. l Ps. 57. 7. m Ps. 64. 10. 7 k He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his l heart is fixed, m trusting in the Lord.

Of evil tidings; at the report of approaching calamities and judgments of God, at which the wicked are so dismayed and affrighted. *Trusting in the Lord;* casting all his care upon God, and securely relying upon his providence and promise.

n Prov. 3. 33. o Ps. 59. 10. & 118. 7. 8 His heart *is* established, n he shall not be afraid, until he o see *his desire* upon his enemies.

And although his enemies be many, and mighty, and terrible, yet he shall confidently and cheerfully wait upon God until he see their ruin and his own deliverance and safety.

p 2 Cor. 9. 9. q Deut. 24. 13. Ver. 3. r Ps. 75. 10. 9 p He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; q his righteousness endureth for ever; r his horn shall be exalted with honour.

Dispersed, to wit, his goods, and that freely and liberally, to several persons, as occasion is offered, as this word implies. *His righteousness*, i. e. his liberality, as this word is used, Prov. x. 2; xi. 4; Dan. iv. 27; 2 Cor. ix. 9. 10, &c.; or the reward of it, as before, ver 3. *Endureth for ever;* either, 1. His charity is not a transient or occasional act, but his constant course, of which he is not weary, but perseveres in it to the end of his life. Or, 2. What he gives is not lost nor cast away, as covetous or ungodly men judge of alms, but indeed is the only part of his estate, which will abide with him unto all eternity. *His horn shall be exalted with honour;* though he may be reproached by ungodly men, yet his innocency shall be cleared, and his name and honour gloriously exalted.

s See Luke 13. 28. t Ps. 37. 12. u Ps. 58. 7, 8. x Prov. 10. 28. & 11. 7. 10 s The wicked shall see *it*, and be grieved; t he shall gnash with his teeth, and u melt away: x the desire of the wicked shall perish.

Be grieved at the felicity of good men, partly, from envy at the happiness of others; partly, from his peculiar hatred of all godly men; and partly, because it is a plain testimony of God's justice and providence, and therefore a certain presage of his own ruin. *The desire;* his desire either of the misery of good men, or of his own constant prosperity and happiness in the world.

PSALM CXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is a declaration of God's powerful and universal providence towards all men, and especially towards his afflicted people.

An exhortation for all men to praise the Lord, for his excellency and greatness, 1—5; *for his condescension to the poor and humble-minded,* 6—9.

† Heb. *Hallelujah.* a Ps. 135. 1. PRAISE † ye the Lord. a Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.

Ye servants of the Lord; ye Levites, who are peculiarly devoted to this solemn work, who sometimes are called God's *servants* in a special sense, and all you faithful souls.

b Dan. 2. 20. 2 b Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore.

c Is. 59. 19. Mal. 1. 11. 3 c From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name *is* to be praised.

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same; from one end of the world to the other; from east to west, which he mentions rather than from north to south, because those parts of the world were at this time much uninhabited and unknown. *The Lord's name is to be praised*, for his glorious works of creation and providence, the benefit of which all nations enjoy; and for his gracious purpose and promise of bringing in all nations to the knowledge of his truth by the Messias.

d Ps. 97. 9. & 99. 2. e Ps. 8. 1. 4 The Lord *is* d high above all nations, *and* e his glory above the heavens.

High above all nations; superior to all princes and bodies of people in the world. *His glory above the heavens:* whereas the glory of earthly monarchs is confined to this lower world, and to small pittances of it, the glory of God doth not only fill the earth, but heaven too, where it is celebrated by thousands and myriads of blessed angels, yea, it is far higher than heaven, being infinite and incomprehensible.

f Ps. 89. 6. † Heb. *exalteth himself to dwell.* 5 f Who *is* like unto the Lord our God, who †dwelleth on high,

To wit, far above all heavens, as was now said, being exalted as in place, so in power and dignity, above all persons and things, visible and invisible.

g Ps. 11. 4. & 123. 1. Is. 57. 15. 6 g Who humbleth *himself* to behold *the things that are* in heaven, and in the earth!

Who is so high, that it is a wonderful vouchsafement and condescension in him to take any notice or care of his holy and heavenly host, and much more of sinful and miserable men upon earth, which yet he is pleased to do.

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h 1 Sam. 2. 8. Ps. 107. 41.

7 [h]He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;

He raiseth up the poor; yea, he stoops so low as to regard and advance those whom all men, and even their own brethren, slight and despise. *Out of the dust;* from a most contemptible and miserable condition. Beggars and mourners used to lie in the dust, or, as it follows, upon *the dunghill*, 1 Sam. ii. 8; Lam. iv. 5.

i Job 36. 7.

8 That he may [i]set *him* with princes, *even* with the princes of his people.

Set him with princes; in equal honour and power with them, as he did Joseph, David, and others. *The princes of his people;* which in God's account and in truth are far more honourable and happy than the princes of heathen and barbarous nations, because their subjects are more noble, and they have God's special presence and providence among them.

k 1 Sam. 2. 5. Ps. 68. 6. Is. 54. 1. Gal. 4. 27. † Heb. *to dwell in an house.*

9 [k]He maketh the barren woman † to keep house, *and to be* a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

To keep house, Heb. *to dwell in a house* or *family*, or *amongst children*, to wit, coming out of her own womb, as is clearly implied by the opposition of this to her barrenness. And the word *house* is oft put for children, as Exod. i. 21; Ruth iv. 11; Psal. cxv. 10, 12. And so it is explained in the next clause.

PSALM CXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is a solemn commemoration of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt; and probably it was to be sung, amongst others, at the celebration of the passover.

The psalmist, rehearsing God's delivering the Israelites out of Egypt, exhorteth all creatures to praise him.

l Ex. 12. 2. b Ps. 81. 5.

WHEN [l]Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob [b]from a people of strange language;

Which was a great aggravation of their captivity and misery. Compare Jer. v. 15.

c Ex. 6. 7. & 15. 17. & 25. 8. & 29. 45. Deut. 27. 9.

2 [c]Judah was his sanctuary, *and* Israel his dominion.

Judah, or *Israel*, as it is explained in the next clause; one tribe being put for all; which is a common synecdoche. Judah he mentions as the chief of all the tribes, not only in number and power, but also in dignity, in which the kingdom was to be seated, Gen. xlix. 10, &c., as at this time it actually was, and from which the Messias was to spring. *His*, i. e. God's, which is easily understood from the whole context, and from the nature of the thing. *Sanctuary;* or, *holiness; the people of* God's *holiness*, as they are called, Isa. xiii. 18; or, *his holy people*, as Deut. xxvi. 19; Dan. viii. 24; sanctified or set apart from all the nations of the world to be his peculiar people and possession. *His dominion*, in a peculiar manner, to be governed by his laws, and honoured with his special presence and favour.

Ex. 14. 21. Ps. 77. 16. Josh. 3. 13, 16.

3 [d]The sea saw *it*, and fled: [e]Jordan was driven back.

Saw it, to wit, this glorious work of God in bringing his people out of Egypt.

f Ps. 29. 6. & 68. 15. Hab. 3. 6.

4 [f]The mountains skipped like rams, *and* the little hills like lambs.

Horeb and Sinai, two tops of one mountain, and other neighbouring hills or mountains. Compare Exod. xix. 18; Psal. lxviii. 8; Hab. iii. 6, 10.

g Hab. 3. 8.

5 [g]What *ailed* thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, *that* thou wast driven back?

What was the cause of this unusual motion? Such speeches directed to senseless creatures are very frequent, both in Scripture and in other authors, and especially in poetical writings, such as this is.

6 Ye mountains, *that* ye skipped like rams; *and* ye little hills, like lambs?

7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

But why do I ask these questions? Ye mountains did no more than what was just and fit at the approach and appearance of the great God; yea, the whole earth hath reason to tremble and quake upon such occasions.

h Ex. 17. 6. Num. 20. 11. Ps. 107. 35.

8 [h]Which turned the rock *into* a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

PSALM CXV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The occasion of this Psalm was to manifest some eminent danger or distress of the people of Israel from some idolatrous nations; but whether it was that mentioned 2 Chron. xx., or what other, is but matter of conjecture, and not worth our inquiry.

The church prayeth to God to keep them, for his glorious name, 1—3. *from the vanity of idol worship,* 4—8; *exhorteth to confidence in him, being assured of his blessing,* 9—17. *They resolve for ever to praise the Lord,* 18.

a See Is. 48. 11. Ezek. 36. 32.

NOT [a]unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake.

As we entreat thy favour and aid, and that thou wouldst work gloriously on our behalf to bring us out of our present straits and extremities; so we do not desire this out of a vain-glorious humour, as usually men do in such cases, that we may get renown by the conquest of our proud and mighty enemies, but that thy honour may be vindicated from all their contempts and blasphemies; and if thou wilt deliver us, we will not arrogate the praise and glory of it to our own worth or valour, but only to thy *mercy* and *truth*.

b Ps. 42. 3, 10. & 79. 10. Joel 2. 17.

2 Wherefore should the heathen say, [b]Where *is* now their God?

Wherefore should the heathen say? why dost thou suffer them, or give them any colour or occasion, to say or think so, by conniving at their wickedness, and by giving thy people into their hands? *Where is now their God?* he is no where; he is lost, or at a loss, either unable, or unwilling, or not at leisure to save them. *Their God;* who hath undertaken to be their God and Saviour, and whom they only worship, and of whom they use to boast and insult over us and over our gods.

c 1 Chron. 16. 26. Ps. 135. 6. Dan. 4. 35.

3 [c]But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

Our God; whom, notwithstanding your reproaches, we are not ashamed to own for our God. *Is in the heavens;* although he have no visible shape nor bodily presence with us here upon earth, as your idols have, which is a certain proof of their baseness and weakness, yet he hath a certain and a glorious place where he resideth, even the highest heavens, where he is clothed with infinite power and majesty, and from whence he beholdeth and governeth this lower world, and all that is in it. *He hath done whatsoever he pleased;* or, *he doth*, &c. By his only will and pleasure all things were at first made, and are still disposed, and without this nothing cometh to pass. And therefore all your insolences, and injuries, and successes against us do not come from an invincible power in you or in your idols, nor from any defect of strength or goodness in our God, but only from hence, that it pleased him for many wise and good reasons to afflict us, and to give you prosperity for a time.

d Deut. 4. 28. Ps. 135. 15, 16, 17. Jer. 10. 3, &c.

4 [d]Their idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

Thus glorious and powerful is our God, O ye heathens, of whom you so boldly ask who and where he is; but as for your gods or idols, they have no power nor worth in them but what is taken from their materials. As their matter is wholly from the earth, so their form or figure they have from the art of man; and therefore they should rather, if it were possible, worship man, as their creator and lord, than be worshipped by him.

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5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:

For although the blind heathen are by their idolatrous priests made to believe otherwise concerning their idols, in regard of the spirits which they pretend to dwell in them, yet this is the truth of the matter, and confirmed by long and constant experience, that they are but vain and senseless things; they can neither *speak* in answer to your prayers of inquiries, nor *see* what you do or what you want, nor *hear* your petitions, nor *smell* your incenses and sacrifices, nor *handle* or use their hands, either to take any thing from you, or to give any thing to you; nor so much as *mutter*, or give the least signification of their apprehension of your condition and concerns.

6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:

7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

Speak, or *mutter*, or *make a noise*, as this word signifies, Isa. x. 14. They are so far from speaking with their throat and other instruments of speech as men do, that they cannot make such an inarticulate and senseless sound with them as the beasts do.

e Ps. 135. 18. Is. 44. 9, 10, 11. Jonah 2. 8. Hab. 2. 18, 19.

8 [e]They that make them are like unto them; *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

They that make them; or, *they that observe* or *worship them*. For the psalmist's quarrel was not so much with those few artists who formed the images, as with all the adorers of them. And the word here rendered *make* doth sometimes signify to *worship*, as some understand it, not without probability, Exod. xxxii. 35, *because they made* (i. e. worshipped) *the calf which Aaron made*, and as in other languages words answering to this do signify, as hath been oft observed by learned men; and it oft signifies to *observe;* as when men are said *to make* (as it is in the Hebrew) *the sabbath*, Deut. v. 15, and *the release*, and *the passover*, and *the feast of weeks*, as Deut. xv. 1; xvi. 1, 10. *Are like unto them:* this is a sharp reflection, either, 1. Upon the idols, whose highest preferment it is to be made like unto man, a mortal, weak, and miserable creature, infinitely inferior to the true God. Or, 2. To the makers or worshippers of them, who by this absurd and foolish action show that they are as ignorant, and stupid, and void of all sense and reason as their images.

f See Ps. 118. 2, 3, 4. & 135. 19, 20. g Ps. 33. 20. Prov. 30. 5.

9 [f]O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: [g]he *is* their help and their shield.

O Israel, do not thou follow the example of these brutish idolaters, but serve the Lord only. *Their help;* who trust in God, as he now required. Or *their* is put for *your* by a change of persons, which is most frequent in Scripture, and especially in these books.

10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

You priests and Levites proceeding from Aaron, or related to him, who have special reason and many obligations to do it, who have a more distinct knowledge of God, which is the foundation of trust, Psal. ix. 10, and who are to be both instructors of and examples to the people in this as well as in other duties.

11 Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

All and every one of you who worship the true God, not only Aaronites and Israelites, but even Gentile proselytes, who are said to *come to trust under the wings of the God of Israel*, Ruth ii. 12. And such there were many at this time in the church of Israel, whom therefore he fitly invites to trust God, because he is no less their than the Israelites' help and shield, as it follows.

12 The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless *us;* he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

Hath been mindful of us in our former straits and calamities, and therefore we trust he *will* still *bless us*, &c. as it follows. Or, *is* or *will be mindful of us*. Though he hath chastened us sore, yet he hath not yet cast us out of the care of his providence.

h Ps. 128. 1, 4. † Heb. with.

13 [h]He will bless them that fear the LORD, *both* small † and great.

Either in age or condition, of whatsoever quality, high and low, rich and poor; for he is no respecter of persons.

14 The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

Shall increase you in number, notwithstanding all the attempts of your enemies to diminish and destroy you. Or, *shall add to you*, to wit, further and greater blessings.

i Gen. 14. 19. k Gen. 1. 1. Ps. 96. 5.

15 Ye *are* [i]blessed of the LORD [k]which made heaven and earth.

Who therefore can bless you indeed in spite of all your enemies' curses and oppositions; and not of an impotent idol, that can do you neither good nor hurt.

16 The heaven, *even* the heavens, *are* the LORD's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

Are the Lord's, to wit, in a peculiar manner, where he dwelleth in that light and glory to which no man can approach, and whence he beholdeth and disposeth all persons and things upon earth. *But the earth hath he given to the children of men*, for their habitation, possession, and use. But these words may be and are thus rendered by others, *and the earth* which (which particle is very oft understood) *he hath given*, &c. And then as the foregoing verse declared that God was the Creator of heaven and earth, ver. 15, so this asserts that he is also their Lord and Governor, to dispose of all men and things as he pleaseth.

l Ps. 6. 5. & 88. 10, 11, 12. Is. 38. 18.

17 [l]The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

The dead; such as we shall suddenly be, if thou dost not succour us. *Into silence;* into the place of silence, the grave.

m Ps. 113. 2. Dan. 2. 20.

18 [m]But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

But we will bless the Lord; but we hope for better things, that notwithstanding our present and urgent danger, yet thou wilt deliver us, and so give us occasion to bless thy name; whereby thou wilt have the praise and glory of our deliverance.

PSALM CXVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a solemn thanksgiving to God for a glorious deliverance from grievous and dangerous calamities; as also from great perplexities and terrors of mind arising from the sense of God's displeasure.

The psalmist professeth his love to God for his manifold mercies in delivering him out of great straits and dangers, 1—8; *promising to walk holily, prayeth for his future protection, studieth and promiseth to be thankful,* 9—19.

a Ps. 18. 1.

I [a]LOVE the LORD, because he hath heard my voice *and* my supplications.

2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon *him* † as long as I live.

† Heb. *in my days*

Heb. *in my days;* as long as I have a day to live, as this phrase is used, 2 Kings xx. 19; Isa. xxxix. 8. Compare Job xxvii. 6.

b Ps. 18. 4, 5, 6. * Heb. *found me*

3 [b]The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell † gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

The sorrows of death; dangerous and deadly calamities as bitter as death. Or, *the cords of death. Of hell;* or, *of the grave;* or, *of death;* either killing pains, or such agonies and horrors as dying persons use to feel within themselves. *Gat hold upon me*, Heb. *found me*, i. e. surprised me. Having been long pursuing me, at last they overtook me, and seized upon me, and I gave up myself for lost.

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4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

[c] Ps. 103. 8. [d] Lam. 3. 22. Nah. 1. 3. Ps. 119. 137. [a] Jas. 1. 17.

5 [c]Gracious *is* the LORD, and [d]righteous; yea, our God *is* merciful.

Gracious is the Lord: this he mentions either, 1. As that which he found by experience in answer to his prayers; or, 2. As the argument by which he encouraged himself to pray. *And righteous;* therefore he will maintain me and my just cause against my unrighteous oppressors, and perform his promises, and save those who faithfully serve him and put their trust in him.

6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was *brought* low, and he helped me.

The simple; sincere and plain-hearted persons, who dare not use those frauds and crafty and wicked artifices in saving themselves or destroying their enemies, but wait upon God with honest hearts in his way and for his time of deliverance; which was the case of David, who, though he had the prospect and the promise of the kingdom, yet would not make haste to it by indirect courses, as by cutting off Saul, when he had great provocation and fair opportunity to do it; of which see 1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi. Such persons he calls *simple* or *foolish*, as this word is commonly rendered, not because they are really so, but because the world esteems them so.

[e] Jer. 6. 16. Matt. 11. 29. [f] Ps. 13. 6. & 119. 17.

7 Return unto thy [e]rest, O my soul; for [f]the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

Unto thy rest; unto that tranquillity of mind and cheerful confidence in God's promises and providence which thou didst once enjoy.

[g] Ps. 56. 13.

8 [g]For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, *and* my feet from falling.

My soul; myself. *From falling,* to wit, into mischief, and the pit of destruction.

[h] Ps. 27. 13.

9 I will walk before the LORD [h]in the land of the living.

I will walk before the Lord; or, *I shall walk,* &c. This is either, 1. The psalmist's promise to God in requital of the favour last mentioned; I will therefore please God, as this phrase is used, Gen. v. 24, compared with Heb. xi. 5; Gen. xvii. 1. I will devote myself to the worship and service of God. Or, 2. His thankful acknowledgment of God's further favour. Though I be now banished from the place of thy presence and worship, yet I assure myself that I shall be restored to it, and shall spend my days in thy house and service, which is the one thing that I desired above all other things, Psal. xxvii. 4. *In the land of the living;* amongst living men of this world. See on Psal. xxvii. 13.

[i] 2 Cor. 4. 13.

10 [i]I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:

I believed, to wit, God's promise of deliverance and of the kingdom made to me by Samuel, which I was confident he would perform in spite of discouragements and difficulties. *Therefore have I spoken:* so these words are translated, as by others, so by the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 13. *I have spoken;* either, 1. What I have now said, ver. 9; or, 2. What I have uttered to others concerning God's promises made to me; which I was not ashamed nor afraid to publish when I had occasion, because I was fully persuaded that God ... them good. *I was greatly afflicted;* or, when ... though *I was,* &c.; such particles being understood. The sense is, And this I did ... many and sore afflictions.

... said in my haste, [l]All men *are*

... I spake very unadvisedly. *In* ... precipitation of my mind, ... same phrase is used, ... *amazement,* when I ... the greatness of my ... is either, 1. All men, ... panions, prove deceitful and perfidious, all human help faileth me; so that my case is desperate, if God do not help me. Or, 2. All men, God's own prophets not excepted, are liable to mistakes by the condition of their nature, as they are men, and therefore may easily deceive others; and this might be the case of Samuel in his promise of the kingdom to me. Thus he questions the truth of God's promises, yet so as he doth not strike directly at God, but only reflects upon the instrument.

12 What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me?

Yet notwithstanding all my dangers and my distrust of God too, God hath conferred so many and great blessings upon me, that I can never make sufficient returns to him for them.

13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.

I will take the cup of salvation; I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving to God, as this phrase seems to be explained below, ver. 17, where the latter clause of the verse is the same with that which here follows. The phrase is taken from the common practice of the Jews in their thank-offerings, in which a feast was made of the remainders of the sacrifices, and the offerers, together with the priests, did eat and drink before the Lord, and, amongst other rites, the master of the feast took a cup of wine into his hand, and solemnly blessed God for it, and for the mercy which was then acknowledged, and then gave it to all the guests, who drunk successively of it; see 1 Chron. xvi. 2, 3; to which custom it is supposed that our blessed Saviour alludes in the institution of the cup, which also is called *the cup of blessing,* 1 Cor. x. 16, which is in effect the same with *the cup of salvation.* This metaphor of a *cup* is used both of afflictions, as Psal. xi. 6; lxxv. 8, and of comforts, as Psal. xxiii. 5; Jer. xvi. 7. *Call upon the name of the Lord;* or, *publish* or *preach in* or *of the name of the Lord,* i. e. his gracious nature, and the great things which he hath done for me. For he speaks of praise rather than of prayer, as appears both from the former clause, and by comparing ver. 17.

14 [m]I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

[m] ver. 18. Ps. 22. 25. Jonah 2. 9.

My vows; the praises and sacrifices which I vowed to God in the time of my distress. *In the presence of all his people;* that they who heard my vows, or understood them by the report of others, might be witnesses of my payment of them, and not be scandalized by my unfaithfulness in that matter.

15 [n]Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of his saints.

[n] Ps. 72. 14.

He sets a high price upon it; he will not readily grant it to those that greedily seek it; and if any son of violence procure it, he will make him pay very dearly for it; and when the saints suffer it for God's sake, as they frequently do, it is a most acceptable sacrifice to God, and highly esteemed by him. Thus *the blood* of God's people is said to be *precious in his sight,* Psal. lxxii. 14. And, in the same sense, the *life* of a man is said to be *precious in* his *eyes* who spareth and preserveth it, as 1 Sam. xxvi. 21; 2 Kings i. 13. God's people are precious in his eyes, both living and dying; for *whether they live, they live unto the Lord; or whether they die, they die unto the Lord,* Rom. xiv. 8.

16 O LORD, truly [o]I *am* thy servant; I *am* thy servant, *and* [p]the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

[o] Ps. 143. 12. & 119. 125. & 143. 12. [p] Ps. 86. 16.

I am thy servant: this is either, 1. An argument used in prayer, It becometh thee to protect and save thy own servants, as every good master doth; or rather, 2. A thankful acknowledgment of his great obligations to God, whereby he was in duty bound to be the Lord's faithful and perpetual servant. For this suits best with the context. *The son of thine handmaid;* either, 1. The son of a mother who was devoted and did devote me to thy service. Or, 2. Like one born in thy house of one of thy servants, and so thine by a most strict and double obligation. *Thou hast loosed my bonds;* thou hast rescued me from mine enemies, whose captive and vassal I was, and therefore hast a just right and title to me and to my service.

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q Lev. 7. 12. Ps. 50. 14. & 107. 22.

17 I will offer to thee q the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

r ver. 14.

18 r I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,

And as I said before, so I now repeat my promise, for the greater assurance, and to lay the stricter obligation upon myself.

s Ps. 96. 8. & 100. 4. & 135. 2.

19 In the s courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, as appears both from the matter of it, and from Rom. xv. 11, where it is quoted to that purpose.

An exhortation to all nations to praise God for his mercy and truth's sake.

a Rom. 15. 11.

O a PRAISE the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

Acknowledge the true God, and serve him only, and cast away all your idols.

2 For his merciful kindness is great

b Ps. 100. 5.

toward us: and b the truth of the LORD *endureth* for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

Toward us; either, 1. Towards us Jews, to whom he hath given those peculiar privileges which he hath denied to all other nations. But this may seem an improper argument to move the Gentiles to praise God for his mercies to others from which they were excluded. Or, 2. Towards all of us, all the children of Abraham, whether carnal or spiritual, who were to be incorporated together, and made one body and one fold by and under the Messias, John x. 16; Eph. ii. 14, which mystery seems to be insinuated by this manner of expression.

PSALM CXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm most probably was composed by David, when the civil wars between the houses of Saul and David were ended, and David was newly settled in the kingdom of all Israel, and had newly brought up the ark of God to his royal city. But though this was the occasion, yet David, or at least the Spirit of God, which indited this Psalm, had a further reach and higher design in it, and especially in the latter part of it, which was to carry the reader's thoughts beyond the type to the antitype, the Messias and his kingdom, who was chiefly intended in it; which is apparent both from the testimonies produced out of it to that purpose in the New Testament, as Matt. xxi 9, 42; Mark xii. 10, 11; Acts iv. 11, &c.; and from the consent of the Hebrew doctors, both ancient and modern; one evidence whereof is, that in their prayers for their Messiah they use some part of this Psalm; and from the matter itself, as we shall see hereafter. The form of this Psalm may seem to be dramatical, and several parts of it are spoken in the name of several persons, yet so that the distinction of the persons and their several passages is not expressed, but left to the observation of the intelligent and diligent reader, as it is in the book of the Song of Solomon, and in some part of Ecclesiastes, and in many profane writers. David speaks in his own name from the beginning to ver. 22, and from thence to ver. 25 in the name of the people, and thence to ver. 27 in the name of the priests, and then concludes in his own name.

The psalmist exhorteth all the godly to praise the Lord, who had been merciful to them, 1—4. *By his own experience showeth how good it is to trust in the Lord, who had delivered him from his enemies,* 5—18. *Under the type of the psalmist, the coming of Christ, whom the chief of the people refuse, is expressed and blessed,* 19—29.

a 1 Chron. 16. 8, 34. Ps. 106. 1. & 107. 1. & 136. 1.

O a GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for *he* *is* good: because his mercy *endureth* for ever.

O give thanks; all sorts of persons, which are particularly expressed in the three next verses, as they are mentioned in like manner and order Psal. cxv. 9—11, where see the notes.

b See Ps. 115. 9, &c.

2 b Let Israel now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

Israel, after the flesh, all the tribes and people of Israel, except the Levites.

3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

The priests and Levites, who were greatly discouraged and oppressed in Saul's time, and shall receive great benefits by my government.

4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

The Gentile proselytes, whereof there were in David's time, and were likely to be, greater numbers than formerly had been.

c Ps. 120. 1. † Heb. *out of distress.* d 1 Sa. 18. 13.

5 c I called upon the LORD †in distress: the LORD answered me, *and* d *set* *me* in a large place.

Set me; which verb is tacitly included in the former, and is easily understood out of Psal. xxxi. 8, where the full phrase is expressed, and from the following word. See the like examples in the Hebrew text, Gen. xii. 15; Psal. xxii. 21, &c.

e Ps. 27. 1. & 56. 4, 11. & 146. 5, 6. Isa. 51. 12. Heb. 13. 6. † Heb. *for me.*

6 e The LORD *is* †on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

A frail and impotent creature in himself, and much more when he is opposed to the Almighty God.

f Ps. 54. 4. g Ps. 59. 10.

7 f The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall g I see *my* *desire* upon them that hate me.

The Lord taketh my part with them that help me; he is one of the number of my helpers, and enables them to defend me.

h Ps. 40. 4. & 62. 8, 9. Jer. 17. 5, 7.

8 h *It is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

As mine adversaries do in their own numbers, and in their great confederates.

i Ps. 146. 3.

9 i *It is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

† Heb. *cut them off.*

10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I †destroy them.

All nations compassed me about; the neighbouring and heathen nations, Philistines, Syrians, Ammonites, Moabites, &c., who were stirred up, partly, by the overthrows which David had given some of them; partly, by their jealousy at David's growing greatness and fear for themselves; and partly, by their hatred against the true religion.

k Ps. 88. 17.

11 They k compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

They compassed me about; the repetition implies their frequency and fervency in this action, and their confidence of success.

l Deut. 1. 44. m Eccles. 7. 6. Nah. 1. 10. † Heb. *cut down.*

12 They compassed me about l like bees; they are quenched m as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will †destroy them.

Like bees; in great numbers, and with great and potent fury, and to their own ruin, as bees do when they fly about a man, and leave their stings in him. *They are quenched:* so this word is used Job vi. 17; xviii. 5, 6; xxi. 17. Or, as the LXX. and Chaldee render it, *they burnt* or *flamed,* i. e. raged against me like fire, as it follows. And this is supposed to be one of those Hebrew verbs, which have not only divers, but contrary significations. *As the fire of thorns;* which flameth out terribly, and makes a crackling noise, and burneth fiercely, but quickly spends itself without any considerable or lasting effect. *For;* or, *but,* as this very particle is frequently used, and here twice in this very phrase, ver. 10, 11. So as the former part of the verse notes their hostile attempt, this notes their ill success and utter ruin. Here is an inversion of words in this last clause, which is not unusual in the Hebrew text. Although these words may be, and are by a learned man of our own, rendered as they lie in the Hebrew, I trust (which word may easily be understood out of ver. 8, 9) *in the name of the*

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Lord, therefore (for so the Hebrew *chi* is oft rendered, and is so taken by the Chaldee in this place) *I shall destroy them*, or *cut them off*.

13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.

Thou, O mine enemy, and the head of all mine enemies. Possibly he understandeth Saul, whom for honour's sake he forbears to name; or some other chief commander of his enemies. Or the singular word is here put collectively for all his enemies.

[n] Ex. 15. 2. Isa. 12. 2.

14 [n]The LORD *is* my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

My strength and song; the author of my strength, and therefore the just object of my song and praise. *My salvation*, i. e. my Saviour.

15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation *is* in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

The voice of rejoicing and salvation, of rejoicing and thanksgiving for the salvation and deliverance which God hath wrought for me, *is in the tabernacles of the righteous*; partly because they clearly saw God's hand in the work, and therefore took pleasure in it; and partly because all good men suffered great inconveniences under Saul's government, as David complains in divers of the foregoing Psalms, and expected and received singular benefits by David's advancement, both in their civil and religious concernments. *The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly*: these are the words of that song of joy and praise now mentioned.

[o] Ex. 15. 6.

16 [o]The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

Is exalted; hath appeared evidently, and wrought powerfully and gloriously on my behalf.

[p] Psa. 6. 5. Heb. 1. 12. [q] Psa. 73. 28.

17 [p]I shall not die, but live, and [q]declare the works of the LORD.

I shall not die, to wit, so soon as mine enemies desire, nor by their sword, as they hope and endeavour. *Declare the works of the Lord*; one branch whereof is the total destruction of mine enemies. He implies that he did not desire life, nor should employ it, as his enemies did theirs, but for the service and glory of God.

[r] 2 Cor. 6. 9.

18 The LORD hath [r]chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

Hath chastened me sore by the hands of mine enemies, whom God used to that very purpose for my greater good, and their own greater and surer ruin and confusion.

[s] Is. 26. 2.

19 [s]Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, *and* I will praise the LORD:

Open to me, O ye porters, appointed by God for this work. Or it is a figurative and poetical manner of expression, whereby he speaks to the gates themselves, as if they had sense and understanding. Or by saying *open*, he implies that they had been long shut against him in Saul's time. *The gates of righteousness*, to wit, the gates of the Lord's tabernacle, the proper and usual place of the solemn performance of the duty here following, which he calleth *the gates of righteousness*, partly, in opposition to *the gates of death*, of which he speaks implicitly ver. 18, and expressly Psal. ix. 13; cvii. 18, which may be called the gates of sin or unrighteousness, because death is the wages of sin; partly, because there the rule of righteousness was kept and taught, and the sacrifices of righteousness (as they are called, Psal. iv. 5) were offered, and divers other exercises of righteousness or of God's service were performed; and partly, because those gates were to be opened to all righteous persons, (such as David had oft professed and proved himself to be, upon which account he claims this as his just privilege,) and only to such, for the unclean and unrighteous were to be shut and kept out by the porters, 2 Chron. xxiii. 19; compare Isa. xxvi. 2.

[t] Psa. 24. 7. [u] Isa. 35. 8. Rev. 21. 27. [x] Isa. 14. 18.

20 [t]This gate of the LORD, [u]into which the righteous shall enter.

These may be the words either, 1. Of the Levites, the porters returning this answer to the foregoing question: This is the gate of the Lord which thou seekest, and which shall be opened to thee according to thy desire, and thy just privilege, for thou art one of those righteous ones to whom this of right belongs. Or, 2. Of David himself, who stands as it were pausing and contemplating before he makes his entrance: This, this is that holy and blessed gate, which I so long and earnestly thirsted for in my banishment, and which is now very beautiful in my sight, into which I will enter, and all other righteous persons by my example and encouragement. But as David was a type of Christ and the temple of heaven, so this place hath a further prospect than David, and relates to Christ's ascending into heaven, and opening the gates of that blessed temple, both for himself, and for all righteous men or believers.

[x] Psa. 116. 1. [y] ver. 14. [z] Matt. 21. 42. Mark 12. 10. Luke 20. 17. Acts 4. 11. Eph. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 4, 7.

21 I will praise thee: for thou hast [x]heard me, and [y]art become my salvation.

22 [z]The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner.

The commonwealth of Israel and the church of God are here and elsewhere in Scripture compared to a building, wherein as the people are the stones and the matter, so the princes and rulers are the builders, whose office it was to erect, and support, and improve the building, and to use their wisdom and power in choosing fit materials for the several parts and purposes of the building, and in the rejection of what was unprofitable and inconvenient. And these master-builders rejected David as an obscure, and treacherous, and rebellious person, fit to be not only laid aside and thrown away, but also to be crushed to pieces. And so their successors rejected Christ as an enemy to Moses, a friend to sinners, and a blasphemer against God, and therefore deserving death and damnation. *The head stone of the corner*; the chief stone in the whole building, by which the several parts of the building are upheld and firmly united and kept together. Thus David united all the tribes and families of Israel, who had been miserably distracted and divided by the civil wars between the houses of Saul and David. And thus Christ united Jews and Gentiles together, as is observed, Eph. ii. 14, &c. And although David alludeth to himself and his own condition, yet it is not to be doubted but that having the prophetical Spirit, by which he foresaw the coming of Christ, and his ill usage from the Jews, of which he speaks very particularly Psal. xxii., and elsewhere; and having his thoughts much taken up with Christ and the event of his kingdom, of which he speaks in divers of his Psalms, he had his eye principally fixed upon him in these and the following expressions. And therefore this place is justly expounded of Christ in the New Testament, as Mark xii. 10; Acts iv. 11; Rom. ix. 32; Eph. ii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 6, compared with Isa. xxviii. 16. And to him indeed the words agree much more properly and fully than to David.

† Heb. *This is from the* LORD.

23 †This is the LORD's doing; it *is* marvellous in our eyes.

This; this strange event; the feminine gender being put for the neuter, as it is in other places of Scripture. *The Lord's doing*; peculiarly an effect of his omnipotent wisdom; done not only without the help of man, but against all the artifices and forces of men.

24 This *is* the day *which* the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Made; either created, or exalted and glorified, as this word is used, 1 Sam. xii. 6, or sanctified by his glorious presence and work, and by his appointment, as a time or season never to be forgotten, but to be observed with great thankfulness and rejoicing, as it follows.

25 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

I beseech thee; or, *we beseech thee*; for the Hebrew words may be rendered either way. These seem to be the words of the Levites, to whom he spake ver. 19; or of the people, using these joyful acclamations or prayers to God for the preservation of their king and kingdom. This also is interpreted of and was applied to Christ, even by the Jews themselves, Mark xi. 9; John xii. 13.

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a Matt. 21. 9. & 23. 39. Mark 11. 9. Luke 19. 38. See Zech. 4. 7.

26 [a]Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

Blessed be he; we earnestly pray that God would bless his person and government, and all his enterprises. *That cometh,* to wit, unto us, from whom he was long banished; or unto the throne; or from his Father into the world; the Messias, who is known by the name of him *that cometh* or *was to come,* as Matt. xi. 3; xxi. 9; Luke vii. 20; xiii. 35; John xii. 13, and of whom this very word is used, Gen. xlix. 10; Isa. xxxv. 4. He who is about to come, or will certainly come. *In the name of the Lord;* by command and commission from him, and for his service and glory. *We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord;* we who are the Lord's ministers, attending upon him in his house, and appointed to bless in his name, Numb. vi. 23; Deut. x. 8, do pray for, and in God's name pronounce, his blessing upon thee. So these are the words of the priests.

27 God *is* the LORD, which hath shewed us [b]light: bind the sacrifice with cords, *even* unto the horns of the altar.

b Esth. 8. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

God is the Lord; God hath proved himself to be the Lord Jehovah by the accomplishment of his promises. See the notes on Exod. vi. 3. Or, *the Lord* or *Jehovah is God,* as it was said upon another solemn occasion and appearance of God, 1 Kings xviii. 39; or, *is the mighty God,* as this name of God signifies, and as he showed himself to be by this his mighty and wonderful work. *Which hath showed us light;* who hath caused light to shine out of darkness; who hath scattered our thick and dark clouds, and put us into a state of peace, and comfort, and safety, and happiness; all which are frequently signified by *light* in the Holy Scripture. Or, who hath discovered, and will in due time send, the Messias, who is called *the light of the Gentiles,* or *of the world,* or *of men,* Isa. xlii. 6; John i. 4; viii. 12; xii. 35, 46, and by whom he will more clearly and fully reveal his whole mind and will to us, and *tell us all things,* as the Jews expected, John iv. 25, who also will enlighten our dark minds by his Spirit. *Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar:* these words, as well as those which go before them in this verse, and those which follow after them, ver. 28, may be the words of David unto the priests, who had now blessed him in God's name, ver. 26. And this blessing of God which you wish me, God hath already given me; and therefore in way of gratitude I will offer sacrifices to him, which do you, O ye priests, according to your office, *bind to the horns of the altar;* of which see Exod. xxvii. 2; which horns are supposed by divers learned men to be made for this very use, that the beasts should be bound and killed there. And this may seem probable from Exod. xxix. 11, 12; Lev. iv. 7, &c., where we read that the beasts were to be killed *by the door of the tabernacle,* which was very near the altar of burnt-offerings, and then immediately part of their *blood* was to be *put upon the horns of the altar,* and the rest *poured out at the bottom of it.* Although these words may be thus rendered, *Bind* and bring (one pregnant word being put for two, as above, ver. 5, and in many other places of Scripture) *the sacrifice with cords unto the horns of the altar,* that it may be killed beside it, and its blood put upon the horns, after the manner. So they may be David's words to his servants to go and bring one of his beasts to be offered to God in his name.

28 Thou *art* my God, and I will praise thee: [c]*thou art* my God, I will exalt thee.

c Ex. 15. 2. Is. 25. 1.

29 [d]O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

d ver. 1.

PSALM CXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The author of this Psalm was David; which I know none that deny, and of which there is no just reason to doubt. The scope and design of it is manifest, to commend the serious and diligent study, and the stedfast belief and the constant practice of God's word, as incomparably the best counsellor and comforter in the world, and as the only way to true blessedness. And this he confirmeth by his own example, which he proposeth to them for their imitation; and he declareth the great and frequent experience which he had of its admirable sweetness and manifold benefits in all conditions, and especially in the times o his distresses. And because it was a hard thing rightly to understand this word in all its parts, and harder to put it in practice, he therefore intermixeth many prayers to God for his help therein, thereby directing and encouraging others to take the same course. And because this Psalm was very large, and the matter of it of greatest importance, the psalmist thought fit to divide it into two and twenty several parts, according to the number of the Hebrew letters, that so he might both prevent tediousness, and fix it in the memory. It is further observable, that the word of God is here diversly called by the the names of *law, statutes, precepts* or *commandments, judgments, ordinances, righteousness, testimonies, way,* and *word;* by which variety he designed to express the nature and the great perfection and manifold parts and uses of God's word: which is called his *word,* as proceeding from his mouth, and revealed by him to us; his *way,* as prescribed by him for us to walk in; his *law,* as binding us to obedience; his *statutes,* as declaring his authority and power of giving us laws; his *precepts,* as declaring and directing our duty; his *ordinances,* as ordained and appointed by him; his *righteousness,* as exactly agreeable to God's righteous nature and will; his *judgments,* as proceeding from the great Judge of the world, and being his judicial sentence to which all men must submit; and his *testimonies,* as it contains the witnesses of God's mind and will, and of man's duty. And there are very few of these 176 verses contained in this Psalm, in which one or other of these titles is not found.

This Psalm contains the commendation of God's word; David's love to it; a prayer for grace to carry himself according to it; with an account of God's law, institutions, commandments, testimonies, precepts, word, promises, ways, judgments, name, righteousness, truth, &c.; with a prayer for help and assistance.

ALEPH.

BLESSED *are* the ‖undefiled in the way, [a]who walk in the law of the LORD.

‖ Or, *perfect,* or, *sincere.*

a Ps. 128. 1.

The undefiled; or, *the perfect* or *sincere,* as this word properly and most frequently signifies; such whose hearts and course of life agree with their profession. *In the way;* either, 1. In their way or course of life, which in Scripture is oft called a man's *way;* or, 2. In the way of the Lord, as it seems to be explained by the next clause. *Who walk in the law of the Lord;* who order their lives according to the rule of God's law or word.

2 Blessed *are* they that keep his testimonies, *and that* seek him with the whole heart.

That keep, in mind and heart, that carefully and diligently observe, *his testimonies;* his precepts. For the reason of this and the other titles of God's word, see the argument or preface to this Psalm. *That seek him,* to wit, the Lord, expressed ver. 1, that seek his presence, and favour, and acquaintance. *With the whole heart;* sincerely, industriously, and fervently, above all other things. This is opposed to hypocrisy, and sloth, and lukewarmness in religion.

3 [b]They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

b 1 John 3. 9. & 5. 18.

Do no iniquity; or, *are not workers of iniquity,* i. e. do not knowingly, and resolvedly, and industriously, and customarily continue in sinful courses. So this phrase is understood Job xxxi. 3; xxxiv. 8; Psal. v. 5; vi. 8; cxxv. 5; Prov. x. 29; Luke xiii. 27; otherwise *there is not a just man upon earth that sinneth not,* Eccles. vii. 20. *They walk:* this is their constant practice, and the general course of their lives, which is commonly signified by *walking,* as Psal. i. 1, and every where. *In his ways;* in the paths which God hath prescribed to them.

4 Thou hast commanded *us* to keep thy precepts diligently.

Nor is it strange that thy people do so exactly and diligently observe and practise thy precepts, because they are commanded so to do by thee their sovereign Lord.

5 O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

My desires answer thy commands. *Directed,* or *established,* to wit, by thy grace and Holy Spirit; for the direction of God's word he had already.

6 [c]Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.

c Job 22. 26. 1 John 2. 28.

Then shall I not be ashamed; either of my actions, or of my profession of religion, or of my hope and confidence in thy favour. When sinners shall be ashamed, both here, Rom. vi. 21, and hereafter, Dan. xii. 2, I, having the conscience of mine own integrity, shall lift up my head with

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courage and *boldness*, both before men, when they either accuse or persecute me, and before God *in the day of judgment*, as it is said, 1 John iv. 17. *Respect;* a due and true respect, which implies high valuation, hearty affection, diligent study, and common practice. *Unto all thy commandments;* so as not to be partial in my obedience, not to allow myself in the practice of any known sin, or in the neglect of any known duty.

† Heb. *judgments of thy righteousness*

7 [d] I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned † thy righteous judgments.

Praise thee, i. e. worship thee; one eminent duty of God's worship being put for all, as is frequent in Scripture. *With uprightness of heart;* or, *with a right mind* or *heart;* in a right manner, so as may be acceptable to thee, and beneficial to myself. *When I shall have learned thy righteous judgments;* when by thy good Spirit I shall be more fully instructed in the meaning of thy word, which is the only rule of thy worship; for want of a sound knowledge whereof many persons run into superstitious or erroneous practices.

8 I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

I will keep thy statutes; it is my full purpose to do so, whatsoever it cost me. *Forsake me not utterly;* not totally and finally; for then I shall fall into the foulest sins and greatest mischief. Not that he was contented to be forsaken in the least degree, but this he more especially deprecates, as he had great reason to do.

ב BETH.

9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word.

Young man; or, any man. But he names the *young man*, because such are commonly void of wisdom and experience, heady and wilful, and impatient of admonition, full of violent passions and strong lusts, and exposed to many and great temptations. *Cleanse his way;* reform his life, or purge himself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. *By taking heed thereto according to thy word;* by a diligent and circumspect watch over himself, and the examination and regulation of all his actions by the rules of thy word.

e 2 Chron. 15. 15. Psal. 63. 1. & 84. 2. & 119. 10.

10 With my whole heart have I [e] sought thee: O let me not [f] wander from thy commandments.

Deny me not thy grace and assistance, which I have so sincerely and earnestly desired, and laboured to obtain. *Let me not wander*, Heb. *do not make me to wander*, to wit, by leading me into temptation, by withdrawing thy grace, which is necessary to keep me from wandering.

f Psa. 37. 31. Luke 2. 19, 51.

11 [g] Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

I have not contented myself with bare hearing or reading thy word, but have received it in the love of it, have diligently pondered it, and laid it up in my mind and memory like a choice treasure, to be ready upon all occasions, to counsel, or comfort, or quicken, or caution me, as need requires; that by a diligent and affectionate consideration of thy precepts, and promises, and threatenings, I might be kept from sinful courses, against which these are the best antidote.

g Psa. 37. 31. 40. 8. 119. 9, 11. Prov. 2. 10. Psa. 25. 4.

12 Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: [h] teach me thy statutes.

Blessed art thou; thou art infinitely blessed, and most worthy of all blessing and praise, and therefore do thou bless me in teaching me, as it follows. Or, *Blessed* be *thou.* I bless and praise thee for that great blessing of thy word, ver. 11. *Teach me thy statutes*, both to know and to practise them better.

i Psa. 34. 11.

13 With my lips have I [i] declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

If thou wilt teach me, I will teach others, as I have already done; and so thou shalt have glory, and others benefit by it.

14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches.

In the way of thy testimonies; in the study and practice of them.

15 I will [k] meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

k Ps. 1. 2. ver. 23, 48, 78.

I will diligently and seriously consider the nature, and design, and extent of thy precepts, and especially so far as they concern my own duty. *Have respect unto thy ways;* or, *look unto* them, as workmen constantly and carefully look to their rule to guide themselves by it.

16 I will [l] delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

l Ps. 1. 2. ver. 35, 47, 70, 77.

ג GIMEL.

17 [m] Deal bountifully with thy servant, *that* I may live, and keep thy word.

m Ps. 116. 7.

Deal bountifully; I plead no merit, but only thy free grace and rich mercy. *That I may live*, safely and comfortably, in spite of all the attempts of mine enemies to take away my life. *And keep thy word:* I do not desire life that I may satisfy my own lusts, but that I may spend it in thy service.

† Heb. *Reveal.*

18 † Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

Open thou mine eyes; enlighten my mind by the light of thy Holy Spirit, and dispel all ignorance and error. *Wondrous things out of thy law;* those great and marvellous depths of Divine wisdom and goodness, and those profound mysteries of Christ and of God's grace to mankind, and of that future and everlasting state, which are contained in God's law, and which were not to be known but by divine illumination, Matt. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. ii. 11, 14; 2 Cor. iii. 14; iv. 4, 6; Eph. i. 17, especially in the times of the Old Testament.

n Gen. 47. 9. 1 Chr. 29. 15. Psa. 39. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 6. Heb. 11. 13.

19 [n] I *am* a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.

Stranger, or *sojourner*. I am not here as in my home, but as a pilgrim travelling homeward in a strange land; which calls for thy pity and help. That law of nature, which thou hast planted in all men's minds, teacheth them to show humanity to strangers, and to direct travellers; much more may this be expected from thee. *Thy commandments;* which are my chief support and guide in my pilgrimage.

o Ps. 42. 1, 2. & 63. 1. & 84. 2. ver. 40, 131.

20 [o] My soul breaketh for the longing *that it hath* unto thy judgments at all times.

Breaketh; fainteth, as it frequently doth, when a thing vehemently desired is denied or delayed. Compare Prov. xiii. 12. *Unto thy judgments;* to a more sound knowledge and serious practice of them.

p ver. 10, 110, 118.

21 Thou hast rebuked the proud *that are* cursed, which do [p] err from thy commandments.

Hast rebuked, or *dost rebuke*, i. e. severely punish and destroy. And therefore I justly long for thy judgments, as for the love which I have to them, so for fear of those terrible judgments which thou sendest upon the despisers of them. *The proud;* obstinate and presumptuous sinners, who sin with a high hand, and with contempt of God, and of his laws, and of his judgment; all which is the effect of pride. *That are cursed;* that have the curse of God upon them, and upon all which they have or do; which is the depth of misery. *Do err;* or, *wander;* knowingly, and wilfully, and maliciously, as proud sinners use to do.

q Ps. 39. 8.

22 [q] Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.

Reproach, which I suffer unjustly and for thy sake, as he elsewhere complains. *I have kept thy testimonies*, and therefore I am innocent from those crimes for which they censure and reproach me. Or, and therefore thou wilt maintain mine honour and interest according to thy promise made to such as keep thy testimonies, and I beg with some confidence that thou wilt do it.

23 Princes also did sit *and* speak against me:

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r ver. 15. *but* thy servant did rmeditate in thy statutes.

Did sit and speak; did speak against me continually, (for *sitting* notes continuance,) and when they sat upon their seats of judicature, and when they sat together in companies, entertaining one another with discourses. *Did meditate in thy statutes;* all their contumelies and reproaches did not discourage nor divert me from the study, belief, and practice of thy word.

s ver. 77, 92. † Heb. men of counsel. 24 sThy testimonies also *are* my delight *and* †my counsellors.

My delight; my chief comfort under all their censures and persecutions. *My counsellors,* to teach me how to carry myself under them.

ד DALETH.

t Ps. 44. 25. u ver. 40. Ps. 143. 11. 25 tMy soul cleaveth unto the dust: uquicken thou me according to thy word.

My soul cleaveth unto the dust; I am in evident danger of present death, through the rage and power of mine enemies; I am like one laid in the grave, without all hopes of recovery. So this phrase is used Psal. xxii. 15. *Quicken thou me;* preserve my life, or revive me and raise me out of the dust by thy almighty power. *According to thy word;* according to thy promise.

x ver. 12. Ps. 25. 4. & 27. 11. & 86. 11. 26 I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: xteach me thy statutes.

My ways; my sins, in way of confession; and all my cares, and fears, and troubles, and concerns, in way of humble petition to thee, as appears from God's answer.

y Ps. 145. 5, 6. 27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so yshall I talk of thy wondrous works.

Make me to understand, more thoroughly and more practically, *the way of thy precepts;* either, 1. The full mind and meaning of thy precepts, which are exceeding broad, as he saith afterwards; or, 2. The way wherein I may walk according to thy precepts; how to demean myself in all the varieties of my condition, and in all my affairs and actions, so as is most agreeable to thy precepts. *Thy wondrous works;* even the wonders of the law mentioned before, ver. 18.

z Ps. 107. 26. † Heb. droppeth. 28 zMy soul †melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

Melteth, like wax before the fire; it hath no strength nor consistency left in it, but consumeth or pineth away. *For heaviness;* through grief, partly for my extreme danger and misery; and principally for my sins, and thy wrath and terrors following upon them. *Strengthen thou me,* that so I may bear my burdens patiently and cheerfully, and vanquish all my temptations.

29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.

The way of lying; or, *of falsehood;* either, 1. The practice of lying, and dissembling, and cheating, which is so rife in Saul's court, and in the courts of most princes; but, Lord, let it not be so in my courts. Or rather, 2. Every false way of doctrine or worship; for to this way he opposeth God's *law* in the next clause. And he justly prayeth to God to keep him from apostacy, heresy, idolatry, and superstition, because his own corrupt nature of itself and without God's grace was prone to these errors, and not only heathens, but many Israelites, did frequently fall into them. *Grant me thy law graciously;* vouchsafe unto me an accurate knowledge and firm belief of thy word, and that I may constantly attend and adhere to it, and govern myself by it in all things.

30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid *before me.*

I have chosen the way of truth, to wit, thy word or law, for my portion, and the rule of my worship and whole life. *Laid before me;* or, *set* before me, as the phrase is fully expressed, Psal. xvi. 8, as a delightful object, or as a mark to aim at, or as a rule to direct me.

31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.

I have stuck unto thy testimonies; I have resolutely persisted in the practice of thy precepts, in spite of all temptations, reproaches, persecutions, and discouragements, to which I was exposed in and for so doing. *Put me not to shame;* either, 1. By giving me over to apostacy or transgression, which will bring shame; or rather, 2. By the disappointment of my hopes and confidence in those promises of the blessings of this life, as well as of the next, which thou hast made to the obedient, of which I have made my boast.

a 1 Kings 4. 29. Is. 6. 5. 2 Cor. 6. 11. 32 I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt aenlarge my heart.

I will run the way of thy commandments, I will obey thy precepts with all readiness, fervency, and diligence, *when thou shalt enlarge my heart:* either, 1. When thou shalt bring me out of my present straits or distresses. This indeed is called *enlarging,* as Psal. iv. 1; xviii. 36, but never, to my remembrance, *the enlarging of the heart.* Or rather, 2. When thou shalt replenish my heart with more wisdom, and love to and delight in thee and thy law; for this *enlargement of heart* in Scripture is ascribed to wisdom, 1 Kings iv. 29, and love, 2 Cor. vi. 11, and joy, Isa. lx. 5; when thou shalt knock off those fetters of remaining corruption, and give me a more noble and generous disposition towards thee, and stablish me *with thy free spirit,* as it is expressed, Psal. li. 12. Thus David both owns his duty, and asserts the absolute necessity of God's grace to the performance of it.

ה HE.

b ver. 112. c ver. 112. Matt. 10. 22. Rev. 2. 26. 33 bTeach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it c*unto* the end.

Or, *that I may keep it,* &c. That I may persevere; for apostacy proceeds from the want of a good understanding.

d ver. 73. Prov. 2. 6. Jam. 1. 5. 34 dGive me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with *my* whole heart.

35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I edelight. e ver. 16.

Make me to go, by directing my mind into the right way, by inclining my will, and strengthening my resolution. *For therein do I delight:* forsake not him who delighteth in thee and in thy service; and as thou hast wrought in me to will, work in me also to do.

f Ezek. 33. 31. Mark 7. 21. 22. Luke 12. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 10. Heb. 13. 5. 36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to fcovetousness.

Unto thy testimonies; to the love and practice of them. *Not to covetousness;* not to the inordinate love and desire of riches: which particular lust he mentions, partly, because this lust is most spreading and universal, and there is scarce any man who doth not desire riches either for the love of riches, or upon pretence of necessity, or for the service of pride or luxury, or some other lust; partly, because this lust is most opposite to God's testimonies, and doth most commonly hinder men from receiving God's word, and from profiting by it; see Matt. xiii. 22; Luke xvi. 14; and partly, because this lust is most pernicious, as being the root of all evil, 1 Tim. vi. 10, and is most mischievous in princes and governors, such as David was, and therefore in a special manner forbidden to them, Exod. xviii. 21.

g Is. 33. 15. † Heb. Make to pass. h Prov. 23. 5. i ver. 40. 37 g†Turn away mine eyes from hbeholding vanity; *and* iquicken thou me in thy way.

Vanity; the vain things and lusts of this present evil world, such as riches, honours, pleasures; *from beholding* them, to wit, with admiration and inordinate affection; for such a sight of the eyes doth usually affect the heart, and stir up men's lusts and passions; of which see Numb. xv. 39; Job xxxi. 1; Prov. iv. 25; xxiii. 5, 6; Matt. v. 28. *Quicken thou me in thy way;* as I desire that I may be dull and dead in affections to worldly vanities; so, Lord, make me lively, and vigorous, and fervent in thy work and service.

k 2 Sam. 7. 25. 38 kStablish thy word unto thy servant, who *is devoted* to thy fear.

Confirm and perform thy promises, as concerning the kingdom, so also for the giving of gracious assistances,

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directions and comforts to those that fear thee, of which number I am one.

39 Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments *are* good.

Turn away my reproach; either, 1. For the shameful disappointment of my hopes and confident boastings concerning the truth and certainty of thy promises; or, 2. For my manifold failings, and particularly for that shameful matter about Uriah and Bathsheba; or, 3. For my instability in or apostacy from thy ways; which in respect of mine own weakness and folly I have great cause to fear. *For thy judgments are good*: this may be a reason either, 1. Why he prayed and hoped that God would turn away reproach from him, because God's word and statutes were good, and therefore it was not fit for any to suffer reproach in and for his diligent observation of them; or, 2. Why he feared reproach, because he had, and feared he might hereafter, transgress those judgments or statutes of God which were, and he very well knew to be, *good*, i. e. just, and holy, and excellent, and therefore it was a shameful thing to violate them.

40 Behold, I have [l] longed after thy precepts: [m] quicken me in thy righteousness.

[l] ver. 20. [m] ver. 25, 37, 88, 107, 149, 156, 159.

After thy precepts; after a more solid knowledge and constant performance of thy precepts. *Quicken me*; do thou preserve and maintain both my natural and spiritual life. *In thy righteousness*; according to thy justice or faithfulness, which obligeth thee to make good thy promises.

ו VAU.

41 [n] Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation, according to thy word.

[n] Ps. 106. 4. ver. 77.

Let promised mercies be performed to me.

42 ‖ So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

‖ Or, *so shall I answer him that reproacheth me in a thing.*

That reproacheth me; that chargeth me with folly for my piety and trust in thy promises. *For I trust in thy word*; or, *because I trust*, &c. This was the matter of their reproach.

43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of *my* mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.

Do not deal so with me, that I shall be altogether ashamed to mention thy word, which I have so often affirmed to be a word of truth and infallible certainty, of which I have often made my boast. *In thy judgments*; either in thy word and promises, or in thy judicial administrations and government of the world, which as it is matter of terror to the wicked, so it is matter of comfort and hope to me.

44 So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

So shall I be obliged and encouraged to the constant and perpetual study and observation of thy laws.

45 And I will walk † at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.

† Heb. *at large.*

I will walk at liberty; or, *I shall walk at large*, as it is in the margin; I shall be delivered from all my present straits, both of the outward and inward man, and enjoy great freedom and comfort in thy ways.

46 [o] I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

[o] Ps. 138. 1. Matt. 10. 18. Acts 26. 1, 2

Before kings; who commonly entertain all godly discourses with scorn and contempt.

47 And I will [p] delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

[p] ver. 16.

Whereas other princes place their delight in the glories and vanities of this world, and the study and practice of religion is generally irksome and loathsome to them, thy law shall be my chief delight and recreation.

48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will [q] meditate in thy statutes.

[q] ver. 15.

Lift up; to lay hold upon them, to receive and embrace thy precepts and promises by faith and love, and cheerfully and vigorously to put them in practice; for as the *hanging down of the hands* is a gesture of sloth and listlessness, as 2 Chron. xv. 7, and elsewhere; so *the lifting up of the hands* is the posture of a man entering upon action, as Gen. xli. 44; 2 Sam. xx. 21. *I will meditate in thy statutes*; my deepest thoughts, as well as my hands, shall be exercised in them.

ז ZAIN.

49 Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to [r] hope.

[r] ver. 74, 81, 147.

The word; thy promises. *Caused me to hope*, by thy command requiring it of me, and by thy grace working it in me.

50 This *is* my [s] comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.

[s] Rom. 15. 4.

This, to wit, thy word, as is evident both from the foregoing and following words. *Hath quickened me*; hath preserved my life in manifold dangers, and hath revived and cheered my spirit.

51 The proud have had me greatly [t] in derision: *yet* have I not [u] declined from thy law.

[t] Jer. 20. 7. [u] Job 23. 11. Ps. 44. 18. ver. 157.

Greatly in derision, for my godliness and trust in thy word, as the following words imply.

52 I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.

Thy judgments of old; thy former and ancient dispensations to the children of men in punishing the ungodly, and protecting and delivering thy faithful servants, whose experience is my encouragement.

53 [x] Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

[x] Ezra 9. 3.

Horror; a mixed passion made up of indignation at their persons as sinful, and abhorrency of their sins, and dread and sorrow at the consideration of the judgments of God coming upon them. *Because of the wicked that forsake thy law*; for the dishonour which they bring to God, the scandal and mischief to others, and their own certain ruin.

54 Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

My songs; the matter of my songs, my delight and recreation. *In the house of my pilgrimage*; either, 1. In this present world, which I do not own for my home, wherein I am a stranger and pilgrim, as all my fathers were, Psal. xxxix. 12: compare Gen. xlvii. 9. Or, 2. In mine exile, and in the wildernesses and other places where I have been oft forced to wander, when I was banished from all my friends, and from the place of thy worship, and had no other support or comfort but the remembrance of thy statutes.

55 [y] I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.

[y] Ps. 63. 6.

Thy name; thy holy nature and attributes, thy blessed word, and thy wonderful works; all which come under the title of God's *name*. *In the night*, when darkness causeth fear in others, I took pleasure in remembering thee; and when others abandon all business, and wholly give themselves up to rest and sleep, my thoughts and affections were working towards thee. *And have kept thy law*; this was the fruit of my serious remembrance of thee.

56 This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

This I had, this comfortable and profitable remembrance and contemplation of thy name and statutes, of which he spoke ver. 54, 55, *because I kept thy precepts*; which if I had wilfully and wickedly broken, the remembrance of these things would have been sad and frightful to me, as now it is comfortable, because I kept them.

ח CHETH.

57 [z] *Thou art* my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.

[z] Ps. 16. 5. Jer. 10. 16. Lam. 3. 24.

Whereas other men place their portion and happiness in worldly things, I have chosen thee for my portion and chief

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treasure, as he said, Psal. xvi. 5; lxxiii. 26, and thou hast an all-sufficient and an excellent portion for me. *I have said;* I have not only purposed it in my own heart, but have professed and owned it before others, and I do not repent of it.

† Heb. *face.* Job 11. 19. a ver. 41.

58 I intreated thy †favour with *my* whole heart: be merciful unto me [a]according to thy word.

Thy favour; thy gracious presence and merciful assistance, as it follows.

b Luke 15. 17, 18.

59 I [b]thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

I seriously considered both my former counsels and courses, that I might be humbled for my past errors, and might now amend them, and my duty in all my future actions. And finding that my feet had too often swerved from thy rule, I turned them to it. And although the ways of sinful pleasure and advantage were presented to my mind, yet I rejected them, and turned myself wholly to thy ways.

60 I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

Being fully convinced of the necessity and excellency of obedience, I presently resolved upon it, and immediately put it in execution.

‖ Or, *companies.*

61 The ‖bands of the wicked have robbed me: *but* I have not forgotten thy law.

Robbed me; or, *made a prey of me;* done me many injuries for my respect to thy law.

c Acts 16.25.

62 [c]At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

I will rise out of my bed to praise thee in a solemn manner; not being contented with those short ejaculations which he might have used lying in his bed. *Thy righteous judgments,* i. e. laws, which are so useful to direct and comfort me.

63 I *am* a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

Not excepting the poorest and meanest, whose society other princes disdain.

d Ps. 33. 5. e ver. 12, 26.

64 [d]The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: [e]teach me thy statutes.

Thou dost satisfy the just desires and necessities of all men and all creatures with the fruits of thy goodness. The generality of other men chiefly desire the blessings of this life; but, Lord, give me thy spiritual blessings, the saving knowledge, love, and practice of thy law.

ט TETH.

65 Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

Good judgment; whereby I may rightly discern between truth and falsehood, good and evil, between the mind of God and my own or others' inventions; that so I may be kept from those mistakes and errors in which many are involved, that I may truly judge what thy law requires or permits, and what it forbids. Heb. *the goodness of taste,* an experimental sense and relish of divine things. Compare Psal. xxxiv. 8. *Knowledge;* a spiritual and experimental knowledge. And *judgment,* or *taste,* and *knowledge* may, by a usual figure called *hendiadis,* be put for *judicious,* or *solid,* or *practical knowledge. I have believed thy commandments;* I have believed the Divine authority of them, and the truth and certainty of those promises and threatenings which thou hast annexed to them.

f ver. 71. Jer. 31. 18, 19. Heb. 12. 11.

67 [f]Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

I went astray, as men generally do in their prosperity. See Deut. xxxii. 15; Psal. lxxiii. 4—6, &c.; Prov. i. 32; Jer. xxii. 21.

g Ps. 106. 1. & 107. 1. Matt. 19. 17. h ver. 12. 26.

68 Thou *art* [g]good, and doest good; [h]teach me thy statutes.

Thou art good; gracious and bountiful in thy nature. *And dost good* to all men, both good and bad, Matt. v. 45, and in all things, yea, even when thou afflictest. *Teach me thy statutes;* which is the good that I desire above all things.

i Job 13. 4. Ps. 109. 2.

69 The proud have [i]forged a lie against me: *but* I will keep thy precepts with *my* whole heart.

Forged a lie; a slander, charging me with hypocrisy towards God, and rebellion against my prince. *But I will keep thy precepts;* my practice shall confute their calumnies.

k Ps. 17. 10. Is. 6. 10 Acts 28. 27. l ver. 35

70 [k]Their heart is as fat as grease; *but* I [l]delight in thy law.

Their heart is as fat as grease: the sense is either, 1. They are stupid, and insensible, and past feeling, not affected either with the terrors or comforts of God's word. So the like phrase is used Isa. vi. 10, compared with John xii. 40. Or, 2. They prosper exceedingly, and are even glutted with the wealth and comforts of this life. *But I delight in thy law;* but I do not envy them their jollity, and I have as much delight in God's law as they have in worldly things.

m ver. 67. Heb. 12. 10, 11.

71 [m]*It is* good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

Good; necessary, and greatly beneficial. He repeats what in effect he said before, ver. 67, partly to intimate the certainty and importance of this truth, and partly because it is a great paradox to worldly men, who generally esteem afflictions to be evil, yea, the worst of evils.

n ver. 127. Ps. 19. 10. Prov. 8. 10, 11, 19.

72 [n]The law of thy mouth *is* better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

Not only thy promises, but even thy precepts, which are so unpleasant and hard to ungodly men, to me they are more desirable and more needful and profitable, because they do not only give me abundant satisfaction and comfort in this life, but also they conduct me with safety and delight unto that eternal and most blessed life, where gold and silver bear no price.

י JOD.

o Job 10. 8. Ps. 100. 3. & 138. 8. & 139. 14. p ver. 34, 144.

73 [o]Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: [p]give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

I am thy creature, and therefore obliged to serve and obey thee with all my might; which that I may do aright I beg thy instruction or assistance. Or, thou hast made me once, make me a second time, and renew thy decayed image in me, that I may know and serve thee better; and that as I was made by thee, so I may be guided by thy grace to serve and glorify my Creator.

q Ps. 34. 2. r ver. 49, 147.

74 [q]They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because [r]I have hoped in thy word.

Will be glad; partly for my sake, of whose innocency and piety they are convinced, and therefore sympathize with me; and partly for their own sakes, both for the encouragement they have by my example to trust in God, and for the manifold benefits, both spiritual and temporal, which they expect from my government. *See me,* to wit, alive and in safety, notwithstanding all the force and malice of mine enemies, and advanced to the kingdom. *I have hoped in thy word;* in thy promise, and have not been disappointed of my hope, which is a great confirmation of their faith and hope in God, that they shall obtain all the good things which God hath promised them.

† Heb. *right-eousness* s Heb 12 10.

75 I know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* †right, and [s]*that* thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

I know by the convictions of my own conscience, and by experience. *Thy judgments,* i. e. thy corrections, as the next clause explains this. *In faithfulness;* in pursuance of thy promises, and in order to my good, that by my afflictions thou mightest purge me from those sins which might provoke thy wrath against me, and prepare me for a better administration, and more lasting and comfortable enjoyment of my kingdom.

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76 Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be †for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

† Heb. to comfort me.

Yet in judgment remember mercy, and give me that comfort and assistance in, and that deliverance out of, my troubles which thou hast promised me.

77 [t] Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for [u] thy law *is* my delight.

t ver. 41.
u ver. 24, 47, 174.

That I may live; that I may be preserved from that violent and untimely death which mine enemies design to bring upon me. *For thy law is my delight;* I humbly beg and expect thy protection, because I am thy faithful servant.

78 Let the proud [x] be ashamed; [y] for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: *but* I will [z] meditate in thy precepts.

x Ps. 25. 3.
y ver. 86.
z ver. 23.

They dealt perversely with me, Heb. *they have perverted me;* either by their calumnies, whereby they have put false and perverse constructions upon all my words and actions; or by endeavouring to overthrow and destroy me, or to turn me out of the way of thy precepts. But all their wicked attempts against me shall never drive me from the study, and love, and practice of thy precepts.

79 Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

Turn unto me; either, 1. Turn their eyes to me as a spectacle of God's wonderful mercy; or rather, 2. Turn their hearts and affections to me, which have been alienated from me, either by the artifices and calumnies of my adversaries, or by my sore and long distresses, which made them prone to think that either I had deceived them with false pretences, or that God for my sins had utterly forsaken me; which doubtless was a very grievous burden to David, who had a far greater esteem and affection for such persons than for all other men, and desired above all things to stand right in their opinions. *Known,* i. e. loved and practised them; as words of knowledge are oft used.

80 Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.

Sound, Heb. *perfect,* or *entire,* that I may love and obey them sincerely, constantly, and universally. *That I be not ashamed,* to wit, for my sins, which are the only just causes of shame, and for the disappointment of my hopes following upon them.

כ CAPH.

81 [a] My soul fainteth for thy salvation: *but* [b] I hope in thy word.

a Ps. 73. 26. & 84. 2.
b ver. 74, 114.

Fainteth, with longing desire, and earnest expectation, and hope deferred, and hitherto disappointed.

82 [c] Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

c ver. 123. Ps. 69. 3.

Mine eyes fail, with looking hither and thither, and to thee for help.

83 For [d] I am become like a bottle in the smoke; *yet* do I not forget thy statutes.

d Job 30. 30.

In the smoke; hung up in a smoking chimney. My natural moisture is dried and burnt up; I am withered, and deformed, and despised, and my case grows worse and worse every day.

84 [e] How many *are* the days of thy servant? [f] when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

e Ps. 39. 4.
f Rev. 6. 10.

The days; either, 1. The days of my life, as the word *days* is commonly used, Gen. vi. 3; Job vii. 1, 6; Psal. xxxix. 5, 6. I have but a little while to live in the world, give me some respite before I die, and help me speedily, otherwise it will be too late. Or rather, 2. The days of my misery, as the next clause implies, and as *days* are taken, Psal. xxxvii. 13; cxvi. 2, and elsewhere. How long, Lord, shall my miseries last? for ever?

85 [g] The proud have digged pits for me, which *are* not after thy law.

g Ps. 35. 7. Prov. 16. 27.

Have digged pits for me; have sought to destroy me by deceit and treachery, as well as by violence. *Which;* either, 1. Which men have no respect to thy law, which forbids such things. Or rather, 2. Which thing, to wit, to dig pits for me, an innocent and just man, is not agreeable to thy law, but directly contrary to it.

86 All thy commandments *are* †faithful: [h] they persecute me [i] wrongfully; help thou me.

† Heb. *faithfulness.*
h ver. 78.
i Ps. 35. 19. & 38. 19.

Are faithful; they are in themselves most just and true, and they require justice and faithfulness from men, promising many blessings to those that perform it, and severely forbid all fraud and falseness, threatening grievous punishments to those that use it; and such promises and threatenings are true, and shall certainly be executed.

87 They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.

They had almost consumed me upon earth, as to my present life and all my happiness upon earth; whereby he implies that his immortal soul and eternal happiness in heaven, of which he speaks, Psal. xvi. 11; xvii. 15, and elsewhere, was safe, and out of their reach.

88 [k] Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

k ver. 40.

Heb. *and I will keep.* I will testify my gratitude to thee by my obedience.

ל LAMED.

89 [l] For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

l Ps. 89. 2. Matt. 24. 34, 35. 1 Pet. 1. 25.

Although many things happen upon earth which seem contrary to thy word, and at which men take occasion to question the truth of thy word, yet in heaven it is sure and certainly true. *In heaven;* either, 1. With thee in thy heavenly habitation, or in thy breast; as thy nature is unchangeable, so thy word is infallible. Or rather, 2. In the heavenly bodies, which are not subject to those changes and decays which are in this lower world, but constantly continue the same in their substance, and order, and courses, and this by virtue of that word of God by which they were made and established in this manner; and therefore God's word delivered to his people upon earth, which is of the same nature, must needs be of equal certainty and stability. This sense best suits with the following verses, and with other scriptures, wherein the certainty of God's word is set forth by comparing it with the stability of the heaven and the earth, as Matt. v. 18, and elsewhere.

90 Thy faithfulness *is* †unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it †abideth.

† Heb. *to generation and generation.* Ps. 89. 1.
† Heb. *standeth.*

Every age gives fresh proofs of the truth of thy word. *The earth abideth* in that place and state in which thou didst establish it. See Eccles. i. 4.

91 They continue this day according to [m] thine ordinances: for all *are* thy servants.

m Jer. 33. 25.

They continue; the heaven and the earth last mentioned. *According to thine ordinances;* as thou hast appointed, and by virtue of thine appointment. *All are thy servants;* all things are subject to thy power and pleasure, and none can resist thy will or word.

92 Unless [n] thy law *had been* my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

n ver. 24.

Then; at the very instant; I could not have outlived one stroke of thine afflicting hand.

93 I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.

Revived and cheered me, when my heart was ready to sink and die within me.

94 I *am* thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.

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I am thine by creation and redemption, and manifold obligations, as also by my own choice and designation. I have devoted myself to thy service, and committed myself to thy care.

95 The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: *but* I will consider thy testimonies.

As my best comforters, and counsellors, and defenders against all the assaults and designs of mine enemies.

o Matt. 5. 18. & 24. 35.

96 °I have seen an end of all perfection: *but* thy commandment *is* exceeding broad.

I have seen an end of all perfection; I have observed by my experience that the greatest and most perfect accomplishments and enjoyments in this world, the greatest glory, and riches, and power, and wisdom, are too narrow and short-lived to make men happy. *Thy commandment;* thy word; one part of it being synecdochically put for the whole. *Broad*, or *large*, both for extent and for continuance; it is useful to all persons in all times and conditions, and for all purposes, to inform, direct, quicken, comfort, sanctify, and save men; it is of everlasting truth and efficacy; it will never deceive nor forsake those who trust to it, as all worldly things will, but will make men happy both here and for ever.

ם MEM.

p Ps. 1. 2.

97 O how love I thy law! PIt *is* my meditation all the day.

O how love I thy law! O Lord, thou knowest it, and to thee I appeal herein against all the censures and calumnies of mine enemies to the contrary.

q Deut. 4. 6, 8.

98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me qwiser than mine enemies: for †they *are* ever with me.

† Heb. *it is ever with me.*

Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies, because by that means I have thy wisdom to guide me, and thy power engaged to protect and save me; which is a more certain and effectual way to obtain my desires and ends than all the policy and craft of mine enemies is to hinder them, as I have found by experience. *They are ever with me;* they are continually before mine eyes, as a rule by which to govern all my actions, whereby I am kept from splitting upon those rocks whereby others are ruined.

99 I have more understanding than all

r 2 Tim. 3. 15.

my teachers: r*for* thy testimonies *are* my meditation.

Understanding: he speaks not here of notional, but of spiritual, and practical, and experimental knowledge. *Than all my teachers;* than all or most (for that general word is oft so understood) of those who taught me formerly, or of the public teachers in Saul's time; which probably were for the generality of them neither so knowing nor so good as they should have been. *My meditations;* the matter of my constant and most diligent study.

s Job 32. 7, 8, 9.

100 s I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

By which reason he intimates that the practice of religion is the best way to understand it, and that men's vicious hearts and lives are the greatest hinderances of all true and solid knowledge of it.

t Prov. 1. 15.

101 I have trefrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

Evil way; or, *way of evil;* which either is evil, or leads to it; sin, and the temptations or occasions of sin. *That I might keep thy word;* I did this not for any carnal reasons, as some men abstain from divers sins for their credit or advantage, but out of pure respect to thy word.

102 I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

To wit, by thy blessed Spirit, illuminating my mind, and working upon my heart, which other teachers cannot do.

u Ps. 19. 10. Prov. 8. 11. † Heb. *palate.*

103 uHow sweet are thy words unto my †taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth!

The study and obedience of thy words yields me more satisfaction and delight than any worldly men find in their sensual pleasures.

104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore xI hate every false way.

x ver. 128.

Understanding; true, and useful, and powerful knowledge. *Therefore;* because that discovers to me, as the wickedness, so the folly and mischief of such practices. *Every false way;* every thing which is contrary to that rule of truth and right, all false doctrine and worship, and all sinful or vicious courses.

נ NUN.

y Prov. 6. 23. ‖ Or, *candle.*

105 yThy word *is* a ‖lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

To direct me in all my doubts and difficulties, to preserve from sin and misery, both which oft come under the name of *darkness*, and to comfort me in all my fears and distresses.

z Neh. 10. 29.

106 zI have sworn, and I will perform *it*, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

I have sworn; obliged myself by serious purpose and solemn vow, or by a formal oath, which was not unusual amongst God's people, as 2 Chron. xv. 15; Neh. x. 29. *Will perform it;* I do not repent of it, but by God's grace I will fulfil it.

a ver. 88.

107 I am afflicted very much: aquicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

b Hos. 14. 2. Heb. 13. 15

108 Accept, I beseech thee, bthe free-will offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and

c ver. 12, 26.

cteach me thy judgments.

The free-will offerings of my mouth; either, 1. Those which I have promised with my mouth, though I am not now in a capacity of performing my promises, as being banished from thy house. Or rather, 2. The sacrifices of prayer and praises, which I do freely and frequently offer unto thee; which are called *sacrifices*, as Psal. l. 14, and *calves of our lips*, Hos. xiv. 2.

d Job 13. 14.

109 dMy soul *is* continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

In my hand; exposed to perpetual and extreme danger, as any precious and frail thing is which a man carrieth openly in his hand, whence it may easily fall or be snatched away by a violent hand. See the same or like phrase, Judg. xii. 3; 1 Sam. xix. 5; Job xiii. 14.

e Ps. 140. 5. & 141. 9. f ver. 10, 21.

110 eThe wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I ferred not from thy precepts.

g Deu. 33. 4.

111 gThy testimonies have I taken as

h ver. 77, 92, 174.

an heritage for ever: for hthey *are* the rejoicing of my heart.

I have chosen them for my chief portion, from which I will never part.

† Heb. *to do.* i ver. 33.

112 I have inclined mine heart †to perform thy statutes alway, i*even unto* the end.

As I prayed to thee to incline mine heart to them, above, ver. 36, so I did not neglect my duty, but cheerfully complied with the motions of thy Spirit, and yielded up my mind and heart to the study and practice of them.

ס SAMECH.

113 I hate *vain* thoughts: but thy law do I love.

Thoughts: this word signifies *thoughts*, Job iv. 13; xx. 2, or *opinions*, 1 Kings xviii. 21; which being indifferent to good and evil, is here taken in an evil sense, for vain *thoughts*, as we render it, or for thoughts, or opinions, or devices of men differing from or opposite to God's law, as may be gathered from the next clause, where God's *law* is opposed to these, and as some both Jewish and Christian expositors understand it. Nor is it unusual in the Hebrew text for one and the same word to be taken both in a good and an ill sense in several places; whereof we have one instance in a word of the same signification with this,

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mezimmah, which signifies a *thought*, and is sometimes taken in a good sense, as Prov. i. 4; iii. 8; viii. 12; xiii. 16; Jer. li. 11; but elsewhere in a bad sense, as Job xxi. 27; Psal. x. 2, 4; Prov. xii. 2; xiv. 17. The like hath been observed concerning another Hebrew word of the same or near signification, *hormah*, which is taken in a good sense, Prov. i. 4: xiii. 16. &c., and in an ill sense, as Exod. xxi. 14; Josh. ix. 4; Job v. 13. And the like may be said concerning this word also. But the ancient interpreters understand this word not of things, but of persons, and so it may be understood of men *that think evil*, that devise wicked devices, or that have false and evil opinions, opposite to God's law, or tending to seduce men from it.

k Ps. 32. 7. & ver. 81. l ver. 81.

114 [k]Thou *art* my hiding place and my shield: [l]I hope in thy word.

m Ps. 6. 8. & 139. 19. Matt. 7. 23.

115 [m]Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

And therefore will avoid your society and conversation, lest I should be hindered from that which is good, and drawn to sin by your evil counsel or example.

n Ps. 25. 2. & 31. 1. & 71. 1. & 22. & 10. 11.

116 Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not [n]be ashamed of my hope.

Or, *because of my hope*, or *confidence* in thy promises, of the certainty whereof I have oft made my boast before others.

117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

And being freed from those distractions and diversions which my pressing dangers occasion, I will wholly devote myself to the study and practice of thy blessed word.

o ver. 21.

118 Thou hast trodden down all them that [o]err from thy statutes: for their deceit *is* falsehood.

All their crafty and deceitful devices, by which they design to insnare and ruin me, and other good men, shall deceive them and their own expectations, and bring that destruction upon themselves which they design for others.

* Heb. ceasest to err. † Heb. 22. 18.

119 Thou †puttest away all the wicked of the earth [p]*like* dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

Thou puttest away; thou removest them from thy presence, and from the society of thy people, and from the land of the living. *Like dross*; which, though for a season it be mixed with gold or silver, is not only separated from it as a useless and contemptible thing, but also is utterly consumed by fire. *Therefore I love thy testimonies*; because they are the best preservatives against wickedness, and against those dreadful punishments attending upon it, of which he professeth his fear in the next verse.

q Hab. 3. 16.

120 [q]My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

The observation of thy terrible judgments against ungodly men, and the conscience of my own infirmity and manifold sins, makes me fear lest thou shouldst punish me also, as thou mightest justly do, if thou shouldst be strict to mark what is amiss in me; or lest I should partake with them in their sins, and consequently in their plagues.

ע AIN.

121 I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.

Judgment and justice, i. e. just judgment, as Eccles. v. 8. to wit, towards mine oppressors, whom I have no way injured.

r Heb. 7. 22.

122 Be [r]surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

Do thou undertake and plead my cause against all mine enemies, as a surety rescues the poor persecuted debtor from the hands of a severe creditor. *For good*; for my safety and comfort.

s ver. 81, 82.

123 [s]Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

For the performance of thy righteous, or faithful, or merciful word or promise.

t ver. 12.

124 Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and [t]teach me thy statutes.

Not according to strict justice, nor according to my sins.

u Ps. 116. 16.

125 [u]I *am* thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

126 *It is* time for *thee*, LORD, to work: *for* they have made void thy law.

It is time; it is high time, or a fit season. *To work*; to put forth thy power for the vindication of thy own name and cause, and for the restraint and punishment of evildoers. *They*, to wit, mine oppressors, or the wicked; whom it was needless to express, both because they had been lately and frequently mentioned before, and partly because it was evident from the following words. *Have made void thy law*; or, *abrogated thy law*; have professedly and openly cast off its authority, resolvedly preferring their own wills and lusts before it, trampled upon thy plain commands, and despised both thy promises and thy threatenings. They have not only sinned through ignorance and infirmity, but presumptuously and maliciously.

x ver. 72. Ps. 19. 10. Prov. 8. 11.

127 [x]Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

Partly, because it is one evidence of their excellency, that they are disliked by the vilest of men; partly, out of a just indignation and opposition against my sworn enemies; and partly, because the great and general apostacy of others makes this duty more necessary to prevent their own and other men's relapses.

y ver. 104.

128 Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I [y]hate every false way.

Therefore, for the reasons now mentioned, I do not make void all thy precepts, as they did, ver. 126, nor yet am I partial in my approbation of them, as others are, who reject all such as are opposite to their lusts and interests; but I approve all of them without any exception, and that not only in my judgment, but in my heart and life, as appears by that hatred of sin which is opposed to it in the next clause.

פ PE.

129 Thy testimonies *are* wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

Wonderful; in regard of the deep and wonderful mysteries, and most excellent counsels and directions, far exceeding all the rules of the greatest philosophers, and the exceeding great and precious promises of God contained in them. This is the reason of his high estimation of them, expressed in the last verse.

z Ps. 19. 7. Prov. 1. 4.

130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; [z]it giveth understanding unto the simple.

The entrance of thy words; the very beginnings and rudiments of them; the first discoveries of those sacred mysteries; and much more the depths of them, in which their chief excellency consists. Or, as others both ancient and later interpreters render the place. *The opening of thy words*; by which may be understood, either, 1. The opening of men's minds by the word of God; but that seems to be the same thing with *giving light*, which here follows; or, 2. The opening or declaration of God's mind made in and by his word. *Unto the simple*; to the most ignorant and unlearned persons, who are but willing to learn.

a ver. 20.

131 I opened my mouth, and panted: for I [a]longed for thy commandments.

I thirst after thy precepts, and pursue them eagerly, as it were with open mouth, ready and greedy to receive them. It is a metaphor from one that makes great haste after another, whereby he is forced to pant and to open his mouth for air to refresh himself.

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b Ps. 106. 4. c 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. † Heb. according to the custom toward those, &c.

132 [b]Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, [c]†as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

Look thou upon me, to wit, favourably, as the next clause explains it, and as this phrase is commonly used; whereby also he implies that God at present did hide his face and favour from him. *As thou usest to do unto those that love thy name;* as thou hast done in all former ages. Do not deny me the common privilege of all the faithful.

d Ps. 17. 5. e Ps. 19. 13. Rom. 6. 12.

133 [d]Order my steps in thy word: and [e]let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Order my steps; by thy grace direct and govern all my motions and actions. *In thy word;* in the way prescribed in thy word; or, *by thy word.* Let thy Spirit accompany thy word, and ingraft it within me, so that I may be guided and ruled by it. And although I have evil inclinations and affections within me, let them not bear sway in me, nor withdraw me from the course of obedience.

f Luke 1. 74.

134 [f]Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

As he prayed against the inward impediment of his obedience, ver. 133, so here he prayeth against an external impediment of it, and a common temptation to sin.

g Ps. 4. 6. h ver. 12, 26.

135 [g]Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and [h]teach me thy statutes.

Look upon me with a pleased and favourable countenance. Compare Numb. vi. 25; Prov. xvi. 15.

i Jer. 9. 1. & 14. 17. See Ezek. 9. 4.

136 [i]Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

Rivers of waters; plentiful and perpetual tears, witnesses of my deep sorrow for God's dishonour and displeasure, and for the miseries which sinners bring upon themselves and others. *They*, to wit, the wicked, as before, ver. 126, who were not worthy to be mentioned; for this pronoun is oft used in way of contempt, as Luke xiv. 24; xix. 27; John vii. 11; viii. 10; Acts xvi. 36.

ץ TZADDI.

k Ezra 9. 15. Neh. 9. 33. Jer. 12. 1. Dan. 9. 7.

137 [k]Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments.

Righteous art thou, by thine essence and nature, and therefore it is impossible that thou shouldst be unjust in any of thy laws or providences.

l Ps. 19. 7, 8, 9. † Heb. *righteousness.* † Heb. *faithfulness.*

138 [l]Thy testimonies *that* thou hast commanded *are* †righteous and very †faithful.

But this verse is otherwise rendered by all the ancient interpreters, and by divers others, and that more agreeably to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, *Thou hast commanded righteousness*, even *thy testimonies* (or, *the righteousness of thy testimonies;* or, *thy righteous testimonies*, by a common Hebraism; or rather, *righteousness* in or by *thy testimonies;* nothing being more frequent than the ellipsis of the prefix *beth*, which signifies *in* or *by*) *and truth*, (or, *and true*, thy righteous and true testimonies; although the other seems to be the better translation,) *earnestly*. So the sense is, Thou hast strictly and severely, under the highest obligations and penalties, commanded in thy word that men should be just and true in all their actions. And this agrees very well with the next foregoing verse, wherein he affirmed that God is righteous, and doth righteous things; and then here he adds that he requires righteousness and truth from all men.

m Ps. 69. 9. John 2. 17. † Heb. *cut me off.*

139 [m]My zeal hath †consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

Hath consumed me; I am tormented and cut to the heart with grief and anger at it. *Have forgotten thy words*, i. e. despise and disobey them; which in Scripture use is oft called a forgetting of them, as the remembering of them is oft put for loving and practising them.

n Ps. 12. 6. & 18. 30. & 19. 8. Prov. 30. 5. † Heb. *tried*, or, *refined.*

140 [n]Thy word *is* very †pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

Very pure; without the least mixture of any falsehood or sin, both which are frequent in the words or precepts of men. *Therefore;* because of that exact purity and holiness of it, for which very reason ungodly men either despise or hate it.

141 I *am* small and despised: *yet* do not I forget thy precepts.

Small; or, *a little one;* not for age, but in respect of my condition in the world; mean and obscure.

142 Thy righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* [o]the truth.

o ver. 151. Ps. 33. 4. John 17. 17.

An everlasting righteousness; constant and unchangeable, the same in all ages and places, and to all persons, of eternal truth and justice, never to be dispensed with, nor to be made void. *The truth;* nothing but truth; or as true as truth itself.

143 Trouble and anguish have †taken hold on me: *yet* thy commandments *are* [p]my delights.

† Heb. *found me.* p ver. 77.

Outward troubles and anguish of spirit, or great anguish or distress.

144 The righteousness of thy testimonies *is* everlasting: [q]give me understanding, and I shall live.

q ver. 34, 73, 169.

I shall be kept from those sins which deserve and bring death.

פ KOPH.

145 I cried with *my* whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.

146 I cried unto thee; save me, ‖and I shall keep thy testimonies.

‖ Or, that I may keep

147 [r]I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: [s]I hoped in thy word.

r Ps. 5. 3. & 88. 13. s ver. 74.

The dawning of the morning, Heb. *the twilight*, to wit, of the morning, by comparing Psal. lxxxviii. 13. And so this word is used 1 Sam. xxx. 17.

148 [t]Mine eyes prevent the *night* watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

t Ps. 63. 6.

The night watches, Heb. *the watches;* which were kept only by night. And these watches were then three, as hath been more than once observed. And this is not to be understood of the first watch, which was at the beginning of the night, for the prevention thereof was very easy, and frequent, and inconsiderable; but of the *middle watch*, as it is called, Judg. vii. 19, which was set in the middle of the night; and especially of the *morning watch*, as it is called Exod. xiv. 24, which was set some hours before the dawning of the day; and so this is an aggravation and addition to what he said ver. 147.

149 Hear my voice according unto thy lovingkindness: O LORD, [u]quicken me according to thy judgment.

u ver. 88, 154.

According to thy word, which is oft called God's judgment; or, according to thy custom or manner of dealing with me and with others of thy people; as this word is taken above, ver. 132.

150 They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.

They draw nigh, to wit, to me, or against me, as Psal. xxvii. 2; they are at hand, and ready to seize upon me. *They are far from thy law;* they cast away far from them all thoughts of and respect to thy law, which forbids such wicked practices.

151 Thou *art* [x]near, O LORD; [y]and all thy commandments *are* truth.

x Ps. 145. 18. y ver. 142.

Thou art near to me. Thou art as ready and present to succour me as they are to molest me. *Thy commandments*, considered with the promises and threatenings, which are frequently annexed to them. Or, the promises, as the word seems to be used, Psal. cxi. 7, and elsewhere in this

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Psalm. And God is said to *command* not only his precepts, or the observation thereof, but also his *covenant*, Psal. cv. 8; cxi. 9, which is a collection or body of the promises; and his *loving-kindness*, Psal. xlii. 8, which is the fountain of the promises; and his *blessing*, Psal. cxxxiii. 3, which is the fruit of his promises; and *deliverances*, Psal. xliv. 4, which are the things promised. And therefore it is not strange if the promises be sometimes called *commandments*.

152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them [z] for ever.

z Luke 21. 33.

Known of old, by my own long experience, ever since I arrived at any knowledge in those matters. *That thou hast founded them for ever;* that thou hast established them upon sure and everlasting foundations.

RESH.

153 [a] Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.

a Lam. 5. 1.

154 [b] Plead my cause, and deliver me: [c] quicken me according to thy word.

b 1 Sam. 24. 15. Ps. 35. 1. Mic. 7. 9. c ver. 40. d Job 5. 4.

155 [d] Salvation *is* far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.

And therefore, on the contrary, I trust that thou wilt save me because I do seek them. My wicked enemies shall certainly be destroyed, by which means I shall be delivered.

156 ‖ Great *are* thy tender mercies, O LORD: [e] quicken me according to thy judgments.

‖ Or, *Many.* e ver. 149.

According to the manner of thy administrations towards thy people, as ver. 149.

157 Many *are* my persecutors and mine enemies; *yet* do I not [f] decline from thy testimonies.

Ps. 44. 18. ver. 51.

Though they tempt me to do so, and persecute me because I will not do it.

158 I beheld the transgressors, and [g] was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

g ver. 136. Ezek. 9. 4.

I observed and considered their ungodly courses.

159 Consider how I love thy precepts: [h] quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.

h ver. 88.

I love thy precepts; which was the cause of my grief for their violation of them.

160 † Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

† Heb. *The beginning of thy word is true.*

From the beginning; either from the beginning of the world, or ever since thou hast revealed thy mind by thy word to the sons of men; all thy words have been found to be true and certain, and so they will be to the end of the world, as is implied in the next clause. Or, as it is in the margin, *the beginning* (or, as others render it, *the sum*, as this very word is used, Exod. xxx. 12; Numb. xxvi. 2; xxxi. 26, to wit, the whole of it, there is not the least part of it which is not so) *of thy word is true.*

SCHIN.

161 [i] Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

i 1 Sam. 24. 11, 14 & 26. Is. ver. 23.

Princes; who had power to do it, and who ought to have used their authority to protect me, whom they knew to be innocent and injured. *But my heart standeth in awe of thy word;* but I feared thine offence and displeasure more than their wrath.

162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

163 I hate and abhor lying: *but* thy law do I love.

Lying; or, *falsehood;* either, 1. In my speech and actions; all hypocrisy and deceit, which is the common practice of mine enemies, and of all godless politicians: or, 2. In doctrine and worship, as this word seems to be used, ver. 29, because both there and here it is opposed to God's *law*.

164 Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

Seven times; many times; that definite number being oft taken indefinitely, as Lev. xxvi. 28, and elsewhere.

165 [k] Great peace have they which love thy law: and † nothing shall offend them.

k Prov. 3. 2. Is. 32. 17. † Heb. *they shall have no stumblingblock.*

Great peace; either outward prosperity and happiness, which God in his law hath expressly promised to good men; or at least inward peace, satisfaction and tranquillity of mind, arising from the sense of God's love to them and watchful care over them in all the concerns of this life and of the next. *Have they*, Heb. is *to them*, or shall be *to them;* for the verb being not expressed, it may be understood either way. Although they may meet with some disturbance, yet *their end shall be peace*, as is said, Psal. xxxvii. 37. *Nothing shall offend them*, Heb. *they shall have no stumbling-block*, to wit, such at which they shall stumble and fall into mischief and utter ruin, as ungodly men have, before whom God doth oft lay stumbling-blocks, or occasions of sin and destruction, as it is affirmed by God himself, Jer. vi. 21; Ezek. iii. 20; Rom. ix. 33, out of Isa. viii. 14.

166 [l] LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

l Gen. 49. 18. ver. 174.

Thus performing the condition which thou hast required, I justly and confidently hope for thy mercy promised.

167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

I have not only obeyed thy commands, which a hypocrite may sometimes and in part do for worldly ends, but I have done it with my very soul, and from a hearty love to them.

168 I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: [m] for all my ways *are* before thee.

m Prov. 5. 21.

For, or *because, all my ways are before thee.* This is added either, 1. As the reason or motive of his obedience, which was the consideration of God's omniscience, and his desire to approve himself and his ways to God; or, 2. As a proof and evidence of it. Whereas this and all his former professions of his piety were charged by his enemies with deep hypocrisy, and might seem to savour of pride and vainglory, here in the close of them he makes a solemn appeal to that God who knew his heart and all his ways, and whether these things were not true and real; which if they were not, he tacitly imprecates God's judgment upon himself.

TAU.

169 Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: [n] give me understanding according to thy word.

n ver. 144.

Near before thee; which at present thou seemest to *shut out*, as the church complained, Lam. iii. 8. *Understanding;* whereby I may both know and perform my duty in all particulars.

170 Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

171 [o] My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

o ver. 7.

172 My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.

Shall speak, Heb. *shall pour forth*, freely and abundantly, like a fountain. *Of thy word;* in praise of it, for its righteousness, as it here follows, its truth, and purity, and other excellencies. *Thy commandments;* even those which to men of corrupted minds seem harsh and unjust.

173 Let thine hand help me; for [p] I have chosen thy precepts.

p Josh. 24. 22. Prov. 1. 29. Luke 10. 42.

For my guide and companion, and chief joy and treasure.

174 [q] I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and [r] thy law *is* my delight.

q ver. 166. r ver. 16, 24, 47, 77, 111.

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For thy salvation; either, 1. For deliverance from my present straits and calamities, that I may serve thee with more freedom, and may glorify thy name in a more solemn and public manner; or, 2. That thou wouldst completely save me, not only from my outward pressures, but also from my sins, from my dulness and deadness in thy service, from all inclinations and temptations to apostacy and impiety, and from my other indispositions and corruptions, against which he prayeth in divers parts of this Psalm; and that at last thou wouldst crown me with eternal salvation in thy kingdom, which it is apparent that David did believe and expect, and hath been already proved from divers passages of this book.

175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.

Either, 1. Thy providential dispensation, whereby thou judgest and rulest the world, punishing the wicked, and protecting and delivering the godly. Or, 2. Thy word or testimonies, as this word most commonly signifies in this Psalm, which are the only ground of my hope in thy help.

[a] Is. 53. 6. Luke 15. 4, &c. 1 Pet. 2. 25.

176 [a] I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

I have gone astray like a lost sheep: this is meant either, 1. Of sinful errors. I have too often swerved from the path of thy precepts through mine own infirmity, or the power of temptation. Or, 2. Of penal errors. I have been banished by the power and tyranny of mine enemies from all my friends and relations, and, which is far worse, from the place of thy worship and presence, and forced to wander hither and thither, hiding myself in mountains, and caves, and woods, exposed to a thousand snares and dangers. *Seek thy servant,* as the shepherd doth his wandering sheep, and bring me back into thy fold.

PSALM CXX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed, either, 1. By David in the time of his persecution by Saul, when he was exposed both to the swords and to the calumnies of his enemies; of which two evils he complains in this Psalm; or, 2. By some other holy prophet in a time of the church's persecution.

¶ A Song of degrees.

Or, *of ascents,* as others render it, and as the word properly signifies. This title is given to this and to the fourteen following Psalms; concerning the reason whereof there are divers conjectures, the chief of which are these: either, 1. Because of the excellent matter of them, as eminent persons are called *men of high degree,* 1 Chron. xvii. 17. For in them are contained, as learned men have observed, many doctrines or instructions of great use and importance, and those delivered with extraordinary brevity and elegancy. Or, 2. Because they were sung upon the fifteen degrees of stairs of the temple, which the Jewish writers mention; or, at least, upon some high place. Or, 3. Because they were sung with a very loud voice. Or, 4. Because they were sung by the Jews when they returned from Babylon and went up to Jerusalem; which some judge the more probable, because it suits with the order of these Psalms; whereof the first was to be used by them when they were preparing for their departure, and suffered delays in it from the calumnies of their enemies; the second, in their journey; the third, upon their arrival at Jerusalem; the fourth, after the building of the city and temple, &c. And although one of these Psalms is ascribed to David, and another to Solomon, yet they also, as well as the rest, might be applied to this use; and so might this Psalm also, though David first composed it upon another occasion. Or, 5. From something which was peculiar in them, either in the poetry or the manner of singing them. But these things being now lost and unknown, not only to Christians, but even to the Jews themselves, we must be contentedly ignorant of this as well as of most other titles of the Psalms; and the rather, because they do not at all concern the matter, nor are they necessary to the understanding of them.

David prayeth against lying lips and deceitful tongues, 1—4, *and complaineth that his habitation was unavoidably among wicked and unpeaceable men,* 5—7.

IN [a] my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me. cir. 1058. [a] Ps. 118. 5. Jonah 2. 2.

2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, *and* from a deceitful tongue.

From lying lips; from the unjust censures and malicious slanders of mine enemies, who traduce me as an egregious hypocrite, as a rebel and traitor. *From a deceitful tongue;* which covereth mischievous designs with pretences of kindness.

3 ‖ What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be † done unto thee, thou false tongue? ‖ Or, *What shall thy deceitful tongue give unto thee?* † Heb. *added.* or, *what shall it profit thee?*

What shall be given unto thee, whosoever thou art who art guilty of these practices? He applies himself severally to the consciences of every one of them. Or he designs Doeg or some other person in Saul's court eminent for this wickedness. The sense may be this, It is true, thou dost me some mischief; but what benefit dost thou get by it, if all thy accounts be cast up? For although thou mayst thereby obtain some favour and advantage from Saul, yet thou wilt assuredly bring upon thyself the curse and vengeance of God; and then thou wilt be no gainer by the bargain. And to do mischief to another without benefit to thyself, is an inhuman and diabolical wickedness.

4 ‖ Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper. ‖ Or, *It is as the sharp arrows of the mighty* man, *with coals of juniper.*

So this verse contains an answer to the question ver. 3, and declares the slanderer's recompence; which is the wrath and vengeance of the mighty God, which in Scripture, and particularly in this book, is oft compared to *arrows,* as Psal. vii. 13, 14, &c., and here to *arrows of the mighty,* i. e. shot by the hands of a strong man; and *to coals,* Psal. cxl. 10, and here to *coals of juniper,* which being kindled burn very fiercely, and retain their heat for a long time. And the psalmist may possibly express it in these words, to show the suitableness of the punishment to the sin; as thy tongue shoots arrows, (for so calumnies are called, Psal. lvii. 4; lxiv. 3,) and kindles coals, so thou shalt bring God's arrows and coals kindled by the fire of his wrath upon thyself. But according to the other translation, which is in the margin, this is a further declaration of the sin of calumny. Though, all things considered, it doth thee no good, yet it doth others much hurt, to whom it is like *sharp arrows,* &c.

5 Woe is me, that I sojourn in [b] Mesech, [c] *that* I dwell in the tents of Kedar! [b] Gen. 10. 2. Ezek. 27. 13. [c] Gen. 25. 13. 1 Sam. 25. 1. Jer. 49. 28, 29.

Mesech and *Kedar* are two sorts of people, oft mentioned in Scripture, and reckoned amongst the heathen and barbarous nations. But their names are not here to be understood properly, (for we do not read that either David or the Israelites in the Babylonish captivity dwelt in their lands,) but only metaphorically, as the ungodly Israelites are called Sodom and Gomorrah, Isa. i. 10, and Amorites and Hittites, Ezek. xvi. 3, 45, and as in common speech among us, men of an evil character are called Turks or Jews. And so he explains himself in the next verse by this description of them, *him* or them *that hated peace,* although David sought peace with them, ver. 7. And so he speaks either, 1. Of the Philistines, among whom he sojourned for a time. But he did not seek peace with them, but sought their ruin, as the event showed; nor did they wage war against him, whilst he lived peaceably among them. Or rather, 2. The courtiers and soldiers of Saul, and the generality of the Israelites, who, to curry favour with Saul, sought David's ruin, and that many times by treachery and pretences of friendship; of which he oft complains in this book; whom as he elsewhere calls *heathen,* as Psal. ix. 5; lix. 5, it is not strange if he compares them here to the savage Arabians. And amongst such persons David was oft forced to sojourn in Saul's time, and with them he sought peace by all ways possible; but they hated peace, and the more he pursued peace, the more eagerly did they prosecute the war, as it here follows.

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6 My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

7 I *am* ‖*for* peace: but when I speak, they *are* for war.

‖ Or, a man of peace.

PSALM CXXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter of this Psalm sufficiently showeth that the psalmist was conflicting with great difficulties and oppositions, and looking hither and thither for help, as men in such cases use to do, and then turning his eyes to God and his providence, and encouraging himself by God's promises made to his people.

¶ A Song of degrees.

The psalmist showeth that the great safety of the godly is from the Lord, 1—5, *who keepeth them in their outgoings and incomings from all evil,* 6—8.

1 I ‖WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

‖ Or, Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? whence should my help come? See Jer. 3. 23.

Unto the hills; either to Zion and Moriah, which are called *the holy mountains,* Psal. lxxxvii. 1; or rather, 2. To the hills in general, whereof there were many in the land of Canaan, and upon which the forces, which he hoped would come to his aid, might be seen at a great distance. *Cometh;* or, *may come;* Heb. *will come.*

2 [a]My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

a Ps. 124. 8.

From God alone, and therefore to him alone will I turn mine eyes.

3 [b]He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: [c]he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

b 1 Sam. 2. 9. Prov. 3. 23, 26. c Ps. 127. 1. Is. 27. 3.

He speaketh as it were from God to himself, but withal to the encouragement of his followers and of all good men. *To be moved,* to wit, so as fall into mischief. *Will not slumber;* will not overlook nor neglect any thing which is necessary for thy preservation.

4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD *is* thy keeper: the LORD *is* [d]thy shade [e]upon thy right hand.

d Is. 25. 4. e Ps. 16. 8. & 109. 31.

Thy shade; both to refresh thee and keep thee from the burning heat of the sun, as it is expressed in the next verse, and to protect thee by his power from all thine enemies; for which reason God is oft called a *shadow* in Scripture. *Upon thy right hand;* partly to uphold thy right hand, which is the chief instrument of action; and partly to defend thee in that place where thine enemies oppose thee; of which see on Psal. cix. 6. And compare Psal. xvi. 8; cix. 31.

6 [f]The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

f Ps. 91. 5. Is. 49. 10. Rev. 7. 16.

The sun shall not smite thee with excessive heat, *nor the moon* with that cold and moisture which comes into the air by it and with it. Intemperate heats and colds are the two springs of many diseases. He alludes both to the conditions of soldiers or travellers, who are exposed to the open air by day and by night, and also to the cloudy pillar which defended the Israelites both by day and by night. The sense is, He shall protect thee from all evils both by day and night.

7 The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall [g]preserve thy soul.

g Ps. 41. 2. & 97. 10. & 145. 20. Prov. 2. 8. & 22. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 9. & 4. 6.

8 The LORD shall [h]preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in; shall guard and assist thee in all thy expeditions, and affairs, and actions, either at home or abroad. So this phrase is used Numb. xxvii. 17; Deut. xxviii. 6.

PSALM CXXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been written by David for the use of the people when they came up to Jerusalem to the solemn feasts.

¶ A Song of degrees of David.

David professeth his joy when he went into the house of the Lord, 1—5; *prayeth for the welfare, prosperity, and peace of it,* 6—9.

1 I WAS glad when they said unto me, [a]Let us go into the house of the LORD.

a Is. 2. 3. Zech. 8. 21.

Let us go; exhorting one another to it, as Deut. xxxiii. 19. Or, *We will go.* The sense is, It delighteth me much to hear that the people, who had so long lived in the neglect or contempt of God's worship, were now ready and forward in it.

2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

Our feet shall stand; thither we shall come, and there we shall make our abode during the times of solemn worship. *Within thy gates, O Jerusalem;* in that city where the ark is now fixed. We shall wander no more from place to place, as the ark was removed.

3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is [b]compact together:

b See 2 Sam. 5. 9.

Partly in its buildings, which are not dispersed, as they are in villages, nor divided into two cities, as it was before, but united and enlarged, 1 Chron. xi. 7, 8; and principally in its government and religion, which was distinct and opposite, before David took the fort of Zion from the Jebusites.

4 [c]Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto [d]the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

c Ex. 23. 17. Deut. 16. 16. d Ex. 16. 34.

The tribes; not some few pious people of each tribe, as in Saul's time and under the judges, but whole tribes; nor only one or two of the tribes, as it was during the late civil wars, but all the twelve tribes. *The tribes of the Lord;* whom God hath chosen to be his people, and whom he hath invited and required to resort thither. *Unto the testimony of Israel;* unto the ark, which is oft called *the testimony,* as Exod. xvi. 34; Lev. xvi. 13; xxiv. 3; Numb. xvii. 4, and more fully *the ark of the testimony,* as Exod. xxvi. 33, 34, and elsewhere; because of the tables of the covenant laid up in it, which are called God's *testimony,* and *the tables of the testimony,* as Exod. xxv. 16; xxxi. 18, &c. And this may well be called *the testimony of* or *to Israel,* because it was given by God to them and for their good. Or, by or according *to the testimony of Israel,* i. e. God's command given to Israel, which may be alleged here as the reason which moved them to this journey. *To give thanks unto the name of the Lord;* to worship God; this one eminent part and action thereof being put for all the rest.

5 [e]For there †are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

e Deu. 17. 8. 2 Chr. 19. 8. † Heb. *do sit.*

This is added as another reason inviting and obliging them to go up to Jerusalem, and as another commendation of this city. *Thrones of judgment;* the supreme courts of justice for ecclesiastical, and especially for civil affairs, as the next clause explains it. *The thrones of the house of David;* the royal throne allotted by God to David and to his posterity for ever, and the inferior seats of justice established by and under his authority. See 2 Chron. xix. 8—10.

6 [f]Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

f Ps. 51. 18.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; in whose prosperity both your civil and your religious privileges are deeply concerned. *They shall prosper;* or, *let them prosper;* the future being taken imperatively, as is very frequent. The Lord grant them prosperity and all happiness.

7 Peace be within thy walls, *and* prosperity within thy palaces.

Within thy walls; in all thy dwellings. *Within thy palaces;* especially in the court and the dwellings of the

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princes and rulers, whose welfare is a public blessing to all the people.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace *be* within thee.

And this I desire not only nor chiefly for my own security, and for the glory of mine empire, but for the sake of all my fellow citizens, and of all the Israelites, whom, though my subjects, I must own for my brethren and companions in the chief privileges and blessings enjoyed at Jerusalem.

9 Because of the house of the LORD
g Neh. 2. 10. our God I will [g]seek thy good.

The house of the Lord our God; which is now fixed in this city.

PSALM CXXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a description of the great agony and distress of God's people, and of their carriage under it.

¶ A Song of degrees.

The godly profess their patient trusting and confidence in God, 1, 2; *and withal earnestly pray to be delivered from the contempt of the proud,* 3, 4.

a Ps. 121. 1. & 141. 8. b Ps. 2. 4. & 11. 4. & 115. 3.

UNTO thee [a]lift I up mine eyes, O thou [b]that dwellest in the heavens.

Unto thee only, because all other persons either cannot or will not help me.

2 Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* unto the hand of their masters, *and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes *wait* upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

Look unto the hand of their masters; either, 1. For supply of their wants, which comes from their masters' hand; or, 2. For pity, the hand being the instrument whereby masters commonly correct their servants, and looking to the hand may express the posture of one supplicating for mercy; or rather, 3. For help and defence against their oppressors. For servants were unable to defend themselves, and were not allowed to wear defensive weapons, but expected and had protection from their masters in case of injury. For this phrase of *having one's eyes towards another*, both in this and other sacred books, constantly notes expectation and desire of help from them, as Psal. xxv. 15; lxix. 3; Isa. xvii. 7; Ezek. xxiii. 27, and oft elsewhere. And the phrase of God's *having mercy* upon another, doth most commonly signify that act or effect of his mercy in helping and delivering him. *Until that he have mercy upon us;* until he graciously help and save us.

3 Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

With opprobrious words and injuries.

4 Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, *and* with the contempt of the proud.

With the scornful and contemptuous carriage of thine and our enemies, who live in great ease and glory, whilst we, thy people, are overwhelmed with manifold calamities.

PSALM CXXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David in the name and for the use of all the church and people of Israel, as a thanksgiving for their deliverance from some eminent danger or dangers from proud and potent enemies. Many such they had in David's time; but which of them is here intended is hard to determine, and not worth the inquiry.

¶ A Song of degrees of David.

The church setteth forth God's mercy for a miraculous deliverance, out of the apparent danger of powerful enemies, 1—5, *and blesseth him for it,* 6—8.

IF *it had not been* the LORD who was on our side, [a]now may Israel say; a Ps. 129. 1.

2 If *it had not been* the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us:

3 Then they had [b]swallowed us up b Ps. 56. 1, 2. & 57. 3. Prov. 1. 12. quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:

They had swallowed us up quick; they had speedily and utterly destroyed us, as Korah, &c. were, Numb. xvi.

4 Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:

5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

Our enemies, compared to *proud waters*, for their great multitude, and swelling rage, and mighty force.

6 Blessed *be* the LORD, who hath not given us *as* a prey to their teeth.

A metaphor from wild beasts, which tear and devour their prey with their teeth.

7 Our soul is escaped [c]as a bird out of c Ps. 91. 3. Prov. 6. 5. the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

8 [d]Our help *is* in the name of the LORD, d Ps. 121. 2. [e]who made heaven and earth. e Gen. 1. 1. Ps. 134. 3.

PSALM CXXV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was designed for the consolation and encouragement of God's church and people in all ages, against all the plots and malice of their enemies.

¶ A Song of degrees.

The stedfastness of such as trust in God, 1—3. *A prayer for the godly to do them good, and against the ungodly to destroy them,* 4, 5.

THEY that trust in the LORD *shall be* as mount Zion, *which* cannot be removed, *but* abideth for ever.

Removed, or, *overthrown,* by any winds or storms; partly because of its own greatness and strength; and partly because of the Divine protection afforded to it.

2 *As* the mountains *are* round about Jerusalem, so the LORD *is* round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

As the mountains are round about Jerusalem; by which it was defended both from stormy winds and from the assaults of its enemies.

3 For [a]the rod of †the wicked shall not a Prov. 22. 8. Is. 14. 5. † Heb. wickedness rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

The rod of the wicked; the power and authority of cruel tyrants. *Shall not rest;* not continue for ever, nor too long. *Upon the lot of the righteous;* upon the habitations and persons of good men. *Lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity;* lest through human frailty and the great weight or long continuance of their troubles they should be driven to impatience, or to despair, or to use indirect and sinful courses to relieve themselves.

4 Do good, O LORD, unto *those that be* good, and to *them that are* upright in their hearts.

As thou hast promised to keep thy people from evil, ver. 3, be pleased also to vouchsafe unto them those blessings which are good for them. Or thus, having declared God's tender care of his people, and his promise made to them, he now prayeth for the execution of the said promises.

5 As for such as turn aside unto their [b]crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them b Prov. 2. 15. forth with the workers of iniquity: *but* [c]peace *shall be* upon Israel. c Ps. 128. 6. Gal. 6. 16.

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But those hypocrites, who either through fear of the rod, mentioned ver. 3, or for other considerations, shall turn aside from the ways of God, which for a time they professed and seemed to own, unto sinful courses, whom he opposeth to the *upright*, ver. 4, *the Lord shall lead them forth*, to wit, unto punishment, as malefactors are commonly led to the place of execution. *With the workers of iniquity;* with the most obstinate and profligate sinners, of whose plagues they shall certainly partake, as they did of their sins. *Upon Israel;* upon the true Israel of God.

PSALM CXXVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by Ezra, or some other man of God, at the return of Israel from Babylon.

¶ A Song of degrees.

The church, celebrating and praising God for her return out of the Babylonian captivity, 1—3, prayeth him to perfect his work, and foretelleth the good success thereof, 4—6.

[a] Heb. restored the captivity of Zion. Ps. 53. 6. & 85. 1. Hos. 6. 11. Joel 3. 1. a Acts 12. 9.

1 WHEN the LORD † turned again the captivity of Zion, [a] we were like them that dream.

Turned again the captivity of Zion, i. e. brought the captive Israelites out of Babylon into their own land. *We were like them that dream;* we were so surprised and astonished with the report of such a favour, that we could not believe our own eyes and ears, but thought it to be but a dream or delusion of our own fancies; as is usual in matters of great joy, as Gen. xlv. 26; Luke xxiv. 11; Acts xii. 9.

[b] Job 8. 21.

2 Then [b] was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD † hath done great things for them.

[a] Heb. hath magnified to do with them.

They did and well might wonder at it, that a heathen emperor should of his own mere motion show so much kindness to so hateful and despicable a people as the Jews were.

3 The LORD hath done great things for us; *whereof* we are glad.

4 Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

Turn again our captivity; as thou hast brought us home, bring home also the rest of our brethren, who are dispersed and yet remain captives in Babylon, or in any other parts of the world. *As the streams in the south;* as thou art pleased sometimes to send floods of water into dry and barren grounds, such as the southern parts of Canaan and the parts adjacent were; which is an act of thy great power and goodness; and no less will this reduction of thy people be, and no less shall we rejoice in it, and bless God for it.

[c] Jer. 31. 9, &c. Hos. 2. 23. Amos 9. 13. Zech. 10. 9. Matt. 13. 23. Gal. 6. 9. Heb. 12. 11. Jam. 5. 7. Rev. 14. 15. ‖ Or, singing.

5 [c] They that sow in tears shall reap in ‖ joy.

This is an argument wherewith he presseth the foregoing prayer, ver. 4, taken from the common course of God's providence towards men of all nations, to whom he affords vicissitudes of sorrow and comfort; and particularly towards husbandmen, who though ofttimes they sow their seed-corn with care, and fear, and sorrow, yet afterwards for the most part meet with a joyful harvest. And therefore we hope thou wilt not deny this favour to thine own people. And as thou hast in some good measure granted it to us, so we pray thee grant it to our brethren, who are yet exercised with hard labours and griefs, that they and we together may at last obtain that blessed and full harvest which we still pray and hope for.

[a] Or, seed basket.

6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing ‖ precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him*.

He that goeth forth; the husbandman that goeth out into his field, and walketh hither and thither to scatter his seed, as the manner is. *Weepeth*, for fear of the loss of his seed, and of a bad harvest. *Precious seed;* seed-corn when it is scarce and dear. Or, *the basket of seed* as it is rendered in our margin, as also by the Chaldee paraphrast, and some others. *Shall doubtless come*, Heb. *coming shall come;* which manner of expression may note either the certainty of the thing, or the frequency and customariness of it. This verse is only an amplification of the former.

PSALM CXXVII.

¶ A Song of degrees ‖ for Solomon.

‖ Or, *of Solomon*. Ps. 72. title.

Or rather, *of Solomon*, as this particle is generally used in this book. Nor is there any thing in this Psalm which gives us just ground to question whether Solomon was the author of it or no.

No success in city or family without God's blessing and protection, 1, 2. Good children are his gifts, 3, 4. Their happiness that have them, 5.

EXCEPT the LORD build the house, they labour in vain † that build it: except [a] the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain.

† Heb. that are *builders of it* in it. a Ps. 121. 3, 4, 5.

Build the house, i. e. assist and bless those that build the house; either an artificial house, the temple, or the royal palace, or any of those numerous structures which Solomon raised; or a natural or civil house, a family, or a state, or kingdom. *They labour in vain that build it;* they will never bring it to perfection, nor have any comfort in it.

2 *It is* vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to [b] eat the bread of sorrows: *for* so he giveth his beloved sleep.

[b] Gen. 3. 17, 19.

He directs his speech to the persons forementioned, *the builders* or *watchmen*, of both which sorts there are many that use the following course. *To rise up early, to sit up late;* to use constant and unwearied diligence, from the very dawning of the day unto the dark night, that so you may accomplish your designs. *To eat the bread of sorrows;* to eat the bread which you get by excessive and grievous pains. *So*, to wit, by his blessing, which, though not expressed, is sufficiently understood out of the former verse, where it is twice expressed. As therefore he saith it is in vain for them to build or watch, if God do not give his blessing and assistance, ver. 1; so here he adds that it is in vain to be diligent in their labours and callings, understand, without God's blessing; for *so*, i. e. not singly by their industry, but by his blessing upon their labours. But the Hebrew word rendered *so* may be and is by others rendered *when*, or *whereas*, or *since;* by others, *rightly*, or *well*, when it is convenient and needful for them; by others, *certainly;* the sleep which they have is undoubtedly from God's blessing, without which all possible endeavours would never procure it. *He;* the Lord, expressed in the former and in the following verses. *Giveth*, to wit, freely, without that immoderate toiling and drudgery wherewith others pursue it. *His beloved;* his people, who though hated and maligned by men, are beloved of God, over whom his providence watcheth in a special manner. In this expression he seems to allude to the name of Jedidiah, which was given to Solomon, and signifies *the belored of the Lord*, 2 Sam. xii. 25. *Sleep;* a quiet rest, both of body and mind, which many of those greedy worldlings cannot enjoy, as is observed, Eccles. v. 21.

3 Lo, [c] children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* [d] the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.

c Gen. 33. 5. & 48. 4. Josh. 24. 3, 4. d Deut. 28. 4.

Children; which he mentions here, partly because they are the chief of all these blessings, and partly because all the forementioned toil and labour is in a great measure and most commonly undertaken for their sakes. *Are an heritage of the Lord;* they come not from the power of nature, and from a man's conversation with his wife, or with a multitude of wives or concubines, which Solomon had, but only from God's blessing; even as an inheritance is not the fruit of a man's own labour, but the gift of his father, or rather

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the gift of God, both enabling and inclining his father to give it to him. *His reward;* not a reward of debt merited by good men, but *a reward of grace*, of which we read Rom. iv. 4, which God *gives them graciously*, as Jacob acknowledgeth of his children, Gen. xxxiii. 5. And although God give children and other outward comforts to ungodly men in the way of common providence, yet he gives them only to his people as favours, and in the way of promise and covenant.

4 As arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth.

In the hand of a mighty man; when they are shot out of a bow by a man of great strength against his enemy, which are of great use and power, both to offend the enemy, and to defend himself. *Children of the youth;* children begotten in youth, as a husband or wife married in their youth are called a *husband* or *wife of youth*, Prov. v. 18; Isa. liv. 6; Joel i. 8, and as a son begotten in old age is called *a son of old age*, Gen. xxxvii. 3. And these he prefers before other children in this point, partly because such are commonly more strong and vigorous than others; and partly because they live longest with their parents, and to their comfort and support, whereas children born in old age seldom come to any maturity of years before their parents' death.

† Heb. *hath filled his quiver with them.*
c See Job 5. 4. Prov. 27. 11.
‖ Or, *shall subdue*, as Ps. 18. 47. or, *destroy.*

5 Happy *is* the man that †hath his quiver full of them: [c] they shall not be ashamed, but they ‖ shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

That hath his quiver full of them; who hath a numerous issue; which as it is a great blessing in itself, so Solomon's want of it made it more valuable in his eyes. *They shall not be ashamed;* such parents fear not the reproach of barrenness, which was grievous, especially among the Jews; of which see Luke i. 25; nor any other shame from their enemies. *They shall speak with the enemies in the gate;* they shall courageously plead their cause in courts of judicature, which were in the gates, Deut. xxi. 19; xxv. 7, not fearing to be crushed by the might of their adversaries, as weak and helpless persons frequently are.

PSALM CXXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a description of the blessedness of good men.

¶ A Song of degrees.

The psalmist showeth the happy state of such as fear God, in his labour, 1, 2, *wife, and children*, 3. *He shall also see the good of Jerusalem, and peace upon Israel*, 4—6.

a Ps. 112. 1. & 115. 13. & 119. 1.
b Is. 3. 10.

BLESSED [a] *is* every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.

2 [b] For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *shalt* thou *be*, and *it shall be* well with thee.

Thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands; thy labour shall not be vain and fruitless, and the fruit of thy labours shall not be taken away from thee, and possessed by others, as God threatened to the disobedient, Deut. xxviii., but enjoyed by thyself with comfort and satisfaction. *Well with thee*, both in this world and in the world to come, as even the Chaldee paraphrast explains these words.

c Ezek. 19. 10.
d Ps. 52. 8. & 144. 12.

3 Thy wife *shall be* [c] as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children [d] like olive plants round about thy table.

As a fruitful vine; like the vine for fruitfulness; or like that sort of vines known by this name for its eminent fruitfulness, as some trees amongst us are for the same reason called *the great bearers*. *By the sides of thine house*, where the vines are commonly planted for support and other advantages; which being applied to the wife, may signify either, 1. The wife's duty to abide at home, Tit. ii. 5, as the harlot is deciphered by her gadding abroad, Prov. vii. 11, 12. Or rather, 2. The legitimateness of the children, which are begotten at home by the husband, and not abroad by strangers. *Like olive plants*, numerous, growing and flourishing, good both for ornament and manifold uses, as olive trees are. *Round about thy table;* where they shall sit at meat with thee, for thy comfort and safety.

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

5 [e] The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

e Ps. 134. 3.

Out of Zion; from the ark in Zion, and with those spiritual and everlasting blessings which are to be had no where but in Zion, and from the God who dwelleth in Zion, and with all other mercies which thou shalt ask of God in Zion. *The good of Jerusalem;* the prosperity of that city to which thou belongest, and which is the only seat of God's special presence, and of his worship, whose felicity therefore is very delightful to every good man, and upon whose peace the peace and safety of every member of it depends, as every seaman is concerned in the safety of the ship in which he is.

6 Yea, thou shalt [f] see thy children's children, *and* [g] peace upon Israel.

f Gen. 50. 23. Job 42. 16.
g Ps. 125. 5.

Not only upon Jerusalem, and the parts adjacent, but upon all the tribes and people of Israel.

PSALM CXXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains a joyful and thankful remembrance of the church's former and manifold calamities from barbarous enemies, and of God's wonderful mercy in delivering them out of their hands.

¶ A Song of degrees.

The various manifold afflictions of the church described, but delivered out of all, 1—4. *The haters thereof cursed, and devoted to judgment*, 5—8.

‖ Or, *Many.*
a See Ezek. 23. 3. Hos. 2. 15. & 11. 1.
b Ps. 124. 1.

MANY ‖ a time have they afflicted me from [a] my youth, [b] may Israel now say:

They; mine enemies or oppressors; which is easily understood, both from the nature of the thing, and from ver. 3, where they are expressed under the name of *ploughers*. *From my youth;* from the time that I was a people, when I was in Egypt and came out of it, which is called the time of Israel's *youth*, Jer. ii. 2; Ezek. xxiii. 3.

2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.

3 The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.

Ploughed upon my back; they have not only thrown me down, and trod me under foot, but have cruelly tormented me, wounded and mangled me, and had no more pity upon me than the ploughman hath upon the earth which he cuts up at his pleasure. He saith, *upon my back*, either because they did literally scourge the captives upon their backs with such *cords* as are mentioned ver. 4, although we do not read that the Israelitish captives were thus used by any of their enemies; or by way of allusion to that usage, which made a sort of furrows in their backs, upon which they used to lay on their strokes. *They made long their furrows;* they oft repeated their injuries and prolonged my torments.

4 The LORD *is* righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

Righteous; faithful or merciful, as that word is frequently used. *Cut asunder the cords* wherewith the plough was drawn; by which means they were stopped in their course. So he persists in the same metaphor of a plough. By these *cords* he understands all their plots and endeavours.

5 Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

Forced to retreat with shame and disappointment.

6 Let them be as [c] the grass *upon* the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up:

c Ps. 37. 2.

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The house-tops there were flat, and therefore more capable of grass or green corn growing between the stones than ours are. *Which withereth afore it groweth up;* which having no deep root, never comes to maturity. And so all their designs shall be abortive, and never come to perfection.

7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

8 Neither do they which go by say, [d] The blessing of the LORD *be* upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD.

Which was a usual salutation given by passengers to reapers, as Ruth ii. 4. So the meaning is, It never continues till the harvest comes.

PSALM CXXX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by the prophet when he was conflicting with horrors of his conscience for the guilt of his sins, and imploring God's mercy and pardon.

¶ A Song of degrees.

The psalmist being troubled for and acknowledging his sins, professeth his hope in God, 1—6, *and exhorteth Israel to hope also in him,* 7, 8.

OUT [a] of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.

Being overwhelmed with deep distresses and terrors, and ready to despair.

2 Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

3 [b] If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

Mark iniquities; observe them accurately, and punish them severely, as they deserve. *Who shall stand* in thy presence, or at thy tribunal? No man can acquit himself, or escape the sentence of condemnation, because all men are sinners, Eccles. vii. 20; James iii. 2. *To stand* is a judicial phrase, and notes a man's being absolved or justified upon an equal trial, as Psal. i. 5; Rom. xiv. 4, where it is opposed to *falling.*

4 But *there is* [c] forgiveness with thee, that [d] thou mayest be feared.

There is forgiveness with thee; thou art able and ready to forgive repenting sinners. *That thou mayest be feared;* not with a slavish, but with a child-like fear and reverence. This grace and mercy of thine is the foundation of all religion and worship of thee in the world, without which men would desperately proceed on in their impious courses without any thought of repentance.

5 [e] I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and [f] in his word do I hope.

I wait for the Lord, that he would manifest his favour to me in the pardon of my sins. *In his word;* wherein he hath declared his merciful nature, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, and his gracious purpose and promises for the pardoning of sinners.

6 [g] My soul *waiteth* for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: ‖ *I say, more than* they that watch for the morning.

Whether soldiers that keep the night watches in an army or city, or the priests or Levites who did so in the temple; who being wearied with hard service and want of convenient rest, diligently look for and fervently desire the morning, when they may be discharged. Compare Psal. cxix. 148.

7 [h] Let Israel hope in the LORD: for [i] with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* plenteous redemption.

Let Israel; every true Israelite, by the encouragement of mine example. *Plenteous redemption;* abundantly sufficient for all persons who shall accept it upon God's terms, and for the remission of all sins; and therefore here is good ground of hope for all contrite and returning sinners.

8 And [k] he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

He shall redeem; the Lord, either God the Father by his Son, or God the Son by his own blood. *Israel;* all true Israelites, whether of the carnal or spiritual seed. *From all his iniquities;* from the guilt and punishment of all their sins.

PSALM CXXXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm seems to have been composed by David during Saul's persecution, when he was charged with boundless ambition, and a greedy affectation of the royal throne, and that he sought it by wicked practices against Saul's life and dignity. And for his own just vindication he is forced to publish his own integrity, and to declare that as the right of the kingdom was not sought or coveted by him, but freely conferred upon him by the unexpected and undesired favour of God; so that he had no thought or design to invade the throne before his time, but was willing to stay God's leisure for it, and in the mean time was resolved to behave himself towards Saul as became a faithful subject, seeking nothing but to preserve his own life from the rage of unrighteous and bloody men.

¶ A Song of degrees of David.

David testifieth his humility, 1, 2, *and exhorteth Israel to trust in the Lord,* 3.

LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: [a] neither do I † exercise myself in great matters, or in things too † high for me.

Is not haughty; or, *lifted up,* with that pride whereof I am accused, as thou the Searcher of all hearts knowest. *Nor mine eyes lofty;* which is a sign and effect of pride, Prov. vi. 17; xxi. 4. *Neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me;* Heb. *neither have I walked in great matters,* &c. It neither is nor hath been my course to attempt or arrogate any thing to myself above my degree and private capacity, or to affect worldly glory or domination.

2 Surely I have behaved and quieted † myself, [b] as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

When my mind was provoked to irregular practices, either by my own corrupt heart, or by Saul's implacable rage and tyranny, or by the solicitation of any of my followers, as 1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi., I restrained and subdued all such evil motions. *As a child that is weaned of his mother;* either, 1. As void of all that ambition and malice wherewith I am charged as a child newly weaned; or rather, 2. As wholly depending upon God's providence for the way and time of bringing me to the kingdom, as the poor helpless infant, when it is deprived of its natural and accustomed food, the mother's milk, takes no care to provide for itself, but wholly relies upon its mother's care and providence for its support.

3 [c] Let Israel hope in the LORD † from henceforth and for ever.

Let all Israelites learn by my example to commit themselves to God in well-doing, and to fix all their hope and trust upon him alone.

PSALM CXXXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The penman of this Psalm was either, 1. David, when God had graciously declared his acceptance of David's desire to build a house for God, and his purpose of establishing the kingdom to David and his seed for ever; or, 2. Solomon, as may be gathered from the whole matter of the Psalm, which seems better to agree to him than to David; and particularly from ver. 8—10, compared with 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42, where we have the same words with no great alteration.

¶ A Song of degrees.

David in prayer commendeth unto God the care he had for the ark, 1—7; *with his prayer over it,* 8—10. *A rehearsal of God's oath and promises of the everlasting kingdom of Christ,* 11—18.

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cir. 1004. LORD, remember David, *and* all his afflictions:

Remember David; either, 1. Thy covenant made with David; or rather, 2. David's eminent piety and zeal for thy service, amplified by the following clause. *All his afflictions;* all his sufferings for thy sake, all the solicitude of his mind, all his hard and wearisome labours for thy service and glory, and for provisions towards the building of thy temple, and for the establishment of thy people in peace and tranquillity, that so way might be made for that great work.

a Ps. 65. 1. 2 How he sware unto the LORD, [a]*and* b Gen. 49. 24. vowed unto [b]the mighty *God* of Jacob;

He made a solemn vow, and confirmed it with an oath; which he undoubtedly did, although no mention be made of it 2 Sam. vii. Thus many historical passages which were omitted in their proper places, are afterwards recorded upon other occasions; of which examples have been formerly noted. *Of Jacob;* of Israel; Jacob and Israel are frequently put for their posterity, as hath been frequently observed.

3 Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;

This and the following clauses are not to be understood strictly and properly, as if he would never come into his house or bed till this was done, which is confuted by the history, 2 Sam. xi. 2; but figuratively, as an hyperbolical expression, such as are usual both in Scripture and in all other authors, to signify his passionate desire of doing this work, which was so earnest, that neither his house, nor bed, nor sleep could give him any content till this work was done, or in some forwardness.

c Prov. 6. 4. 4 I will [c]not give sleep to mine eyes, *or* slumber to mine eyelids,

d Acts 7. 46. 5 Until I [d]find out a place for the LORD, + Heb. *habitations.* †an habitation for the mighty *God* of Jacob.

Until I find out a place for the Lord; either, 1. Until I can understand from God what place he hath chosen for his house to be built in. Or rather, 2. Until I have fitted or raised a house in which the ark may be put; *a habitation,* as this is explained both in the next clause, and in ver. 7, and Acts vii. 46. For this, and not the former, was the matter both of David's desire, and of God's answer delivered by Nathan, 2 Sam. vii.

e 1 Sam. 17. 12. f 1 Sam. 7. 1. g 1 Chr. 13. 5. 6 Lo, we heard of it [e]at Ephratah: [f]we found it [g]in the fields of the wood.

We heard of it; of the place or habitation for the Lord last mentioned. *At Ephratah;* either, 1. In Bethlehem, which is called *Ephratah,* Gen. xxxv. 19; xlviii. 7; Micah v. 2. So the sense is either this, We heard a rumour at Bethlehem among David's relations, that the ark should be removed to a new place, and that David had pitched upon it; or this, We heard that Bethlehem would be the place for it, because it was the city of David. Or rather, 2. In the tribe of Ephraim, which was called also *Ephratah* or *Ephrathah,* as is manifest, because the men of Ephraim were called *Ephrathites,* as Judg. xii. 5, in the Hebrew text, though in the English it be *Ephraimite.* So Jeroboam is called an *Ephrathite,* 1 Kings xi. 26. So the sense is, We heard it from our fathers, that the ancient place of it was Shiloh, which was in the land of Ephraim; whereby he covertly intimates that God rejected and forsook that place, and *chose not the tribe of Ephraim,* as it is said, Psal. lxxviii. 67, that so he might make way for Zion, which was the place chosen by God for it, as it follows here, ver. 13. *We found it;* afterwards we found it elsewhere. *In the fields of the wood,* i. e. in a field, or in one of the fields of the wood; for that little spot of ground in which the tabernacle or temple was built was not likely to be in several fields. Thus Jephthah was buried *in the cities of Gilead,* Judg. xii. 7, i. e. in one of them. This is meant either, 1. Of the Mount Moriah, which might possibly be called *the field of the wood,* as being anciently a place full of wood, Gen. xxii. 13, or of *the threshing-floor of Araunah,* of which see 2 Sam. xxiv. 18, which before the building of the temple is said to have been a woody place. Or rather, 2. Of Kirjath-jearim, which signifies *a city of woods,* in the field or territory whereof the ark was seated for twenty years, as we read, 1 Sam. vii. 1, 2. And from this place it was removed to Zion, 2 Sam. vi. 1, &c.

7 We will go into his tabernacles: [h]we will worship at his footstool. h Ps. 5. 7. & 99. 5.

We will go; seeing the ark is now fixed in a certain place, we will go to it more generally and constantly than formerly we did. *Into his tabernacles;* into his tabernacle or temple, the plural number put for the singular, as Psal. xliii. 3; xlvi. 4, &c. *At his footstool;* either the temple; or rather the ark, so called 1 Chron. xxviii. 2; Lam. ii. 1, because God is oft said to *sit between the cherubims,* which were above the ark.

8 [i]Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and [k]the ark of thy strength. i Num. 10. 35. 2 Chron. 6. 41, 42. k Ps. 78. 61.

Arise, i. e. arise and come. One word put for two, as Gen. xliii. 33, *marvelled* (i. e. marvelled looking) *one at another;* and ver. 34, *he took messes,* i. e. *he took and sent messes,* as our translation renders it. And this word is very proper in this place, because it was to be used by God's appointment when the ark was to be removed from one place to another, Numb. x. 35, as now it was from the tabernacle in Zion to the temple in Moriah, upon which occasion this and the two following verses were used by Solomon, 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42. *Into thy rest;* into thy resting-place, the temple, so called Isa. lxvi. 1, where thou hast now a fixed habitation. *The ark of thy strength;* the seat of thy powerful and glorious presence, from whence thou dost put forth and manifest thy strength on the behalf of thy people when they desire and need it.

9 Let thy priests [l]be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy. l Job 29. 14. ver. 16. Is. 61. 10.

With righteousness; not only with those outward sacerdotal garments of glory and beauty which thou hast appointed for them, but especially with those inward ornaments of righteousness and true holiness, that so their persons and services may be accepted by thee, both for themselves and for all thy people, and they may be *clothed with salvation,* as it is expressed here below, ver. 16; 2 Chron. vi. 41, which is the effect or consequent of the former clothing. *Let thy saints shout for joy;* let all thy people have cause of rejoicing in the tokens of thy goodness; which they eminently had at the dedication of the temple, as is noted, 1 Kings viii. 66.

10 For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.

For thy servant David's sake; in regard of thy singular kindness and promises vouchsafed to David, as this is explained in the following verses. And this verse makes it more than probable that David was not the penman of this Psalm, who never used to beg mercies from God for his own sake, but constantly for *his name's sake,* and *for the sake of his truth, mercy, goodness,* or *righteousness,* as will be evident to any one that reads this book. *Turn not away the face;* cast me not out of thy presence, do not reject or deny my request, as this phrase is expounded, 1 Kings ii. 16. *Of thine anointed;* of me, whom thou hast anointed to be king over thy people. He speaks of himself in the third person, as is usual.

11 [m]The LORD hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; [n]Of the fruit of †thy body will I set upon thy throne. m Ps. 89. 3, 4, 35, &c. & 110. 4. n 2 Sam. 7. 12. 1 Kings 8. 25. 2 Chr. 6. 16. Luke 1. 69. Acts 2. 30. + Heb. *the body.*

Sworn in truth; not falsely or deceitfully, as men sometimes do, but sincerely and faithfully, what he will inviolably observe and fulfil, as the next clause expounds this. *Of the fruit of thy body;* some of thy posterity.

12 If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

13 [o]For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired *it* for his habitation. o Ps. 48. 1, 2.

Zion; not strictly, but largely taken; either for the whole mountain, whereof Zion and Moriah were two parts or tops; or for Jerusalem, which was in a great part built upon

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Mount Zion, whence it is oft called *Zion*, as hath been noted again and again. For he speaks here of that place which he chose to be his *rest for ever*, as it follows, ver. 14, which unquestionably was the temple; whence also it appears that this Psalm was not written by David, nor before the building of the temple.

p Ps. 95. 11. 14 pThis *is* my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

I will no more wander to several places as I have done, but here I have fixed my abode.

q Ps. 147. 14. 1 Or, *surely*. 15 qI will ‖abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.

I will plentifully provide for Jerusalem, and all that live in her or resort to her for worship; nor shall they seek my face in vain.

r 2 Chron. 6. 41. ver. 9. s Ps. 149. 5. t Heb. 11. 32. 16 rI will also clothe her priests with salvation: sand her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

With salvation; with my saving graces and blessings; *with righteousness*, as thou didst desire, ver. 9; and moreover, with that protection and benediction which by my promise belongs to righteous persons.

u Luke 1. 69. x See 1 Kings 11. 36. & 15. 4. 2 Chron. 21. 7. 17 tThere will I make the horn of David to bud: uI have ordained a ‖lamp for mine anointed.

‖ Or, *candle*.

There; in Jerusalem, the seat of the kingdom, and, which is no small advantage to that family, the only place of my presence and worship in the world. *The horn of David to bud;* his power and glory to flourish and increase, and to be propagated to his posterity. *A lamp;* a successor or succession to continue for ever in his family, as this phrase is expounded, 1 Kings xi. 36; xv. 4; and particularly one eminent and glorious light, to wit, the Messias, who shall come out of his loins, and revive and vastly enlarge his kingdom.

y Ps. 35. 26. & 109. 29. 18 His enemies will I xclothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

Clothe with shame; for the shameful and unexpected disappointment of all their vain hopes and wicked designs. *Upon himself;* upon him and his posterity, which are nothing else but a man's self multiplied.

PSALM CXXXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David upon the happy occasion of the ending of the civil war between the two houses of Saul and David; in which, having felt the sad effects of discord and division, both the king and people were more sensible of the great blessing of reconciliation and unity.

¶ A Song of degrees of David.

David extolleth the benefit and excellency of the unity and brotherly communion of the faithful.

a Gen. 13. 8. Heb. 13. 1. b Heb. even together. BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant *it is* for abrethren to dwell †together in unity!

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is! you have been harassed by a civil war, take notice of this blessed change with thankfulness to God for it. *For brethren;* for us, who are brethren, not only by nature and blood, but also by combination in one and the same commonwealth, and by the profession of the same religion.

c Ex. 30. 25. 30. 2 *It is* like bthe precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

It is no less grateful and refreshing than that oil which was plentifully poured forth upon Aaron's head at the time of his consecration to the priestly office, which was exceeding pleasant, not only for the extraordinary fragrancy of it, but because by this, together with the other rites prescribed, he was initiated into that sacred office, which was so acceptable to God, and so comfortable and beneficial to the people, as being the happy instrument of making atonement to God for them, and of procuring and maintaining their peace with God, upon which all their happiness of this life and of the next depends. *Skirts;* or, *skirt;* for the Hebrew word is of the singular number. Not to the lower skirt or bottom of his sacerdotal garment, for that the sacred oil was poured forth in so great plenty is not probable, nor was it necessary or convenient; but to the upper skirt of it, or the mouth of it, as this Hebrew word properly signifies; or to the collar of his upper priestly garment, which the ointment falling upon his beard might easily reach.

3 As the dew of cHermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for dthere the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

c Deut. 4. 48.

d Lev. 25. 21. Deut. 28. 8. Ps. 42. 8.

It is no less grateful than the dew is which falls upon that great and goodly hill of *Hermon*, whereby it is both refreshed and made fruitful. And as the dew which falleth *upon the mountains of Zion*, i. e. either upon the several parts and ridges or tops of that mountain, whereof one was peculiarly called *Zion*, and another *Moriah;* or upon the mountains which are round about Jerusalem, Psal. cxxv. 2, which is oft called *Zion*, as Psal. cxxxii. 13. And these may be opposed to Hermon, which was remote and beyond Jordan. But peradventure (which yet I propose with all submission) this *dew* is not to be taken literally, for the falling of the dew availed very little to the refreshment or improvement of the hills of Zion and Moriah, especially as now they were filled with buildings; but allegorically, for the favour or blessing of God, which is frequently called and compared to the *dew*, as Prov. xix. 12; Isa. xviii. 4; Hos. xiv. 5; Micah v. 7. And thus it may seem to be explained in the following clause; and so the sense of the place is this, It is as desirable as the natural dew which falls upon Mount Hermon, nay, which is more, as that blessed and heavenly dew of God's ordinances and graces which he hath commanded to fall upon the mountains of Zion; i. e. either upon Mount Zion; the plural number being put for the singular, as it is Psal. cxxxii. 7, and oft elsewhere, as I have observed in several places; or upon the mountains of Zion and Moriah, and others which are round about Jerusalem, as was now said. And if it seem strange that the *dew* should be taken literally in the first clause, and mystically in the next, we have a like instance Matt. viii. 22, *Let the dead* (spiritually) *bury the dead* (naturally). *For:* he now gives the reason either why this unity is so good a thing; or why the dew descending upon Zion, to which that is compared, is so desirable. And so upon this occasion he slides into the commendation of Zion's felicity, as the sacred writers frequently do upon other like occasions. *There;* either, 1. Where brethren live in peace and unity; or rather, 2. In Zion last mentioned. *Commandeth the blessing;* ordained, promised, conferred, and established his blessing, to wit, all manner of blessedness for his people that sincerely worship him in that place. *Life*, to wit, a happy and pleasant life; for to live in misery is accounted and oft called *death*, both in Scripture and in other authors.

PSALM CXXXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The form of this Psalm seems to be dramatical. In the two first verses the psalmist speaks in the name of some eminent person, either the king or chief priests, exhorting and requiring all the priests and Levites to perform the duties of their place and calling; and in the last verse in the name of the priests and Levites, returning him thanks for his good advice.

¶ A Song of degrees.

The priests and Levites are exhorted to bless the Lord in his sanctuary.

BEHOLD, bless ye the LORD, aall *ye* servants of the LORD, bwhich by night stand in the house of the LORD.

a Ps. 135. 1, 2. b 1 Chron. 9. 33.

Behold, bless ye the Lord; do not stand there like statues, dumb and idle, but employ your hearts and tongues in singing forth the praises of the Lord. *Ye servants of the Lord;* peculiarly so called, priests and Levites, who are set

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apart to the service of God and of the sanctuary, as the next clause restrains this general expression. *By night;* not only by day, but also and especially by night, when their watch was more necessary. See Exod. xxvii. 21; Lev. viii. 35; 1 Sam. iii. 3. As you watch by night when others sleep, so do you utter the praises of God when others are silent. *Stand*, i. e. serve or minister, as this word is used, Deut. x. 8; xviii. 7, and oft elsewhere. *House;* which word includes both the temple and courts belonging to it, as hath been noted before.

c 1 Tim. 2. 8.
‖ Or, in holiness.

2 [c]Lift up your hands ‖*in* the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

Lift up your hands unto God in prayer and praises, thus expressing and exciting your inward devotion. *In the sanctuary;* in that holy house of God where you stand, ver. 1. Or, in or with *holiness, lift up your hands*, as it is prescribed, 1 Tim. ii. 8. Do not content yourselves with lifting up your hands, but see that this be done with pure and holy hearts.

d Ps. 124. 8.
e Ps. 128. 5. & 135. 21.

3 [d]The LORD that made heaven and earth [e]bless thee out of Zion.

Thee; either, 1. Thee, whosoever thou art, who dost faithfully perform the duty here commanded. Or, 2. Thee, O king, or priest, who dost engage and encourage us in this blessed work. *Out of Zion;* where God dwells, and from whence he heareth the prayers of his people, and giveth them the blessings which they desire and need.

PSALM CXXXV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm contains an exhortation to all the Israelites, and especially to the priests and Levites, to praise God for his great and wonderful works; some particulars whereof are here recorded.

The servants of the Lord are exhorted to praise him for his mercy to Israel, by his might and power, 1—7; *for his judgments on Egypt and other nations*, 8—14. *The vanity of idols, and those that trust in them*, 15—18. *The house of Aaron and Levi are exhorted to bless God*, 19—21.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise ye the

a Ps. 113. 1. & 134. 1.

name of the LORD; [a]praise *him*, O ye servants of the LORD.

Ye priests and Levites, as Psal. cxxxiv. 1.

b Luke 2. 37.
c Ps. 92. 13. & 96. 8. & 116. 19.

2 [b]Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in [c]the courts of the house of our God,

Either in the temple or the inner court, which were appropriated to the priests and Levites; or in the outward court, which was for the people. See 2 Chron. iv. 9.

d Ps. 119. 68.
e Ps. 147. 1.

3 Praise the LORD; for [d]the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; [e]for *it is* pleasant.

Is good; bountiful and gracious, especially to you, and therefore he justly expects and deserves your praises. *Is pleasant;* the work itself of singing praises to God is pleasant, as it is more fully expressed, Psal. cxlvii. 1.

f Ex. 19. 5. Deut. 7. 6. 7. & 10. 15.

4 For [f]the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure.

g Ps. 95. 3. & 97. 9.

5 For I know that [g]the LORD *is* great, and *that* our Lord *is* above all gods.

Above all that are called *gods*, or worshipped as gods by the heathen people. And therefore seeing they commonly praise and extol their idols, it becometh you not to be silent as to the praises of your God.

h Ps. 115. 3.

6 [h]Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

Whatsoever the Lord pleased, either in the creation or government of them, *that did he in heaven and in earth;* his power and jurisdiction is universal, and not like that of the heathen gods, which is confined to their several countries. *In the seas, and all deep places;* in the visible seas, and in those invisible depths, both of earth, and of the waters which are contained in the bowels of the earth.

7 [i]He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; [k]he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his [l]treasuries.

i Jer. 10. 12. & 51. 16.
k Job 28. 25, 26. & 38. 34, &c. Zech. 10. 1.
l Job 38. 22.

The vapours; which are the matter of clouds and rain. *From the ends of the earth;* either, 1. From the sea, the common source of vapours, 1 Kings xviii. 44; Amos v. 8; wherewith both the earth in general, and several particular countries, are terminated or bounded: or rather, 2. From all parts of the earth, from one end to another; as *the borders* of a land are commonly put for the whole land, from one border to another, as Psal. cv. 31, 33; cxlvii. 14, and oft elsewhere. For in this sense this phrase is generally used in Scripture, as Job xxviii. 24; xxxviii. 13; Psal. xix. 4, 6; xlviii. 10, and every where. *He maketh lightnings for the rain;* he bringeth water even out of the fire; he maketh thick clouds, which being broken produce lightnings, and so are dissolved into showers of rain. So the lightnings are both a sign, and in some sort the cause of rain. Or, *he maketh lightnings with* (as this particle is used, Gen. xlvi. 26; Psal. lxxxix. 4; cxix. 56, 98) *rain*, i. e. he causeth both of them to come out of the same cloud. *Out of his treasuries;* out of those secret places where he reserves them, and whence he bringeth them, as he sees fit. Thus we read of *treasures of snow and hail*, Job xxxviii. 22; not that they are formally laid up in any certain places, but to signify that God hath them as much at his disposal, as any man hath that which he hath laid up in his stores.

m Ex. 12. 12, 29. Ps. 78. 51. & 136. 10.
† Heb. *from man unto beast.*

8 [m]Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, †both of man and beast.

From the general works of nature, he comes to God's special works of providence towards his people.

n Ex. 7. 8. 8. & 9. & 10. & 14.
o Ps. 136. 15.

9 [n]*Who* sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, [o]upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

p Num. 21. 24, 25, 26, 34, 35. Ps. 136. 17, &c.

10 [p]Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings;

q Josh. 12. 7.

11 Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and [q]all the kingdoms of Canaan:

r Ps. 78. 55. & 136. 21, 22.

12 [r]And gave their land *for* an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.

s Ex. 3. 15. Ps. 102. 12.
† Heb. *to generation and generation.*

13 [s]Thy name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever; *and* thy memorial, O LORD, †throughout all generations.

These wonderful works of thine shall never be forgotten. The land which thou gavest us, ver. 12, and which we yet enjoy, is an everlasting monument of thy power and goodness, and an obligation and encouragement to trust in thee in all our present or future difficulties.

t Deut. 32. 36.

14 [t]For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.

Will judge his people; will in due time plead the cause of his people, or give judgment for them, as this phrase is used, Deut. xxxii. 36; Jer. v. 28; xxii. 16. *He will repent himself concerning his servants;* he will recall that severe sentence which for their sins he had passed upon them, and be reconciled to them.

u Ps. 115. 4. 5, 6, 7, 8.

15 [u]The idols of the heathen *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

Of this and the following verses, see the notes on Psal. cxv. 4, 5, &c.

16 They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

17 They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there *any* breath in their mouths.

18 They that make them are like unto them: *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

x Ps. 115. 9. &c.

19 [x]Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

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20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

y Ps. 134. 3. 21 Blessed be the LORD y out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

Blessed be the Lord out of Zion; by the assemblies of his people in Zion or Jerusalem. *Which dwelleth at Jerusalem:* this clause may be added either to distinguish the true God from the gods which were worshipped in other places and countries; or as a reason why they should bless God, because he had blessed and honoured that place with his gracious and glorious presence.

PSALM CXXXVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter of this Psalm is the same with the former, only it is a little more fitted to the use and service of the temple, by the continued repetition of that solemn clause, *for thy mercy endures for ever*, which was much used by the sacred singers. See 2 Chron. vii. 3; xx. 21.

The psalmist exhorteth all to praise God, for his power and wisdom in creating and governing the world, 1—9; *for delivering the Israelites out of Egypt, and bringing them to the Promised Land,* 10—26.

a Ps. 106. 1. & 107. 1. & 118. 1. b 1 Chron. 16. 34, 41. 2 Chr. 20. 21. c Deut. 10. 17. O a GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: b for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 O give thanks unto c the God of gods: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

The God of gods; who is infinitely superior to all that are called *gods*, whether angels, or princes, or idols.

3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

d Ps. 72. 18. 4 To him d who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

Him who alone; he and none else. Or, he without the help of any other person or thing; whereas no other being can do any thing alone or without his help.

e Gen. 1. 1. Jer. 3. 19. Jer. 51. 15. 5 e To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

By wisdom, to wit, by eminent and admirable wisdom, far exceeding the capacity of all human or angelical creatures.

f Gen. 1. 9. & 7. 11. Jer. 10. 12. 6 f To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

Stretched out the earth above the waters; of which see on Gen. i. 9; Psal. xxiv. 2.

g Gen. 1. 14. 7 g To him that made great lights: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

h Gen. 1. 16. 8 h The sun † to rule by day: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

† Heb. *for the ruling by day*

The sun to rule by day; of which phrase and the like in the next verse, see my notes on Gen. i. 16.

9 The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

i Ex. 12. 29. Ps. 135. 8. 10 i To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

k Ex. 12. 31. & 13. 17. 11 k And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

l Ex. 6. 6. 12 l With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

m Ex. 14. 21, 22. Ex. 15. 19. 13 m To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

To pass through the midst of it, to wit, without fear or danger, by comparing this with the next verse.

n Ex. 14. 27. Ps. 135. 9. † Heb. *shaked off.* 15 n But † overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

o Ex. 13. 18. & 15. 22. Deut. 8. 15. 16 o To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

Through the wilderness; through that vast howling wilderness, where there was neither way nor provision; through which none but the Almighty God could have safely conducted them.

p Ps. 135. 10, 11. 17 p To him which smote great kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

q Deut. 29. 7. 18 q And slew famous kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

r Num. 21. 21. 19 r Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

s Num. 21. 33. 20 s And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

t Josh. 12. 1, &c. Ps. 135. 12. 21 t And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

22 *Even* an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

Israel his servant; he speaks of all that people as of one man, because they were united together in one body, in the worship of one and the same God. Thus God calleth them all *his first-born*, Exod. iv. 22.

u Gen. 8. 1. Deut. 32. 36. Ps. 113. 7. 23 Who u remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

24 And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

x Ps. 104. 27. & 145. 15. & 147. 9. 25 x Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

To all flesh; either to all mankind, or to all living creatures. For which God deserves great praises, which the psalmist by his example teacheth us to render to God for them, because those who are most concerned either cannot or do not perform this duty.

26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

PSALM CXXXVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The penman of this Psalm is uncertain; the occasion of it was unquestionably the consideration of the Babylonish captivity; and it seems to have been composed either during the time of that captivity, or presently after their deliverance out of it.

The sad complaint of the Jews in captivity, 1—3. *Of the scoffing of their enemies, yet their constancy to remember Jerusalem,* 4—6. *Judgments imprecated upon Edom and Babylon,* 7—9.

BY the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. cir. 570.

Rivers of Babylon; either, 1. Of the city of Babylon, and then the river is Euphrates, here called *rivers* for its greatness, and by a common enallage of the plural for the singular, as Tigris also is, Nah. ii. 6, yea, and Jordan, Psal. lxxiv. 15. Or, 2. Of the territory of Babylon, in which there were many rivers, as Euphrates, which also was divided into several streams or rivulets; and Tigris and others. Here they were either by the appointment of their lords for the making or repairing of the works beside the river; or by choice, retiring themselves thither from the noise and observation of their enemies, as they had opportunity, that they might disburden their oppressed minds before the Lord. *We sat down;* the usual posture of mourners, Ezra ix. 4, &c.; Job ii. 13; Isa. xlvii. 1, 5. *When we remembered Zion;* either, 1. Our former enjoyments in Zion, which greatly aggravated their present misery, Lam. i. 7. Or, 2. Zion's present desolations and pollutions.

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2 We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

These are, not without great probability, supposed to be the words of some holy Levites, who had been accustomed to music, both vocal and instrumental, in the service of the temple. *Harps* are here put by a synecdoche for all instruments of music. It is further to be observed, that although the harp was used by the Grecians in mourning, yet it was used by the Hebrews in rejoicing, as is manifest from Gen. xxxi. 27; 2 Chron. xx. 27, 28; Psal. xliii. 4, &c. This passage is to be understood either, 1. Figuratively, signifying only that they abandoned all signs and means of comfort; or rather, 2. Properly, as the following songs are, which the Babylonians required them to sing to their harps. And these harps they might either, 1. Bring from Jerusalem, which they might desire to do to preserve those sacred utensils, and their enemies might either permit or command them to do for their own delight: or, 2. Procure in Babylon, that they might sometimes solace themselves with the practice of some of the temple music, which they desired and intended to do; but when they came to the trial, they were not able to do it, and therefore laid them by. *Upon the willows;* which commonly grow upon the banks of rivers, as they did by Euphrates in such plenty, that from thence it is called *the brook of willows*, Isa. xv. 7.

3 For there they that carried us away captive required of us † a song; and they that † [a] wasted us *required of us* mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion.

† Heb. *the words of a song.* † Heb. *laid us on heaps.* [a] Ps. 79. 1.

Such songs as you used to sing in the temple at Zion; which they required either out of curiosity, or to delight their ears, or rather by way of scoffing and insultation over them, and their temple and religion.

4 How shall we sing the LORD's song in a † strange land?

† Heb. *land of a stranger.*

The Lord's song; those songs which were appointed by God, and to be sung only to his honour and in his service. *In a strange land;* when we are banished from our own temple and land, and amongst those who are strangers and enemies to God and to his worship. So we should prostitute and profane God's ordinances. And this answer they either expressed to their enemies, or kept in their own breasts when they refused to comply with their desire.

5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning*.

If I forget thee; if I do not retain a deep and sorrowful sense of thy ruin and misery, or if I indulge myself in mirth and jollity, as if I had forgotten thee. *Right hand;* the chief instrument of playing upon musical instruments and of other actions. *Forget her cunning*, i. e. lose its skill of playing. In the Hebrew it is only *forget*, without expressing what, to intimate the extent and generality of this wish; Let it forget or be disenabled not only for playing, but for every action in which it was formerly used.

6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue [b] cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above † my chief joy.

[b] Ezek. 3. 26. † Heb. *the head of my joy.*

Remember thee with affection and sympathy, so as to damp my joys. *Cleave to the roof of my mouth;* be made uncapable of singing, or speaking, or moving, as it is in some diseases. Compare Job xxix. 10; Psal. xxii. 15. *If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy;* if I do not value and desire Jerusalem's prosperity more than all other delights, and consequently if Jerusalem's misery doth not so deeply affect me as to hinder my delight in all other things.

7 Remember, O LORD, [c] the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, † Rase *it*, rase *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof.

[c] Jer. 49. 7, &c. Lam. 4. 22. Ezek. 25. 12. Obad. 10, &c. 1 Esd. 4. 45. † Heb. *Make bare.*

Remember, O Lord, so as to punish them, *the children of Edom*, our constant and inveterate enemies, who had no regard either to consanguinity or humanity. *In the day;* in the time of its calamity or destruction, which is oft called a *day*, as Job xviii. 20; Psal. xxxvii. 13; Ezek. xxx. 9; Hos. i. 11; Obad. 12. *Who said* to the Babylonians, whom they assisted and provoked against Jerusalem; of which see Lam. iv. 21; Ezek. xxv. 12; Obad. 11—14.

8 O daughter of Babylon, [d] who art to be † destroyed; happy *shall he be*, † [e] that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

[d] Is. 13. 1. 6, &c. & 47. 1. Jer. 25. 12. & 50. 2. † Heb. *wasted.* † Heb. *that recompenseth unto thee thy deed which thou didst to us.* [e] Jer. 50. 15, 29. Rev. 18. 6.

Daughter of Babylon; by which he understands the city and empire of Babylon, and the people thereof. *Who art to be destroyed;* who art by God's righteous and irrevocable sentence devoted to certain destruction. *Happy shall he be;* as being God's instrument to vindicate his honour, and execute his just judgments, and fulfil his counsel and word; which Cyrus was to his own great glory and advantage, as appears both from sacred and profane history. *That rewardeth thee as thou hast served us;* that shall use thee with equal cruelty.

9 Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and [f] dasheth thy little ones against † the stones.

[f] Is. 13. 16. † Heb. *the rock.*

As thou didst use our little ones. So this was but a just retaliation foretold here, as also Isa. xiii. 16.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This is a Psalm of thanksgiving to God for those great deliverances which he had granted to David from Saul and other enemies; by the remembrance whereof David encourageth himself to trust in God in all his future difficulties.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David praiseth God for his goodness and truth showed to him, and foretelleth that the kings of the earth shall also praise him, 1—6, *and professeth the fruit of his trusting in God in the midst of troubles*, 7, 8.

I WILL praise thee with my whole heart: [a] before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

[a] Ps. 119. 46.

Either, 1. Before the angels, who were represented by the cherubims upon the ark, who are called *gods*, Psal. viii. 5; xcvii. 7, compared with Heb. i. 6; ii. 7, who also are present in the congregations of God's people, 1 Cor. xi. 10. Or rather, 2. Before kings and princes, by comparing this with ver. 4, *All kings* (provoked by my example) *shall praise thee;* and with Psal. cxix. 46, *I will speak of thy testimonies before kings.* And these are most commonly called *gods* in Scripture, as Exod. xxi. 6; xxii. 9, 28, compared with Deut. xix. 17. Besides, David mentions this as something singular and extraordinary, and designed by him; whereas the doing of this before the angels is common to all, and is unavoidably necessary.

2 [b] I will worship [c] toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast [d] magnified thy word above all thy name.

[b] Ps. 5. 7. [c] 1 Kings 8. 29, 30. Is. 5. 7. [d] Is. 42. 21.

Toward thy holy temple, where the ark was. He saith *toward* it, because he was not permitted to enter into it. *For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name;* for thou hast glorified thy word or promise, or thy faithfulness in fulfilling thy promises unto me, more than any other of thy glorious perfections by which thou art known. Not that one of God's attributes is really and in itself more great or glorious than another, or can be made so, but because one may be more celebrated and admired by men than another, as here God's gracious promise made to David, and the wonderful accomplishment thereof in spite of all those difficulties which stood in the way, and which seemed to men to be insuperable, was at this time more observed and admired than any other of his attributes or actions. But here we must remember, that amongst the rest of the promises made to David, one was that the Messias should come out of his loins, and that those parts of the promised mercies which David had actually received were pledges to assure him that he should receive the rest in due time, and especially that great and eminent word of promise con-

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cerning the Messias, which might well be said to be magnified above all God's name.

3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

The last clause limits and explains the former, how God answered him so speedily, not by giving him the thing which he desired in that very instant, but by giving him inward support and patience to wait God's time, and to bear all his troubles cheerfully in the mean time, which was a singular mercy, and indeed greater than the actual donation of any temporal blessing.

a Ps. 102. 15, 22. 4 [a]All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

Either, 1. All neighbouring kings; or, 2. The generality of kings and princes upon earth. And so this is a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, which seems to be confirmed by the next verse, which expresseth their extraordinary joy; and an eminent advancement of God's glory, which agrees much better to this great occasion, than to that of David's exaltation to the throne, wherein the other kings of the earth were not much concerned. *The words of thy mouth;* either, 1. Thy promises declared unto them by me; or, 2. The gospel preached among them.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

In the ways of the Lord; or, *of*, or *for*, or *because of the ways of the Lord*, i. e. his wonderful counsel and gracious providences towards themselves and others. *Great is the glory;* or, *great* shall be the glory. At that time the worship and glory of God shall not be confined to one small land, as now it is, but shall be extended to all the parts of the world.

f Ps. 113. 5, 6. h Prov. 3. 34. Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5. 6 [f]Though the LORD *be* high, yet [g]hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

Unto the lowly; unto such as are mean and obscure in the world; to me, a poor contemptible shepherd, whom he hath preferred before great princes, and to such as are little in their own eyes. *But the proud he knoweth afar off;* but as for the great men of the world, who are lifted up in pride, he looks upon them as they do upon others, with scorn and contempt, and at a great distance, as disdaining to admit them into his presence. But the words may be, and by divers interpreters are, rendered otherwise, *And he who is high*, or *the lofty one from afar*, (i. e. from his high and holy place, even the highest heavens, where he dwells, notwithstanding that distance,) *doth know* them, or *will own* them. So this is the repetition of the former sentence, as is very usual in this book. And this seems best to suit, as with the foregoing, so also with the following words, and thus all will be understood of one and the same sort of persons.

h Ps. 23. 3, 4. 7 [h]Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

Walk in the midst of trouble, i. e. be encompassed with dangers. *Thou will revive me;* thou wilt cheer my spirit, and preserve my life. *Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand;* put forth thy almighty power, to oppose and restrain their rage, and to save me from them, as it follows.

i Ps. 57. 2. Phil. 1. 6. k See Job 10. 3. 8. & 14. 15. 8 [i]The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: [k]forsake not the works of thine own hands.

Will perfect that which concerneth me; will finish that great work of my deliverance and advancement, which he hath undertaken and carried on hitherto. *Endureth for ever;* it is not inconstant and changeable, as men's affections are, but everlasting. And this may be either a proof of the foregoing assertion, *the Lord will perfect*, &c., or an argument to enforce the following petition, therefore *forsake not*, &c. *Forsake not*, or *leave not*, or *do not desist from* or *give over*. *The works of thine own hands;* the work of my salvation, which is thus far advanced, not by any human help, but by thine own extraordinary power and providence, and therefore it is not for thine honour to desert it at last. This he calls *works* in regard of the many and various parts and actions which concurred to this work.

PSALM CXXXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is esteemed by the Hebrews the most excellent in the whole book. The matter of it is noble and sublime, and so is the style. The occasion of it seems to have been those heavy censures and reproaches wherewith David was loaded by his enemies, who branded him for a notorious hypocrite and impostor, that pretended religion only for the covering and promoting his own ambitious and wicked designs against his lawful king, whose life and crown he sought to take away. Against these he comforteth himself with the consideration of God's omniscience, to whom he appeals as the only proper judge of the integrity of his heart.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

David magnifieth the all-seeing providence of God, 1—16; *his great and tender mercies to him before he had a being in the world*, 17, 18; *abhorreth all converse with wicked men*, 19—22; *prayeth for and testifieth his sincerity*, 23, 24.

O LORD, [a]thou hast searched me, and known *me*. a Ps. 17. 3. Jer. 12. 3.

2 [b]Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou [c]understandest my thought afar off. b 2 Kings 19. 27. c Matt. 9. 4. John 2. 24, 25.

Known me, i. e. known me exactly, as men do those things which they diligently search out. *My downsitting and mine uprising;* all my postures and motions, my actions and my cessations from action. *My thought;* all my secret counsels and designs. *Afar off;* before they are perfectly formed in my mind. Thou knowest what my thoughts will be in such and such circumstances long before I know it, yea, from all eternity.

3 [d]Thou ‖compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways. d Job 31. 4. ‖ Or, winnowest.

Thou compassest my path; thou watchest me on every side, and therefore discernest every step which I take. It is a metaphor either from huntsmen watching all the motions and lurking-places of wild beasts, that they may catch them; or from soldiers besieging their enemies in a city, and setting watches round about them. *My lying down;* me, when I lie down in my bed, where men oft contrive what they execute in the day time.

4 For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, [e]thou knowest it altogether. e Heb. 4. 13.

Thou knowest what I speak, and with what design and disposition of mind. Or rather, as others render it, and which is more admirable, *When* there is *not a word*, &c. Thou knowest what I intend to speak, either in prayer to thee, or in conversation with men, when I have not yet uttered one word of it.

5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

Thou hast beset me behind and before, with thine all-seeing and all-disposing providence. *And laid thine hand upon me;* thou keepest me, as it were, with a strong hand, in thy sight and under thy power.

6 [f]*Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it. f Job 42. 3. Ps. 40. 5. & 131. 1.

I am so far from equalling thy knowledge, that I cannot apprehend it, in what manner thou dost so perfectly know all things, even such as are most secret, and have yet no being, and seem to depend upon many casualties and uncertainties.

7 [g]Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? g Jer. 23. 24. Jonah 1. 3.

From thy spirit; either, 1. From the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Trinity: or, 2. From thee, who art a Spirit, and therefore canst penetrate into the most secret parts: or, 3. From thy mind or understanding, of which he

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is here speaking, as this word seems to be taken, Isa. xl. 13, compared with Rom. xi. 34; for what there is called *the spirit of the Lord*, is here called *the mind of the Lord*. And as the *Spirit of God* is oft used in Scripture for its gifts and graces, so the *spirit* of God in this place may be put for that knowledge which is an attribute or action of God. *From thy presence;* a man can go to no place which is out of thy sight.

h Amos 9. 2, 3, 4. i Job 26. 6. Prov. 15. 11.

8 [h]If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: [i]if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*.

If I make my bed in hell; if I should or could repose and hide myself in the grave, or in the lowest parts of the earth, which are at the farthest distance from heaven.

9 *If* I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

If I should flee as swiftly from thy presence as the morning light doth, which in an instant scattereth itself from east to west; for the *sea* being the western border of Canaan, is oft put for the west in Scripture. And *wings* are poetically ascribed to the morning or morning light here, as they are elsewhere to the sun, as Mal. iv. 2, and to the winds, as Psal. xviii. 10; civ. 3, and to other things of eminent swiftness.

10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

I could neither go thither without thy conduct, nor subsist there without thy powerful support, and much less could I go out of thy sight; for a man may see many things which are out of his power.

11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

Shall be as clear and manifest to God as the light itself.

k Job 26. 6. & 34. 22. Dan. 2. 22. Heb. 4. 13. † Heb. *darkeneth not.* † Heb. *as is the darkness, so is the light.*

12 Yea, [k]the darkness †hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: †the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee*.

Shineth, or *enlighteneth*, as this word is used, Psal. xix. 8; Prov. xxix. 13, &c.; discovereth me and all mine actions. *The darkness and the light are both alike to thee:* this is repeated so oft to reprove and confute the ridiculous conceits of many ungodly men, who flatter themselves with hopes of secrecy and impunity for those sins which they commit in the dark. See Isa. xxix. 15.

13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

Thou hast possessed; or, *thou dost possess;* thou dwellest in them, thou art the Owner and Governor of them, and therefore must needs know them. Or, *thou hast formed*, as some of the ancients and others render it. *My reins;* the most inward and hidden part of the body, supposed also to be the seat of men's lusts and passions. *Thou hast covered me;* either, 1. With that covering called the *after-birth*, wherein the infant is wrapped and preserved in the womb by the wonderful care of Divine Providence. Or, 2. *With skin and flesh*, as it is expressed, Job x. 11.

14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth †right well.

† Heb. *greatly.*

I am fearfully and wonderfully made; thy infinite power and wisdom, manifested in the rare and curious structure of man's body, doth fill me with wonder and astonishment, and with the dread of thy majesty. *Marvellous are thy works;* both in the lesser world, man, and in the greater. *My soul knoweth right well;* I am well assured, both by thy word, and by the contemplation and study of thy works, to which I have much addicted myself, that they are wonderful, although I do not so accurately understand all the particulars of them as I would do.

l Job 10. 8, 9. Eccles. 11. 5. ‖ Or, *strength*, or, *body.*

15 [l]My ‖substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

My substance; or, *My bone*, as the LXX. and others render the word. And *bone* may be here taken collectively for *bones*, as is usual in such words, or for the whole fabric of the bones. And the *bones* may be very fitly mentioned here, because they are inward and invisible, as being covered with skin, and flesh, and sinews. Or the *bones* may be put synecdochically for the whole body, as being the most substantial part of it, as they are Psal. xxxv. 10. *In secret;* in the dark vault of my mother's womb. *Curiously wrought*, Heb. *embroidered;* exquisitely composed of bones, and muscles, and sinews, and veins, and arteries, and other parts, all framed with such wonderful skill, that even heathens, upon the contemplation of all the parts of man's body, and how excellently they were framed, both for beauty and use, have broken forth into pangs of admiration and adoration of the Creator of man, as Galen particularly did. *In the lowest parts of the earth;* or, as it were *in the lowest parts of the earth*. So there is only an ellipsis of the note of similitude, which is very frequent in Scripture, as hath been often said and proved. In a place as secret and remote from human eyes as the lowest parts of the earth are, to wit, in my mother's womb. And so what is said in the former clause is repeated in this in other words.

16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book †all *my members* were written, ‖*which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

† Heb. *all of them.* ‖ Or, *what days they should be fashioned.*

Yet being unperfect; when I was a mere embryo, a rude and shapeless lump, when I was first conceived. *In thy book;* in thy counsel and providence, by which thou didst contrive and effect this great work, and all the parts of it, according to that model which thou hadst appointed. This is a metaphor taken from workmen, who when they are to make some curious structure, they first draw a rude draught or delineation of it, by which they govern themselves in the building of it. *All my members;* all the several parts of my substance. *Which in continuance were fashioned;* which in due time and by degrees were formed into bones, fleshy sinews, &c. Or, as it is in the margin, what *days* (and *the days* in which) *they were* or *should be fashioned;* by what steps, in what order and time, each part of the body should receive its proper form. This also was written or appointed by God. *When as yet there was none of them*, Heb. *and not one of them;* understand either *yet was*, as it is in our translation; or, *was lacking*, to wit, in thy book. All my parts without exception were written by thee. But then these words are not to be joined with those immediately foregoing, but with the former, and the words are to be read thus, *in thy book all* my members *were written*, (which *in continuance were fashioned,*) *when* as yet, &c.

17 [m]How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

m Ps. 40. 5.

Thy thoughts: thy is taken either, 1. Passively, my thoughts of thee; or rather, 2. Actively, *thy thoughts*, counsels, or contrivances on my behalf, which are admirable and amiable in mine eyes. Thou didst not only form me at first, but ever since my conception and birth thy thoughts have been employed for me, in preserving and providing for me, and blessing of me. *How great is the sum of them!* thy gracious designs and providences towards me are numberless, as it follows.

18 *If* I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

To wit, by my thoughts and meditations. Thy wonderful counsels and works on my behalf come constantly into my mind, not only in the day time, but even in the night season, which is commonly devoted to rest and sleep; whensoever I awake, either in the night or in the morning. These are my last thoughts when I lie down, and my first when I rise.

n Is. 11. 4. o Ps. 119. 115.

19 Surely thou wilt [n]slay the wicked, O God: [o]depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.

Surely thou wilt slay the wicked: and as thou hast precious and gracious thoughts towards me, and all that love and fear thee; so thou hast other kinds of thoughts and purposes towards wicked men, such as thou knowest mine

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enemies to be, even to destroy them utterly. *Depart from me therefore;* I renounce your friendship and society. I will not partake with you in your sins, lest I should also partake of your plagues. *Ye bloody men*, Heb. *ye men of blood;* either, 1. Passively, deserving death, or *guilty of blood*, or *of death*, as the phrase is, Numb. xxxv. 27, 31; Matt. xxvi. 66. Or rather, 2. Actively, blood-thirsty, or shedders of blood, as this phrase is generally taken, as 2 Sam. xvi. 8; Psal. xxvi. 9; lv. 23; lix. 2. Having called them *wicked* men in general, he now gives a particular account of their wickedness; they were unjust and cruel towards men, and withal profane and impious towards God, as he tells us in the next verse.

[p] Jude 15.

20 For they [p]speak against thee wickedly, *and* thine enemies take *thy name* in vain.

They speak against thee wickedly, by profane scoffs, and a professed denial or contempt of thine omniscience and providence. Or, *they speak of thee in* or *unto wickedness;* they make use of religion to cover or further their wicked designs. But our translation is more favoured by the context, which speaks of God's open and professed enemies. *And thine enemies take thy name in vain;* or, according to the order of the Hebrew words, and *take* thy name *in vain*, and are *thine enemies*, or haters of thee, as it follows, ver. 21. These words, *thy name*, are understood here, as also Isa. iii. 7, out of Exod. xx. 7, where they are expressed. They abuse thy blessed name with hellish oaths, and perjuries, and blasphemies.

[q] 2 Chron. 19. 2. Ps. 119. 158.

21 [q]Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

I appeal to thee, the omnipresent and omniscient God, whether I do not perfectly hate them so far as they are enemies to God and goodness. *That rise up against thee*, in open hostility and rebellion against thine authority.

22 I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

I am no less grieved with their enmity against thee, than if they directed it against myself.

[r] Job 31. 6. Ps. 26. 2.

23 [r]Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

And whether I do not speak this from my very heart, do thou judge, who art the Searcher of hearts, and deal with me accordingly.

[s] Heb. *way of pain, or, grief.* Ps. 5. 8. & 27. 11.

24 And see if *there be any* † wicked way in me, and [s]lead me in the way everlasting.

Wicked way in me, Heb. *way of trouble* or *grief;* any course of life which is grievous, either, 1. To myself, as all sin is to the sinner sooner or later: or, 2. To others; as I am accused of causing much trouble and designing mischief to the king and kingdom. *In the way everlasting;* in the right and good way, which is lasting, and leads to everlasting life; whereas the *way of wickedness*, to which this is opposed, will *perish*, as is said, Psal. i. 6, and bring men into utter destruction. Or, as others render it, *in the old way*, which is *the good way*, as it is called Jer. vi. 16.; in the way of righteousness and holiness, which may well be called *the old way*, because it was from the beginning of the world written in man's heart, whereas wickedness is of a later date. Possibly it may be rendered, *in* thy *way* (the ellipsis of the pronoun being very frequent, as hath been noted and proved before; or, *in the way*, to wit, the way of God, which is oft called emphatically *the way*, as Psal. xxv. 8; cxix. 1; Prov. xxiii. 19; xxix. 27, and which is sufficiently understood from its opposition to *the wicked way* in the former clause) *for ever*, or as long as I live, as this Hebrew word *olam* without any prefix to it is used, 2 Sam. xxvii. 12; Job xli. 4; Psal. xxi. 4; xlv. 7, and elsewhere. But this with submission.

PSALM CXL.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm was composed by David upon occasion of those slanderous and reproachful speeches and treacherous dealings which David had from his enemies in Saul's time, of which we have an account in the history.

¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

The psalmist prayeth for deliverance and safety from wicked men, 1—7, *for judgment upon them*, 8—11, *and comforteth himself with an assurance of God's righteousness*, 12, 13.

DELIVER me, O LORD, from the evil man: [a]preserve me from the † violent man; [a] ver. 4. † Heb. *man of violences.*

Either Saul or Doeg, or some other malicious enemy, or rather enemies; the word *man* being taken collectively for *men*, as appears from the next verse, where he speaks of this man in the plural number.

2 Which imagine mischiefs in *their* heart; [b]continually are they gathered together *for* war. [b] Ps. 56. 6.

To execute those bloody enterprises which they had devised in the first clause of this verse.

3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; [c]adders' poison *is* under their lips. Selah. [c] Ps. 58. 4. Rom. 3. 13.

They have sharpened their tongues; their malicious hearts stirred up their tongues to utter vile slanders against me. *Like a serpent;* either whetting their tongues, as serpents are said to whet theirs when they are about to bite; or rather, using words as sharp and piercing as the sting of a serpent.

4 [d]Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; [e]preserve me from the violent man; who have purposed to overthrow my goings. [d] Ps. 71. 4. [e] ver. 1.

Whose design and full resolution it is, if thou dost not prevent it, *to overthrow my goings*, or *my feet* or *footsteps*, i. e. to throw me down to the ground, to defeat all my hopes and counsels, and bring me to ruin.

5 [f]The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set gins for me. Selah. [f] Ps. 35. 7. & 57. 6. & 119. 110. & 141. 9. Jer. 18. 22.

The proud; my insolent enemies, who despise me for my meanness, and exalt themselves against thee. *By the wayside;* in which I used to walk.

6 I said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

7 O God the LORD, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

With thy powerful protection, as with a helmet or shield.

8 Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; ‖[g]*lest* they exalt themselves. Selah. ‖ Or, *let them* not *be exalted.* [g] Deut. 32. 27.

His wicked device; which is to destroy me. *Exalt themselves;* not only against me, but against thee also, as if by their power and policy they had frustrated thy design and promise made to me.

9 *As for* the head of those that compass me about, [h]let the mischief of their own lips cover them. [h] Ps. 7. 16. & 94. 23. Prov. 12. 13 & 18. 7.

The head; or, *heads;* the singular number put for the plural, as is frequent. By which he understands either, 1. Their politic heads, their chiefs or ringleaders, who were most malicious, and by whom all the rest were supported and stirred up: or, 2. Their proper and natural heads, as this word is used ver. 7; and this covering of their heads here is opposed to the covering of David's head there. *Let the mischief of their own lips cover them;* let the mischief which by their calumnies they design against me fall upon themselves.

10 [i]Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again. [i] Ps. 11. 6.

Burning coals; Divine vengeance, which is compared to

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coals of fire, as Psal. xviii. 12, and elsewhere. *Rise not up again;* either to my danger, or their own comfort.

† Heb. a man of tongue. ‖ Or, an evil speaker, a wicked man of violence, be established in the earth: let him be hunted to his overthrow.

11 Let not † ‖ an evil speaker be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow *him.*

An evil speaker; such as slander me and other innocent persons, to exasperate princes against us. *Evil;* either the evil of punishment; or, which comes to the same thing, the evil of sin, their own wickedness, which shall recoil upon themselves.

k 1 Kings 8. 45. Ps. 9. 4.

12 I know that the LORD will k maintain the cause of the afflicted, *and* the right of the poor.

I know, both by God's word, which hath promised it, and by my own experience of it in the course of God's providence.

13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

Shall give thanks unto thy name; shall have occasion to praise thee for their deliverance. *Shall dwell in thy presence;* shall constantly enjoy thy gracious and powerful presence and assistance.

PSALM CXLI.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm also must be referred to the time of David's persecution by Saul. It is a humble prayer that God would deliver him from the rage and malice of his enemies, and from those sins to which he might be inclined or provoked upon that occasion.

¶ A Psalm of David.

David prayeth that he might be heard and comforted, 1, 2; *that his service might be sincere,* 3—6, *and his life safe from the snares of his adversaries,* 7—10.

a Ps. 70. 5.

LORD, I cry unto thee: a make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

b Rev. 5. 8. & 8. 3, 4. † Heb. directed. c Rev. 8. 3. d Ps. 134. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 8. e Ex. 29. 39.

2 Let b my prayer be † set forth before thee c *as* incense; *and* d the lifting up of my hands *as* e the evening sacrifice.

Be set forth before thee, Heb. *be directed to thy face.* Let it not be lost, but let it come unto thee and find audience. *As incense;* owned and accepted by thee no less than the incense, which by thy command, Exod. xxx. 7, &c., is offered upon thine altar, from which I am now banished, and so disenabled to offer it there, and therefore I trust thou will accept my prayer instead of it. *The lifting up of my hands;* my prayer made with hands lifted up, which was the usual gesture. See Job xi. 13; Psal. lxiii. 4; lxxxviii. 9, &c. *As the evening sacrifice;* which was offered every evening, Exod. xxix. 39, &c.; which he mentions either, 1. By way of opposition to the incense which was offered in the morning: or, 2. Synecdochically, so as to include the morning sacrifice, and all the sacrifices of the day, of which this was the close; such synecdoches being most frequent, as hath been already observed: or, 3. Because the evening sacrifice was more solemn than the morning, and was attended with more company and more prayers; whence the *ninth hour,* which was the time of this sacrifice, is called *the hour of prayer,* Acts iii. 1.

3 Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

That I may not through mine own infirmity, and the great provocations of mine enemies, break forth into any unadvised speeches, or any expressions of impatience, or distrust, or envy, or malice, &c. *My lips,* which are the door of my mouth whence words come forth.

4 Incline not my heart to *any* evil thing, to practise wicked works with men

f Prov. 23. 6.

that work iniquity: f and let me not eat of their dainties.

Incline not; suffer it not to be inclined or led aside, either by my own errors or lusts, or by the temptations of the world or of the devil. Thus God is frequently said *to harden* men's *hearts,* not positively, for he can do no evil, nor tempt any man to it, James i. 13; but privatively, by denying softening grace. *My heart;* keep me not only from wicked speeches, ver. 3, but from all evil motions of my heart, which otherwise will draw me to many evil speeches and actions. *To practise wicked works with men that work iniquity;* either, 1. To join with them in their sinful courses; or, 2. To do wickedly, as they do. *Let me not eat of their dainties;* let me never enjoy or desire worldly comforts upon such terms as they do, to wit, with God's wrath and curse, as instruments of wickedness, and of my own eternal destruction. My afflictions are more desirable than such prosperity. Let none of their sweet morsels, the pleasures or advantages which they gain by their wickedness, tempt me to approve of or imitate their ways.

g Prov. 9. 8. & 19. 25. & 25. 12. Gal. 6. 1. ‖ Or, Let the righteous smite me kindly, and reprove me; let not their precious oil break my head, &c.

5 g ‖ Let the righteous smite me; *it shall be* a kindness: and let him reprove me; *it shall be* an excellent oil, *which* shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also *shall be* in their calamities.

Smite me, to wit, with his tongue by reproofs, as the next clause explains it, which are called *wounds,* Prov. xxvii. 6. As I pray unto thee that thou wouldst keep me from sinful practices, so I beg it of all just men, that if I do transgress, or if by the arts and slanders of mine enemies any of them are made to believe that I am guilty of evil designs against Saul, or of any other wickedness, that they would freely admonish and reprove me for it. And their reproofs shall please me better than the dainties of the wicked last mentioned, ver. 4. *It shall be a kindness;* I shall be so far from being offended with it as an act of enmity or ill will, as they may suspect, that I shall esteem it an act and sign of true friendship. *It shall be an excellent oil;* or, it shall be as *the oil of the head,* as it is in the Hebrew, i. e. which is poured upon the head, as the manner was in great feasts and solemnities. *Not break my head;* not hurt or disturb it, but, on the contrary, shall heal and greatly refresh and delight it; which is here understood by a known figure called *meiosis,* whereby more is intended than is expressed, as Prov. xvii. 21, and oft elsewhere. *In their calamities;* either, 1. In the calamities of those righteous persons who reproved and censured him. So this is an evidence of what he last said, that he should take their reproofs for a kindness, because when they came into such calamities as those wherein he was involved, as all righteous men must expect sufferings at one time or other, he would not insult over them, nor censure them, but pity them, and pray for them. Or, 2. In the calamities of his enemies, of which he speaks in the next words. And so this may be added as a reason why he did so freely offer himself to the righteous to be reproved by them, if he or his cause were so bad as his enemies made them, because he was well assured that he was sincere and his cause good, and that God would bring him out of all his calamities, and bring his enemies into such calamities that they should need and desire his prayers, which also he would willingly grant to them; and then all good men would be fully satisfied of the justice of his person and cause.

6 When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet.

Their judges; the chief of mine enemies, their governors civil and military. *Are overthrown;* or, *shall be overthrown,* or cast down headlong by thine exemplary vengeance. Or, as others, *were left free,* unhurt by me, when it was in my power to destroy them; of which see 1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi.; to which histories this place is by divers learned interpreters thought to allude. And then by *their judges* he means Saul, although he thought not fit distinctly to mention him, but only to intimate him in an obscure and general way. *In stony places,* Heb. *in the hands* or *by the sides of the rock;* which may relate either, 1. To the rocky nature of those places in which Saul fell into David's hands. See 1 Sam. xxiv. 2. Or, 2. To the ancient manner of punishing malefactors, which was by throwing them down from the tops of rocks; of which see 2 Chron. xxv. 12. Or, 3. To aggravate their overthrow; for falls in stony places are, as most easy and frequent, so also most mischievous. *They*

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shall hear my words, for they are sweet: then *they;* either the judges, who will be wise too late; or the people spared by my favour, when others were overthrown and warned by that fearful example; *will hear my words,* i. e. hearken to my counsels and offers, which now they despise, and then *they,* my words, *will be sweet* and acceptable to them, which now they reject. Others thus, *then they did hear my words that they were sweet;* then they acknowledged that my words and carriage towards Saul were full of meekness and gentleness, and that I was not so false and malicious as they had represented me to be.

2 Cor. 1. 9. 7 Our bones are scattered [h] at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth *wood* upon the earth.

Our bones; my bones, and the bones of my friends and followers. Our skin and flesh is in a manner consumed, and there is nothing left of us but a company of dead and dry bones; whereby he intimates that their condition was desperate. Compare Ezek. xxxvii. 11. *Are scattered at the grave's mouth;* either, 1. Literally and properly. So barbarously cruel were our enemies, that they not only killed us, but left our carcasses unburied, by which means our flesh and sinews, &c. were consumed or torn in pieces by wild beasts, and our bones dispersed upon the face of the earth, our common grave; or if any of my followers were dead and buried, they pulled their bones out of the grave, and scattered them about. Or rather, 2. Metaphorically. So the sense is, Our case is almost as hopeless as of those who are dead, and whose bones are scattered in several places. *As when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth;* as much neglected and despised by them as the chips which a carpenter makes when he is cutting wood, which he will not stoop to take up. Or rather, as the LXX., and Chaldee, and Syriac understand it, and as it is in the Hebrew, *as when one* (to wit, the husbandman) *cutteth and cleaveth the earth,* or *in the earth,* which he tilleth without any mercy.

[i] Psa. 25. 15. & 123. 2. [k] Heb. make my soul bare

8 But [i] mine eyes *are* unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; †leave not my soul destitute.

Or, *naked,* as this word signifies, Psal. cxxxvii. 7, and as Aaron is said to have *made the people naked,* Exod. xxxii. 25, i. e. deprived of thy favour and protection. Or, *do not pour out my soul,* to wit, unto death, as this word is used, Isa. liii. 12.

[k] Psa. 119. 110. & 140. 5. & 142. 3.

9 Keep me from [k] the snares *which* they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

[l] Psa. 35. 8. [m] Heb. pass over.

10 [l] Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal † escape.

Into their own nets, Heb. *into his nets;* either into God's nets, the relative being put without the antecedent, as is usual in such cases, where it is easily understood; or, each *into his own nets,* to wit, the mischiefs which he designs against me. *Withal,* or, *together,* to wit, with my followers; or, *in like manner,* as I have done formerly. But this word may seem to be more fitly joined to the foregoing clause, to which it is next placed in the Hebrew, and the verse may be and is by divers, both ancient and later translators, thus rendered, *Let the wicked fall* (or, *the wicked shall fall*) *into their own nets together,* (altogether, or alike, one as well as another, Saul himself not excepted, whom though I dare not destroy, God will judge,) *whilst that I escape;* am preserved from that common calamity in which mine enemies shall perish; which was verified by the event. For David was strangely kept out of harm's way when Saul and others of David's enemies were cut off by the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxxi.

PSALM CXLII.

[n] Psa. 57. title. [o] Heb. of teaching, giving instruction. * 1 Sam. 22. 1. & 24. 3.

¶ * || Maschil of David; A Prayer * when he was in the cave.

Either that of Adullam, 1 Sam. xxii., or that of En-gedi, 1 Sam. xxiv. There he meditated this Psalm, which afterwards he more accurately composed and committed to writing.

David, finding help no where in his straits and afflictions, 1—4, crieth and comforteth himself in prayer to God, 6, 7.

I CRIED unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

With my voice; either, 1. With the voice of my soul. But so this addition would be superfluous, and much more the repetition of it, because that is necessarily implied in the former word, *I cried,* and in the following, *I make my supplication.* Or rather, 2. With my corporeal voice, which the fervour of my soul forced me to use, when I could not do it without some danger, the enemy being at the mouth of the cave. And so this addition is emphatical, and therefore is repeated. But it is probable that David spoke with a low voice; and that he might do so without very great danger, is manifest from that discourse which passed between David and his men, even when Saul was entered into the cave, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4—7.

2 [a] I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble. [a] Psa. 102. title. Is. 26. 16.

I poured out; I did it fully, and fervently, and confidently.

3 [b] When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. [b] Psa. 143. 4.

[c] In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me. [c] Psa. 140. 5.

Thou knewest, to wit, practically, so as to direct me to it. *My path;* what paths I should choose whereby I might escape Saul, when I fled hither and thither in deserts, and mountains, and woods; and which way I should get out of his hands when he and all his men were at the cave's mouth, which passed my skill. *Wherein I walked;* wherein I used to walk, or they supposed that I would walk.

4 [d] || I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld, but *there was* no man that would know me: refuge †failed me; †no man cared for my soul. [d] Psa. 69. 20. || Or, *Look on the right hand, and see.* [e] Psa. 31. 11. & 88. 8, 18. † Heb. *perished from me.* † Heb. *no man sought after my soul.*

Right hand; the place where the patron or assistant used to stand. See Psal. xvi. 8; cix. 31; cxxi. 5. *No man,* to wit, in Saul's court or camp; none of my former acquaintance, and friends, and relations. *Know me;* own me, or show any respect or kindness to me. *For my soul;* or, *for my life,* to wit, to preserve it; but they all conspired to take it away; which is here implied.

5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, [f] Thou *art* my refuge *and* [g] my portion [h] in the land of the living. [f] Psa. 46. 1. & 91. 2. [g] Psa. 16. 5. & 73. 26. & 119. 57. Lam. 3. 24. [h] Psa. 27. 13.

Thou only art both *my refuge* to defend me from all evil, and *my portion* to supply me with all the good which I need and desire. *In the land of the living;* even in this life, wherein I doubt not to see God's goodness, as he said, Psal. xxvii. 13.

6 Attend unto my cry; for I am [i] brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I. [i] Psa. 116. 6.

7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: [k] the righteous shall compass me about; [l] for thou shalt deal bountifully with me. [k] Psa. 34. 2. [l] Psa. 13. 6. & 119. 17.

Bring my soul out of prison; bring me safe out of this cave, wherein I am imprisoned, and set me at perfect liberty. *Shall compass me about;* shall flock to me from all parts, partly out of curiosity to see such a spectacle and miracle of God's power and mercy; and partly to rejoice and bless God with me and for me, and for all the benefits which they expect from my government.

PSALM CXLIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm is much of the same nature with the former, and seems to have been composed much about the same time, and upon the like

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occasion. This is the last of those which are called penitential Psalms, the former being Psal. vi., xxxii., xxxviii., li., cii., cxxx.

¶ A Psalm of David.

The psalmist prayeth that God in faithfulness would hear him, and not enter into judgment with him, 1, 2; *complaineth of his persecuting enemies,* 3, 4; *praying also for speedy deliverance; instruction in God's ways, and the destruction of his enemies,* 5—12.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, give ear to
[a] Ps. 31. 1. my supplications: [a]in thy faithfulness
answer me, *and* in thy righteousness.

Whereby thou art inclined and engaged to favour righteous persons and just causes.

[b] Job 14. 3. [c] Ex. 34. 7. Job 4. 17. & 9. 2. & 15. 14. & 25. 4. Ps. 130. 3. Eccles. 7. 20. Rom. 3. 20. Gal. 2. 16.
2 And [b]enter not into judgment with
thy servant: for [c]in thy sight shall no
man living be justified.

But when I appeal to thy righteousness, I do it only with respect to mine enemies, whose cause as well as their persons is worse than mine, but not in reference to thee, as if I could absolutely justify myself upon a severe trial at the tribunal of thy justice; for if thou shouldst rigorously examine all the passages of my heart and life, I dread the thoughts and consequences of it. *Be justified,* to wit, upon terms of strict justice, without thy indulgence and infinite mercy.

3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

This is not a reason of what he last said, ver. 2, but an argument to enforce his petition delivered ver. 1, and repeated ver. 7, &c. For though I am not faultless, if thou shouldst make an exact search into me, yet mine enemies are more culpable and highly unjust, and therefore I hope for thy help against them, from thy justice as well as mercy. *My soul,* i. e. my life; for nothing less will satisfy him. *He hath smitten my life down to the ground;* he hath beaten me down to the ground, where I lie struggling for life. *He hath made me to dwell in darkness;* he hath forced me to have mine abode in dark vaults and caves, where I am out of sight and memory, and in as forlorn and hopeless a condition in the eye of man as those that have lain long rotting in the grave.

[d] Ps. 77. 3. & 142. 3.
4 [d]Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed
within me; my heart within me is desolate.

My spirit overwhelmed within me. See on Psal. lxi. 2, cxlii. 3. *Is desolate;* deprived of all hope and comfort. Or, *is astonished.*

[e] Ps. 77. 5, 10, 11.
5 [e]I remember the days of old; I
meditate on all thy works; I muse on
the work of thy hands.

I remember the days of old, i. e. what thou hast done for thy servants in former times; which he mentions either, 1. As matter of terror, to consider how unlike God now was unto himself and to his former dealings; or, 2. As matter of support from former experience, because God was still the same. Either way it drives him to his prayers, which here follow.

[f] Ps. 88. 9. [g] Ps. 63. 1.
6 [f]I stretch forth my hands unto thee:
[g]my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty
land. Selah.

I stretch forth my hands unto thee; I pray to thee fervently. See on Psal. cxli. 2. *Thirsteth after thee;* after thy favour and help. *As a thirsty land,* to wit, thirsteth for rain.

7 Hear me speedily, O LORD: my
[h] Ps. 28. 1. ‖ Or, *for I am become like, &c.* Ps. xxx. 3.
spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me,
[h]‖lest I be like unto them that go down
into the pit.

That are dead and buried, of whom there is no hope.

[i] See Ps 46. 5.
8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness
[i]in the morning; for in thee do I trust:
[k]cause me to know the way wherein I
should walk; for [l]I lift up my soul unto
thee.

[k] Ps. 5. 8. [l] Ps. 25. 1.

In the morning, i. e. early, as this phrase is taken, Psal. xc. 14, and elsewhere; seasonably and speedily. *Wherein I should walk;* so as to please thee, and to secure myself.

9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine ene-
mies: I †flee unto thee to hide me.

† Heb. *hide me with thee.*

Without whose care these caves and rocks can give me no protection.

[m] Ps. 25. 4, 5. & 132. 12. [n] Neh. 9. 20. [o] Is. 26. 10.
10 [m]Teach me to do thy will; for thou
art my God: [n]thy spirit *is* good; lead
me into [o]the land of uprightness.

To do thy will; to continue in faithful obedience to thee, notwithstanding all temptations to the contrary. *Thy spirit is good, lead me;* or rather, as it is exactly in the Hebrew, and as many both ancient and modern translators render it, *let thy good Spirit lead me.* Leave me not to my own blind and vain mind, or corrupt affections, neither give me up to the evil spirit, as thou didst Saul, but conduct me in all my ways by thy *good,* i. e. gracious and holy, *Spirit. Into the land of uprightness;* or, *in plain* or *even land,* or *ground;* in a straight and smooth path, that I may not stumble nor fall, either into sin or mischief. This is opposed to the crooked and rugged ways, in which sinners are said to walk. See Psal. cxxv. 5; Prov. ii. 15; Isa. xl. 4.

[p] Ps. 119. 25, 37, 40, &c.
11 [p]Quicken me, O LORD, for thy
name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake
bring my soul out of trouble.

[q] Ps. 54. 5.
12 And of thy mercy [q]cut off mine
enemies, and destroy all them that afflict
my soul: for [r]I *am* thy servant.

[r] Ps. 116. 16.

Of thy mercy; out of thy mercy to me, whose life they seek.

PSALM CXLIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The matter of this Psalm is partly gratulatory for mercies received, and partly petitionary for further blessings. It seems to have been composed after Saul's death, and in the beginning of David's reign, when he was exposed to many perils, both from his own rebellious subjects, and from the Philistines and other foreign enemies, yet so that he had a good prospect and assurance of a more complete and established felicity.

¶ *A Psalm* of David.

David, blessing God for his mercy to him in his wars and government, confesseth his own and man's nothingness, 1—4; *prayeth that he would deliver him from his powerful enemies,* 5—8, *and promiseth to praise him,* 9—11. *The happiness of that kingdom whose God is the Lord,* 12—15.

BLESSED *be* the LORD †my strength,
[a] which teacheth my hands †to war, *and*
my fingers to fight:

† Heb. *my rock.* [a] 2 Sam. 22. 35. Ps. 18. 34. † Heb. *to the war, &c.*

Who has given me that skill in military conduct, and that dexterity in the management of my weapons, which was wholly unsuitable to and much above my education and former course of life.

[b] 2 Sam. 22. 2, 3, 40, 48. ‖ Or, *My mercy.*
2 [b]‖My goodness, and my fortress; my
high tower, and my deliverer; my shield,
and *he* in whom I trust; who subdueth
my people under me.

My goodness; or, *my mercy;* or, the God *of my mercy,* as God is called, Psal. lix. 10, 17; the name of *God* being easily understood from the foregoing verse. Or, he who is exceeding good or merciful to me, as good as goodness itself; the abstract being put for the concrete, as it is frequently in speeches of God, who is called *wisdom, truth, goodness,* &c.; and sometimes of men, as Psal. xii. 1; Prov. x. 29, where *faithfulness* and *uprightness* are put for *faithful* and *upright men. Who subdueth my people under me;* who has disposed my people's hearts to receive and obey me as their king.

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3 [c]LORD, what *is* man, that thou takest knowledge of him! *or* the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

[c] ch. 8. 4. Heb. 2. 6.

Lord, what is man! he aggravates God's goodness to him, expressed ver. 2, by the consideration of his own meanness. Though I am king over my people, yet, alas, I am but a man, a base, sinful, mortal, and miserable creature; if compared with thee, less than nothing and vanity. *Takest knowledge of him*, i. e. hast any care and kindness for him, as words of knowledge commonly imply in Scripture. *Makest account of him*; the same thing repeated in other words.

4 [d]Man is like to vanity: [e]his days *are* as a shadow that passeth away.

[d] Job 7. 16. & 14. 1, 2. Ps. 39. 5. & 62. 9. & 89. 47. [e] Job 8. 9. & 14. 2. & 47. 9. Ps. 102. 11. & 109. 23. & 144. 4. Ecc. 6. 12. & 8. 13. Isa. 38. 12. Jam. 4. 14.

Man is like, in his nature and continuance in the world, *to vanity*, or *to a vapour* or *a breath*, as Isa. lvii. 13, which is gone in an instant. *That passeth away*; or, *that declineth*, as Psal. cii. 11; cix. 23; that groweth less and less, till it be quite out of sight, and lost.

5 [f]Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: [g]touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

[f] Ps. 18. 9. & 68. 7. [g] Ps. 104. 32. & 144. 5. Isa. 64. 1. Nah. 1. 5. Hab. 3. 10.

Come down, to help me, before it be too late, remembering what a frail and perishing creature I am. *And they shall smoke*; or, *that they may smoke*; or, *and let them smoke*, as Sinai did at thy glorious appearance, Exod. xix. 18. This is a figurative and poetical description of God's coming to take vengeance upon his enemies, which is continued in the next verse.

6 [h]Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.

[h] Ps. 18. 13, 14.

Thy thunderbolts, which oft accompany the lightnings and thunder.

7 [i]Send thine † hand from above; [k]rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of [l]strange children;

[i] Ps. 18. 16. & 69. 1. [k] ver. 11. Ps. 69. 1, 2, 14. [l] Ps. 54. 3. Mal. 2. 11.

Either of the heathen nations, which envy and hate me; or of the rebellious Israelites, who, though they profess themselves to be the Lord's people, yet in truth and for their carriage to me are like the barbarous heathens.

8 Whose mouth [m]speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood.

[m] Ps. 12. 2.

Vanity; either, 1. Vain brags and threatenings, which shall come to nothing; or, 2. Vain and deceitful promises, or professions, or friendship. *Their right hand*; here mentioned either, 1. As it is used in swearing, to note their perjury; or rather, 2. As an instrument of action. *Is a right hand of falsehood*; deceiving either, 1. Themselves, by being unable to do what they designed; or, 2. Others, by not giving them that help which they promised to them.

9 I will [n]sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

[n] Ps. 33. 2, 3. & 96. 1.

When thou hast granted this request of mine, ver. 7, 8, which I know assuredly thou wilt do.

10 [o]*It is he* that giveth ‖salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

[o] Ps. 18. 50. ‖ or, victory.

Kings are not preserved by their own power or prudence, but by God's special providence, which for the public good of the world watcheth over them.

11 [p]Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood:

[p] ver. 7, 8.

And upon these accounts grant me the mercy which I desired before, and now again do repeat.

12 That our sons *may be* [q]as plants grown up in their youth; *that* our daughters *may be* as corner stones, †polished *after* the similitude of a palace:

[q] Ps. 128. 3. † Heb. *hewn.*

This mercy I beg, not only for my own sake, but for the sake of thy people, that thine and our enemies being subdued, and peace established in the land, thy people may enjoy those blessings which thou hast promised to them; and particularly, *that our sons*, which are the strength, and safety, and hopes of a nation, may be *like plants*, flourishing and thriving, and growing in height and strength, as plants do *in their youth*, and they only; for when they grow old, they wither and decay. *Our daughters*; upon whom the hope of posterity depends. *As corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace*; strong and beautiful, and adorned with all the ornaments belonging to their sex.

13 *That* our garners *may be* full, affording †all manner of store: *that* our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:

† Heb. *from kind to kind.*

So as they may fill our streets, being brought in thither for food to the towns and cities. Or, *in our folds* or *stables*, as the Chaldee and others render it; or, as the LXX. and others, *in their* (or rather, *in our*, as it is in the Hebrew) *outlets* or *outgoings*, i. e. in the fields, where they abide.

14 *That* our oxen *may be* †strong to labour; *that there be* no breaking in, nor going out; that *there be* no complaining in our streets.

† Heb. *able to bear burdens*, or, *loaden with flesh.*

To labour, Heb. *laden*, either with flesh and fat, as many understand it; or, as others, with young: but then the foregoing word is not to be rendered *oxen*, but *cows*, as the same word and in the same masculine gender is used Deut. vii. 13. And so this agrees best with the former prayer for the sheep, ver. 13, and he wisheth the same blessing of fruitfulness both for greater and smaller cattle. *No breaking in*, to wit, of enemies invading the land, or assaulting our cities, and making breaches in their walls. *Nor going out*, to wit, of our people; either out of the towns and cities, to fight with an invading enemy; or out of the land into captivity. *No complaining*; or, *no outcry*, or *howling*, for any sad tidings, or public grievances or calamities.

15 [r]Happy *is that* people, that is in such a case: *yea*, happy *is that* people, whose God *is* the LORD.

[r] Deut. 33. 29. Ps. 33. 12. & 65. 4. & 146. 5.

This is a correction of the last sentence. This is a very desirable estate; but the true and chief happiness of our Israel doth not consist in these things, which are common to others with us, but in this peculiar privilege, that the true and blessed God is our God by covenant and special relation.

PSALM CXLV.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm and the rest which follow to the end are wholly laudatory, setting forth the praises of God. The excellency of this Psalm appears not only from the opinion of the Hebrew writers, but also from the care which the psalmist took to digest it into such accurate and alphabetical order, that it might be more easily fixed in the mind and memory of the reader.

¶ David's [a]*Psalm* of praise.

[a] Ps. 100, title.

David magnifieth God for his greatness and terrible acts, 1—7; *for his goodness and everlasting kingdom*, 8—13; *for his care and providence over all*, 14—16; *and for his saving mercies to them that fear him*, 17—21.

I WILL extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

O King; or, *the King*, by way of eminency; the King of kings, the God by whom kings reign, and to whom I and all other kings owe subjection and obedience.

2 Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

[b] Ps. 66. 4. & 147. 5. † Heb. *and of his greatness there is no search.* [c] Job 5. 9. & 9. 10. Rom. 11. 33.

3 [b]Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised; †and [c]his greatness *is* unsearchable.

His greatness, in his being, majesty, and glory, and all perfections.

4 [d]One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

[d] Is. 38. 19.

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The people that live in one age shall relate them to their posterity, and so successively in all ages.

5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous †works.

† Heb. *things*, or, *words*.

The glorious honour of thy majesty; here are divers words heaped together, to intimate that no words were sufficient to express it.

6 And *men* shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will †declare thy greatness.

† Heb. *declare it*.

7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

The memory of thy great goodness; the memorials of thy kindness to thy people, thy never to be forgotten blessings.

e Ex. 34. 6, 7. Num. 14. 18. Ps. 86. 5, 15. & 103. 8. † Heb. *great in mercy*. f Ps. 100. 5. Nah. 1. 7.

8 [e]The LORD *is* gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and †of great mercy.

9 [f]The LORD *is* good to all: and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.

Is good to all; not to Israel only, but to all mankind, *whose hearts he fills with food and gladness*, as it is said, Acts xiv. 17; yea, to all his creatures, as it is in the next clause, to beasts as well as men. See Psal. cxxxvi. 25; cxlvii. 9.

g Ps. 19. 1.

10 [g]All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.

All thy works shall praise thee; objectively, they give men and angels just occasion to praise thee.

11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

h Ps. 146. 10. 1 Tim. 1. 17. † Heb. *a kingdom of all ages*.

13 [h]Thy kingdom *is* †an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and

i Ps. 146. 8.

[i]raiseth up all *those that be* bowed down.

Upholdeth all; either, 1. All that look up to him for help: or, 2. All that are upheld; whose support is not from themselves, nor from other men, but only from God's powerful and good providence.

k Ps. 104. 27. ‖ Or, *look unto thee*. l Ps. 136. 25.

15 [k]The eyes of all ‖wait upon thee; and [l]thou givest them their meat in due season.

The eyes of all living creatures *wait upon thee;* expect and receive their supplies wholly from thy bounty. Expectation is here figuratively ascribed to brute creatures, as Psal. civ. 27; Rom. viii. 22. *In due season;* when they need it.

m Ps. 104. 21. & 147. 9.

16 Thou openest thine hand, [m]and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Or, as divers render it, and which is more agreeable to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, *thou satisfiest every living thing* with thy *favour* or *good-will*, i. e. with the fruits of thy bounty; the pronoun *thy* being easily and fitly understood out of the foregoing clause.

n Or, *merciful*, or, *bountiful*.

17 The LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and ‖holy in all his works.

Holy; or rather, *merciful*, as this word most commonly signifies. There is a mixture of mercy in the most severe and terrible works of God in this life, *judgment without mercy* being reserved for the next life, James ii. 13; Rev. xiv. 10.

n Deut. 4. 7.

18 [n]The LORD *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon

o John 4. 24.

him [o]in truth.

Is nigh unto all them, to answer their prayers for relief, *that call upon him in truth;* sincerely, or with an upright heart, trusting to him, and waiting upon him in his way.

19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Fulfil the desire, so far as it is agreeable to his own will, and convenient for their good; not inordinate desires, which God commonly denies to his people in mercy, and granteth to his enemies in anger.

p Ps. 31. 23. & 97. 10.

20 [p]The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

Frequently in this world, but infallibly in the next.

21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

PSALM CXLVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The design of this Psalm is to persuade men to trust in God, and in him alone.

The psalmist voweth perpetual praises to God, 1, 2; *and exhorteth that none put their trust in man*, 3, 4, *but in God, in regard of his power, faithfulness, and everlasting government*, 5—10.

† Heb. *Hallelujah*. a Ps. 103. 1.

PRAISE †ye the LORD. [a]Praise the LORD, O my soul.

b Ps. 104. 33.

2 [b]While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

c Ps. 118. 8. 9. Is. 2. 22.

3 [c]Put not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, in whom *there is* no ‖help.

‖ Or, *salvation*.

In princes; in men of greatest wealth and power, in whose favour men are very prone to trust. *In whom there is no help;* who are utterly unable frequently to give you that help which they promise, and you expect.

d Ps. 104. 29. Eccles. 12. 7. Is. 2. 22. e See 1 Cor. 2. 6.

4 [d]His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day [e]his thoughts perish.

He returneth, in his body, Eccles. xii. 7, *to his earth;* to that earth from which all mankind, princes not excepted, had their original. *In that very day*, as soon as ever he is dead, *his thoughts perish;* all his designs and endeavours, either for himself or for others.

f Ps. 144. 15. Jer. 17. 7.

5 [f]Happy *is he* that *hath* the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope *is* in the LORD his God:

g Gen. 1. 1. Rev. 14. 7.

6 [g]Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein *is:* which keepeth truth for ever:

Both because he liveth for ever to fulfil his promises, and because he is eternally and unchangeably faithful.

h Ps. 103. 6.

7 [h]Which executeth judgment for the

i Ps. 107. 9.

oppressed: [i]which giveth food to the hungry. [k]The LORD looseth the prisoners:

k Ps. 68. 6. & 107. 10, 14. l Matt. 9. 30. John 9. 7,—22. m Ps. 145. 14. & 147. 6. Luke 13. 13.

8 [l]The LORD openeth *the eyes of* the blind: [m]the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:

The eyes of the blind; either, 1. The eyes of their mind, which he enlightens and directs in doubtful and difficult causes; or, 2. Their bodily eyes, which he did abundantly by his Son Jesus Christ. *Loveth the righteous*, even when he doth afflict them, which also he doth out of love, Heb. xii. 6.

n Deut. 10. 18. Ps. 68. 5.

9 [n]The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: [o]but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

o Ps. 146. 4.

He *overthroweth their goings*, as the phrase is, Psal. cxl. 4. He maketh them to lose their way; he not only frustrateth their plots and enterprises, but turneth them against

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themselves. This and all the foregoing sentences are so many arguments to encourage all good men to trust in God in all their straits and afflictions.

p Ex. 15. 18. Ps. 9. 16. & 10. 16. & 29. 10. & 45. 6. & 93. 1. & 97. 1. & 99. 1. & 146. 10. Jer. 10. 10. & 51. 57. Lam. 5. 19.

10 pThe LORD shall reign for ever, *even* thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXLVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm may seem, from ver. 2 and 13, to have been composed by some holy prophet after the return of Israel from the Babylonish captivity. It containeth an ample celebration of God's praises, both for common mercies and for special favours.

The prophet exhorteth the people to praise God for his care over his church, 1—14; *his wisdom and government over all,* 15—18; *and for his salvation to the faithful,* 19, 20.

a Ps. 92. 1. b Ps. 135. 3. c Ps. 33. 1.

PRAISE ye the LORD: for a*it is* good to b sing praises unto our God; bfor *it is* c pleasant; *and* cpraise is comely.

It is good; it is acceptable to God, and greatly comfortable and beneficial to ourselves.

d Ps. 102. 16. e Deut. 30. 3.

2 The LORD doth dbuild up Jerusalem: ethe gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

Build up Jerusalem; it is the Lord's own doing, and not man's. *The outcasts;* or, *the banished,* who were carried captives out of their own land, and dispersed in divers strange countries.

f Ps. 51. 17. Isa. 57. 15. & 61. 1. Luke 4. 18. † Heb. *griefs.*

3 fHe healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their †wounds.

The broken in heart, either with the sense of their sins, or with their sorrows and grievous calamities. He seems to speak peculiarly of the captive Israelites now returned.

g See Gen. 15. 5. Isa. 40. 26.

4 gHe telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by *their* names.

He telleth the number of the stars, which no man can do, Gen. xxii. 17. For those thousand and twenty-five which astronomers number, are only such as are most distinctly visible to the eye, and most considerable for their influences. *He calleth them all by their names:* this signifies, 1. That he exactly knows them as we do those whom we can call by name; he is able to give distinct names to each of them, because he accurately understands their several natures and operations. 2. That he hath a sovereign power over them, as men have over their children, or servants, or soldiers, whom they can call by name; that he appointeth and governeth all their motions and influences to the fulfiling of his own pleasure and purposes.

h 1 Chron. 16. 25. Ps. 48. 1. & 96. 4. & 145. 3. i Heb. *no end.* k Heb. *no search.* l Isa. 40. 28.

5 hGreat *is* our LORD, and of igreat power: †khis understanding *is* infinite.

6 lThe LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

7 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:

m Job 5. 10. & 36. 27. Ps. 104. 13. Jer. 10. 13. & 51. 16.

8 mWho covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

n Job 38. 41. Ps. 104. 21. & 145. 15. Matt. 6. 26. & 10. 29. Luke 12. 24. o Job 38. 41.

9 nHe giveth to the beast his food, *and* oto the young ravens which cry.

Which he mentions, partly, because they were most contemptible, especially to the Jews, to whom they were unclean and forbidden for food; partly, because they are greedy and voracious; and partly, because they are not only neglected by men, but also forsaken by their dams as soon as ever they can fly, and so are wholly left to the care and keeping of Divine Providence.

p Ps. 33. 16. & 76. 10. Isa. 63. 1.

10 pHe delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

As if he needed either the one or the other for the accomplishment of his designs.

11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

That believingly and patiently expect and seek relief and happiness from God alone, and from his mere grace and mercy, and not from any creature, nor from their own merits.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.

13 For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

Thy strength consists not in thy walls, and gates, and bars, but in his protection.

† Heb. *Who maketh thy border peace* q Is. 60. 17. r Ps. 132. 15. † Heb. *fat of wheat.* Deut. 32. 14. Ps. 81. 16.

14 †qHe maketh peace *in* thy borders, *and* rfilleth thee with the †finest of the wheat.

In thy borders; in all thy land, even to its utmost borders, which are most liable to the incursion of enemies.

s Ps. 107. 20. Job 37. 12.

15 sHe sendeth forth his commandment *upon* earth: his word runneth very swiftly.

His commandment; which is sufficient without any instruments to execute whatsoever pleaseth him, either in works of nature or of providence. *His word runneth very swiftly;* the thing is done without delay or difficulty.

t Job 37. 6

16 tHe giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.

Snow like wool; not only in colour, and shape, and softness, but also in use, keeping the fruits of the earth warm. *Hoar-frost like ashes;* in colour and smallness of parts, as also in its burning quality.

17 He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?

His ice; either, 1. Pieces of ice, which God may be said to *cast forth,* or *to cast down,* because he sendeth it, and oftimes suddenly; or, 2. Great hailstones, which are of an icy nature and substance, and which are very properly *cast forth* or *cast down* out of the clouds, and that like morsels or fragments, the particles being congealed in them. *His cold;* the cold which he sometimes sends into the air is so sharp, that it would be intolerable, if men did not defend themselves from it by houses, clothes, fire, &c.

u ver. 15. See Job 37. 10.

18 uHe sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, *and* the waters flow.

His wind; the southern or some other warm wind sent with commission to dissolve the ice. *The waters flow;* the rivers return to their course which before were bound up by, or turned into, ice.

x Deut. 33. 2, 3, 4. Ps. 76. 1. & 78. 5. & 103. 7. † Heb. *his words.* y Mal. 4. 4.

19 xHe sheweth †his word unto Jacob, yhis statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

He showeth his word; he fully declared his mind and will by revelation and in his word. *Unto Jacob;* to the children of Jacob or Israel, and to them alone, as it follows.

z See Deut. 4. 32, 33, 34. Rom. 3. 1, 2.

20 zHe hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his* judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

He left all others to their own native darkness and blindness, and to those dim discoveries of God and of themselves which they had from the light of nature.

PSALM CXLVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The nature of this Psalm is for substance the same with the former, containing an invitation to all the creatures to praise God for his manifold blessings.

The psalmist exhorteth all celestial and terrestrial creatures, especially man, to praise God for his favour and mercy to his church.

† Heb. *Hallelujah*

PRAISE †ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

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From the heavens; all the host of heaven, which he particularly expresseth in the following verses. *In the heights;* in those high and heavenly places.

a Ps. 103. 20, 21.

2 [a]Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

He inviteth the angels here, and the senseless creatures afterward, to praise God; not as if the former needed, or the latter were capable of, his exhortation, but only by a poetical rapture; the design whereof is, that men by this means might be more provoked to this duty. The angels are called *hosts*, here and 1 Kings xxii. 19, for their vast numbers, exquisite order, and perfect subjection to their General, the Lord of hosts.

3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

Sun and moon; you which are adored by the blind heathens for gods, you are but his creatures, and therefore were obliged, if you were capable, to worship and praise him for your glorious light and powerful influences.

b 1 Kings 8. 27. 2 Cor. 12. 2. c Gen. 1. 7.

4 Praise him, [b]ye heavens of heavens, and [c]ye waters that *be* above the heavens.

Ye heavens of heavens; ye highest and most glorious heavens, the place of God's throne and glorious presence, as this phrase is used, Deut. x. 14; 1 Kings viii. 27; Neh. ix. 6; Psal. cxv. 16. Or, ye starry heavens, which also may well be so called, because they are above the air, which is oft called *heaven* in Scripture. *Ye waters that be above the heavens;* ye clouds, which are above a part of the heavens; of which see on Gen. i. 7.

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for [d]he commanded, and they were created.

d Gen. 1. 1, 6, 7. Ps. 33. 6, 9.

They owe their being wholly to God's good will.

e Ps. 89. 37. & 119. 90, 91. Jer. 31. 35, 36. & 33. 25.

6 [e]He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

Stablished them for ever and ever; either absolutely, as to the substance of them, or at least to the end of the world. He hath made them constant and incorruptible, not changeable and perishing, as the things of the lower world are. *Made a decree;* either concerning their several courses and influences; or rather, for their continuance for ever; which best agrees with the foregoing and following words. *Which shall not pass;* which decree shall never be made void.

f Isa. 43. 20.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth, [f]ye dragons, and all deeps:

Either, 1. Dragons and serpents, which abide in the deep caverns and holes of the earth; or, 2. Whales or other sea-monsters, which dwell in the depths of the sea, which are oft called by this name, as Job vii. 12; Ezek. xxix. 3, and elsewhere, as the word here rendered *deeps* is most commonly used concerning the sea.

g Ps. 147. 15,—18.

8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind [g]fulfilling his word:

Fire; lightnings and other fire-works of the air. *Vapours*, or *fumes;* hot exhalations, as the word properly signifies, as cold exhalations are comprehended under the title of *snow*. And both of them, arising from the earth, are here fitly mentioned as belonging to it. *Fulfilling his word;* executing his commands, either for the comfort and refreshment, or for the punishment, of the inhabitants of the earth.

h Is. 44. 23. & 49. 13. & 55. 12.

9 [h]Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:

Admirable for your height, and strength, and use, though not for your fruit.

† Heb. *birds of wing.*

10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and † flying fowl:

11 Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:

Kings of the earth; who, though you are called *gods*, and adored like gods by your subjects, yet are but men, and the creatures and subjects of this sovereign Lord, to whom you owe both your being, and all your power and dignity.

12 Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for [i]his name alone is † excellent; [k]his glory *is* above the earth and heaven.

i Ps. 8. 1. Is. 12. 4. † Heb. *exalted.* k Ps. 113. 4.

Not so much in place as in excellency, above all the glories which are in earth and in heaven.

14 [l]He also exalteth the horn of his people, [m]the praise of all his saints; *even* of the children of Israel, [n]a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

l Ps. 75. 10. m Ps. 149. 9. n Eph. 2. 17

Exalteth the horn of his people, to wit, above the horns of all the people in the world, in respect of their spiritual and eternal privileges, as it here follows. *The horn* in Scripture doth commonly note strength, victory, glory, and felicity, as Deut. xxxiii. 17, and every where. *The praise;* either, 1. He is *the praise*, as God is called, Deut. x. 21. to wit, *the God of* their *praise*, as Psal. cix. 1, the chiefest object and matter of it: or, 2. Which is *the praise;* which work of God in exalting their horn is their glory, and maketh them praiseworthy, or obligeth and provoketh them in a singular manner to perform this great duty of praising God, which is so generally neglected by others. *Near unto him*, by special relation, and friendship, and covenant, and by familiar intercourses; God manifesting his face and favour to them, and they frequently and solemnly approaching into his presence, and worshipping him at his footstool.

PSALM CXLIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The scope and design of this Psalm is to stir up and encourage God's people to praise him; either, 1. For their deliverance out of Babylon, and the promises which God had given them of the perfection of that work, and of the enlargement of their power and dominion in the world; or rather, 2. For the establishment of the kingdom of Israel in David's hands, and for that safety, and glory, and victory over their enemies which they expected by that means. But withal, the psalmist, or the Spirit of God, which dictated this Psalm to him, had a further prospect, even to the Messiah, of whom David was a type, and who was to succeed David in the throne, and to bring that kingdom to its highest perfection. And so divers of the Jewish doctors understand this Psalm.

An exhortation to praise God for his love to his people, 1—4 *and for enabling them by his power to overcome their enemies*, 5—9.

PRAISE † ye the LORD. [a]Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise in the congregation of saints.

† Heb. *Hallelujah.* a Ps. 33. 3. Is. 42. 10.

A new song, for these new mercies conferred upon us, denied to former times.

2 Let Israel rejoice in [b]him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their [c]King.

b See Job 35. 10. Ps. 100. 3. Is. 54. 5 c Zech. 9. 9. Matt. 21. 5.

That made him; that made them not only his creatures, but, which is unspeakably greater, his people; or, that advanced and adorned them with singular privileges, as this word is used, 1 Sam. xii. 6, and elsewhere. *Be joyful in their King;* David and his posterity, and especially the chief of all of them, the Messiah. Let them rejoice and bless God that they have so potent, so wise, and so just a king.

3 [d]Let them praise his name ‖ in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.

d Ps. 81. 2. & 150. 4. ‖ Or, *with the pipe.*

According to the usage of that time and dispensation.

4 For [e]the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: [f]he will beautify the meek with salvation.

e Ps. 35. 27. f Ps. 132. 16.

Taketh pleasure in his people; he loveth them above all people, and rejoiceth over them to do them good. *He will beautify*, Heb. *adorn* or *glorify;* make them amiable and honourable in the eyes of the world, who now hate and despise them. *The meek*, or *humble*, to wit, his people, as he now said, who are oft in Scripture described by that character, because all true Israelites are such, and all Israel-

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ites profess and ought to be such. Or, *the afflicted*, as that word is oft used in Scripture, which hath been observed before; his poor afflicted and oppressed people, to whom the following salvation is most needful and acceptable. *With salvation;* both temporal, in delivering them from, and setting them above, all their enemies; and afterwards, with everlasting salvation and glory.

5 Let the saints be joyful in glory: let
g Job 35. 10. them g sing aloud upon their beds.

Be joyful in glory, for the honour which God putteth upon them. *Sing aloud upon their beds;* either, 1. For their safe and sweet repose and peace, which is signified by *resting in beds*, Isa. lvii. 2; or, 2. By night as well as by day, even in the time devoted to rest and sleep, which they shall borrow to praise God for his eminent and extraordinary blessings, as David frequently did upon such occasions.

† Heb. *in their throat.* h Heb. 4. 12. Rev. 1. 16. 6 *Let* the high *praises* of God *be* †in their mouth, and h a twoedged sword in their hand;

In their mouth, Heb. *in their throat;* which signifies vocal praise, and that with a loud voice. *A two-edged sword in their hand;* not only to defend themselves from their enemies, but, as it follows, to revenge themselves upon them.

7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people;

For all their cruelties and injuries towards God's people. This was literally accomplished by David upon the Philistines, Ammonites, Syrians, and other neighbouring nations and princes, which were bitter enemies to God's people. And the same thing was done afterward in the Christian world, when God raised up Christian princes, who did by the help of the Christians, fighting with and under them, severely revenge the blood of the martyred Christians upon their cruel persecutors and tyrants in divers ages. It may also be understood of the spiritual plagues which Christ by the hand or ministry of his apostles and ministers did inflict upon the hearts and consciences of his incorrigible enemies, who by God's word and ordinances were either tormented or hardened to their destruction. Yea, it may have a respect unto the last day of judgment, in which the saints shall judge the world, 1 Cor. vi. 2, which will be a most dreadful execution of this vengeance, &c.

8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

Of which see the note on the foregoing verse.

i Deu. 7. 1, 2. k Ps. 138. 14. 9 i To execute upon them the judgment written: k this honour have all his saints.
Praise ye the LORD.

The judgment written; appointed and declared in the Holy Scripture, as Deut. xii. 32; xxix. 19; xxxii. 41—43, and elsewhere. This is added to show that they do not this work to satisfy their own malicious or revengeful inclinations, but in obedience to God's command, and only in such manner as God hath allowed in his word. *This honour have all his saints;* the honour of these actions belongs to all the saints, for whose sakes God appointed this in his word, and afterwards executed it by his providence.

PSALM CL.

THE ARGUMENT.

This Psalm agrees much with the former, and is an invitation to all men to praise God, and especially to the Levites, or those of them who were appointed to this work, as may be gathered both from the place in which they are to praise him, which is, according to our translation, *in his sanctuary*, ver. 1, and from that great variety of instruments here mentioned, all which were frequently used in their temple service, and seldom elsewhere.

An exhortation to praise the holiness, power, and kindness of God, with all sorts of musical instruments.

PRAISE †ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. † Heb. *Hallelujah.*

In his sanctuary; in his temple, where this work was to be performed constantly and solemnly. Or, who dwelleth *in his sanctuary.* So it describeth and limiteth the object of their praises. Or, *for* (as this particle is used in the next verse) *his sanctuary*, for this great favour of placing his sanctuary and dwelling-place amongst men. *In the firmament of his power;* in his heavenly mansion, there let the blessed angels praise him. Or, who dwelleth *in the firmament*, or *spreading forth of his power*, to wit, in the heavens, which were stretched out by his great power, and in which are the most glorious testimonies of his infinite power. Or, *for the firmament*, &c.; for that glorious and astonishing piece of his workmanship.

2 a Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent b greatness. a Ps. 145. 5, 6. b Deu. 3. 24.

As his infinite majesty deserves to be praised.

3 Praise him with the sound of the ‖trumpet: c praise him with the psaltery and harp. ‖ Or, *cornet.* Ps. 98. 6. c Ps. 81. 2, & 149. 3.

4 Praise him d with the timbrel and ‖dance: praise him with e stringed instruments and organs. d Ex. 15. 20. ‖ Or, *pipe.* Ps. 149. 3. e Ps. 33. 2, & 92. 3, & 144. 9. Is. 38. 20.

5 Praise him upon the loud f cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. f 1 Chron. 15. 16, 19, 28. & 16. 5, & 25. 1, 6.

6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Every thing that hath breath; every living creature in heaven and in earth, Rev. v. 13, according to their several capacities, some objectively, others actively, as was noted before.

THE PROVERBS.

THE penman of this book is expressed in the title, Solomon, who was famous for his proverbs, of which he spoke three thousand, as it is recorded, 1 Kings iv. 32, the most eminent and useful of them being doubtless collected in this book. And that the greatest part of this book was composed by Solomon doth sufficiently appear, because that part of it which was collected and composed by other hands is so plainly distinguished from the foregoing part, chap. xxv. 1. The nine first chapters contain a preface or introduction to the book, or an exhortation to true wisdom; and all the following chapters contain the precepts of wisdom called proverbs; wherein we are not to expect that order and coherence which is in many other books of Scripture.

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CHAP. I.

The use of the proverbs, 1—6. *An exhortation to fear God, and believe his word*, 7. *The glory of those children that obey the instruction of their parents*, 8, 9. *A caution against yielding to enticing sinners*, 10. *The contrivance*, 11, 12, *arguments, and invitation of these sinners*, 13, 14. *Reasons against complying with them*, 15—19. *Wisdom's call to repentance*, 20—22. *Her promise*, 23. *Her complaints and threatenings*, 24—30. *The fruit of sin*, 31, 32. *Peace to the penitent*, 33.

B. C. written cir. 1000. THE [a] proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

a 1 Kings 4. 32. ch. 10. 1. & 25. 1. Eccles. 12. 9.

Proverbs are ancient, and wise, and short sayings in common use; whereof some are plain and easy, others are intricate and obscure. *Of Solomon;* proceeding from Solomon, and most of them digested by him into this book. See the preface.

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

To know; written to help men to know thoroughly and practically. *Wisdom;* both human wisdom, to conduct our affairs in this life, which divers of the following proverbs do; and especially Divine wisdom, which Solomon chiefly designed; or to make men wise to know their duty, and to save their souls. *Instruction;* the counsels and instructions delivered, either by God or by men, in order to the attainment of wisdom. *Words of understanding;* either, 1. Which are the effects of a good understanding; or, 2. Which teach a man true understanding, whereby to discern between truth and error, between good and evil, to choose the former, and to refuse the latter.

b ch. 2. 1, 9. † Heb. *equities.* 3 To [b] receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and † equity;

To receive the instruction; willingly to receive the counsels of others, which is a good step to wisdom, and a part of it. *Of wisdom;* such as is wise, and tends to make men wise and prudent. This is opposed to *the instruction of fools* and *folly*, of which Prov. xvi. 22; xix. 27. For folly or wickedness hath its school, and multitudes of scholars, that are very apt to learn its lessons. *Justice, and judgment, and equity;* which teach men just judgment or equity, to wit, their whole duty, both to God and to others, and to themselves. These three words seem to signify the same thing, and are heaped together to note either the necessity of the precept, or the exactness and diligence which is required in the practice of it.

c ch. 9. 4. ‖ Or, *advisement.* 4 To give subtilty to the [c] simple, to the young man knowledge and ‖ discretion.

Subtilty; or rather, *prudence*, as this word is used, Prov. iii. 21; v. 2; viii. 5, 12, which elsewhere is taken in an evil sense for *craft* or *subtilty*. *The simple;* such as want wisdom, and are easily deceived by others, and therefore most need this blessing. *The young man*, which wants both experience and self-government.

d ch. 9. 9. 5 [d] A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

Will hear; is not self-conceited, as fools are, but willing to learn from others; and therefore will attend to the following instructions. *Will increase learning;* and thereby will gain this great benefit, to grow in knowledge and wisdom. This he adds to show that this book is useful and necessary, not only to the simple, but also to the most wise and knowing persons. *Unto wise counsels;* not to deep speculations, but practical consideration; to the art of governing himself or others well and prudently.

‖ Or, *an eloquent speech.* 6 To understand a proverb, and ‖ the interpretation; the words of the wise,

e Ps. 78. 2. and their [e] dark sayings.

The interpretation, i. e. the interpretation of a proverb, by a figure called *hendiadus*, or the meaning and use of the wise sayings of God, or of men; to know this practically, and for his direction and benefit; for practice is the great design of this book. *Dark sayings;* such as are hard to be understood by inconsiderate and ungodly men, but to be found out by diligent and humble inquiry.

f Job 28. 28. Ps. 111. 10. ch. 9. 10. Eccles. 12. 13. 7 ¶ [f] The fear of the LORD *is* ‖ the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

‖ Or, *the principal part.*

The fear of the Lord; reverence and obedience to God, or his worship and service, as this word is commonly used. *The beginning;* either the foundation, or the top, and perfection, or chief point, without which all other knowledge is vain and useless. *Fools;* wicked men, called *fools* through this whole book; such as do not fear God. *Despise wisdom and instruction;* are so far from attaining true wisdom, that they despise it, and all the means of getting it; which fully proves what he now said, that *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*

g ch. 4. 1. & 6. 20. 8 [g] My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

My son; he speaks to his scholars with paternal authority and affection, to make them more attentive and obedient. Teachers among the Hebrews and others were commonly called *fathers*, and their scholars their *sons*. *The instruction of thy father;* his good and wholesome counsels, but not such as are contrary to God's law, Prov. xix. 27. *The law of thy mother;* those pious instructions which thy mother instilled into thee in thy tender years. See Prov. xxxi. 1; 2 Tim. i. 5; iii. 14, 15. This he adds, because children, when grown up, are very prone to slight their mother's advice, because of the infirmity of their sex, and because they have not that dependence upon and expectation from their mothers which they have from their fathers.

h ch. 3. 22. † Heb. *an addition.* 9 For [h] they *shall be* † an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

This will make thee amiable and honourable in the sight of God and of men; whereas the forsaking of those good counsels will make thee contemptible.

i Gen. 39. 7, &c. Ps. 1. 1. Eph. 5. 11. 10 ¶ My son, if sinners entice thee, [i] consent thou not.

Sinners; eminently so called, as Gen. xiii. 13; Psal. i. 1; xxvi. 9; such as sell themselves to work all manner of wickedness; particularly thieves, and robbers, and murderers, as appears from the next verses, as also oppressors and cheaters, by comparing this with ver. 19.

k Jer. 5. 26. 11 If they say, Come with us, let us [k] lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

Come with us; we are numerous, and strong, and sociable. *Let us lay wait for blood;* to shed blood. He expresseth not their words, which would rather affright than inveigle a young novice; but the true nature and consequence of the action, and what lies at the bottom of their specious pretences. *Lurk privily;* so we shall neither be prevented before, nor discovered and punished afterward. *The innocent;* harmless travellers, who are more careless and secure, and unprovided for opposition, than such villains as themselves. *Without cause;* though they have not provoked us, nor deserved this usage from us. This Solomon adds to discover their malignity and baseness, and so deter the young man from association with them.

l Ps. 28. 1. & 143. 7. 12 Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, [l] as those that go down into the pit:

As the grave; which speedily covers and consumes dead bodies. See Psal. lv. 15; cxxiv. 3. *Whole as those that go down into the pit;* into some deep pit, into which a traveller falls unawares, and is utterly lost, and never discovered.

13 We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

As our danger is little, so our profit will be great.

14 Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

Cast in thy lot among us, i. e. put in thy money into our stock. Or rather, *thou shalt cast thy lot amongst us*, i. e.

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thou shalt have a share with us, and that equally and by lot, although thou art but a novice, and we veterans. This agrees best with their design, which was to allure him by the promise of advantage. *Let us all have one purse;* or, *we will have*, &c. One purse shall receive all our profits, and furnish us with all expenses. So we shall live with great facility and true friendship.

[l] Ps. 1. 1. [m] Ps. 119. 101.

15 My son, [m]walk not thou in the way with them; [n]refrain thy foot from their path:

Walk not thou in the way with them; avoid their courses, and their conversation, and company. *Refrain thy foot from their path;* when thou hast any thought, or inclination, or temptation to follow their counsels or examples, suppress it, and restrain thyself as it were by force and violence, as the word implies.

[o] Is. 59. 7. Rom. 3. 15.

16 [o]For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

Their feet run; they make haste, as it follows, without considering what they are doing. *To evil;* to do evil to others, as was expressed ver. 11, 12, which also will bring evil upon themselves. *To shed blood;* to shed innocent blood; which is an inhuman and dangerous practice.

[p] Heb. in the eyes of every thing that hath a wing.

17 Surely in vain the net is spread †in the sight of any bird.

The design of these words is to set forth the folly of these men by the similitude of a bird, which yet is very variously applied and understood by divers interpreters. But I shall not confound the reader with the rehearsal of them. This clause, *in vain*, upon the understanding whereof the whole depends, may be understood, either, 1. In respect of the fowler. So the sense is, The fowler who spreads his net in the sight of the bird loseth his labour, because the bird, perceiving the danger, will not be tempted to come to the bait, but flees away from it. *But*, or *yet*, *these* (as the first words of the next verse may well be, and by the Chaldee translator are, rendered) are more foolish than the silly birds; and though they are not ignorant of the danger and mischief which these evil courses will bring upon themselves, which I have here represented, yet they will not take warning, but madly rush upon their own ruin. Or, 2. In respect of the bird. So the sense is, The silly bird, although it see the spreading of the net, yet is not at all instructed and cautioned by it, but through the greediness of the bait rusheth upon it, and is taken by it. And these men are not one jot wiser, but albeit they know and find that by these practices they expose themselves to the justice of the magistrate, and to the vengeance of God, the sad effects whereof they daily see in the destruction of their brethren in iniquity, yet they will boldly and madly run themselves into the same miseries. Both ways the sense comes to the same.

18 And they lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives.

And, or *but*, or *yet*, or *so;* for all these ways this particle is used; which is more fully expressed in the next verse. *They lay wait for their own blood;* the destruction which they design to others falls upon themselves. *Their blood* answers to *their feet*, ver. 16, and belongs to the same persons.

[q] Ch. 15. 27. & 28. 8, 16.

19 [q]So *are* the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; *which* taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

So, as is expressed both in the foregoing and following words, *are the ways;* the actions and courses, which are so in the tendency and event of them. *That is greedy of gain;* that seeks gain by unrighteous and wicked practices. *Which;* either *which greediness;* or rather, *which gain*, by comparing the last words. *Taketh away the lives of the owners thereof;* brings sudden and violent death upon those who had made themselves masters and possessors of such gain.

[r] Heb. Wisdoms, Latin, *ipsa Sapientia*, that wisdom. [s] ch. 8. 1, &c. & 9. 3. John 7. 37.

20 ¶ †[r]Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:

Having expressed the counsels and invitations of folly and of wicked men, he now declareth the voice of wisdom. By the name of wisdom or *wisdoms* he seems to understand the wisdom or counsel of God revealed to the sons of men by his word. Which he calls *wisdoms* here, as also Prov. ix. 1, either to note the excellency of this wisdom beyond all other, as the greatest and chief of beasts is called *behemoth* or *beasts*, Job xl. 15; or because it consisteth of a multitude of wise precepts; or because it hath been delivered to mankind at sundry times, and in divers manners, and by many persons, prophets and apostles, and especially by the Son of God, who is called *the wisdom of God*, Luke xi. 49. And this wisdom is said to *cry* with a loud voice, to intimate both God's earnestness in inviting sinners to repentance, and their inexcusableness if they do not hear such loud cries. *Without*, or *abroad*, or *in the streets* or *open places*, as many others render it, and as it is in the next clause. Not in corners and privily, as seducers persuade men to error or wickedness, being afraid of the light, but openly and publicly before all the world.

21 She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, *saying*,

The chief place of concourse; where there is probability of most success. *The opening of the gates;* where magistrates sit in judgment, and people are assembled. So it crieth both to the wise and to the unwise, as Paul preached, Rom. i. 14. *In the city;* not only in the gate, but in every part of the city. Or, *in the cities*, the singular number being put for the plural.

22 How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

Ye simple ones; ye ignorant, and easy, and credulous persons, who are so soon cheated by the world and the devil, and do not understand your own interest. *Love simplicity;* being unwilling to part with it, or to be made wiser. *Scorners;* that scoff at all religion, and contemn the word and faithful ministers of God. *Fools;* wilful and wicked fools, as Prov. xvii. 10; xxvi. 4.

23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, [t]I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

[t] Joel 2. 28.

Turn ye from your evil courses unto me. *At my reproof;* upon this admonition here given to you. *I will pour out;* if you will do so, I will freely and abundantly impart unto you. *My spirit;* either my mind, as *spirit* is taken, Psal. lxxvii. 6; Prov. xxix. 11; or the gifts and graces of my Spirit, which he hath promised to such persons, Luke xi. 13; John iv. 14; vii. 39. *I will make known my words unto you;* by my Spirit I will cause you truly and savingly to understand my word, which is hid from others, 2 Cor. iv. 3.

24 ¶ [s]Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

[s] Is. 65. 12. & 66. 4. Jer. 7. 13. Zech. 7. 11.

I have called, by my ministers, and by my judgments upon you or others, and by the motions of my Spirit and your own consciences. *Stretched out my hand;* offering grace and mercy to you, and earnestly inviting you to accept of it. Lest through your deafness or distance from me you should not hear, I have beckoned to you with my hand, which this phrase signifies, Isa. xiii. 2; lxv. 2. *No man regarded;* few or none complied with it.

25 But ye [t]have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

[t] Ps. 107. 11. ver. 30. Luke 7. 30.

Set at nought, or *despised*, or *made void;* resisted its power and authority. *My counsel:* either, 1. My design of doing sinners good, which you have made of none effect to yourselves. Or, 2. My commands and counsels, which suits better with the next clause.

26 [u]I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

[u] Ps. 2. 4.

As you have scoffed at me and my ways, *I also will laugh at your calamity*, i. e. destroy you without pity, and take pleasure therein. Compare Rev. xviii. 20. *Your fear;* the misery which you do or should fear. The act for the object, as Isa. viii. 12, and elsewhere.

27 When [x]your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a

[x] ch. 10. 24.

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whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

As desolation; as some desolating sword or judgment, which quickly overruns a whole country. *As a whirlwind;* which instantly spreadeth itself from place to place with great and irresistible violence, and doing much mischief.

y Job 27. 9. & 35. 12. Is. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11. & 14. 12. Ezek. 8. 18. Mic. 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13. Jam. 4. 3.

28 [y]Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

Early; or, *in the morning*, as the word properly signifies, and is here rendered by others, as soon as their calamity comes; or rather, with great diligence and fervency, as this phrase commonly signifies. *They shall not find me*, because they do not seek me by choice and with sincerity, but only by constraint, and that they may be freed from their miseries.

z Job 21. 14. ver. 22. a Ps. 119. 173.

29 For that they [z]hated knowledge, and did not [a]choose the fear of the LORD:

Hated knowledge, to wit, the practical knowledge of God, and of their duty to him, as it is explained in the following clause. *Did not choose;* not heartily approve of it and love it, but only made some show of it.

b ver. 25. Ps. 81. 11.

30 [b]They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

They would none of my counsel; they refused to be guided by my counsels or precepts.

c Job 4. 8. ch. 14. 14. & 22. 8. Is. 3. 11. Jer. 6. 19.

31 Therefore [c]shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

They shall eat of the fruit of their own way; they shall receive punishments answerable to their sins. *With their own devices;* with the fruits or effects of their wicked devices. What was sweet in their mouths shall be bitter in their bellies, and that destruction which they have plotted against others shall fall upon themselves.

‖ Or, *case of the simple.*

32 For the ‖turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

Turning away, to wit, from God, and from his counsels and reproofs; so this is opposed to *hearkening unto* God, ver. 33. Or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by divers others, *the ease* or *rest*, the peace or tranquillity, as it seems to be explained in the next clause. *Shall destroy them;* it commonly proves the occasion of their ruin, by making them presumptuous, and secure, and worldly, and proud, and forgetful of God and of their own eternal happiness, whereby they provoke God's wrath, and bring upon themselves swift and certain destruction. Thus he meets with the common objection against the fear of God, taken from the present impunity and prosperity of ungodly men.

d Ps. 25. 12, 13. e Ps. 112. 7.

33 But [d]whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and [e]shall be quiet from fear of evil.

Safely; or *securely*, or *confidently;* resting himself upon the conscience of his own integrity, and upon the promises and favour of God. *From fear of evil;* from sinful and tormenting cares and fears. And as a wicked man's mind is oft full of anxiety in the midst of all his outward prosperity and glory, so the mind of a good man is filled with peace and joy, even when his outward man is exposed to many troubles.

CHAP. II.

Solomon exhorteth his son to get wisdom, 1—4; *telleth him the benefit he shall receive thereby*, 5—10, *and the evils which he should avoid*, 11, 12. *The wicked man's ways are described*, 13—20. *A habitation promised the righteous*, 21. *The end of the wicked miserable*, 22.

a ch. 4. 21. & 7. 1.

MY son, if thou wilt receive my words, and [a]hide my commandments with thee;

These words are spoken by Solomon, either, 1. In the name of wisdom, as before; or rather, 2. In his own name. *Hide my commandments with thee;* lay them up in thy mind and heart with care, as men do their choicest treasures.

2 So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;

Give thyself to the study of it with affection and diligence.

3 Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* †liftest up thy voice for understanding;

† Heb. *giveth thy voice.*

If thou criest, to wit, unto God, the only giver of it, ver. 6. Heb. *if thou callest;* invitest it to come unto thee; earnestly desirest its conduct.

b ch. 3. 14. Matt. 13. 44.

4 [b]If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures;

With the same unwearied diligence, and earnest desire, and patient expectation under all delays, disappointments, and difficulties, which worldlings use in the purchase of riches, or in digging in mines of silver.

5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

Understand more perfectly and profitably; for that very *seeking* and *searching after it*, ver. 4, supposed some understanding. *The fear of the Lord;* which is *the beginning of* this *wisdom*, chap. i. 7.

c 1 Kings 3. 9, 12. Jam. 1. 5.

6 [c]For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding.

Giveth wisdom, Heb. *will give;* hath promised to give it, to wit, to those that so seek it; whereby he also teacheth them not to ascribe any wisdom which they may obtain unto their own wit and industry, but only unto God's favour and blessing. *Out of his mouth;* from his word, or appointment, and good will; as *the word of God* is taken, Deut. viii. 3.

d Ps. 84. 11. ch. 30. 5.

7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: [d]*he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

Sound wisdom, Heb. *essence* or *substance;* either, 1. Solid and true felicity, opposed to the vain enjoyments of this world, which are said to have no substance or being, Prov. xxiii. 5. Or, 2. True and substantial wisdom, which is satisfactory and everlasting, opposed to worldly wisdom, which is but an empty shadow of wisdom, and perisheth with us. *A buckler to them*, to protect and save them from that mischief and ruin which shall befall all wicked men.

e 1 Sam. 2. 9. Ps. 66. 9.

8 He keepeth the paths of judgment, and [e]preserveth the way of his saints.

He keepeth the paths of judgment; he guardeth and guideth the paths or ways, i. e. the counsels and actions, of good men, as the next clause explains this, which are called *paths of judgment*, or righteous paths; *judgment* being here put for *righteousness*, as it is in Psal. xcix. 4, and oft elsewhere. And *keeping* of *paths* may be put for keeping them in their paths, so as they shall neither swerve from them, nor stumble and fall in them. *And preserveth the way of his saints;* the same thing repeated in other words.

9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.

Then; when thou hast done thy part, expressed ver. 1—3, &c., and God in answer to thy desires hath given thee wisdom, ver. 6; or when it is with thee, as it follows, ver. 10. *Righteousness, and judgment, and equity;* all the parts of thy duty to man, as well as *the fear of God*, ver. 5, which contains all duties to God. These three words are used here, as also chap. i. 3, to signify the same thing. *Every good path;* the practice of all virtues and graces.

10 ¶ When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

When wisdom entereth into thine heart; when thou dost truly love it, and passionately desire it, and hide its precepts in thy heart, according to Psal. cxix. 11.

f ch. 4. 22.

11 Discretion shall preserve thee, [f]understanding shall keep thee:

From wicked courses, and the mischiefs which attend upon them; as is particularly expressed in the following verses.

12 To deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, from the man that speaketh froward things;

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From the way of the evil man; from following his counsel or example, which others for want of wisdom commonly do. *That speaketh froward things;* with design to corrupt thy mind, and entice thee to evil principles or practices.

13 Who leave the paths of uprightness, to [g]walk in the ways of darkness;

g John 3. 19, 20.

The paths of uprightness; the way of God's precepts. *Of darkness,* i. e. of sin, which is oft called *darkness,* as Rom. xiii. 12, &c.; Eph. v. 11, because it comes from darkness, ignorance, and error, and loves darkness and hates light, and leads to utter darkness.

h ch. 15. 21. i Rom. 1. 32.

14 Who [h]rejoice to do evil, *and* [i]delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

Who rejoice to do evil; seeking and embracing occasions of sin with diligence and greediness, and pleasing themselves both in the practice and remembrance of sin; whereas upright men abhor and watch against all occasions of sin beforehand, and mourn bitterly for it afterwards. *Delight in the frowardness of the wicked;* not only in their own sins, but in the sins of other wicked men, which shows a greater malignity of mind and love to sin. See Rom. i. 32.

k Ps. 125. 5.

15 [k]Whose ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths:

Whose ways are crooked, or, *who make their ways crooked,* i. e. whose course of life swerves from the right and straight way of God's law.

l ch. 5. 20.

16 To deliver thee from [l]the strange woman, [m]*even* from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words;

m ch. 5. 3. & 6. 24. & 7. 5.

From the strange woman; from the adulteress or whore; called *strange,* partly because such persons were commonly heathens, or are supposed to be such by reason of that severe law against these practices in Israelitish women, Deut. xxiii. 17, or are justly reputed heathens, as being degenerate Israelites, which are oft called *strangers,* as hath been noted in the Book of the Psalms; and partly because conversation with such persons is forbidden to men; as those Israelites which were not Levites are called *strangers,* Numb. i. 51, in respect of the holy things which they were prohibited to touch; and forbidden fire is called *strange fire,* Numb. iii. 4. *Which flattereth with her words;* which useth all arts and ways to allure men to unchaste actions; one kind being put for all the rest.

n Mal. 2. 14, 15.

17 [n]Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.

The guide of her youth, to wit, her husband, whom she took to be her guide and governor, and that in her youth: which circumstance is added to aggravate her sin and shame, because love is commonly most sincere and fervent between *a husband* and *wife of youth,* as they are for that reason emphatically called, Prov. v. 18; Isa. liv. 6; Joel i. 8; Mal. ii. 14, 15. *Forgetteth,* i. e. violateth or breaketh, as that word is commonly used in a practical sense. *The covenant of her God;* the marriage covenant; so called, partly because God is the author and institutor of that society and mutual obligation; and partly because God is called to be the witness and judge of that solemn promise and covenant, and the avenger of the transgression of it.

o ch. 5. 5.

18 For [o]her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.

Her house inclineth unto death; conversation with her (which was most free and usual in her own house) is the ready and certain way to death, which it brings many ways; by wasting a man's vital spirits, and shortening his life; by exposing him to many and dangerous diseases, which physicians have declared and proved to be the effects of inordinate lust; as also to the fury of jealous husbands or friends, and sometimes to the sword of civil justice, and undoubtedly, without repentance, to God's wrath and the second death. This is here mentioned as one great privilege and blessed fruit of wisdom, to be delivered from this evil. *Unto the dead;* or, as the Chaldee and some others render it, *unto the giants,* to wit, those rebellious giants, Gen. vi. 4; or, as others, *unto the damned,* or *unto hell.* See for this word Job vii. 9; Psal. lxxxviii. 11; Prov. ix. 18; xxi. 16.

19 None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.

None; few or none; an hyperbolical expression, used Isa. lxiv. 7. *That go unto her;* that go to her house, or that lie with her, as this phrase is used, Gen. xvi. 4; xxx. 4; Josh. ii. 3. *Return again,* from her and from this wickedness, unto God. Adulterers and whoremongers are very rarely brought to repentance, but are generally hardened by the power and deceitfulness of that lust, and by God's just judgment, peculiarly inflicted upon such persons, Heb. xiii. 4. He alludes to the nature of corporal death, from which no man can without a miracle return to this life. *Of the paths of life;* of those courses which lead to true and eternal life.

20 That thou mayest walk in the way of good *men,* and keep the paths of the righteous.

This depends upon ver. 11, and is mentioned as another happy fruit of wisdom, the former being declared from ver. 12 to this verse. *Walk in the way of good men;* follow the counsels and examples of the godly; whereby he intimates that it is not sufficient to abstain from evil company and practices, but that we must choose the conversation of good men.

21 [p]For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

p Ps. 37. 29.

Shall have a peaceable and comfortable abode in the land of Canaan, which also is a type of their everlasting felicity. See Psal. xxxvii. 3, 9, 18, 29.

22 [q]But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be ‖rooted out of it.

q Job 18. 17. Ps. 37. 28. & 104. 35. ‖ Or, *plucked up.*

CHAP. III.

Solomon exhorteth his son to obedience, 1—4. *To faith,* 5, 6, *and trust in God; the benefits that they shall receive thereby,* 7, 8. *To honour God with our estates,* 9. *The advantage in so doing,* 10. *To patience under God's chastisements,* 11. *A reason for it,* 12. *The happiness of him that findeth wisdom,* 13. *Wisdom set out, with the benefits that attend her,* 14—18. *The effects,* 19, 20. *Another exhortation to perform our duty,* 21—27. *To charitableness,* 28. *To avoid strife,* 29, 30. *Against envy,* 31. *The misery of the wicked, and blessings of the just,* 32—35.

MY son, forget not my law; [a]but let thine heart keep my commandments:

a Deut. 6. 1. & 30. 16, 20.

My law; my doctrine or counsel; or the law of God, which might be called *his law,* as the gospel is called Paul's *gospel,* 2 Tim. ii. 8, because delivered by him. *Keep my commandments,* by diligent meditation and hearty affection.

2 For length of days, and †long life, and [b]peace, shall they add to thee.

† Heb. *years of life.* b Ps. 119. 165.

God will add these blessings which he hath promised to the obedient, Deut. viii. 18; xxx. 20; 1 Tim. iv. 8.

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: [c]bind them about thy neck; [d]write them upon the table of thine heart:

c Ex. 13. 9. Deut. 6. 8. ch. 6. 21. & 7. 3. d Jer. 17. 1. 2 Cor. 3. 3.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: either, 1. God's mercy and truth. So it is a promise, God's mercy and truth shall not forsake thee. Or rather, 2. That mercy and truth which is man's duty. So it is a precept; which seems most probable, both from the form of the Hebrew phrase, and from the following words of this verse, which are plainly preceptive, and from the promise annexed to the performance of this precept in the next verse. *Mercy* and *truth* are frequently joined together, as they are in God, as Psal. xxv. 10; lvii. 3, &c., or in men, as Prov. xvi. 6; xx. 28; Hos. iv. 1, and here. *Mercy* notes all that benignity, clemency, charity, and readiness to do good freely to others; *truth* or *faithfulness* respects all those duties which we owe to God or man, to which we have special obligation from the rules of justice. *Bind them about thy neck,* like a chain, wherewith persons adorn their necks, as it is expressed, chap. i. 9; which is fastened there, and not easily lost, which also is continually in one's view.

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Upon the table of thine heart: either, 1. Upon those tablets which the Jews are said to have worn upon their breasts, which are always in sight. So he alludes to Deut. vi. 8. Or, 2. In thy mind and heart, in which all God commands are to be received and engraven, as is oft required in this book, and every where. So *the table of the heart* seems to be opposed to *the tables of stone* in which God's law was written, as it is Jer. xxxi. 33; 2 Cor. iii. 3.

e Pa. 111. 10. See 1 Sam. 2. 26. Luke 2. 52. Acts 2. 47. Rom. 14. 18. ‖ Or, *good success.*

4 eSo shalt thou find favour and ‖good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Find favour, i. e. obtain acceptance, or be gracious and amiable to them. *Good understanding;* whereby to know thy duty, and to discern between good and evil. The serious practice of religion is an excellent mean to get a solid understanding of it; as, on the contrary, a vicious life doth exceedingly debase and darken the mind, and keep men from the knowledge of truth, which not only Scripture, but even heathen philosophers, have oft observed. Others render it, *good success;* which seems not to suit well with the following words. *In the sight of God; grace* or *favour* with God, and that *understanding* which is *good in God's sight*, i. e. truly and really; as a truly good man is called *good before God*, in the Hebrew, Eccles. vii. 26.

f Pa. 37. 3, 5. g Jer. 9. 23.

5 ¶ fTrust in the LORD with all thine heart; gand lean not unto thine own understanding.

Trust in the Lord; wholly and securely rely upon God's promises and providence for help and relief in all thine affairs and dangers. *Lean not unto thine own understanding;* think not to accomplish thy designs by the strength of thine own wit without God's blessing. Under this one kind of carnal confidence, which is most frequent and most plausible, he understands and forbids all other confidences in bodily strength, wealth, friends, &c.

h 1 Chron. 28. 9. i Jer. 10. 23.

6 hIn all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall idirect thy paths.

Ways; designs and undertakings for the things of this life or of the next. *Acknowledge him*, Heb. *know him*, to wit, practically; or, *own him;* his wisdom, in following his counsels; his power and goodness, in expecting success from him; his sovereignty, in managing all thy affairs so as to please and glorify him. *Direct thy paths;* assist and bless all thine endeavours, and keep thee from the paths of sin and destruction.

k Rom. 12. 16. l Job 1. 1. ch. 16. 6.

7 ¶ kBe not wise in thine own eyes: lfear the LORD, and depart from evil.

Be not wise in thine own eyes; be not puffed up with vain conceit of thine own wisdom, as if that were sufficient for the conduct of all thine affairs without direction or assistance from God, or without the advice of others. *Fear the Lord:* this he adds, because the reverence and dread of the Divine Majesty will make a man, when he compareth himself with God, little and vile in his own eyes. Reverence God's wisdom, and thou wilt despise thine own.

† Heb. *medicine.* † Heb. *watering*, or, *moistening.* m Job 21. 24.

8 It shall be †health to thy navel, and †mmarrow to thy bones.

To thy navel, i. e. to thy body, which is signified by the *navel*, which is a noble and useful part of the body, by which the infant receives nourishment in the womb, and which is the ligament or bond by which the bowels, a principal part of the body, are united together and preserved. *Marrow* is the nourishment and strength of the bones, and a great preserver and prolonger of life, as the decay of it is a chief cause of the weakness, and dryness, and decay of the body. The sense of the verse is, This wisdom or fear of God is not only useful to the salvation of the soul, but also to the health and welfare of the body, both as it prevents those diseases and distempers which are oft procured by sinful lusts and passions, and as it giveth us an interest in all God's promises, and putteth us under the care of his special providence.

n Ex. 22. 29. & 23. 19. & 34. 26. Deut. 26. 2, &c. Mal. 3. 10, &c. Luke 14. 13.

9 nHonour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

With thy substance; or, *with thy riches.* Lay out thy estate not only to please and advance thyself or family, but also to glorify God; which is done by the payment of all those offerings and dues which God hath required; by giving according to thy abilities whatsoever is necessary for the support and advancement of God's worship and service in the world; by free and liberal contributions to those whom God hath made his deputies, and, as I may say, the receivers of his rents, to wit, faithful ministers and good Christians, and all others who need and require thy help. The performance of these duties is here called an *honouring of God*, partly because that word is sometimes used for *giving of gifts*, as 1 Tim. v. 17, and elsewhere; and partly because it is a testimony of our respects to God, of our obedience to him as our sovereign Lord, and that in hard and costly duties, of our thankfulness to him as our chief Benefactor and Donor of all that we have, and of our belief of his promises made to the faithful practisers of this duty; which if they were believed, the most covetous persons would be the most charitable. *With the first-fruits;* or, *with the chief*, or *best*, or *first*, which answers to the first-fruits under the law.

o Deut. 28. 8.

10 oSo shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

This is not the way to diminish thy estate, as covetous and profane persons allege, but rather to increase it. *Shall burst out;* shall be so filled, that they would burst out, if not carefully prevented.

p Job 5. 17. Ps. 94. 12. Heb. 12. 5, 6. Rev. 3. 19.

11 ¶ pMy son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

Despise not the chastening of the Lord; either, 1. By making light of it, or not being duly affected with it; and so this is one extreme opposed to the other in the next clause. Or rather, 2. By accounting it an unnecessary, and useless, and troublesome thing; but rather esteem it as a privilege and favour from God, and a benefit to thyself: for such negatives do oft imply the contrary affirmatives by a common figure called *meiosis*, as Prov. xvii. 21, and oft elsewhere. And this sense seems to agree better both with the following clause, which repeats the same thing with some aggravation, after the manner; and with the reason used to enforce this and the following command, ver. 12, which concerns not such as are insensible, but rather such as had too deep a sense of the evil of affliction. *Neither be weary of his correction;* neither esteem it tedious and intolerable, but endure it with patience and cheerfulness.

q Deut. 8. 5.

12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; qeven as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

Afflictions are not infelicities, but benefits and comforts, because they are testimonies of God's love, which is infinitely more desirable than any evil can be terrible. They show God's purpose, and desire, and care to purge us from our sins, and to make us fit for his presence and kingdom. This and the former verse seem to be here inserted in the midst of his commendations of wisdom, to remove an objection against the excellency and happiness of wise or pious men, taken from those many calamities to which such persons are frequently exposed, the reason of which providence he here giveth.

r ch. 8. 34, 35. † Heb. *the man that draweth out understanding.*

13 ¶ rHappy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and †the man *that* getteth understanding.

Happy is the man, notwithstanding all his afflictions, *that findeth wisdom;* which supposeth his diligent searching for it, expressed chap. ii. 4. *That getteth*, Heb. *that draweth out;* which expression implies two things: 1. That man hath it not naturally in himself, but must have it from another, even from God and his word. 2. That men should labour for it, as those do that dig and draw forth metals out of the earth.

s Job 28. 15, &c. Ps. 19. 10. ch. 8. 10, 19. & 16. 16.

14 sFor the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

It is more necessary and advantageous, because it is so, not only for this short life, but also to the future and everlasting life, in which gold and silver bear no price.

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15 She *is* more precious than rubies: and [t] all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

[t] Mat. 13. 44.

For true worth and usefulness.

16 [u] Length of days *is* in her right hand; *and* in her left hand riches and honour.

[u] ch. 4. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 8.

Wisdom is here represented as a great and generous princess distributing gifts to her subjects. She giveth them *long life*, &c., unless when she foresees that these things would prove snares and mischiefs to them, as they very frequently do to others.

17 [x] Her ways *are* ways of pleasantness, and all her paths *are* peace.

[x] Matt. 11. 29, 30.

Are ways of pleasantness; are exceedingly delightful, to wit, to those who know them and walk in them; whose judgment is certainly to be preferred before the contrary opinion of ungodly men, who are grossly ignorant of them, and professed enemies to them. *Are peace;* procure a blessed tranquillity in a man's mind and conscience, prosperity in his undertakings, and eternal rest with God in glory.

18 She *is* [y] a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy *is every one* that retaineth her.

[y] Gen. 2. 9. & 3. 22.

She is a tree of life; she is a certain pledge and mean of everlasting life and happiness. He alludes to that *tree of life*, Gen. ii. 9; iii. 22; which if eaten by man in Paradise before he fell, should have perpetually preserved him in life, and health, and vigour; and intimates that this is the only restorer of that life which we have lost by sin. *That lay hold upon her;* that eagerly pursue after her, and when they overtake her do greedily and gladly apprehend and embrace her, as the Hebrew word signifies. *That retaineth her;* that holdeth her fast, and is constantly resolved not to forsake her.

19 [z] The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he ‖ established the heavens.

[z] Ps. 104. 24. Isa. 51. 13. Jer. 10. 12. & 51. 15.

‖ Or, prepared.

By wisdom; either, 1. By Christ, the co-essential and co-eternal Wisdom of God the Father. Or, 2. By that Divine perfection of wisdom, which is the fountain of that wisdom that is in man, which Solomon hath hitherto commended; and therefore the commendation of that wisdom tends to be commendation of this, which is a stream flowing from it. *Hath founded the earth;* hath fixed it in the lowest part of the world. *Established the heavens,* or *fitted* or *ordered them;* framed them in that exquisite order which now they are.

20 [a] By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and [b] the clouds drop down the dew.

[a] Gen. 7. 11. [b] Job 36. 28.

The depths are broken up; that great abyss or depth of waters, which was mixed with and contained in the bowels of the earth, did break forth into fountains and rivers for the use of men and beasts; which is justly remembered here as an illustrious effect of God's wisdom, by which the earth was made habitable, and the waters serviceable. *The dew;* under which the rain is comprehended, as being of the same nature and use.

21 ¶ My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:

Them, to wit, *wisdom and discretion;* of which he hath hitherto discoursed, and which are expressed in the end of this verse, and may be referred hither by a figure called trajection; and the words may be put into this order, *let not sound wisdom and discretion depart from thine eyes,* but keep them *diligently.* The like trajections are found in other parts of Scripture. *From thine eyes,* i. e. from the eyes of thy mind. Constantly and seriously meditate upon them, and upon those excellent precepts and rules which proceed from them.

22 So shall they be life unto thy soul, and [c] grace to thy neck.

[c] ch. 1. 9.

Unto thy soul; either, 1. To thee or thy person. They shall prolong and perpetuate thy life, and make it life indeed, to wit, pleasant and happy; whereas a miserable life is reputed a kind of death, and is oft so called. Or, to thy soul, properly so called. They shall quicken, and delight, and save thy soul. *Grace to thy neck;* like a beautiful chain or ornament about thy neck, as above, ver. 3; chap. i. 9.

23 [d] Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

[d] Ps. 37. 24. & 91. 11, 12. ch. 10. 9.

Walk in thy way; manage all thy employments and concerns. *Safely,* or *securely,* or *confidently,* without danger or fear; casting thy care upon God in the discharge of thy duty. *Shall not stumble* at those stumbling-blocks and temptations at which heedless sinners commonly stumble and fall. Thou shalt thereby be kept from falling into sin, and that mischief which generally attends upon it.

24 [e] When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.

[e] Lev. 26. 6. Ps. 3. 5. & 4. 8.

Free from distracting cares and terrors, which ofttimes haunt sinners even in their sleep, because thy mind shall be composed and serene through the sense of God's favour and providence, and the conscience of thine own integrity.

25 [f] Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.

[f] Ps. 91. 5. & 112. 7.

Be not afraid, i. e. thou shalt not be afraid. For that it is a promise, seems most probable from the context; only it is for greater emphasis delivered in the form of a precept; I allow thee and require thee not to be afraid, which is both thy duty and privilege. *Of sudden fear;* for sudden and unexpected evils are most frightful and grievous. And *fear* is here put for the evils feared, as Prov. i. 26, 27, and oft elsewhere. *The desolation of the wicked;* either, 1. Actively, which they bring upon thee. Or, rather 2. Passively, which befalls them, when *the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity,* as it is expressed, Isa. xxvi. 21; and thou mayst be apt to fear lest thou shouldst be involved in the common calamity; but fear not, for God will then hide thee in his chambers, as he promised, Isa. xxvi. 20.

26 For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

Thy confidence; a sufficient and sure ground of confidence to thee. *From being taken,* in the snares either of sin or of mischief.

27 ¶ [g] Withhold not good from † them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do *it.*

[g] Rom. 13. 7. Gal. 6. 10. † Heb. *the owners thereof.*

Withhold not good; do not deny it, but readily and cheerfully impart it, which is implied in the contrary, as above, ver. 11, and oft in this book, as we shall see. *Good;* any thing which is good; either spiritually, as counsel, comfort, reproof, &c.; or civilly, the good things of the present life, as *good* is taken, Psal. iv. 6, called *this world's good,* 1 John iii. 17. *From them to whom it is due,* Heb. *from the lords* or *owners of it;* from those who have any kind of right to it; either, 1. By the law of justice and equity, prescribed both by the natural and written laws of God, and by the civil laws of men. So this place commands the payment of just debts, and the restitution of things either found or committed to our trust, or taken from others by fraud or violence. Or, 2. (which seems to be chiefly intended by comparing this with the next verse, though the former is not to be excluded,) By that great and sovereign law of love or charity, which God hath written in the hearts of men by nature, and frequently and severely enjoined in his word, whereby every man is obliged according to his ability and opportunity, to pity and relieve such as are in real want or misery; who in that case are here called *the owners* of our goods, not in respect of men, as if men in want might seize upon the riches of others, but in respect of God, who is the sovereign Lord and only true Proprietary of all men's estates, who giveth them when and to whom he pleaseth, and who doth not give away his right, nor make men absolute lords of them to dispose them as they will, but only allows them the use and comfort of them upon such conditions, and with such reservations and rent charges

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as I may call them, as he hath appointed, whereof this is one, that men should readily and freely communicate them to other men who need and require their help. And such actions, though they be acts of charity and bounty to men, yet, as to God, they are acts of *righteousness*, as they are called, Prov. xi. 18; 2 Cor. ix. 9, and in many other places. *To do it;* either, 1. To withhold it. Or, 2. To do good. And this clause may be added, either, 1. As a limitation, to intimate that God expects from men *according to what they have, and not according to what they have not*, as is said, 2 Cor. viii. 12. Or, 2. As an argument to persuade them to partake the present season to perform this duty, when they are capable of so doing, because by the changes of this world, and the course of Divine providence, they may be disenabled from the performance of this great and necessary duty, and then they will be without excuse.

h Lev. 19. 13. Deut. 24. 15.

28 [h]Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

The former verse forbade the denial, and this forbids the delay of this duty. *Unto thy neighbour;* unto any man, as the word *neighbour* is commonly used in Scripture, as hath been oft proved. *I will give*, to wit, what is thy due, in manner before expressed, or what thou needest; for this word is generally used concerning free or charitable gifts, and not concerning due debts.

‖ Or, Practise no evil.

29 ‖Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.

Devise not evil; any thing injurious or hurtful. Having commanded doing of good, ver. 27, 28, he here forbids doing or designing any evil. *Dwelleth securely by thee;* relying upon thine integrity: do not therefore betray thy trust, which is hateful even to heathens.

i Rom. 12. 18.

30 ¶ [i]Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

Strive not; either by words before the magistrate; or otherwise by thine actions. *Without cause;* without just and necessary cause. *If he have done thee no harm;* whereby he clearly implies that in case of injury a man may by all lawful means defend himself.

k Ps. 37. 1. & 73. 3. ch. 24. 1. † Heb. a man of violence.

31 ¶ [k]Envy thou not †the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

Envy thou not the oppressor, for his impunity and success in his wicked designs, and the wealth which he gains by his unrighteous practices. *Choose none of his ways;* for what men envy in others they seek to obtain for themselves.

l Ps. 25. 14.

32 For the froward *is* abomination to the LORD: [l]but his secret *is* with the righteous.

The froward; or, *perverse*, who walketh in crooked or sinful paths, as the oppressor last mentioned; opposed to the upright man, who is called *right* or *straight*, as Deut. xxxii. 4; Prov. xxix. 27. *Is abomination to the Lord;* God hates him, and therefore sooner or later he must needs be extremely and eternally miserable. *His secret is with the righteous;* they are God's friends and favourites, to whom he familiarly imparts, as men use to do to their friends, his mind and counsels, or his secret favours and comforts, to which other men are strangers. Compare Psal. xxv. 14; John xv. 15; Rev. ii. 17.

m Lev. 26. 14, &c. Ps. 37. 22. Zech. 5. 4. Mal. 2. 2. n Ps. 1. 3.

33 ¶ [m]The curse of the LORD *is* in the house of the wicked: but [n]he blesseth the habitation of the just.

In the house of the wicked; not only upon his own person, but also upon his posterity, and upon all his domestical concerns.

o Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

34 [o]Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

He scorneth, he will expose to scorn and contempt, *the scorners;* proud and insolent sinners, who *make a mock at sin*, Prov. xiv. 9, and at God and religion also, and despise all counsels and means of amendment. Compare Psal. i. 1; Prov. i. 22. *He giveth grace*, to wit, favour, both with himself and with men, as this word and phrase is used, Exod. iii. 21; xi. 3; xii. 36; Eccles. ix. 11; Luke ii. 52, &c.

† Heb. exalteth the fools.

35 The wise shall inherit glory: but shame †shall be the promotion of fools.

Shall inherit glory; shall enjoy it not only for a season, as wicked men oftimes do, but as an inheritance, constantly, and to perpetuity. *Shame shall be the promotion of fools;* instead of that glory which they greedily seek, they shall meet with nothing but ignominy. Or, as it is in the margin, *shame exalteth* or *lifteth up fools*, i. e. it makes them manifest and notorious, as this very word is used Prov. xiv. 29. Or, as the words lie in the Hebrew text *fools take* or *carry away* (as this word is here rendered by divers both ancient and modern translators, and as it is used Lev. vi. 10, 15, and oft elsewhere) *shame*, to wit, as his proper portion or inheritance; which is here very fitly opposed to the portion or inheritance of the just. And although the verb be singular, yet it agrees well enough with the noun plural, because this is taken distributively, such constructions being very usual in the Hebrew text.

CHAP. IV.

Solomon showeth the excellency of his doctrine, 1—4. *His counsel to get wisdom*, 5, 6, *and understanding*, 7. *The honour which cometh thereby*, 8, 9. *The good effects of it*, 10—12. *He dehorts from the paths of the wicked, by the evil consequences thereof*, 13—19; *and exhorteth to keep several precepts for the better government of himself*, 20; *concerning his eyes*, 21, 22, *his heart*, 23, *his mouth*, 24, *and his feet*, 25—27.

a Ps. 34. 11. ch. 1. 8.

HEAR, [a]ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

Of a father; of me your teacher, who have paternal authority over you, and affection to you.

2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

Good doctrine; not vain, or foolish, or false, or pernicious counsels, but such as are true and profitable. *My law;* God's law or commands, delivered to you by my mouth. See on chap. iii. 1.

b 1 Chron. 29. 1.

3 For I was my father's son, [b]tender and only *beloved* in the sight of my mother.

My father's son, in a special manner; his best beloved son, and designed to be his successor in the throne. *Tender;* young and tender in years, and capable of any impressions, and tenderly educated. *Only beloved*, Heb. *only*, or *the only son;* or rather, because Bathsheba seems to have had other sons, 1 Chron. iii. 5, *as an only son*, as dearly beloved as an only son; in which sense this title is given to Isaac, Gen. xxii. 2, 12, 16, though he had another son, and to others. And all these circumstances are mentioned to show the necessity and great benefit of wholesome instruction, which his royal parents would not neglect, no, not in his tender years, and thereby to prepare and excite them by his example to receive instruction.

c 1 Chron. 28. 9. Eph. 6. 4. d ch. 7. 2.

4 [c]He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: [d]keep my commandments, and live.

Said unto me: the following verses, at least as far as the 10th verse, are propounded as the words of David, that the name of so great a king and holy a prophet might add the more authority and efficacy to his counsels. *And live*, i. e. thou shalt live. It is a promise in the form of a command, as chap. iii. 25.

e ch. 2. 2, 3.

5 [e]Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

From the belief and practice of my word.

f 2 Thess. 2. 10.

6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: [f]love her, and she shall keep thee.

Love her; he intimates that it is not enough to do what is good, which may sometimes proceed from worldly or

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sinful motives, but that we must have a sincere and fervent love to it.

[e] Matt. 13. 44. Luke 10. 42.

7 [e]Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

The principal thing; the most excellent of all possessions. *With all;* even with the price of all, though it cost thee the loss of all which thou hast. Or, *in or among all.* Whilst you labour for other things, do not neglect this.

[b] 1 Sam. 2. 30.

8 [b]Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

Exalt her; let her have thine highest esteem and affection. *To honour,* both with God and men; which Solomon knew by experience.

[f] Or, *she shall compass thee with a crown of glory.*

9 She shall give to thine head [f]an ornament of grace: ‖ a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

An ornament of grace, i. e. an acceptable or beautiful ornament, such as they used to put upon their heads.

[k] ch. 3. 2.

10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; [k]and the years of thy life shall be many.

11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.

In the way of wisdom; either, 1. Which procureth wisdom. Or, 2. Which wisdom directeth thee to walk in.

[l] Ps. 18. 36. [m] Ps. 91. 11, 12.

12 When thou goest, [l]thy steps shall not be straitened; [m]and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

Thy steps shall not be straitened; thou shalt manage thine affairs with great facility, and safety, and success. It is a metaphor from those who walk in a strait and uneven path, where they are apt to stumble and fall. *Not stumble;* not miscarry.

13 Take fast hold of instruction; let *her* not go: keep her; for she *is* thy life.

The conductor, and preserver, and comfort of thy life.

[n] Ps. 1. 1. ch. 1. 10, 15.

14 ¶ [n]Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men.*

Enter not into the path of the wicked; avoid their courses and company. *Go not;* do not proceed further. If thou hast unadvisedly entered into it, do not persist in it, but get thee speedily out of it.

15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

Avoid it, pass not by it; keep at a great distance from it. Compare Job xxii. 23; Prov. v. 8. *Turn from it;* shun all occasions of sin.

[o] Ps. 36. 4. Is. 57. 20.

16 [o]For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause *some* to fall.

They sleep not; they cannot compose themselves to sleep with quietness and satisfaction to their own minds. *To fall* into their own snares, either into sin or into mischief.

17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

They eat the bread of wickedness: the sense is either, 1. Wickedness is as necessary and as pleasant to them as their bread; which suits well with the former verse. Or, 2. They live wholly upon what they get by wicked courses; which gives the reason of what he last said, why they could not sleep without prey. *The wine of violence,* i. e. gotten by violence. See on the former clause.

[p] Matt. 5. 14, &c. Phil. 2. 15. [q] 2 Sam. 23. 4.

18 [p]But the path of the just [q]*is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The path of the just is as the shining light; the common course of their lives or actions is pure and spotless, clear and certain, safe and comfortable, as light is. *That shineth more and more unto the perfect day;* just men do daily more and more grow in knowledge, and grace, and consolation, until all be perfected and swallowed up in glory.

[r] 1 Sam. 2. 9. Job 18. 5, 6. Is. 59. 9, 10. Jer. 23. 12. John 12. 35.

19 [r]The way of the wicked *is* as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

As darkness; full of gross ignorance and error, of uncertainty and confusion, of wickedness, of danger and misery; all which come under the name of *darkness* in Scripture use, and suit well with the context. *Stumble,* Heb. *shall stumble.* Though they are always in danger, yet they are always secure, and do not discern their danger, nor the cause, or manner, or time of their ruin, till they be surprised with it.

20 ¶ My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

[s] ch. 3. 3, 21. [t] ch. 2. 1.

21 [s]Let them not depart from thine eyes; [t]keep them in the midst of thine heart.

Heartily love them, and stedfastly retain them.

[u] ch. 3. 8. & 12. 18. † Heb. *medicine.* † Heb. *above all keeping.*

22 For they *are* life unto those that find them, and [u]† health to all their flesh.

23 ¶ Keep thy heart † with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life.

Thy heart; thy mind and thoughts, and especially the will and affections, which are the more immediate and effectual cause of all men's actions. *Out of it are the issues of life;* from thence proceed all the actions, as of the natural, so of the spiritual life, which lead to eternal life and happiness; as, on the contrary, all evil actions tending to death spring from thence, which is here implied.

† Heb. *frowardness of mouth, and perverseness of lips.*

24 Put away from thee † a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

All sorts of sinful words, which proceed from and discover an evil heart.

25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

Direct all thine actions by a good intention, to a right end, and keep thy mind fixed upon that way which leads to it, and neither look nor turn aside to the right hand nor to the left, as it follows, ver. 27.

‖ Or, *all thy ways shall be ordered aright.*

26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and ‖ let all thy ways be established.

Ponder the path of thy feet; consider thine actions before thou doest them, and see that they agree with the rule. *Let all thy ways be established;* let thine actions be uniformly and constantly good in spite of all temptations to the contrary. Or, *let thy ways be directed* or *disposed aright,* as this Hebrew word signifies. Or, *thy ways shall be established.* So this is a promise to confirm the foregoing precept. If thou dost ponder them, thou mayst expect God's blessing and good success in them.

[x] Deut. 5. 32. & 28. 14. Josh. 1. 7. [y] Is. 1. 16. Rom. 12. 9.

27 [x]Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: [y]remove thy foot from evil.

Fly all extremes, and neither add to God's commands, nor take from them.

CHAP. V.

An exhortation to the study of wisdom, 1, 2. *To shun the company of strange women,* 3—5. *The mischief of whoredom and riots,* 14. *In a married estate exhorted to chastity in that state, and to rejoice with the wife of his youth,* 15—19. *God's pondering our ways an argument to close with the exhortation,* 20, 21. *The miserable end of the wicked,* 22, 23.

MY son, attend unto my wisdom, *and* bow thine ear to my understanding:

2 That thou mayest regard discretion, and *that* thy lips may [a]keep knowledge.

[a] Mal. 2. 7.

Regard, or, *keep,* i. e. hold fast, as it is in the next clause. *Discretion;* spirituai wisdom for the conduct of

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thy life, as this word is used Prov. i. 4, and elsewhere in this book. *That thy lips may keep knowledge;* that by wise and pious discourses thou mayst preserve and improve thy wisdom for thine own and others' good.

b ch. 2. 16. & 6. 24. + Heb. *palate.* c Ps. 55. 21. 3 ¶ [b] For the lips of a strange woman drop *as* an honeycomb, and her † mouth *is* [c] smoother than oil:

It concerns thee to get and to use discretion, that thou mayst be able to resist and repel those manifold temptations to which thou art exposed. *Drop as an honeycomb;* her words and discourses are sweet, and charming, and prevalent.

d Eccles. 7. 26. e Heb. 4. 12. 4 But her end is [d] bitter as wormwood, [e] sharp as a twoedged sword.

Her design, and the effect of that lewdness to which she enticeth men, is the sinner's destruction.

f ch. 7. 27. 5 [f] Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

Her feet; her course or manner of life.

6 Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, *that* thou canst not know *them.*

Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, to prevent thy serious consideration of the way and manner of rescuing thyself from this deadly course of life. *Movable;* various and changeable. She transforms herself into several shapes, to accommodate herself to the humours of her lovers, and hath a thousand arts and deceits to insnare them, and hold them fast. *Thou canst not know them;* thou canst not discover all her subtle practices, and much less deliver thyself from them.

7 Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

8 Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:

Lest thine eyes affect thine heart, and her allurements prevail over thee.

9 Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:

Thine honour; thy dignity and reputation, the strength and vigour of thy body and mind, which is an honour to a man, and which are commonly wasted by adulterous practices. *Unto others;* unto whores, and their husbands, and children, and friends. *Thy years;* the flower of thine age, thy youthful years. *Unto the cruel;* to the harlot, who though she pretends ardent love and kindness to thee, yet in truth is one of the most cruel creatures in the world, wasting thy estate and body without the least pity, and then casting thee off with scorn and contempt; and when her interest requires it, taking away thy very life, of which there are innumerable examples, and damning thy soul for ever.

+ Heb. *thy strength.* 10 Lest strangers be filled with † thy wealth; and thy labours *be* in the house of a stranger;

Strangers; not only the strange women themselves, but bawds, panders, and other adulterers, who are in league with them. *Thy labours;* wealth gotten by thy labours.

11 And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,

Thou mourn at the last; bitterly bewail thy own madness and misery when it is too late. *Thy flesh and thy body;* thy flesh, even thy body; the particle *and* being put expositively. *Consumed* by those manifold diseases which filthy and inordinate lusts bring upon the body, of which physicians give a very large and sad catalogue, and the bodies of many adulterers give full proof.

g ch. 1. 29. h ch. 1. 25. & 12. 1. 12 And say, How have I [g] hated instruction, and my heart [h] despised reproof;

How have I hated instruction! oh what a mad beast have I been, to hate and slight the fair warnings which were given me, and against mine own knowledge, to run headlong into this pit of destruction! which are not the words of a true penitent mourning for and turning from his sin, but only of a man who is grieved for the sad effects of his delightful lusts, and tormented with the horror of his own guilty conscience. *My heart despised reproof;* I did with my whole heart abhor all admonitions.

13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

Of my teachers; of my parents, and friends, and ministers, who faithfully and seasonably informed me of those mischiefs and miseries which now I feel.

14 I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

I was almost in all evil. Oh what a miserable man am I! there is scarce any misery, in respect of estate, or body, or soul, into which I am not already plunged. The words also are and may well be rendered thus, *In a moment I am come into all evil.* In how little a time, and for what short and momentary pleasures, am I now come into extreme and remediless misery! *In the midst of the congregation and assembly:* I, who designed and expected to enjoy my lusts with secrecy and impunity, am now made a public example and shameful spectacle to all men, and that in the congregation of Israel, where I was taught better things, and where such actions are most infamous and hateful.

15 ¶ Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

This metaphor contained here, and ver. 16—18, is to be understood either, 1. Of the free and lawful use of a man's estate, both for his own comfort, and for the good of others. Or rather, 2. Of the honest use of matrimony, as the proper remedy against these filthy practices. This best suits with the whole context, both foregoing and following; and thus it is explained in the end of ver. 18. So the sense is, Content thyself with those delights which God alloweth thee, with the sober use of the marriage bed. Why shouldst thou ramble hither and thither, trespassing against God and men, to steal their waters, which thou mightest freely take out of thine own cistern or well. The ground of the metaphor is this, that waters were scarce and precious in those countries, and therefore men used to make cisterns and wells for their own private use. And the same metaphor of *waters,* and of a *pit,* or *well,* is applied to things of this nature elsewhere, as Prov. xxiii. 27; Isa. xlviii. 1; li. 1.

16 Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, *and* rivers of waters in the streets.

Thy fountains; thy children proceeding from thy wife, called *thy fountain,* ver. 18, and from thyself, as the Israelites are said to come from the *fountain of Israel,* Deut. xxxiii. 28; Psal. lxviii. 26. Compare Isa. li. 1. And *fountains* are here put for *rivers* flowing from them, as it is explained in the next clause, and as it is Psal. civ. 10, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect. And this title may be the more fitly given to children, because as they are rivers in respect of their parents, so when they grow up, they also become fountains to their children. *Be dispersed abroad;* they shall be multiplied, and in due time appear abroad in the world to thy comfort and honour, and for the good of others; whereas whores are commonly barren, and men are ashamed to own the children of whoredom.

17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.

Hereby thou mayst be secured, that thou dost not father and leave thine estate to other men's children; whereas the parents of harlots' children are common or uncertain.

18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with [i] the wife of thy youth. i Mal. 2. 14.

Thy fountain; thy wife, as the next clause explains it. *Be blessed;* she shall be blessed with children; for barrenness was esteemed a curse and reproach, especially among the Israelites. Or rather, she shall be a blessing and a comfort to thee, as it follows, and not a curse and a snare, as a harlot will be. *Rejoice with the wife;* seek not to have for that delight which God alloweth thee to take with thy wife. So here he explains the foregoing metaphor, and applies it to his present design. *Of thy youth;* which thou didst marry in her and thine own youthful days, with whom therefore in all reason and justice thou art still to satisfy

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thyself, even when she is old. Or he mentions *youth*, because that is the season in which men are most prone to unclean practices, against which men are commonly fortified by the infirmities of old age.

19 [b] *Let her be as* the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts † satisfy thee at all times; and † be thou ravished always with her love.

[b] See Cant. 2. 9. & 4. 5. & 7. 3.
† Heb. water thee.
† Heb. err thou always in her love.

As the loving hind, or, *as the beloved hind*, Heb. *the hind of loves*; as amiable and delightful as the hinds are, either, 1. To their males, the harts; or, 2. To princes and great men, who used to make them tame and familiar, and to take great delight in them, as hath been noted by many writers; of which see my Latin Synopsis. *Her breasts*, i. e. her loves and embraces, expressed by *lying between the breasts*, Cant. i. 13; Compare Ezek. xxiii. 3, 8, 21. *At all times*; at all convenient times; for that there may be excess in the use of the marriage bed is manifest, not only from many scriptures, but from the light of nature, and the consent of wise and sober heathens, who have laid restraints upon men in this particular. A man may be drunk with his own wine, and intemperate with his own wife. Or, in all ages and conditions. Do not only love her when she is young and beautiful, but also when she is old and deformed. *Be thou ravished*; love her fervently. It is an hyperbolical expression.

20 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with [l] a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

[l] Heb. 2. 16. & 7. 5.

Why wilt thou destroy and damn thyself for those delights which thou mayst enjoy without sin or danger?

21 [m] For the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

[m] Job 31. 4. & 34. 21. ch. 15. 3. Jer. 16. 17. & 32. 19. Gen. 7. 2. Heb. 4. 13.

Before the eyes of the Lord; God sees all thy filthy actions, though done with all possible cunning and secrecy. He taketh an exact account of all their doings, that he may recompense them according to the kinds, degrees, numbers, and aggravations of all their unchaste actions.

22 ¶ [n] His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his † sins.

[n] Ps. 9. 15.
† Heb. sin.

In vain doth he think to disentangle himself from his lusts by repenting when he grows in years, and to escape punishments; for he is in perfect bondage to his lusts, and neither able nor willing to set himself at liberty; and if he do escape the rage of a jealous husband, and the sentence of the magistrate, yet he shall be infallibly overtaken by the righteous judgment of God.

23 [o] He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

[o] Job 4. 21. 36. 12.

Without instruction; because he neglected instruction. Or, *without correction* or *amendment*. He shall die in his sins, and not repent of them, as he designed and hoped to do before his death. *In the greatness of his folly*; through his stupendous folly, whereby he cheated himself with hopes of repentance or impunity, and exposed himself to endless torments for the momentary pleasures of sinful lusts. *To go astray* from God, and from the way of life, and from eternal salvation.

CHAP. VI.

Dehortation against suretiship, 1. *The danger of it*, 2; *and the way of delivery*, 3—5. *Sluggards reproved by a similitude of the ant*, 6—11. *The carriage of the wicked described*, 12—14; *and his sudden ruin*. 15. *Of seven things which are displeasing to God*, 16—19. *The benefits of keeping the commandments*, 20—24. *The mischief of adultery*, 25. *Its evil consequences*, 26—35.

MY son, [a] if thou be surety for thy friend, *if* thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,

[a] ch. 11. 15. 17. 18. & 20. & 22. & 27. 13.

Surety, to wit, rashly, without considering for whom or how far thou dost oblige thyself, or how thou shalt discharge the debt, if occasion require it. Otherwise suretiship in some cases may be not only lawful, but an act of justice, and prudence, and charity. See Gen. xlii. 37; xliii. 9; Philem. 19. Or, *to* (as this prefix most commonly signifies) *a friend. Stricken thy hand*; obliged thyself by giving thy hand, or joining thy hands with another man's, as the custom then was in such cases; of which see Job xvii. 3; Prov. xvii. 18; xxii. 26. *With a stranger*; with the creditor, whom he calls a *stranger*, because the usurers in Israel, who lent money to others for their necessary occasions, upon condition of paying use for it, were either heathens, or were reputed as bad as heathens, because this practice was forbidden by God's law, Deut. xxiii. 19. Or, *to* or *for a stranger*; for here is the same prefix which is rendered *for* in the former clause. And so he may imply, that whether a man be surety to or for a friend, or to or for a stranger, the case and course to be used is much of the same kind.

2 Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

Thy freedom is lost, and thou art now in bondage to another.

3 Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, ‖ and make sure thy friend.

‖ Or, *so shalt thou prevail with thy friend.*

Into the hand; into the power. *Of thy friend*; either, 1. Of the creditor, who possibly may be also thy friend; yet take the following course with him, and much more if he be a stranger. Or, 2. Of the debtor, for whom, as being thy friend, thou didst become surety; whereby thou art not only in the creditor's power to exact payment, but also in the debtor's power, by his neglect or unfaithfulness, to expose thee to the payment of the debt. And this may seem best to agree both with ver. 1, where *friend* is taken in that sense, and is distinguished from the creditor, who is called a *stranger*, and with the words here following; for this *humbling of himself* was not likely to have much power with a stranger and a griping usurer; but it might probably prevail with his friend, either to take effectual care to pay the debt, or at least to discharge him from the obligation, or to secure him against it some other way. *Humble thyself*, Heb. *offer thyself to be trodden upon*, or *throw thyself down* at his feet. As thou hast made thyself his servant, bear the fruits of thine own folly, and humbly and earnestly implore his patience and clemency. *And make sure thy friend*; or, *and prevail with thy friend*; strive to win him by thine incessant and earnest solicitations. Or, *honour* or *magnify thy friend*, which is fitly and properly opposed to, and indeed is in some good measure done by, the humbling a man's self before him.

4 [b] Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids.

[b] Ps. 132. 4.

To wit, until thou hast taken care for the discharge of this obligation. Be not secure, nor negligent, nor dilatory in this matter.

5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand *of the hunter*, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

With all possible expedition, as the roe runs swiftly away.

6 ¶ [c] Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

[c] Job 12. 7.

This is another distinct precept; and it is for the most part as needless to seek, as hard to find, coherence in the proverbs and counsels of this book. *Her ways*; her actions and manner of living, especially her diligence and providence, which are the things commended in her, ver. 7, 8; of which naturalists give many instances, as that the ants watch the fittest seasons for all things, that they provide most plentifully against the time of famine, that they never hinder, but always assist, one another in their work, and unite their force together to carry away such things as are too large or heavy for one of them; that they prepare fit cells or repositories for their corn in the ground, and such as the rain cannot easily reach; and if through excessive rain their corn be wet, they bring it forth to be dried; that

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they bite off the ends of the grains of corn that they may not grow, &c.

7 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

Which might direct them in or quicken them to the work, as the bees have their kings, and many other creatures have their leaders. This heightens their commendation.

8 Provideth her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest.

When they come forth in great numbers, as in winter they stir not out of their holes.

d ch. 24. 33, 34. 9 [d] How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

How long wilt thou sleep? when the ants are watchful and labour, not only in the day time, but even by night, when the moon shineth.

10 *Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

This he speaks in the person of the sluggard, refusing to arise, and requiring more sleep, that so he might express the disposition and common practice of such persons. *Folding of the hands* is the gesture of men composing themselves to sleep.

e ch. 10. 4. & 13. 4. & 20. 4. 11 [e] So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

As one that travelleth, swiftly and unexpectedly. *As an armed man*, irresistibly or unavoidably.

12 ¶ A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.

He showeth the naughtiness of his heart by the wickedness of his talk and discourses, to which he doth accustom himself, as *walking* implies.

f Job 15. 12. Ps. 35. 19. ch. 10. 10. 13 [f] He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;

He vents his wickedness, as by his speech, so also by his gestures, whereby he secretly signifies what he is afraid or ashamed to express openly to his accomplices, his intentions or desires of some evil towards another person; which having in the general declared by the motion of his eyes or feet, he points out the particular person by his fingers.

g Mic. 2. 1. 14 Frowardness *is* in his heart, [g] he deviseth mischief continually; [h] he †soweth discord.

h ver. 19. †Heb. *casteth forth.*

Frowardness; perverse or wicked thoughts and desires. *He soweth discord*; either out of malice against others, or out of a base design of improving it to his own advantage.

15 Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he [i] be broken [k] without remedy.

i Jer. 19. 11. k 2 Chron. 36. 16.

Heb. *and there* shall be *no healing*; no prevention of it beforehand, nor recovery afterward.

16 ¶ These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination †unto him:

†Heb. *of his soul.*

Hate, to wit, above many other sins, which have a worse name in the world.

l Ps. 18. 27. & 101. 5. †Heb. *Haughty eyes.* m Ps. 120. 2, 3. n Is. 1. 15. 17 [l] †A proud look, [m] a lying tongue, and [n] hands that shed innocent blood,

A proud look; pride of heart, which commonly discovers itself by a man's looks and gestures. See Psal. ci. 5; cxxxi. 1; Prov. xxx. 13. *A lying tongue*; he that accustometh himself to lying and deceit in his common conversation.

o Gen. 6. 5. 18 [o] An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, [p] feet that be swift in running to mischief,

p Is. 59. 7. Rom. 3. 15.

An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations; he whose practice it is to design and contrive wickedness. *Feet that be swift in running to mischief*; such as greedily and readily execute their wicked designs, without any restraint or delay.

q Ps. 27. 12. ch. 19. 5, 9. 19 [q] A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he [r] that soweth discord among brethren.

r ver. 14.

That speaketh lies, to wit, in judgment; whereby this differs from the former lying, ver. 17. *Brethren*; dear relations or friends.

s ch. 1. 8. Eph. 6. 1. 20 ¶ [s] My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Keep thy father's commandment, so far as it is not contrary to God's command. *Forsake not the law of thy mother*, whom children are too apt to despise. See Prov. i. 8.

t ch. 3. 3. & 7. 3. 21 [t] Bind them continually upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy neck.

Bind them continually upon thine heart; constantly remember and duly consider them. *Tie them about thy neck*: see on Prov. i. 9; iii. 3.

u ch. 3. 23, 24. x ch. 2. 11. 22 [u] When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, [x] it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

It, the law of God, which thy parents have taught thee, and pressed upon thee, *shall lead thee*; direct thee how to order all thy steps and actions. *It shall talk with thee*; it shall give thee counsel and comfort.

y Ps. 19. 8. & 119. 105. ‖ Or, *candle.* 23 [y] For the commandment *is* a ‖ lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life:

Is a lamp; it enlightens thy dark mind, and clearly discovers to thee the plain and right way. *Reproofs of instruction*; wise and instructive reproofs or admonitions. *The way to life*; both to preserve and prolong this life, and to procure eternal life to those that obey them.

z ch. 2. 16. & 5. 3. & 7. 5. ‖ Or, *of the strange tongue.* 24 [z] To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery ‖ of the tongue of a strange woman.

This is mentioned as a great commendation of God's word, because neither worldly discretion, nor civil education, nor moral precepts, nor any other considerations, are sufficient preservatives against this lust, as is manifest from daily experience.

a Matt. 5. 28. 25 [a] Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids.

Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; do not give way to, nor delight thyself with, unchaste thoughts or affections. Compare Matt. v. 28. *With her eyelids*; either with her beauty, which consists much in the eyes; or rather, with her amours and wanton glances.

b ch. 29. 3. c Gen. 39. 14. †Heb. *the woman of a man.* d Lev. 17. 18. 26 For [b] by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought* to a piece of bread: [c] and †the adulteress will [d] hunt for the precious life.

To a piece of bread; to extreme poverty, so as to want and be forced to beg his bread. *Hunt for the precious life*; to take away a man's life; either by consuming his body and spirits, and so shortening his days; or more directly and strictly, when she hath any great provocation to it, or any prospect of considerable advantage by it. Or, *for the precious soul*, which she corrupteth and destroyeth. But I prefer the former sense.

27 Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

The question implies a denial; he cannot escape burning. No more can he who burns in lust avoid destruction.

28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?

29 So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.

That goeth in to his neighbour's wife; that lieth with her, as the phrase signifies, Gen. xix. 31; xxix. 21, 23, &c. *Toucheth her*, i. e. hath carnal knowledge of her, as this word is used, Gen. xx. 6; 1 Cor. vii. 1, and in Terence, and

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other writers. *Shall not be innocent;* shall be punished as a malefactor, either by God or man.

30 *Men* do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;

Despise, i. e. abhor or reproach him, but rather pity and pardon him, who is urged by mere necessity to these practices.

e Ex. 22. 1, 4. 31 But *if* he be found, [e]he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.

He shall restore sevenfold. Quest. How doth this agree with God's law, which required only that he should restore double, or at most fourfold, or fivefold? Exod. xxii. 1, 4. *Answ.* 1. The number of *seven* may be here put indefinitely for many times, as it is Gen. iv. 24; Lev. xxvi. 28, and in many other places. 2. Some think that as thefts were multiplied, so the punishment of it was increased, in Solomon's time; or, at least, that it was the practice of some nations to require this sevenfold restitution. 3. He speaks not of that restitution which the law required, but of that which either the wronged person being potent might force the thief to make, or which the thief would willingly give rather than be exposed to public shame; as appears by the following clause, wherein he adds to this sevenfold restitution *all his substance,* which no law of God or man required. See on Exod. xxii. 4.

32 *But* whoso committeth adultery
f Heb. wants heart. with a woman [f]lacketh † understanding:
he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

Lacketh understanding; is a brutish and silly man, who madly rusheth upon those filthy courses, without any sense or consideration of the horrid shame and certain destruction which attends upon them. *Destroyeth his own soul,* or *life;* is guilty of self-murder and of soul-murder.

33 A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

A wound; civil or corporal punishment from the magistrate, or rather from the woman's husband, as it follows. *His reproach shall not be wiped away;* although it be forgiven by God, yet the reproach and scandal of it remains.

34 For jealousy *is* the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

It the rage of a man; it inflames a man with rage and fury against the adulterer. *In the day of vengeance;* when he hath an opportunity to avenge himself upon the delinquent.

† Heb. *He will not accept the face of any ransom.* 35 † He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

He will accept of no other recompence for the injury beneath thy life.

CHAP. VII.

Solomon again persuadeth to keep his laws, and delight in wisdom, 1—5. *A young man void of understanding is ensnared by a harlot,* 6—9. *A description of a harlot,* 10, 11, *from her practice,* 12, 13. *Of her subtlety,* 14—20; *by which she gained compliance to her desire,* 21, 22. *The danger of it, set forth under the similitude of a bird,* 23. *He craveth their attention,* 24; *and dehorteth from uncleanness,* 25—27.

a ch. 2. 1. MY son, keep my words, and [a]lay up my
b Lev. 18. 5. ch. 4. 4. Is. 55. 2. c Deu. 32. 10. commandments with thee.
2 [b]Keep my commandments, and live;
[c]and my law as the apple of thine eye.

And live, i. e. thou shalt live. A promise in the form of a command, as Prov. iii. 25. *As the apple of thine eye;* with all possible care and diligence, as men guard that part from all dangers, yea, even from the least mote. The eye is a most noble and necessary, and therefore highly esteemed and beloved, part of the body, and the apple thereof is the most honourable, and beautiful, and useful part of that part, and it is a most tender part, easily hurt or destroyed, and therefore needs to be diligently watched.

d Deut. 6. 8. & 11. 18. ch. 3. 3. & 6. 21. 3 [d]Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

Bind them upon thy fingers; as a ring which is put upon them, and is continually in a man's eye. Constantly remember them, and meditate upon them. *Write them upon the table of thine heart;* fix them in thy mind and affection. See on Prov. iii. 3.

4 Say unto wisdom, Thou *art* my sister; and call understanding *thy* kinswoman:

When other foolish young men seek wanton mistresses, whom they frequently call *sisters* or *kinswomen,* let wisdom be thy mistress; acquaint and delight thyself with her, and let her have the command of thy heart, and the conduct of thy life.

e ch. 2. 16. & 5. 3. & 6. 24. 5 [e]That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words.

This privilege Solomon doth so oft inculcate, either because he found in himself the great power and besotting nature of lustful inclinations; or because he observed these vices to abound more in his time, in which peace and prosperity made way for luxury and uncleanness.

6 ¶ For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,

This is either an historical relation, or rather a parabolical representation of that which frequently happened.

7 And beheld among the simple ones,
† Heb. *the sons.* f ch. 6. 32. & 9. 4, 16. I discerned among † the youths, a young man [f]void of understanding,

Whose strength and heat made him most subject to lustful impressions, and who wanted judgment and experience as well as grace to keep him from such courses.

8 Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house,

Passing through the street; idle and careless. *Near her corner;* near the corner of the street in which her house stood; such places being most convenient for that wicked purpose, as giving opportunity either for the discovery of passengers in several streets, or for the escape of such as might be in danger of being taken in her house. Compare ver. 12. *He went the way to her house;* not with intention to act gross filthiness with her, as may be gathered from the following passages, but to gratify his curiosity, and to understand the manner of such persons, and to please himself with the sight of her, or discourse of her.

g Job 24. 15. † Heb. *in the evening of the day.* 9 [g]In the twilight, † in the evening, in the black and dark night:

In the evening; when the day labour being ended, he was at leisure for any thing; and when such strumpets used to walk abroad for prey. *In the black and dark night;* when it begun to be black and dark.

10 And, behold, there met him a woman *with* the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.

With the attire of an harlot; with a habit and carriage agreeable to her quality and design. *Subtle,* or *wary,* or *reserved,* as she showed in her following discourse; wherein she proposeth all things which might invite him, and conceals whatsoever might discourage him.

h ch. 9. 13. i 1 Tim. 5. 13. Tit. 2. 5. 11 ([h]She *is* loud and stubborn; [i]her feet abide not in her house:

Loud, or *clamorous,* or *full of talk,* which served her design. *Stubborn;* rebellious against God, and against her husband, and incorrigible by all admonitions of ministers or friends. *Her feet abide not in her house;* she minds not her business, which lies at home, but gives up herself wholly to idleness and pleasure, which she seeks abroad with other men.

12 Now *is she* without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

Without; standing or waiting without or nigh the door of her house. *In the streets;* in places of resort. *At every corner;* at the corners of the streets, where she might either conceal or discover herself, as she saw fit.

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13 So she caught him, and kissed him, *and* † with an impudent face said unto him,

† Heb. *she strengthened her face, and said.*

14 † *I have* peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.

† Heb. *Peace offerings are upon me.*

I have paid my peace-offerings which I had vowed; whereby she signifies, either, 1. That she was no common harlot, but one of good repute for religion. Or rather, 2. That she had plentiful and excellent provisions at her house for his entertainment. For the peace-offerings were to be of the best flesh, Lev. xxii. 21, and a considerable part of these offerings fell to the offerers' share, wherewith they used to feast themselves and their friends; see Lev. ii. 3, &c.; vii. 31, &c.; xix. 6, &c.; xxii. 30, &c.; whereas the burnt-offerings where wholly consumed, and the flesh of the sin-offerings and trespass-offerings belonged to the priest.

15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.

Diligently to seek thy face; as not being able to take any pleasure in my feast without thy company. *I have found thee,* by a happy providence of God complying with my desires.

16 I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved *works*, with
k Is. 19. 9. k fine linen of Egypt.

She designs to inflame his lust by the mention of the bed, and by its ornaments and perfumes.

17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.

19 For the goodman *is* not at home, he is gone a long journey:

The goodman; whom she doth not call her husband, lest the mention of that name should awaken his conscience or discretion.

† Heb. *in his hand.* ‖ Or, *the new moon.*

20 He hath taken a bag of money † with him, *and* will come home at ‖ the day appointed.

He hath taken a bag of money with him; which is an evidence that he designs to go far, and to stay a considerable time. *And will come home at the day appointed;* so that we need not fear any surprisal.

l ch. 5. 3. m Ps. 12. 2.

21 With l her much fair speech she caused him to yield, m with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

With her much fair speech; which implies that her alluring words were more effectual with him than her impudent kisses, which possibly had a little alienated his mind from her. *She caused him to yield;* whereby he signifies that no provocation to sin is a sufficient excuse for sin. *She forced him;* she prevailed over him; which argues that there was some reluctancy in his judgment or conscience against it.

† Heb. *suddenly.*

22 He goeth after her † straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks:

Straightway; without delay and consideration. *As an ox to the slaughter;* either being drawn and driven to it; or going to it securely, as if it were going to a good pasture. *As a fool to the correction of the stocks;* or, which is more agreeable to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, *as* one in *fetters,* or bound with fetters, *to the correction of a fool,* i. e. to receive such correction or punishment as belongs to fools; which may imply either, 1. That he hath no more sense of the shame and mischief which he is bringing upon himself than a fool. Or, 2. That he can no more resist the temptation, nor avoid the danger, than a man fast tied with chains or fetters can free himself, although his be a moral and voluntary, and not a natural impotency.

23 Till a dart strike through his liver;
n Eccles. 9. 12. n as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it *is* for his life.

His liver, i. e. his vital parts, whereof the liver is one. Till his life be lost, as it is explained in the next clause. *Knoweth not;* which may be referred either to a foolish and inconsiderate young man; or to the silly bird to which he is compared, which comes to the same thing.

24 ¶ Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.

25 Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.

Decline to her ways; either to the paths which lead to her house, or to her manner of living.

26 For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, o many strong *men* have o Neh. 13. 26. been slain by her.

Strong men; men that excel others, either, 1. In bodily strength, upon which they presume, which yet is wasted, and by degrees ruined, by these courses. Or, 2. In wisdom, and fortitude, and resolution; whereby he implies how much more necessary it is for a weak and foolish young man to use all possible care and diligence to avoid this mischief.

27 p Her house *is* the way to hell, p ch. 2. 18. & 5. 5. & 9. 18. going down to the chambers of death.

To hell; or, *to the grave;* for the word is used in both senses; and this sense seems better to agree both with the foregoing and following words. Although, without repentance, hell will certainly be their portion, and their first death will be followed by the second.

CHAP. VIII.

Wisdom's fame, call, and exhortation, 1—9. *Her excellency, nature, and hatred of evil,* 10—13. *Her power,* 14—16; *and love to the godly,* 17. *Her riches,* 18, 19. *Her eternity,* 20—30. *Her delight in the children of men,* 31. *An exhortation to true wisdom,* 32, 33; *and the blessedness of them that are truly wise,* 34, 35. *The fruits of sin,* 36.

DOTH not q wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? q ch. 1. 20. & 9. 3.

It is a great question what this *wisdom* is, of which Solomon discourseth so largely and profoundly in this chapter. Some understand it of that attribute or perfection of the Divine nature which is called wisdom, whereby God perfectly knoweth all things, and maketh known to men what he judgeth necessary or expedient for them to know. Others understand it of the second person in the Godhead, the Son of God, who is called *the Wisdom of God,* Luke xi. 49. And it cannot fairly be denied that some passages do best agree to the former, and others to the latter opinion. Possibly both may be joined together, and the chapter may be understood of Christ, considered partly in his personal capacity, and partly in regard of his office, which was to impart the mind and will of God to mankind, which he did, 1. By revealing it to and writing it upon the mind of man at his first creation; for it was Christ who then gave being, and life, and light to mankind, as is undeniably evident from John i. 1—4, &c. 2. By publishing it unto the holy patriarchs and prophets in the time of the Old Testament: for it was Christ who spake and discovered things to them from time to time, as is manifest from I Pet. i. 11; iii. 18—20, and from many other scriptures, both of the Old Testament, as I have formerly noted in their proper places, and in the New Testament, as we shall see hereafter. 3. By declaring it from his own mouth, and by his apostles and ministers under the gospel. *Put forth her voice;* clearly and audibly instruct men how to avoid those fleshly lusts. He opposeth the inviting words of wisdom to the seducing speeches of the harlot.

2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

In the top of high places, where she may be best seen and heard; not in corners and in the dark, as the harlot did. *In the places of the paths;* where many paths meet, where there is a great concourse, and where travellers may need direction.

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3 She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

At the gates; the places of judgment, and of the confluence of people. *At the entry of the city,* to invite passengers at their first coming, and to conduct them to her house. *At the coming in at the doors,* to wit, of her house, as the harlot stood at her door to invite lovers.

4 Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice *is* to the sons of man.

To all men without exception, even to the meanest, who are thus called, Psal. xlix. 2.

5 O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

Ye simple; who want knowledge and experience, and are easily deceived. *Ye fools;* wilful and obstinate sinners.

ch. 22. 20. 6 Hear; for I will speak of [b]excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things.

Of excellent things, Heb. *of princely things,* worthy of princes to learn and practise them; or such as excel common things as much as princes do ordinary persons.

7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* † an abomination to my lips.

† Heb. the abomination of my lips

Shall speak, Heb. *shall meditate,* i. e. shall speak not rashly and hastily, but what I have well considered and digested. *Is an abomination to my lips:* I hate to speak it; therefore you may be assured that I shall not deceive you.

8 All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing † froward or perverse in them.

† Heb. wrested.

All the words of my mouth; all my precepts, promises, threatenings, &c. *Nothing froward or perverse in them;* not the least mixture of vanity, or error, or folly in them, as there is in the words of the wisest philosophers, &c.

9 They *are* all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

Plain; evident and clear to their minds; or, *right,* just and good. *To him that understandeth;* either to him who with an honest mind applies himself to the study of them in the diligent use of all the means appointed by God to that end; or to him whose mind God hath enlightened by his Spirit, though they seem otherwise to ignorant and carnal-minded men. *That find knowledge;* that are truly wise and discerning persons, and taught of God.

10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

And not silver, i. e. rather than silver, as such negative expressions are understood, Gen. xlv. 8; Exod. xvi. 8; Jer. vii. 22; xvi. 14, 15, and in many other places. Though withal he seems to intimate the inconsistency of these two studies and designs, and the great hinderance which the love of riches gives to the study of wisdom.

[c] Job 28. 15, 16, 17, 18, & 42. 12. Psal. 19. 10. & 119. 72, 127. Prov. 3. 14, 15. & 16. 16. & 22. 1. Eccles. 7. 1. Matt. 13. 44, 45, 46.

11 [c]For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

12 I wisdom dwell with ‖prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

‖ Or, subtilty.

Dwell with prudence; I do not content myself with high speculations, but my inseparable companion is prudence, to govern all my own actions, and to direct the actions of others by good counsels. This he saith, because some persons have much wit and knowledge, and nothing of discretion. *Find out knowledge,* i. e. I know them as clearly and certainly as if I had found them out by diligent searching. Or, *I find out,* is put for I help men to find out, as the Spirit is said to *intercede,* Rom. viii. 26, when it helpeth us to do so. *Of witty inventions;* of all ingenious designs and contrivances for the service and glory of God, and for the good of ourselves and others. But why may it not be rendered, *of wicked devices,* as this very word is translated, Prov. xii. 2: xiv. 17; xxiv. 8? For surely this is one great work of prudence, to discover, and so avoid, all evil counsels or devices, and the effects of them. But this I propose with submission, because I have not the concurrence of any interpreter in this exposition.

13 [d]The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: [e]pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and [f]the froward mouth, do I hate.

[d] ch. 16. 6. [e] ch. 6. 17. [f] ch. 4. 24.

The fear of the Lord; which he had before noted to be *the beginning of wisdom,* chap. i. 7. *Is to hate evil;* it consists in a careful abstinence from all sin, and that not from carnal or prudential motives, but from a true dislike and hatred of it. *Pride;* which he mentions first, as that which is most hateful to God, and most opposite to true wisdom and to the fear of God, which constantly produce humility. *The evil way;* all wicked actions, especially sinful customs and courses. *The froward mouth;* false doctrines, and bad counsels and deceits.

14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; [g]I have strength.

[g] Eccles. 7. 19.

Sound wisdom: all solid, and substantial, and useful, yea, essential wisdom, is natural and essential to me, for the word properly signifies *essence. I am understanding,* by my nature and essence, as was now said. Or, I am the author of understanding; as John xvii. 3, *This is life eternal,* i. e. this is the cause or means of it. *I have strength;* courage and resolution to execute all my counsels, and to conquer all difficulties.

15 [h]By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

[h] Dan. 2. 21. Rom. 13. 1.

By me kings reign: either, 1. They get their kingdoms by mine appointment and providence. Or rather, 2. They rule their kingdoms wisely, and justly, and happily, by my counsel and assistance; for this best suits with the next clause. *And princes decree justice:* their injustice or wickedness is from themselves, but all the just and good things which they do they owe to my conduct.

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

[i] 1 Sam. 2. 30. Psa. 91. 14. John 14. 21. [k] Jam. 1. 5.

17 [i]I love them that love me; and [k]those that seek me early shall find me.

I love them that love me; I do not despise their love, though it be but a small and inconsiderable thing to me, but I kindly accept it, and will recompense it with my love and favour. *That seek me early,* i. e. with sincere affection, and great diligence, and above all other persons or things in the world; which he mentions as the effect and evidence of their love; for otherwise all men pretend to love God.

18 [l]Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea,* durable riches and righteousness.

[l] 1 ch. 3. 16. Matt. 6. 33.

Which he mentions here, either, 1. As the best and surest way to get and to keep riches; for estates unjustly gotten quickly vanish, as is manifest both from Scripture and from common observation. Or, 2. To signify that this wisdom gives both worldly and spiritual or heavenly blessings together to its followers, whereas God gives riches alone to ungodly men, and they are to expect no other portion.

19 [m]My fruit *is* better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

[m] ch. 3. 14. ver. 10.

20 I ‖lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

‖ Or, walk.

Keeping at an equal distance from both extremes, and from the very borders of them; which is called a *putting away iniquity far from us,* Job xxii. 23.

21 That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

Substance; substantial, and true, and satisfying happiness; which is here opposed to all worldly enjoyments, which are said *not to be,* Prov. xxiii. 5; which are but mere shadows and dreams of felicity.

22 [n]The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

[n] ch. 3. 19. Eccles. 24. 9. John 1. 1.

Possessed me, as his Son by eternal generation, who was

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from eternity *with him*, as is said, John i. 1; and *in him*, as *he* also was *in me*, John xiv. 10. *In the beginning;* yea, and before the beginning, as it is largely expressed in the following verses. *Of his way;* either, 1. Of his counsels or decrees. Or rather, 2. Of his works of creation, as it follows.

o Ps. 2. 6.

23 °I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

Set up, Heb. *anointed;* ordained or constituted to be the person by whom the Father resolved to do all his works, first to create, and then to uphold, and govern, and judge, and afterwards to redeem and save the world; all which works are particularly ascribed to the Son of God, as is manifest from John i. 1, &c.; Col. i. 16, 17; Heb. i. 3, and many other places, as we may see hereafter in their several places. *From the beginning;* before which there was nothing but a vast eternity. *Or ever the earth was;* which he mentions, because this, together with the heaven, was the first of God's visible works.

24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

No depths; no abyss or deep waters, either mixed with the earth, as they were at first, or separated from it. *Brought forth;* begotten of my Father's essence.

p Job 15. 7, 8.

25 PBefore the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

Settled; or, *fixed* by their roots in the earth.

‖ Or, *open places.* ‡ Or, *the chief part.*

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the ‖fields, nor ‖the highest part of the dust of the world.

The earth, i. e. the dry land, called *earth* after it was separated from the waters, Gen. i. 10. *The fields;* the plain and open parts of the earth, distinguished from the *mountains* and *hills*, and the valleys enclosed between them. *The highest part;* or, *the first part*, or *beginning;* or, *the best part*, Heb. *the head;* that which exceeds other parts in riches or fruitfulness; which he seems to distinguish from the common fields. *Of the dust of the world;* of this lower part of the world, which consisteth of dust.

‖ Or, *a circle.*

27 When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set ‖a compass upon the face of the depth:

I was there, not as an idle spectator, but as a co-worker with my Father. *Of the depth*, i. e. of that great and deep abyss of water and earth mixed together, which is called both *earth* and *water*, and *the deep*, Gen. i. 2. When he made this lower world round, or in the form of a globe, agreeable to the form of the upper world.

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

Established, Heb. *strengthened*, by his word and decree, which alone upholds the clouds in the air, which of themselves are thin and weak bodies, and would quickly be dissolved or dispersed. *When he strengthened the fountains;* when he shut up the several fountains in the cavities of the earth, and kept them there as it were by a strong hand for the use of mankind. *Of the deep;* which have their original from the deep, either from the sea, or from the abyss of waters in the bowels of the earth.

q Gen. 1. 9, 10. Job 38. 10, 11. Ps. 33. 7. & 104. 9. Jer. 5. 22. r Job 38. 4.

29 qWhen he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when rhe appointed the foundations of the earth:

His decree; or, *his bound* or *limits*, to wit, those parts of the earth which border upon it. *Not pass his commandment*, i. e. not overflow the earth. *Appointed*, or *laid*, *the foundations of the earth;* either, 1. The centre of the earth; or, 2. The earth itself, which is the foundation of the world; or rather, 3. The firm standing of the earth upon its foundations, notwithstanding all the assaults which the waters of the sea or within the earth make against it; which is a singular work of God's providence.

s John 1. 1, 2, 18. t Matt. 3. 17. Col. 1. 13.

30 sThen I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him:* tand I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him;

By him; conversant with him, and united to him, as was said before. *As one brought up with him;* as one tenderly and dearly beloved by him. *Rejoicing always before him;* he and I had constant, and intimate, and sweet converse together.

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and umy delights *were* with the sons of men.

u Ps. 16. 3.

Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; in contemplating the wonderful wisdom and goodness of God in the making and ordering of all his creatures, and of man especially. *My delights were with the sons of men*, to uphold them by my power and providence, to reveal myself and my Father's mind and will to them from age to age, to assume their nature, and to redeem and save them, which I would not do for the fallen angels.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for xblessed *are they that* keep my ways.

x Ps. 119. 1, 2. & 128. 1, 2. Luke 11. 28.

Now therefore; seeing I have such a true love to you, and seeing I am so thoroughly acquainted with my Father's mind, and so excellently qualified to be your Counsellor and Ruler.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

Or, *do not make it void* or unprofitable to you by your own sloth or wilfulness.

y ch. 3. 13, 18.

34 yBlessed *is* the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

As servants, and clients, and others wait at the doors of princes or persons of eminency for place, or power, or wisdom, that they may be admitted to speak or converse with them.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall †zobtain favour of the LORD.

† Heb. *bring forth.* z ch. 12. 2.

36 But he that sinneth against me awrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

a ch. 20. 2.

He that sinneth against me, by the neglect or contempt of or rebellion against my commands, *wrongeth his own soul;* is guilty of self-murder and of soul-murder. *They that hate me*, i. e. who reject and disobey my counsels, and live wickedly, which in God's account is a hating of him, as is here implied and elsewhere, as Exod. xx. 5; Deut. vii. 10; xxxii. 41. *Love death;* not directly or intentionally, but by consequence, because they love those practices which they know will bring certain destruction upon them.

CHAP. IX.

Wisdom's call to her people unto blessed communion and fellowship with herself, set out under a similitude of making a feast, 1. *Her preparation*, 2, *and invitation*, 3—5. *She dehorteth from evil company*, 6. *Her counsels concerning reproof and instruction*, 7—9. *A description of the fear of God*, 10, *with the benefits thereof*, 11, 12. *The nature of a foolish woman*, 13—15. *Her invitation*, 16. *and arguments to insnare the simple*, 17. *The miserable state of them that are deceived by her*, 18.

a Matt. 16. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 5. Rev. 21. 22. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

WISDOM hath abuilded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:

Hath builded her house, for the reception and entertainment of her guests, as appears from the following passages. This house is opposed to the harlot's house, mentioned Prov. vii. 8; and it is to be understood, either, 1. Of the heavenly house, or the palace of glory; or rather, 2. Of the church, which Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, hath erected and established in the world, in which this following feast is made, which is called God's *house*, 1 Tim. iii. 15; Heb. iii. 3, 4. *Seven*, i. e. many pillars; whereby is intimated both the beauty and the stability of the church. *Pillars;* prophets, and apostles, and ministers of holy things, which in Scripture are called *pillars*, as Gal. ii. 9, and elsewhere.

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2 [b]She hath killed †her beasts; [c]she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table.

[b] Matt. 22. 4, &c. [c] Heb. her killing. Cant. 5. 1. ch. 23. 30.

Hath killed her beasts, i. e. made provision for the guests; which is meant of the ordinances, gifts, graces, comforts, and eternal felicities which God doth offer and give to men in and by the church. *Hath mingled her wine*; either, 1. With spices, to make it strong and delightful, this mixed wine being mentioned as the best, Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. Or, 2. With water, as they used to do in those hot countries, partly for refreshment, and partly for wholesomeness; whereby also may be intimated that wisdom teacheth us temperance in the use of our comforts. *Hath also furnished her table* with all necessaries, and now waits for the guests.

3 She hath [d]sent forth her maidens: [e]she crieth [f]upon the highest places of the city,

[d] Rom. 10. 15. [e] ch. 8. 1, 2. [f] ver. 14.

Her maidens; her servants, to invite the guests; ministers of the word, whom he calls *maidens*, partly for the decency of the parable; for wisdom being compared to a great princess, was fit to be attended upon by maidens; and partly to show that God by his word did work sweetly, though strongly, and did allure and draw rather than drive sinners to repentance. *Upon the highest places*: either upon the tops of the houses, which were flat; or rather, from such high seats as those from which judges delivered their sentences, and officers made proclamations, for the convenience of the people's better hearing.

4 [g]Whoso *is* simple, let him turn in hither: *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

[g] ver. 16. Matt. 11. 25.

Simple; ignorant, and weak, and subject to delusion, and willing to learn; to show that wisdom rejects those scholars who are proud and self-conceited. *Understanding*, Heb. *heart*, which signifies *understanding*, Jer. v. 21; Hos. vii. 11.

5 [h]Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine *which* I have mingled.

[h] Cant. 5. 1. Isa. 55. 1.

6 Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

The foolish, i. e. the wicked, and their courses and society: you must either forsake them or me, for we are irreconcilable enemies. *In the way of understanding*; which leads to it, and is prescribed by it.

7 He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked *man* *getteth* himself a blot.

He that reproveth a scorner: the connexion may be conceived thus, Having invited the simple, he forbids the invitation of scorners; or thus, He showeth who he meant by the *foolish*, ver. 6, even *scorners* and *wicked men*, as they are here called; and he presseth his last advice of *forsaking* them, because there was no good, but hurt, to be got by conversation with them. *Getteth to himself shame*; partly from the scorner, who will revile and deride him; and partly from others, because he is frustrated in his design and hope, and by his imprudence hath brought an inconvenience upon himself. *A blot*; a censure or reproach.

8 [i]Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: [k]rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

[i] Matt. 7. 6. [k] Ps. 141. 5.

Reprove not a scorner; an obstinate and incorrigible sinner, who scornfully rejects and despiseth the means of amendment. Thus physicians deny physic to persons in desperate condition. *Lest he hate thee*; whereby thou wilt not only expose thyself without necessity to his malice and rage, but also make thyself utterly uncapable of doing him that good which possibly thou mightest do by other more prudent and proper means. *Rebuke a wise man*; who is opposed to the *scorner*, to intimate that *scorners*, howsoever they are thought by themselves or others to be witty or wise, yet in God's account, and in truth, are fools. *He will love thee*; both for that faithfulness and charity which he perceiveth in thee, and for that benefit which he receiveth from thee.

9 Give *instruction* to a wise *man*, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just *man*, [l]and he will increase in learning.

[l] Matt. 13. 12.

Give instruction: in the Hebrew it is only *give*; for as *receiving* is put for learning, Prov. i. 3, so *giving* is put for teaching, both in Scripture and in other authors; of which see my Latin Synopsis. *A just man*; called *a wise man* in the former branch, to intimate that good men are the only wise men.

10 [m]The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding.

[m] Job 28. 28. Ps. 111. 10. ch. 1. 7.

Of the holy; either, 1. Of holy men, whether such as all saints learn, or rather such as the holy men of God, the servants of this wisdom, teach from God's word; or rather, 2. Of holy things, the Hebrew word being here taken in the neuter gender, as it is Numb. v. 17, and elsewhere; for this seems best to answer to *the fear of the Lord* in the other branch. *Is understanding*; is the only true, and necessary, and useful knowledge.

11 [n]For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.

[n] ch. 3. 2, 16. & 10. 27.

12 [o]If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but *if* thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear *it*.

[o] Job 35. 6, 7. ch. 16. 26

Thou shalt be wise for thyself; thou dost not profit me, but thyself by it; I advise thee for thine own good. *Thou alone shalt bear it*; the blame and mischief of it falls wholly upon thee, not upon me, or my word, or ministers who have warned thee.

13 ¶ [p]A foolish woman *is* clamorous: *she is* simple, and knoweth nothing.

[p] ch. 7. 11.

A foolish woman; by which he understands, either, 1. Folly, which is opposite to that wisdom of which he hath been so long discoursing; and so it may include all wickedness, either in principle, as idolatry, heresy, &c., or in practice. Or, 2. The harlot; which, with submission, seems most probable to me, partly because all the following description exactly agrees to her, especially what is said ver. 17, as also ver. 18, which in effect was said of the harlot before, chap. ii. 18; v. 5; and partly because such transitions from discoursing of wisdom, to a discourse of harlots, are frequent in Solomon, as we have seen, chap. ii. 16; v. 3; vii. 5. *Is clamorous*; speaks loudly, that she may be heard; and vehemently, that persons might be moved by her persuasions. *Knoweth nothing*; to wit, aright, nothing that is good, nothing for her good, though she be subtle in little artifices for her own wicked ends.

14 For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat [q]in the high places of the city,

[q] ver. 3.

Which notes her idleness and impudence, and diligence in watching for occasions of sin.

15 To call passengers who go right on their ways:

Who were going innocently and directly about their business without any unchaste design; for others needed none of those invitations or offers, but went to her of their own accord. And besides, such lewd persons take a greater pleasure in corrupting the innocent.

16 [r]Whoso *is* simple, let him turn in hither: and *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

[r] ver. 4.

Simple; which title is not given to them by her, for such a reproach would not have allured them, but driven them away; but by Solomon, who represents the matter of her invitation in his own words, that he might discover the truth of the business, and thereby dissuade and deter those whom she invited.

17 [s]Stolen waters are sweet, and bread †*eaten* in secret is pleasant.

[s] ch. 20. 17. † Heb. *of secrecies.*

Stolen waters; by which he understandeth, either, 1. Idolatry, or other wickednesses, which in Solomon's time before his fall were publicly forbidden and punished, but privately practised; or rather, 2. Adultery. *Are sweet*;

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partly, from the difficulty of obtaining them; partly, from the art which men use in contriving such secret sins; and partly, because the very prohibition renders it more grateful to corrupt nature.

t ch. 2. 18. & 7. 27. 18 But he knoweth not that t the dead *are* there; *and that* her guests *are* in the depths of hell.

Knoweth not, i. e. he doth not consider it seriously, whereby he proveth his folly.

CHAP. X.

From this chapter to the five and twentieth, are sundry observations of moral virtues, and their contrary vices, with excellent rules for the government of our conversation.

a ch. 15. 20. & 17. 21, 25. & 19. 13. & 29. 3, 15. THE proverbs of Solomon. a A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother.

The proverbs of Solomon, properly so called; for the foregoing chapters, though they had this title in the beginning of them, yet in truth were only a preface or preparation to them, containing a general exhortation to the study and exercise of wisdom, to stir up the minds of men to the greater attention and regard to all its precepts, whereof some here follow; of which in general these things are fit to be observed, to help us in the understanding of them: 1. That these sentences are generally distinct and independent, having no coherence one with another, as many other parts of Scripture have. 2. That such sentences being very short, as their nature requires, more is understood in them than is expressed, and the causes are commonly to be gathered from the effects, and the effects from the causes, and one opposite from another, as we shall see. 3. That they are delivered by way of comparison and opposition, which for the most part is between virtue and vice, but sometimes is between two virtues, or two vices. *A wise son*, i. e. prudent, and especially virtuous and godly, as this word is commonly meant in this book, and in many other scriptures. *A glad father;* and a glad mother too; for both parents are to be understood in both branches, as is evident from the nature of the thing, which affects both of them, and from parallel places, as chap. xvii. 25; xxx. 17, although one only be expressed in each branch, for the greater elegancy. *The heaviness of his mother;* the occasion of her great sorrow, which is decently ascribed to the mothers rather than to the fathers, because their passions are most vehement, and make deepest impression in them.

b Ps. 49. 6, &c. ch. 11. 4. Luke 12. 19, 20. c Dan. 4. 27. 2 b Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: c but righteousness delivereth from death.

Treasures of wickedness: either, 1. All worldly treasures and riches, which are called the *mammon of unrighteousness*, Luke xvi. 9, of which see the reasons there; to which righteousness or holiness, which are spiritual and heavenly riches, may be fitly opposed. Or, 2. Such treasures as are got by any sort of unjust or wicked practices. *Profit nothing;* they do the possessor no good, but, which is implied from the opposite member, much hurt; they do not only not deliver him from death, but oft expose him to it; either from men, who take away his life that they may enjoy his wealth; or from God, who shortens his days, and makes his death more terrible, as being attended with guilt, and with the second death. *Righteousness:* either, 1. True holiness of heart and life. Or, 2. Justice and equity in the getting of riches, or an estate honestly obtained, which may be fitly opposed to *treasures of wickedness*. Or, 3. A liberal and charitable use of riches, which is oft called righteousness, as Psal. cxii. 9; Dan. iv. 27; 2 Cor. ix. 10, &c., and is indeed but an act of justice, of which see on Prov. iii. 27, which also is conveniently opposed to an unjust getting of riches; and so this contains a great paradox, yet a certain truth, that the charitable laying out of money is more profitable to men than an unjust and covetous laying it up. *From death;* ofttimes from temporal death, because men generally love, and honour, and will assist such persons in cases of danger, and God gives them the blessing of a long life; and always from eternal death, when such charity proceeds from a sincere and honest mind, and a good conscience.

d Ps. 10. 14. & 34. 9, 10. & 37. 25. ‖ Or, *the wicked for their wickedness*. 3 d The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away ‖ the substance of the wicked.

Will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish; will preserve them from famine, according to his promises, Psal. xxxiv. 10, and elsewhere, which, as other temporal promises, is not to be understood simply and universally, but with this limitation, except this be necessary for God's glory, which in all reason should overrule the creatures' good, and for their own greater benefit. For, to say nothing of eternal felicities which follow every good man's death, it is certainly in some times and cases a less evil for men to be killed with famine, than to survive to see and feel those miseries which are coming upon them, and upon the land where they live. *The substance*, as this word is used, Psal. lii. 7, or *the wickedness*, i. e. the wealth gotten by wickedness; as *righteousness*, ver. 2, is by divers understood of an estate got with righteousness. *Of the wicked;* who by that means shall be exposed to want and famine.

e ch. 12. 24. & 19. 15. f ch. 13. 4. & 21. 5. 4 e He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: but f the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

With a slack hand; negligently and slothfully, as appears from the *diligence* opposed to it in the next branch, and from the use of this word in this sense, Prov. xii. 24, 27; xix. 15; Jer. xlviii. 10. Heb. with *a deceitful hand;* so called, partly because it seems and pretends to do something, when in truth it doth nothing; and partly because such persons usually endeavour to maintain themselves by deceit and wickedness, which they cannot or will not do by honest labour and diligence. *Maketh rich;* not by itself, nor necessarily, as is manifest from experience, and is noted, Eccles. ix. 11, but through God's blessing, which commonly is given to such, by comparing this verse with ver. 22, here following.

g ch. 12. 4. & 17. 2. & 19. 26. 5 He that gathereth in summer *is* a wise son: *but* he that sleepeth in harvest *is* g a son that causeth shame.

He that gathereth the fruits of his field *in summer;* in harvest, as it follows, which is a part of summer. He that watcheth for and improveth the proper seasons and opportunities of doing good to himself, and to others. *That causeth shame;* both to himself for his folly, and that poverty and misery caused by it; and to his parents, to whose negligent or evil education such things are oft, and sometimes justly, imputed.

h ver. 11. Esth. 7. 8. 6 Blessings *are* upon the head of the just: but h violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

Blessings are upon the head of the just; all sorts of blessings are wished to them by men, and conferred upon them by God. He saith, *upon* their *head*, either to show that these blessings come from above; and that openly, in the sight of the world, so that he can confidently speak of them to God's praise, and to his own comfort and honour; or because blessings were commonly pronounced by men with this ceremony, by laying their hands upon the head of the party blessed. *Violence covereth the mouth of the wicked: violence* (either, 1. Their own violence or injustice, which may be here put for the fruit or punishment of it, as *iniquity* is oft put for the punishment of iniquity. Or, 2. Violence, or the violent, and injurious, and mischievous practices of others against them, deserved by their own violence committed against others, and inflicted upon them by the curse and righteous judgment of God) *shall cover the mouth of the wicked*, i. e. shall fall upon them. This phrase of covering their mouth is used, either, 1. With allusion to the ancient custom of covering the mouths and faces of condemned malefactors; of which see Esth. vii. 8; Job ix. 24. Or, 2. To signify that the curse and judgment of God upon them should be so manifestly just, that their mouths should be stopped, and they not be able to speak a word against God, or for themselves. Or, 3. To intimate that God's judgment upon them should be public and evident to all that behold them, as any covering put upon a man's mouth

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or face is, as for the same reason the blessings of the just were said to be upon their heads. And the *mouth* may be put for the *face* or *countenance*, by a synecdoche. But this clause is otherwise rendered by divers learned interpreters, *the mouth of the wicked covereth* (i. e. concealeth or smothereth within itself, and doth not utter that) *violence* or *injury*, which he meditateth in his heart, and designeth to do to others, and therefore shall be accursed and miserable. But this suits not so well with the former clause, wherein the *blessings of the just* are not meant actively, of those blessings which they wish or give to others, but passively, of those blessings which others wish or give to them; and consequently this *violence* is not understood of that which they do to others, but of that which is done to them by others.

i Ps. 9. 5, 6. & 112. 6. Eccles. 8. 10. 7 [i]The memory of the just *is* blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.

Is blessed, i. e. honourable and acceptable to those who mention them. Compare Job xxxi. 20; Psal. lxii. 5. *Shall rot*; shall perish, and be cursed and detestable amongst men, shall stink above ground.

k ver. 10. * Heb. *a rod of lips.* † Or, shall be beaten. 8 The wise in heart will receive commandments: [k]but † a prating fool ‖ shall fall.

Will receive commandments; is ready to hear and obey the counsels and precepts of God, and of men, by which means he shall stand fast and live. *A prating fool*; one who is slow to hear and swift to speak, who, instead of receiving good admonitions, cavils and disputes against them. In the Hebrew he is called *a fool of lips*, either because he discovers the folly of his heart by his lips, and thereby exposeth himself to the mischief here following; or because he is *without heart*, as is said of Ephraim, Hos. vii. 11, or his *heart is little worth*, as is said here, ver. 20; or because he speaks rashly, without any consideration. Or it may be rendered, *a fool by his lips*, i. e. by his foolish and wicked speeches, contrary to the commands of God, by talking much and ill, when it is more comely and necessary for him to hear and receive instruction from others. *Shall fall*, to wit, into mischief; or, *be punished*, as the word is used, Hos. iv. 14; or, *be beaten*, as below, ver. 10.

l Ps. 23. 4. ch. 28. 18. Is. 33. 15, 16. 9 [l]He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.

He that walketh uprightly; who is sincere, and just, and faithful in his dealings with God and with men. *Surely*; or, *securely*, or *confidently*, as the word properly signifies, and is here rendered by all the ancient interpreters, and by most of the others; quietly resting upon God's favour and gracious providence for his protection, and being supported by the testimony of a good conscience, and therefore not fearing nor caring who knows or observes his actions, which he endeavours to approve both to God and to men. *That perverteth his ways*; that walks perversely, or frowardly, or in crooked and sinful paths; that dealeth hypocritically and deceitfully with God, or with men, using all possible crafts to conceal his wickedness. *Shall be known*; his wickedness shall be publicly discovered, and so he shall be exposed to all that shame and punishment which his sins deserve, and which he thought by his cunning practices to avoid.

m ch. 6. 13. 10 [m]He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow: [n]but a prating fool ‖shall fall.

n ver. 8. † Or, shall be beaten.

That winketh with the eye; that secretly and cunningly designs mischiefs against others, as this phrase is used, Psal. xxxv. 19; Prov. vi. 13. *Causeth sorrow* to others, and afterwards to himself. *But*; or, *and*, as it is in the Hebrew; for vice is not here opposed to virtue, as it is in many other proverbs, but one vice is compared with another. *A prating fool*; who is so far from such deceits, that he runs into the other extreme, and *uttereth all his mind*, as is said of the fool, Prov. xxix. 11, and thereby speaks many things offensive to others, and mischievous to himself.

o Ps. 37. 30. ch. 13. 14. & 18. 4. p Ps. 107. 42. ver. 6. 11 [o]The mouth of a righteous *man is* a well of life: but [p]violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

A well of life; continually sending forth waters of life, or such good and wholesome words as are very refreshing and useful, both to themselves and others, for the preserving of their natural life, and for the promoting of their spiritual and eternal life. We have the same phrase Psal. xxxvi. 9. *Violence covereth the mouth of the wicked*; the same words were used before, ver. 6, where see the notes; and they may be understood in the same sense here, and the opposition of this clause to the former may be conceived thus: As the mouth of a good man speaketh those things which are good and beneficial to himself and others, so the mouth of the wicked uttereth violence, or injury, or things injurious to others, which at last fall upon himself. But it is no new thing for the same words and phrases to be taken in different senses in the same chapter, and sometimes in the same verse, as Matt. viii. 22, and elsewhere; and therefore these words may here be, and are by many, translated and interpreted thus, *the mouth of the wicked covereth* (i. e. concealeth) *violence* or *mischief*, which he plotteth against others. And so here is a double opposition between the righteous and the wicked; first in the contrary effects, the former causeth life, the latter mischief and death; and secondly in the manner of producing them, the righteous doth it by uttering his words, and the wicked doth it by concealing his mind.

q ch. 17. 9. 1 Cor. 13. 4. 1 Pet. 4. 8. 12 Hatred stirreth up strifes: but [q]love covereth all sins.

Hatred stirreth up strifes upon every slight occasion, by filling men with suspicions and surmises, whereby they imagine faults where there are none, and aggravate every small offence. *Love covereth all sins*; either doth not severely observe, or doth willingly forget and forgive, the offences or injuries of others, and so preventeth contention and mischief.

r ch. 26. 3. † Heb. *heart.* 13 In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but [r]a rod *is* for the back of him that is void of †understanding.

Wisdom is found; his wisdom showeth itself in his prudent speeches, by which he escapeth that rod which fools meet with, and gaineth that reputation and advantage to himself which fools lose. *A rod is for the back of him*, he may expect rebukes and punishments from God and men, *that is void of understanding*; which he showeth by his foolish words.

s ch. 18. 7. & 21. 23. 14 Wise *men* lay up knowledge: but [s]the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.

Wise men lay up, to wit, in their minds and memories, to be brought forth thence upon fit occasions, *knowledge*; whereby they may be enabled to speak both what and when it is seasonable, for their own or others' good. *The mouth of the foolish is near destruction*; fools are more forward to lay out than to lay up, and for want of knowledge speak much and foolishly, whereby they frequently bring destruction upon themselves.

t Job 31. 24. Ps. 52. 7. ch. 18. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 17. 15 [t]The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city: the destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.

Is his strong city; either, 1. Really, as *money is* called *a defence*, Eccles. vii. 12, because it oftimes redeems a man from dangers and calamities. Or, 2. *In his own conceit*, as it is explained, and fully expressed, chap. xviii. 11. It makes him secure and confident. *The destruction*; it is the cause of their ruin. Or, *the contrition*, or *the terror*, or *consternation*, as others, both ancient and modern, render it. Their poverty takes away their spirit and courage, and fills them with fear and despair.

16 The labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.

The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: either, 1. The design of his labour is only this, that he may have wherewith to live honestly, without sinful shifts. Or, 2. The fruit or effect of his labour or industry (as this word *labour* is most commonly understood, and this best answers to the following clause, where *fruit* is put instead of this *labour*) is the preservation and prolongation of this life, and the

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obtaining of eternal life, to which an honest and conscientious diligence in men's worldly callings doth in some manner contribute. *The fruit of the wicked,* the fruit of all their labours and endeavours, *to sin;* tendeth to sin, serves only for fuel to men's pride, and luxury, and worldliness, and by that means oft causeth temporal, and always, without repentance, eternal death.

17 He *is in* the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof ‖ erreth.

‖ Or, *causeth to err.*

The way of life; which leadeth to life and blessedness. *That keepeth instruction;* that observeth and obeyeth the wholesome counsels of God, and of good men. *Erreth,* to wit, from the way of life, or into the ways of sin, and so of death; Heb. *leadeth into error,* or *seduceth,* to wit, himself, as appears by the opposition of this to the former clause; he wittingly and willingly exposeth himself to temptation and wickedness, because he rejecteth that admonition which is a proper preservative from it.

18 He that hideth hatred *with* lying lips, and [u] he that uttereth a slander, *is* a fool.

u Ps. 15. 3.

With lying lips; with flattering words and false pretences of friendship. *And he,* Heb. *he,* i. e both of them, one no less than the other. So he condemneth two opposite vices, secret hatred and manifest slander. *Is a fool,* because a sinner, and because the mischief of these things will fall upon himself.

19 [x] In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but [y] he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.

x Eccles. 5. 3.
y Jam. 3. 2.

Men that love and commonly use much talking, do frequently run into many miscarriages, because such persons, for the most part, want wisdom to order their words aright, Eccles. v. 3, and speak hastily, without care and consideration. *That refraineth his lips;* that forbeareth to utter what cometh into his mind, before he hath weighed whether it be true and fit to be spoken or not.

20 The tongue of the just *is as* choice silver: the heart of the wicked *is* little worth.

As choice silver; of great worth and use, bringing credit to himself, and much benefit to others. *The heart,* and consequently the tongue, which speaketh *out of the abundance of the heart,* Matt. xii. 34.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want † of wisdom.

† Heb. *of heart.*

Feed many, by their wise and pious discourses, counsels, and comforts, which are so many evidences of their wisdom. *Die for want of wisdom;* they have not wisdom to feed or preserve themselves, much less to feed others.

22 [z] The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

z Gen. 24. 35. & 26. 12. Ps. 37. 22.

Riches are not got by wisdom or diligence, but only by God's favour and blessing. *He addeth no sorrow with it,* i. e. with that blessing which gives riches, but gives them content and comfort in their riches, which is a singular gift and blessing of God, of which see Eccles. ii. 24, 26; iii. 13; v. 18, 19; whereas the riches which wicked men get are attended with God's curse, with many discontents, with tormenting cares and fears, with horrors of conscience, and with the just dread of a sad account to God for them.

23 [a] *It is* as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

a ch. 14. 9. & 15. 21.

As sport; he doth it with ease and delight, and without any shame, or remorse, or fear. *To do mischief;* or, as others, *to work wickedness;* yea, great and premeditated wickedness, as the Hebrew word properly signifies. *Hath wisdom;* whereby he is kept from committing wickedness, and especially from sporting himself with it. But this clause is by divers learned interpreters rendered thus, *and* or *so* is *wisdom to a man of understanding,* it is a sport or pleasure to him to practise wisdom or piety; which translation makes the opposition more evident.

24 [b] The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but [c] the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

b Job 15. 21.
c Ps. 145. 19. Matt. 5. 6. 1 John 5. 14, 15.

The fear; the evils which he feareth, or hath cause to fear, as *fear* is oft taken. *Shall be granted;* God will not only prevent the mischiefs which they fear, but grant them the good things which they desire.

25 As the whirlwind passeth, [d] so *is* the wicked no *more:* but [e] the righteous *is* an everlasting foundation.

d Ps. 37. 9, 10.
e ver. 30. Ps. 15. 5. Matt. 7. 24, 25. & 16. 18.

As the whirlwind passeth; which is suddenly gone, though with great noise and violence. *So is the wicked no more;* his power and felicity is lost in an instant. *Is an everlasting foundation;* or, hath *an everlasting,* &c. His hope and happiness is built upon a sure and unmovable foundation.

26 As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so *is* the sluggard to them that send him.

As vinegar to the teeth; which by its cold and sharpness it offends. *So is the sluggard;* unserviceable and vexatious.

27 [f] The fear of the LORD † prolongeth days: but [g] the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

f Deut. 9. 11. † Heb. *addeth.* g Job 15. 32. 22. & 22. 16. Ps. 55. 23. Eccles. 7. 17.

Prolongeth days; partly because it gives them a title to the promise of long life, as well as to other promises; partly because it gladdeth the heart, which doth good like a medicine, Prov. xvii. 22, and preserves a man from those wicked practices which tend to the shortening of the days.

28 The hope of the righteous *shall be* gladness: but the [h] expectation of the wicked shall perish.

h Job 8. 13. & 11. 20. Ps. 112. 10. ch. 11. 7.

Shall be gladness; though at present it be mixed with doubts, and fears, and disappointments, yet at last it shall be accomplished, and turned into enjoyment. *Shall perish;* shall be utterly frustrated, and so end in sorrow.

29 The way of the LORD *is* strength to the upright: [i] but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

i Ps. 1. 6. & 37. 20.

The way of the Lord; either, 1. The way or course of God's providence in the government of the world. Or rather, 2. The way of God's precepts, as God's *way* or *ways* are most commonly understood in Scripture, or walking in God's ways; for this is opposed to *working iniquity* in the next clause. *Is strength;* gives strength, i. e. either courage and confidence, or support and protection from that *destruction* here following. *Destruction,* or *terror,* or *consternation,* as the word properly signifies, and many render it. The design of this verse is to show that piety is the only true policy.

30 [k] The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

k Ps. 37. 22, 29. & 125. 1. ver. 25.

The righteous shall never be removed; they shall live long and happily here, when this is most expedient for them, and eternally in heaven. *The wicked shall not inhabit the earth;* they shall not have so much as a long and quite abode upon earth, unless where this is a curse and mischief to them, and much less shall they have any possession in heaven.

31 [l] The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.

l Ps. 37. 30.

Bringeth forth, freely, and abundantly, and constantly, as the earth or a tree bring forth their proper fruit, as the word properly signifies. *Wisdom;* wise counsels, by which he directeth and secureth himself and others. *Shall be cut out,* because it bringeth forth not wisdom, but folly and wickedness.

32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked *speaketh* † frowardness.

† Heb. *frowardnesses.*

Know, to wit, practically, so as to consider and speak. Knowledge is here ascribed to the *lips,* as it is to the *hands* Psal. lxxviii. 72, because they are conducted by knowledge and wisdom. *What is acceptable* to God and good men,

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or what is truly worthy of acceptation; for this is opposed to what is *froward* or wicked in the next clause.

CHAP. XI.

a Lev. 19. 35, 36. Deut. 25. 13–16. ch. 16. 11. & 20. 10, 23. † Heb. *balances of deceit.* ‡ Heb. *a perfect stone.*

1 a A †FALSE balance *is* abomination to the LORD: but ‡a just weight *is* his delight.

A false balance, the use of all false weights and measures in commerce, *is abomination*, i. e. highly abominable, as the abstract signifies; which is opposed to the false opinion of men, who account it a fineness of wit, or, at worst, but a trivial fault. *To the Lord;* partly because this wickedness is acted under a colour of justice; and partly because it is destructive to human society, and especially to the poor, whose patron the Lord owneth himself to be.

b ch. 16. 18. & 18. 12. Dan. 4. 30, 31.

2 b *When* pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly *is* wisdom.

When pride cometh, then cometh shame; pride, as it is the effect of folly, so it bringeth a man to contempt and destruction, such persons being commonly hated both by God and by all men. *With the lowly is wisdom;* whereby they are kept from those foolish and wicked actions which expose men to shame.

c ch. 13. 6.

3 c The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

The integrity of the upright, their sincere obedience to God's laws, *shall guide them;* shall keep them from crooked and dangerous courses, and lead them in a right and safe way. *The perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them;* those wicked devices by which they design and expect to secure themselves, shall be the instrument of their destruction.

d ch. 10. 2. Ezek. 7. 19. Zeph. 1. 18. Eccles. 5. 8. e Gen. 7. 1.

4 d Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but e righteousness delivereth from death.

In the day of wrath; in the time of God's judgments, when he is executing wrath and vengeance upon sinners. *Righteousness*, or *mercy*, as this word is oft rendered; or charity to the poor, which is fitly opposed to riches laid up in store. *Delivereth from death;* it moveth God to deliver them oftimes from temporal calamities, and always from eternal death, where such actions are done from a right principle.

† Heb. *rectify.*

5 The righteousness of the perfect shall †direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

Shall direct his way; shall bring all his designs and endeavours to a happy issue, by comparing this clause with the next.

f ch. 5. 22. Ezek. 18. 8.

6 The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but f transgressors shall be taken in *their own* naughtiness.

Shall deliver them from many snares and dangers.

g ch. 10. 28.

7 g When a wicked man dieth, *his* expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust *men* perisheth.

His expectation shall perish; all his hope and felicity, which he placed wholly in earthly things, is lost and gone with him. *The hope of unjust men;* so it is a repetition of the same thing in other words. Or, as divers render it, *the hope* of their *strengths*, i. e. which they place in their carnal strengths, their riches, children, friends, &c. So this is added by way of aggravation.

h ch. 21. 18.

8 h The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

Is by God's providence brought into the same miseries, which either he designed against the righteous, or had formerly inflicted upon the righteous, and now lately removed from them.

i Job 8. 13.

9 An i hypocrite with *his* mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

With his mouth; by his corrupt communication, whereby he endeavours to draw him to error or wickedness. *Through knowledge*, to wit, of God, and of his word, which makes men wise, and discovers, and so prevents, the frauds of deceivers. *Be delivered* from the infection of the hypocrite's evil and crafty counsel.

k Esth. 8. 15. ch. 28. 12, 28.

10 k When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish, *there is* shouting.

When it goeth well with the righteous, when such men are encouraged and advanced into places of power and trust, *the city rejoiceth;* the citizens or subjects of that government rejoice, because they confidently expect justice and tranquillity, and many other benefits, by their administration of public affairs. *There is shouting;* a common rejoicing, partly for the just vengeance of God upon them who have been the instruments of so much mischief; and partly for their deliverance from such public grievances and burdens of the land.

l ch. 29. 8.

11 l By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

By the blessing of the upright, wherewith they bless the city, to wit, by their sincere prayers, and wise and wholesome counsels. *By the mouth of the wicked;* by their curses, and oaths, and blasphemies, and wicked and pernicious counsels, whereby they both provoke God, and mislead men to their own ruin.

† Heb. *destitute of heart.*

12 He that is †void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.

Despiseth his neighbour; which contempt he showeth, either, 1. By contemptuous or reproachful expressions of him; or, 2. By not asking or not regarding his advice, but trusting wholly to his own understanding. *Holdeth his peace;* either, 1. He forbeareth all such expressions against his neighbour. Or, 2. He silently and patiently bears these reproaches from his neighbour, and doth not render one reproach for another; wherein he showeth true wisdom. Or, 3. He desireth and hearkeneth to the counsels of others. Any of these ways the opposition is sufficiently evident.

m Lev. 19. 16. ch. 20. 19. † Heb. *He that walketh,* being *a talebearer.*

13 m †A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

A tale-bearer, or, *he that goeth about* (from one place or person to another, as the manner of such is) *telling tales*, making it his business to scatter reports, *revealeth secrets;* this tattling humour is so prevalent with him, that he cannot forbear to publish, either his neighbour's secret faults, or such things as were committed to his trust with a charge of secrecy. *He that is of a faithful spirit*, that hath a sincere, and constant, and faithful mind, which both can and will govern his tongue, *concealeth the matter*, so far as he can lawfully do.

n 1 Kings 12. 1, &c. ch. 15. 22. & 24. 6.

14 n Where no counsel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

No counsel; or, *no wise counsel*, as the word properly signifies, as Job xxxvii. 12; Prov. i. 5. *In the multitude of counsellors*, to wit, of wise and good counsellors, for such will employ and unite their counsels together for the public good.

o ch. 6. 1. † Heb. *shall be sore broken.* ‡ Heb. *those that strike* hands.

15 o He that is surety for a stranger †shall smart *for it:* and he that hateth ‡suretiship is sure.

A stranger; whose condition he doth not thoroughly understand, and therefore knows not his own danger. *Suretiship;* of which see on Prov. vi. 1.

p ch. 31. 30.

16 p A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong *men* retain riches.

A gracious woman, Heb. *a woman of grace and favour*, i. e. one who by her meekness, and modesty, and prudence, and other virtues, renders herself acceptable and amiable to God and to men. *Retaineth honour*, or *holdeth fast her honour*, or good reputation, with no less care and resolution than strong men do riches, as it here follows. *And strong*

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men retain riches; or, *as strong men,* &c.; for so this conjunction is oft used in this book, of which we have seen some, and may afterwards see more instances.

q Matt. 5. 7. & 25. 34, &c.

17 [q]The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but *he that is* cruel troubleth his own flesh.

To his own soul, i. e. to himself, because his liberality shall turn to his own infinite advantage, both in this life and in the next. *Cruel;* hard-hearted and uncharitable to others. *His own flesh;* either, 1. His own children or kindred, who are commonly expressed by this very word, for whose sakes he is thus covetous and uncharitable, that he may hoard it up for them; but they, saith the wise man, shall have nothing but trouble and vexation, and God's curse with it. Or, 2. Himself, denominated here from his *flesh* or body, as in the former branch from *his* soul. But he may seem to mention his *flesh* rather than his *soul,* to intimate that the mischiefs of his covetousness shall not only fall upon his soul, which he despiseth, but upon his flesh or outward man, which is the only thing that he feareth.

18 The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but [r]to him that soweth righteousness *shall be* a sure reward.

r Hos. 10. 12. Gal. 6. 8, 9. James 3. 18.

A deceitful work; a work which will deceive his expectation of that good for which he worketh. *That soweth;* that worketh it with constancy, and diligence, and hope of recompence, as they do who sow in seed-time. *Righteousness;* good works, acts of piety towards God, and charity to men.

19 As righteousness *tendeth* to life: so he that pursueth evil *pursueth it* to his own death.

That pursueth evil; who are not overtaken by sin, as a good man may be, Gal. vi. 1, but studiously design it, and follow after the occasions of it earnestly, and greedily, and industriously.

20 They that are of a froward heart *are* abomination to the LORD: but *such as are* upright in *their* way *are* his delight.

They that are of a froward heart; hypocrites, as appears from the opposition of these to the *upright* in the next clause; whose hearts are false to God, and contrary to their own professions. *Are abomination to the Lord;* though by their cunning artifices they may deceive men, and gain their good opinion and favour, yet God sees their naughty hearts, and hateth them. *In their way;* in the course of their lives and actions. By which changing of the phrase from *heart* in the first clause, to *way* here, he intimates that the sincerity and hypocrisy of men's hearts are discovered and to be judged by their conversations.

s ch. 16. 5. t Ps. 112. 2.

21 [s]*Though* hand *join* in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but [t]the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

Though hand join in hand; though they are fortified against God's judgments by a numerous issue, and kindred, and friends, and by mutual strong combinations or confederacies. *Shall not be unpunished;* they shall be punished even in their own persons, as well as in their posterity. They shall not be able either totally to prevent God's judgment, or to delay it from coming in their days. *The seed of the righteous,* not only their persons, but their children, *shall be delivered,* without any such auxiliaries, by God's special providence.

22 *As* a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, *so is* a fair woman which † is without discretion.

† Heb. *departeth from.*

As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout; which would not adorn the swine, but only be disparaged itself. It was the custom of some of the Jews to wear jewels upon their noses, and some of their neighbours wore them in their noses. *Which is without discretion;* which disgraceth the beauty of her body by a foolish and filthy soul.

23 The desire of the righteous *is* only good: *but* the expectation of the wicked [u]*is* wrath.

u Rom. 2. 8, 9.

The desire; either, 1. Properly so called. So the sense is, His desires are generally and constantly to do good to men, as wicked men's designs are to do hurt, and to execute wrath and hatred against them. Or rather, 2. The object, or event, or effect of their desire, as appears from the next clause, where *expectation* is clearly put for the object or event of it. And the sense of the proverb seems to be this, The desires and expectations of the righteous shall end in their good and happiness, but the desires and expectations of wicked men shall be sadly disappointed, and end in the wrath of God and their utter ruin.

24 There is that [x]scattereth, and yet increaseth; and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, but *it tendeth* to poverty.

x Ps. 112. 9.

That scattereth; that giveth liberally of his goods to the poor; for so this Hebrew word is used, Psal. cxii. 9, *He hath dispersed,* which is explained in the following words, *he hath given to the poor. Increaseth,* through God's secret blessing upon his estate. *More than is meet,* Heb. *from what is right* or *just,* i. e. what by the law of God, and the rules of general justice, he is obliged to give; of which see Prov. iii. 27. *It tendeth to poverty;* by God's providence secretly blasting his estate, either in his own or his children's hands, as it very frequently befalls covetous wretches.

25 [y]† The liberal soul shall be made fat: [z]and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

y 2 Cor. 9. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. † Heb. *The soul of blessing.* z Matt. 5. 7.

The liberal soul, Heb. *the soul of blessing;* that man who is a blessing to others, who blesseth them, i. e. doeth good to them, as *blessing* is oft used for a gift, as Gen. xxxiii. 11; 1 Sam. xxv. 27; 2 Cor. ix. 5. *Shall be made fat;* shall be greatly enriched, both with temporal and spiritual blessings. *He that watereth shall be watered also himself:* possibly it is a metaphor from a fountain, which when it poureth forth its waters is instantly filled again, whereas if it be stopped it groweth empty, and the water seeketh another course. Others render it, *he shall be a rain,* i. e. he shall receive such liberal supplies from God, that he shall be able to pour forth showers of good things upon others.

26 [a]He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but [b]blessing *shall be* upon the head of him that selleth *it.*

a Amos 8. 5, 6. b Job 29. 13.

Withholdeth corn, in a time of scarcity, when others need and desire it. *Blessing;* the blessing of God, which the people shall heartily beg for him. *That selleth it* upon reasonable terms.

27 He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: [c]but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.

c Esth. 7. 10. Ps. 7. 15, 16. & 9. 15, 16. & 10. 2. & 57. 6.

He that diligently seeketh, which is opposed to those who content themselves with lazy desires, or cold and careless endeavours, *good,* to do good to all men, as he hath opportunity, *procureth favour* with God and men. *He that seeketh mischief,* to do any mischief or injury to others, *it shall come unto him;* it shall be requited either by men's malice and revenge, or by God's just judgment.

28 [d]He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but [e]the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

d Job 31. 24. Ps. 52. 7. Mark 10. 24. Luke 12. 21. 1 Tim. 6. 17. e Ps. 1. 3. & 52. 8. & 92. 12, &c. Jer. 17. 8.

He that trusteth in his riches, as his chief portion, and felicity, and ground of safety, *shall fall,* as a withered leaf, by comparing this clause with the latter. *The righteous,* who maketh God alone, and not riches, his trust, *shall flourish as a branch,* to wit, a green and flourishing branch.

29 He that troubleth his own house [f]shall inherit the wind: and the fool *shall be* servant to the wise of heart.

f Eccles. 5. 16.

He that troubleth his own house; he who bringeth trouble and misery upon himself and children, either, 1. By carelessness, slothfulness, improvidence, prodigality, or any wickedness, whereby he consumeth his estate. So this *troubling* of *his house* may be opposed to a man's *building* of *his house,* Jer. xxix. 28. Or, 2. By covetous desires and restless endeavours to heap up riches, whereby he greatly tires and troubles both himself and all his family with excessive cares and labours, which is called *coveting*

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an evil covetousness to his house, Hab. ii. 9. *Shall inherit the wind;* shall be as unable to keep and enjoy what he gets as a man is to hold the wind in his fist, or to feed and satisfy himself with it; he shall be brought to poverty. *The fool shall be servant to the wise of heart;* by which means such a troublesome fool shall through his extreme necessity be forced even to sell himself to such as are wiser.

f Deut. 12. 3. Prov. x. 19, &c. Jam. 3. 20. † Heb. taketh.

30 The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and [f] he that † winneth souls *is* wise.

The fruit of the righteous, i. e. which he produceth; his discourses and his whole conversation. *Is a tree of life;* is like the fruit of the tree of life; is a great preserver of his life, and a procurer of eternal life, not only to himself, but to others also. *He that winneth souls*, Heb. *that catcheth souls*, as a fowler doth birds; that maketh it his design and business, and useth all his skill and diligence, to gain souls to God, and to pluck them out of the snare of the devil. *Is wise;* showeth himself to be a truly wise and good man. But this clause is and may be rendered thus, *and he that is wise* (the same with the *righteous* in the former clause) *winneth souls*, or brings them to life. So this clause agrees very well with the former.

h Jer. 25. 29. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18.

31 [h] Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.

The righteous shall be recompensed, i. e. punished for his sins, as appears from the next clause; the general word being here used of this one particular, by a synecdoche. *In the earth;* whereby he intimates that all his sufferings are confined to this world, which is an unspeakable felicity. *Much more*, they shall be punished more certainly and more severely, either in this life or in the next, *the wicked and the sinner;* those who make sin their great study, and daily and most delightful exercise. Compare this verse with 1 Pet. iv. 18, which is a good comment upon it.

CHAP. XII.

WHOSO loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof *is* brutish.

Instruction; admonition or reproof, as appears from the next clause, which is a singular means of getting true and sound knowledge. *Loveth knowledge;* showeth that he is a true lover of knowledge, because he is willing to purchase it upon such unwelcome terms, as reproofs are generally esteemed. *Is brutish;* discovereth himself to be a most foolish and stupid creature, because he is an enemy to himself and to his own happiness.

a ch. 8. 35.

2 [a] A good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

Obtaineth favour; whereby he is and shall be acquitted and justified. *A man of wicked devices*, who designeth and industriously committeth wickedness, *will he condemn*, when he standeth in judgment, howsoever he may for the present justify himself, and deceive others into a good opinion of him.

3 A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the [b] root of the righteous shall not be moved.

b ch. 10. 25.

By wickedness; by any sinful courses by which he useth to secure or stablish himself; whereby he implies that he shall be rooted up. *Shall not be moved*, to wit, out of its place. He shall stand fast, and flourish, like a well-rooted tree.

c ch. 31. 23. Prov. 11. 7.

4 [c] A virtuous woman *is* a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed *is* d ch. 14. 30. [d] as rottenness in his bones.

A crown; a singular ornament and matter of his glorying and joy. *That maketh ashamed;* that by her folly or wickedness bringeth shame to herself and to her husband. *As rottenness in his bones;* loathsome, and vexatious, and pernicious.

5 The thoughts of the righteous *are* right: *but* the counsels of the wicked *are* deceit.

The thoughts of the righteous are right; his constant purpose is to deal justly and truly with God and with men. *The counsels of the wicked are deceit;* his great care and contrivance is to wrong and deceive others by fair pretences and cunning artifices.

6 [e] The words of the wicked *are* to lie in wait for blood: [f] but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.

e ch. 1. 11, 18. f ch. 14. 3.

Are to lie in wait for blood; are designed and ordered to entrap or deceive others, and to destroy them. *Shall deliver them*, to wit, from those that lie in wait for them; which it doth, either, 1. By prayer to God for their deliverance; or, 2. By pacifying the wicked with soft and gentle answers, or by diverting them from their evil course by their good counsels and admonitions; or, 3. By pleading their righteous cause in a judicial or other way.

7 [g] The wicked are overthrown, and *are* not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.

g Ps. 37. 36, 37. ch. 11. 21. Matt. 7. 24, 25, 26, 27.

Are not; both they and their families shall suddenly perish. *The house;* the family or posterity.

8 A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: [h] but he that is † of a perverse heart shall be despised.

h 1 Sam. 25. 17. † Heb. *perverse of heart.*

A man shall be commended, to wit, by wise and good men, *according to his wisdom;* more or less according to the degree of wisdom which his discourses and actions discover to be in him. *He that is of a perverse heart*, which he showeth by his wicked words and conversation, *shall be despised* by God and all wise men.

9 [i] *He that is* despised, and hath a servant, *is* better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.

i ch. 13. 7.

That is despised; that liveth in a mean and obscure condition in the world, for such are commonly despised by men of a higher rank. *Hath a servant;* hath but one servant. Or rather, *is servant to himself;* hath none to wait upon him or work for him but himself, that getteth bread by his own labours. *Is better*, is happier, *than he that honoureth himself*, that glorieth in his high birth or gay attire, *and lacketh bread*, wants necessaries for his own sustenance.

10 [k] A righteous *man* regardeth the life of his beast: but the ‖ tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel.

k Deu. 25. 4. ‖ Or, *bowels.*

Regardeth the life of his beast, which is employed in his service; he will not destroy it either by labours beyond its strength, or by denying to it necessary food or rest, or by any other way; and much more will he be pitiful to his own servants, and to poor men. *The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel;* there is much cruelty mixed even with their most merciful actions, when they pretend or intend to show mercy. Heb. *the bowels of the*, &c.; those very bowels, which in others are the seat of pity, in him are hardened and shut up, and only stir him up to cruelty. Instead of that mercy which is natural to other men, he hath nothing but cruelty. Their *mercies* are here said to be *cruel*, as *the foolishness* and *weakness of God* are said to be *wise* and *strong*, 1 Cor. i. 25.

11 [l] He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain *persons* [m] *is* void of understanding.

l Gen. 3. 19. ch. 28. 19. m ch. 6. 32.

That tilleth his land; that employeth his time and strength in an honest calling. *That followeth vain persons;* that useth their society and idle course of living. *Is void of understanding;* shall through his own folly want bread.

12 The wicked desireth ‖ the net of evil *men:* but the root of the righteous yieldeth *fruit.*

‖ Or, *the fortress.*

The wicked desireth the net of evil men; he approveth and useth those cunning and deceitful arts, which wicked men use like nets to insnare other men, and to take their goods to themselves. Or, *he desireth the fortress of wicked* men, or *of wickedness*, i. e. he seeks to fortify and stablish him-

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self by wicked practices. *The root of the righteous yieldeth fruit;* that justice and piety in which he is rooted, and which is the root of his actions, doth of itself, without the aid of any indirect and sinful courses, yield him sufficient fruit, both for his own need, and to do good to others. But because the word *fruit* is not in the Hebrew, and may seem to be too great a supplement, it is and may be rendered thus, *the root of the righteous giveth* it, to wit, that fortress or security which others seek in wickedness.

† Heb. *The snare of the wicked is in the transgression of lips.*

13 †[n]The wicked is snared by the transgression of *his* lips: [o]but the just shall come out of trouble.

n ch. 18. 7. o 2 Pet. 2. 9.

The wicked is snared, i. e. brought into trouble, *by the transgression of his lips,* by his wicked speeches against God and men. *The just shall come out of trouble,* to wit, by his wise, and holy, and inoffensive speeches, whereby he pacifieth men, and gaineth God's favour and protection.

p ch. 13. 2. & 18. 20. q Is. 3. 10, 11.

14 [p]A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth: [q]and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

By the fruit of his mouth; by his pious and profitable discourses. *Of a man's hands,* i. e. of his works and actions, of which the hand is the great instrument; whereby also may be implied that God will not regard nor recompense good works, unless they be accompanied with a good conversation. *Shall be rendered unto him,* to wit, by God, to whom the work of retribution belongs.

r ch. 3. 7. Luke 18. 11.

15 [r]The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel *is* wise.

The way of a fool, the counsel and course which his own mind suggests to him in ordering of his affairs, *is right in his own eyes;* highly pleaseth him, so that he neglects and despiseth the opinions and advices of others. *He that hearkeneth unto counsel;* that distrusteth his own judgment, and seeketh counsel from others.

s ch. 29. 11. † Heb. *in that day.*

16 [s]A fool's wrath is †presently known: but a prudent *man* covereth shame.

Is presently known, by his rash words and indecent actions, whereby he exposeth himself to shame. *Covereth shame;* either, 1. The shame, or reproach, or injury done to him by others, which he concealeth and beareth with patience, and passeth by, as his duty and interest obligeth him to do. Or, 2. His own shame, to which the folly of rash anger would have betrayed him.

t ch. 14. 5.

17 [t]*He that* speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

He that speaketh truth, Heb. He that *will speak truth,* i. e. he who accustometh himself to speak truth in common conversation; for the future tense in the Hebrew tongue oft notes a continued act or habit. *Showeth forth righteousness,* to wit, as a witness in public judgment; he will speak nothing but what is true and just; you may depend upon his testimony. *But a false witness deceit;* he who useth himself to lying in his common talk will use falsehood and deceit in judgment.

u Ps. 57. 4. & 59. 7. & 64. 3.

18 [u]There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise *is* health.

Speaketh like the piercings of a sword, hurtful and pernicious words, whereby they either corrupt men's minds and manners, or scandalize them, or injure them in their reputation, estate, or life, or otherwise. *The tongue of the wise is health;* his speech, both in judgment and in common discourse, is sound and wholesome in itself, and tending to the comfort and benefit of others.

x Ps. 52. 5. ch. 19. 9.

19 The lip of truth shall be established for ever: [x]but a lying tongue *is* but for a moment.

The speaker of truth is constant, and always agreeable to himself, and his words, the more and longer they are tried, the more doth the truth of them appear; whereas liars, though they may make a fair show for a season, yet are easily and quickly convicted of falsehood.

20 Deceit *is* in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace *is* joy.

Deceit; either, 1. Towards others, whom they design to deceive, and then to destroy, whilst good counsellors bring safety and joy to others. Or rather, 2. To themselves. So the sense of the verse is, They whose hearts devise mischief against others shall be deceived in their hopes, and bring that trouble upon themselves which they design against others; but they who by good counsels labour to promote the peace and happiness of others, shall reap the comfort and benefit of it to themselves.

21 There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.

No evil; either, 1. Of sin; or rather, 2. Of suffering or mischief, as the next clause explains this. No such evil shall befall them as doth commonly befall the wicked, who are filled, or overwhelmed, and utterly destroyed by it; whereas good men are supported under their troubles, and shall be delivered out of them, and receive much benefit by them.

y ch. 6. 17. & 11. 20. Rev. 22. 15.

22 [y]Lying lips *are* abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly *are* his delight.

That deal truly; that speak and act sincerely and truly. He implies, that although lying lips alone are sufficient to purchase God's hatred, yet truth in a man's speech is not sufficient to procure God's favour, unless there be also truth and justice in his actions.

z ch. 13. 16. & 15. 2.

23 [z]A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

Concealeth knowledge; he doth not vain-gloriously and unseasonably utter what he knows, but keeps it in his breast till he hath a fit occasion to bring it forth for God's glory, and the good of others. *Proclaimeth foolishness;* whilst he makes ostentation of his knowledge, he betrays his ignorance and folly. Compare Eccles. x. 3.

a ch. 10. 4.

24 [a]The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the ‖slothful shall be under tribute.

‖ Or, *deceitful.*

Shall bear rule; shall procure wealth and power. *The slothful,* Heb. *the deceitful.* So he calls the slothful, because deceit and idleness are commonly companions, and such men seek to gain by fraud what they either cannot or will not get by honest labour. Compare Prov. x. 4.

b ch. 15. 13. c Is. 50. 4.

25 [b]Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but [c]a good word maketh it glad.

A compassionate or encouraging word from a friend or minister.

‖ Or, *abundant.*

26 The righteous *is* more ‖excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

More excellent; either, 1. In his temper and disposition, more just, and generous, and public-spirited, and merciful, &c. Or, 2. In his condition, more happy, notwithstanding all his sufferings and the contrary opinion of the world concerning them. *Than his neighbour;* than any other men. *Seduceth them,* Heb. *maketh them to err* or *wander,* to lose that excellency or happiness which they had promised to themselves in and by their wicked practices.

27 The slothful *man* roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man *is* precious.

The slothful man; or, *the deceitful man,* as ver. 24, who seeks to enrich himself by fraudulent and unjust practices. *Roasteth not that which he took in hunting;* doth not enjoy the fruit of his labours or devices, either because he doth not labour, and so hath nothing to waste or enjoy; or because God oftimes deprives him either of such ill-gotten goods or at least of a quiet and comfortable fruition of them. *Is precious;* yields him great comfort and satisfaction, partly because it abides with him, and partly because he hath God's favour and blessing with it.

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28 In the way of righteousness *is* life; and *in* the pathway *thereof there is* no death.

The practice of justice and godliness, though it expose a man to some dangers and inconveniences in the world, yet it will certainly lead him to life and happiness, whereas the end of all wicked courses is death and destruction.

CHAP. XIII.

1 A WISE son *heareth* his father's instruction: [a]but a scorner heareth not rebuke.

[a] 1 Sam. 2. 25.

Heareth; which word is understood out of the next clause, as is frequent in the Hebrew text. *Instruction;* or, *rebuke* or *reproof*. *Heareth not rebuke;* he hateth reproof, either from his father or from any other man.

2 [b]A man shall eat good by the fruit of *his* mouth: but the soul of the transgressors *shall eat* violence.

[b] ch. 12. 14.

Shall eat good; shall receive much comfort, and credit, and benefit to himself. *By the fruit of his mouth;* by his wise and profitable discourses. *The soul*, i. e. the person, as *the soul* is oft used. *The transgressors;* who transgress with their lips, as this general phrase may be restrained from the former clause. *Shall eat violence;* shall have that violence and injury returned upon themselves, which they have offered to others in word or deed.

3 [c]He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: *but* he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

[c] Ps. 39. 1. ch. 21. 23. Jam. 3. 2.

He that keepeth his mouth, to wit, shut, for this is opposed to the opening of it; who speaks sparingly, and with due care and caution; *keepeth his life;* prevents many sins and mischiefs which others run into. *He that openeth wide his lips*, that takes liberty to speak every thing which pleaseth him, or cometh into his mind, *shall have destruction*, from God or men.

4 [d]The soul of the sluggard desireth, and *hath* nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

[d] ch. 20. 4.

Hath nothing, because he contenteth himself with lazy desires without diligent endeavours. *Shall be made fat;* he shall be enriched with the fruit of his own labours.

5 A righteous *man* hateth lying: but a wicked *man* is loathsome, and cometh to shame.

Hateth lying, both in himself and in other men, whereby he getteth that good name which is like a precious ointment. *A wicked man;* who accustometh himself to lying, as may be gathered from the foregoing words. *Cometh to shame;* makes himself contemptible and hateful to all that know him; there being scarce any reproach which men more impatiently endure, and severely revenge, than that of being called or accounted a liar.

6 [e]Righteousness keepeth *him that is* upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth †the sinner.

[e] ch. 11. 3, 5, 6. † Heb. *sin.*

Keepeth him; either from sin, or from that overthrow which befalls sinners, in the next clause. *The sinner*, Heb. the man *of sin*, who giveth up himself to wicked courses.

7 [f]There is that maketh himself rich, yet *hath* nothing: *there is* that maketh himself poor, yet *hath* great riches.

[f] ch. 12. 9.

Some men who have little or nothing pretend to have great riches, and carry themselves accordingly; either out of pride and vanity, or with a design to gain reputation with others whom they intend to defraud. Some rich men seem and profess themselves to be very poor, that they may preserve and increase their estates, by concealing them from those who would either desire a share in them, or take them away by deceit or violence.

8 The ransom of a man's life *are* his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.

This verse sets forth, either, 1. The several advantages of riches and poverty. Riches enable a man to redeem his life when it is in greatest danger, and poverty preserves a man from those rebukes and injuries which endanger and oft destroy the rich. Or, 2. The convenience of poverty above riches. Riches frequently expose men to the peril of losing their lives by false accusers, or thieves, or tyrants, which they are forced to redeem with the loss of their riches; whereas poverty commonly secures men not only from such kinds of death, but even from rebukes and injuries; partly because such persons are cautious that they may not offend or provoke others; and partly because their persons and actions are neglected and slighted, and they are esteemed objects of pity.

9 The light of the righteous rejoiceth: [g]but the ‖lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

[g] Job 18. 5, 6. & 21. 17. ch. 24. 20. ‖ Or, *candle.*

The light; the prosperity or happiness, which is oft called a *light* or *lamp* in Scripture, and other authors. *Rejoiceth;* shineth with a pleasant and constant brightness and glory; for this is opposed to the *putting out* in the next clause. *Rejoicing* is here ascribed to the light, as it is to the sun, Psal. xix. 5, both metaphorically, because they would rejoice in it if they were capable of any such passions; and metonymically, because they refresh and cheer men's spirits. So mountains and trees are said to rejoice, Psal. lxv. 12; xcvi. 12. *The lamp of the wicked shall be put out;* their felicity shall have a sudden and a dismal end.

10 Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.

Only by pride cometh contention; which is not to be understood exclusively as to all other causes; for contentions oft spring from ignorance, or mistake, or covetousness, or other passions: but eminently, because as pride bloweth up those coals of contention which other lusts kindle, so oftimes pride alone, without any other cause, stirreth up strife; which it doth by making a man self-conceited in his opinions, and obstinate in his resolutions, and impatient of any opposition, and many other ways. *With the well-advised*, who are not governed by their own passions, but by prudent consideration, and the good counsel of others, *is wisdom;* which teacheth them to avoid and abhor all contention.

11 [h]Wealth *gotten* by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth †by labour shall increase.

[h] ch. 10. 2. & 20. 21. † Heb. *with the hand.*

By vanity; by vain, or deceitful, or wicked practices. *Shall be diminished*, because the curse of God attends upon it. *By labour;* by diligence in an honest calling.

12 Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but [i]*when* the desire cometh, *it is* a tree of life.

[i] ver. 19.

Hope deferred; delays in obtaining that good which a man passionately desireth and hopeth for. *The desire;* the good desired and expected; acts being oft put for the objects. *It is a tree of life;* it is most sweet, and satisfactory, and reviving.

13 Whoso [k]despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment ‖shall be rewarded.

[k] 2 Chron. 36. 16. ‖ Or, *shall be in peace.*

Despiseth; disobeyeth it wilfully and presumptuously. *The word;* the word of God, which is called *the word* by way of eminency, Deut. xxx. 14, compared with Rom. x. 18; 1 Tim. v. 17, and elsewhere. *Shall be destroyed*, except he repent, and return to his obedience. *That feareth the commandment;* that hath a reverence to its authority, and is afraid to violate it.

14 [l]The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from [m]the snares of death.

[l] 1 ch. 10. 11. & 14. 27. & 16. 22. [m] 2 Sam. 22. 6.

The law; the doctrine, instruction, or counsel; as the word *law* is frequently understood in Scripture. *Of the wise;* of holy men, who are commonly called *wise*, as sinners are called *fools*, in this book.

15 Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors *is* hard.

Good understanding; discovering itself by a man's holy and righteous practices and ways, as appears from the opposition of *the way of transgressors* to it; and as words of *understanding* in this and other books of Scripture com-

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monly include practice. *Giveth favour;* maketh a man acceptable both to God and men. *The way;* the carriage or manner of conversation. *Is hard;* or, *rough*, as this very word is used, Deut. xxi. 4; offensive and hateful to God and men, as rough ways are to a traveller; fierce, and intractable, and incorrigible.

n ch. 12. 23. & 15. 2. + Heb. *spreadeth.*

16 [n]Every prudent *man* dealeth with knowledge: but a fool †layeth open *his* folly.

Dealeth, Heb. *acteth*, or *doth*, manageth all his affairs, *with knowledge;* considerately and discreetly. *Layeth open his folly*, by his heady and foolish actions.

o ch. 25. 13. + Heb. *an ambassador of faithfulness.*

17 A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but [o] †a faithful ambassador *is* health.

A wicked messenger, who is unfaithful in the execution of that which is committed to his charge, as appears by the opposite clause, *falleth into mischief;* shall not escape punishment from God, or from them who sent him. *Is health;* or, *wholesome;* procureth safety and benefit, as to his master, so also to himself.

18 Poverty and shame *shall be to* him that refuseth instruction: but [p]he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

p ch. 15. 5, 31.

Instruction; whereby he might have been kept from destructive and dishonourable courses. *He that regardeth reproof*, that considers it seriously, receiveth it kindly, and reformeth himself by it, *shall be honoured*, and enriched, which is implied from the former branch. Not that it is so always, but commonly, and when God sees it good for a man. Or if he do not always gain riches, he shall certainly have honour both from God and men.

q ver. 12.

19 [q]The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but *it is* abomination to fools to depart from evil.

The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul; the satisfaction of a man's desires by the enjoyment of the things desired is very acceptable to him; which may be taken either, 1. Of the desire of fools, which may be understood out of the next clause. So the sense of the verse is, It is sweet to sinners to indulge and satisfy their desires, which are wholly carnal and sinful, and for that reason they love sin, and hate the thoughts of leaving it, because their desires are wholly and fully set upon it. Or, 2. Of good desires, or of the desires of wise and good men, as the LXX., and Chaldee, and Syriac, and Arabic interpreters understand it, by the opposition of *fools* in the next clause. So the sense may be this, The desires of good men are set upon what is good, and they rejoice when they attain to it, and are grieved when they fall short of it; but the desires of the wicked are set upon sin, and it is a pleasure to them to commit it, and an abomination to them to be hindered from it. Or rather, 3. Of desires in general. Whatsoever men do earnestly desire, the enjoyment of it is very sweet and grateful to them; and therefore sinners rejoice in the pursuit and satisfaction of their sinful lusts, and abhor all restraint and mortification of them. For this is certain and confessed, that many things are understood in these short proverbial speeches which are not expressed. *But;* or, *and*, as this particle properly signifies; or, *therefore*, as it is frequently used.

20 He that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise: but a companion of fools †shall be destroyed.

† Heb. *shall be broken.*

Walketh; commonly converseth and associateth himself. *Shall be wise;* shall learn wisdom and goodness, both from their counsels and examples. The design of this proverb is to show the wonderful influence which a man's society hath upon him, either to save, or to corrupt and destroy him.

r Ps. 32. 10.

21 [r]Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repayed.

Evil; evil of punishment proportionable to their evil of sin, as appears from the next clause. *Pursueth;* and sooner or later shall certainly overtake them, albeit they please themselves with hopes of impunity. *Sinners;* obstinate and incorrigible sinners. *Good;* God's blessings and true happiness.

22 A good *man* leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and [s]the wealth of the sinner *is* laid up for the just.

s Job 27. 16, 17. ch. 28. 8. Eccles. 2. 26.

Is by God's powerful providence oftimes translated to good men of another family, who will be more faithful stewards of it.

23 [t]Much food *is in* the tillage of the poor: but there is *that is* destroyed for want of judgment.

t ch. 12. 11.

Much food is in the tillage of the poor; poor and mean persons, by their diligent labours in tillage or other employments, and God's blessing upon them, ofttimes grow rich. *Destroyed;* or, *consumed*, to wit, in his estate, brought to poverty. *For want of judgment;* either, 1. For want of discretion and convenient care and diligence in tilling his land, and in managing his affairs, which he neglects himself, and leaves to the care of others; whereas poor men are forced by their necessities to look to their own concerns, and to use their utmost diligence in them. Or rather, 2. By injustice, as this phrase is used, Prov. xvi. 8; Jer. xvii. 11; xxii. 13; Ezek. xxii. 29. Nor do I find it in any other scripture. By his frauds, rapines, and oppressions, and other unjust and wicked practices, whereby he seeks to enrich himself, as refusing and scorning to get an estate by honest labours. So this agrees with what is said ver. 11.

24 [u]He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

u ch. 19. 18. & 22. 15. & 23. 13. & 29. 15, 17.

He that spareth, Heb. *withholdeth* it from his son when it is due to him, *his rod*, that correction which his son's fault requires, and he as a father is required to give him, *hateth his son;* not directly and properly in regard of his affection, but consequently, and in respect of the event. His fond affection is as pernicious to him as his or another man's hatred could be. *Chasteneth him betimes;* either, 1. In his tender years, as soon as he is capable of it. Or, 2. Speedily, before he be hardened and inveterate in sin.

25 [x]The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.

x Ps. 34. 10. & 37. 3.

God's favour and blessing gives the righteous man a competent estate, and a heart to use it, and comfort and satisfaction in it; whereas wicked men commonly want either all these blessings, or some of them.

CHAP. XIV.

EVERY [a]wise woman [b]buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

a ch. 24. 3. b Ruth 4. 11.

He speaks of the *woman* not to exclude the man, of whom this is no less true, but because the women, especially in those times, were very industrious in managing their husbands' estates; of which see Prov. xxxi. *Buildeth her house;* maintaineth and improveth her family and estate, as this phrase is used, Exod. i. 21; 2 Sam. vii. 11; Psal. cxxvii. 1. *Plucketh it down with her hands;* either by her idleness and not using her hands, or by her foolish and sinful courses.

2 He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: [c]but *he that is* perverse in his ways despiseth him.

c Job 12. 4.

That walketh in his uprightness; whose conversation is sincerely pious and righteous. The design of this proverb and verse is to show that God doth, and men may, judge of men's outward professions and inward dispositions by the common course of their lives. *Despiseth him;* plainly declares that he doth not fear God, but despise him, and his commands and threatenings.

3 In the mouth of the foolish *is* a rod of pride: [d]but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

d ch. 12. 6.

A rod of pride: their proud and insolent speeches, as they are like a rod, offensive and injurious to others, so they

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make a rod for their own backs, by provoking God and men against them; which sense seems most probable, both from the opposite clause, and by comparing this place with Prov. x. 13; xxvi. 3. For this phrase, *the rod of pride*, it may be compared with other like phrases, as *the foot of pride*, Psal. xxxvi. 11, *the scourge of the tongue*, Job v. 21, and *the rod of the mouth*, Isa. xi. 4. *Shall preserve them*, from that rod.

4 Where no oxen *are*, the crib *is* clean: but much increase *is* by the strength of the ox.

The crib is clean; the barn or stable is empty of food for cattle, and much more for man, whose food is more scarce and dear. In the same sense *cleanness of teeth* is put for famine, Amos iv. 6. *By the strength of the ox;* by their labours, or by diligence in husbandry, which then was principally managed by oxen.

e Ex. 20. 16. & 23. 1. ch. 6. 19. & 12. 17. ver. 25.

5 [e]A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

Will not lie, to wit, in common discourse and conversation, whereby he showeth his love to truth, and giveth assurance that when he is called to be a witness, he will be true and faithful. *But a false witness will utter lies;* or, as the words lie in the Hebrew, *and* or *but* he that *will utter lies* (that accustometh himself to lying) is or will be *a false witness*, when occasion requires it. Having debauched his conscience by daily lying, he is thereby prepared and disposed to false witness-bearing. Compare Prov. xii. 17.

6 A scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth it* not: but [f]knowledge *is* easy unto him that understandeth.

f ch. 8. 9. & 17. 24.

A scorner; a proud, self-conceited, and profane person. *Findeth it not*, because he doth not seek it aright, to wit, sincerely, and earnestly, and seasonably, and in a constant and diligent use of all the means which God hath appointed to that end, and with an honest intention of employing his knowledge to the service of God, and the furtherance of his practice of religion. *Knowledge is easy unto him*, is plain and easily attained by him, *that understandeth;* that knoweth and is deeply sensible of his own want of knowledge, and of the great worth and necessity of knowledge, which will make him use all possible means to it, and, among other ways, pray earnestly to God for it. Or, that is honest and pious; for words of knowledge are oft understood practically, especially in this book.

7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not *in him* the lips of knowledge.

Avoid the company and conversation of ungodly men, when they break forth into foolish or wicked discourses, lest thou either be infected by them, or seem to approve of them.

8 The wisdom of the prudent *is* to understand his way: but the folly of fools *is* deceit.

The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way; it consists not in vain speculations, nor in a curious prying into other men's matters, nor in cunning arts of deceiving others; but in a diligent study of his own duty, and of the way to true and eternal happiness. *The folly of fools is deceit;* the wit of ungodly men, which, though they account their wisdom, is really their folly, is employed only in finding out ways of overreaching and deceiving others, and themselves too.

g ch. 10. 23.

9 [g]Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous *there is* favour.

Fools, wicked men, as appears from their opposition to the *righteous* in the next clause, *make a mock at sin;* please and support themselves with their own and other men's sins, which is a high offence and provocation to God and men. Or, as others render it, *excuse* or *cover sin;* sin against God or men, and then justify or extenuate their sins, which is to double the injury. Possibly this clause may be thus rendered, *Sin deludes or makes a mock of fools*, or sinners, i. e. exposeth them to shame and contempt, which is fitly opposed to *favour* in the next clause. And thus two ancient and learned interpreters, Aquila and Theodotion, render it. And this suits exactly with the Hebrew words, whereas in the other translation the noun and verb governed by it are of diverse numbers, which, though sometimes it be allowed, yet is not to be supposed without necessity. But this I submit to the learned and judicious. *Among the righteous*, who are so far from making a mock of sin, or excusing it, that they do not allow themselves to commit it, *there is favour;* they find favour both with God and men, as this very word thus generally expressed is used, Prov. xi. 27, because they make conscience of ordering their lives so that they offend neither God nor men; or if they offend either, they heartily repent of it; so far are they from excusing it, or pleasing themselves with it. Or, there is *good will*, as the word properly and usually is taken; they have a real love, and are ready to do all offices of kindness one to another, and therefore neither sin against others, nor rejoice in the sins of others.

10 The heart knoweth †his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

† Heb. *the bitterness of his soul.*

The sense of the verse is this, The inward griefs and joys of men's hearts, though sometimes they may be guessed at by outward signs, yet are not certainly known to any but a man's self. Compare 1 Cor. ii. 11. The scope of the parable may be to keep men from murmuring under their own troubles, or envying other men's happiness. *A stranger*, any other person without or besides a man's self, *doth not intermeddle with his joy;* doth not partake of it, nor understand it.

11 [h]The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

h Job 8. 15.

The house; their dwelling and family. *The tabernacle;* which is a weak, and poor, and unstable thing, soon reared up, and soon taken down, and is here opposed to the large, and strong, and magnificent house of wicked men.

12 [i]There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but [k]the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

i ch. 16. 25. k Rom. 6. 21.

There are some evil actions or courses which men may think to be lawful and good, either through gross and affected ignorance, or through partiality or self-flattery, or through want of necessary diligence in examining them by the rule of God's will or word; all which are culpable causes of the mistake, and therefore do not excuse the error: but the event showeth that they were sinful and destructive.

13 Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and [l]the end of that mirth *is* heaviness.

l ch. 5. 4. Eccles. 2. 2.

The outward signs of joy are commonly mixed with or end in real and hearty sorrow. The design of the proverb is to declare the vanity of all worldly joys and comforts, and to teach men moderation in them, and to persuade us to seek for more solid and durable joys.

14 The backslider in heart shall be [m]filled with his own ways: and a good man *shall be satisfied* from himself.

m ch. 1. 31 & 12. 14.

The backslider in heart; he who departeth from God and from the way of his precepts with all his heart, which implies the doing it upon deliberation, with free choice, and full purpose, and customary practice, as ungodly men commonly do, and is opposed to the slips of human frailty; for otherwise every sin is a revolt from God. *With his own ways;* with the fruit of his ways or doings, the punishment of his sins. *From himself*, i. e. from his ways, as appears by the opposition; from the pious temper of his own heart, which cleaveth to the Lord, when the hearts of sinners forsake him; and from the holy and righteous course of his life, from which he shall receive unspeakable comfort and satisfaction both here and hereafter to all eternity.

15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going.

The simple, either the harmless man, or rather a foolish man, because he is opposed to the prudent, *believeth every word;* is easily deceived with the smooth words and fair pretences of false and deceitful men. *To his going;* either, 1. To his own going, as this is generally understood; he ordereth his conversation and dealings in the world with due circumspection, not considering so much what other men say as what he ought to do. Or, 2. To the going of the deceiver, whose the word in the former clause is supposed to be. So the sense is, He judgeth of men's words and professions by their conversation; which is a good rule.

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n ch. 22. 3. 16 n A wise *man* feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

Feareth; trembleth at God's judgments, when they are either inflicted or threatened. *From evil;* from sin, which is the procuring cause of all calamities. *Rageth;* fretteth against God, or is enraged against his messengers who bring the threatening, or disquieteth himself in vain. Or, *transgresseth*, as this verb in its simple form and first conjugation commonly signifies; or, *goeth on in sin constantly and resolutely*, according to the emphasis which this conjugation commonly adds to the simple verb. And this is most fitly opposed to *departing from evil;* as being *confident* is opposed to *fearing. Is confident;* secure and insensible of his danger till God's judgments overtake him.

17 *He that is* soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.

Dealeth foolishly; his passion hurries him into many rash and foolish speeches and actions. *A man of wicked devices*, one who suppresseth his passion, but designeth and meditateth revenge, watching for the fittest methods and opportunities of executing it, *is hated*, both by God and men, as being most deeply malicious, and like the devil, and most dangerous and pernicious to human society; whereas men that are soon angry give a man warning, and are quickly pacified, and therefore pitied and pardoned.

18 The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

Inherit folly; they possess it as their inheritance or portion, holding it fast, improving it, delighting and glorying in it. In like manner David took God's *testimonies* for his *heritage*, Psal. cxix. 111, where the word is the same; withal he may imply that folly is natural and hereditary to them. *Are crowned with knowledge;* they place their honour and happiness in a sound, and practical, and saving knowledge of God, and of their own duty, and therefore earnestly pursue after it, and heartily embrace it.

19 The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

Bow before the good; giving honour to them, and supplicating their favour and help, either for supply of their wants, as being brought low for their sins, or for counsel or comfort, or for their prayers to God for them. *At the gates;* as clients, and petitioners, and beggars use to wait at the doors and houses of great and potent men. The sense is, Good men shall have the pre-eminency over the wicked, ofttimes in this life, when God sees it expedient, but assuredly in the next life.

o ch. 19. 7. † Heb. *many are the lovers of the rich.* 20 o The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but † the rich *hath* many friends.

Is hated, i. e. despised and abandoned, as hateful persons and things are. *His own neighbour;* strictly so called, who is nearest to him, either by habitation or by relation, and therefore most obliged to love and help him.

21 He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: p but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy *is* he.

p Ps. 41. 1. & 112. 9.

That despiseth his neighbour; that doth not pity and relieve the poor, as this is explained in the next clause; the word *neighbour* being here generally taken for any man, as it is most commonly used in Scripture; which not relieving him proceeds from a contempt of his person. *Sinneth;* and therefore shall be punished for his inhumanity, which is opposed to his being *happy* in the next clause. *That hath mercy;* that showeth his compassion by his bounty and relief. *Happy is he;* he doth a worthy action, and shall be blessed in his deed.

22 Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth *shall be* to them that devise good.

Do they not err? they do certainly err from the right way, and mistake their mark, and shall miss of that advantage and felicity which they promise to themselves by such practices. *That devise;* that do not only commit it, but make it their design, and study, and business; that are artists or masters in it, as the word signifies. *Evil;* either, 1. Mischief to men. Or, 2. Any kind of wickedness against God or men; for the expression is general; and this seems best to agree to the following clause. *Mercy and truth;* either, 1. From men; men shall deal truly and kindly with them, partly because such men by their carriage obliged them to do so, and partly because God inclineth their hearts to it. Or, 2. From God, to whom these two properties are jointly ascribed in divers places of Scripture. *That devise good;* that designedly and industriously apply themselves to the doing of all good offices to God and men.

23 In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips *tendeth* only to penury.

Diligent labour is the ready way to riches, but idle talking, wherein too many spend most of their precious time, will bring a man to poverty.

24 The crown of the wise *is* their riches: *but* the foolishness of fools *is* folly.

The crown of the wise is their riches; they are a singular advantage and ornament to them, partly as they make their wisdom more regarded, when *the poor man's wisdom is despised*, Eccles. ix. 16; and partly as they give a man great opportunity to discover and exercise his wisdom or virtue by laying out his riches to the honour and service of God, and to the great and manifold good of the world; which also highly tends to his own glory and happiness. *But the foolishness of fools is folly;* but as for rich fools, for to them the general word is to be restrained from the opposite clause, their folly is not cured, but made worse and more manifest by their riches. Their riches find them fools, and leave them fools; they are not a crown, but a reproach to them, and an occasion of their greater contempt. For the phrase, we have the like in the Hebrew text, 1 Sam. i. 24. *The child* Samuel was *a child*. It is an elegant figure called *antanaclasis*, used in all authors.

25 q A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful *witness* speaketh lies. q ver. 5.

Delivereth souls, i. e. persons, to wit, such as are innocent, from the mischief of false accusations, by declaring the truth, which is sufficient for their vindication. *Speaketh lies*, to the injury and destruction of the innocent; which is easily understood out of the former clause, and from the practice of false witnesses.

26 In the fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

Strong confidence; a sure ground of confidence; or a strong refuge, as the next clause explains it. *His children;* either, 1. God's children. Or, 2. The children of them that fear God, who are sufficiently understood out of the former clause.

27 r The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. r ch. 13. 14.

To preserve men from deadly and destructive courses.

28 In the multitude of people *is* the king's honour: but in the want of people *is* the destruction of the prince.

Is the king's honour, because it is an evidence of his wise and good government. Under *honour* he here comprehends also strength and safety, (as appears from the opposite clause,) which depend much upon a prince's reputation. And *honour* may be here put for strength, as *strength* is put for honour or glory, Psal. viii. 2; xxix. 1; xcvi. 7.

29 s *He that is* slow to wrath *is* of great understanding: but *he that is* † hasty of spirit exalteth folly. s ch. 16. 32. Jam. 1. 19. † Heb. *short of spirit.*

Is of great understanding; showeth great and true wisdom in conquering his sinful and shameful passions. *Exalteth*, Heb. *lifteth up*, like a banner; makes it known and visible to all men.

30 A sound heart *is* the life of the flesh: but t envy u the rottenness of the bones. t Ps. 112. 10. u ch. 12. 4.

A sound heart; free from envy and such-like inordinate passions, which are commonly called *the diseases of the soul*, not only in sacred, but even in heathen writers. Or, as others render it, *a healing heart;* mild, and merciful, and kind to others, which is opposed to envy. *Is the life of the*

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flesh; procureth and maintaineth the health and vigour of the whole body. *But envy the rottenness of the bones;* it wasteth the spirits, and consumeth even the strongest and most inward parts of the body.

x ch. 17. 5. Matt. 25. 40, 45.
y See Job 31. 15, 16. ch. 22. 2.

31 [x]He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth [y]his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

He that oppresseth the poor; that useth him hardly, as the Syriac renders it; that withholdeth from him that which is his due, either by the rules of strict justice, or by the great law of charity, of which see Prov. iii. 27, and so it is opposed to *having mercy* in the next clause. *Reproacheth his Maker;* whose image the poor man bears, which might challenge respect, Job xxxi. 15; by whose counsel and providence he is made poor, 1 Sam. ii. 7; Prov. xxii. 2, and who hath declared himself to be their protector and avenger. *He that honoureth him,* his image, and works, and laws, *hath mercy on the poor;* doth not only forbear oppressing or injuring of him, but affords him his pity and help.

z Job 13. 15. & 19. 26. Ps. 23. 4. & 37. 37. 2 Cor. 1. 9. & 5. 8. 2 Tim. 4. 18.

32 The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but [z]the righteous hath hope in his death.

Driven away, to wit, in his death, as is gathered from the opposite clause; *driven away* from God's favour and presence, and from the society of the just, and from all his hopes of happiness, both in this life and in the next. This expression notes that this is done suddenly, violently, and irresistibly, as the smoke or chaff are driven away by a strong wind. *In his wickedness,* or, *for his wickedness,* Heb. *in his evil,* which may be understood of the evil of punishment; in the day of his calamity, when he shall flee to God for help. *Hath hope* of deliverance from it, or of great and everlasting advantage by it. *In his death;* in his greatest dangers and distresses, yea, even in death itself, which therefore he can receive with comfort and confidence.

a ch. 12. 16. & 29. 11.

33 Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but [a]*that which* is in the midst of fools is made known.

Resteth; is laid up and hid there, and not vainly nor rashly uttered by him, but only upon necessary or fit occasions. *In the midst,* i. e. in the heart, which is expressed by this very word, Psal. lxiv. 6, and elsewhere. That folly which is there instead of wisdom; or, that small degree of wisdom or knowledge which they have. *Is made known;* they will publish it in all times and companies, without any consideration or discretion.

† Heb. *to nations.*

34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach † to any people.

Exalteth a nation; maketh it honourable in the eyes of God, and of all other nations, as it did the ancient Romans. *A reproach to any people;* brings contempt and ruin upon them by provoking both God and men against them.

b Matt. 24. 45, 47.

35 [b]The king's favour *is* toward a wise servant: but his wrath is *against* him that causeth shame.

Both to himself, by his foolish management of the king's affairs committed to him; and to the king, who made so foolish a choice of a servant.

CHAP. XV.

a Judg. 8. 1, 2, 3. ch. 25. 15.
b 1 Sam. 25. 10, &c. 1 Kings 12. 13, 14, 16.

A [a]SOFT answer turneth away wrath: but [b]grievous words stir up anger.

A soft, mild or gentle, *answer,* which may imply a foregoing charge or accusation, although the word is and may be rendered *speech* or *discourse, turneth away wrath* from the speaker. *Grievous words,* fierce and vexatious replies or speeches, *stir up anger;* kindle it, and cause it to flame forth.

c ver. 28. ch. 12. 23.
d 13. 16.
† Heb. *belcheth, or, vomiteth.*

2 The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: [c]but the mouth of fools † poureth out foolishness.

Useth knowledge aright; expressing what he knows prudently and gracefully; taking due care both what, and when, and to whom, and in what manner he speaks. *Poureth out,* plentifully, continually, promiscuously, and vehemently, as a fountain doth waters, as this word signifies.

d Job 34. 21. ch. 5. 21. Jer. 16. 17. & 32. 19 Heb. 4. 13.

3 [d]The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

The eyes of the Lord; his knowledge and providence. *The evil;* who are first mentioned, because they either doubt of or deny God's providence.

† Heb. *The healing of the tongue.*

4 † A wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life: but perverseness therein *is* a breach in the spirit.

A wholesome tongue, which uttereth sound, and comfortable, and useful counsels, *is a tree of life;* is greatly useful to preserve the present life, and to promote the spiritual and eternal life, both of the speaker and hearers. *Perverseness therein,* all sorts of false or corrupt speeches, *is a breach in the spirit;* disturbs and wounds, and oftimes corrupts and destroys, the spirits or souls, both of the speaker and hearers.

e ch. 10. 1.
f ch. 13. 18. ver. 31, 32.

5 [e]A fool despiseth his father's instruction: [f]but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

A fool despiseth, doth not regard nor obey, which is an evidence of contempt, *his father's instruction,* who hath both love to him, and authority over him; which greatly aggravates his folly. *Reproof;* the reproof of any person whatsoever, and much more of a father.

6 In the house of the righteous *is* much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

House, or *family;* whereby he implies that it is not only enjoyed by him, but also left to his posterity. *In the revenues of the wicked is trouble:* though he may obtain great revenues, yet they are attended with much trouble and vexation; either because they are strangely blasted and taken from them, or because they are imbittered to them by their own insatiable desires, or tormenting cares and fears, or the horrors of their guilty consciences, or by divers other ways.

7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish *doeth* not so.

Disperse knowledge; freely communicate to others what they know, as they have opportunity. *Doeth not so;* either because he hath no knowledge to disperse, or because he hath not a heart to perform his duty, or to do good to others. Or, as others render it, and as the last Hebrew word is rendered, Gen. xlii. 34, and elsewhere, is *not right;* or the place may be rendered, *the heart of the foolish* (understand out of the former clause, as is very usual, *disperseth by his lips) that which* is *not right;* foolish and corrupt discourse, which is fitly opposed to *knowledge.*

g ch. 21. 27. & 28. 9. Is. 1. 11. & 61. 8. & 66. 3. Jer. 6. 20. & 7. 22. Amos 5. 22.

8 [g]The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

The sacrifice; all the religious services, yea, the best and most costly of them; one kind being put for all the rest. *The prayer;* the cheapest and meanest services.

h ch. 21. 21. 1 Tim. 6. 11.

9 The way of the wicked *is* an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that [h]followeth after righteousness.

The way; the conversation or course of life. This verse seems to contain a reason of the foregoing. God hates wicked men's religious performances, because they are accompanied with ungodly lives, and they pull down with one hand what they build up with another. *That followeth after righteousness;* that earnestly desires, and constantly and diligently endeavours, to be holy and righteous in the course of his life, although he doth not attain to that perfect righteousness which he thirsts after.

‖ Or, *Instruction.*
i 1 Kings 22. 8.
k ch. 5. 12. & 10. 17.

10 ‖ Correction *is* [i]grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: *and* [k]he that hateth reproof shall die.

Correction is grievous; he hateth reproof, because it is a reproach to him, and because it strikes at that sin which he loveth. *The way;* God's way, emphatically called *the way*

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here, as also Psal. cxix. 1; cxxxix. 24; Prov. ii. 13. *Shall die*, i. e. be destroyed, both here and for ever; which is a more grievous thing than a harsh reproof.

l Job 26. 6. Psa. 139. 8. m 2 Chron. 6. 30. Psa. 7. 9. & 44. 21. Jerem. 2. 24. 25. & 21. 17. Acts 1. 24.

11 [l]Hell and destruction *are* before the LORD: how much more then [m]the hearts of the children of men?

Destruction; put for the place of destruction, by a usual metonymy; the place and state of the damned, of which men know nothing but by Divine revelation. *The hearts*; whose thoughts and affections, though they lie deep, discover themselves by outward signs and actions.

n Amos 5. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 3.

12 [n]A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.

Loveth not, i. e. hateth and avoideth it; for more is here understood than is expressed, as it is Prov. xi. 21; xii. 3, and elsewhere. *Neither will he go unto*, seek their company and conversation, as his duty and interest obligeth him, *the wise*, i. e. the godly, because he knows they who are so indeed will make conscience of reproving him.

o ch. 17. 22.

13 [o]A merry heart maketh a cheerful

p ch. 12. 25.

countenance: but [p]by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

The spirit; either, 1. His vital spirits. Or rather, 2. His courage and vigour, the decay whereof showeth itself in his countenance, as is implied from the former clause.

14 The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

Their hearts are set upon wickedness, which is meat and drink to them.

q ch. 17. 22.

15 All the days of the afflicted *are* evil: [q]but he that is of a merry heart *hath* a continual feast.

Of the afflicted; of the troubled in mind or heart, as this general expression may very fitly be restrained from the following clause. *Are evil*; tedious and uncomfortable; he takes no content in any time or thing. *Of a merry heart*, Heb. *of a good heart*, i. e. composed, and quiet, and contented. *Hath a continual feast*; hath constant satisfaction and delight in all conditions, yea, even in affliction.

r Psa. 37. 16. ch. 16. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 6.

16 [r]Better *is* little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

The fear of the Lord, which gives a man tranquillity and comfort in what he hath. *Trouble*; tumultuous lusts and passions, vexatious cares and fears, horrors of conscience, and expectation of God's curse and judgment, which riches gotten without God's fear do commonly produce.

s ch. 17. 1.

17 [s]Better *is* a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

Love; true friendship and kindness between those that eat together.

t ch. 26. 21. & 29. 22.

18 [t]A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but *he that is* slow to anger appeaseth strife.

Stirreth up strife, because he is very apt both to give and to take all occasions of contention.

u ch. 22. 5.

19 [u]The way of the slothful *man is* as

† Heb. *is raised up as a causey.*

an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous †*is* made plain.

The way of the slothful man, the way in which he doth or ought to walk, any good work which he pretends or desires to undertake, *is as an hedge of thorns*; as a way hedged up with thorns, as it is expressed, Hos. ii. 6, troublesome and perplexed, and full of such difficulties as he despaireth, and therefore never striveth, to overcome. *The way of the righteous*, who is always diligent in his calling, which is one branch of righteousness, and therefore is fitly opposed to *the slothful*, who is joined with *the wicked*, Matt. xxv. 26, and censured as such both in Scripture and heathen authors, because idleness is both in itself a sin, and it leads the way to many other wickednesses. *Is made plain*; is easy and pleasant to him, notwithstanding all his discouragements and difficulties.

x ch. 10. 1. & 29. 3.

20 [x]A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.

Maketh a glad father, by giving him that honour and obedience which he oweth to him. *Despiseth his mother*; whereby he maketh her sad. See the notes on Prov. x. 1, where we have the same proverb.

y ch. 10. 23. † Heb. *void of heart.* z Eph. 5. 15.

21 [y]Folly *is* joy to *him that is* †destitute of wisdom: [z]but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.

Is joy; he doth not only work wickedness, but taketh pleasure in it. *Walketh uprightly*, Heb. *directeth* or *maketh straight his going*, i. e. ordereth all his actions by the rule of God's word, and delighteth in so doing, which is understood from the opposite clause.

a ch. 11. 14. & 20. 18.

22 [a]Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

Without counsel, when men do not seek or will not receive advice from others in weighty affairs, *purposes are disappointed*; their designs are ill managed, and succeed accordingly. *In the multitude of counsellors*, i. e. of wise and good counsellors, for such only deserve that name, *they are established*, i. e. accomplished and brought to a good issue.

b ch. 25. 11. † Heb. *in his season.*

23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and [b]a word *spoken* †in due season, how good *is it!*

By the answer, i. e. by a wise or good and seasonable answer or advice, as is manifest, both from the opposite clause, and from the nature of the thing, because it is manifest and undeniable, that a foolish answer can be no credit nor comfort to the answerer. Thus above, ver. 10, *the way* is put for God's way; and such synecdoches are frequent in Scripture. *A word spoken in due season*, counsel or comfort given to another in fit time and manner, *how good is it!* it is highly acceptable and useful.

c Phil. 3. 20. Col. 3. 1, 2.

24 [c]The way of life *is* above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

The way of life is above to the wise; the way or course which a wise man taketh to preserve and obtain life, is to place his heart, and treasure, and conversation in things above, and to manage all his affairs in this world with due respect and subserviency to the happiness of a better life. *From hell beneath*; or, *from the lowermost hell*; not *from the grave*, as this word is elsewhere used, for no wisdom can prevent that; but from hell properly so called, as this word is elsewhere used, as hath been formerly observed.

d ch. 12. 7. & 14. 11. e Ps. 68. 5, 6. & 146. 9.

25 [d]The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but [e]he will establish the border of the widow.

Of the proud; of the most mighty oppressors, who conceit themselves to be unmovably fixed. *The border*; either, 1. The estate, *the border* being oft used for the land within the borders, as Psal. cv. 31, 33, and elsewhere. Or, 2. The border by which lands were then bounded and distinguished, which those proud persons endeavoured to remove contrary to God's law, Deut. xix. 14; xxvii. 17.

f ch. 6. 16, 18. g Ps. 37. 30. † Heb. *words of pleasantness.*

26 [f]The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD: [g]but *the words* of the pure *are* †pleasant words.

The thoughts of the wicked; and much more their words, which express their thoughts; for *thoughts are* said to be *free*, and wicked men are seldom and but little concerned for the sins of their thoughts. *The words of the pure*, which discover and proceed from their thoughts, Matt. xv. 19. *Pleasant*; acceptable to God, which is opposed to *abomination* to him.

h ch. 11. 19. Is. 5. 8. Jer. 17. 11.

27 [h]He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

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He that is greedy of gain, that seeketh wealth by unjust courses, as appears from the opposite clause, *troubleth his own house;* bringeth God's curse and destruction upon himself and his family, whom he designed to enrich and establish. *That hateth;* who refuseth them not with dissimulation, nor only from prudential reasons, but from a hearty abhorrency of all unrighteousness. *Gifts*, i. e. bribes given to corrupt judgment. See Exod. xviii. 21; xxiii. 8; Deut. xvi. 19. *Shall live;* shall preserve himself and (which is understood out of the former clause) his family from ruin.

[i] 1 Pet. 3. 15.

28 The heart of the righteous [i]studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

Studieth to answer; he answers or speaks considerately and conscientiously, and therefore profitably, or to the use and edification of the hearers. *The mouth*, not the heart; for he is without heart in Scripture account, and he rashly speaks what comes into his mouth, without the direction of his heart or conscience. *Evil things;* foolish, and unprofitable, and hurtful speeches.

[k] Ps. 10. 1. & 34. 16. [l] Ps. 145. 18, 19.

29 [k]The LORD *is* far from the wicked: but [l]he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

Is far from the wicked, to wit, when they pray to him, as the next clause explains, and therefore doth not hear nor regard them, as he is said to be *nigh to the righteous*, Psal. xxxiv. 18; cxlv. 18. But this farness or nearness respecteth not God's essence, which is every where, but his gracious and helpful presence.

30 The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: *and* a good report maketh the bones fat.

The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart; the light which we see with our eyes, and by the help of which we see many other pleasant objects, is a great comfort and refreshment. Compare Eccles. xi. 7, *Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant* thing it is *for the eyes to behold the sun;* which is a good comment upon this place. *A good report;* either, 1. Glad tidings. Or rather, 2. A good name, which is a more lasting thing, and makes deeper impression. *Maketh the bones fat;* not only cheereth a man for the present, but gives him such solid and stable comfort as doth both revive his soul, and give health and vigour to his body. So he compares two senses together, seeing and hearing, with respect to their several objects, and prefers the latter before the former.

[m] ver. 5.

31 [m]The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

The ear that heareth; the man that hearkeneth to it, and delights in it. *The reproof of life;* that reproof and good counsel which leads to life. *Abideth among the wise*, Heb. *shall* or *will abide*, &c. Either, 1. He will thereby be made wise, and be esteemed one of that number. Or rather, 2. He seeketh and delighteth in the company and conversation of the wise, by whom he may be admonished; as, on the contrary, fools, who hate reproof, do avoid and abhor the society of wise men and reprovers, Amos v. 10.

‖ Or, *correction.* ‡ Or, *heareth.* † Heb. *possesseth an heart.*

32 He that refuseth ‖instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that ‡heareth reproof †getteth understanding.

Despiseth his own soul; which hereby he exposeth to the danger of utter destruction, whereby he shows his folly. *Getteth understanding;* whereby he saveth his soul. Heb. *possesseth an heart*, which the Hebrews make the seat of wisdom.

[n] ch. 1. 7. [o] ch. 18. 12.

33 [n]The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; and [o]before honour *is* humility.

Is the instruction of wisdom; doth instruct men in or lead them to true wisdom; whence it is said to be *the beginning of wisdom*, Prov. i. 7; ix. 10. *Before honour is humility*, i. e. it is the ready way to honour, both from God and from men. *Humility;* whereby men submit to God, and yield to men, which gains them love and respect; whereas pride procures them hatred and contempt from God and men.

CHAP. XVI.

THE [a]‖preparations of the heart in man, [b]and the answer of the tongue, *is* from the LORD.

[a] ver. 9. ch. 19. 21. & 20. 24. Jer. 10. 23. ‖ Or, *disposings.* [b] Matt. 10. 19, 20.

Men can neither think nor speak wisely and well of themselves, or without Divine assistance. Or, as many others, both ancient and modern interpreters, render the verse, *The preparations*, or *dispositions*, or *orderings of the heart* are *in* or *from a man;* (i. e. a man may consider and contrive in his own thoughts what he wills or designs to speak; which is spoken by way of concession, yet not excluding man's dependence upon God therein, which is evident both from many plain texts of Scripture, and from undeniable reason;) but *the answer* or *speech* (as this word is oft used) *of the tongue is from the Lord.* Men cannot express their own thoughts without God's leave and help, and their tongues are oft overruled by God to speak what was besides and above their own thoughts, as he did Balaam, Numb. xxiii., and Caiaphas, John xi. 49—51.

2 [c]All the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; but [d]the LORD weigheth the spirits.

[c] ch. 21. 2. [d] 1 Sam. 16. 7.

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; many men can easily flatter and deceive themselves into a good opinion of themselves, and of their own actions, though they be sinful. See below, ver. 25, and compare 1 Cor. iv. 4. *The Lord weigheth*, i. e. exactly knoweth, as men do the things which they weigh and examine, *the spirits;* the hearts of men, from which both men's actions, and the goodness and badness of them, in a great measure, proceed; their ends and intentions, their dispositions and affections, which are hid not only from others, but ofttimes from a man's self; whereby he is unfit to judge in his own cause, and easily mistaken, if he do not use great diligence and fidelity. In this last clause he intimates the reason why men deceive themselves in judging of their state and actions, because they do not search their own hearts.

[e] Ps. 37. 5. & 55. 22. Matt. 6. 25. Luke 12. 22. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. † Heb. *Roll.*

3 [e]† Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

Commit thy works unto the Lord, Heb. *Roll*, &c., as a man rolls a burden to another, which is too heavy for himself, imploring his help. Refer all thy actions and concerns to God, and to his glory, as the end of them, and in the discharge of thy own duty depend upon God's providence for assistance and success. *Thy thoughts shall be established;* thy honest desires and designs shall be brought to a happy issue one way or other.

4 [f]The LORD hath made all *things* for himself: [g]yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

[f] Is. 43. 7. Rom. 11. 36. [g] Job 21. 30. Rom. 9. 22.

Hath made; or, *hath wrought* or *doth work;* for the Hebrews express the present as well as the past time by this tense: he ordereth or disposeth; for this may be understood either of the works of creation or of providence. *All things*, and especially all men, *for himself;* for his own service and glory; for the discovery and illustration of his own wisdom, power, goodness, truth, justice, and his other most glorious perfections. *The wicked*, wilful and impenitent sinners, *for the day of evil;* for the time of punishment, as this phrase is used, Psal. xlix. 5; Jer. xvii. 18, and elsewhere; of which the Scripture frequently speaks, both to warn sinners of their danger, and to satisfy the minds of them which are amazed and disquieted with the consideration of the present impunity and felicity of wicked men. Men make themselves wicked, and God therefore makes them miserable.

5 [h]Every one *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD: [i]*though* hand *join* in hand, he shall not be †unpunished.

[h] ch. 6. 17. & 8. 13. [i] ch. 11. 21. † Heb. *held innocent.*

That is proud in heart, though he dissemble it in his outward carriage and countenance, as Psal. x. 4. In whose heart pride rules. *Though hand join in hand;* though they have many friends and assistants. See the same phrase Prov. xi. 21.

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k Dan. 4. 27. Tobit 12. 9. Luke 11. 41. 1 ch. 14. 16.

6 k By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and l by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.

By mercy and truth; either, 1. By God's mercy or grace, and by his truth in performing his promises made to sinners in Christ. Or, 2. By men's mercy and truth, as those very words are jointly used, Prov. iii. 3; xx. 28, and elsewhere; and as, in the following clause, *the fear of the Lord* is a grace or disposition in men; by a merciful, and just, and faithful frame of heart and course of life; which are here opposed to sacrifices, as *mercy* is, Hos. vi. 6, by which the hypocritical Jews expected to obtain the expiation of their sins. *Iniquity is purged*, not meritoriously, but instrumentally, as they qualify a man to offer up acceptable prayers to God for the pardon of his sins, and to receive and apply to himself that pardon which Christ by his blood hath purchased for all sincere believers, who are filled with mercy, and truth, and other graces. *By the fear of the Lord;* by a filial reverence or respect unto God, and by a holy fear of offending God, and by a dread of God's judgments; *men depart from evil;* they are kept from abusing pardoning mercy, and from returning to folly or wickedness. So he showeth that justification and sanctification are constant and inseparable companions.

7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

By disposing their hearts to kindness towards him.

m Ps. 37. 16. ch. 15. 16.

8 m Better *is* a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

This was in effect said before, Prov. xv. 16, and is here repeated, partly because of the great importance and usefulness of this truth, and partly because men are very hardly brought to a serious belief of it.

n ver. 1. ch. 19. 21. o Ps. 37. 23. Prov. 20. 24. Jer. 10. 23.

9 n A man's heart deviseth his way: o but the LORD directeth his steps.

Deviseth his way; considers and proposeth to himself what he will do. *Directeth his steps;* overruleth and disposeth all their designs and actions as he pleaseth, and not as they list.

† Heb. *Divination.*

10 † A divine sentence *is* in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.

A divine sentence, Heb. *divination*, which is sometimes taken in a good sense for *prudence*, as it is Isa. iii. 2. A great sagacity and piercing judgment to discern dubious and difficult cases. *Is;* or, *should be;* for the verb is wanting in the Hebrew, and this may be supplied as well as *is*. And he seems not so much to speak of the matter of fact, as if it were thus in all kings, which is notoriously and confessedly untrue, as of the duty of kings, in whom wisdom is a necessary qualification. For thus the two following proverbs concerning kings, ver. 12, 13, must be understood, otherwise they are repugnant to common experience. *Of the king;* either, 1. Of wise kings, who only are worthy of that name and office; *king* being here put for a wise king, as a *name* is put for a *good name*, and a *woman* for a *good woman*, Eccles. vii. 28; and then this is true in fact, as it was in David. 2 Sam. xiv. 17, and in Solomon, 1 Kings iii. 28. Or, 2. Of kings in general, in the sense before given; for seeing the word is generally expressed without any limitation, both here and ver. 12, 13, it may seem presumption to confine it to those few kings which are or were wise and good. *Transgresseth not;* or, *shall* or *should not transgress*, or go beyond the bounds of religion and justice.

p Lev. 19. 36. ch. 11. 1. † Heb. *all the stones.*

11 p A just weight and balance *are* the LORD's: † all the weights of the bag *are* his work.

Are the Lord's; are God's work, as it follows; made by his direction and appointment, so as no man can corrupt or alter them without violating God's rights and authority, and incurring his displeasure. *The weights*, Heb. *the stones*, which they then used as weights. See on Prov. xi. 1.

q ch. 25. 5. & 29. 14.

12 *It is* an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for q the throne is established by righteousness.

It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness; they should not only abstain from all wicked practices, but abhor them both in their own persons, and in all their servants and subjects. It is too plain that he speaks not of the common practice, but of the duty of kings, as on ver. 10. And such affirmative expressions are oft used in Scripture to express men's duty only, as 1 Cor. vi. 19, *your body is* (i. e. should be) *the temple*, &c.; and vii. 32, *careth*, &c. i. e. ought to care. *The throne is established by righteousness;* and (which is implied) weakened, and sometimes overthrown, by unrighteousness; and therefore this is necessary for their own security and happiness.

r ch. 14. 35. & 22. 11.

13 r Righteous lips *are* the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

All wise and good kings do, and all kings should, delight in employing such counsellors, judges, and officers under them, as are just and faithful in their counsels, and sentences, and actions, because such bring great honour and advantage to them.

s ch. 19. 12. & 20. 2.

14 s The wrath of a king *is as* messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.

Is as messengers of death; is as terrible as if many messengers were sent to denounce the sentence of death, and to execute it. *Will pacify it;* will use all prudent and lawful means to pacify it.

t ch. 19. 12. u Job 29. 23. Zech. 10. 1.

15 In the light of the king's countenance *is* life; and t his favour *is* u as a cloud of the latter rain.

In the light of the king's countenance is life; his favour and smiling countenance is most sweet and refreshing, especially to him that was under a sentence of death, ver. 14. *His favour is as a cloud of the latter rain;* as acceptable as those clouds which bring the latter rain, whereby the fruits are filled and ripened a little before the harvest; of which see Deut. xi. 14; Job xxix. 23; James v. 7.

x ch. 8. 11, 19.

16 x How much better *is it* to get wisdom than gold? and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver?

How much better! it is inexpressibly and unconceivably better, as this phrase implies, Psal. xxxi. 19; xxxvi. 7; xcii. 5, &c. *Is it to get wisdom than gold*, because it brings a man more certain, and complete, and lasting comfort and advantage.

17 The highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.

The highway of the upright, their common road, in which they constantly purpose, and desire, and customarily use to walk, although sometimes through frailty or temptation they slip into the by-paths of sin, *is to depart from evil;* from the evil of sin, and consequently from the evil of punishment. *He that keepeth his way*, that takes heed to walk in that highway, *preserveth his soul* from that mischief which befalls those that walk in the crooked paths of wickedness.

y ch. 11. 2. & 17. 19. & 18. 12.

18 y Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

Pride goeth before destruction; it is commonly a forerunner and cause of men's ruin, because it highly provokes both God and men.

19 Better *it is to be* of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Who will spoil and rob others to maintain their own pomp and luxury.

‖ Or, *He that understandeth a matter.* z Ps. 2. 12. & 34. 8. & 125. 1. Is. 30. 18. Jer. 17. 7.

20 ‖ He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso z trusteth in the LORD, happy *is* he.

He that handleth a matter wisely; he who orders his affairs with discretion. Or, as others, both ancient and later interpreters, take it, *he that understandeth* or *attendeth to the word*, to wit, the word of God, which is called absolutely *the word*, Prov. xiii. 13, and elsewhere, making that the rule of his actions. *Shall find good;* shall obtain happy success. *Whose trusteth in the Lord;* who doth not trust to his

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prudence or diligence, but to God's providence and blessings. Or, who mixeth God's word with faith, as the phrase is, Heb. iv. 2. *Happy is he;* he shall not only find some good, but shall certainly attain to true happiness.

21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

The wise in heart shall be called prudent: the sense is either, 1. He who hath wisdom or sound knowledge in his heart, will show it by his prudence in ordering his actions. Or rather, 2. He who is truly wise, or prudent, or intelligent (all which words most commonly signify one and the same thing, both in this and in other books of Scripture) shall be so called or accounted by others. *The sweetness of the lips;* eloquence added to wisdom; the faculty of expressing a man's mind fitly, and freely, and acceptably. *Increaseth learning;* both in himself, for whilst a man teacheth others he improveth himself; and especially in others, who by this means are induced to hear and receive his good instructions. Wisdom gets a man repute with others, but this faculty of right speaking makes a wise man more instrumental to do good to others.

a ch. 13. 14. & 14. 27.

22 [a]Understanding *is* a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools *is* folly.

Is a well-spring of life, is continually suggesting wholesome and saving instructions, *unto him that hath it;* and to others also, as is understood from the following clause. *The instruction of fools is folly;* their most grave and serious counsels are foolish.

b Psa. 37. 30. Matt. 12. 34. † Heb. maketh wise.

23 [b]The heart of the wise †teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

Teacheth his mouth; directeth him what, and when, and how to speak, and keepeth him from speaking rashly and foolishly. *Addeth learning to his lips,* i. e. enableth him to speak learnedly and wisely. Or, *increaseth learning* (in himself and others) *by* (as this Hebrew particle oft signifies, and is by some rendered here) *his lips,* i. e. by his wise speeches; that this may agree with the latter clause of ver. 21, where this same phrase is used.

24 Pleasant words *are as* an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

Pleasant words; the discourses of the wise last mentioned, ver. 23, which yield both profit and delight; their wholesome counsels and refreshing comforts. *To the bones;* to the body, synecdochically expressed by the bones, the strongest and greatest parts of it, and the supporters of the rest.

c ch. 14. 12.

25 [c]There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

This whole verse was delivered before, chap. xiv. 12, and is here repeated, partly for its great importance and usefulness to prevent that self-deceit which is so common and dangerous; and partly to keep men from leaning too much to their own understanding, and to oblige them to seek and receive the good counsels of wise and holy men.

d See ch. 9. 12. Eccles. 6. 7. † Heb. *The soul of him that laboureth.* † Heb. *boweth unto him.*

26 [d]†He that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth †craveth it of him.

For himself; for his own use and benefit. The scope of the proverb is to commend and press diligence in a man's calling, and to condemn idleness. *Craveth it of him,* Heb. *boweth to him,* as a suppliant; beggeth him to labour, that it may have something to put into it for its own comfort, and for the nourishment of the whole body.

† Heb. *A man of Belial.*

27 †An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips *there is* as a burning fire.

Diggeth up evil; inventeth or designeth mischief to others, and prosecuteth his evil designs with great and constant industry. *In his lips there is as a burning fire;* as his thoughts, so also his words are very vexatious and pernicious; his tongue is set on fire of hell, and sets himself and others on fire by lies and slanders, and other provoking speeches.

e ch. 6. 14. 19 & 15. 18. & 26. 21. & 29. 22. † Heb. *soweth forth.* f ch. 17. 9.

28 [e]A froward man †soweth strife: and [f]a whisperer separateth chief friends.

A froward man; or, *perverse man,* who perverteth his words and ways; who pleaseth not God, and is contrary to men, as was said of the Jews, 1 Thess. ii. 15. *Soweth strife,* by whispering such things as may provoke one against another. *A whisperer,* who secretly carries tales from one to another, publishing those evil words and actions which they should conceal, and detracting from their good actions, and perverting such as are innocent with their false constructions. *Chief friends,* Heb. *a chief friend;* the singular number put for the plural, as is frequent in the Hebrew text.

g ch. 1. 10, &c.

29 A violent man [g]enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way *that is* not good.

A violent man, Heb. *a man of violence,* i. e. devoted to violent and injurious courses, *enticeth his neighbour* into a confederacy with him in his wicked practices, as it follows. *That is not good,* i. e. that is very sinful, as this phrase is used, Prov. xvii. 26; xviii. 5, and oft elsewhere.

30 He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.

Shutteth his eyes, that his thoughts may be more free and intent to contrive mischief. *Moving his lips;* which is the gesture, either, 1. Of one whose thoughts are deeply engaged. Or, 2. Of one that speaketh or maketh signs to others to assist him in executing that wickedness which he hath contrived.

h ch. 20. 29.

31 [h]The hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it be found in the way of righteousness.

A crown of glory; a great honour and ornament, as it is a singular blessing of God, a token of great experience and prudence, as it comes nearest to God, who is called *the Ancient of days,* Dan. vii. 9. *If it be found in the way of righteousness;* if it be accompanied with true piety, otherwise *an old sinner is accursed,* Isa. lxv. 20. Heb. *it shall be found,* &c. This is a privilege promised to righteous persons, Exod. xx. 12; Prov. iii. 16; iv. 22; whereas ungodly men *shall not live out half their days,* Psal. lv. 23.

i ch. 19. 11.

32 [i]*He that is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

He that is slow to anger, not apt to revenge, but ready to forgive injuries, *is better than the mighty,* because he is more like to God, more wise to foresee and to prevent mischief, both to himself and others, which oft cometh from rash anger, of a more gallant and generous spirit, and more valiant and victorious, as it follows. This is opposed to the perverse judgment of the world, who esteem such persons pusillanimous and cowardly. *That ruleth his spirit;* that subdueth his passions; for his victory is the more glorious, because he fights with the stronger enemy; he conquers by his own, and not by other men's hands, and he gets a greater glory and advantage to himself, and that without the injury and ruin of others, wherewith the conquests of cities are commonly attended.

33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD.

The lot is cast into the lap; as the ancient practice was in dividing inheritances, and deciding doubtful things, of which see Numb. xxvi. 55; Josh. vii. 16; 1 Sam. x. 20, 21; xiv. 41, 42; Prov. i. 14; Acts i. 26. *The whole disposing thereof is of the Lord;* the event, though casual to men, is directed and determined by God's counsel and providence.

CHAP. XVII.

a ch. 15. 17.

BETTER *is* [a]a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of ‖sacrifices *with* strife.

‖ Or, *good cheer.*

Of sacrifices; of the remainders of sacrifices, of which they used to make feasts; of which see on Prov. vii. 14. Or, *of slain* beasts, as that word is used, Gen. xxxi. 54, and elsewhere.

b ch. 10. 5. & 19. 26.

2 A wise servant shall have rule over [b]a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

Shall have rule over a son that causeth shame; either as being by his father appointed tutor or guardian to his son;

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or being by his wisdom advanced to that estate and dignity which the other possibly hath lost by his folly. *Shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren;* partly as a just recompence for his faithful service, as Gen. xv. 2, 3, &c., and partly as an obligation to him to take care of his children.

c Ps. 26. 2. ch. 27. 21. Jer. 17. 10. Mal. 3. 3.

3 [c]The fining pot *is* for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

The hearts of men cannot be searched and known by any human art, but by God only.

4 A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; *and* a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.

A wicked doer, or, *a malicious* or *mischievous* man, whose practice and delight it is to bring trouble to others, *giveth heed to false lips*, Heb. *to lips of iniquity*, to any wicked counsels or speeches, to false accusations and calumnies, which give him occasion and encouragement to do mischief. *A liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue;* he who accustometh himself to false and wicked speaking delighteth in the like speeches of other men. This proverb contains a comparison between an evil-doer and an evil-speaker, and showeth their agreement in the same sinful practice of being greedy to hear false and wicked speeches.

d ch. 14. 31. e Job 31. 29. Obad. 12. † Heb. *held innocent.*

5 [d]Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: *and* [e]he that is glad at calamities shall not be †unpunished.

Mocketh the poor; derideth or reproacheth him with or for his poverty. *His Maker;* God, who by his providence made him poor. See the same assertion Prov. xiv. 31. *At calamities;* at the miseries of other men.

f Ps. 127. 3. & 128. 3.

6 [f]Children's children *are* the crown of old men; and the glory of children *are* their fathers.

The crown of old men; their honour and happiness, because they are in themselves blessings of God, and testimonies of God's favour, although sometimes they may become the shame of their father's house. *Their fathers;* namely, such fathers as are wise and godly, as is evident from the nature of the thing, for wicked parents bring infamy upon their children.

† Heb. *A lip of excellency.* † Heb. *a lip of lying.*

7 †Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do †lying lips a prince.

Excellent speech; either, 1. Discourse of high and excellent things far above his capacity. Or, 2. Lofty or eloquent speech, which fools oft affect. Or, 3. Virtuous and godly discourse. *A fool;* either properly so called; or, as this word is most commonly used in this book, a wicked man, whose actions give the lie to his expressions.

g ch. 18. 16. & 19. 6. † Heb. *a stone of grace.*

8 [g]A gift *is as* †a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.

As a precious stone; pleasant and acceptable, and withal dazzleth his eyes. *Of him that hath it*, Heb. *of the lord* or *owner of it;* either, 1. Of the giver; or rather, 2. Of the receiver of it, who by the giver is made lord of it; for to his eyes it was exposed, that he might discern the beauty and worth of it, and thereby be allured to do what was desired, which accordingly he did, as it here follows. *Whithersoever it turneth;* to whomsoever it is presented. But this, as also many other proverbs, are to be understood of the common course or effect with most men, but not universally of all men.

h ch. 10. 12. ‖ Or, *procureth.* i ch. 16. 28.

9 [h]He that covereth a transgression ‖seeketh love; but [i]he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

That covereth a transgression; that concealeth, as far as he may, other men's faults against himself, or against their friends. *Seeketh*, i. e. findeth or obtaineth, as this word is used here below, ver. 19, and Prov. xi. 27. *Love;* either 1. To himself. Or rather, 2. To the transgressor or offending friend: he maintains love among friends, as it may be explained from the opposite clause. *That repeateth;* that publisheth and spreadeth it abroad; that recalls it to mind after it was past and forgotten. *A matter;* or, *the matter* last mentioned, to wit, the transgression. *Separateth very friends;* either, 1. He alienateth his friend from himself. Or rather, 2. He raiseth jealousies and dissensions among friends. This phrase we had before, chap. xvi. 28.

‖ Or, *A reproof entereth more a wise man, than to strike a fool an hundred times.*

10 ‖A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.

Is more effectual for his reformation.

11 An evil *man* seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

An evil man seeketh only rebellion; it is the constant study and business of wicked men to rebel, either, 1. Against men in authority. But this is not universally true, for many most wicked persons are not guilty of that sin. Or rather, 2. Against God. For, 1. Thus it is true of all wicked men. 2. This word is used of rebellion against God, Deut. xxxi. 27; Ezek. ii. 5, 6; iii. 9, &c. 3. This word being put alone, without any addition of the object, seems most probably to be meant of the highest and worst kind of rebellion, according to the common rule of interpretation in such cases. *A cruel messenger;* or, *a cruel angel;* the angel of death, the devil, or some bloody men employed by God to avenge his quarrel; or some dreadful punishment; it being very usual in Scripture to represent things under the notion of persons, as Rom. vii., and elsewhere.

k Hos. 13. 8.

12 Let [k]a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.

Robbed of her whelps, when she is most cruel and fierce. *In his folly;* in the heat of his lust or passion, because the danger is greater, all things considered, and more unavoidable.

l Ps. 109. 4, 5. Jer. 18. 20. See Rom. 12. 17. 1 Thess. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9.

13 Whoso [l]rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

From his person and family, because such a man is most hateful to God and to all mankind; God will punish him, and men will not pity nor relieve him.

m ch. 20. 3. 1 Thess. 4. 11.

14 The beginning of strife *is as* when one letteth out water: therefore [m]leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

Letteth out water, by cutting the bank of a river, in which case the water quickly widens the breach, and breaks in with irresistible violence and fury, and causeth great mischief and destruction. *Leave off contention, before it be meddled with;* avoid the occasions and prevent the beginnings of contention.

n Ex. 23. 7. ch. 24. 24. Is. 5. 23.

15 [n]He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both *are* abomination to the LORD.

That justifieth; that acquitteth him as innocent by a judicial sentence, or otherwise approveth or commendeth his evil practices; by which we may easily understand what it is to *condemn the just.*

o ch. 21. 25, 26.

16 Wherefore *is there* a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, [o]seeing *he hath* no heart *to it?*

Wherefore? the question implies that it is unworthily placed, and that it is to no purpose or benefit of the possessor. *A price;* possessions or riches, as all the ancient translators render it, of which this word is used, Isa. lv. 1, and elsewhere, under which all opportunities and abilities of getting it are comprehended. *To get wisdom;* for the obtaining whereof rich men have many and great advantages above others. *No heart to it;* neither common discretion to discern the worth of wisdom, and his advantage to get it; nor any sincere desire to get it; for *the heart* is commonly used in Scripture both for the understanding, and for the will and affections.

p Ruth 1. 16. ch. 18. 24.

17 [p]A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

A friend, a sincere and hearty friend, *loveth at all times*, not only in prosperity, but also in adversity, when false friends forsake us. *A brother*, who is so not only by name and blood, but by brotherly affection, *is born for adversity;* was sent into the world for this among other ends, that he might comfort and relieve his brother in his adver-

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sity. So this proverb compareth a friend with a brother, and showeth that a friend doth that freely, and by choice, which a brother doth by the force and obligations of nature. But this last clause may be, and is by divers, otherwise rendered, *and* he (to wit, the friend) *is born a brother* (or, *becomes* or *is made a brother*, i. e. puts on brotherly affection, as if he had received a second birth, and was born his brother; such expressions being not unusual, both in Scripture and in other authors) *in* or *against the* time of adversity. So the sense is, He is a friend at all times, but in adversity he is more than an ordinary friend, even a brother.

q ch. 6. 1. & 11. 15. † Heb. heart.

18 [q]A man void of †understanding striketh hands, *and* becometh surety in the presence of his friend.

Striketh hands, in token of his becoming surety; of which phrase, and of the thing itself, see on Prov. vi. 1; xi. 15. *His friend:* the *friend* here is either, 1. Before and to the creditor. Or rather, 2. Before, and with, and for the debtor, for whom, as being his friend, he becomes surety, as the manner of friends is. See on Prov. vi. 3. And this proverb is fitly placed after that, ver. 17, to intimate, that although the laws of friendship oblige us to love and help our friends in trouble as far as we are able, yet they do not oblige us to become surety for them rashly, and above what we are able to pay, for by that means we make ourselves unable to do good either to them, or to others, or to ourselves.

r ch. 16. 18.

19 He loveth transgression that loveth strife: *and* [r]he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.

He loveth transgression that loveth strife, because contention is in itself a sin, and is commonly accompanied or followed with many sins, as detraction, malice, hatred, pride, &c. *His gate;* either, 1. His mouth, i. e. who speaketh loftily; for we read of *the gate* or *doors of* one's *mouth* in Micah vii. 5, and elsewhere; but then the word *mouth* or *tongue* is added to determine the sense: but the mouth is no where called *the gate*, simply or absolutely. Or, 2. The gate of his house that maketh it, and consequently his house, lofty and magnificent, beyond what befits his quality, which being an evidence and effect of pride and haughtiness of spirit, is here mentioned for all the rest. So the sense is, He who carries himself loftily and scornfully. *Seeketh destruction;* he seeks those things which will expose him to destruction, because he maketh himself odious both to God and men. Or, *findeth destruction; seeking* being put for finding or procuring, as above, ver. 9.

† Heb. *The froward of heart.* s Jam. 3. 8.

20 †He that hath a froward heart findeth no good: and he that hath [s]a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.

He that hath a froward heart, whose heart is not plain and upright, but false towards God or men, *findeth no good;* shall not get that advantage by his dissimulation which he intends and expects, but shall fall into mischief, as is implied from the opposite clause. *He that hath a perverse tongue:* that speaks deceitfully or wickedly. So here is a comparison between an evil heart and an evil tongue, and the ill effects of both of them.

t ch. 10. 1. & 19. 13. ver. 25.

21 [t]He that begetteth a fool *doeth it* to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.

A fool; not a natural, but a wilful fool, or a wicked son. *The father;* and consequently the mother also. *Hath no joy*, which parents usually have in the birth of a child, and especially of a son; but hath great cause of sorrow, the contrary being implied in this and such-like expressions, as in Scripture, as Prov. x. 2, &c., so also in profane authors; whose words see in my Latin Synopsis.

u ch. 15. 13, 15. & 12. 25. ‖ Or, *to a medicine.* x Ps. 22. 15.

22 [u]A merry heart doeth good ‖*like* a medicine: [x]but a broken spirit drieth the bones.

A merry heart; cheerfulness of soul, especially that which is solid, and ariseth from the witness of a good conscience. *Doeth good*, even to the body; it contributes very much to the restoration or preservation of bodily health and vigour, as physicians observe, and experience showeth. *Broken;* sad and dejected. *Drieth the bones;* wasteth the marrow of the bones, and the moisture and strength of the body.

23 A wicked *man* taketh a gift out of the bosom [y]to pervert the ways of judgment. y Ex. 23. 8.

A wicked man, whether judge or witness. *Out of the bosom;* in secret, as this phrase is expounded, Prov. xxi. 14, being privily conveyed from the bosom of the giver into his own bosom. *To pervert the ways of judgment;* to give or procure an unjust sentence.

z ch. 14. 6. Eccles. 2. 14. & 8. 1.

24 [z]Wisdom *is* before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool *are* in the ends of the earth.

Before him; or, *in* (as the particle *beth* is used, Deut. ii. 7, and is here rendered by divers interpreters) *the face* or *countenance*. The sense is either, 1. His wisdom appears even in his gestures and looks, which are modest, and composed, and grave. Or, 2. Wisdom is before him, or in his sight, as the mark at which he aims, or as the rule by which he constantly walketh and ordereth all his steps, from time to time minding his present duty and business. *The eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth:* the sense of this clause also is either, 1. His folly appears in his light, and unsteady, and disorderly carriage and looks. Or, 2. His mind is wavering and unsettled; he neither proposeth a right and certain end to himself, nor is he constant in the use of fit means to attain it; he neglects his present business and true interest, and wanders hither and thither in the pursuit of earthly vanities, minding most those things which are remotest from him, and least concern him.

a ch. 10. 1. & 15. 20. & 19. 13. ver. 21.

25 [a]A foolish son *is* a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

This he said before, Prov. xv. 20, and elsewhere; but he here repeats it as a point of great moment and constant use, and as a powerful motive to oblige both children to carry themselves wisely and dutifully to their parents, as they would not be thought to be unnatural or inhuman, and parents to educate their children prudently and religiously, at least for their own comfort, if not for the public good.

b ver. 15. ch. 18. 5.

26 Also [b]to punish the just *is* not good, *nor* to strike princes for equity.

Also: this particle seems to have relation to the next foregoing proverb, to imply that it is a very evil thing for children to cause grief to their parents, as it is also to do what here follows. *To punish the just;* for parents, or princes, or rulers, to whom alone this power belongs, to punish innocent and good men; *is not good;* is highly evil and abominable, as is implied. See above, ver. 20; Prov. xvi. 29; xvii. 10, &c. *Nor to strike princes for equity;* nor to smite magistrates, either with the hand or tongue, for the execution of justice, as condemned persons are apt to do. Or, as some learned interpreters render it, *nor for princes to strike* any man *for equity*, or for doing his duty, or what is just. So this clause best agrees with the former. Besides, it belongs to princes or magistrates to punish or strike.

c Jam. 1. 19. ‖ Or, *a cool spirit.*

27 [c]He that hath knowledge spareth his words: *and* a man of understanding is of ‖an excellent spirit.

Spareth, Heb. *restraineth*, as at other times, so especially when he is provoked to passion, in which case fools utter all their mind. *An excellent spirit;* which he showeth by commanding his passions, and bridling himself from hasty and unadvised speeches. Or, as others render it, is *of a cool spirit*, calm and moderate, not easily provoked; *humble*, as the Chaldee renders it; *patient* or *long-suffering*, as the LXX. and Arabic interpreters render the words. Or, as others, *sparing* (Heb. *precious*, which is put for *rare* or *scarce*, 1 Sam. iii. 1; Prov. xxv. 17; Isa. xiii. 12) *of his breath*, i. e. of his speech, as this very word is used, Prov. xxix. 11; Isa. xi. 4, compared with 2 Thess. ii. 8.

d Job 13. 5.

28 [d]Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: *and* he that shutteth his lips *is esteemed* a man of understanding.

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Is counted wise, because he is sensible of his own folly, and therefore forbears to speak, lest he should discover it; which is a great point of true wisdom.

CHAP. XVIII.

‖ Or, *He that separateth himself seeketh according to his desire, and intermeddleth in every business*: See Jude 19.

THROUGH ‖desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh *and* intermeddleth with all wisdom.

According to this interpretation the sense is, *Through desire* (of it, to wit, of wisdom, which is easily understood out of the end of the verse; such ellipses being frequent in Scripture) *a man, having separated himself*, (being sequestered from the company, and noise, and business of the world, betaking himself to retirement and solitude, as men do that apply themselves to any serious study.) *seeketh* and *intermeddleth with all wisdom*, i. e. useth all diligence, that he may search and find out all solid knowledge and true wisdom. And this earnest desire and endeavour to get true wisdom within a man's self is fitly opposed to the fool's contempt of wisdom, or to his desire of it, not for use and benefit, but only for vain ostentation, which is expressed in the next verse, although coherence is little regarded by interpreters in the several verses and proverbs of this book. But this verse is otherwise rendered in the margin of our English Bible, and by divers others, *He that separateth himself*, (either, 1. From his friend; or rather, 2. From other men; who affects singularity, is wedded to his own opinion, and through self-conceit despiseth the opinions and conversation of others,) *seeketh according to his desire*, (seeketh to gratify his own inclinations and affections, and chooseth those opinions which most comply with them,) and *intermeddleth* (for this word is used in a bad sense, Prov. xvii. 14; xx. 3, and it is not found elsewhere, save in this place) *in every business*, as proud and singular persons are commonly pragmatical, delighting to find faults in others, that they may get some reputation to themselves by it. Heb. *in every thing that is*; thrusting themselves into the actions and affairs of other men. Or, as this last clause is and may be rendered, and *contendeth* (Heb. *mingleth himself*; for words of that signification are commonly used for *contending* or *fighting*, as Deut. ii. 5, 9, 19; Isa. xxxvi. 8; Dan. xi. 10) *with* or *against* (for the Hebrew prefix *beth* oft signifies *against*) *all reason* or *wisdom*; whatsoever any man speaketh against his opinion and desire, though it be never so reasonable and evident, he rejecteth it, and obstinately maintains his own opinion.

2 A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.

In understanding; in getting sound and saving knowledge, either by his own study, or by the instructions of wise and good men. *But that his heart may discover itself*, Heb. *but* (his delight is) *in the discovery of his own heart*, i. e. in uttering that folly and wickedness which is in his heart; being more forward to speak than to hear, which is one badge of a fool.

3 When the wicked cometh, *then* cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

When the wicked cometh into any place or company, *then cometh also contempt*; either, 1. Passively; he is justly contemned and reproached by those who converse with him. Or rather, 2. Actively; he despiseth and scorneth all instruction and reproof, neither fearing God nor reverencing man; for he seems here to note his sin rather than his punishment. *And with ignominy reproach*; and he doth not only contemn others in his heart, but showeth his contempt of them by ignominious and reproachful expressions and carriages.

4 [a]The words of a man's mouth *are as* deep waters, [b]*and* the wellspring of wisdom *as* a flowing brook.

a ch. 10. 11. & 20. 5.
b Ps. 78. 2.

A man's, i. e. a wise man's, as the next clause explains this; who is worthy of the name and hath the understanding of a man in him. This Hebrew word oftimes notes an eminent or excellent person, and therefore is opposed to Adam, which designs any ordinary man. *As deep waters*; full of deep wisdom. *The well-spring of wisdom as a flowing brook*; that wisdom which is in his heart is continually pouring forth wise and good counsels.

5 [c]*It is* not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

c Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. & 16. 19. ch. 24. 23. & 28. 21.

It is not good, i. e. it is a most wicked and hateful thing. See on Prov. xvii. 15, 26. *To accept the person*; to favour his unrighteous cause.

6 A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

A fool's lips enter into contention; a fool by his rash and wicked speeches provoketh others to quarrel with him, and, as it follows, to strike him. *His mouth calleth for strokes*; procureth strokes to himself.

7 [d]A fool's mouth *is* his destruction, and his lips *are* the snare of his soul.

d ch. 10. 14. & 12. 13. & 13. 3. Eccles. 10. 12.

8 [e]The words of a ‖talebearer *are* ‖as wounds, and they go down into the †innermost parts of the belly.

e ch. 12. 18. & 26. 22.
‖ Or, *whisperer*.
‖ Or, *like as when men are wounded*.
† Heb. *chambers*.

The words of a tale-bearer, who privily slandereth his neighbour, *are as wounds*; deeply wound the reputation, and afterwards the heart, of the slandered person. Compare Prov. xii. 18. Or, as others render the word, are *as smooth* or *flattering*, i. e. they really are so; the particle *as* being oft used to express the truth of the thing, as hath been noted before. See also John i. 14. They are softer than oil, as is said, Psal. lv. 21. For slanderers use to cover and usher in their calumnies with pretences of kindness and compassion to them whom they traduce. *They go down into the innermost parts of the belly*; they wound mortally, piercing to the heart, which is oft meant by *the belly*; as Job xv. 35; xxxii. 19, &c.

9 He also that is slothful in his work is [f]brother to him that is a great waster.

f ch. 28. 24.

They are alike; though they take several paths, yet both come to one end, even to extreme want and poverty.

10 [g]The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and †is safe.

g 2 Sam. 22. 3, 31. Ps. 18. 2. & 27. 1. & 61. 3, 4. & 91. 2. & 144. 2.
† Heb. *is set aloft*.

The name of the Lord, i. e. the Lord, as he hath revealed himself in his works, and especially in his word by his promises, and the declarations of his infinite perfections, and of his good will to his people. *Is a strong tower*; is sufficient for our protection in case of the greatest dangers. *The righteous*; which limitation he adds to beat down the vain confidences of those men, who though they live in a gross neglect and contempt of God, will expect salvation from him.

11 [h]The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

h ch. 10. 15.

He trusts to his wealth, as that which will either enable him to resist his enemy, or at least purchase his favour.

12 [i]Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour *is* humility.

i ch. 11. 2. & 15. 33. & 16. 18.

Before destruction the heart of man is haughty; pride is a cause and presage of ruin, as is noted, Prov. xvi. 18. *Is*; or, *goeth*. This clause we had Prov. xv. 33.

13 He that †answereth a matter [k]before he heareth *it*, it *is* folly and shame unto him.

† Heb. *returneth a word*.
k John 7. 51.

Before he heareth it; before he hath fully heard and considered what another is speaking about it. *It is folly and shame*; it is a shameful folly, though he seek the reputation of a wise man by it, as if he could readily and thoroughly understand all that another can say before he hath uttered it.

14 The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

The spirit, i. e. the soul, to wit, which is unwounded, as appears by the opposite branch of the verse; which is vigorous and cheerful, supported by the sense of God's love, and the conscience of its own integrity, and the pros-

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pect of its present peace and future happiness. *Will sustain his infirmity;* will easily support him under any bodily or outward troubles, as God's people have oft found by experience. *Wounded;* dejected with the sense of its own guilt and misery. *Who can bear?* it is most grievous and intolerable without Divine assistance.

15 The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge, by employing his thoughts and studies upon it. *The ear of the wise getteth knowledge,* by a greedy and diligent attention to those from whom he may learn it.

16 [l] A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

[l] Gen. 32. 20. 1 Sam. 25. 27. ch. 17. 8. & 21. 14.

Maketh room for him; procures him free access to great men. Heb. *enlargeth him,* as this very phrase is rendered, Psal. iv. 1, and elsewhere; freeth him from straits and oppressions. *Bringeth him before great men;* gets him favour and free conversation with them.

17 *He that is* first in his own cause *seemeth* just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

He that is first in his own cause, he that first pleadeth his cause, *seemeth just,* both to himself and to the judge or court, by his fair pretences. *His neighbour cometh,* to contend with him in judgment and to plead his cause, *and searcheth him;* examineth the truth and weight of his allegations, and disproveth them, and detecteth his weakness. Or, *discovers him;* for *seeking* or *searching* are oft put for *finding,* as Prov. xvii. 9, 19, and elsewhere.

18 The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.

Causeth contentions to cease, by determining the matters in difference. *Parteth;* maketh a partition, giveth to every one what is right or meet, by the disposition of Divine Providence. *Between the mighty;* so it doth also between mean persons, but he mentions *the mighty* because they are most prone to contention, and most fierce and intractable in it, and most capable of doing great mischief to themselves and others by it, and therefore they most need this remedy.

19 A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city: and *their* contentions *are* like the bars of a castle.

Offended, to wit, by his brother's unkindness or injury. *Is harder to be won;* or, *is stronger,* which is sufficiently understood by the mention of a *strong city,* to which he is compared; such ellipses being frequent in the Hebrew, as hath been noted before. *Than a strong city;* which is hardly to be conquered. *Like the bars of a castle;* which are very strong, and not to be broken, and make the castle strong, and hardly to be won. The truth of this assertion is confirmed by the testimony of Aristotle and other learned authors, who affirm the same thing; and the reason of it is evident, because the nearness of the relation greatly heightens the provocation, and love abused frequently turns to extreme hatred.

20 [m] A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; *and* with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

[m] ch. 12. 14. & 13. 2.

Wise and edifying discourses tend to the comfort and satisfaction of the speaker, as well as to the good of the hearers.

21 [n] Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

[n] See Matt. 12. 37.

Are in the power of the tongue; are brought upon men by the good or bad use of their tongues. *That love it;* either, 1. The tongue; that love and use much talking, which is oft censured as a sin, and a cause of mischief. See Prov. x. 19; James i. 19. Or, 2. The use of their tongue in either of those ways, which are plainly supposed in the former clause of the verse: they who do not only speak well, which a wicked man may sometimes do; or speak ill, which a good man may possibly do; but do love, and therefore accustom themselves, to speak well or ill. *Shall eat the fruit thereof;* shall receive either good or evil, according to the quality of their speeches.

22 [o] *Whoso* findeth a wife findeth a good *thing,* and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

[o] ch. 19. 14. & 31. 10.

A wife; either, 1. Simply a wife; for a wife, though she be not the best of her kind, is to be esteemed a blessing, being useful both for society of life, Gen. ii. 18, and for the mitigation of a man's cares and troubles, and for the prevention of sins. Or, 2. Good wife; one that deserves the name and performs the duty of that relation; a wise and worthy wife, as this word may seem to imply, being deduced from the Hebrew word *isch,* which sometimes notes a man of eminency. And this limitation and explication of the word may be gathered both from the following commendations, which would hardly be given to a bad wife, and from the usage of Scripture, in which this ellipsis is frequent, as a *path* or *way* is put for a *good path* or *way,* Psal. cxix. 1; Prov. xv. 10, *an answer* for *a good answer,* Prov. xv. 23, *a king* for *a good king,* Prov. xvi. 10; xxix. 4, *a name* for *a good name,* Prov. xxii. 1; Eccles. vii. 1, &c. *A good thing;* a singular blessing. *Obtaineth favour of the Lord;* obtaineth her not by his own wit, or art, or diligence, but by God's good providence towards him, which ordereth that and all other events as it pleaseth him.

23 The poor useth intreaties; but the rich answereth [p] roughly.

[p] Jam. 2. 3.

Useth entreaties; humbly begs the favour of rich men, as his necessities and occasions require it. *Answereth roughly;* speaketh proudly and scornfully, either to the poor, or to others that converse with him, being puffed up with a conceit of his riches, and of his self-sufficiency.

24 A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: [q] and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

[q] ch. 17. 17.

A man that hath friends, Heb. *a man of friends;* either, 1. Who desires the friendship of others. Or, 2. Who professeth friendship to others. *That sticketh closer* to him that desires and needs his help; who is more hearty in the performance of all friendly offices.

CHAP. XIX.

BETTER [a] *is* the poor that walketh in his integrity, than *he that is* perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

[a] ch. 28. 6.

That walketh in his integrity; who is upright in his words and actions. *That is perverse in his lips;* that useth to speak wickedly, which proceeds from a wicked heart, and is usually attended with an evil life. *Is a fool;* is a hypocrite, or a wicked man, for this is opposed to the upright man in the former clause: yea, though he be rich, which is implied from the same clause.

2 Also, *that* the soul *be* without knowledge, *it is* not good; and he that hasteth with *his* feet sinneth.

The soul; which is the principal cause and director of all men's actions. *Without knowledge;* without wisdom or prudence to discern his way, and what and how he ought to act in his several cases and concernments. *It is not good;* it is very evil and pernicious. *That hasteth with his feet;* that rashly and headily rusheth into actions without serious consideration. So two vices are here censured, the want of knowledge, and the neglect or disuse of knowledge in a man's actions.

3 The foolishness of man perverteth his way: [b] and his heart fretteth against the LORD.

[b] Ps. 37. 7.

Perverteth his way; either, 1. Enticeth him to sin. Or rather, 2. Crosseth and blasteth his designs and enterprises, and brings losses and miseries upon him. *His heart fretteth against the Lord;* he ascribes his unhappiness not to his own sin and folly, which is the true cause of it, but to God and his providence, against which he unjustly murmurs.

4 [c] Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour.

[c] ch. 14. 20.

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Is disowned and forsaken by those who are most obliged to help him.

d ver. 9. Ex. 23. 1. Deut. 19. 16, 19. ch. 6. 19. & 21. 28. † Heb. held innocent.

5 [d]A false witness shall not be †unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall not escape.

Shall not be unpunished; though he escape the observation and punishment of men, yet he shall not avoid the judgment of God. *That speaketh lies;* that accustometh himself to lying, either in judgment or in common conversation.

e ch. 29. 26. f ch. 17. 8. & 18. 16. & 21. 14. † Heb. a man of gifts.

6 [e]Many will intreat the favour of the prince: and [f]every man *is* a friend to †him that giveth gifts.

Of the prince; or, as others, *of the liberal or bountiful man;* which comes to the same thing, for *kings* were anciently called *benefactors*, Luke xxii. 25. *A friend;* not sincerely, as daily experience shows, but in show or profession, or in the outward expressions of it, whereby they may oblige him.

g ch. 14. 20. h Ps 38. 11.

7 [g]All the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go [h]far from him? he pursueth *them with* words, *yet* they *are* wanting *to him.*

Brethren; his nearest and dearest relations, who are oft called *brethren* in Scripture, by a common synecdoche. *Hate him*, i. e. despise and shun him, as men do any thing which they hate, and as the following words explain it. *His friends;* his former companions, who in his prosperity professed friendship to him. *He pursueth them with words*, earnestly imploring their pity; or, *he urgeth* (Heb. *pursueth*) their *words*, i. e. allegeth their former promises and professions of friendship. Or, without any supplement, *he seeketh words*, as the preacher *sought to find out acceptable words*, Eccles. xii. 10, wherewith he might prevail or move them to pity. *They are wanting to him*, Heb. *they* are *not;* either, 1. His friends are not, to wit, what they pretended to be, friends to him. Or, 2. Their words are vain, and without effect; there is no reality in them.

† Heb. an heart. i ch. 16. 20.

8 He that getteth †wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding [i]shall find good.

Loveth his own soul, or *loveth himself*, because he procures great good to his soul, or to himself, as it follows; as sinners, on the contrary, are said to *hate their souls*, Prov. xxix. 24, because they bring mischief upon them. *That keepeth understanding;* that observeth and carefully practiseth its precepts, as that phrase is commonly used. *Shall find good;* shall have great benefit by it, both for his conduct in this life, and for his happiness in the next.

k ver. 5.

9 [k]A false witness shall not be unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall perish.

This was said before, ver. 5, and seems to be here repeated, either for its great use and weight in human society, and to show how much God abhors such practices; or to show the pernicious effects of this sin, and consequently of all other sins, one eminent kind being put for all the rest, and this in opposition to the good effects of wisdom or piety, which he declared in the foregoing verse.

l ch. 30. 22. Eccles. 10. 6, 7.

10 Delight is not seemly for a fool; much less [l]for a servant to have rule over princes.

Delight, to live in pleasure, and plenty, and outward glory, *is not seemly for a fool;* it doth not become him, nor suit with him; partly because prosperity corrupts even wise men, and makes fools mad; and partly because it gives him more opportunity to discover his folly, and to do mischief both to himself and others. He implies that a rod or punishment is fitter for him than pleasure, as is noted, Prov. x. 13; xxvi. 3. *A servant;* who is of a servile condition and disposition, not much differing from a *fool;* who is a servant to his lusts, and wholly unfit to rule other men. *Over princes*, i. e. over men of better quality than himself; for servants are commonly ignorant, and when they are advanced, they grow insolent, and presumptuous, and intolerable.

m ch. 14. 29. Jam. 1. 19. ‖ Or, prudence. n ch. 16. 32.

11 [m]The ‖discretion of a man deferreth his anger; [n]and *it is* his glory to pass over a transgression.

This is opposed to the perverse judgment of worldly men, who account it folly and stupidity not quickly to resent a provocation, and a dishonour and reproach not to revenge it.

o ch. 16. 14, 15. & 20. 2. & 28. 15. p Hos. 14. 5.

12 [o]The king's wrath *is* as the roaring of a lion; but his favour *is* [p]as dew upon the grass.

q ch. 10. 1. & 15. 20. & 17. 21, 25. r ch. 21. 9, 19. & 27. 15.

13 [q]A foolish son *is* the calamity of his father: [r]and the contentions of a wife *are* a continual dropping.

Are like rain continually dropping upon a house, which by degrees marreth the house and household stuff, and driveth the inhabitants out of it. He compareth her to a *continual dropping*, because of that inseparable union and necessary cohabitation of husband and wife together, notwithstanding such contentions.

s 2 Cor. 12. 14. t ch. 18. 22.

14 [s]House and riches *are* the inheritance of fathers: and [t]a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.

Is vouchsafed to a man by the singular providence of God, who is the only searcher and ruler of hearts, exactly discerning who are prudent or pious, in which even wise men's judgments are commonly mistaken, and inclining the minds and hearts of persons one towards another.

u ch. 6. 9. x ch. 10. 4. & 20. 13. & 23. 21.

15 [u]Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall [x]suffer hunger.

Casteth into a deep sleep; maketh a man careless and negligent, and like one asleep in his business, whereby he cometh to want, as it follows.

y Luke 10. 26. & 11. 28.

16 [y]He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul; *but* he that despiseth his ways shall die.

The commandment; the commands of God, called by way of eminence *the commandment*, as *the word* is oft used emphatically for the word of God, as hath been noted before. *His ways;* either, 1. His own ways, by not taking heed to his ways, so as to order his conversation aright. Or, 2. The ways of God, who is understood in the former clause.

z ch. 28. 27. Eccles. 11. 1. Matt. 10. 42. & 25. 40 2 Cor. 9. 6, 7, 8. Heb. 6. 10. ‖ Or, *his deed.*

17 [z]He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and ‖that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Lendeth unto the Lord; who takes what is done to them as done to himself, because it is done to them whom God, as to this particular, hath put in his own stead, to be his receivers, and whom God hath in a peculiar manner commended to the care and charity of all other men.

a ch. 13. 24. & 23. 13. & 29. 17. ‖ Or, *to his destruction;* or, *to cause him to die.*

18 [a]Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare ‖for his crying.

While there is hope; before custom in sin, and thy indulgence, hath made him hard-hearted and incorrigible. *Let not thy soul spare*, forbear not to give him due and necessary correction, *for his crying*, which oft stirs up a foolish and pernicious pity in parents towards them. This word, with some small difference in the points, is used in this sense Isa. xxiv. 11. Or, as it is in the margin, *to his destruction*, intimating that this is a cruel pity, and a likely way to expose him to that death threatened to stubborn sons, Deut. xxi. 18, 21. But this clause is, and may be, rendered otherwise, *yet* or *but do not lift up thy soul* (which signifies a vehement desire, Deut. xxiv. 15; Psal. xxv. 1; Jer. xliv. 14; let not thy passion or eager desire of chastening him transport thee so far as) *to cause him to die*, i. e. use moderation in this work.

† Heb. add.

19 A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver *him*, yet thou must †do it again.

A man of great wrath; or, *he who is of great wrath*, of strong passions; which may be understood either, 1. More particularly, of a son of such a temper, who is very im-

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patient of correction, and breaks forth into violent passions upon that occasion; and then the following words contain the parent's duty, which is to take care to punish him, because if he spare him that time for his passion, he must do so again and again, the same cause returning upon him, and so must wholly forbear to chasten him. Or, 2. More generally, of any man of a fierce and furious temper and carriage; and then the next words declare only the event, by his great and repeated provocations he will bring punishment upon himself, either from God or men. *If thou deliver him;* if either a parent, or another person provoked by him, forbear to punish him. He turneth his speech to the party, as is usual in Scripture and in other authors. *Thou must do it again*, Heb. *thou must add*, to wit, to deliver him again and again, as oft as he shall offend; or, *thou wilt add or increase*, to wit, his wrath, which thou shouldst subdue.

20 Hear counsel, and receive instruc-
[b] Ps. 37. 37. tion, that thou mayest be wise [b] in the latter end.

Before thy death come; which he adds not exclusively, as if he ought not to be wise before, but emphatically, to show that how foolishly soever he had spent his former and younger years, it highly concerned him to be wise before it was too late, or before death came.

[c] Job 23. 13. Ps. 33. 10, 11. ch. 16. 1, 9. Is. 14. 26, 27. & 46. 10. Acts 5. 39. Heb. 6. 17.

21 [c] *There are* many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

There are many devices in a man's heart; understand out of the opposite clause, which shall not stand, but be disappointed. *The counsel of the Lord;* his eternal, and unchangeable, and most wise decree, which ofttimes contradicts, and always overrules, the designs and purposes of men. *Shall stand*, i. e. be certainly fulfilled, as this phrase is used, Jer. xliv. 28, 29, and elsewhere.

22 The desire of a man *is* his kindness: and a poor man *is* better than a liar.

The desire of a man; either, 1. Of any or every man. All men desire, and it is desirable, to be in a capacity of being kind and bountiful to others, whereby they gain love and honour, and many other great advantages. Or, 2. Of the poor man, expressed in the next clause. The hearty will or desire of being kind or liberal to others in necessity is all the kindness which a poor man can show, and is accepted by God, and should be owned by men as a real kindness. Compare 2 Cor. viii. 12. Or, 3. Of the rich man, as may be gathered from the opposition of this man to the poor man in the following clause; such ellipses being very common in this book, as hath been noted again and again. So the sense may be this, There be a sort of rich men all whose kindness and charity consists in good desires and well wishes to persons in misery, *saying to them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, but not giving them those things which are needful*, as it is expressed, James ii. 16. And this sense seems to agree very well with the following clause. But being singular in this exposition, I submit it to the judicious reader. *A poor man*, who is not able to give what he desires to do, *is better than a liar;* than a rich man, who feeds the poor with good words and fair promises, but doth not perform what he pretends and is able to do.

[d] 1 Tim. 4. 8.

23 [d] The fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life: and *he that hath it* shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

Shall abide satisfied; shall want nothing, and shall be fully contented with God's favour and blessing. *With evil;* with any destructive affliction.

[e] ch. 15. 19. & 26. 15, 15.

24 [e] A slothful *man* hideth his hand in *his* bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

Hideth his hand in his bosom; either to keep it warm in cold weather; or to give it rest, being loth to oppress it with the labour of any action. It is a sarcastical hyperbole. *Will not so much as bring it to his mouth again*, to wit, to feed himself; he expects that the meat should drop into his mouth.

25 [f] Smite a scorner, and the simple
[f] ch. 21. 11. [g] will beware: and [h] reprove one that
[g] Heb. *will be cunning.* [h] Deu. 13. 11. [h] ch. 9. 8. hath understanding, *and* he will understand knowledge.

Smite a scorner; an obstinate and impudent transgressor, who rejects and scorns all admonitions, and therefore is to be taught with blows. *The simple;* who sin through ignorance, and imprudence, and infirmity, being possibly drawn to sin by the scorner's evil counsel or example. *He will understand knowledge;* a verbal reproof will be more effectual for his reformation than the severest punishments will be to a scorner.

26 He that wasteth *his* father, *and* chaseth away *his* mother, *is* [i] a son that
[i] ch. 17. 2. causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.

Wasteth his father, i. e. his father's estate, by unjust or riotous courses. *Chaseth away his mother;* causeth her to avoid and abhor his presence and society, and to go from the house where he is. *Bringeth reproach;* both to himself, and to his parents and family. But this verse may very well be rendered otherwise, the last words being made the subjects of the proposition, as is usual in Scripture; *A son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach*, (upon himself and his friends by wicked ways,) *wasteth his father's* (estate, and health, and comfort) *and chaseth* or *driveth away his mother.* These are the effects of his wickedness.

27 Cease, my son, to hear the instruction *that causeth* to err from the words of knowledge.

If thou hast formerly, yet do not now any longer hearken to those false doctrines or evil counsels which tend to withdraw thee from the belief or practice of God's holy word.

28 †An ungodly witness scorneth judg-
† Heb. *A witness of Belial.* ment: and [k] the mouth of the wicked de-
[k] Job 15. 16. & 20. 12, 13. & 34. 7. voureth iniquity.

Scorneth judgment; hath no reverence to the place of justice, nor to the presence of God there, nor to that sacred and solemn work of executing judgment, but in spite of all gives in a false testimony. *Devoureth iniquity;* uttereth with as great greediness, and delight, and ease, as they swallow down delicious meats and drinks. Compare Job xv. 16.

29 Judgments are prepared for scorn-
[l] ch. 10. 13. & 26. 3. ers, [l] and stripes for the back of fools.

Prepared, either by men, or at least by God; although they be deferred for a time, yet they are treasured up for them, and shall infallibly be inflicted upon them.

CHAP. XX.

WINE [a] *is* a mocker, strong drink *is*
[a] Gen. 9. 21. ch. 23. 29, 30. Is. 28. 7. Hos. 4. 11. raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

Wine is a mocker; wine immoderately drunk makes men mockers or scoffers at God and men. Compare Hos. vii. 5. *Strong drink is raging;* makes men full of rage and passion. *Is not wise;* is a fool, or a madman, because he depriveth himself of the use of his reason.

2 [b] The fear of a king *is* as the roaring
[b] ch. 16. 14. & 19. 12. of a lion: *whoso* provoketh him to anger
[c] ch. 8. 36. [c] sinneth *against* his own soul.

The fear of a king, passively taken, the terror which the wrath of a king causeth, by comparing this with chap. xix. 12. *Sinneth against his own soul;* exposeth himself to manifest danger of death.

3 [d] *It is* an honour for a man to cease
[d] ch. 17. 14. from strife: but every fool will be meddling.

To cease from strife; either to prevent it, or, if it be begun, to put an end to it; which, although proud and profane persons esteem dishonourable to them, is indeed their glory, because it is an evidence of their great wisdom and power over their passions, and of their respect and obedience to their sovereign Lord, in which their honour and happiness consists. *Will be meddling*, to wit, with mat-

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ters of strife; he is always ready to begin strife, and obstinate in the continuance of it.

e ch. 10. 4. & 19. 24. ‖ Or, *winter.* f ch. 19. 15.

4 e The sluggard will not plow by reason of the ‖cold; f *therefore* shall he beg in harvest, and *have* nothing.

By reason of the cold of the ploughing season, which is in autumn and towards winter. He hates and avoids all laborious and difficult work, although his own necessity and interest oblige him to it. *And have nothing;* and not obtain an alms; not in that time of plenty and bounty, because men's hearts are justly hardened against that man who by his own sloth and wilfulness hath brought himself to want.

g ch. 18. 4.

5 g Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

Counsel; either, 1. Wisdom or ability to give good counsel; or, 2. Designs or purposes of doing something of moment; for this word is frequently used in both senses, but the last seems fittest here. *Is like deep water;* either, 1. Is there in great abundance; or, 2. Is secret and hard to be discovered. *Will draw it out,* by prudent questions and discourses, and a diligent observation of his words and actions.

h ch. 25. 14. Matt. 6. 2. Luke 18. 11. ‖ Or, *bounty.* i Ps. 12. 1. Luke 18. 8

6 h Most men will proclaim every one his own ‖goodness: but i a faithful man who can find?

Most men are forward to profess religion, and speak of their own good deeds; *but a faithful man,* one who is indeed what he seemeth and professeth himself to be, *who can find?* there are but few such to be found.

k 2 Cor. 1. 12. l Ps. 37. 26. & 112. 2.

7 k The just *man* walketh in his integrity: l his children *are* blessed after him.

The just man walketh in his integrity; he proveth himself to be so not only by his profession, of which he spoke in the former verse, but by his sincere and unblamable conversation. *His children are blessed after him,* by virtue of that covenant which God hath made with such men, which is not confined to their persons, but entaileth blessings upon their posterity.

m ver. 26.

8 m A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment; that makes it his great care and business to execute judgment and justice among his people, especially if he do this in his own person, as was usual in ancient times, and sees things with his own eyes. As for the phrase, the sign or gesture is here put for the thing signified by it. *Scattereth away all evil,* effectually punisheth and suppresseth all wickedness, *with his eyes;* with his very looks, or by his diligent inspection into affairs.

n 1 Kings 8. 46. 2 Chron. 6. 36. Job 14. 4. Ps. 51. 5. Eccles. 7. 20. 1 Cor. 4. 4. 1 John 1. 8.

9 n Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

Who can say? no man living upon earth can say this truly and sincerely. Compare 1 Kings viii. 46; Job xiv. 4; xv. 14; Eccles. vii. 20; 1 John i. 8. *I am pure from my sin;* I am perfectly free from all guilt and filth of sin in my heart and life.

o Deu. 25. 13, &c. ver. 23. ch. 11. 1. & 16. 11. Mic. 6. 10, 11. † Heb. *A stone and a stone.* ‡ Heb. *an ephah and an ephah.*

10 o †Divers weights, *and* †divers measures, both of them *are* alike abomination to the LORD.

Divers weights and divers measures; one greater and true for public show, and one lesser and false for private use, when they had an opportunity of deceiving.

p Matt. 7. 16.

11 Even a child is p known by his doings, whether his work *be* pure, and whether *it be* right.

Even a child is known by his doings; young children discover their inclinations or dispositions even by their childish speeches and carriages, as not having yet learnt the art of dissembling. *Whether his work be pure;* or rather, *will be pure;* for it is not expressed in the Hebrew, and therefore may be either way supplied. The sense is, The future disposition and conversation of a man may very probably be conjectured from his childish manners.

q Ex. 4. 11. Ps. 94. 9.

12 q The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

It is God alone who gives us our senses and natural faculties, and the use and exercise of them, and especially a power of employing them aright to see and observe the works of God, and to hear and receive his word and all wholesome instructions; whence he leaves it to us to gather, that God doth exactly see and hear all men's words and actions, though never so secret. He names *the eye* and *ear,* because these are the two senses by which instructions are conveyed to the mind; but under them he seems to comprehend all other senses and powers of soul or body, by a synecdoche.

r ch. 6. 9. & 12. 11. & 19. 15. Rom. 12. 11.

13 r Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, *and* thou shalt be satisfied with bread.

Love not sleep, i. e. immoderate sleep, or sloth, or idleness. Take sleep because necessity requires it, not from any love to it. *Open thine eyes;* awake out of sleep, shake off sloth, and betake thyself to thy employment with diligence and vigour.

14 *It is* naught, *it is* naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.

It is naught; the commodity is but of little worth. *Saith the buyer,* to wit, to the seller; he discommends it, that he may bring down the price of it. *Gone his way,* with the commodity purchased. *He boasteth* that by his wit he hath overreached the seller, and got a great advantage to himself. This he notes as a common but reprovable practice.

s Job 28. 12, 16, 17, 18, 19. ch. 3. 15. & 8. 11.

15 There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but s the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.

There is gold, to wit, in the world, in divers men's hands, by whom it is highly prized. *But the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel;* but wise speeches proceeding from an understanding or honest heart are of far greater worth and use, both to him that uttereth them, and to those that receive and improve them to their own benefit.

t ch. 22. 26, 27. & 27. 13.

16 t Take his garment that is surety *for* a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

Take his garment, to wit, as a pledge, without which he ought not to be trusted, because by this action he showeth himself to be a fool, and he taketh the ready way to beggary. *Object.* This precept contradicts that law which forbade the taking of a garment for a pledge, Exod. xxii. 26. *Answ.* It doth not contradict it, for the cases vastly differ; for that law concerned only the poor, who were forced to borrow for their own necessity, and therefore deserve pity; whereas this reacheth only those who are or would be thought rich and sufficient security for others, and who borrow not for their own need, but for a mere stranger, for which folly they deserve to be severely punished. Besides, this may be only a prediction, though it be delivered in the form of a precept, as many predictions are; and so shows what may be expected by him that is guilty of such folly, even that he shall be stripped of his garments and other necessaries. *For a stranger;* for a foreigner, or a person unknown to him. *Take a pledge of him* that is surety; which words are to be understood out of the foregoing clause. *For a strange woman;* for a harlot, who is so called, Prov. ii. 16, and elsewhere.

u ch. 9. 17 † Heb. *Bread of lying,* or, *falsehood.*

17 u †Bread of deceit *is* sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.

Bread of deceit; gain or pleasure procured by unrighteous courses. *His mouth shall be filled with gravel;* it shall be bitter and pernicious at last, like gritty bread, which offends the teeth and stomach. It will certainly bring upon him the horrors of a guilty conscience, and the wrath and judgments of the Almighty God.

x ch. 15. 22. & 24. 6. y Luke 14. 31.

18 x *Every* purpose is established by counsel: y and with good advice make war.

Every purpose is established by counsel; the way to bring

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our purposes and desires to a good effect, is to manage them with serious consideration and good advice. *And;* or, *therefore.* This is necessary in every common undertaking, and much more in a thing of such high importance as war is.

a ch. 11. 13. a Rom. 16. 18. ‖ Or, enticeth.

19 [a]He that goeth about *as* a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him [a]that ‖flattereth with his lips.

He that goeth about as a tale-bearer revealeth secrets; he that delighteth in and accustometh himself to the practice of spreading tales or evil reports, will not forbear to publish the greatest secrets which are committed to his trust. Or, as others render it, and as the words lie in the Hebrew text, *He that revealeth secrets,* (contrary to his promise or the trust reposed in him, you may by that token be assured that,) *he doth and will go about as a tale-bearer.* He who divulgeth secrets cannot or will not forbear to publish other things, and so is not fit to be trusted with any thing. *Therefore,* to prevent that mischief. Heb. *and.* So the following sentence is not inferred from the former, but only added to it. *Meddle not with him,* avoid frequent and familiar society and conversation with him, *that flattereth with his lips;* by which artifice he seeks to gain thy affections, and so to fish out all thy secrets, which he may impart to others, whom he may oblige hereby, and so render his company more acceptable.

b Ex. 21. 17. Lev. 20. 9. Matt. 15. 4. c Job 18. 5, 6. ch. 24. 20. ‖ Or, *candle.*

20 [b]Whoso curseth his father or his mother, [c]his ‖lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

Or his mother, Heb. *and his mother;* which is used for *or,* Exod. xii. 5; Lev. vi. 3, and elsewhere. *His lamp;* his comfort and happiness, his name and memory, which are oft compared in Scripture to a *lamp* or *light; shall be put out in obscure darkness;* shall utterly perish; he shall die childless, and with ignominy.

d ch. 28. 20. e Hab. 2. 6.

21 [d]An inheritance *may be* gotten hastily at the beginning; [e]but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; an estate sometimes is got suddenly, in the very beginning of a man's labours for it; in which case it may be presumed that some indirect and unrighteous courses were used for the getting of it, because riches are very seldom given by God, or gotten by men, without men's diligence. But this, as well as many other proverbs, are to be understood of the common course, although it admit of some exceptions. For sometimes merchants or others get great estates speedily by one happy voyage, or by some other prosperous event. This translation follows the Hebrew marginal reading, but according to the textual reading it may be thus rendered and understood; *An inheritance gotten in the beginning* (to wit, of a man's endeavours) *is abominable,* to wit, unto God, being supposed to be unjustly gotten, as was now said. *The end thereof shall not be blessed;* at last it shall be cursed and wither by God's just judgment.

f Deut. 32. 35. ch. 17. 13. & 24. 29. Rom. 12. 17, 19. 1 Thess. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9. g 2 Sam. 16. 12.

22 [f]Say not thou, I will recompense evil; *but* [g]wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

Say not thou in thy heart; give not way to any such evil thoughts or purposes. *Wait on the Lord,* to whom it belongs to execute vengeance, and to deliver his people from all their enemies.

h ver. 10. † Heb. *balances of deceit.*

23 [h]Divers weights *are* an abomination unto the LORD; and †a false balance *is* not good.

Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord; of which see above on ver. 10. *Is not good;* is very wicked and hateful to God and men.

i Ps. 37. 23. ch. 16. 9. Jer. 10. 23.

24 [i]Man's goings *are* of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?

Man's goings, all men's purposes and actions, *are of the Lord;* are ordered and overruled by God's wise and powerful providence to accomplish his own counsel and good pleasure, and not what men list or intend. *His own way;* either, 1. What course he ought to take; which he cannot know without God's direction and assistance: compare Prov. xvi. 9; Jer. x. 23. Or, 2. What the issue of his designs will be, whether they shall succeed or be disappointed; *the way* being taken for the end or event to which it leads, as it is in many other places. The scope of the proverb is to show that all the events of human life are neither ordered nor foreseen by man's, but only by God's providence, and therefore men should only mind the doing of their duty, and then quietly depend upon God for a good issue to their endeavours.

k Eccles. 5. 4, 5.

25 *It is* a snare to the man *who* devoureth *that which is* holy, and [k]after vows to make enquiry.

It is a snare; it brings guilt and God's curse and vengeance upon him. *That which is holy,* i. e. those meats or drinks which were devoted or consecrated to God; under which one kind he comprehends and forbids all alienation of sacred or dedicated things from God to a man's private use or benefit; of which see Lev. xxvii. 9; Deut. xxiii. 21; Mal. iii. 8, 9; Acts v. 1, &c. *After vows to make inquiry;* after a man hath made vows to consider whether he can possibly or may lawfully keep them, and to invent or inquire of others all ways possible to break his vow, and to satisfy or deceive his conscience in so doing; which inquiry is justly censured as a sin and snare, because it is an evidence of a covetous or irreligious mind, and is the ready way and first step towards the open violation of it.

l Ps. 101. 5, &c. ver. 8.

26 [l]A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.

A wise king, who seriously minds his duty and his true interest, *scattereth the wicked;* breaks their companies and confederacies, and forceth them to flee several ways for their own safety; driveth them from his presence, and from the society of honest men, as the chaff is by the husbandman separated from the corn, and driven away by the wind, of which this Hebrew word is commonly used, and to which the next clause hath some reference. *Bringeth the wheel over them,* as the cart-wheel was anciently turned over the sheaves to beat the corn out of them, Isa. xxviii. 27, 28. He punisheth them severely, as their offences deserve. This or such-like punishments were not unusual among the Eastern nations, as we may gather from 2 Sam. viii. 2; xii. 31; Amos i. 3.

m 1 Cor. 2. 11. ‖ Or, *lamp.*

27 [m]The spirit of man *is* the ‖candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

The spirit, i. e. the reasonable soul. *Is the candle;* is a clear and glorious light set up in man for his information and direction. *Of the Lord;* so called, partly because it comes from God in a more immediate and peculiar manner than the body doth, Eccles. xii. 7; and partly because it is in God's stead to observe and judge all a man's actions. *Searching all the inward parts of the belly;* discerning not only his outward actions, which are visible to others, but his most inward and secret thoughts and affections, which no other man can see, 1 Cor. ii. 11. *The belly* is here put for the heart, as it is frequently. The soul can reflect upon and judge of its own dispositions and actions; which plainly showeth that the heart is not so deceitful, but that a man by diligent study of it, and the use of the means appointed by God, may arrive at a certain knowledge of its state and condition, in reference to God and to salvation.

n Ps. 101. 1. ch. 29. 14.

28 [n]Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.

Mercy; clemency to offenders, and bounty to worthy and to indigent persons; *and truth;* faithfulness in keeping his word and promises inviolably; *preserve the king,* because they engage God to guard him, and gain him the reverence and affections of his people, which is a king's greatest safety and happiness. *Mercy* is again mentioned, to show that although it be an act of grace, and therefore in some sort free, yet princes are obliged to it, both by their duty and by their interest, because it is a singular means of their preservation.

o ch. 16. 31.

29 The glory of young men *is* their strength: and [o]the beauty of old men *is* the grey head.

The glory of young men; that wherein they glory as their privilege above old men. *The beauty of old men is the grey*

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head, i. e. their old age, expressed by the outward sign of it, wherein they glory as their peculiar privilege, as a testimony of their piety and God's blessing, and as a token of their great experience and wisdom. The design of this proverb is to declare the several advantages of several ages, and the mutual need they have one of another, and thereby to engage them to mutual love and assistance, and to friendly converse, and to make every one contented with his own age and condition, and not to envy nor yet despise his brother, or the difference of their ages, as is very usual among men.

† Heb. *in a purging medicine against evil.*

30 The blueness of a wound †cleanseth away evil: so *do* stripes the inward parts of the belly.

The blueness of a wound, grievous wounds, which make men black and blue, or severe punishments, *cleanseth away evil;* are the most effectual means to reclaim a wicked man, and to purge out his corruption. *So do stripes.* Heb. *and stripes*, which answer to the *wounds* in the former clause, *the inward parts of the belly;* either, 1. Which pierce even to the inward parts of the belly; and so we are to understand out of the former branch, *cleanse away evil.* Or, 2. They cleanse the inward parts of the belly, i. e. of the heart. So this is an addition to the former clause, and the sense of the whole is, Grievous wounds or stripes do cleanse not only the outward man, by keeping it from evil actions, but even the inward man, by expelling or subduing vile affections; which is mentioned as a great and blessed benefit of afflictions.

CHAP. XXI.

THE king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

The king's heart; his very inward purposes and inclinations, which seem to be most in a man's own power, and out of the reach of all others, and much more his tongue and hand, and all his outward actions. He names *kings* not to exclude other men, but because they are more arbitrary and uncontrollable than other men. *As the rivers of water;* which husbandmen or gardeners can draw by little channels into the adjacent grounds as they please, and as their occasions require. *He turneth it;* directeth and boweth, partly by suggesting those things to their minds which have a commanding influence upon their wills; and partly by a direct and immediate motion of their wills and affections, which being God's creatures must needs be as subject to his power and pleasure as either men's minds or bodies are, and which he moves sweetly and suitably to their own nature, though strongly and effectually. *Whithersoever he will;* so as they shall fulfil his counsels and designs, either of mercy or of correction to themselves, or to their people.

a ch. 16. 2.
b ch. 24. 12. Luke 16. 15.

2 [a]Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes: [b]but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

This was said chap. xvi. 2, where it is explained, and is here repeated, either for the great importance and usefulness of it, or because he perceived that the Israelites were very prone to self-deceit.

c 1 Sam. 15. 22. Ps. 50. 8. ch. 15. 8. Is. 1. 11, &c. Hos. 6. 6. Mic. 6. 7, 8.

3 [c]To do justice and judgment *is* more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

Justice and judgment; the conscientious performance of all our duties to men. *Than sacrifice;* than the most costly outward services offered to God, joined with the neglect of our moral duties to God or men. The same thing is affirmed 1 Sam. xv. 22; Hos. vi. 6; Micah vi. 7, 8, &c.

d ch. 6. 17. † Heb. *Haughtiness of eyes.* ‖ Or, *the light of the wicked.*

4 [d]† An high look, and a proud heart, *and* ‖ the plowing of the wicked, *is* sin.

An high look; one gesture or sign of pride put for all the rest, Prov. vi. 17. *A proud heart;* pride lurking and reigning in the heart, though it do not discover itself to men by outward actions, but be disguised with a show of humility, as it is frequently. *The ploughing;* either, 1. Strictly and properly so called: even their civil or natural actions, which in themselves are lawful and good, are made sinful, as they are managed by ungodly men, without any regard to the service and glory of God, which ought to be the great end of all our actions, 1 Cor. x. 31, and with a design of serving their own wicked lusts by it. Or, 2. Metaphorically, their designs and endeavours, which are said to be *sin*, because they are wholly and fully set upon sin, and they make sin their trade or business, which is called *ploughing wickedness*, Job iv. 8. But all the ancient interpreters, and divers others, render the word *the lamp* or *light*, as this Hebrew word, even thus pointed, is rendered, 1 Kings xi. 36; xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19; 2 Chron. xxi. 7; and the *lamp of the wicked* is a phrase used in this book, chap. xiii. 9; xxiv. 20, as also Job xxi. 17; whereas *the ploughing of the wicked* is a phrase not elsewhere used. And this seems best to agree with the context, for by their *lamp* he seems to understand all their pomp and glory, that worldly greatness and prosperity, which is the fuel of their pride, and therefore is most fitly joined with it. *Is sin;* it is by them turned into sin, and made the occasion of much wickedness. The whole verse may be thus rendered, *An high look and a proud heart*, which is *the light* or *glory of the wicked*, (i. e. wherein they glory, esteeming it magnanimity or gallantry of spirit,) *is sin*, i. e. is a great and grievous sin. And in this manner the learned Mercer renders the verse, save only that he translates the Hebrew word *nir*, *the ploughing*.

e ch. 10. 4. & 13. 4.

5 [e]The thoughts of the diligent *tend* only to plenteousness; but of every one *that is* hasty only to want.

The diligent, who carefully and industriously prosecutes what he hath wisely contrived and resolved. *That is hasty;* who manageth his affairs rashly, without due consideration. *Only to want;* is likely to bring himself to poverty.

f ch. 10. 2. & 13. 11. & 20. 21. 2 Pet. 2. 3.

6 [f]The getting of treasures by a lying tongue *is* a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.

By a lying tongue; by false witness-bearing, or by any other false or deceitful words or actions, whereby many men get riches. *Is a vanity tossed to and fro;* is like the chaff or smoke driven away by the wind; it is neither satisfactory nor durable, but quickly vanisheth away, as hath been frequently observed of estates ill gotten. *That seek death;* not designedly, but eventually, that take those courses which will bring death or destruction upon them or theirs.

† Heb. *saw them*, or, *dwell with them.*

7 The robbery of the wicked shall †destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment.

The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; the injury which they do to others shall either by God or men be returned upon their own heads. *They refuse to do judgment;* they wilfully and obstinately give up themselves to unrighteous practices.

8 The way of man *is* froward and strange: but *as for* the pure, his work *is* right.

The way of man; the course of his life. *Of man;* of every man; of man by nature and in his corrupt estate; of a wicked or impure man, to whom *the pure* is opposed in the next clause. *Strange;* estranged from God and from man's primitive integrity, and from the rule of his actions, reason and Scripture; in which respects wicked men are called *strangers*, Psal. liv. 3; Ezek. xliv. 7, and elsewhere. *But as for the pure, his work is right;* but he whose heart is pure and upright, his conversation is agreeable to it.

g ver. 19. ch. 19. 13. & 25. 24. & 27. 15. † Heb. *a woman of contentions.* † Heb. *an house of society.*

9 [g]*It is* better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with †a brawling woman in †a wide house.

To dwell, to wit, alone in quietness, as appears from the opposite clause. *Of the house-top;* of the roof of the house, which in those countries was flat and plain, and habitable, but was exposed to all the injuries of the weather. *In a wide house;* or, *in a common house;* or, *a house of society*, where husband and wife live together, or which is capable of many friends or companies.

h Jam. 4. 5.

10 [h]The soul of the wicked desireth

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† Heb. is not favoured. evil: his neighbour † findeth no favour in his eyes.

The soul of the wicked desireth evil; his heart is fully and earnestly *set in him*, as it is expressed, Eccles. viii. 11, *to do evil*, to work wickedness, to do mischief to others, to satisfy his own lusts, though it be with injury of others. *His neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes*, if he either dissuade him from his wickedness, or stand in the way of his lusts. He spares neither friend nor foe.

i ch. 19. 25. 11 [i]When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

The simple; the honest or plain-hearted man, as chap. xix. 25, where this whole verse for the substance of it is contained and explained. *Instructed;* or, *prospers*, as this word is used, Prov. xvii. 8, and elsewhere. So the sense of the verse is, The simple learn wisdom, both from the punishment of wicked men, and from the prosperity of good men.

12 The righteous *man* wisely considereth the house of the wicked: *but God* overthroweth the wicked for *their* wickedness.

Wisely considereth the house of the wicked; he looketh through its present power and glory (which dazzleth the eyes of others) unto that ruin to which it is designed. *But*, or *now*, or *that*, this being the thing which he wisely considereth, *God overthroweth*, or *will overthrow* in his due time, though for a season he bear with them.

k Matt. 7. 2. & 18. 30, &c. Jam. 2. 13. 13 [k]Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, when they cry out by reason of oppression or want, and beg relief from him, *he also shall cry himself* unto God or men, in his straits which God will bring upon him.

l ch. 17. 8, 23. & 18. 16. 14 [l]A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

A gift, to a person offended and angry with us, as the following words show. *In secret;* which makes it more acceptable; for gifts openly given savour of ostentation in the giver, and cause some shame or contempt to the receiver. *In the bosom;* secretly conveyed into his bosom. See on Prov. xvii. 8; xviii. 16.

15 *It is* joy to the just to do judgment:
m ch. 10. 29. [m]but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

It is joy to the just: the sense is either, 1. He is highly pleased and delighted with it. Or, 2. He reapeth much comfort and benefit by it, which is opposed to the following *destruction: joy* is put for matter or cause of joy. *To do judgment;* to do what is just or good, for this is opposed to *working* of *iniquity*. *Destruction;* or, as others render it, *terror* or *horror*, opposite to joy.

16 The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.

The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding; that forsaketh the rule of God's word, and walketh after his own lusts; *shall remain in the congregation of the dead;* shall, without repentance, be condemned to eternal death or damnation.

‖ Or, *sport.* 17 He that loveth ‖pleasure *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

He that loveth pleasure, that gives up himself to the pursuit and enjoyment of sensual and immoderate pleasures, *shall be a poor man;* takes the ready course to poverty. *Wine and oil* are put for all delicious fare and luxurious feasting; for wine and oil were much used in feasts in those parts.

n ch. 11. 8. Is. 43. 3, 4. 18 [n]The wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.

The wicked shall be brought into those troubles which were either threatened by God or designed by wicked men against the righteous, and by that means, as by a ransom, the righteous shall be delivered. Thus Achan was a ransom for Israel, Josh. vii. 26, and Haman for Mordecai.

o ver. 9. † Heb. in the land of the desert. 19 [o]*It is* better to dwell † in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

Than, understand, *in a wide house*, as it is expressed above, ver. 9, and as the opposition here requires.

p Ps. 112. 3. Matt. 25. 3, 4. 20 [p]*There is* treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.

Wise men lay up all necessary and desirable treasures for their own use, and for their children and families. *Oil* is particularly mentioned, partly because that was a considerable part of their wealth and treasures in those countries, of which see Deut. vii. 13; xxviii. 40, 51; Judg. ix. 9; Micah vi. 15, &c.; and partly to show that his providence reached not only to necessaries, but even to matters of just and lawful delight.

q ch. 15. 9. Matt. 5. 6. 21 [q]He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.

That followeth after; that fervently desires, and diligently and constantly endeavours, to attain to them, for such shall and will certainly obtain them. *Righteousness and mercy;* living in the constant exercise of these virtues. *Findeth;* shall obtain from God what is right and due to him; either from God, by virtue of his gracious promise; or from men, whose hearts God will dispose to deal justly and kindly with him.

r Eccles. 9. 14, &c. 22 [r]A wise *man* scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.

A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty; wisdom and policy is ofttimes more considerable and powerful than strength. *The strength of the confidence thereof;* the strongest forts, to which the citizens trust most for their defence.

s ch. 12. 13. & 13. 3. & 18. 21. Jam. 3. 2. 23 [s]Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue from offensive and provoking speeches, *keepeth his soul*, his person, *from troubles;* which a licentious and abusive tongue frequently brings upon a man.

† Heb. in the wrath of pride. 24 Proud *and* haughty scorner *is* his name, who dealeth † in proud wrath.

Proud and haughty scorner is his name; instead of that respect and glory which he seeks by such courses, he shall be branded with the title and imputation of an arrogant and scornful person, which is most contemptible and hateful to mankind. *Who dealeth in proud wrath;* who in the conduct of his affairs and dealings in the world is not governed by reason and justice, but by his own pride and passions.

t ch. 13. 4. 25 [t]The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

Killeth him; either, 1. Tormenteth him almost to death, whilst he passionately desires that which he sees he shall not enjoy, and will not take pains to procure. Or, 2. Exposeth him to extreme want, and so to death, or to such wicked courses, for the supply of his wants, as bring him to an untimely death.

u Ps. 37. 26. & 112. 9. 26 He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the [u]righteous giveth and spareth not.

He coveteth; the slothful man, mentioned in the last verse. But because the verses in this book are for the most part independent one upon another, this clause is and may be otherwise rendered, There is that *coveteth*, &c.; or, the wicked (which may be understood from the opposition of the *righteous* in the next clause) *coveteth*, &c. *All the day long;* spends his whole time in vain and lazy desires, but will not labour to get any thing, either to use himself, or to give to others. *The righteous giveth and spareth not;* by God's blessing upon his industry he procures enough, not only for his own support, but also for the liberal relief of others.

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x Ps. 50. 9. ch. 15. 8. Is. 66. 3. Jer. 6. 20. Amos 5. 22. † Heb. in wickedness?

27 x The sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it †with a wicked mind?

The sacrifice; all the most glorious and costly services which they offer to God. *Is abomination;* God rejects and abhors them, because they are offered by such men and in such manner as God justly abhors. *When;* or, *because*, as all the ancient translators render it, the Hebrew particle *aph* being expletive; or, *even because;* so the following clause gives the reason of the former proposition. *With a wicked mind;* with a hypocritical and impenitent heart, or with a bad design, not in obedience to God's command, and with respect to his honour and service; but either to cover, or countenance, or promote some wicked intention or course, which notwithstanding all his professions of religion he is resolved to prosecute.

y ch. 19. 5, 9. † Heb. *A witness of lies.*

28 y † A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.

A false witness, Heb. *a witness of lies;* one who is forward to swear or speak false things, or such things as he hath not heard nor learned from others, nor seen, but devised in his own heart. *Shall perish;* shall be severely punished, either by God or men, and shall be confounded and silenced, because none will for the future regard or credit his testimony. *The man that heareth;* he who hears before he speaks, and witnesseth nothing but what he hath heard or seen, and knows to be true. *Speaketh constantly;* doth not contradict himself, but always affirmeth the same thing. Or, as most other interpreters render the words, *speaketh* (or, *may speak*, dare speak freely and boldly) *for ever;* when liars are cut off, he lives, and is in a capacity of speaking and bearing witness again and again, as occasion requires, as long as he lives, and his testimony will be received.

29 A wicked man hardeneth his face: ‖ Or, considereth. but *as for* the upright, he ‖directeth his way.

Hardeneth his face; continueth in evil courses with obstinacy and impudence, in spite of all the commands of God, or counsels of men. *He directeth his way;* he ordereth his steps aright; and if at any time he goeth awry, he doth not add rebellion to his sin, nor persist in his error, but considereth his ways, and turneth his feet to God's testimonies, as David did. Psal. cxix. 59. Or, *considereth his way*, remembering with grief and shame what he hath done, and taking better heed to himself for the future.

z Is. 8. 9, 10. Jer. 9. 23. Acts 5. 39.

30 z *There is* no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

Which can prevail against the counsel and will of God.

a Ps. 20. 7. & 33. 17. Is. 31. 1. b Ps. 3. 8. ‖ Or, victory.

31 a The horse *is* prepared against the day of battle: but b ‖safety *is* of the LORD.

The horse; under which particular all warlike provisions are comprehended. *Safety is of the Lord;* the success of the battle depends not upon any human strength or art, but merely upon God's providence, who gives the victory when and to whom he pleaseth, and oftimes to those that have least reason to expect it. Compare Eccles. ix. 11.

CHAP. XXII.

a Eccles. 7. 1. ‖ Or, favour is better than, &c.

A a *GOOD* name *is* rather to be chosen than great riches, *and* ‖loving favour rather than silver and gold.

A good name, Heb. *name* put for *good name*, as Eccles. vii. 1, the word *good* being easily understood out of the next clause, in which it is expressed in the Hebrew text. A good reputation amongst wise and good men. *Is rather to be chosen than great riches;* partly, because it is a most special blessing from God, being appropriated to worthy persons, whereas God commonly throws away riches upon the basest of men; partly, because it gives a man that tranquillity and satisfaction of mind, and that content and comfort in his condition, which no riches can purchase; and partly, because as it is commonly an evidence of a man's virtue and piety, so it is accompanied with God's love and favour, whereas riches are oft given by God in wrath, and to the hurt of the owner. *Loving favour;* or, *good grace or favour;* a good report among men, especially among good men, and that hearty love and kindness which attends upon it.

b ch. 29. 13. 1 Cor. 12. 21. c Job 31. 15. ch. 14. 31.

2 b The rich and poor meet together: c the LORD *is* the maker of them all.

The rich and poor meet together; either, 1. In a way of hostility or opposition, as this word is sometimes used; the rich contemning and oppressing the poor, and the poor envying and purloining from the rich; and so the following words are a reason why that hostility should cease. Or, 2. In the way of mutual converse; they live together, and need one another. *The Lord is the Maker of them all;* not only as they are men, but also as they are poor or rich, which difference comes wholly from God's providence; they have one common Creator, and Lord, and Judge, and the one cannot despise nor grudge at the other without a reflection upon God.

d ch. 14. 16. & 27. 12.

3 d A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

The evil; the calamity or judgment of God threatened and approaching. *Hideth himself;* retireth to his strong tower, mentioned Prov. xviii. 10; by prayer and repentance putteth himself under the protection of the Almighty. Compare Isa. xxvi. 20. *Pass on* in their former road and course of sin, carelessly and securely, as travellers do in a road where they apprehend no danger.

e Ps. 112. 3. Matt. 6. 33. ‖ Or, The reward of humility, &c.

4 e ‖By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches, honour, and life.

By humility; or, *because of humility;* or, as many others render it, *the reward of humility;* that reward which God hath graciously promised and will give to humility; which is a grace of great price in God's eyes. See Isa. lvii. 15; James iv. 6. *The fear of the Lord;* by which he distinguisheth true and Christian humility from counterfeit and moral humility, because that ariseth from a deep sense of God's greatness, and purity, and perfection, compared with our meanness, and filthiness, and manifold imperfections, whereas this is quite of another nature, and from other grounds. *Life;* the comforts of this life, and the happiness of the next, both which are promised to godliness, 1 Tim. iv. 8.

f ch. 15. 19. g 1 John 5. 18.

5 f Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the froward: g he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.

Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward; the wicked by their evil courses expose themselves to many dangers and occasions both of sin and mischief. *He that doth keep his soul*, that taketh heed to himself, and to his actions, and to the saving of his life and soul, *shall be far from them;* either, 1. Will avoid the society of such froward persons. Or, 2. Shall by that circumspection preserve himself from those *thorns*, &c., with which the pronoun *them* agrees in number.

h Eph. 6. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 15. ‖ Or, Catechise. † Heb. in his way.

6 h ‖Train up a child †in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Train up, or, *initiate* or *instruct, a child in the way he should go*, Heb. *in* or *according to his way*, i. e. either, 1. According to his capacity. Or rather, 2. In that course or manner of life which thou wouldst have him choose and follow. Or, as one learned man renders it, *in the beginning of his way*, i. e. in his tender years, as soon as he is capable of instruction. Heb. *in the mouth*, &c. *The mouth* is oft put for the beginning or entrance of any place, as Gen. xxix. 2; Josh. x. 18; Prov. viii. 3; Dan. vi. 17. *Will not depart from it*, to wit, not easily and ordinarily. The impressions made in childish years will remain, as hath been observed by all sorts of learned writers. But this, as many proverbs of like nature, are not to be understood as if this were universally and necessarily true, which experience confutes, but because it is so for the most part, except some extraordinary cause hinder it.

i Jam. 2. 6. † Heb. to the man that lendeth.

7 i The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower *is* servant †to the lender.

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Ruleth over the poor, to wit, with rigour and tyranny, taking advantage of his necessities. *Is servant to the lender;* is at his mercy, and therefore forced to comply with his pleasure. The design of the proverb is partly to correct this miscarriage of the rich, and partly to oblige all men to diligence, whereby they may deliver themselves from this servitude.

k Job 4. 8. Hos. 10. 13. ‖ Or, *and with the rod of his anger he shall be consumed.*

8 [k]He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: ‖and the rod of his anger shall fail.

He that soweth iniquity, or *unrighteousness*, whose common practice it is to wrong or oppress others, *shall reap vanity;* or, *trouble* or *misery*, as this word is commonly used, and as divers here render it The mischief which he hath done to others shall be returned to him by God's righteous sentence. *The rod of his anger shall fail;* that power which he used with fury and cruelty shall be taken away from him.

12 Cor. 9. 6. † Heb. *Good of eye.*

9 [l]†He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

He that hath a bountiful eye, Heb. *a good eye*. He who looks upon the wants and miseries of others with compassion and kindness, as this phrase is used, Matt. xx. 15; as *an evil eye* is put for one that beholds others with envy and unmercifulness, Deut. xv. 9; Prov. xxiii. 6; xxviii. 22. *Shall be blessed*, both by God and men.

m Gen. 21. 9, 10. Ps. 101. 5.

10 [m]Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

Cast out of your society, avoid conversation with, *the scorner;* who neither fears God, nor reverences man, but scorns all admonitions, and minds only the pleasing of himself, and the gratifying of his own lusts, which is the chief cause of most contentions. *Strife and reproach;* wherewith he loads those that either oppose or admonish him.

n Ps. 101. 6. ch. 16. 13. ‖ Or, *and hath grace in his lips.*

11 [n]He that loveth pureness of heart, ‖*for* the grace of his lips the king *shall be* his friend.

That loveth pureness of heart; who is plain-hearted or sincere, and abhors dissimulation. *For the grace of his lips;* for those gracious speeches which naturally and commonly flow from a pure heart. Or, and (understand, *loveth*, out of the former clause) *grace of his lips;* whose discourse is gracious and sincere. *The king shall be his friend;* the greatest men will, or should, desire and highly prize the acquaintance and advice of such persons, rather than of dissemblers and flatterers, wherewith they are most commonly pestered.

12 The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and he overthroweth ‖the words of the transgressor.

‖ Or, *the matters.*

The eyes of the Lord preserve, God by the watchful eye of his providence maintains and defends, *knowledge*, to wit, men of knowledge; the abstract being put for the concrete, as *pride* is put for a *proud man*, Psal. xxxvi. 11, *deceit* for *the deceitful*, as Prov. xii. 17: so here *knowledge* for knowing and good men, such as the last verse spoke of, whose hearts are pure, and speeches gracious; not only the king shall be their friend, as he said there, but God also, which he adds here. *The words;* their false and flattering speeches, whereby they designed and expected to gain the favour and friendship of great men, which are opposed to the sincere and gracious speeches of good men, implied in the first cause of this verse, and expressed in the foregoing verse; or, as others render it, and the word is very commonly used, *the matters;* all his counsels, hopes, enterprises, and concerns.

o ch. 26. 13.

13 [o]The slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

Saith, allegeth as his excuse to them who upbraid him with idleness, or persuade him to diligence, *There is a lion without;* there are extreme dangers and invincible difficulties in my way. *I shall be slain* by that lion, or some other way. *In the streets;* which is added to show the ridiculousness of his excuse; for lions abide in the woods or fields, not in the streets of towns or cities.

p ch. 2. 16. & 5. 3. & 7. 5. & 23. 27. q Eccles. 7. 26.

14 [p]The mouth of strange women *is* a deep pit: [q]he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.

The mouth; her fair and flattering speeches, wherewith she enticeth him to gross filthiness, as it is noted, Prov. vii. 21. *A deep pit;* into which it is easy to fall, but hard, if not impossible, to get out of it. It is a rare thing for any person, once entered into the course of whoredom, sincerely to repent of it, and turn from it. See Prov. ii. 19. *That is abhorred of the Lord*, to wit, in a high and singular manner; who by his former impieties, and contempt of God and of his grace, hath provoked God to leave and loathe him, and to punish one sin with another; for otherwise all sinners, as such, are abhorred by God.

r ch. 13. 24. & 19. 18. & 23. 13, 14. & 29. 15, 17.

15 Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child; *but* [r]the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Is bound; is fixed and settled there, as being born with him, and rooted in his very nature, and not plucked up without great difficulty and diligence. *The rod of correction shall drive it far from him;* the smart of punishment makes him weary of his sin, and watchful against it.

16 He that oppresseth the poor to increase his *riches*, *and* he that giveth to the rich, *shall* surely *come* to want.

That giveth to the rich; that vainly and prodigally casts away his estate upon those who do not need it, or gives it to them with evil design, as that they may assist him in oppressing the poor, or at least not hinder him in it.

17 Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

Of the wise; of wise and holy men of God. *Apply thine heart;* thirst after it, and give up thyself to the diligent study of it. *My knowledge;* the knowledge of God, and of thy several duties, which I am here delivering to thee.

† Heb. *in thy belly.*

18 For *it is* a pleasant thing if thou keep them †within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.

If thou keep them, the words of the wise, *within thee*, Heb. *in thy belly*, i. e. in thine heart, which implies receiving them in love, and retaining them in mind and memory. *Be fitted;* be fitly expressed; or, *be disposed* or *ordered*. The sense is, When thou hast got them into thine heart, thou wilt be able and ready to discourse pertinently and profitably of them.

‖ Or, *trust thou also.*

19 That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, ‖even to thee.

That knowing God, and his word and promises, thou mayst cheerfully and confidently trust in him, which is the only way to thy safety and happiness.

s ch. 8. 6.

20 Have not I written to thee [s]excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

Excellent things; or, *princely things*, as they are called, Prov. viii. 6, *the great things of God's law*, as Hos. viii. 12. *In counsels and knowledge;* consisting of *counsels* to direct thy practice, and *knowledge* to inform and enrich thy mind. Or by that known figure *hendiadis*, *in counsels of knowledge*, i. e. in good counsels, which proceed from sound knowledge, and make a man knowing and wise, which are opposed to *the counsels of the wicked*, Prov. xii. 5, which are without knowledge.

t Luke 1. 3, 4. u 1 Pet. 3. 15. ‖ Or, *to those that send thee.*

21 [t]That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; [u]that thou mightest answer the words of truth ‖to them that send unto thee?

That I may make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that I may teach thee, not false, or vain, or uncertain things, as the teachers of the heathen nations do, but the true and infallible oracles of God. *That thou mightest answer the words of truth;* that being instructed by me, thou mayst be able to give true, and solid, and satisfactory

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answers. *To them that send unto thee*, to wit, for thine advice in great and difficult matters. Or, *to those that send thee*, i. e. that employ thee in any business of moment, whereof they expect an account from thee.

x Ex. 23. 6. Job 31. 16, 21. y Zech. 7. 10. Mal. 3. 5.

22 [x]Rob not the poor, because he *is* poor: [y]neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:

Because he is poor: this may be mentioned, either, 1. As a motive to this robbery, because he was unable to resist him, or to revenge himself upon him. Do not take advantage of his poverty. Or, 2. As an argument against it, because he is a fitter object for thy pity and charity, than for thy injustice or cruelty. It is base and inhuman to crush such a person. *In the gate;* in the place of judgment, or under pretence of justice, and much less in other ways, where there is no colour of justice.

z 1 Sam. 24. 12. & 25. 39. Ps. 12. 5. & 35. 1, 10. & 68. 5. & 140. 12. ch. 23. 11. Jer. 51. 36.

23 [z]For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

Will plead their cause; which he hath in a peculiar manner undertaken to do. *Spoil the soul;* take away not only their goods, but their lives too; so fully will he recompense their wickedness to them.

24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

Into his company; not converse frequently and familiarly with him, as friends use to do.

25 Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

Lest thou learn his ways; lest thou be infected by his example, or provoked by his passion to return the like to him. *A snare;* either, 1. A mischief, which is oft the effect of unbridled rage. Or, 2. An occasion of sin; either by drawing thee to an imitation or requital of his rage; or by tempting thee to unfaithfulness in performing the great office of a friend, to wit, admonition or reproof, which, by reason of his furious temper, thou either canst not or wilt not do.

a ch. 6. 1. & 11. 15.

26 [a]Be not thou *one* of them that strike hands, *or* of them that are sureties for debts.

To wit, rashly, or unnecessarily.

27 If thou hast nothing to pay, why b ch. 20. 16. should he [b]take away thy bed from under thee?

Why wilt thou put thyself into the hands of such a man, who will exact the debt from thee without any compassion? For though God did not allow this practice, covetous creditors would frequently do it.

c Deut. 19. 14. & 27. 17. ch. 23. 10. ‖ Or, *bound.*

28 [c]Remove not the ancient ‖landmark, which thy fathers have set.

Landmark, whereby the lands of several possessors were distinguished and divided. Do not enrich thyself with the injury of other men; do not invade the rights of others.

29 Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before † mean *men.*

† Heb. *obscure men.*

Diligent; or, *expeditious,* as the word properly signifies; one of quick despatch, vigorous and speedy in executing what hath been well and wisely contrived. *He shall stand before kings;* he is fit to be employed in the affairs of the greatest princes.

CHAP. XXIII.

WHEN thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what *is* before thee:

When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, when thou art invited to a feast with a great man, *consider diligently what is before thee;* either 1. What person or persons. Or rather, 2. What things; what plenty and variety of meats and drinks, by which thou mayst easily be tempted to excess, and by that means induced to use such speeches or carriages as may be unfit for thee, or many ways hurtful to thee.

2 And put a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite.

Put a knife to thy throat; restrain and moderate thine appetite, as if a knife or some other thing stuck in thy throat, and hindered thee from swallowing what thou didst desire; or as if a man stood with a knife at thy throat ready to kill thee, if thou didst transgress; or though it be as irksome to thee to do so as if thou hadst a knife put to thy throat. So this is to be understood metaphorically, as that phrase of *cutting off the right hand,* &c., Matt. v. 29, 30. Or, *For thou dost* (or, *lest thou shouldst,* as the Syriac interpreter renders it; or, *otherwise thou wilt* or *shouldst*) *put a knife to thy throat.* So the sense is, When thou goest to their feasts, thou dost expose thyself to great and manifest hazards, to thy own intemperance, and to all its dangerous consequences, and to the ill effects of other men's intemperance. *Given to appetite;* prone to excess in eating and drinking.

3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they *are* deceitful meat.

Either because they do not yield thee that satisfaction which thou didst expect from them, but rather load thee with ill humours, and the seeds of divers diseases; or because they are not provided for thee with sincerity and good will, but with some evil design upon thee, either to discover and betray thee, or to enslave thee. See below, ver. 6, 7.

a ch. 28. 20. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. b ch. 3. 5. Rom. 12. 16.

4 [a]Labour not to be rich: [b]cease from thine own wisdom.

Labour not, Heb. Do not weary thyself with immoderate cares and labours, as many covetous men do. *From thine own wisdom;* from that carnal wisdom which is natural to man in his corrupt estate, which persuades men to believe that it is their interest to use all possible means to get riches, and that the happiness of their lives consists in the abundance of their possessions, directly contrary to the assertion of our blessed Lord, Luke xii. 15.

† Heb. *Wilt thou cause thine eyes to fly upon.*

5 †Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that, i. e. look upon it with earnestness and greedy desire, employing the eyes of thy mind and body about it. *Which is not;* which hath no solid and settled being; which is ours *to have,* but not *to hold;* which is always upon the wing, and ofttimes gone in the twinkling of an eye, so that the owner is frequently at a loss, and cannot tell whether he hath his estate, or whether he hath lost it. *They fly away as an eagle,* swiftly, strongly, and irrevocably. We quickly lose the sight and possession of them. Their flying away from us is elegantly opposed to our eyes being set, or, as it is in the Hebrew, flying upon them, in the beginning of the verse.

c Ps. 141. 4. d Deut. 15. 9.

6 [c]Eat thou not the bread of *him that hath* [d]an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:

Of him that hath an evil eye; of the envious or covetous man, who secretly grudgeth thee the meat which he sets before thee, as this phrase is used, Prov. xxviii. 22; Matt. xx. 15; as, on the contrary, a liberal man is said to have a *good eye,* Prov. xxii. 9.

e Ps. 12. 2.

7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, [e]saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee.

As he thinketh in his heart, so is he: you are not to judge of him by his words, for so he professeth kindness, as it follows; but by the constant temper of his mind, which he hath fully discovered to all that know him by the course of his life. *His heart is not with thee;* he hath no sincere kindness to thee, but inwardly grudgeth thee that which he outwardly offers to thee.

8 The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.

When thou perceivest his churlish disposition and carriage, his meat will be loathsome to thee, and thou wilt wish either that thou hadst never eaten it, or that thou

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couldst vomit it up again. *Thy sweet words;* thy pleasant discourse, wherewith thou didst adorn his table, and design both to delight and profit him, is lost, and of no effect to him, and thou wilt be ready to repent of it.

f ch. 9. 8. Matt. 7. 6. 9 [f]Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

Speak not in the ears of a fool; cast not away good counsels upon obstinate and incorrigible sinners. We have the same advice given Matt. vii. 6. *He will despise the wisdom of thy words;* he will scornfully reject thy wise and good admonitions.

g Deut. 19. 14. & 27. 17. ch. 22. 28. ‖ Or, *bound.* 10 [g]Remove not the old ‖landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:

Either to take away their goods; or rather, to possess their lands, as this phrase is used, 2 Sam. v. 6.

h Job 31. 21. ch. 22. 23. 11 [h]For their redeemer *is* mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

Their redeemer, Heb. *their near kinsman,* to whom it belongs to avenge their wrongs, and to recover and maintain their rights, of which see Lev. xxv. 25; Numb. xxxv. 12. Thus God is pleased to call himself, to show how much he concerns himself for the relief of oppressed and helpless persons.

12 Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

Apply thine heart unto instruction; content not thyself with outward hearing or reading of it, but affectionately receive it into thine heart, and lay it up there as choice treasure.

i ch. 13. 24. & 19. 18. & 22. 15. & 29. 15, 17. 13 [i]Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

It is a likely mean to prevent their corruption, and the destruction which commonly follows it, as the next verse explains this.

14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and [k]shalt deliver his soul from hell.

k 1 Cor. 5. 5.

l ver. 24, 25. ch. 29. 3. ‖ Or, *even I will rejoice.* 15 My son, [l]if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, ‖even mine.

In the good success of my counsels, and in thy piety and happiness, which is as truly desirable and pleasant to me as my own.

16 Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.

I shall rejoice not only in show and profession, but inwardly, and with all my soul.

m Ps. 37. 1. & 73. 3. ch. 3. 31. & 24. 1. n ch. 28. 14. 17 [m]Let not thine heart envy sinners: but [n]*be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

Let not thine heart envy sinners; let not the consideration of their present impunity and prosperity stir thee up, either to envy them, or to approve and imitate their evil courses. *Be thou in the fear of the Lord;* reverence the presence of the Divine Majesty, and dread his power and justice, and those judgments which he hath prepared for sinners, and thou wilt see no cause to envy, but rather to pity them. *All the day long;* not only when thou art in trouble, but in all times and conditions.

o Ps. 37. 37. ch. 24. 14. Luke 16. 25. ‖ Or, *reward.* 18 [o]For surely there is an ‖end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.

An end; an expected and happy end for such as fear God, which was required, ver. 17. Or, *a reward,* as this Hebrew word is rendered, Prov. xxiv. 20. *Thine expectation shall not be cut off;* thou shalt certainly enjoy that good which thou expectest, as the wicked shall lose that happiness which they enjoy.

19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and [p]guide thine heart in the way.

p ch. 4. 23.

Be wise; rest not in hearing, but see that thou growest wiser and better by it. *Guide thine heart;* order the whole course of thine affections and actions. *In the way;* in God's way, oft called *the way,* as hath been observed before.

20 [q]Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters †of flesh:

q Is. 5. 22. Matt. 24. 49. Luke 21. 34. Rom. 13. 13. Eph. 5. 18. † Heb. *of their flesh.*

Avoid their conversation and company, lest thou be either infected or injured by them.

21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and [r]drowsiness shall clothe *a man* with rags.

r ch. 19. 15.

Drowsiness; immoderate sleep and idleness, which is as ready a way to poverty as gluttony or drunkenness is.

22 [s]Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

s ch. 1. 8. & 30. 17. Eph. 6. 1, 2.

That begat thee; and therefore desires and seeks thy good in all his counsels. *When she is old;* when the infirmity of age is added to that of her sex, which is apt to breed contempt.

23 [t]Buy the truth, and sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

t ch. 4. 5, 7. Matt. 13. 44

Buy the truth; purchase it upon any terms, spare no pains nor cost to get it. *The truth;* the true and saving knowledge of God's mind and will concerning your salvation, and the way that leads to it. *Sell it not;* do not forget it nor forsake it for any worldly advantages, as ungodly men frequently do. *Understanding;* whereby you may love and practise the truth known and received.

24 [u]The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise *child* shall have joy of him.

u ch. 10. 1. & 15. 20. ver. 15.

25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.

Thy father and thy mother shall be glad; he repeateth this again, as a powerful argument to prevail with all children that are not void of natural affection, to labour to be wise and good, that so they may glad the hearts of their parents, to whom they have such high and indelible obligations. *She that bare thee* with so great pain and hazard, and brought thee up with such tender care, whom thou canst not better requite.

26 My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

Give me thine heart; receive my counsels with thy whole heart. Solomon speaking in God's name and cause, requires the heart to be given to him. *Let thine eyes observe,* let thy mind seriously and practically consider, *my ways;* either, 1. The ways in which I have walked, my evil practices; take warning by my sad example. Or, 2. The ways which I prescribe to you; as the apostles called the gospel which they preached *their gospel,* 1 Thess. i. 5; 2 Tim. ii. 8.

27 [x]For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.

x ch. 22. 14.

A deep ditch; in which a man is in evident danger of perdition, and out of which it is exceeding difficult to escape.

28 [y]She also lieth in wait ‖as *for* a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.

y ch. 7. 12. Eccles. 7. 26. ‖ Or, *as a robber.*

Lieth in wait as for a prey; watching all opportunities of insnaring young men to their destruction. *Increaseth the transgressors among men;* she is the cause of innumerable sins against God, and against the marriage-bed, against the soul and body too, and by her wicked example and arts involveth many persons in the guilt of her sins.

29 [z]Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who [a]hath redness of eyes?

z Is. 5. 11, 22. a Gen. 49. 12.

From the sin of lust he proceeds to that of drunkenness, which doth frequently accompany it. *Babbling* the sin of much and impertinent talking; or, *tumultuous noise* or *clamour,* which is usual among drunkards. See Prov. xx. 1. *Without cause;* upon every slight occasion, which men inflamed with wine are very apt to take.

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30 [b]They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek [c]mixed wine.

b ch. 20. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 18. c Ps. 75. 8. ch. 9. 2.

Either mixed with water, or with other ingredients, to make it strong and delicious. Heb. *mixture;* mixed drinks of several sorts suited to their palates.

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright.

Look not thou upon the wine earnestly, so as to inflame thine appetite towards it; in which sense men are forbidden *to look upon a woman*, Job xxxi. 1; Matt. v. 28. *When it is red;* which was the colour of the best wines in that country, which therefore are called *blood*, Gen. xlix. 11; Deut. xxxii. 14; and such were used by them in the passover. *When it moveth itself aright;* when it sparkleth and frisketh, and seems to smile upon a man.

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like ‖ an adder.

‖ Or, *a cockatrice.*

It hurts the body in many respects, impairs the vigour of the mind, wastes the estate and reputation, wounds the conscience, and, without repentance, will destroy the soul.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

Behold, with evil intent, or lustfully, which is the effect of drinking much wine, as is noted in Scripture, Gen. xix. 31, 35; Hos. iv. 18, and other authors. *Thine heart shall utter perverse things;* thine heart, which, when thou hadst the use of thy wit, concealed, will then discover its wickedness by filthy and perverse speeches.

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down † in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

† Heb. *in the heart of the sea.*

That lieth down to sleep, of which that word is frequently used, *in the midst of the sea;* in a ship in the midst of the sea. This phrase notes the temper and condition of the drunkard, the giddiness of his brain, the unquietness of his mind, and especially his extreme danger joined with great security. *The top of a mast;* the worst part of the ship, both for its perpetual tossings, and for the hazard of him that sleeps on it.

35 [d]They have stricken me, *shalt thou say, and* I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* †[e]I felt *it* not: [f]when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

d Jer. 5. 3. ch. 27. 22. ‖ Heb. *I knew it not.* e Eph. 4. 19. f See Deut. 29. 19. Is. 56. 12.

They have stricken me; I cannot deny that I exposed myself by my drunkenness to manifold abuses and injuries. *I was not sick;* I was not then sensible of it, neither do I now find any great hurt by it; it was but the effect of a present frolic, at which I have no cause to be much troubled. *When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again;* at present I find some inconvenience, and my condition requires sleep to settle myself, and when I am composed and refreshed, I purpose to return to my former course. But that which Solomon here expresseth, seems rather to be the language of their hearts or lives than of their tongues. Compare Prov. i. 11.

CHAP. XXIV.

BE not thou [a]envious against evil men, [b]neither desire to be with them.

a Ps. 37. 1, &c. & 73. 3. ch. 3. 31. & 23. 17. ver. 19. b Prov. 1. 15.

Their company or manner of life.

2 [c]For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.

c Ps. 10. 7.

Studieth destruction; how they may oppress and destroy others, which yet at last falls upon their own heads.

3 Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:

There is no need that thou shouldst raise thyself and family by ruining others, as the manner of wicked men is, which thou mayst more easily and effectually do by wisdom, and the fear of God.

4 And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

Knowledge; which in Scripture phrase includes the love and practice of that which we know.

5 [d]A wise man † *is* strong; yea, a man of knowledge † increaseth strength.

d ch. 21. 22. Eccles. 9. 16. † Heb. *is in strength.* † Heb. *strengtheneth might.*

Is strong; is courageous and resolute, and able by wisdom to do greater things than others can accomplish by their own strength.

6 [e]For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

e ch. 11. 14. & 15. 22. & 20. 18. Luke 14. 31.

War is better managed by wisdom than by strength. So this proves what he said in the last verse.

7 [f]Wisdom *is* too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate.

f Ps. 10. 5. ch. 14. 6.

Wisdom is too high for a fool; either, 1. Really, it is above his reach or capacity. Or, 2. In his opinion; he judgeth it too hard for him, he despairs of attaining it, he pretends the impossibility of it, because he will not put himself to the charge or trouble of getting it; as, on the contrary, *wisdom is* said to be easy *to him that understandeth*, Prov. xiv. 6, because he seriously giveth his mind to it, and therefore easily and certainly attains to it. *For a fool;* for a wilful fool, or a wicked man, whose lusts enfeeble and darken his mind, and make it uncapable of wisdom. *He openeth not his mouth in the gate;* either, 1. He can say nothing for himself when he is accused before the magistrate, for which he gives frequent occasion. Or, 2. He knows not how to speak acceptably and profitably in the public assembly among wise men.

8 He that [g]deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.

g Rom. 1. 30.

Heb. *a master of mischief.* The sense is, Though he cover his wicked devices with fair pretences, and would be better esteemed, yet he shall be noted and branded with that infamy which is due to him.

9 The thought of foolishness *is* sin: and the scorner *is* an abomination to men.

The thought of foolishness is sin; the very inward thought or contrivance of evil, of which he spake ver. 8, even before it break forth into action, it is a sin in God's sight, and it is hateful to God. Or *foolishness* is put for foolish or wicked men, by comparing this with the next clause where *the scorner* is opposed to it. So the sense is, All the thoughts of wicked men are only evil, and that continually, as is said of man in his corrupt estate, Gen. vi. 5, and therefore abominable to God. *The scorner;* he who not only deviseth and practiseth wickedness, but obstinately persists in it, and rejects all admonitions against it. *Is an abomination to men;* is abominable not only to God, as all sinners are, but to all sober men.

10 *If* thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength *is* † small.

† Heb. *narrow.*

If thou faint; if thou art impatient, and unable to bear sufferings; if thy resolution flag, and thou givest way to despondency or dejection of mind. *Is small*, Heb. *is narrow;* it lives in a little compass; it is as strait as thy condition is; for there is an elegant allusion in the Hebrew words. The sense is, This is a sign that thou hast but little Christian strength or courage, for that is best known by adversity.

11 [h]If thou forbear to deliver *them that are* drawn unto death, and *those that are* ready to be slain;

h Ps. 82. 4. Is. 58. 6, 7. 1 John 3. 16.

To deliver them, when it is in thy power to do it lawfully. *Drawn unto death*, to wit, unjustly, or by the violence of lawless men. *That are ready to be slain;* that are in present danger of death or destruction.

12 If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not [i]he that pondereth the heart consider *it?* and he that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it?* and shall *not* he render to *every* man [k]according to his works?

i ch. 21. 2. k Job 34. 11. Ps. 62. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Rom. 2. 6. Rev. 2. 23. & 22. 12.

We knew it not; I was ignorant either of his innocency, or of his extreme danger, or of my power to relieve him.

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Consider it; that this is only a frivolous excuse, and that the true reason of thy neglect was thy want of true love to thy brother, whose life thou wast by the law of God and of nature obliged to preserve, and thy sinful self-love, and a carnal fear of some mischief or trouble which might befall thee in the discharge of thy duty. *He that keepeth thy soul;* God, who is *the preserver of men*, Job vii. 20, who daily doth, and who only can, keep thee both in and from the greatest dangers. And this favour of God may be here mentioned, partly, as a strong obligation upon him to preserve him who is made after God's image, and whom God hath commanded him to love and preserve; partly, as an encouragement to the performance of his duty herein from the consideration of God's special care and watchfulness over those that do their duty; and partly, to intimate to them the danger of the neglect of this duty, whereby they will forfeit God's protection over themselves, and expose themselves to manifold dangers and calamities. Or, as others render it, and as the Hebrew verb is frequently used, *he that observeth thy soul*, that seeth all the secret thoughts and inward motions of the heart; which exposition is favoured both by the following words, *doth not he know it?* which agrees better to God's *observing* than to his *preserving* a man's *soul;* and by the former clause, to which this translation doth more exactly answer, the same thing being here repeated in other words, after the manner of these sacred writers. *Shall not he render to every man according to his works?* God will certainly deal with thee as thou hast dealt with him, either rewarding thy performance of this duty, or punishing thy neglect of it.

[l] Cant. 5. 1.

13 My son, [l]eat thou honey, because *it is* good; and the honeycomb, *which is* sweet † to thy taste:

† Heb. upon thy palate.

This is not a command, but a concession, and is here expressed only to illustrate the following verse. Honey in those parts was excellent, and a usual and an acceptable food. See Deut. viii. 8; Judg. xiv. 18; 1 Sam. xiv. 25.

[m] Ps. 19. 10. & 119. 103.

14 [m]So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be* unto thy soul: when thou hast found

[n] ch. 23. 18.

it, [n]then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

When thou hast found it; whereby he implies that there is indeed some difficulty and trouble in the pursuit of wisdom, but that it is abundantly compensated with the sweetness and advantage of it when a man arrives at it. *Then there shall be a reward.* Heb. *and* or *also there is a reward.* It is not only as good as honey, sweet for the present, but it is infinitely better, bringing a sure and everlasting reward with it.

[o] Ps. 10. 9, 10.

15 [o]Lay not wait, O wicked *man*, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place:

Lay not wait; do him no injury, either by subtle and secret devices, or, as it follows, by manifest violence. *Against the dwelling of the righteous;* against his person, or family, or possession.

[p] Job 5. 19. Ps. 34. 19. & 37. 24. Mic. 7. 8.

16 [p]For a just *man* falleth seven times,

[q] Esth. 7. 10. Amos 5. 2. & 8. 14. Rev. 18. 21.

and riseth up again: [q]but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

Falleth; either, 1. Into sin. Or, rather, 2. Into calamities, of which he evidently speaks, both in the foregoing verse, and in the opposite and following branch of this verse, and so this word is used in the next verse, and Psal. xxxvii. 24; Isa. xxiv. 20; Jer. xxv. 27; Amos viii. 14; Micah vii. 8, &c. And so this is fitly alleged as a just reason to dissuade wicked men from their unjust attempts against righteous men, because they should not succeed in them; and although they might by God's permission bring them into some distress for a time, yet God would deliver them out of their hands, and they should be disappointed of their hopes. *Seven times*, i. e. frequently. *Into mischief;* into unavoidable and irrecoverable destruction, ofttimes in this life, and infallibly in the next.

[r] Job 31. 29. Ps. 35. 15, 19. ch. 17. 5. Obad. 12.

17 [r]Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

Falleth, to wit, into mischief, as in the former verse. Please not thyself in his destruction; which plainly shows that the love of our enemies is a precept of the old law as well as of the gospel. See Exod. xxiii. 4, 5.

18 Lest the LORD see *it*, and †it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

† Heb. *it be evil in his eyes.*

Understand, *upon thee*, which is implied in the Hebrew phrase, such defects being usual in that concise language, Psal. lxxxiv. 11; Prov. xix. 1, and oft elsewhere. This consideration strikes at the root of that sinful and inhuman disposition, which is an expectation of safety or advantage to himself by his enemy's downfal, which, saith he, by this very mean thou shalt lose, for thine enemy shall be raised, and thy danger greatly increased, by thy provoking both God and him against thee.

[s] Ps. 37. 1. & 73. 3. ch. 23. 17. ver. 1.

19 [s]‖Fret not thyself because of evil *men*, neither be thou envious at the wicked;

‖ Or, *Keep not company with the wicked.*

Fret not thyself; which translation of the word is confirmed by the parallel word in the following clause. *Because of evil men;* for their present impunity and good success.

[t] Ps. 11. 6. [u] Job 18. 5, 6. & 21. 17. ch. 13. 9. & 20. 20.

20 For [t]there shall be no reward to the evil *man;* [u]the ‖candle of the wicked shall be put out.

‖ Or, *lamp.*

There shall be no reward to the evil man; all his hopes and happiness shall quickly and eternally perish, and he shall have no share in those solid felicities and blessed recompences of a better life which thou shalt enjoy; therefore thou hast no reason to envy him. *The candle of the wicked shall be put out;* all their comfort and glory shall cease.

[x] Rom. 13. 7. 1 Pet. 2. 17.

21 My son, [x]fear thou the LORD and the king: *and* meddle not with †them that are given to change:

† Heb. *changers.*

Fear thou the Lord and the king; honour and obey both God and the king, and all in authority. He puts God before the king, because God is to be served in the first place, and our obedience is to be given to kings only in subordination to God, and not in those things which are contrary to the will and command of God, as is manifest both from plain Scripture, as Acts v. 29, and from the judgment and practice of wise and sober heathens. *Meddle not with them*, Heb. *mix not thyself with them*, either in their counsels and practices, or in familiar conversation, *that are given to change;* that love or use changes; that are unstable in their obedience to God or to the king, and are prone to rebellion against either of them. Those men that wickedly forsake God, and break his laws, are said to change *their God*, Jer. ii. 11, and to *change* God's *judgments* and *ordinances*, Isa. xxiv. 5; Ezek. v. 6.

22 For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?

Who knoweth? who can conceive how sore and sudden it will be? *The ruin of them both;* of them that fear not God, and of them that fear not the king, for they have two potent and terrible enemies; and therefore if they will not obey them out of conscience, as their duty binds them, yet they should do it at least for their own sakes, and for fear of those severe punishments which they will certainly inflict upon rebels.

[y] Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. & 16. 19. ch. 18. 5. & 28. 21. John 7. 24.

23 These *things* also *belong* to the wise. [y]*It is* not good to have respect of persons in judgment.

These things also, these proverbs or counsels here following to the end of the chapter, no less than those hitherto mentioned, *belong to the wise;* are worthy of the consideration, and fit for the use, of them who are or would be wise; for only such are capable of understanding and improving these proverbs, as was noted, chap. i. 5—7, and elsewhere. *To have respect of persons in judgment;* for judges to determine controversies partially, according to the quality of the persons, and not according to the merits of the cause.

[z] ch. 17. 15. Is. 5. 23.

24 [z]He that saith unto the wicked,

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Thou *art* righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

He that saith, to wit, publicly, and in judgment, as he now said, and as appears by the publicness of the curse following upon it, for *people* or *nations* do neither observe nor hate every man who saith thus privately. *Thou art righteous*, that justify wicked men in their unrighteous courses. *Nations shall abhor him*, partly for the grossness and odiousness of the crime, and partly for the great and general mischief which such practices bring to civil societies.

25 But to them that rebuke *him* shall be delight, and †a good blessing shall come upon them.

† Heb. *a blessing of good.*

That rebuke him; that publicly and judicially rebuke and condemn the wicked. *Delight*; the peace of a good conscience, and the comfort of a good name. *A good blessing*; which the people shall wish, and by their prayers obtain, from God for them; which is fitly opposed to *the people's curse* in the last verse.

† Heb. *that answereth right words.*

26 *Every man* shall kiss *his* lips †that giveth a right answer.

Every man shall kiss his lips, shall highly respect and love him, of which kissing was a sign, *that giveth a right answer*; who being called to speak, either as a judge, or witness, or otherwise, in weighty matters, speaks pertinently, and plainly, and truly, to the conviction and satisfaction of the hearers.

a 1 Kings 5. 17, 18. Luke 14. 28.

27 [a]Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.

This is a domestical precept, requiring both industry and prudence in the management of a man's concerns, that he take care in the first place to furnish himself with cattle and the fruits of the field, which are necessary for his subsistence, and after that he may procure such things as are for ornament and comfort, such as the building of a convenient house is.

b Eph. 4. 25.

28 [b]Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive *not* with thy lips.

Be not a witness against thy neighbour, either in judgment or in private conversation, *without cause*; rashly or falsely, without just and sufficient cause. *Deceive not*, neither thy neighbour, to whom thou hast made a show of friendship, nor the judge, nor any other hearers, with false information. Or this clause forbids flattering him to his face, as the former forbids slandering him behind his back.

c ch. 20. 22. Matt. 5. 39, 44. Rom. 12. 17, 19.

29 [c]Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

Say not within thyself; give not way to any such thoughts or passions. *I will render to the man according to his work*; I will repay him all his calumnies and injuries.

30 I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

d Gen. 3. 18.

31 And, lo, [d]it was all grown over with thorns, *and* nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

† Heb. *set my heart.*

32 Then I saw, *and* †considered *it* well: I looked upon *it*, *and* received instruction.

I learned wisdom by his folly, and by his gross idleness was provoked to greater care and diligence.

e ch. 6. 9, &c.

33 [e]*Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

See this and the following verse in Prov. vi. 10, 11.

† Heb. *a man of shield.*

34 So shall thy poverty come *as* one that travelleth; and thy want as †an armed man.

CHAP. XXV.

Observations about kings, 1—7. *A caution against contentions*, 8; *against revealing of secrets*, 9. *The reason of this caution*, 10; *with divers other rules*, 11—28.

cir. 700. a 1 Kings 4. 32.

[a]THESE *are* also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.

These, which are contained in this and the following chapters. *The men of Hezekiah*; certain persons appointed by Hezekiah for that work, whether prophets, as Isaiah, Hosea, or Micah, who lived in his days, or some others, it is neither evident nor material. Most of them are political precepts, and such as in a special manner concerned Hezekiah and other princes to know, for the conduct of their house and kingdom. *Copied out*; either out of other books or writings of Solomon, concerning natural or civil things, of which we read 1 Kings iv. 32; or out of the historical records which were then extant concerning Solomon's speeches and actions in the history of the kings of Judah, which is oft mentioned in Holy Scripture.

b Deut. 29. 29. Rom. 11. 33. c Job 29. 16.

2 [b]*It is* the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings *is* [c]to search out a matter.

It is the glory of God; it is agreeable to the nature and highly conducing to the honour of God, because it is a testimony of his infinite wisdom and knowledge, of his absolute power and sovereignty, and of his other incomprehensible perfections. *To conceal a thing*; to keep his counsels and the reasons of his actions in his own breast, that he needs not to impart them to any other for their advice and assistance, as being self-sufficient both for the contrivance and execution of whatsoever pleaseth him, and accountable to none for any of his matters. *But the honour of kings is*; but kings must not affect to be like God in this respect, because they are creatures, and therefore ignorant and insufficient, and accountable to a higher authority; *to search out a matter*; in the conduct of their great affairs, not to lean to their own understandings, nor to be wedded to their own wills, but to communicate their counsels to others, that so they may search and find out the true and right way, and to be ready to give a satisfactory account of the justice and reasonableness of them, as occasion shall require.

3 The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings †*is* unsearchable.

† Heb. *there is no searching.*

The heaven for height, and the earth for depth; as no man upon earth can exactly discover the height of heaven, or the depth of earth, or discern what is contained in them. *The heart of kings is unsearchable*; though wise kings will search out other men and things, yet their inward thoughts and purposes are hardly discoverable, partly because every man's heart lies out of the sight of others, and partly because it is the practice of kings industriously to conceal their intentions.

d 2 Tim. 2. 21.

4 [d]Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

Then, and not till then, it is fit for that use.

e ch. 20. 8. f ch. 16. 12. & 29. 14.

5 [e]Take away the wicked *from* before the king, and [f]his throne shall be established in righteousness.

From before the king; from his court and councils. *Shall be established*, by removing them who by their wicked counsels and practices provoked God's displeasure against the king, and blasted his reputation, and alienated the hearts of his people from him. *Established in righteousness*, by such impartial execution of justice.

† Heb. *Set not out thy glory.*

6 †Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great *men*:

Put not forth thyself, Heb. *Do not magnify* or *glorify thyself*, by vaunting speech or carriage, but, which is implied, carry thyself humbly and modestly, which is most pleasing to kings, and most becoming and safe for thee.

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Stand not in the place of great men; do not affect nor use frequent and familiar society with greater persons than thyself, whereby thou mayst easily involve thyself in much guilt, and expose thyself to envy or contempt, and to many other inconveniences.

g Luke 14. 8, 9, 10.

7 [g]For better *it is* that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

For better it is, it is more for thy credit and comfort, ***that it be said unto thee***, by some public officer, or by the king himself. ***Whom thine eyes have seen***; into whose presence and acquaintance thou hast so boldly intruded thyself, who as before he observed thy impudence, so now he sees and suffers this public disgrace to be cast upon thee.

h ch. 17. 14. Matt. 5. 25.

8 [h]Go not forth hastily to strive, lest *thou know not* what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

Go not forth hastily, without necessary cause and due consideration, ***to strive***, either judicially or otherwise. ***Put thee to shame***, for thy folly in undertaking what thou wast not able to accomplish, and for thy injustice in charging him wrongfully.

i Matt. 5. 25. & 18. 15.

‖ Or, *discover not the secret of another.*

9 [i]Debate thy cause with thy neighbour *himself*; and ‖discover not a secret to another:

Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; if thou hast any quarrel with him, first try to compose it by private discourse with him. Compare Matt. v. 25; xviii. 15; Luke xii. 58. ***Discover not a secret***; any secret. Let no heat of contention provoke thee to divulge any of his secret counsels committed to thy trust, or to reproach him with any of his secret faults, as is usual in lawsuits and other contentions. Or, *the secret*; any secret difference between thee and him, which therefore is fittest to be ended secretly between you, and not to be imparted to any other.

10 Lest he that heareth *it* put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.

Put thee to shame; reproach thee for thy gross violation of the laws of prudence, and justice, and charity, and friendship therein. ***And thine infamy turn not away***; and that disgrace which thou didst design against another fall and be fastened upon thyself.

k ch. 15. 23. Is. 50. 4.

† Heb. *spoken upon his wheels.*

11 [k]A word †fitly spoken *is like* apples of gold in pictures of silver.

A word fitly spoken, for the matter, and season, and other circumstances of it, ***is like apples of gold in pictures of silver***, which it seems was usual in those times, and was grateful to the eye for the beauty and variety both of the colours and figures, the golden apples appearing through net-work of silver, or being engraven or portrayed upon tablets of silver.

12 *As* an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, *so is* a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.

As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold; highly acceptable, and a great ornament, and not an offence and dishonour, as fools esteem it; ***so is a wise reprover***, that reproves an offender faithfully; yet prudently, in the fittest manner and season. ***Upon an obedient ear***; to a man that hearkens to it, and is instructed and reformed by it.

l ch. 13. 17.

13 [l]As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, *so is* a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

As the cold of snow; either, 1. As drink cooled with ice or snow, as was and is usual in hot countries. Or, 2. As a cool air, such as is in snowy seasons. Or, 3. As drink which is as cold as snow. ***He refresheth the soul of his masters***, with a true account and speedy despatch of those important affairs which were committed to him.

m ch. 20. 6.

† Heb. *in a gift of falsehood.*

n Jude 12.

14 [m]Whoso boasteth himself †of a false gift *is like* [n]clouds and wind without rain.

Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, pretending that he hath given, or promising that he will give, a man those gifts, which he neither hath given, nor intendeth to give him, ***is like clouds and wind without rain***; like empty clouds carried about with wind, and not affording that rain which by their appearance they promise.

o Gen. 32. 4, &c. 1 Sam. 25. 24, &c. ch. 15. 1. & 16. 14.

15 [o]By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

By long forbearing, by patient submission and expectation, ***is a prince persuaded***, or ***pacified***, whereas his rage is increased by opposition. Compare Eccles. x. 4. ***A soft tongue***, a mild and humble answer, ***breaketh the bone***; softeneth a heart which is as hard as bone or stone. He alludes to those oils which sink through the flesh to the very bone. See Psal. cix. 18.

p ver. 27.

16 [p]Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

Honey in those parts was oft found in woods or fields, as Judg. xiv. 8, &c.; 1 Sam. xiv. 25. By ***honey*** he understands, not only all delicious meats, but all present and worldly delights, which we are here taught to use with moderation. Honey excessively taken disposeth a man to vomiting.

‖ Or, *Let thy foot be seldom in thy neighbour's house.*

† Heb. *full of thee.*

17 ‖Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be †weary of thee, and *so* hate thee.

Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house, visit him not too frequently nor unseasonably, ***lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee***, as men are apt to loathe those meats of which they surfeit, as was now observed, ver. 16.

q Ps. 57. 4. & 120. 3, 4. ch. 12. 18.

18 [q]A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour *is* a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

Is as cruel and pernicious to him as any instrument of death. The design of the proverb is to show the wickedness of slander, and that a false witness is in some respect as bad as a murderer.

19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble *is like* a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

It is not only deceitful, but hurtful, as a broken tooth, though it make show of helping, yet is not only unhelpful to a man for chewing his meat, but also troublesome and painful; and as a foot out of joint doth not help, but hinder and pain, him that attempts to walk upon it.

r Dan. 6. 18. Rom. 12. 15.

20 *As* he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, *and as* vinegar upon nitre, so *is* he that [r]singeth songs to an heavy heart.

In cold weather, when it is most seasonable and necessary. ***As vinegar upon nitre***, which dissolves the nitre, and makes it useless and ineffectual. ***So is he***, he is no less absurd and impertinent, ***that singeth songs to an heavy heart***; whose grief is not relieved, but increased by it, as common experience showeth, and divers learned authors have observed.

s Ex. 23. 4, 5. Matt. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 20.

21 [s]If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

By *bread* and *water* he understands all things necessary for his subsistence.

t 2 Sam. 16. 12.

22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, [t]and the LORD shall reward thee.

For, understand, ***in so doing***, which words are expressed Rom. xii. 20, where this text is quoted, ***thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head***; either, 1. In a bad sense, thou shalt hereby aggravate his sin, and occasion a more speedy and grievous vengeance from God, which, like fire from heaven, shall fall upon his head and consume him. Not that he persuades him to do a kindness with an evil intent, with an expectation, or desire, or design of bringing God's wrath upon him; but only he foretells what would happen, and dissuades him from taking vengeance, and provokes

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him to kindness instead of it, because vengeance is God's peculiar work, which he will certainly inflict upon such persons; which argument is used to that very purpose by St. Paul, Rom. xii. 19. Or, 2. In a good sense, thou shalt melt him into repentance, and inflame him with love and kindness to thee for so unexpected and undeserved a favour; he shall be as heartily grieved and tormented with the thoughts of his vile and wicked carriage to thee, as a man would be that had burning coals of fire heaped upon his head. But if these coals of fire do not melt him, but still he hardens his heart against thee, they will consume him. Thus either by the one or by the other way thou shalt be secured and delivered from him. The metaphor may seem to be taken from founders, who melt the hardest metals by heaping coals of fire upon them. And *the head* may be here mentioned rather than any other part, because in Scripture phrase both blessings and curses are said to fall upon men's heads, i. e. upon them, *heads* being frequently put for persons. *The Lord shall reward thee;* thy charity to him shall be fully recompensed to thee, if not by him, yet by God, which is far better.

u Job 37. 22. ‖ Or, *The north wind bringeth forth rain: so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.* x Ps. 101. 5.

23 u ‖ The north wind driveth away rain: so *doth* an angry countenance x a backbiting tongue.

An angry countenance in the hearer, who by his countenance showeth his dislike of such persons and practices. *A backbiting tongue*, Heb. *a secret tongue*, which *privily slandereth his neighbour*, as it is expressed, Psal. ci. 5, and as the manner of backbiters is. But this verse is otherwise rendered in the margin, and by divers others, *the north wind bringeth forth* (as this verb properly and most frequently signifies, and as it is rendered by all the ancient interpreters, and by many others) *rain* (which it doth in Judea, because the sea lies northward as well as westward from it, as also in Africa, as Aristotle observes, though it drive away rain in countries of another situation): *so doth a backbiting tongue* (cause) *an angry countenance;* it causeth much anger and mischief, both to the person slandered, and to the slanderer, and to other persons who may be concerned with or for either of them, as is manifest from common experience.

y ch. 19. 13. & 21. 9, 19.

24 y *It is* better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

25 *As* cold waters to a thirsty soul, so *is* good news from a far country.

Because it comes thither more rarely and difficultly after it hath been long expected and earnestly desired; all which circumstances make it more acceptable.

26 A righteous man falling down before the wicked *is as* a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

Falling down; either, 1. Into sin. So the sense is, When a just man is either allured or terrified into any sinful practice before wicked men, or into any base and servile compliance with their lusts, he who by his excellent counsels was like a fountain or *well of life*, as his mouth is called, Prov. x. 11, sending forth refreshing streams for the benefit of many, is now corrupted and rendered unserviceable. Or rather, 2. Into misery, of which kind of falling this word is constantly used, and never to my remembrance of falling into sin. And so the sense is this, When righteous men are oppressed and devoured by the wicked, the state of that commonwealth is as deplorable, as if the public fountains, from whence all the people fetch their water, were corrupted, and it is a sign that the fountains of justice are poisoned.

z ver. 16. a ch. 27. 2.

27 z *It is* not good to eat much honey: so *for men* a to search their own glory *is not* glory.

Not good, to wit, for the health of the body. *For men;* which words are easily understood, both out of the foregoing clause, where the honey is supposed to be eaten by men, and out of the following words, which are evidently meant of them. *To search their own glory;* industriously to seek for honour and applause from men. *Is not glory;* is not only sinful, but shameful also, and a sign of a vain and mean spirit. The negative particle *not* is here understood out of the former part of the verse, as it is Psal. i. 5; ix. 18.

b ch. 16. 32.

28 b He that *hath* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a city *that is* broken down, *and* without walls.

Over his own spirit; over his passions, and especially his anger, which is signified by this word, Prov. xvi. 2; Eccles. x. 4. *Is like a city that is broken down, and without walls;* exposeth himself to manifold dangers and mischiefs.

CHAP. XXVI.

Rules how to carry it towards fools, 1—12. *The slothful man described,* 13—16. *The character of a contentious man, and of a busybody, and tale-bearer,* 17—23. *The evil of hypocrisy and lying,* 24—28.

a 1 Sam. 12. 17.

AS snow in summer, a and as rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool.

As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest; unbecoming and unseasonable. *So honour is not seemly for a fool*, because he neither deserves it, nor knows how to use it, but his folly is both increased and publicly manifested by it.

b Num. 23. 8. Deut. 23. 5.

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so b the curse causeless shall not come.

By wandering from place to place; by its perpetual restlessness it secures itself from the fowler, that he cannot shoot at it, nor spread his net over it. *Shall not come*, to wit, upon the innocent person, but he shall escape from it like a bird, &c.

c Ps. 32. 9. ch. 10. 13.

3 c A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

A bridle was very proper and usual for an ass, when they rode upon it, (as the Jews most commonly did,) though not to restrain him from running away, which is the principal use of it in horses, yet that the rider might rule and guide him, which was very necessary for that stupid creature. Although the ancient interpreters render it *a goad*, or *spur*, or something of the like nature and use. *A rod for the fool's back;* which is most proper and necessary for him. Not words, but blows, must make him better.

4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

How can these contrary rules be reconciled, *answer* him *not*, and *answer* him? *Answ.* Easily, by considering the difference of persons, and times, and places, and other circumstances, and of the manner of answering. And such seemingly contradictory precepts are not only used by, but are esteemed elegant in, other authors. *Answer* him *not*, when he is incorrigible, or when he is inflamed with passion or wine, &c., or when it is not necessary, nor likely to do him good. *Answer* him, when he is capable of receiving good by it, or when it is necessary for the glory of God, or for the discharge of a man's duty, or for the good of others. *According to his folly;* so as to imitate his folly, by such passionate, or reproachful, or foolish speeches as he useth to thee. *Be like unto him;* show thyself to be as great a fool as he.

d Matt. 16. 1.—4. & 21. 24.—27. † Heb. *his own eyes.*

5 d Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in † his own conceit.

According to his folly; so as his folly needs and requires, convincing him strongly, reproving him sharply, exposing him to just shame, and correcting him with a rod, when he deserves it, and thou hast a just power to use it. *Lest he be wise in his own conceit;* lest thy silence make him arrogant and presumptuous, as if his words were unanswerable.

‖ Or, *violence.*

6 He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, *and* drinketh ‖ damage.

He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool, he that employeth a fool upon any important errand or business which is too hard for him, *cutteth off the feet*, to wit, of his messenger; he bids one go that wants legs; he sends one who wants that discretion, which is as necessary

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for that employment as legs are for going. *Drinketh damage;* he bringeth upon himself abundance of loss and mischief, not only spoiling that business about which he sends him, but making himself contemptible to the person to whom he sends him, and to others with him, as if he had not common prudence to choose a fit messenger, and giving occasion, by the folly of his messenger, to further misunderstandings, and jealousies, and inconveniences. For the phrase, we may observe that *drinking* in Scripture frequently notes the plentiful doing or receiving of any thing, as they who multiply sins are said to *drink iniquity like water*, Job xv. 16; xxxiv. 7; and they who are greatly afflicted are commonly said to *drink the cup*.

† Heb. *are lifted up.*

7 The legs of the lame †are not equal: so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

The legs of the lame are not equal, Heb. As (which note of similitude is plainly understood from the particle *so* in the following clause) *the legs of the lame are lifted up*, to wit, in going, or rather in dancing, which is done with great inequality and uncomeliness. *So is a parable in the mouth of fools;* no less absurd and indecent are wise and pious speeches from a foolish and ungodly man, whose actions grossly contradict them, whereby he makes them contemptible, and himself ridiculous.

‖ Or, *As he that putteth a precious stone in an heap of stones.*

8 ‖As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so *is* he that giveth honour to a fool.

As he that bindeth a stone in a sling; whereby he hinders his own design of throwing the stone out of it; or, who fastens it there only for a season, that he may speedily and violently throw it away. Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by many others, *As he that putteth* a precious *stone* (Heb. *a stone*, which is oft emphatically used for a precious stone, both in Scripture, as Exod. xxxix. 10; 1 Chron. xxix. 8, and elsewhere, and also in other authors) *in an heap of stones*, where it is obscured and lost. *So is he that giveth honour to a fool;* no less absurd is he that giveth to a fool that honour and praise which he is not capable either of receiving, or retaining, or using aright, but it is quite wasted upon him, and doth him more hurt than good.

9 *As* a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

As a thorn is in a drunkard's hand, which he cannot hold and manage cautiously, but employeth to his own and others' hurt, *so is a parable in the mouth of fools;* as improper and unprofitable, and, by accident, hurtful to himself and others. See on ver. 7.

‖ Or, *A great man grieveth all, and he hireth the fool, he hireth also transgressors.*

10 ‖The great *God* that formed all *things* both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

God, who is oft called *great*, as Psal. lxxxvi. 10; cxxxv. 5, &c., and is described by the name of *the Most High*, as Psal. ix. 2; xxi. 7, &c., who created all things, and therefore observeth and governeth all men and things, will certainly give that recompence which is meet for and deserved by *fools and transgressors*, i. e. by such as sin either through ignorance and heedlessness, or wilfully and wickedly. Or, as it is the margin, *A great* man (a prince or potentate, who are called by this title, Esth. i. 8; Dan. i. 3, &c.) *grieveth* (as this word is used, Isa. li. 9; liii. 5, and elsewhere) *all*, (to wit, all that are subject to him, or all that stand in his way) *he hireth* (as this word most commonly signifies) *the fools, he hireth also transgressors*. So the sense is, It is the manner of many princes to vex and oppress their subjects, which because they cannot do by themselves alone, they hire others, both *fools*, who do not know or consider what they do, and *transgressors*, who are ready to execute all their commands, right or wrong, that they may be their instruments in that work.

c 2 Pet. 2. 22. † Heb. *returneth his folly.*

11 [c]As a dog returneth to his vomit, [t]*so* a fool †returneth to his folly.

[t] *As a dog returneth to his vomit*, to lick up that which he had lately vomited, forgetting how burdensome and vexatious it was to him, *so a fool returneth to his folly;* such like is the impudence and madness of sinners, who having smarted for their sins, and been forced to forsake them for a time, do afterwards return to the commission of them.

12 [g]Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

g ch. 29. 20. Luke 18. 11. Rom. 12. 16. Rev. 3. 17.

A man wise in his own conceit; who, being a fool, thinks himself wise, and therefore scorneth the counsels of others. *There is more hope of a fool;* of doing good to one who is a fool, and sensible of his folly, and ready to receive instruction.

13 [h]The slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion in the way; a lion *is* in the streets.

h ch. 22. 13.

To excuse his idleness, and keeping himself at home. See on chap. xxii. 13.

14 *As* the door turneth upon his hinges, so *doth* the slothful upon his bed.

Turneth upon his hinges; moving hither and thither upon them, but not removing one jot from its place.

15 [i]The slothful hideth his hand in *his* bosom; ‖it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

i ch. 19. 24. ‖ Or, *he is weary.*

He will not take the least pains for the most necessary things.

16 The sluggard *is* wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

Is wiser in his own conceit, because by his idleness he avoids those troubles and dangers to which other men by their activity expose themselves, forgetting in the mean time what reproach and loss, and how much greater mischiefs, both here and hereafter, are brought upon him by his slothfulness. *That can render a reason*, to wit, a satisfactory reason, of all their actions, i. e. who are truly wise men.

17 He that passeth by, *and* ‖meddleth with strife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.

‖ Or, *is enraged.*

He that passeth by; who is going upon the way, and about his business. But this word is by some referred to the last clause, is like *one that taketh a dog by the ears as he is passing by* him, without any thought of doing him harm; which agrees very well both with the order of the words in the Hebrew text, and with the matter of the other clause, to which this similitude is referred. *Belonging not to him;* in which he is not concerned, nor any way obliged to meddle. *Is like one that taketh a dog by the ears;* exposeth himself to great and needless hazards, as a man that causelessly provoketh a mastiff dog against himself.

18 As a mad *man* who casteth †fire-brands, arrows, and death,

† Heb. *flames*, or, *sparks.*

As a madman, as one that feigneth himself mad, that under that pretence he may do mischief with impunity, *who casteth fire-brands*, to hurt his neighbour's person, or to consume his house or goods. *Death;* any instruments of death.

19 So *is* the man *that* deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, [k]Am not I in sport?

k Eph. 5. 4.

That wrongs him under a false pretence of kindness and familiarity.

20 †Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: so [l]where *there is* no ‖talebearer, the strife †ceaseth.

† Heb. *Without wood.* l Ch. 22. 10. ‖ Or, *whisperer.* † Heb. *is silent.*

Tale-bearer, to carry such reports from one to another as may provoke them to mutual rage and strife.

21 [m]*As* coals *are* to burning coals, and wood to fire; so *is* a contentious man to kindle strife.

m ch. 15. 18. & 29. 22.

Heb. *A man of contentions*, that loveth and giveth him self up to contentions.

22 [n]The words of a talebearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the †innermost parts of the belly.

n ch. 18. 8. † Heb. *chambers.*

This was delivered before, chap. xviii. 8, and is here repeated, as being a point of great concernment to the peace and welfare of all societies, and fit to be oft and earnestly pressed upon the consciences of men, because of their great and general proneness to this sin.

23 Burning lips and a wicked heart *are like* a potsherd covered with silver dross.

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Burning; either, 1. With love. Words delivered with show of true and fervent affection. Or rather, 2. With malice or hatred. A slanderous or evil tongue; for this word is constantly used in a bad sense, and notes the heat of rage and persecution. *Like a potsherd covered with silver dross;* such a tongue and heart are of no real worth, although sometimes they make a show of it, as dross doth of silver.

‖ Or, *is known.*

24 He that hateth ‖dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him;

Dissembleth, or, *carrieth himself like another man;* pretends love and kindness; which sense seems to agree best both with the next clause of this verse, and with the two following verses.

o Ps. 28. 3. Jer. 9. 8. † Heb. *maketh his voice gracious.*

25 °When he †speaketh fair, believe him not: for *there are* seven abominations in his heart.

‖ Or, *Hatred is covered in secret.*

26 ‖*Whose* hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the *whole* congregation.

Covered by deceit; with false professions of love. *Showed before the whole congregation;* instead of that secrecy and impunity, which by this art he designed and promised to himself, he shall be brought to public shame and punishment.

p Ps. 7. 15, 16. & 9. 15. & 10. 2. & 57. 6. ch. 28. 10. Eccles. 10. 8.

27 PWhoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.

Whoso diggeth a pit, that another may fall into it. It is a metaphor from hunters, who used to dig deep pits, and then to cover them slightly with earth, that wild beasts passing that way might fall into them, and sometimes in the heat of pursuit fell into them themselves. *That rolleth a stone,* to wit, up the hill, with design to do mischief to some person or thing with it.

28 A lying tongue hateth *those that are* afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

Hateth those that are afflicted by it, because by his calumnies he hath made them his enemies. *A flattering mouth;* which, though it be more smooth and plausible than a slandering mouth, yet is in truth no less pernicious, betraying others either to sin, or to danger and mischief.

CHAP. XXVII.

Counsel against self-conceitedness, 1, 2. *The evil effects of envy,* 4. *The praises of a faithful friend,* 5—10. *The different fruits of prudence and folly,* 11, 12. *Sundry rules and cautions,* 13—27.

a Luke 12. 19, 20. Jam. 4. 13, &c. † Heb. *to morrow day.*

BOAST anot thyself of †to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Of to-morrow; of any good thing which thou purposest to do or hopest to receive to-morrow, or hereafter; the time being here put metonymically for things done or had in the time, as Deut. iv. 32; Eccles. ii. 23. The same caution is given James iv. 13, &c. *What a day may bring forth;* what may happen in the space of one day, which may hinder thy designs or expectations. *The day* is said to *bring forth* what God by his almighty power and providence doth either cause or suffer to be brought forth or done in it.

b ch. 25. 27.

2 bLet another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

Except it be really necessary, either for thy own just vindication, or for the honour of God, or for the edification of others, in which cases this hath been allowed and practised by wise and virtuous men, as particularly by St. Paul, 2 Cor. xi. 12.

† Heb. *heaviness.*

3 A stone *is* †heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath *is* heavier than them both.

Heavier; more grievous and intolerable, as being without cause, without measure, and without end.

† Heb. *Wrath is cruelty, and anger an overflowing.*

4 †Wrath *is* cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; but cwho *is* able to stand before ‖envy?

c 1 John 3. 12. ‖ Or, *jealousy.* ch. 6. 34.

Envy is worse than both of them, partly, because it is more unjust and unreasonable, as not caused by any provocation, as wrath and anger are, but only proceeding from a malignity of mind, whereby a man is grieved for another man's happiness, in which he should rejoice; partly, because it is more deeply rooted and implacable, whereas the other passions are commonly allayed; and partly, because it is more secret and undiscernible, and therefore the mischievous effects of it are hardly avoidable; whereas wrath and anger discover themselves, and so forewarn and forearm a man against the danger.

d ch. 28. 23. Gal. 2. 14.

5 dOpen rebuke *is* better than secret love.

Open rebuke, Heb. *which is manifested* or *discovered,* either, 1. Publicly and before others, when it is needful; in which case, though it put a man to some shame, yet it doth him good. Or, 2. Privately, and to the offender's face, a plain and downright reproof. *Better;* more desirable and beneficial. *Secret love;* which lies hid in the heart, and doth not show itself by friendly actions, and particularly by free and faithful reproof, which is a principal end and benefit of friendship.

e Ps. 141. 5. ‖ Or, *earnest,* or, *frequent.*

6 eFaithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* ‖deceitful.

Faithful are the wounds; they proceed from an upright, and truly loving, and faithful soul, and really promote the good of the person reproved. *The wounds;* the sharpest reproofs, which for the present wound his spirit and reputation. *The kisses;* all the fair speeches and outward professions of friendship. *Are deceitful;* or, *are to be deprecated;* are perfidious and pernicious, and such things as one may pray to God to be delivered from them. Or, are *forced,* like things which are procured with great difficulty, and many entreaties.

† Heb. *treadeth under foot.* f Job 6. 7.

7 The full soul †loatheth an honeycomb; but fto the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

The full soul, a man whose appetite or desire (which is oft expressed in Scripture by the name of *soul*) is fully satisfied, *loatheth an honey-comb,* the most delicious meats. The design of this proverb is to show the inconvenience that ofttimes attends upon plenty, and the advantage of poverty, that the rich might learn moderation, and the poor content.

8 As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so *is* a man that wandereth from his place.

That wandereth from her nest; that flies very much abroad from place to place, whereby she is exposed to all the arts of fowlers, and to birds of prey, from which she is safe whilst she keeps her nest. *That wandereth from his place;* that through vanity or lightness changeth the place of his abode, or his calling and course of life, the ill effects whereof have been frequently observed and noted, even in vulgar proverbs, as when we say, *A rolling stone gathers no moss.*

† Heb. *from the counsel of the soul.*

9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so *doth* the sweetness of a man's friend †by hearty counsel.

Rejoice the heart, by increasing and comforting the spirits. No less grateful and pleasant is the company and conversation of a true friend, in respect of his good and faithful counsel, which comes from his very heart and soul, and contains his most inward and serious thoughts, whereas deceitful persons give such counsels, not as they think to be best, but as most serve their lusts or designs.

g ch. 17. 17. & 18. 24. See ch. 19. 7.

10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: *for* gbetter *is* a neighbour *that is* near than a brother far off.

Thy father's friend, of whose friendship thou hast had long experience. *Neither go into thy brother's house,* to

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wit, for comfort and relief, and so as to forsake or neglect thy friend for him. *Better is a neighbour;* the friend mentioned in the beginning of the verse, who hath showed himself to be a true and a good neighbour. *That is near;* either, 1. In place by cohabitation. Or rather, 2. In affection, in which respect God is oft said to be *near* to the righteous, and *far* from the wicked.

h ch. 10. 1. & 23. 15, 24. i Ps. 127. 5.

11 [h] My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, [i] that I may answer him that reproacheth me.

For being the father of a wicked son, as if I had either deserved him as a curse from God, or made him so by my example, or by the neglect of his education. See Ezek. xvi. 44; 1 Tim. iii. 4.

k ch. 22. 3.

12 [k] A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, *and* hideth himself; *but* the simple pass on, *and* are punished.

This was delivered chap. xxii. 3, and is here repeated to enforce the foregoing exhortation, by representing the great advantage of wisdom.

l See Ex. 22. 26. ch. 20. 16.

13 [l] Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

Possibly this is here repeated as a part of the father's counsel to his son, begun ver. 11, to avoid rash suretiship, to which young men are most prone, and by which they are exposed in the beginning of their days to many sins and miseries, which they carry with them to their graves.

14 He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.

He that blesseth his friend, that saluteth, or praiseth, and applaudeth him to his face, as the manner of flatterers is, *with a loud voice,* that both he and others may be sure to take notice of it; *rising early in the morning* to perform this office, to show his great forwardness, and diligence, and zeal in his service, which was the custom of the Romans afterward, and possibly of some of the Jews at this time; *it shall be counted a curse to him* his friend will value this kind of blessing no more than a curse, because it plainly discovers a base design, and is a high reflection upon him, as if he either did not understand such gross and palpable flattery, or were so ridiculously vain-glorious as to be pleased with it.

m ch. 19. 13.

15 [m] A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.

Are equally troublesome, the first not suffering a man to go abroad with comfort, the latter not permitting him to stay at home with quietness.

16 Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, *which* bewrayeth *itself.*

Whosoever hideth her, i. e. attempts to smother or bridle her passion, that it may not break forth to her shame, and to his own discomfort and reproach, *hideth the wind;* undertakes that which is impossible. *The ointment of his right hand;* which being the great instrument of action, by its much stirring diffuseth the savour of it.

17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Iron cutting tools are made bright, and sharp, and fit for use by rubbing them against the file, or some other iron. So a man, who being alone is sad, and dull, and unactive, by the company and conversation of his friend is greatly refreshed, his very wits are sharpened, and his spirit revived, and he is both fitted for and provoked to action. *The countenance* is here put for the mind or spirit, whose temper or disposition is commonly visible in men's countenances.

n 1 Cor. 9. 7, 13.

18 [n] Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.

He mentions the fig tree, because they abounded in Canaan, and were more valued and regarded than other trees. *He that waiteth on his master,* that serves him faithfully, prudently, and diligently, *shall be honoured;* shall receive that respect and recompence which he deserves.

19 As in water face *answereth* to face, so the heart of man to man.

The sense is either, 1. As the image of a man's face in the water answers to his natural face who looks into it; or, as in water one man's face is like another's, the difference of men's faces being not there visible: so one man resembles another, either in the temper of his mind or body, in which many men are alike one to another; or in the corruption of his nature, in which all are alike. Or, 2. As a man may see his own face if he look into the water, which is nature's looking-glass, or into any other looking-glass; so a man may discern his own heart, if he look into those glasses whereby it discovers itself; if he examine his thoughts and inclinations, together with the general course of his actions. Or, 3. As the face of a man standing by the waters is visible not only to himself, but to others, by the shadow or image of it in the waters; so the heart of a man is in some measure discernible, not only to himself, but to others also, who observe his disposition and carriage.

o ch. 30. 16. Hab. 2. 5. † Heb. *not.* p Eccles. 1. 8. & 6. 7.

20 [o] Hell and destruction are † never full; so [p] the eyes of man are never satisfied.

Hell and destruction are never full; the grave devours all the bodies which are put into it, and is always ready to receive and devour more and more without end. *The eyes,* i. e. the desires, which work and discover themselves by the eyes, 1 John ii. 16, and other senses; for otherwise *the eyes* in themselves are neither capable of satisfaction nor of dissatisfaction.

q ch. 17. 3

21 [q] *As* the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so *is* a man to his praise.

As the fining pot for silver; is appointed and used for the trial of silver, and the detection and separation of the dross from it. *So is a man to his praise;* or, *according to his praise.* The sense is, So a man is known by his praises; either, 1. By the quality of those who praise and applaud him; and as they are good or bad, so is he thought to be. Or, 2. By his carriage under praises; as he carries himself either humbly and modestly with thankfulness to God, and a due sense of his own infirmities, which is the case and temper of a good man; or ambitiously and vain-gloriously, taking to himself the honour which he should give to God, as ungodly men generally do in that case.

r Is. 1. 5. Jer. 5. 3. ch. 23. 35.

22 [r] Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, *yet* will not his foolishness depart from him.

Not a natural, but a moral and wilful fool, who by long continuance in sin is hardened and stupified, and so incorrigible under all the means of amendment.

† Heb. *set thy heart.*

23 Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, *and* † look well to thy herds.

To know the state of thy flocks; that thou mayst preserve and improve what thou hast, and take care that thine expenses may not exceed thine incomes. *Flocks* and *herds* are here put for all riches and possessions, because anciently they were the chief part of a man's riches. *Look well,* Heb. *set thine heart.* Trust not wholly to thy servants, as many do, that they may give up themselves wholly to ease and pleasure; but make use of thine own eyes and reason for the conduct of thine affairs, lest thou come to ruin, as many have done by this very means.

† Heb. *strength.* † Heb. *to generation and generation.*

24 For † riches *are* not for ever: and doth the crown *endure* † to every generation?

Riches; or, *treasure.* The sense is, What thou dost now possess, or hast laid up, will not last always, but will soon be spent, if thou dost not take care to preserve and improve it. *The crown;* by which he understands a condition of the greatest honour and plenty. If a man had the wealth of a kingdom, without provident care and due diligence it would quickly be brought to nothing. Hence the greatest kings have minded husbandry, as Solomon, Uzziah, and others.

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[a] Ps. 104. 14.

25 [a]The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

The hay appeareth, and the tender grass showeth itself, in their proper seasons. These things may be here mentioned, either, 1. As the matter of his diligence. Take care that thy hay and grass may be well managed, and seasonably gathered, for the use of thy cattle. Or rather, 2. As another argument and encouragement to diligence, because God invites thee to it by the plentiful provisions wherewith he hath enriched the earth for thy sake. Thou needest not compass sea and land for them, for God puts them into thy hand, if thou wilt but receive them. *Herbs of the mountains*, even the most barren parts afford thee their help, *are gathered*; or, *are to be gathered*, as such passive verbs are oft used; they are ripe and ready for the gathering. So this clause suits best with the former.

26 The lambs *are* for thy clothing, and the goats *are* the price of the field.

The lambs are for thy clothing; by their wool and skins, either used to clothe thyself with, or sold to purchase all manner of clothing for thyself and family. *The goats are the price of the field*; by the sale whereof thou mayst either pay the rent of the field which thou hirest, or purchase fields or lands for thyself. Either *goats* are put for all cattle, or he mentions *goats*, because these might better be spared and sold than sheep, which brought a more certain and constant profit to the owner.

27 And *thou shalt have* goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy
† Heb. *life.* houshold, and *for* the † maintenance for thy maidens.

Goats' milk enough for thy food; or, if thou choosest rather to keep than to sell thy goats, the milk of them will serve thee for food to thyself, and to thy family. In ancient times men used a plain and simple diet, and neither knew nor used that curiosity and luxury in it which after-ages invented. *For thy maidens*; who are named, because this nourishment was more proper for the weaker sex, whereas men required a stronger diet.

CHAP. XXVIII.

The character of the righteous and of the wicked, with the blessed fruits of integrity, and evil effects of sin, 1—12. *The evil of concealing and blessedness of confessing sin*, 13. *The evil of oppression and violence, the benefit of industry and faithfulness, with sundry other observations*, 15—28.

[a] Lev. 26. 17, 36. Ps. 53. 5.

THE [a]wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

The wicked flee when no man pursueth, because the conscience of their own guilt puts them into a continual expectation and dread of God's judgments. *The righteous are bold*; are courageous and resolute, having the witness of a good conscience, and the assurance of Divine favour and protection, and the supports and consolations of the Holy Ghost.

‖ Or, *by men of understanding and wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged.*

2 For the transgression of a land many *are* the princes thereof: but ‖by a man of understanding *and* knowledge the state *thereof* shall be prolonged.

Many are the princes thereof; either, 1. Together, contending for supremacy. Or rather, 2. Successively, as appears from the following clause. Their princes are soon cut off, and other persons, and ofttimes persons of other families, come in their stead, which is justly threatened as a curse, because such frequent changes are seldom for the better, and commonly for the worse, and are frequently attended with blood and slaughter, with the change and subversion of laws, with heavy taxes and charges, with the ruin of many families, and with many other mischiefs. *By a man of understanding and knowledge*; by a wise and good man; which may be understood either, 1. Collectively, for *men of understanding*, &c., as it is rendered in the margin. i. e. when the men or people of a land are wise and good. Or rather, 2. Singularly; and that either, 1. Of a wise and righteous prince, who by the good government of himself, and his family, and kingdom, by punishing and preventing the transgressions of the people, turns away God's wrath, and saves himself and people. Or, 2. Of any other man of eminent wisdom or piety, who prevents this judgment, either by his good counsels given to the prince and people, and entertained by them, or by his intercession to God; for God hath sometimes spared a people for the sake of one man, as he did Zoar for Lot, Gen. xix. 20, 21, and the Israelites for Moses, Psal. cvi. 23. *The state thereof shall be prolonged*; the land shall enjoy its former state and tranquillity, and the life of their good prince shall be prolonged.

3 [b]A poor man that oppresseth the poor *is like* a sweeping rain †which leaveth no food.

[b] Matt. 18. 28. † Heb. *without food.*

When a poor man, being advanced into a place of authority, abuseth it to oppress those that are poor and unable to resist him, he is like a violent rain or flood, which washeth away the very seeds which are in the earth, and spoileth the corn and fruits which are upon it. He is the worst of all oppressors, because as he is of a base mind, which also is made much worse by a sudden change and elevation into a high condition; so his own necessities inflame his desires, and make him greedy to take all, yea, even the small, advantages of enriching himself; which the ancients expressed by the similitude of an empty horseleech, which sucketh much more strongly than that which is already filled; and of a dry sponge, which licks up far more water than that which was wet before.

4 [c]They that forsake the law praise the wicked: [d]but such as keep the law contend with them.

[c] Ps. 10. 3. & 49. 18. Rom. 1. 32. [d] 1 Kings 18. 18, 21. Matt. 3. 7. & 14. 4. Eph. 5. 11.

They that forsake the law, that live in the contempt of and disobedience to God's law, *praise the wicked*; honour their persons, contrary to Psal. xv. 4; freely and familiarly associate themselves with them, and approve of their sinful courses; all which proceeds from their great likeness to them. *Contend with them*; are so far from praising or applauding them, that they severely rebuke them, and to the utmost of their power oppose them in their wicked enterprises.

5 [e]Evil men understand not judgment: but [f]they that seek the LORD understand all *things*.

[e] Ps. 92. 6. [f] John 7. 17. 1 Cor. 2. 15. 1 John 2. 20, 27.

Understand not, because their minds are naturally blind, and are further blinded by their own prejudices and passions, and by the god of this world, who rules in and over them. *Judgment*, i. e. what is just and right; what is their duty in all cases and conditions, as *judgment* is frequently understood. *That seek the Lord*, by diligent study of his word, and by fervent prayers to him for advice. *All things* which are necessary to be known by them, either for the discharge of all their present duties to God and men, or for their everlasting happiness.

6 [g]Better *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is* perverse *in his* ways, though he *be* rich.

[g] ch. 19. 1. ver. 18.

Better; in a much safer and happier condition. *In his ways*, Heb. in *two ways*; halting between two ways, pretending to virtue, but practising vice; or covering his wicked designs with good pretences; or sometimes erring on one hand, and sometimes on the other, as wicked men commonly do.

7 [h]Whoso keepeth the law *is* a wise son: but he that ‖is a companion of riotous *men* shameth his father.

[h] ch. 29. 3. ‖ Or, *feedeth gluttons.*

Is a wise son; and consequently a credit and comfort to his father, as hath been oft noted before. *Is a companion of riotous men*; which is both a manifest violation of God's law, which forbids this society, and is the ready way to a total and final apostacy from God, and from his law *Shameth his father*, because he is a foolish son.

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8 [t]He that by usury and †unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

[t] Job 27. 16, 17. ch. 13. 22. Eccles. 2. 26. † Heb. *by increase.*

By usury and unjust gain, Heb. *by usury and* (or, *or*) *increase*, i. e. by any kind of usury, whereby the poor are oppressed, as is implied from the opposite clause; or by any unrighteous practices. See more of these words and of this thing on Exod. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 35, 36; Psal. xv. 5; Ezek. xviii. 8. *Shall gather it for him that will pity the poor;* it shall not long continue with him or his, but shall by God's righteous and powerful providence be disposed into more just and merciful hands.

9 [k]He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, [l]even his prayer *shall be* abomination.

[k] Zech. 7. 11. [l] Ps. 66. 18. & 109. 7. ch. 15. 8.

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, that obstinately refuseth to yield audience or obedience to God's commands, *even his prayer shall be abomination* to God, whose law he despised. God will abhor and reject his person, and all his services.

10 [m]Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: [n]but the upright shall have good *things* in possession.

[m] ch. 26. 27. [n] Matt. 6. 33.

Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way; that by evil counsel, or example, or artifice draws them into such practices as expose them to great danger and mischief. *The upright shall have good things in possession;* shall by God's good providence towards him, both keep the good of which the wicked seeks to deprive him, and escape that mischief which he plotteth against him.

11 The rich man *is* wise †in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.

† Heb. *in his eyes.*

Is wise in his own conceit; thinks himself to be wise when he is not, being puffed up with the opinion of his riches, which also he imputes to his own wisdom, and with the admirations and applauses of flatterers, which commonly attend upon them. *Searcheth him out;* knoweth him better than he knoweth himself; and, looking through all his pomp and vain show, he sees him to be what indeed he is, a foolish and miserable man, notwithstanding all his riches, and discovers the folly of his words and actions.

12 [o]When righteous *men* do rejoice, *there is* great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is ‖hidden.

[o] ver. 28. ch. 11. 10. & 29. 2. Eccles. 10. 6. ‖ Or, *sought for.*

When righteous men do rejoice, are encouraged and promoted to places of trust and power, *there is great glory* in that commonwealth. The state of that kingdom is honourable, and comfortable, and safe, so as good men can show their faces with courage and confidence. *When the wicked rise*, are advanced to honour and authority, *a man is hidden;* the state of that nation is so shameful and dangerous, that wise and good men, who only are worthy of the name of *men*, withdraw themselves, or run into corners and obscure places; partly out of grief and shame to behold the wickedness which is publicly and impudently committed; and partly to avoid the rage and injuries of wicked oppressors, and the judgments of God, which commonly follow such persons and their confederates in sin. Or, as others, both ancient and later interpreters, render it, *a man is sought out.* Sober and good men, who had retired themselves, are searched for, and brought forth like sheep to the slaughter, as being most suspected, and hated, and feared by bloody tyrants.

13 [p]He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

[p] Ps. 32. 3, 5. 1 John 1. 8, 9, 10.

That covereth his sins; that doth not confess them (as appears by the opposite clause) to God, and to men too, when occasion requires it; that being convinced or admonished of his sins, either justifieth, or denieth, or excuseth them. *Shall not prosper;* shall not succeed in his design of avoiding punishment by the concealment of his sins; shall not find mercy, as is implied from the next clause. *Whoso confesseth and forsaketh them*, by hearty dislike and hatred of all his sins, and by a resolved cessation from a sinful course of life. This is added, to show, that although the dissembling or hiding one's sins is sufficient for his damnation, yet mere confession without forsaking of sin is not sufficient for salvation. *Shall have mercy*, both from God, who hath promised, and from men, who are ready to grant pardon and favour to such persons.

14 Happy *is* the man [q]that feareth alway: [r]but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

[q] Ps. 16. 8. ch. 23. 17. [r] Rom. 2. 5. & 11. 20.

Happy is the man, because he shall thereby avoid that mischief which befalls fearless sinners, which is expressed in the next clause, and procure that eternal salvation which they lose. *That feareth*, to wit, the offence and judgments of God; who having confessed and forsaken his sins, as was now said, is afraid to return to them again, and careful to avoid them, and all occasions of them. *Alway;* in all times, companies, and conditions; not only in the time of great trouble, when even hypocrites will in some sort be afraid of sinning, but in times of outward peace and prosperity. *That hardeneth his heart;* that goeth on obstinately and securely in sinful courses, casting off due reverence to God, and just fear of his threatenings and judgments.

15 [s]*As* a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; [t]*so is* a wicked ruler over the poor people.

[s] 1 Pet. 5. 8. [t] Ex. 1. 14, 16, 22. Matt. 2. 16.

The lion and *bear* are always cruel and greedy in their natures, and especially when they are hungry and want prey, in which case the lions roar, Psal. civ. 21; Isa. xxxi. 4, and bears range about for it. *So is a wicked ruler;* instead of being a nursing father, and a faithful and tender shepherd, as he ought to be, he is a cruel and insatiable oppressor and devourer of them. *Over the poor people;* whom he particularly mentions, either to note his policy in oppressing them only who were unable to withstand him, or to revenge themselves of him; or to aggravate his sin in devouring them, whom the laws of God and common humanity bound him to relieve and protect; or to express the effect of his ill government, in making his people poor by his frauds and rapines.

16 The prince that wanteth understanding *is* also a great oppressor: *but* he that hateth covetousness shall prolong *his* days.

The tyranny or oppression of a prince, though by some accounted wisdom, is in truth a manifest act and sign of great folly, because it alienateth from him the hearts of his people, in which his honour, and safety, and riches consist, and oftimes causeth the shortening of his days, either from God, who cuts him off by some sudden judgment, or from men, who are injured by him, and exasperated against him. *Covetousness* is the chief cause of all oppressions and unjust practices. *Shall prolong his days*, by God's favour, the peace and satisfaction of his own mind, and the hearty love of his people, which makes them careful to preserve his life by their fervent prayers to God for him, by willingly hazarding their own estates and lives for him, when occasion requires it, and by all other possible means.

17 [u]A man that doeth violence to the blood of *any* person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.

[u] Gen. 9. 6. Ex. 21. 14.

A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person, that sheddeth any man's blood, or taketh away his life unjustly, *shall flee to the pit;* shall speedily be destroyed, being pursued by Divine vengeance, and the horrors of a guilty conscience, and the avengers of blood. *Let no man stay him:* so it is a prohibition that no man should endeavour to save the life of a wilful murderer, either by intercession, or by offering satisfaction, or any other way; of which see Gen. ix. 6; Exod. xxi. 14; Numb. xxxv. 31. Or, as the ancient and many other interpreters render it, *no man shall stay him;* none shall desire or endeavour to save him from his deserved punishment; he shall die without pity, being an object of public hatred.

18 [x]Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but [y]*he that is* perverse *in his* ways shall fall at once.

[x] ch. 10. 9, 25. [y] ver. 6.

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Shall be saved, to wit, from destruction, because God hath undertaken and promised to protect him. *In his ways*, Heb. in *two ways*, of which phrase see above on ver. 6. *Shall fall at once;* once for all, so as he shall not need a second thrust, 1 Sam. xxvi. 8, and so as he shall never rise more. Or, *in one*, to wit, of his ways. Though he hath various ways and arts to secure himself, yet none of them shall save him, but he shall perish in one or other of them, and shall be given up by God to the mistake of his way, that he shall choose that course which will be most pernicious to him.

a ch. 12. 11.

19 [a]He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain *persons* shall have poverty enough.

That followeth after vain persons; choosing their company, and imitating their example; who gives up himself to vanity and idleness, and so is fitly opposed to the diligent man in the former clause.

a ch. 13. 11. & 20. 21. & 23. 4. ver. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9. ‖ Or, *unpunished.*

20 A faithful man shall abound with blessings: [a]but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be ‖innocent.

A faithful man, Heb. *a man of truth*, or *truths*, who deals truly and justly in all his bargains and transactions with men. *That maketh haste;* more than God alloweth him; that taketh the nearest and readiest way to riches, whether it be right or wrong; that is unfaithful and unjust in his dealings. *Shall not be innocent;* shall not obtain the blessings which he seeks, but shall bring curses and miseries upon him instead of them.

b ch. 18. 5. & 24. 23. c Ezek. 13. 19.

21 [b]To have respect of persons *is* not good: for [c]for a piece of bread *that* man will transgress.

When a man hath once vitiated his conscience, and accustomed himself to take bribes, a very small advantage will make him sell justice, and his own soul into the bargain. The design of the proverb is to warn men to take heed of the beginnings of that sin, and consequently of other sins.

‖ Or, *He that hath an evil eye hasteth to be rich.* d ver. 20.

22 ‖[d]He that hasteth to be rich *hath* an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

Hath an evil eye; is uncharitable to persons in want, envious towards those who get any thing besides him, and covetous or greedy of getting riches by all ways possible, whether just or unjust. Thus *an evil eye* is taken, Prov. xxiii. 6; Matt. xx. 15, as a *good eye* notes the contrary disposition, Prov. xxii. 9. *That poverty shall come upon him;* and consequently that he shall need the pity and help of others, which he cannot expect either from God or men, who hath so hardened himself against others in misery.

e ch. 27. 5,6.

23 [e]He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.

Afterwards; when he comes calmly to consider the fidelity of the reprover, and the benefit coming to himself by the reproof, and withal the baseness and mischief of flattery.

f ch. 18. 9. † Heb. *a man destroying.*

24 Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, *It is* no transgression; the same [f]*is* the companion of †a destroyer.

Saith in his heart, supposing that he hath a right to his father's goods. *Is the companion of a destroyer;* either, 1. He hereby showeth that he is fallen into such wicked society, from whom he hath such counsel or example. Or, 2. He is no less guilty than a thief who robs and destroys men upon the highway; he is a thief and robber, because he hath no right to the actual possession of his father's goods before his death, or without his consent.

g ch. 13. 10. h 1 Tim. 6. 6.

25 [g]He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: [h]but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.

He that is of a proud heart, whose property it is to overvalue himself, and to trust to himself and his own wit, or wealth, or strength, *stirreth up strife*, because he makes it his great business to advance and please himself, and hateth and opposeth all that stand in his way, and despiseth other men, and is very jealous of his honour, and impatient of the least slighting, or affront, or injury, and indulgeth his own passions; and therefore shall not be fat, but lean and miserable, as is implied from the opposite clause. *That putteth his trust in the Lord;* which is mentioned as a plain and certain evidence of a humble man, who is mean and vile in his own eyes, and therefore trusts not to himself, but to God only, making God's will, and not his own will, and passion, and interest, the rule of all his actions, and can easily deny himself, and yield to others, all which are excellent preventives of strife. *Shall be made fat;* shall live happily and comfortably, because he avoids that strife which make men's lives miserable.

26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

He that trusteth in his own heart; who trusts to his own wit, neglecting or slighting the advice of others, and the counsel of God himself. *Is a fool;* and shall receive the fruit of his folly, to wit, destruction. *Whoso walketh wisely*, distrusting his own judgment, and seeking the advice of others, and especially of God, as all truly wise men do, *he shall be delivered* from those dangers and mischiefs which fools bring upon themselves; whereby he showeth himself to be a wise man.

i Deut. 15. 7, &c. ch. 19. 17. & 22. 9

27 [i]He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

Shall not lack; shall not impoverish himself by it, as covetous men imagine or pretend; but shall be enriched, which is implied. *That hideth his eyes*, lest he should see poor and miserable men, and thereby be moved to pity or obliged to relieve them. So he cunningly avoids the beginnings, and occasions, and provocations to charity, teaching us to use the same caution against sin. *Shall have many a curse;* partly from the poor, whose curses, being not causeless, shall come upon him, and partly from God, who will curse his very blessings, and bring him to extreme want and misery.

k ver. 12. ch. 29. 2. l Job 24. 4.

28 [k]When the wicked rise, [l]men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.

Men hide themselves; men, i. e. righteous men, as appears from the following clause, are ashamed and afraid to appear publicly; of which see on ver. 12. *The righteous increase;* they who were righteous do now again appear in public, and being advanced to that power which the wicked rulers have lost, they use their authority to encourage and promote righteousness, and to punish unrighteousness, whereby the number of wicked men is diminished, and the righteous are multiplied.

CHAP. XXIX.

The excellency of wisdom, with rules for government, 1—14. *The parents' duty to correct their children,* 15—17. *The misery of them that know not God's law,* 18. *Of anger, pride, thieving, cowardice, and corruption,* 19—26. *The godly and wicked an abomination to each other,* 27.

† Heb. *A man of reproofs.* a 1 Sam. 2. 25. 2 Chron. 36. 16. ch. 1. 24,—27.

†[a]HE, that being often reproved hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Hardeneth his neck; is incorrigible, and obstinately persists in those sins for which he is reproved. *Without remedy*, utterly and irrecoverably.

b Esth. 8. 15. ch. 11. 10. & 28. 12. 28. ‖ Or, *increased.* c Esth. 3. 15.

2 [b]When the righteous are ‖in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, [c]the people mourn.

In authority; which interpretation is confirmed from the opposite clause. The Hebrew word signifies to increase either in number, or in dignity and power. *The people rejoice*, for the blessed effects of their good government. *The people mourn*, both for the oppressions and mischiefs which they feel, and for the dreadful judgments of God which they justly fear.

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d ch. 10. 1. & 15. 20. & 27. 11. e ch. 5. 9, 10. & 6. 26. & 28. 7. Luke 15. 13, 30.

3 [d]Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: [e]but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth *his* substance.

Loveth wisdom; and therefore hateth and escheweth all folly and wickedness. *Keepeth company with harlots;* whereby he plainly discovers himself to want wisdom; of which see Prov. vii. 7, &c. *Spendeth his substance;* whereby he not only ruineth himself, but also grieveth his father, as is implied from the opposite clause.

4 The king by judgment establisheth the land: but †he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

† Heb *a man of oblations.*

By judgment; by the free and impartial exercise of justice. *He that receiveth gifts*, Heb. *a man* (for he would not vouchsafe to call him a king, as being unworthy of that name and office) *of oblations* or *gifts*, i. e. whose delight and common practice it is to take bribes, and sell justice.

5 A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.

A man that flattereth his neighbour, that praiseth or applaudeth another in a sinful state or course, *spreadeth a net for his feet;* kills him under a pretence of kindness; is an occasion of his sin, and consequently of destruction, which possibly he may design to accomplish by that means.

6 In the transgression of an evil man *there is* a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.

There is a snare; his sin will bring him to dreadful horrors and certain ruin. *Doth sing and rejoice*, because he hath sweet peace in his own conscience, and assurance of present safety and eternal happiness.

f Job 29. 16. & 31. 13. Ps. 41. 1.

7 [f]The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: *but* the wicked regardeth not to know *it.*

The righteous, whether magistrate, or any private person concerned to know it, and capable of helping him in it, *considereth the cause of the poor;* his poverty neither hinders him from taking pains to examine it, nor from a righteous determination of it. *Regardeth not to know it;* will not put himself to the trouble of searching it out, either because it yields him no profit, or because he resolves to give away his right.

g ch. 11. 11. ‖ Or, *set a city on fire.* h Ezek. 22. 30.

8 [g]Scornful men ‖ bring a city into a snare: but wise *men* [h]turn away wrath.

Bring a city into a snare; expose it to God's wrath and to destruction by their self-conceit and wilfulness, by their wicked counsels and courses, whereby they seduce and infect the generality of the people, by their contempt of God, of his just laws and righteous judgments, and of the opinions and advices of wise men. *Wise men*, who do not scorn, but hearken to the counsels of God and of prudent men, *turn away wrath;* the wrath of God or of men, who were enraged against it.

9 *If* a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, [i]whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no rest.

i Matt. 11. 17.

If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man; either judicially or otherwise debating any matter with him, endeavouring to convince him of any error; *whether he*, the wise man, *rageth* (or *is angry*) *or laugheth*, i. e. whether he deal sharply and severely with him, rebuking him for his folly, or mildly and pleasantly smiling at it, *there is no rest*, no end or fruit of the debate, the fool will not be satisfied nor convinced. Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *he* (to wit, the fool last named, to whom the following carriages may seem more fitly to agree) *both rageth and laugheth*, (he will not yield nor be convinced, but persists in his folly, which he discovers sometimes by his furious and unbridled passions, and sometimes by foolish laughter and scorning,) *and* there is *no rest;* he will never be quieted.

† Heb. *Men of blood.* k Gen. 4. 8. 1 John 3. 12.

10 †[k]The bloodthirsty hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.

Hate the upright, and consequently seek their ruin, as is implied from the following clause. *Seek his soul;* either, 1. To require his soul or life at the hands of those who have taken it away. Or, 2. To preserve it from those who attempt to take it away, as this phrase is taken, Psal. cxlii. 4, though commonly it signify to seek to destroy it.

11 A [l]fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise *man* keepeth it in till afterwards.

l Judg. 16. 17. ch. 12. 16. & 14. 33.

All his mind; all at once, unnecessarily and unseasonably, without reservation or caution. *Till afterwards;* till he have fit occasion to express it.

12 If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants *are* wicked.

If a ruler hearken to lies, delight in flatteries or calumnies, or any lying words or deceitful and wicked practices, *all his servants are wicked;* partly because he chooseth only such for his service; and partly because they are either corrupted by his example, or engaged by their place and interest to please him, and comply with his base lusts.

13 The poor and ‖ the deceitful man [m]meet together: [n]the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.

‖ Or, *the usurer.* m ch. 22. 2. n Matt. 5. 45.

The deceitful man, Heb. *the man of deceits*, or *of usuries*, i. e. who hath enriched himself by such practices, *meet together;* converse together, and one needeth the other, as chap. xxii. 2. *The Lord lighteneth both their eyes;* either their bodily eyes with the light of the sun, which promiscuously shines upon both; or the eyes of their minds with the light of reason and grace, which he indifferently gives to them; and therefore the one should not envy nor despise the other, but be ready to do good one to another, as God doth good to both.

14 [o]The king that [p]faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

o ch. 20. 28. & 25. 5. p Ps. 72. 2, 4, 13, 14.

Judgeth the poor, and the rich too; but he names *the poor*, because these are most oppressed and injured by others, and least regarded by princes, and yet committed to their more special care by the King of kings.

15 [q]The rod and reproof give wisdom: but [r]a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame.

q ver. 17. r ch. 10. 1. & 17. 21, 25.

The rod and reproof; correction and instruction going together. *Left to himself;* suffered to follow his own will or lusts without restraint and chastening. *His mother*, and father too; but he names only *the mother*, either because her indulgence oft spoils the child, or because children commonly stand in least awe of their mothers, and abuse the weakness of their sex, and tenderness of their natures.

16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: [s]but the righteous shall see their fall.

s Ps. 37. 36. & 58. 10. & 91. 8. & 92. 11.

Are multiplied; or rather, *are advanced*, because this is opposed to their *falling* in the next clause; and so this Hebrew word is taken above, ver. 2. *Transgression increaseth;* sin and sinners abound and grow impudent by impunity, and the example and encouragement of such rulers. *Their fall;* the destruction of such transgressors in due time.

17 [t]Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

t ch. 13. 24. & 19. 18. & 22. 15. & 23. 13, 14. ver. 15.

Rest; satisfaction to thy mind, and comfort in his amendment.

18 [u]Where *there is* no vision, the people ‖ perish: but [x]he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.

u 1 Sam. 3. 1. Amos 8. 11, 12. ‖ Or, *is made naked.* x John 13. 17. Jam. 1. 25.

No vision, i. e. no prophecy, for *the prophets* were anciently *called seers*, 1 Sam. ix. 9, i. e. no public preaching of God's law or word, (as appears by the opposite clause,) which is called *prophecy*, Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. 1, &c., where the people are destitute of the means of instruction. *The people perish*, because they want the only means of salvation. Or, *is made naked;* stripped of their best ornaments, God's favour and protection, as this word is taken, Exod. xxxii. 25. *He that keepeth the law:* this he saith rather than *he that hath vision*, which the laws of opposition might seem to require, to teach us that, although the want of God's word be sufficient for men's destruction, yet the

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having, and hearing, or reading of it is not sufficient for their salvation, except they also keep or obey it.

19 A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.

A servant, who is so not only in condition, but also in the temper of his mind, disingenuous, perverse, and stubborn, *will not be corrected by words;* by mere words without blows. Compare Prov. xix. 29. *Though he understand*, though he know thy mind and words, and his own duty, *he will not answer;* either by words, expressing his readiness; or by deeds, speedily and cheerfully performing thy commands; but will neglect his duty, pretending that he did not hear or understand thee.

‖ Or, *in his matters.*
y ch. 26. 12.

20 Seest thou a man *that is* hasty ‖ in his words? [y] *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

In his words; or rather, *in his business*, who is rash and heady in the management of his affairs. *There is more hope of a fool*, who is sensible of his folly, and willing to hearken to the advice of others, as this word is used, chap. xxvi. 12, though commonly it be meant of a wilful and wicked fool; *than of him*, because he is self-confident, and neither considers things seriously within himself, nor seeks counsel from the wise.

21 He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become *his* son at the length.

He that delicately bringeth up his servant, allowing him too much freedom, and familiarity, and delicious fare, *shall have him become his son;* will find him at last grow insolent and presumptuous, and forgetful of his servile condition.

z ch. 15. 18. & 26. 21.

22 [z] An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

Is by his passion easily transported into grievous and manifold sins against God, and others, and himself, as swearing, and cursing, and violence, yea, sometimes even to murder.

a Job 22. 29. ch. 15. 33. & 18. 12. Is. 66. 2. Dan. 4. 30, 31, &c. Matt. 23. 12. Luke 14. 11. & 18. 14. Acts 12. 23. Jam. 4. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

23 [a] A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

Shall bring him low, because both God and man conspire against him, and abhor him. *Honour shall uphold the humble in spirit;* or, as others render it, without any difference in the sense, *the humble in spirit shall hold* their *honour*, shall be honoured by God and men. Thus honour, like a shadow, flees from them that pursue it, and follows them who flee from it.

b Lev. 5. 1.

24 Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: [b] he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth *it* not.

Whoso is partner with a thief, by receiving a share of the stolen goods upon condition of his concealment of the theft, *hateth his own soul;* he carrieth himself towards it as if he hated it; he woundeth and destroyeth it. *He heareth cursing;* he *heareth the voice of swearing*, as is said, Lev. v. 1; the oath given to him by a judge adjuring him and other suspected persons to give information concerning it; *and bewrayeth it not;* which he is bound to do, both by virtue of his oath, and for the public good, which ought to be preferred before all private contracts or friendships.

c Gen. 12. 12. & 20. 2, 11.
+ Heb. *shall be set on high.*

25 [c] The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD †shall be safe.

The fear of man, inordinate fear of harm or mischief from men, which is fitly opposed to trust in God, because it comes from a distrust of God's promise and providence, *bringeth a snare;* is an occasion of many sins, and of great danger, both of injuries from men, and of sore punishments from God. *Putteth his trust in the Lord;* keeping God's way, and securely relying upon God to protect him from the designs and rage of wicked men.

d See Ps. 20. 9. ch. 19. 6.
+ Heb. *the face of a ruler.*

26 [d] Many seek †the ruler's favour; but *every* man's judgment *cometh* from the LORD.

Seek the ruler's favour: men study to please and engage their rulers by their obliging carriage, and humble petitions, and all other means, supposing that to be the only way to procure either right or favour from them, as they need or desire it. *Every man's judgment*, the decision of his cause, and the success of all his endeavours, *cometh from the Lord;* dependeth wholly upon God, who ruleth and inclineth their minds and hearts as it pleaseth him, Prov. xxi. 1.

27 An unjust man *is* an abomination to the just: and *he that is* upright in the way *is* abomination to the wicked.

Is an abomination to the just, because such men, as such, are hated by God, and haters of and enemies unto God and all goodness, and public plagues to the church and state in which they live; and therefore he who loves these must needs hate them, as true friends hate those who are enemies to their friends. *Is abomination to the wicked;* of which see above on ver. 10.

CHAP. XXX.

Agur's prophecy, 1; *wherein he acknowledgeth his own ignorance*, 2, 3. *The purity of God's word, with the happiness of them that trust in him*, 5. *He dehorts from adding to the Scriptures, by the danger of it*, 6. *The two points of his prayer, with their reason*, 7—9. *Four wicked generations*, 10—14. *Four things insatiable*, 15, 16. *Parents not to be despised*, 17. *Four things hard to be known*, 18, 19. *The way of an adulterous woman*, 20. *Four things intolerable*, 21—23. *Four things little, but wise*, 24—28. *Four things stately*, 29—31.

THE words of Agur the son of Jakeh, *even* [a] the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

a ch. 31. 1.

Agur the son of Jakeh; a person so called, as appears from the designation of his own and his father's name, who lived either in Solomon's time, or rather afterwards, and was famous in his generation for wisdom, and piety, and prophecy; and therefore his proverbs were thought fit to be added to those of Solomon, either by those men of Hezekiah, mentioned chap. xxv. 1, or by some other. But that this should be meant of Solomon may easily be supposed, but cannot be proved; nor is it probable, as being contrary both to the style of the whole chapter, and to the matter of some part of it, as ver. 7—9, which agrees not to Solomon; and to the laws of good interpretation, one of which is, that all words should be taken in their most natural and proper sense, when there is no evidence nor necessity of understanding them improperly and figuratively, which is the present case. *The prophecy;* the prophetical instruction; for as the prophets were public preachers as well as foretellers of things to come, so their sermons, no less than their predictions, are commonly called their *prophecies*. *Unto Ithiel and Ucal;* two friends, or disciples, and contemporaries of Agur, called by those names, who having a great and just opinion of his wisdom, desired his instructions. Others, *concerning Ithiel* and *Ucal;* which they understand of Christ, called *Ithiel*, which signifies *God with me*, and answers to *Immanuel*, which is *God with us;* and *Ucal*, which signifies *power* or *prevalency*. But if he had meant this of Christ, why should he design him by such obscure and ambiguous names, as if he would not be understood? Why did he not call him by the name of *Shiloh* or *Messiah*, or some other Scripture title belonging and ascribed to him? Besides, this interpretation agrees not with the contents of this chapter, wherein there is only a short and occasional mention of Christ, but the chapter consists in a manner wholly of counsels and sentences of a quite other kind.

b Ps. 73. 22.

2 [b] Surely I *am* more brutish than *any* man, and have not the understanding of a man.

You come to me with a great opinion of my wisdom, and you expect that I should inform and instruct you in all things, yea, even in the greatest mysteries: but you are much mistaken in me; I am as ignorant and foolish as other men generally are, yea, more than many others; which he utters either, 1. From a deep sense of the common cor-

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ruption of human nature, and of the blindness of men's minds in things concerning God and their own duty, and of the necessity of instruction from God's word, and of illumination from his Spirit, without which they can never understand these matters. Or, 2. From a modest and humble apprehension of his own ignorance, which hath extorted such-like expressions even from heathen philosophers; whence Pythagoras rejected the title of a *wise man* when it was ascribed to him; and Socrates, though reputed the wisest man of his age, professed that he *knew nothing but this, that he knew nothing.*

† Heb. know.

3 I neither learned wisdom, nor †have the knowledge of the holy.

I neither learned wisdom; I have not been taught in the schools of wisdom, as the sons of prophets were, but must own myself to be an unlearned man, as the prophet Amos was, Amos vii. 14, 15. Or, I have not learned it, neither by my own understanding and study, nor by the help of other men. *Of the holy;* either, 1. Of the holy angels, who are called *holy* by way of eminency, as Deut. xxxiii. 2; Job xv. 15; Dan. iv. 13, 17, 23; viii. 13. But it was vain to deny that angelical knowledge to be in him, which no man imagined to be in him, and which was not in Adam in the state of innocency. Or, 2. Of the holy prophets. So the sense is, I have not such Divine inspirations as prophets strictly so called have received, whereby I should be enabled to know or explain those great mysteries wherein you desire information from me. Or, 3. Of holy things, of the mind and will of God concerning man's salvation, and the way which leads to it; not that he denieth that he had any knowledge of these things, but only a full, and comprehensive, and perfect knowledge, which they falsely supposed to be in him.

c John 3. 13.
d Job 38. 4, &c. Ps. 104. 3, &c. Is. 40. 12, &c.

4 [c]Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? [d]who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what *is* his name, and what *is* his son's name, if thou canst tell?

Who? what mere man? None at all; and therefore I may truly say, that I have not that which no mortal man ever yet had. *Hath ascended up into heaven;* there to learn the mind of God who dwells there, and that wisdom which is from above. *Or descended;* or rather, *and descended,* to teach men below what he had learned above. The meaning of the place is, No man can fully know and teach us these things unless he hath been in heaven, and sent down from thence to the earth to that end; whence our Saviour Christ justly applies these words to himself, John iii. 13, and appropriates this work of declaring God's nature and will to men to himself, upon this account, that he alone was in his Father's bosom, John i. 18. *Hath gathered the wind in his fists,* to hold them in, or let them out, and rule them at his pleasure. Where is there a man that can do this? And none but he who made and governs all the creatures can know and teach these things. *The waters;* those above in the clouds, and those below, the sea, which God keeps as it were *within doors,* and in a *garment* and *swaddling-band,* as it is expressed, Job xxxviii. 8, 9; and the waters which he shuts up in the bowels of the earth. *All the ends of the earth;* the whole earth, from one end to another, which God upholdeth in the air by the word of his power, and secureth from the rage of the sea, by the banks and shores wherewith he hath begirt it for that purpose. *What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?* The sense is either, 1. Seeing it is apparent that no man hath this power, and consequently this knowledge, but that this is the prerogative of the great God, declare, if thou art able, his name, i. e. his nature and perfections, and the eternal generation and the perfections of his Son. Or rather, 2. If thou thinkest there be any such man who can do these things, I challenge thee to produce his name; or if he be long since dead, and gone out of the world, the name of any of his posterity that can assure us that their progenitor was such a person; which because thou canst not do, I must conclude that none can thoroughly understand this matter but the blessed God, and his Son Christ, and they to whom God shall reveal it by Christ.

e Ps. 12. 6. & 18. 30. & 19. 8. & 119. 140.
† Heb. *purified.*

5 [e]Every word of God *is* †pure: [f]he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

f Ps. 18. 30. & 84. 11. & 115. 9, 10, 11.

Every word of God is pure; and therefore you, Ithiel and Ucal, must not expect the full knowledge of Divine mysteries from me, nor from any man, but from the word of God, which is a certain rule, both of your belief and practice, because every part and parcel of it is holy, and true, and good, and there is not the least mixture of falsehood and folly in it, as there is in all the words and writings of men. *That put their trust in him;* which supposeth their knowledge of him by his word, Psal. ix. 10; and contains their reliance upon his promises, joined with obedience to his commands.

g Deut. 4. 2. & 12. 32. Rev. 22. 18, 19.

6 [g]Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

And as the word of God is pure, do not thou corrupt or abuse it, by adding to it thine own or other men's inventions and opinions, and delivering or receiving of them in the name and as the words of God. He here forbids only adding to it, not diminishing from it, which yet is equally forbidden, Deut. iv. 2; xii. 32, because the Israelites then and always were, and others are, more prone to add than to diminish, because it is more easy to add under colour of interpreting, and because it is more agreeable to the humour of mankind, which is much delighted with its own inventions, as the experience of all ages showeth. *Lest he reprove thee* by words or deeds; by discovering thy folly, and bringing thee to deserved shame and punishment.

† Heb. *withhold not from me.*

7 Two *things* have I required of thee; †deny me *them* not before I die:

Have I required; I do earnestly and especially desire *Deny me them not before I die,* Heb. *withhold them not from me before I die,* i. e. whilst I live, as things of great and continual necessity for thy honour and service, and my own good.

h Matt. 6. 11.
† Heb. *of my allowance.*

8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; [h]feed me with food †convenient for me:

Remove far from me; from my heart, and from the course of my life. This is the first of Agur's petitions. *Vanity;* either, 1. All vain and false opinions concerning God, or the things of God; all unbelief, idolatry, or misbelief. Or, 2. All vanity of heart and life; a vain conversation, an affectation of the vain things of this world, as riches, pleasures, or honours, the bewitching power and sad effects whereof he had observed in others, and feared in himself, as the following request implies. *Lies;* all falsehood and deceit in my words and carriage towards God or men. *Give me neither poverty nor riches:* this is his second request, which may seem to have some reference to the former, *poverty* being commonly the occasion and temptation to the sin of *lying,* and *riches* being the great occasions and enticements to *vanity.* Thus, as his first petition was against the sins themselves, so this latter is against the occasions of them. *Food convenient for me;* moderate, and suitable both to my natural necessities, and to that estate and condition of life in which thou hast put me, and to that work and service which thou hast for me to do. And this mediocrity of estate is so amiable, that it hath been oft desired by wise heathens, as more eligible than a state of the greatest plenty and glory.

i Deut. 8. 12, 14, 17. & 31. 20. & 32. 15. Neh. 9. 25, 26. Job 31. 24, 25, 28. Hos. 13. 6.
† Heb. *belie* thee.

9 [i]Lest I be full, and †deny *thee,* and say, Who *is* the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain.*

Deny thee, by trusting to riches, which is a denial of God, Job xxxi. 24—28, by unthankfulness for and abuse of his mercies, and by rebellion against him, and divers other courses and common practices of rich men, whereby God is denied in truth and in works, even when he is owned in words and in show. *Who is the Lord,* that I should obey or serve him? I do not need him, I can live of my own without him. Lest by degrees I should arrive at downright atheism or infidelity, which is most incident to

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rich and great men, as is manifest from experience. *Take the name of my God in vain;* use false oaths, either to vindicate myself when I am suspected or accused of theft, and my oath is required according to the law, Exod. xxii. 8—11, or to gratify others for filthy lucre, as poor men frequently do.

10 †Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.

† Heb. *Hurt not with thy tongue.*

Accuse not a servant, to wit, maliciously, rashly, or without just and sufficient cause; for otherwise, in some cases, this may be not only lawful, but a duty, as when a servant lives wickedly, or robs his master, or the like. *A servant;* whose condition is in itself mean and miserable, and therefore thou shouldst not make it worse without great and apparent necessity. *Curse thee;* desire God to curse and punish thee, which though it may be sinful in him, yet being deserved by thee, thou hast reason to fear and expect. *Be found guilty* by God, who is ready to plead the cause of the afflicted, and upon strict search shall find thee guilty, and punish thee accordingly.

11 *There is* a generation *that* curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

A generation; a sort of men, abominable both to God and men; which is implied concerning these and the following kinds of sinners, ver. 12—14. *Their father,* and mother too, as it follows; ungrateful and unnatural monsters.

12 *There is* a generation [k] *that are* pure in their own eyes, and *yet* is not washed from their filthiness.

k Luke 18. 11.

Who not only pretend to others, but conceit within themselves, that they are truly religious persons, when they live in the course of wickedness.

13 *There is* a generation, O how [l]lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

l Ps. 131. 1. ch. 6. 17.

Who are proud and insolent, advancing themselves, and despising all others in comparison of themselves, and showing the pride of their hearts in their countenances and carriages.

14 [m] *There is* a generation, whose teeth *are as* swords, and their jaw teeth *as* knives, [n] to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from *among* men.

m Job 29. 17. Ps. 52. 2. & 57. 4. ch. 12. 18. n Ps. 14. 4. Amos 8. 4.

Extortioners, and cruel oppressors, who grind the faces of the poor.

15 The horseleach hath two daughters, *crying,* Give, give. There are three *things that* are never satisfied, *yea,* four *things* say not, †*It is* enough:

† Heb. *Wealth.*

The horseleech, an insatiable creature, sucking blood till it be ready to burst, *hath two daughters;* which are either, 1. The two forks into which her tongue is divided, and wherewith she sucks: but those who have more accurately observed and described the frame of that creature tell us that they have no tongue, and that they suck either by three little teeth, or several parts of the mouth gathered and compressed together. Or rather, 2. The following things, which resemble the horse leech in its insatiableness; nothing being more ordinary than to call those persons or things *the sons* or *daughters* of those whose examples they imitate. And whereas it is objected, that they are not only two, but *three,* yea, *four,* as is said in the next clause, the answer is easy, that though he begin with two, yet he proceeds from thence to three, and four, all which are said to be the daughters of the horseleech, if the words be rendered commodiously, and as they are in the Hebrew, as we shall presently see. *Crying, Give, give;* never filled, and always craving, and ready to receive more and more. *There are three things;* or, yea, (which may be understood in this, as it is in our translation of the next clause,) *they* (to wit, the daughters of the horseleech) are *three; that are never satisfied;* which is added partly to explain the former clause, *Give, give,* and to show the cause of that excessive desire of more, because they were not contented with what they had; and partly to give the reason why he calls them *the daughters of the horseleech. Yea, four things say not;* or, yea, *they* (the daughters forementioned) are *four,* which *say not.*

16 °The grave; and the barren womb; the earth *that* is not filled with water; and the fire *that* saith not, *It is* enough.

o ch. 27. 20. Hab. 2. 5.

The barren womb; for as the Israelitish women did generally and vehemently desire many children, for divers reasons elsewhere mentioned; so those who were barren amongst them were most eager in those desires, as we see in Rachel, Gen. xxx. 1, and as in all other cases persons most prize and thirst after those good things which they want. *The earth;* which when it is dry thirsts for rain, and in a little time sucks up great quantities of water, and gapes for more. *The fire;* which continually burns as long as there is any combustible matter left for it.

17 [p] The eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, and despiseth to obey *his* mother, the ravens of ‖the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

p Gen. 9. 22. Lev. 20. 9. ch. 20. 20. & 23. 22. ‖ Or, *the brook.*

The eye that mocketh at his father; he that scorneth or derideth his parents, though it be but with a look or gesture, and much more when he breaks out into opprobrious words and actions. *The ravens of the valley shall pick it out;* he shall die an unnatural, and untimely, and ignominious death, and after death shall lie unburied, and so be exposed to the birds and beasts of prey, and, amongst others, to the crows or ravens, who use to feed upon dead carcasses, and particularly to pick out their eyes, as is noted by all sorts of writers; of which see my Latin Synopsis. He saith, *the ravens of the valley,* either because they most delight in valleys, or with a particular respect unto that valley near Jerusalem, which was called *the valley of dead bodies,* Jer. xxxi. 40, from the carcasses cast out there, to which therefore the ravens resorted in great numbers, according to their manner: or, as others render, *the ravens of the brooks,* because they are of a hot and dry temper, and therefore delight in places adjacent to the brooks of water. *The young eagle;* which also preyeth upon dead carcasses. and especially upon their eyes, as the ravens do, the reason being the same in both, whether it be the softness of that part which makes it more easy to them to take, or from the pleasant taste of it.

18 There be three *things which* are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not:

The way whereof I cannot trace or find out.

19 The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the †midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid.

† Heb. *heart.*

The way of an eagle in the air; either, 1. The manner of her flight, which is exceeding high, and swift, and strong. Or rather, 2. The way or part of the air through which she passeth, without leaving any print or sign in it, which though it be true of all birds, yet is here attributed to the eagle, of whom this is more true, because she flies out of sight, where neither her body nor any sign of it can be discerned. *The way of a serpent upon a rock;* where she leaves no impression, nor slime, nor token where she was, as she doth in softer bodies, and as birds leave their feathers there. *The way of a ship in the midst of the sea;* which though at present it make a furrow, yet is speedily closed again. *The way of a man with a maid;* either, 1. The various methods and artifices which young men use to entice or persuade young virgins, either to honest love and marriage, or to unlawful lust and uncleanness. Or rather, 2. The impure conversation of a man with one who goeth under the name of a maid, but is not so in truth, which is managed with so much secrecy and cunning that it can very hardly be discovered; which exposition agrees best with the foregoing similitudes referred to it, and with the following verse.

20 Such *is* the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

Such, so secret and undiscernible, *is the way of an adulterous woman;* of her who, though she be called and accounted a *maid,* yet in truth is an adulteress; not a common

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strumpet, for of such the following words are not true, but one that secretly lives in the sin of adultery or fornication. *She eateth*, to wit, *the bread of deceit in secret*, by which is understood the act of filthiness, Prov. ix. 17; xx. 17, which such persons do as greedily desire, and as delightfully feed upon, as hungry persons do upon bread. Thus chastely doth the Holy Ghost express the most filthy actions, to teach us to avoid all immodest and obscene speeches as well as actions. *Wipeth her mouth*, as a child doth when it hath eaten some forbidden food, and would not be discovered. *Saith, I have done no wickedness*; denies the fact, and avoweth her innocency.

21 For three *things* the earth is disquieted, and for four *which* it cannot bear:

The earth is disquieted; either, 1. The earth itself trembleth and is moved; so it is an hyperbole. Or rather, 2. The inhabitants of the earth. They do by their insolence and impudence cause great and dreadful disturbances in the places where they live. *Which it cannot bear*; which are intolerable in human societies.

q ch. 19. 10. Eccles. 10. 7.

22 [q]For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat;

When he reigneth; when he is advanced to great power and dignity; for such a one is ignorant and unfit for his place, and therefore commits many errors; he is poor, and therefore an insatiable oppressor, according to Prov. xxviii. 3; he is proud and imperious, and being maligned and hated by others, he is provoked to hate them, and to be injurious and cruel to them. *A fool*, a conceited and wilful fool, or an obstinately wicked man, *when he is filled with meat*; either, 1. When he is glutted with meat or drink, which dulls men's reason, and heats their blood, and stirs them up to many insolencies. Or rather, 2. When he abounds in wealth, which in that case is like a sword in a madman's hand, being an instrument and occasion of innumerable wickednesses and mischiefs, as appears from common experience.

23 For an odious *woman* when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.

Odious; proud, and perverse, and full of hateful and offensive qualities. *When she is married*; for then she displayeth and exerciseth all those ill humours, which before for her own ends she concealed; then she is puffed up, and imperious, and becomes intolerable to her own family, and to her relations and neighbours. *That is heir to her mistress*; that possesseth her estate, either by the gift of her mistress, into whose favour she had insinuated herself by her cunning and officious carriage; or rather by the marriage of her master, which great and sudden change transports her beside herself, and makes her insufferably proud, and scornful, and injurious to all that converse with her.

24 There be four *things which are* little upon the earth, but they *are* †exceeding wise:

† Heb. *wise, made wise.*

Comparatively to other brute creatures. They act very wisely and providently, not from any reason which they have, but by the direction of Divine Providence, which secretly guides them to do those things for their own preservation which are most agreeable to the rules of wisdom. The design of this observation is either, 1. To commend wisdom to us, and to teach us to imitate the providence of these creatures, as we are provoked to imitate their diligence, Prov. vi. 6. Or, 2. To keep us from being proudly conceited of our own wisdom, because we are either equalled or exceeded therein by the unreasonable creatures in the wise conduct of their affairs. Or, 3. To direct us to whom to resort for wisdom when we want and desire it, even to that God who is able to inspire wisdom even into the brute creatures.

r ch. 6. 6, &c.

25 [r]The ants *are* a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

People; which title is oft given to the unreasonable creatures, both in Scripture, as Joel i. 6; ii. 2, and in Homer, and Virgil, and divers other authors. *They prepare their meat in the summer*; of which see on Prov. vi. 6—8.

s Ps. 104. 18.

26 [s]The conies *are but* a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;

In rocky ground, or in the holes of rocks, for their safety against their too potent enemies.

27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them †by bands;

† Heb. *gathered together.*

Have no king to rule and order them. *By bands*; in great numbers, and in several companies, and in exact order, as is observed in Scripture, as Judg. vi. 5; vii. 12; Joel i. 6; ii. 7, and by other writers.

28 The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

The spider taketh hold of the thread which she spins out of her own bowels *with her hands*; with her legs, which he calls *hands*, because they serve her for the same purpose, to do her work, to weave her web, and to catch gnats or flies, &c. *Is in kings' palaces*; is not only in poor cottages, but many times in palaces also, where she makes a shift to keep her abode, notwithstanding all the care and pains which is taken to sweep and cleanse it.

29 There be three *things* which go well, yea, four are comely in going:

That walk decently, and with great alacrity and courage; which are here commended to us to imitate in the management of our affairs.

30 A lion *which is* strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;

He doth not flee from his pursuers, whether men or beasts, but walketh away with a slow and majestic pace, as is observed by Aristotle, and many others.

31 A ‖†greyhound; an he goat also; and a king, against whom *there is* no rising up.

‖ Or, *horse.* † Heb. *girt in the loins.*

A greyhound, called in Hebrew, *girt in the lions*; either because its loins are slender, and as it were girt up into a little compass, and tight or well trussed up: or because of its great agility and swiftness; for the girding of the loins was used for expedition in going or working. Or, as it is rendered by others, *a horse*, to wit, a war-horse, having his armour girt about him, and marching to the battle, which he doth with great majesty and courage, as God himself observes at large, Job xxxix. 19, &c. *An he-goat*; which marcheth in the head of the flock in grave and stately manner, conducting them with great courage and resolution, and being ready to fight for them, either with beasts or men that oppose him; whence great captains are oft compared to *he-goats*, as Isa. xiv. 9; Jer. l. 8; Dan. viii. 5, 21; Zech. x. 3. *A king, against whom there is no rising up*; a mighty and victorious king, whose power none can withstand, who therefore goeth hither and thither, and proceedeth in his affairs with invincible courage and majesty. But this place, with the variation of one Hebrew point, reading *ammo* for *immo*, may be rendered, as a very learned man observes, *a king, and his people with him*; a king when he hath the hearts and hands of his people going along with him in his undertakings.

32 If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, *lay* thine hand upon thy mouth.

t Job 21. 5. & 40. 4. Eccles. 8. 3. Mic. 7. 16.

In lifting up thyself; either, 1. By rebellion or sedition against the king last mentioned. Or, 2. By anger or wrath, of which he speaks in the next verse. But this verse hath no necessary dependence either upon the foregoing or following verse. Or, 3. Through thy pride, which makes men carry themselves very foolishly, and scornfully, and injuriously, and is the root of contention, as was observed, Prov. xiii. 10. *Thought evil*, i. e. designed any mischief or injury against thy neighbour. *Lay thine hand upon thy mouth*, to wit, to shut it. Be silent, as this phrase is used, Job xxi. 5; xxix. 9. Restrain thyself, do not speak one word, much less do any thing tending to the accomplishment of it; do not open thy mouth to justify or excuse it, but silently and seriously consider the evil of it, and repent of it, and do so no more.

33 Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

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The forcing of wrath; the stirring up of wrath, either, 1. In a man's self towards others, by giving way to passion, or by fixing his thoughts upon those things which may inflame it. Or, 2. In others by reproaches, injuries, or any other provocations. *Bringeth forth strife;* is the cause of many quarrels, and much mischief among men.

CHAP. XXXI.

Lemuel's lesson concerning chastity and temperance, 1—5. *The proper use of wine,* 6, 7. *An exhortation to righteous judgment,* 8, 9. *A description of a virtuous wife,* 10, *with her husband's confidence in her,* 11. *Her work and careful provision for her household,* 12—20. *Their furniture and clothing,* 21, 22. *The properties and praise of a good wife,* 23—29. *The vanity of beauty; the good are to be praised,* 30, 31.

cir. 1015. a ch. 30. 1. 1 THE words of king Lemuel, [a] the prophecy that his mother taught him.

Of king Lemuel, i. e. of Solomon, by the general consent both of Jewish and Christian writers; to whom this name doth very fitly agree, for it signifies one *of* or *from God,* or *belonging to God;* and such a one was Solomon eminently, being given by God to David and Bathsheba, as a pledge of his reconciliation to them after their repentance; of whom it is expressly said that *the Lord loved him,* 2 Sam. xii. 24, and who was by God himself appointed to succeed David in the kingdom. Possibly his mother gave this name to mind him of his great obligations to God, and of the justice and necessity of his devoting himself unto God's service and glory. *The prophecy;* so called, either, 1. More especially, because she did either by natural sagacity, or by Divine inspiration, foresee Solomon's danger, and what sins he was most likely to be either inclined or tempted to commit; and therefore thought fit to give him these precautions. Or, 2. More generally, as all godly discourses or counsels are called *prophecies;* of which see on Prov. xxx. 1, and elsewhere. *His mother,* Bathsheba, who having truly repented of her adultery, did not only avoid it in herself for the future, but seriously endeavoured to prevent that and such-like sins in others, and especially in Solomon, whom the remembrance of her sin might possibly provoke to an imitation of her example. But when she gave him these instructions is but matter of conjecture. Probably it was either, 1. When she first discerned his inclinations to those sins of which she here warns him, to which she saw he was like to have many and strong provocations. Or, 2. After he was made king, and had more plainly discovered his proneness to these excesses, although he had not yet broken forth into those scandalous enormities into which he afterwards fell.

b Is. 49. 15. 2 What, my son? and what, [b] the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?

What? a short speech, arguing her great passion for him; what dost thou do? or, what words shall I take? what counsels shall I give thee? My heart is full, I must give it vent; but where shall I begin? *The son of my womb;* my son, not by adoption, but whom I bare in my womb, and brought forth with great pain, and brought up with tender care; and therefore it is my duty to give thee admonitions, and thine to receive them; and what I speak is from sincere and fervent affection to thee, which I trust thou wilt not despise. *The son of my vows;* on whose behalf I have made many prayers, and sacrifices, and solemn vows to God; whom I have, as far as in me lay, devoted to the work, and service, and glory of God.

c ch. 5. 9. d Deut. 17. 17. Neh. 13. 26. ch. 7. 26. Hos. 4. 11. 3 [c] Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways [d] to that which destroyeth kings.

Thy strength; the vigour of thy mind and body, which is greatly impaired by inordinate lusts, as all physicians agree, and frequent experience showeth. *Thy ways;* thy conversation or course of life. *To that which destroyeth kings;* the same thing repeated in other words, as is very usual in these books; to the immoderate love of women, which is most destructive to kings and kingdoms, as was well known to Solomon by the example of his father David, and by many other sad instances left upon record in all histories.

e Eccles. 10. 17. 4 [e] *It is* not for kings, O Lemuel, *it is* not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

To drink wine, to wit, to drunkenness or excess, as the next verse explains it.

f Hos. 4. 11. + Heb. *alter.* + Heb. *of all the sons of affliction.* 5 [f] Lest they drink, and forget the law, and + pervert the judgment + of any of the afflicted.

Forget the law; the laws of God, by which they are to govern themselves and their kingdoms. *Pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted;* which may easily be done by a drunken judge, because drunkenness deprives a man of the use of reason; by which alone men can distinguish between right and wrong, and withal stirs up those passions which incline him both to precipitation and partiality.

g Ps. 104. 15. + Heb. *bitter of soul.* 1 Sam. 1. 10. 6 [g] Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be + of heavy hearts.

Unto him; which is to be understood comparatively, to him rather than to kings, partly because he needs a liberal draught of it more than kings do; and principally because if it proceed to excess, in him it is only a private inconvenience, but in kings it is a public mischief and grievance. *Ready to perish;* sorely afflicted and overwhelmed with sorrow, as it is explained in the following words; for such need a cordial.

7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

For wine, moderately used, allayeth men's cares and fears, and cheereth their spirits, Psal. civ. 15.

h See Job 29. 15, 16. i 1 Sam. 19. 4. Esth. 4. 16. + Heb. *the sons of destruction.* 8 [h] Open thy mouth for the dumb [i] in the cause of all + such as are appointed to destruction.

Open thy mouth, speak freely and impartially, as becomes a king and judge to do, *for the dumb;* for such as cannot speak in their own cause, either through ignorance and infirmity, or because of the dread of their more potent adversaries, or of the majesty of the king sitting in judgment. *Such as are appointed to destruction;* who without such succour from the judge are like to be utterly ruined, whom therefore both justice and charity oblige thee to preserve.

k Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 16. l Job 29. 12. Is. 1. 17. Jer. 22. 16. 9 Open thy mouth, [k] judge righteously, and [l] plead the cause of the poor and needy.

m ch. 12. 4. & 18. 22. & 19. 14. 10 ¶ [m] Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price *is* far above rubies.

A virtuous woman, whom he may take to wife. Such a person is hardly to be found. Compare Eccles. vii. 28. And here he lays down several characters or qualifications of an excellent wife, which are here delivered in alphabetical order, each verse beginning with a several and the succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet; which method is used in some, and but in a few places of Scripture, to oblige us to the more diligent consideration and careful remembrance of them, as things of more than ordinary importance. And such this matter is, partly because the good or bad education even of private families, which depends much upon the mother's qualifications, hath a mighty influence upon the welfare or misery of commonwealths; and partly because the right education of royal families is in itself a very public blessing, and therefore it is the interest and happiness of whole kingdoms that their kings should have virtuous and pious wives.

11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

Doth safely trust in her, for the prudent and faithful management of all his domestic affairs, which are committed to her care. *So that he shall have no need of spoil;* the sense is either, 1. He shall want no necessary provisions for his family, which are sometimes called *spoil,* or *prey,* as below, ver. 15; Psal. cxi. 5; Luke xi. 22. Or, 2. He shall not need to use indirect and unlawful courses to get wealth, by

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cheating or oppressing his subjects or others, as princes have oft done to maintain the luxury of their wives, and as Solomon himself afterwards did, of which see on 1 Kings xii. 4, 10, 11, because all shall be abundantly supplied to him by her providence.

12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

She will improve, and not waste his estate.

13 She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

She seeketh wool and flax, that she may find employment for her servants, and not suffer them to spend all their time unprofitably in ease and idleness. *Worketh willingly with her hands;* she encourageth them to work by her example; which was a common practice among princesses in those first and purest ages of the world. Not that it is the duty of kings and queens to use manual or mechanical operations, but that it is the duty of all persons, the greatest not excepted, to improve all their talents, and particularly their time, which is one of the noblest of them, one way or other to the service of that God to whom they must give an account, and to the good of that community to which they are related and obliged.

14 She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.

By the sale of her homespun commodities she purchaseth the choicest goods which come from far countries.

n Rom. 12. 11.
o Luke 12. 42.

15 [n]She riseth also while it is yet night, and [o]giveth meat to her houshold, and a portion to her maidens.

While it is yet night; early in the morning, to redeem time. *Giveth meat;* distributeth all her necessary provisions. *A portion;* either, 1. Of work, which she allots to them. Or rather, 2. Of provisions for them; for so this word is used, Gen. xlvii. 22; Lev. x. 13, 14; Prov. xxx. 8, and no where, to my remembrance, of an allotment of work. And so this clause agrees best with the former, expressing the same thing in other words, according to the manner.

† Heb. taketh.

16 She considereth a field, and †buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

She considereth a field; whether it be fit for her use, and of a reasonable price, and how she may purchase it. This excludes the rashness, as her proceeding to *buy* it excludes the inconstancy, which is oft incident to that sex. *With the fruit of her hands*, with the effects of her diligence, *she planteth a vineyard;* she improveth the land to the best advantage.

17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

She girdeth her loins with strength; she useth great diligence and expedition in her employment; for which end men in those times used to gird up their long and loose garments about their loins. *Strengtheneth her arms;* putteth forth her utmost strength in her business.

† Heb. She tasteth.

18 †She perceiveth that her merchandise *is* good: her candle goeth not out by night.

She perceiveth that her merchandise is good; she finds great comfort and good success in her labours. *Her candle goeth not out by night;* which is not to be taken strictly, but only signifies her unwearied care and industry, which is oft expressed by labouring *day and night*, or *continually*.

19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

By her own example she provoketh her servants to labour. And although in these later and more delicate and luxurious times, such mean employments are grown out of fashion among great persons, yet they were not so in former ages, neither in other countries, nor in this land; whence all women unmarried are to this day called in the language of our law *spinsters*.

† Heb. She spreadeth.
p Eph. 4. 28. Heb. 13. 16.

20 †[p]She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

To relieve their necessities. Her designs are generous and noble; for she labours not only to supply her own and her household necessities, or to support her own state, much less to feed her pride and luxury, but that she may have wherewith to supply the wants of others who crave or need her assistance; which also procures God's blessing upon her husband, and children, and whole family, to whom, by this means, she brings both honour and advantage.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her houshold: for all her houshold *are* clothed with ‖scarlet.

‖ Or, *double garments.*

She is not afraid of the snow, or of any injuries of the weather. *All her household are clothed with scarlet;* she hath provided enough, not only for their necessity and defence against cold and other inconveniences, which is here supposed, but also for their delight and ornament; so that not only herself, and husband, and children, but some of the better rank of her servants, wear scarlet; which was more cheap and familiar in those times and countries than now it is with us. Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by divers others, *are clothed with double garments*, which is necessary and customary in cold seasons.

22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing *is* silk and purple.

Coverings of tapestry, for the furniture of her house. *Silk and purple*, which was very agreeable to her high quality, though it doth not justify that luxury in attire which is now usual among persons of far lower ranks, both for wealth and dignity.

q ch. 12. 4.

23 [q]Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

Known; observed and respected, not only for his own worth, but for his wife's sake; not only for those rich ornaments which by her care and diligence she provides for him, which others of his brethren, by reason of their wives' sloth or luxury, are not able to procure, but also for his wisdom in choosing, and his happiness in enjoying, so excellent a wife, by whose prudent care, in the management of his domestic concerns, he hath perfect freedom wholly to attend upon public affairs. *Sitteth among the elders of the land*, in counsel or judgment.

24 She maketh fine linen, and selleth *it;* and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

Curiously wrought of linen, and gold, or other precious materials, Jer. xiii. 1: Dan. x. 5, which in those parts were used both by men, 2 Sam. xx. 8, and by women, Isa. iii. 24; Cant. vii. 1.

25 Strength and honour *are* her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

Strength; not strength of body, which is no ornament of that sex, save only as she preserves her health and strength by sobriety and exercise, which other men waste by intemperance and idleness; but strength of mind, magnanimity, courage, resolution, activity. *Honour;* either, 1. Her prudent, and pious, and amiable behaviour, in which true honour principally consists. Or, 2. That good name and honourable esteem which she hath gained amongst all that know her by her virtuous disposition and carriage. *Her clothing;* these, and not her rich garments mentioned before, are her great ornament and glory. *She shall rejoice in time to come:* the sense is either, 1. In her old age she reaps the comfort and benefit of her youthful labours. Or rather, 2. She lives in constant tranquillity of mind, and a confident and cheerful expectation of all future events, how calamitous soever, partly because she hath laid in provisions for a rainy day, and chiefly because she hath the comfortable remembrance of a well-spent life, and, which follows thereupon, a just confidence in God's gracious providence and promises made to such persons.

26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue *is* the law of kindness.

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; she is neither sullenly silent, nor full of vain and impertinent talk, as many women are, but speaks directly and piously, as occasion offereth itself. *In her tongue is the law of kindness;* her speeches are not froward and provoking, as those of foolish women frequently are, but most obliging and amiable, as being

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guided by wisdom and grace, and not by inordinate lusts and passions. And this practice is called *a law in her tongue*, because it is constant and customary, and proceeds from an inward and powerful principle of true wisdom, which in a manner necessitates and constrains her to discourse like herself, so that in a moral sense she cannot speak otherwise, unless she offer violence to herself, or the nature of the thing require sharp and severe expressions.

27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

She looketh well to the ways of her household; she diligently observeth the management and progress of her domestic business, and the whole carriage and conversation of her children and servants; whereby also he intimates that she spends not her time in gadding abroad to other houses, and idle discourses about the concerns of other persons, as the manner of many women is, but is wholly intent upon her own house and proper business. *Eateth not the bread of idleness;* that which is got by idleness, or without labour.

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praiseth her.

Her children; whose testimony is the more considerable, because they have been constant eye-witnesses of her whole carriage, and therefore must have seen her misdemeanours, if there had been any, as well as her virtues. *Arise up;* either, 1. In token of reverence to her, which agrees not to the following clause, wherein the same phrase is understood concerning her husband. Or rather, 2. That they may seriously and industriously apply themselves to the work of setting forth her praises, as this phrase is used, Gen. xxxvii. 25; Exod. ii. 17, and oft elsewhere. For sitting being commonly the posture of idleness, men that set about any work are said to rise in order thereunto. *Call her blessed*, both for her own excellency, and for many happy fruits which they have gathered from her wise and godly education. *He praiseth her*, in the following words.

29 Many daughters ‖ have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

‖ Or, *have gotten riches.*

Daughters; daughters of men, i. e. women, so called also Gen. xxxiv. 1; Ezek. xxx. 18. *Thou excellest them all:* he esteems it but just that his praises should bear proportion to her real and manifold perfections.

30 Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* a woman *that* feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

Favour; comeliness; or, as the next clause explains it, beauty, which commonly gives women favour or acceptation with those who behold them. These are the words either, 1. Of her husband, continuing to praise her. Or, 2. Of Bathsheba, giving the sum of what she had said in few words. *Is deceitful;* partly, because it gives a false representation of the person, being ofttimes a cover to a most deformed soul, and to many evil and hateful qualities; partly, because it doth not give a man that content and satisfaction which at first view he promised to himself from it; and partly, because it is soon lost, not only by death, but by many diseases and contingencies. *That feareth the Lord;* which character is here mentioned either, 1. As the crown of all her perfections. Or, 2. As a key to understand the foregoing passage of that wisdom, and fidelity, and diligence, which proceeded from or is accompanied with the fear of God.

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

Give her of the fruit of her hands; it is but just and fit that she should enjoy those benefits and praises which her excellent labours deserve. *Let her own works praise her;* give her the praises which her own works may challenge. If men be silent, the lasting effects of her prudence and diligence will loudly trumpet forth her praises. *In the gates;* in the most public and solemn assemblies.

ECCLESIASTES;

OR,

THE PREACHER.

THREE things in general are to be noted concerning this book: 1. The author of it, who was Solomon, as is manifest both from the common consent of Jewish and Christian writers, and from the express words of the first verse. Nor can any thing be opposed to it but bold and groundless conjectures. That he wrote it in his old age is more than probable from divers passages in it, as, that he did it after his buildings, chap. ii. 4, which yet took up twenty years of his life, 1 Kings ix. 10, and after some considerable enjoyment of them, and planting of gardens and orchards, and reaping the fruit of them, chap. ii. 5, 6, and after long and much consideration and experience of all those methods in which men expected to find happiness, and after he had been deeply plunged in impure and inordinate loves, chap. vii. 27, &c., and from many other places, which may be observed by any diligent reader. And so this book was written by him as a public testimony of his repentance and detestation of all those vain and wicked courses to which he had addicted himself; wherein he followed the example of his father David, who after his sad fall penned the 51st Psalm. And the truth of this opinion may be confirmed by that expression, 2 Chron. xi. 17, *they walked in the way of David and Solomon*, i. e. wherein they walked both before their falls, and after their repentance. 2. The form or method of it. For whereas there are some passages in it which may seem offensive and impious, for which some few persons have suspected its authority, it must be considered that it is in part dramatical, as was said before of the Book of Proverbs, and that Solomon speaks some and most things in his own name, but some other things in the names and according to the opinions of those worldly and ungodly men, as is undeniably manifest, both from the scope and design of the book, as it is expressed both in the beginning and in the conclusion of it, and from his serious and large disputation against those wicked principles and courses. And this way of writing is not unusual amongst both sacred and profane writers. 3. The design and business of it, which is to describe man's true happiness, and the way leading to it; which he doth both negatively, asserting and proving that it is not to be found either in secular wisdom, or in sensual pleasures, or in worldly greatness and glory, or in abundance of riches, or in a vain profession of religion; and positively, showing that it is to be had only by the fear of God, and obedience to his laws, which alone can give a man a contented and cheerful enjoyment of his present comforts, and assurance of his future and everlasting happiness.

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CHAP. I.

All is vanity; our labour great and unprofitable, 1—3. *The whole course of things is always going and returning,* 4—7. *Nothing in nature is satisfied,* 8. *Nothing new; old things are forgot,* 9—11. *The search after wisdom is itself a vain labour; cannot supply our natural wants, nor satisfy our desires; but increaseth sorrow: all this the Preacher found out by experience,* 12—18.

B.C. cir. 977. THE words [a]of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem.

[a] ver. 12. ch. 7. 27. & 12. 8, 9, 10.

The Preacher; who was not only a king, but also a teacher of God's people, which he did both by words, upon some solemn occasions, and by writings; who having sinned grievously and scandalously in the eyes of all the world, justly thought himself obliged to preach or publish his true repentance for all his folly and wickedness, and to give public warning and wholesome counsels to all persons to avoid those rocks upon which he had split. The Hebrew properly signifies either *gathering* or *gathered;* and so it signifies either, 1. A preacher, as it is commonly rendered, whose office it is to gather in souls unto God or his church. Or, 2. A penitent or convert, or one *gathered* or brought back by true repentance to God, and to his church, from which he had so wickedly revolted. *King of Jerusalem:* this is added partly as a description of the person or author of this book, Solomon, who was the only man that was both *son of David,* properly so called, and *king of Jerusalem;* and partly as an aggravation of his sin, because he was *the son of David,* a wise and godly father, who had given him both excellent counsel, and, for his general course, a good example: and for the evil example which he gave him in the matter of Uriah, that also, considered with his hearty and effectual repentance for it, and the dreadful punishments of it upon his person and family, was a fair warning and most powerful instruction to him to learn by his father's example, and because he was a king, not by birth, for he was not David's eldest son, but by the special favour and designation of that God whom he had now so ill requited, and that in Jerusalem, a holy city, the place of God's special presence, and of his worship, where he had daily opportunities to know and obligations to practise better things, which place he had defiled by his horrid sins, and thereby made it, and all God's people, and the true religion, and the name of the blessed God, odious and contemptible amongst all the nations round about him.

[b] Ps. 39. 5, 6. & 62. 9. & 144. 4. [c] ch. 12. 8. [c] Rom. 8. 20.

2 [b]Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; [c]all *is* vanity.

Vanity of vanities; not only *vain,* but *vanity* in the abstract, which notes extreme vanity, especially where the word is thus doubled; as *a king of kings* is the chief of kings, and a *servant of servants* is the vilest of servants, and *a song of songs* is a most excellent song. *Saith the Preacher,* upon deep consideration and long experience, and by Divine inspiration. This verse contains the general proposition, which he intends particularly to demonstrate in the whole following book. *All,* all worldly things, and all men's designs, and studies, and works about them, *is vanity;* not in themselves, for so they are God's creatures, and therefore good and really useful in their kinds; but in reference to men, and to that happiness which men seek and confidently expect to find in them. So they are unquestionably *vain,* because they are not what they seem to be, and perform not what they promise, content and satisfaction, but instead of that are commonly the causes or occasions of innumerable cares, and fears, and sorrows, and mischiefs; and because they are altogether unsuitable to the noble mind or soul of man, both in nature or quality, and in duration, as being unstable and perishing things. And this vanity of them is here repeated again and again; partly, because it was most deeply fixed and perpetually present in Solomon's thoughts; partly, to show the unquestionable certainty and vast importance of this truth; and partly, that he might more thoroughly awaken the dull and stupid minds of men to the consideration of it, and might wean men's hearts from those things upon which he knew they excessively doted.

3 [d]What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

[d] ch. 2. 22. & 3. 9.

What profit? or, as others render it, *What remainder?* What real and abiding benefit hath a man by it? None at all. All is unprofitable, as to the attainment of that happiness which Solomon here is, and all men in the world are, inquiring after. *His labour,* Heb. *his toilsome labour,* both of body and mind, in the pursuit of riches, or pleasures, or other earthly things. *Which he taketh under the sun;* in all sublunary or worldly matters, which are usually transacted in the day time, or by the light of the sun. By this restriction he implies that that profit and happiness which in vain is sought for in this lower world, is really and only to be found in heavenly places and things.

4 *One* generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: [e]but the earth abideth for ever.

[e] Ps. 104. 5. & 119. 90.

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: men continue but for one, and that a short age, and then they leave all their possessions to the succeeding age; and therefore they cannot be happy here, because happiness must needs be unchangeable and eternal; or else the perpetual fear and certain knowledge of the approaching loss of all these things will rob a man of all solid contentment in them. *The earth abideth for ever,* i. e. through all successive generations of men; and therefore man in this respect is more mutable and miserable than the very earth upon which he stands; and which, together with all the glories and comforts which he enjoyed in it, he leaveth behind him to be possessed by others.

5 [f]The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and †hasteth to his place where he arose.

[f] Ps. 90. 5, 6. † Heb. *panteth.*

The sun is in perpetual motion, sometimes arising, and sometimes setting, and then arising again, and so constantly repeating its courses in all succeeding days, and years, and ages; and the like he observes concerning the winds and rivers, ver. 6, 7. And the design of these similitudes seems to be, either, 1. That by representing the constant changes and restless motions of these particular things he might intimate that it is so with all other earthly things; and therefore no man can expect satisfaction from them. Or, 2. That by comparing the sun, and wind, and rivers, as, ver. 4, he compared the earth with man, he might show that man, considered as mortal, is in a more unhappy condition than these things, because when the earth abides, man goes; and when the sun sets, he riseth again; and so the wind and rivers return to their former place and state, but man, when once he dies, he never returns again to this life; of which comparison see Job xiv. 7, 12. Or, 3. To show the vanity of all worldly things, and that man's mind can never be satisfied with them, because there is nothing in the world but a constant repetition of the same things, which is so irksome a thing, that the consideration thereof hath made some persons weary of their lives; and there is *no new thing under the sun,* as is added in the foot of the account, ver. 9, which seems to me to be given as a key to understand the meaning of the foregoing passages. And this is manifest and certain from experience, that the things of this world are so narrow, and the mind of man so vast, that there must be something new to satisfy the mind; and even delightful things, by too frequent repetition or long continuance, are so far from yielding satisfaction, that they grow tedious and troublesome.

6 [g]The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

[g] John 3. 8.

The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; the wind also sometimes blows from one quarter of the world, and sometimes from another; all of them being synecdochically comprehended under these two eminent quarters. But because this word, the *wind,* is not expressed in the Hebrew, but is only borrowed or understood from the latter clause of the verse, this first clause is by other judicious interpreters understood of the sun, of whom he last spake; the words being thus rendered according to the Hebrew, *He* (the sun) *goeth towards the south,* (which

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he doth one half of the year,) *and turneth about unto the north*, which he doth the other half. And so here is the whole motion of the sun towards the four quarters of the world particularly described; his daily motion from east to west, and back again, ver. 5; and his yearly motion from north to south, between the signs of Cancer and Capricorn. *The wind returneth again according to his circuits:* this clause is by all understood of the wind, which is fitly mentioned immediately after the sun, because it hath its rise from the sun, who is therefore called *the father of winds*, and the winds do usually rise with the sun, and are laid when he sets. But then it is rendered thus, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew, *the wind goeth continually whirling* or *compassing about, and he returneth again to his circuits*, being sometimes in one, and sometimes in another quarter, and successively returning to the same quarters in which he had formerly been.

h Job 38. 10. Ps. 104. 8, 9.

7 [h]All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they † return again.

† Heb. return to go.

Is not full, to wit, to the brink, or so as to overflow the earth, which might be expected from such vast accessions to it; whereby also he intimates the emptiness and dissatisfaction of men's minds, notwithstanding all the abundance of creature-comforts. *Unto the place from whence the rivers come;* either, 1. Unto the sea, from whence they are supposed to return into their proper channels, and then, as it is expressed, *thither* (i. e. into the sea) *they return again*. Or, 2. Unto their springs or fountains, to which the waters return by secret passages of the earth, as is manifest from the Caspian Sea, and reasonably supposed in other places. Or rather, 3. Unto the earth in general, from whence they come or flow into the sea, and to which they return again by the reflux of the sea. For he seems to speak of the visible and constant motion of the waters, both to the sea and from it, and then to it again in a perpetual reciprocation; which agrees best with the former similitudes, ver. 5, 6.

8 All things *are* full of labour; man cannot utter *it:* [i]the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

i Prov. 27. 20.

All things, not only the sun, and winds, and rivers, which I have mentioned, but all other creatures, *are full of labour;* both subjectively, as they are in continual restlessness and change, never abiding in the same state or place; and efficiently, as they cause great and sore labour to men, in getting, and keeping, and enjoying of them, yea, even in the study of them, as is noted hereafter. *Man cannot utter it;* the labour is inexpressibly and unconceivably great. *The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing;* as there are many things in the world troublesome and vexatious to men's senses and minds, so even those things which are comfortable and acceptable to them are not satisfactory, but men are constantly desiring some longer continuance or fuller enjoyment of them, or variety in them, and they never say, It is enough, I desire no more. *The eye* and *ear* are here synecdochically put for all the senses, because these are most spiritual and refined, most curious and inquisitive, most capable of receiving satisfaction, because they are exercised with more ease and pleasure than the other senses, whose satisfactions are oft attended with greater weariness and manifold dangers and inconveniences.

k ch. 3. 15.

9 [k]The thing that hath been, it *is that* which shall be; and that which is done *is* that which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun.

There is nothing in the world but a continued and tiresome repetition of the same things. The nature and course of the beings and affairs of the world, and the tempers of men's minds, are generally the same that they ever were and shall ever be; and therefore because no man ever yet received satisfaction from any worldly things, it is a vain and foolish thing for any person hereafter to expect it. *No new thing*, to wit, in the nature of things, which might give us hopes of attaining that satisfaction which things have not hitherto afforded. For otherwise this doth not restrain the God of nature, who hath frequently done, and still can do, new and miraculous works, and who can and doth discover to particular persons new inventions, when it pleaseth him.

10 Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

For the proof hereof I appeal to the consciences and experiences of all men. *It hath been already of old time;* the same things have been said and done before, though possibly we did not know it.

11 *There is* no remembrance of former *things:* neither shall there be *any* remembrance of *things* that are to come with *those* that shall come after.

There is no remembrance of former things: this seems to be added to prevent this objection, There are many new inventions and enjoyments unknown to former ages. To this he answers, This objection is grounded only upon our ignorance of ancient times and things, which is very great, and which if we did exactly know or remember, we should easily find parallels to all present occurrences in former ages. The latter clause tends both to illustrate and confirm the former. The sense is, There are many thousands of remarkable speeches and actions done in this and the following ages, which neither are, nor ever will be, put into the public records or histories, and consequently they must unavoidably be forgotten and lost unto succeeding ages; and therefore it is just and reasonable to believe the same concerning former ages, seeing the same causes are most likely to produce the same effects.

12 ¶ [l]I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

l ver. 1.

This verse is a preface to the following discourse, that by the consideration of the quality of the speaker they might be induced to give more attention and respect to his words. Having asserted the vanity of all things in the general, he now comes to prove his assertion in all those particulars wherein men commonly seek, and with greatest probability expect to find true happiness. He begins with secular wisdom. And to show how competent a judge he was of this matter, he lays down his character, that he was *the Preacher*, which implies eminent knowledge and ability to teach others; or, *the convert*, who had learned by dear-bought experience what he now taught them; and a *king*, who therefore had all imaginable opportunities and advantages for the attainment of happiness, and particularly for the getting of wisdom, by consulting all sorts of books and men, by trying all manner of experiments, and many other ways; and no ordinary king, but *king over Israel*, God's own and only beloved people, a wise and a happy people, Deut. iv. 6, 7; xxxiii. 29, whose king he was by God's special and gracious appointment, and furnished by God with singular wisdom for the discharge of that great trust; and whose royal palace and abode was *in Jerusalem*, where were the house of God, and the most wise and learned of the priests attending upon it, and the seats of justice, and colleges or assemblies of the wisest men of their nation; of which see 2 Kings xxii. 14; 1 Chron. xxv. 8, &c.; Psal. cxxii. 5: all which helps concurring together in him, which very rarely do in any other men, makes the argument drawn from his experience more convincing and undeniable.

13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all *things* that are done under heaven: [m]this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man ‖ to be exercised therewith.

m Gen. 3. 19. ch. 3. 10.

‖ Or, *to afflict them.*

I gave my heart, which phrase notes his serious and fixed purpose, his great industry and alacrity in it. *To seek and search out*, to seek diligently and accurately, *by wisdom*, wisely, or by the help of that wisdom wherewith God had endowed me, *concerning all things that are done under heaven;* concerning all the works of God and men in this lower world; the works of nature, and their causes, effects, properties, and operations; the works of Divine providence, and God's counsels and ends in them; the work and depths of human policy in the conduct of personal, and domestical, and public affairs. *This sore travail*, this difficult and toilsome work of searching out these things, *hath God given to the sons of man;* God hath inflicted this as a just punish-

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ment upon man for his eating of the tree of knowledge, that instead of that sweet and perfect knowledge which God had freely infused into man at his first creation, he should now grope after some small parcels or fragments of it, and those too not to be gotten without the sweat of his brows and brains. *To be exercised therewith;* to employ themselves in the painful study of these things, which now is both their duty and their punishment. Or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by many others, *to afflict* them *in* or *by it*, to chastise their former curiosity, and to give them matter of continual humiliation and vexation. And therefore knowledge is so far from making men happy, that it exposeth them to trouble and infelicity.

14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

I have seen, i. e. diligently observed, and in great measure understood. *Behold;* for it was a great surprise to me, and therefore may seem strange to you. *All is vanity and vexation of spirit;* and not only unsatisfying, but also troublesome, and an affliction or breaking to a man's spirit or mind. Or, as others, both ancient and modern translators, render it, *a feeding upon wind*, as these very words, save only that there is the verb from which this noun seems most probably deduced, are rendered, Hos. xii. 1, where also it signifies a fruitless or lost labour, and a disappointment of their hopes and desires of satisfaction. And so this is a repetition of the same thing in other words, according to the manner of these books.

n ch. 7. 13.

15 n *That which is* crooked cannot be made straight: and †that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

† Heb. *defect.*

That which is crooked cannot be made straight; all our knowledge serves only to discover our diseases and miseries, but is oft itself utterly insufficient to heal or remove them; it cannot rectify those confusions and disorders which are either in our own hearts and lives, or in the men and things of the world. *That which is wanting*, to wit, in our knowledge, and in order to man's complete satisfaction and felicity, *cannot be numbered;* we know little of what we should or might know, or did know in the state of innocency, or shall know in the future life.

16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten °more wisdom than all *they* that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart †had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

o 1 Kings 3. 12. 11. 4. Ps. 4. 6. 10. 7. 23. ch. 2. 9.

† Heb. *had seen much.*

I communed with mine own heart; I considered within myself in what condition I was, and what degrees of knowledge I had gained, and whether it was not my ignorance that made me unable to rectify those errors, and supply those wants, and wiser men could do it, though I could not. *I am come to great estate*, Heb. *I am grown great*, to wit, in wisdom; or, *I have magnified*, or *greatly enlarged*. *Have gotten*, Heb. *have added*. As I had a large stock of wisdom infused into me by God, 1 Kings iii. 12; iv. 29, so I have greatly improved it by conversation, and study, and experience. *More wisdom than all they that have been before me*, whether governors, or priests, or private persons; which was no vain boast, but a known and confessed truth, and profession hereof was necessary to demonstrate his assertion. *In Jerusalem;* which was then the most eminent place in the world for wisdom and knowledge. *Had great experience*, Heb. *had seen much;* which intimates that his knowledge was clear, and certain, and experimental, as that is which we have from our own eyesight. *Wisdom and knowledge:* two words signifying the same thing, as may be gathered from ver. 18, and from the promiscuous use of them in this book, and in the Proverbs, and elsewhere, and implying all manner of knowledge, Divine or human, speculative or practical, political or philosophical.

p ch. 2. 3, 12. Ps. 7. 25, 26. 1 Thes. 5. 21.

17 p And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly, that I might thoroughly understand the nature and difference of truth and error, of virtue and vice, all things being best understood by contraries, and might discern if there were any opinion or practice amongst men which would give him full satisfaction. *Vexation of spirit;* or, *feeding upon wind*, as ver. 14.

18 For q in much wisdom *is* much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

q ch. 12. 12.

Grief, or *indignation*, or displeasure within himself, and against his present condition. *Increaseth sorrow;* which he doth many ways, partly, because he gets his knowledge with hard and wearisome labour, both of mind and body, with the consumption of his spirits, and shortening and imbitterment of his life; partly, because he is oft deceived with knowledge falsely so called, and oft mistakes errors for truths, and is perplexed with manifold doubts, from which ignorant men are wholly free; partly, because he foresees, and consequently feels, the terror of many miseries which are or are likely to come to pass, which are unobserved by less knowing persons, and which possibly never happen; partly, because he hath the clearer prospect into, and quicker sense of, his own ignorance, and infirmities, and disorders, and withal how vain and ineffectual all his knowledge is for the prevention or removal of them; and partly, because his knowledge is very imperfect and unsatisfying, yet increasing his thirst after more knowledge, and consequently after more dissatisfaction, because instead of that just honour, and delight, and advantage which he expects from it, he meets with nothing but envy, and opposition, and contempt, because his knowledge quickly fades and dies with him, and then leaves him in no better, and possibly in a much worse, condition than the meanest and most unlearned man in the world.

CHAP. II.

Pleasure and mirth also vanity, 1, 2; *whether in wine, or buildings and gardens, or servants, or cattle, or silver and gold, or music*, 3—8. *This the Preacher searched out and found, and none need try after him*, 9—12. *Wisdom excelleth folly*, 13, 14; *but the like event is to both, and both are forgotten; therefore is wisdom also vanity, and life hateful*, 15—17. *Men labour they know not for whom, but the fool enjoyeth the wise man's pains: this rendered his toil irksome, that he reaped no fruit, and yet his days were travail and grief*, 18—23. *There is nothing better than to enjoy contentedly what God giveth us; and this also is of God, who giveth travail to the sinner*, 24—26.

a I SAID in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, b this also *is* vanity.

a Luke 12. 19.

b Is. 30. 11.

I said in mine heart; being disappointed of my hopes from knowledge, I resolved in my own mind to try another course. *I will prove thee*, O my soul, I will try whether I cannot make thee happy, *with mirth;* by allowing to myself the free enjoyment of the present and sensible delights of human life. *Enjoy pleasure;* take thy fill of pleasure, and expect satisfaction thence. *Is vanity;* is vain, and unable to make men happy, because sensible pleasures are mean and unsuitable to the noble and heaven-born soul of man, and if excessively used, apter to cloy and glut men than to satisfy them, and are frequently mixed with, and most commonly end in, bitterness, as being the great instruments and occasions of sin, and of all its fatal consequences.

2 c I said of laughter, *It is* mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?

c Prov. 14. 13. ch. 7. 6.

I said of laughter; of excessive mirth, which discovers itself by immoderate laughter, and other outward gestures. *It is mad;* this is an act and sign of madness, more fit for fools, who know nothing, than for wise men, at least in this sinful, and dangerous, and deplorable state of mankind, which calls for seriousness and sorrow from all considerate persons, in which case it is like the laughter of one in a frenzy; and none but a fool or madman can take satis-

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faction in such light and frothy pleasures, or expect happiness from them. *What doeth it?* what good doeth it? or how can it make men happy? I challenge all the epicures in the world to give me a solid and satisfactory answer.

d ch. 1. 17. † Heb. *to draw my flesh with wine.*

3 [d] I sought in mine heart † to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven † all the days of their life.

† Heb. *the number of the days of their life.*

To give myself unto wine; to relax and gratify my flesh with delicious meats and drinks, synecdochically expressed by *wine* here, as also Prov. ix. 2; Cant. ii. 4, &c., as necessary food is by *bread*, Amos vii. 12, compared with viii. 11. *Yet acquainting my heart with wisdom;* yet resolving to use my wisdom; either, 1. To set bounds to my pleasures. Or rather, 2. That I might try whether I could not arrive at satisfaction, by mixing wine and wisdom together, by using wine to sweeten and allay the toils of wisdom, and wisdom to prevent that destruction which many bring upon themselves by intemperate pleasures whilst they seek for satisfaction, that so I might have the comfort without the danger and mischief of pleasures. *To lay hold on folly;* to pursue and addict myself to carnal pleasures, which was my folly. *Till I might see*, &c.; till by trying several methods I might find out the true way to contentment and satisfaction, during this mortal life.

4 I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

I made me great works; magnificent works for my honour and delight. *I built me houses;* of which see 1 Kings vii. 1, &c.; ix. 15, &c. *I planted me vineyards:* see Cant. viii. 11.

5 I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind of* fruits:

I made me gardens, Heb. *paradises*, or gardens of pleasure. *I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits*, mixing pleasure and profit together.

6 I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

I made me pools of water, because the rain there fell but seldom. *The wood that bringeth forth trees;* the nurseries of young trees newly planted in the orchards, which for the multitude of them were like a wood or forest.

† Heb. *sons of my house.*

7 I got *me* servants and maidens, and had † servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:

Born in my house, of my bond-servants, which therefore were a part of my possessions: see 1 Kings x. 8; Ezra ii. 55.

e 1 Kings 9. 28. & 10. 10, 14, 21, &c. † Heb. *musical instrument and instruments.*

8 [e] I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, *as* † musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

The peculiar treasure of kings; either, 1. Vast riches, answerable to the state of a king. Or, 2. The greatest jewels and rarities of other kings, which they gave to me either as a tribute, or by way of present; of which see 1 Kings iv. 21; ix. 11; x. 2, 10. *Of the provinces;* which were imposed upon or presented by all the provinces of my dominions. *Women singers;* whose voices were more sweet than the men's. *And the delights of the sons of men;* either, 1. All other delightful things. Or, 2. That in which men generally delight, to wit, *musical instruments*, as it follows.

f ch. 1. 16.

9 So [f] I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.

I was great, in riches, and power, and glory. *Also my wisdom remained with me;* as yet I was not wholly besotted and seduced from God by these things, as I was afterwards; I still had the use of my reason, whereby I was capable of searching after and finding satisfaction, if it was to be had in those things.

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and [g] this was my portion of all my labour.

g ch. 3. 22. & 5. 18. & 9. 9.

Whatsoever mine eyes desired; whatsoever was grateful to my senses, or my heart desired. He ascribes desire to the *eyes*, because the sight of the eyes is the usual and powerful incentive of desires; of which see Josh. vii. 21; Job xxxi. 1; Matt. v. 28. *I kept not from them;* I denied myself nothing, at least of lawful delights, but went to the very utmost bounds of them; which was the occasion of his falling afterward into sinful pleasures. *I withheld not my heart from any joy;* as my heart was vehemently set upon pleasure, so I did not resist or curb it therein, but made all possible provisions to gratify it. *My heart rejoiced in all my labour;* I had the comfort of all my labours, and was not hindered from the free and full enjoyment of them by sickness or war, or any other calamities occurrent. *This was my portion of all my labour;* this present and temporary enjoyment of them was all the benefit which I could expect or receive from all my labours, so that I made the best of them. I had a heart to use them, which many men through covetousness have not; and I tasted the sweetness of them, which many others cannot do; and therefore if any man could arrive at happiness by this means, I had done it.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all *was* [h] vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun.

h ch. 1. 3, 14.

I made a serious review of my former works and labours, and considered whether I had obtained that satisfaction in them which I designed and expected; *and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit;* I found myself suddenly disappointed and wholly dissatisfied in this course. *There was no profit;* the pleasure was past and gone, and I was never the better for it, but as empty as before, and had nothing left but sorrowful reflections upon it.

12 ¶ And I turned myself to behold wisdom, [i] and madness, and folly: for what *can* the man *do* that cometh after the king? ‖*even* that which hath been already done.

i ch. 1. 17. & 7. 25. ‖ Or, *in those things which have been already done.*

I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly; of which see chap. i. 17. Being frustrated of my hopes in pleasure, I returned to a second and more serious consideration of my first choice, to see whether there was not more satisfaction to be gotten from wisdom, than what I discovered at my first view. *What can the man do*, to find out the truth in this matter, to discover the utmost satisfaction which was possibly to be found in pleasures? So this is added as a reason why he gave over the thoughts of pleasures, and directed them to another object, and why he so confidently asserted their vanity from his own particular experience, because he had made the best of them, and it was a vain thing for any private *man* to expect that from them which could not be found by a *king*, and such a king, who had so much wisdom to invent, and such vast riches to pursue and enjoy, all imaginary delights, and who had made it his design and business to search this to the bottom. *That cometh after the king;* that succeeds me in this inquiry. *That which hath been already done;* as by others in former times, so especially by myself. They can make no new discoveries as to this point.

13 Then I saw † that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

† Heb. *that there is an excellency in wisdom more than in folly, &c.*

Then I saw; or, *yet I saw;* for this is added to prevent an objection or mistake. *Wisdom excelleth folly;* although wisdom is not sufficient to make men truly and perfectly

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happy, yet it is of a far greater use and excellency than vain pleasures, or any other follies. *As far as light excelleth darkness*, i. e. vastly and unspeakably. Light is very pleasant and comfortable, and withal of great necessity and singular use to discover the differences of persons and things, to prevent mistakes and dangers, and to direct all a man's paths in the right way; whereas darkness is in itself doleful, and leads men into innumerable confusions, and errors, and miseries.

k Prov. 17. 24. ch. 8. 1.

14 [k] The wise man's eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that [l] one event happeneth to them all.

l Ps. 49. 10. ch. 9. 2, 3, 11.

Are in his head; in their proper place, and therefore they can see, which they could not do if they were out of his head. He hath the use of his eyes and reason, and sees his way, and orders all his affairs with discretion, and foresees, and so avoids, many dangers and mischiefs. *Walketh in darkness;* manageth his affairs ignorantly, rashly, and foolishly, whereby he showeth that his eyes are not in his head, but in his heels, or, as it is expressed, Prov. xvii. 24, *in the ends of the earth. And;* or, *yet;* notwithstanding this excellency of wisdom above folly for our conduct in the matters of this life, yet at last they both come to one end. *One event happeneth to them all;* both are subject to the same calamities, and to death itself, which utterly takes away all difference between them.

15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it † happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also *is* vanity.

† Heb. *happeneth to me, even to me.*

Why was I then more wise? what benefit have I by my wisdom? or, to what purpose did I desire and take so much pains for wisdom?

16 For *there is* no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now *is* in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise *man?* as the fool.

There is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; their name and memory, though it may flourish for a season among some men, yet it will not last for ever, but will in a little time be worn out; as we see in most of the wise men of former ages, whose very names, together with all their monuments, are utterly lost, as hath been oft observed and bewailed by learned writers in several ages. *As the fool;* he must die as certainly as the fool, and after death be as little remembered and honoured.

17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun *is* grievous unto me: for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

I hated life; my life, though accompanied with so much honour, and pleasure, and wisdom, was a burden to me, and I was apt to wish either that I had never been born, or that I might speedily die. *The work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me;* all human designs and works are so far from yielding me that satisfaction which I expected, that the consideration of them increaseth my discontent.

18 ¶ Yea, I hated all my labour which I had † taken under the sun: because [m] I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

* Heb. *laboured.*
m Ps. 49. 10.

I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun; all these riches and buildings, and other fruits of my labour, were the matter of my repentance, and aggravations of my misery, because I must, and that everlastingly, part with them, and leave them all behind me.

19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise *man* or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This *is* also vanity.

A fool; who will undo all that I have done, and turn the effects of my wisdom into instruments of his folly, and occasions of ruin. Some think he had such an opinion of Rehoboam.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.

I gave myself up to despondency, and despair of ever reaping that satisfaction which I promised to myself.

21 For there is a man whose labour *is* in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he † leave it *for* his portion. This also *is* vanity and a great evil.

† Heb. *give.*

Whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; who useth great industry, and prudence, and justice too, in the management of his affairs, and therefore might as confidently expect God's blessing, and the comfort of his labours, as any other man. *That hath not laboured therein,* so as I have done; who hath spent his days in sloth and folly. *A great evil;* a great disorder in itself, and a great disgrace to this world, and a great torment to a considering mind.

22 [n] For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

n ch. 1. 3. & 3. 9.

What comfort or benefit remains to any man after this short and frail life is once ended? or, what advantage hath he by all his labours above him who never laboured, and yet enjoyeth all the fruits of his labours?

23 For all his days *are* [o] sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

o Job 5. 7. & 14. 1.

For all his days are sorrows; or, *though all his days* were *sorrows*, i. e. full of sorrows. For this seems added to aggravate the evil mentioned in the foregoing verse. Though he took great and unwearied pains all his days, yet after death he hath no more benefit by it than another man hath. *His travail grief;* the toils of his body are, or were, accompanied with the vexations of his mind. *Taketh not rest in the night;* either because his mind is distracted, or his sleep broken, with perplexing cares and fears.

24 ¶ [p] *There is* nothing better for a man, *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* he ‖ should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it *was* from the hand of God.

p ch. 3. 12, 13, 22. & 5. 18. & 8. 15.

‖ Or, *delight his senses.*

There is nothing better for a man; or, Is there *any thing better for a man?* which implies that there is nothing better, to wit, for man's present comfort and satisfaction; this is the chief, and indeed the only, considerable benefit of his labours. *That he should make his soul enjoy good;* that he should thankfully take, and freely and cheerfully enjoy, the comforts which God gives him. *That it was from the hand of God;* that this also is a singular gift of God, and not to be procured by a man's own wisdom or diligence.

25 For who can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto*, more than I?

Who can more freely and fully enjoy the comforts of this life than I did? This verse is added to confirm what he said in the foregoing verse from his own experience, which was the more considerable, because no man ever was a more capable judge of these matters, none could either have more creature-comforts, or more addict himself to the enjoyment of them, or improve them to better advantage, than he did; and therefore he could best tell what was the greatest good to be found in them, and whether they were able of themselves, without God's special gift, to yield a man satisfaction. *Who else can hasten hereunto,* to wit, to the procuring and enjoying of them? who can pursue them with more diligence, or obtain them with more speed and readiness, or embrace them with more greediness and alacrity?

26 For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good † in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up,

† Heb. *before him.* Gen. 7. 1. Luke 1. 6.

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q Job 27. 16, 17. Prov. 28. 8. that qhe may give to *him that is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

That is good in his sight; who not only seems to be good to men, as many bad men do, but is really and sincerely good. Or, *who pleaseth him*, as this phrase is rendered, Eccles. vii. 26, and oft elsewhere; whereby he seems to intimate the reason why he found no more comfort in his labours, because his ways had been very displeasing to God, and therefore God justly denied him that gift. *Wisdom and knowledge*, to direct him how to use his comforts aright, that so they may be blessings, and not snares and curses to him. *Joy;* a thankful and contented mind with his portion. *He giveth travail, to gather and to heap up;* he giveth him up to insatiable desires, and wearisome labours, to little or no purpose. *That he may give to him that is good before God;* that he may have no comfort in them, but leave them to others, yea, to such as he least expected or desired, to good and virtuous men, into whose hands his estate falls by the wise and all-disposing providence of God.

CHAP. III.

Every thing hath its time; in which, to enjoy it, and therewith do good to others, is our good, 1—13. *God doth all according to his decree that we should fear him, and there is nothing new,* 14. 15. *The vanity of unjust judgment; God is the great Judge of all,* 16, 17; *and he will make men know that they are here but as brute beasts,* 18—22.

a ver. 17. ch. 8. 6. TO every *thing there is* a season, and a atime to every purpose under the heaven:

A season; a certain time appointed by God for its being and continuance, which no human wit or providence can prevent or alter. And by virtue of this appointment or decree of God, all the vicissitudes and changes which happen in the world, whether comforts or calamities, do come to pass; which is here added, partly, to prove what he last said, chap. ii. 24, 26, that both the free and comfortable enjoyment of the creatures which some have, and the crosses and vexations which others have with them, are from the hand and counsel of God; partly, to prove the principal proposition of the book, that all things below are vain, and happiness is not to be found in them, because of their great uncertainty, and mutability, and transitoriness, and because they are so much out of the reach and power of men, and wholly in the disposal of another, to wit, God, who doth either give or take them away, either sweeten or imbitter them, as it pleaseth him; and partly, to bring the minds of men into a quiet and cheerful dependence upon God's providence, and submission to his will, and a state of preparation for all events. *To every purpose*, or *will*, or *desire*, to wit, of man; to all men's designs, attempts, and businesses. Not only natural, but even the free and voluntary actions of men, are ordered and disposed by God to accomplish his own purpose. But it must be considered, that he doth not here speak of a time allowed by God, wherein all the following things may lawfully be done, which is wholly besides his scope and business; but only of a time fixed by God, in which they would or should be done.

† Heb. *to bear.* b Heb. 9. 27. 2 A time †to be born, and b*a time to* die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is* planted;

A time to die; a certain period unknown to man, but fixed by God, in which a man must unavoidably die; of which see Job xiv. 5; John xiii. 1. *A time to plant;* wherein God inclines a man's heart to planting.

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to kill; when a man shall die a violent death, either by chance, as Exod. xxi. 13, or by the sentence of the magistrate, or by the hands of murderers. *A time to heal;* when he who seemed to be mortally wounded shall be healed and restored. *A time to break down;* when houses shall be demolished, either by the fancy of the owner, or by the rage of other men, or otherwise.

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to weep; when men shall have just occasion for weeping and mourning.

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and ca time †to refrain from embracing;

c Joel 2. 16. 1 Cor. 7. 5. † Heb. *to be far from.*

A time to cast away stones; which were brought together in order to the building of a wall or house, but are now cast away, either because the man who gathered them hath changed his mind, and desists from his project, or by other causes or accidents. *A time to embrace;* when persons shall enter into friendship, and perform all friendly offices one to another. *A time to refrain from embracing;* either through alienation of affections, or grievous calamities. See Joel ii. 16; 1 Cor. vii. 5.

6 A time to ‖get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

‖ Or, *seek.*

A time to lose; when men shall lose their estates, either by God's providence, or by their own choice. *A time to cast away;* when a man shall cast away his goods voluntarily, as in a storm to save his life, as Jonah i. 5; Acts xxvii. 18, 19; or out of love and obedience to God, as Matt. x. 37, 39; Heb. x. 34.

7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; da time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

d Amos 5. 13.

A time to rend; when men shall rend their garments, as they did in great and sudden griefs, as Gen. xxxvii. 29; Joel ii. 13. *A time to keep silence;* wherein men will or shall be silent, either through grief, as Job ii. 12, 13, or by sickness or weakness, or because God denies a man ability to utter his mind.

8 A time to love, and a time to ehate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

e Luke 14. 26.

A time to love; when God will stir up the affection of love, or give occasion for the exercise or discovery of it to others.

9 fWhat profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

f ch. 1. 3.

Seeing then all actions and events in the world are out of man's power, and no man can at any time do or enjoy any thing at his pleasure, but only what and when God pleaseth, as hath been now shown in many particulars, and it is as true and certain in all others, hence it follows that all men's labours, of themselves, and without God's help and blessing, are unprofitable, and utterly insufficient to make them happy.

10 gI have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

g ch. 1. 13.

I have seen, I have diligently observed and considered upon this occasion, *the travail*, or *the occupation* or *business*, men's various employments, and the differing successes of them, *which God hath given to the sons of men;* either, 1. Which God hath imposed upon men as their duty; and therefore men must labour, although it brings them no profit, as was now said. Or, 2. Which God hath inflicted upon mankind as a just punishment for their sins; to which therefore men ought quietly to submit. *To be exercised in it;* that hereby they might have constant matter of exercise for their diligence, and patience, and submission to God's will and providence, and for all other graces. Or, *that they might be afflicted* or *humbled therewith*, as the same phrase is rendered by divers, Eccles. i. 13.

11 He hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that hno man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

h ch. 8. 17. Rom. 11. 33.

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: this seems to be added as an apology for God's providence, notwithstanding all the contrary events and confusions which are in the world. *He* (i. e. God, expressed in the last clause of the verse) *hath made* (or *doth make* or *do*, by his providence in the government of the world) *every thing* (which he doth either immediately, or by the ministry of men or other

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creatures, for God worketh in and with all his creatures in all their actions, as is agreed by divines and philosophers) *beautiful* (decently and conveniently, so that, all things considered, it could not have been done better) *in his time;* in the time which he had appointed, or which he saw most proper and fit for it; or, *in its time* or *season*, when it was most fit to be done. Many events seem to men's shallow and perverse judgments, at least for a time, to be very irregular and unbecoming, as when wicked men prosper in their impious and unrighteous enterprises, and good men are sorely oppressed and afflicted, and that for righteousness' sake; but when men shall come thoroughly to understand God's works, and the whole frame and contexture of them, and to see the end of them, they will then say that all things were done most wisely and most seasonably; whereof we have eminent instances in Joseph, and David, and Mordecai, and the Jews of his time. *He hath set the world in their heart*, i. e. in the hearts of men, as the following words show, where *man* is expressed. The sense is either, 1. Although all God's works are beautiful, yet men do not discern the beauty of them, because the world is in their hearts; their minds are so busied and distracted with the thoughts, and cares, and love, and business of this world, that they have neither leisure nor heart seriously to study God's works. But this inordinate love of the present world comes from man's own corruption, and not from God; and therefore it seems harsh to impute it to God, and improbable that Solomon would have phrased it thus, that *God hath set* or *put the world*, i. e. worldly lusts, *in* men's *hearts*. Or, 2. As God's works are beautiful in themselves, so men are capable of discerning the beauty of them, because *God hath set the world in men's hearts;* he hath exposed the world, and all his dispensations in the world, unto the view of men's minds; both because he hath wrought his works so evidently and publicly, that men might easily observe them; and because he hath given men reason whereby they may discover the wisdom and beauty of all God's works, if they diligently apply themselves to the study of them. *So that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end:* so this is another reason why men do not discern the beauty of God's works, because they do not see the whole frame or course of them from the beginning to the end, but only some small parcels or fragments of them; the eminent works of God being oft begun in one age, and finished in another. Or, yet *so that*, &c. Or, *except that* (as this phrase properly signifies, and is elsewhere used) *no man can find out*, &c. Thus it is an exception to the next foregoing clause, and the sense is, It is true God hath put the world into men's hearts, or made them capable of observing all events and dispensations of God in the world; but this is to be understood with a limitation, because there are some more mysterious works of God which no man can fully understand, because he cannot search them out through or from the beginning to the end.

i ver. 22. 12 [i]I know that *there is* no good in them, but for *a man* to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

I know, by clear reason, and my own long and certain experience, *that there is no good*, no other satisfaction or felicity which a man can enjoy, *in them*, in creatures or worldly enjoyments. *To do good;* either, 1. To himself, as it is fully expressed, Psal. xlix. 18. Or, 2. To others; to employ them in acts of charity and liberality towards others. Or, 3. Towards God; to use them, and to live in the fear of God, which is necessary to the happiness of this as well as of the other life.

k ch. 2. 24. 13 And also [k]that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it *is* the gift of God.

That every man should eat and drink, i. e. hath power or a heart to use what God hath given him, as it is expressed, chap. vi. 2. *It is the gift of God;* of which see the notes on chap. ii. 24.

14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth,
l Jam. 1. 17. it shall be for ever: [l]nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before him.

Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; all God's counsels or decrees are eternal and unchangeable, and his providence works effectually, so as men cannot resist or hinder it. *Nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it;* men can neither do any thing besides or against God's counsel and providence, nor hinder any work or act of it. *That men should fear before him;* not that men should make this an occasion of despair, or idleness, or dissoluteness, as some abuse this doctrine, but that, by the consideration of his sovereign and irresistible power in the disposal of all persons and things as pleaseth him, men should learn to trust in him, to submit to him, to fear to offend or rebel against him, and more carefully and industriously to study to please him.

15 [m]That which hath been is now; m ch. 1. 9.
and that which is to be hath already been; † Heb. *that which is driven away.*
and God requireth †that which is past.

That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; things past, present, and to come, are all of the same nature, and all ordered in the same manner by one constant counsel and settled course in all parts and ages of the world. There is a continual return of the same motions and influences of the heavenly bodies, of the same seasons of the year, and a constant succession of new generations of men and beasts, but all of the same quality. The same thing in substance was said before, chap. i. 9. *Requireth*, i. e. reneweth, as this word is used, Job iii. 4. *That which is past;* that time and those things which are irrecoverably gone in themselves, but are as it were recalled, because others of the same kind arise and come in their stead. Heb. *that which is driven away* with a mighty force, as time present is violently thrust away by that which comes after it.

16 ¶ And moreover [n]I saw under the n ch. 5. 8.
sun the place of judgment, *that* wickedness *was* there; and the place of righteousness, *that* iniquity *was* there.

This is mentioned, either, 1. As another vanity, to wit, the vanity of honour and power, which is so oft an instrument of injustice and oppression. Or rather, 2. As another argument of the vanity of worldly things, or a hinderance of that comfort which men expect in this life, because they are oppressed by their rulers. *I saw;* I perceived it by information from others, and by my own observation. *The place of judgment;* in the thrones of princes and tribunals of magistrates, where judgment should be duly executed. *Wickedness was there;* judgment was perverted, the guilty acquitted, and the innocent condemned. *The place of righteousness;* in which righteousness should be found and should dwell, if it were banished from all other places.

17 I said in mine heart, [o]God shall o Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7.
judge the righteous and the wicked: for
there is [p]a time there for every purpose p ver. 1.
and for every work.

I said in mine heart, mine heart was sorely grieved at this disorder, but I quieted it with this consideration, *God shall judge the righteous and the wicked;* absolving and saving the just, and condemning the wicked. *A time*, fixed by God's unalterable decree. He implies, that as this life is the sinner's time in which he doth whatsoever seemeth good in his own eyes, so God will have his time to reckon with them, and rectify all these disorders. *There;* in the presence or at the judgment-seat of God; which is easily understood out of the foregoing words, the relative being put for the antecedent, as it is Numb. vii. 89; Esth. ix. 25; Job i. 21; Psal. xiv. 5; cxiv. 2. Or it may be rendered *then*, as this particle is used, Psal. xiv. 5; Hos. ii. 15, and as it is usual in other authors for adverbs of place to be put for adverbs of time. *For every purpose, and for every work;* for the examining and judging, not only all men's practices or open actions, but also all their secret thoughts and purposes; all the evil which they either did, or designed, or desired, or endeavoured to do. The design of this verse is partly to strike a terror into oppressing potentates, and partly to satisfy the doubts and support the spirits of good men, who are oppressed in this life.

18 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of

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‖ Or, *that they might clear God, and see, &c.*

the sons of men, ‖ that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

I said in my heart; and further I considered with myself. *Concerning the estate of the sons of men;* concerning their condition and deportment in this present world. *That God might manifest them;* God suffers these horrible disorders among men, expressed ver. 16, *that* he *might discover* men to themselves, and by permitting these actions show what strange creatures they are, and what vile hearts they have, which men would not otherwise understand or believe. See 2 Kings viii. 13, 14. *That they themselves are beasts,* Heb. *that they are beasts to themselves;* either, 1. One to another, devouring and destroying one another. Or, 2. In their own judgment, or themselves being judges; that although God made them men or reasonable creatures, yet they have made themselves beasts by their brutish practices; and that men, considered only with respect unto the present life, which is the only thing valued and regarded by most men, and the vanity whereof is the principal subject of this book, are as vain and miserable creatures as the beasts themselves, the great differences between men and beasts being such as respect the other life. For men seem here to be called beasts in both these respects, and the latter he prosecutes more largely in the following verses.

q Ps. 49. 12, 20. & 73. 22. ch. 2. 16.

19 q For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all *is* vanity.

Befalleth beasts; they are subject to the same diseases, pains, and casualties. *So dieth the other;* as certainly, and no less painfully. *One breath;* one breath of life, which is in their nostrils; one and the same living soul, by which the beasts perform the same vital and animal operations. For he speaks not here of man's rational and immortal spirit, nor of the future life. *A man hath no pre-eminence above a beast,* in respect of the present life and sensible things. Nay, the beasts have quicker senses than men, and therefore enjoy more pleasure in those things, and that with less dangers and mischief, than men do.

r Gen. 3. 19.

20 All go unto one place; r all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

All go unto one place; to the earth, as it is expressed, ver. 21, out of which they were both taken. *All turn to dust again;* which is meant only of their bodies, as it is explained, Eccles. xii. 7.

s ch. 12. 7. † Heb. *of the sons of man.* ‡ Heb. *is ascending.*

21 s Who knoweth the spirit † of man that † goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth ‡?

It might be objected, that the conditions of men and beasts are vastly differing, because man's spirit goeth upward to God, chap. xii. 7, but the spirit of a beast goeth downward, together with its body, and perisheth with it. To this he answers, *Who knoweth this?* which is not to be understood as if no man did know it, or as if the thing were utterly uncertain and unknown, for he knew it, and positively affirms it, chap. xii. 7; but that few know it; as the same manner of expression is understood, Prov. xxxi. 10, *Who can find?* Isa. liii. 1, *Who hath believed?* &c.; which note the scarcity or difficulty, but not the nullity or impossibility of the thing. Besides, he seems here to speak not so much of a speculative as of a practical knowledge, as such words are most commonly used. Who considers or regards this, or layeth it to heart? True it is, there is such a difference, which also is known and believed by wise and good men; but the generality of mankind never mind it; their hearts are wholly set upon this life, and upon present and sensible things, and they place all their hopes and happiness in them, and take no thought nor care for the things of the future and invisible world. And as to them with whom Solomon hath to do in this matter, the argument is strong and good, being, as logicians call it, *an argument to the man;* and there is no considerable difference between sensual men and beasts, because their affections are set upon the same objects, and both of them are partakers of the same sensual satisfactions, and subject to the same sensual pains and miseries, and their hopes and felicity perish together, to wit, at death, and therefore such men are no more happy than the beasts that perish. Others understand it thus, *Who knoweth this?* to wit, by sense or experience, or merely by his own reason, or without the help of Divine revelation. But, with the leave of so many worthy interpreters, and with submission to better judgments, the former seems to be the truer sense.

t ver. 12. ch. 2. 24. & 5. 18. & 11. 9.

22 t Wherefore I perceive that *there is* nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for u that *is* his portion: x for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

u ch. 2. 10.

x ch. 6. 12. & 8. 7. & 10. 14.

There is nothing better, to wit, for a man's present satisfaction, and the happiness of this life, *than that a man should rejoice in his own works;* that he comfortably enjoy what God hath given him, and not disquiet himself with cares about future events. He seems to speak this, not in the person of an epicure, but as his own judgment, which also he declareth, chap. ii. 24; v. 18, 19; viii. 15. *That is his portion;* this is the benefit of his labours; he hath no more than he useth, for what he leaveth behind him is not his, but another man's. *Who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?* when once he is dead he shall never return into this life to see into whose hands his estate falls, and how it is either used or abused; nor is he at all concerned in those matters.

CHAP. IV.

The vanity of oppression, by reason of which the dead and the unborn are better than the living, 1—3. *Of envy, sloth, quarrel,* 4—6. *Of coretousness and selfishness,* 7, 8. *The advantage of society and friendship,* 9—12. *The poor better than foolish kings,* 13. *He is advanced, whilst one born king is made poor,* 14. *The people never contented, but rejoicing in changes,* 15, 16.

SO I returned, and considered all the a oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of *such as were* oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the † side of their oppressors *there was* power; but they had no comforter.

a ch. 3. 16. & 5. 8.

† Heb. *hand.*

I considered again more seriously *all the oppressions that are done under the sun,* whether by supreme magistrates or judges, of which he spake chap. iii. 16, or by any other potent persons. *They had no comforter;* none afforded them either pity or succour, either out of a selfish and barbarous disposition, or for fear of exposing themselves thereby to the same injuries. *There was power,* both in themselves, and because most men were ready to join with the strongest and safest side. So they were utterly unable to deliver themselves, and, as it follows, none else could or would do it. *They had no comforter;* which is repeated as an argument both of the great inhumanity of men towards others in calamity, and of the extreme misery of oppressed persons.

b Job 3. 17, &c.

2 b Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

I praised; I judged them more happy, or less miserable; which he seems to deliver not only as the judgment of the flesh, or of the sense, or of men in misery, as this is commonly understood, but as his own judgment. For this is most true and certain, that setting aside the advantage which this life gives him for the concerns of the future life, which Solomon doth not meddle with in the present debate, and considering the uncertainty, and vanity, and manifold vexations of mind, and outward calamities of the present life, a wise man would not account it worth his while to live, and would choose death rather than life. *The dead which are already dead;* those which are quite dead; who possibly are here opposed to them that, in respect of their deplorable and desperate condition, are even whilst they live called *dead* men, Isa. xxvi. 19, and said to *die daily,* 1 Cor. xv. 31. *The living which are yet alive;* which languish

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under their pressures, of whom we can only say, as we use to speak of dying men, They are alive, and that is all.

c Job 3. 11, 16, 21. ch. 6. 3.

3 c Yea, better *is he* than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

Which hath not yet been; who was never born. How this is true, see on the foregoing verse. *Not seen*, i. e. not felt; for as *seeing good* is put for enjoying it, chap. ii. 24, so *seeing evil* is put for suffering it, as hath been more than once observed.

† Heb. *all the rightness of work.* ‡ Heb. *this is the envy of a man from his neighbour.*

4 ¶ Again, I considered all travail, and †every right work, that ‡for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

Every right work; all the worthy designs and complete works of wise and virtuous men. *Is envied of his neighbour;* instead of that honour and recompence which he deserves, he meets with nothing but envy and obloquy, and many evil fruits thereof.

d Prov. 6. 10. & 24. 33.

5 d The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

Foldeth his hands together; is careless and idle, which is the signification of this gesture, Prov. vi. 10; xix. 24; xxvi. 15. Perceiving that diligence is attended with envy, ver. 4, he, like a fool, runs into the other extreme. *Eateth his own flesh;* wasteth his substance, and bringeth himself to poverty, whereby his very flesh pineth away for want of bread, and he is reduced to skin and bone; and if he have any flesh left, he is ready to eat it through extremity of hunger.

e Prov. 15. 16, 17. & 16. 8.

6 e Better *is* an handful *with* quietness, than both the hands full *with* travail and vexation of spirit.

These are the words, either, 1. Of the sluggard making this apology for his idleness, that his little with ease, is better than great riches got with much trouble. Or, 2. Of Solomon, who elsewhere speaks to the same purpose, as Prov. xv. 16, 17; xvii. 1, and here proposeth it as a good antidote against the vanity of immoderate cares and labours for worldly goods, against which he industriously directs his speeches in divers places of this book; and particularly as a seasonable precaution against the sin of covetousness, of which he speaks in the following passage.

7 ¶ Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.

8 There is one *alone*, and *there is* not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet *is there* no end of all his labour; neither is his f eye satisfied with riches; g neither *saith he*, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This *is* also vanity, yea, it *is* a sore travail.

f Prov. 27. 20. 1 John 2. 16. g Ps. 39. 6.

One alone; either, 1. Who lives by himself, as grudging that any other should partake of his provisions. Or rather, 2. Who hath none but himself to care and labour for, as the next words explain it. *He hath neither child nor brother*, to whom he may leave his vast estate. *Yet is there no end of all his labour;* he lives in perpetual restlessness and excessive toils. *His eye*, i. e. his covetous mind or desire, fitly expressed by *the eye*, partly because that is the incentive of this sin, Josh. vii. 21; and partly because he hath *no good* by his riches, *saving the beholding of them with his eyes*, as it is affirmed, Eccles. v. 11, compared with ii. 10; 1 John ii. 16. *Neither saith he*, within himself; he considers nothing but how he may get more and more. *For whom do I labour?* having no posterity nor kindred to enjoy it, as was now said. Shall I take all this pains for a stranger, possibly for an enemy, who will reap the fruit of all my labours? *Bereave my soul of good;* deny myself those comforts and conveniencies which God hath allowed unto me. *A sore travail;* a dreadful judgment and misery as well as a great sin.

9 ¶ Two *are* better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

Two, who live together in any kind of society, and join their powers together in any enterprises; which he opposeth to that humour of the covetous man, who desired to live alone, as was now said. *A good reward for their labour;* both have great benefit by such combinations and conjunctions of their counsels and abilities, whereby they do exceedingly support, and encourage, and strengthen one another, and effect many things which neither of them alone could do.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up.

They; one of them, the plural being put for the singular, as Jonah i. 5; Matt. xxi. 7; 1 Tim. ii. 15. Or both of them successively. *Fall*, in any kind, into any mistakes and errors, or sins, or dangers and distresses. *Will lift up his fellow;* hold him up if he be falling, or raise him up if he be fallen.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm *alone?*

They have heat; they will be sooner warm in a cold bed and cold season. *How can one be warm alone?* not so soon nor so thoroughly.

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Against him; against either of them. *A threefold cord is not quickly broken;* if a man have not only one, but two or more friends, he is so much the safer and the happier.

13 ¶ Better *is* a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, †who will no more be admonished.

† Heb. *who knoweth not to be admonished.*

Better; more happy. Now he proceeds to another vanity, even that of honour and power, and of the highest places. *A poor child;* who is doubly contemptible, both for his age, and for his poverty. *An old king;* venerable both for his age and gravity, and for his royal dignity. So that the comparison is made with the greatest disadvantage that may be. *Who will no more be admonished;* who hath neither wisdom to govern himself, nor to receive the counsels or admonitions of wiser men, but is foolish, and wilful, and incorrigible.

14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also *he that is* born in his kingdom becometh poor.

Out of prison, into which he was cast for his poverty and debt, *he*, the poor and wise child, *cometh to reign;* is oftimes advanced by his wisdom to the highest power and dignity; which was the case of Joseph, and Mordecai, and many others. *He that is born in his kingdom*, that old king, who was born of the royal race, and had possessed his kingdom for a long time, *becometh poor;* is deprived of his kingdom, either by the rebellion of his subjects provoked by his folly, or by the power of some other and wiser prince.

15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

I considered all the living; the general disposition or humour of common people in all kingdoms, that they are fickle and unconstant, weary of their old governors, and desirous of changes. *Which walk under the sun:* this is a *periphrasis*, or description of living and mortal men, like that Eccles. vii. 11, *that see the sun*. *With the second child:* these words may be joined either, 1. With those *which walk*, or, *that they walk under the sun*, (i. e. upon the earth,) *with the second child*, i. e. follow, and favour, and worship him as the rising sun, upon whom the eyes and hopes of most people are fixed. Or, 2. With the first words, *I considered all the living which walk under the sun*, i. e. the temper of all subjects or people, together *with* the condition of *the second child;* which may be understood either, 1. In general, of a king's *child*, or son and heir, who is called *second*, in respect of his father, whose successor he is to be. Or, 2. That wise and poor child mentioned ver. 13, who is said to *come to reign*, ver. 14, and may well be called *the second* to the old and foolish king who *became poor*, ver. 15, being deposed from his kingdom, whom he succeeds, being

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put in his place either by the humour of the people, or by some higher power. *Stand up*, i. e. arise to reign, as that phrase signifies, Dan. viii. 22, 23; xi. 2, 3, 7, 20, 21.

16 *There is* no end of all the people, *even* of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

There is no end of all the people: the sense is either, 1. The people which have this humour are without end, or innumerable, as this phrase signifies, Job xxii. 5; Isa. ii. 7; ix. 7. Or, 2. This humour of the common people hath no end, but passeth from one generation to another; they ever were, and are, and will be unstable and restless, and given to change; which sense the following words seem to favour. *Before them;* either, 1. Before the two kings above mentioned, the father and the son, or the predecessor and successor. All those who stood or desired to stand in their presence, and waited upon them, as this phrase is used, 2 Sam. xvi. 19; 1 Kings x. 8. Or rather, 2. Before the present generation of subjects, who earnestly desired and promoted the change of government here expressed; for these are evidently opposed to *them that come after*, which all interpreters understand of the people, not of the kings. And so here are three generations of people noted, the authors of the present change, and their parents, and their children, and all are observed to have the same inclinations in these matters. *Shall not rejoice in him;* they shall be as weary of the successor, though a wise and worthy prince, as their parents were of his foolish predecessor; the reason whereof is partly from that itch of novelty and curiosity which is natural and common to mankind, and partly from their vain and foolish hopes of advantage from such changes.

CHAP. V.

Vanities in divine matters, 1—7. *In murmuring and repining,* 8. *In riches and covetousness,* 9, 10; *for riches rob men of ease,* 11, 12, *procure their death,* 13, *fly away,* 14, *cannot be carried with them into the grave,* 15—17. *A contented life best: this is the gift of God,* 18—20.

The seven first verses of this chapter are inserted partly as the only effectual remedy against all the foregoing vanities, and partly as a caution to take heed of bringing vanity into the service of God, or of worshipping God vainly and foolishly.

a See Ex. 3. 5. Is. 1. 12, &c.
b 1 Sam. 15. 22. Ps. 50. 8. Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27. Hos. 6. 6.

KEEP [a] thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, [b] than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

Keep thy foot; the feet of thy soul, which are the thoughts and affections, by which men go to God, and walk or converse with him. Make straight steps. See that your hearts be purged from sin, and prepared and furnished with all graces or necessary qualifications, as good intention, reverence, humility, &c. It is a metaphor from one that walketh in a very slippery path, in which there needs more than ordinary care to keep him from falling. *The house of God;* the place of God's solemn and public worship, whether the temple or synagogue. *Be more ready,* Heb. *more near,* more forward and inclinable. Prefer this duty before the following. *To hear;* to hearken to and obey God's word, there read and preached by the priests or prophets; for *hearing* is very frequently put in Scripture for obeying. *The sacrifice of fools;* such as foolish and wicked men use to offer, who vainly think to please God with the multitude and costliness of their sacrifices without true piety or obedience. *They consider not that they do evil;* they are not sensible of the great sinfulness of such thoughts and practices, but, like fools, think they do God good service; which is implied, as is usual in such expressions.

2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* ‖ thing before God: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words [c] be few.

‖ Or, word.
c Prov. 10. 19. Matt. 6. 7.

Be not rash with thy mouth; speak not without good understanding and due consideration. *Let not thine heart be hasty;* do not give way to every sudden motion of thine heart, nor suffer it to break out of thy lips till thou hast well weighed it. *To utter any thing before God;* either, 1. In prayers directed to him. Or, 2. In solemn vows and promises made in God's presence; which were very much in use in those times, and of which he speaks in the following verses, where he presseth us to pay our vows when we have made them, as here he seems to caution us in making them. *God is in heaven;* is a God of infinite majesty, not to be despised or abused; of infinite holiness, not to be polluted or offended; of infinite knowledge, observing all our words and carriages, not to be deceived. *Thou upon earth;* thou art a poor earth-worm, infinitely below him, and therefore shouldst stand in awe of him, and fear to offend him. *Let thy words be few;* either 1. In prayer. Use not vain repetitions nor multitude of words in prayer, as if they were necessary to inform God of thy state, or to prevail with God to grant thy requests, or as if thou shouldst certainly be heard upon that very account, as Christ also cautions us, Matt. vi. 7. For otherwise it is not unlawful, nay, sometimes it is a duty, to use long prayers, and consequently many words, and to repeat the same words in prayer, as is manifest from Neh. ix. 3; Dan. ix. 18, 19; Matt. xxvi. 44; Luke vi. 12, and many other places. Or, 2. In vowing. Be not too prodigal in making more vows and promises than thou art either able or willing and resolved to perform, remembering that God looks down from heaven, and heareth all thy vows, and expects a punctual accomplishment of them. Compare the notes on ver. 3.

3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and [d] a fool's voice *is known* by multitude of words.

d Prov. 10. 19.

When men's minds are distracted and oppressed with too much business in the day, they dream of it in the night. *A fool's voice is known;* it discovers the man to be a foolish, and rash, and inconsiderate man. *By multitude of words;* either, 1. In prayer. Or, 2. In vowing, i. e. by making many rash vows, of which he speaks in ver. 4—6, and then returns to the mention of *multitude of dreams and many words,* ver. 7, which verse may be a comment upon this, and which makes it probable that both that and this verse are to be understood of vows rather than of prayers.

4 [e] When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for *he hath* no pleasure in fools: [f] pay that which thou hast vowed.

e Num. 30. 2. Deut. 23. 21, 22, 23. Ps. 50. 14. & 76. 11.
f Ps. 66. 13, 14.

A vow; which is a solemn promise, whereby a man binds himself to do something which is in his power to do. *Defer not to pay it;* perform it whilst the sense of thine obligation is fresh and strong upon thee, lest either thou seem to repent of thy promises, or lest delays end in denials and resolutions of non-performance. See Numb. xxx. 2; Deut. xxiii. 21; Psal. lxvi. 13, 14; lxxvi. 11. *In fools;* in hypocritical and perfidious persons, who, when they are in distress, make liberal vows, and when the danger is past, neglect and break them; whom he calls *fools,* partly because it is the highest folly to despise and provoke, to think to mock and deceive, the all-seeing and almighty God; and partly in opposition to the contrary opinion of such persons, who think they deal wisely and cunningly in serving themselves of God, by getting the advantage or deliverance which they desire by making such vows, and yet avoiding the inconvenience and charge of payment when once the work is done, whereas nothing is more impious or ridiculous than such an imagination.

5 [g] Better *is it* that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

g Prov. 20. 25. Acts 5. 4.

That thou shouldest not vow; for this was no sin, because men are free to make such vows, or not to make them, as they think fit. See Numb. xxx. 3, &c.; Deut. xxiii. 22; Acts v. 4. But having vowed we cannot forbear payment of them without sin.

6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; [h] neither say thou before the angel, that it *was* an error: wherefore

h 1 Cor. 11. 10.

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should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?

Suffer not thy mouth, by uttering any rash or foolish vow. *Thy flesh*, i. e. thyself, the word *flesh* being oft put for the whole man, as Gen. vi. 12; Isa. xl. 5; Rom. iii. 20, &c. And it seems to have some *emphasis* here, and to intimate either, 1. That such vows were made upon fleshly or carnal, and not upon spiritual and religious motives. Or rather, 2. That *the flesh* or corrupt nature of man, which is oft called *flesh*, was exceeding prone to set itself at ease and liberty from such bonds, and to neglect the chargeable duties of religion. *The angel;* either, 1. The blessed angels, the singular number being put for the plural, who are present in the public assemblies in which these vows were generally paid, Psal. lxvi. 13, where they observe both the matter and manner of men's religious performances, as appears from 1 Cor. xi. 10, who as they rejoice in the conversion of a sinner, Luke xv. 10, so are displeased with the sins of men, and especially such as are committed in or against the worship of God. Or, 2. Christ, who in the Old Testament is frequently called an *angel*, as hath been oft noted before, and *the Angel of the covenant*, Mal. iii. 1, because even then he acted as God's messenger, appearing and speaking to the patriarchs and prophets in his Father's name, as a presignification of his future incarnation, and who is and was in a special manner present in all religious assemblies; and being omniscient and omnipresent, exactly knew and observed all the vows which men made, and whether they did perform or violate them. Or rather, 3. The priest or minister of holy things, who was to require of the people the payment of their vows, to whom all sacrifices for sins of ignorance or errors about vows or other things were to be brought, Lev. v. 4, 5. For such persons are oft called *angels*, or, as this Hebrew word is commonly rendered, *messengers*, as Job xxxiii. 23; Mal. ii. 7; Rev. i. 20. And this title seems to be given to the priest here, not without some *emphasis*, because the vow made to God was paid to the priest as one standing and acting in God's name and stead, and it belonged to the priest, as God's angel or ambassador, to discharge persons from their vows when there was just occasion so to do. *That it was an error;* I did foolishly and unadvisedly in making such a vow, and therefore I hope God will excuse me, and instead of that which I had vowed, accept of a sacrifice for my ignorance, according to the law for sins of ignorance, Lev. iv. 2; v. 15; Numb. xv. 26. *Wherefore should God be angry*, why wilt thou provoke God to anger, *at thy voice?* either, 1. At the vows which thou hast hastily uttered with thy mouth, as he said above. Or rather, 2. At these frivolous excuses, wherewith thou deludest thy own conscience, and vainly imaginest that thou canst deceive God himself. *Destroy the work of thine hands;* blast all thy contrivances, and labours, and estate gotten by thy labours, and particularly that work or enterprise for the success whereof thou didst make these vows, which being, as thou thinkest, finished, thou refusest to pay thy vows; but know that God can quickly undo that which thou hast done, and plentifully repay thine indignities and injuries offered to him into thine own bosom.

7 For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there are* also *divers* vani-
i ch. 12. 13. ties: but [i]fear thou God.

There is a great deal of vanity and folly, as *in multitude of dreams*, which for the most part are vain and insignificant, so also *in many words*, i. e. in making many vows, whereby a man is exposed to many snares and temptations. *Fear thou God;* fear the offence and wrath of God, and therefore be sparing in making vows, and just in performing them; whereby he implies that this rashness in vowing, and slackness in performing vows, proceed from the want of a just reverence and dread of the Divine Majesty, who is immediately concerned in these matters.

k ch. 3. 16. 8 ¶ If thou [k]seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not † at the matter: for [l]*he that is* higher than the highest regardeth; and *there be* higher than they.

† Heb. *at the will*, or, *purpose.*
l Ps. 12. 5. & 58. 11. & 82. 1.

Here is an account of another vanity, and a sovereign antidote against it. *Marvel not*, as if it were inconsistent with God's wisdom, and justice, and truth to suffer such disorders, or a just cause for any man to throw off that fear and service of God which I have now commended to thee. *He that is higher than the highest*, the most high God, who is infinitely above the greatest of men, and therefore, if he saw meet, could crush them in an instant, *regardeth*, not like an idle spectator, but like a judge, who diligently observes and records all these miscarriages, and will so effectually punish them, that neither they shall have any cause of triumph in their former successes, nor good men to be grieved at the remembrance of them. *There be higher than they;* either, 1. The high and holy angels, who are employed by God in the government of kings and kingdoms, as we read in the Book of Daniel, and elsewhere, and for the defence of God's people, Psal. xxxiv. 7; xci. 11; Heb. i. 14. Or, 2. God; and so it is an emphatical repetition of the same thing, which is frequent in Scripture; there is *a higher than they*. Or, as the words are by others fitly rendered, *the Most High* (for plural words are oft understood of God singularly) *is above them*, and therefore can control them, and will certainly call them to an account.

9 ¶ Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: the king *himself* is served by the field.

The profit of the earth, the fruits procured from the earth by the skill and labour of the husbandman, *is for all;* are necessary and beneficial to all men whatsoever. The wise man, after some interruption, returns to his former subject, to discourse of the vanity of great riches, one argument or evidence whereof he seems to mention in this verse, to wit, that the poor labourer enjoyeth the fruits of the earth as well as the greatest monarch, and that the richest man in the world depends as much upon them as the poorest. *Is served by the field;* is supported by the fruits of the field; or, as many others render it, *serves* or *is a servant to the field*, depends upon it, is obliged to see that his fields be tilled and dressed, that he may have subsistence for himself, and for his servants and subjects.

10 He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this *is* also vanity.

The greatest treasures of silver do not satisfy the covetous possessor of it; partly because his mind is insatiable, and his desires are increased by and with gains; partly because silver of itself cannot satisfy his natural desires and necessities as the fruits of the field can do, and the miserable wretch grudgeth to part with his silver, though it be to purchase things needful and convenient for him. *That loveth abundance;* or, *that loveth* it (to wit, silver) *in abundance;* that desires and lays up great treasures.

11 When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good *is there* to the owners thereof, saving the beholding *of them* with their eyes?

They are increased that eat them; they require and are more commonly attended with a numerous company of servants, and friends, and retinues to consume them; which is a great torment to a covetous man, of whom he here speaks. *What good is there to the owners thereof?* what benefit hath he above others, who feed upon his provisions, and enjoy the same comforts which he doth, without his fears, and cares, and troubles about them? *The beholding of them with their eyes;* either, 1. With a reflection upon his propriety in them. Or, 2. With unlimited freedom. He can go and look upon his bags or chests of silver as long and as oft as he pleaseth, whereas other men are seldom admitted to that prospect, and see only some few of the fruits or purchases of it.

12 The sleep of a labouring man *is* sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

Is sweet; because he is free from those cares and fears, wherewith the minds of rich men are oft distracted, and their sleep disturbed. *Whether he eat little*, then his weariness disposeth him to sleep, *or much*, in which case his healthful constitution and laborious course of life prevents those crudities and indigestions which ofttimes break the

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sleep of rich men. *The abundance*, Heb. *the fulness*, either, 1. Of his diet, which commonly discomposeth their stomachs, and hinders their rest; or, 2. Of wealth, which is commonly attended with many perplexing cares, which disquiet men both by day and by night. The Hebrew word is used in Scripture both ways, and possibly it is thus generally expressed to include both significations.

m ch. 6. 1. 13 [m]There is a sore evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely*, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

Because they frequently are the instruments and occasions both of their present and eternal destruction, as they feed their pride or luxury, or other hurtful lusts, which waste the body, and shorten the life, and damn the soul; and as they are great temptations to tyrants or thieves, yea, sometimes to relations, or servants, or others, to take away their lives, that they may get their riches.

14 But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and *there is* nothing in his hand.

But, or *for*, or *or*, or *moreover*; for this particle is so rendered by divers others, both here and in other places of Scripture. *Those riches perish*: if they be kept, it is to the owner's hurt; and if not, they are lost to his grief. *By evil travail*; by some wicked practices, either his own, or of other men; or by some secret hand of God cursing all his enterprises. *There is nothing in his hand*; either, 1. In the father's power to leave to his son, for whose sake he underwent all those hard labours; which is a great aggravation of his grief and misery. Or, 2. In the son's possession after his father's death.

n Job 1. 21. Ps. 49. 17. 1 Tim. 6. 7. 15 [n]As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.

Return to go into the womb or belly of the earth, the common mother of all mankind. See the notes on Job i. 21; Eccles. xii. 7. And *return to go*, is put for *return and go*; and *going* is here put for *dying*, as Job xvi. 22; Psal. xxxix. 13. This is another vanity: if his estate be neither lost, nor kept to his hurt, but enjoyed by him with safety and comfort all his days, yet when he dies he must leave it behind him, and cannot carry one handful of it with him into another world.

16 And this also *is* a sore evil, *that* in all points as he came, so shall he go: and o ch. 1. 3. p Prov. 11. 29. [o]what profit hath he [p]that hath laboured for the wind?

This also, which I have last mentioned and shall now repeat. *For the wind*; for riches, which are empty and unsatisfying, uncertain and transitory, fleeing away swiftly and strongly, Prov. xxiii. 5, which no man can hold or stay in its course, all which are the properties of the wind. Compare Prov. xi. 29; Hos. xii. 1.

q Ps. 127. 2. 17 All his days also [q]he eateth in darkness, and *he hath* much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

All his days, to wit, of his life, *also he eateth in darkness*; he hath no comfort in his estate, but even when he eats, when other men relax their minds, and use freedom and cheerfulness, he doth it with anxiety and discontent, as grudging even at his own necessary expenses, and tormenting himself with cares about getting, and disposing, and keeping his estate. *He hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness*; when he falls sick, and presageth or feareth his death, he is filled with rage, because he is cut off before he hath accomplished his designs, and because he must leave that wealth and world in which all his hopes and happiness lie, and must go to give up a doleful account to his Judge of all his actions and acquisitions.

r ch. 2. 24. & 3. 12, 13, 22. & 9. 7. & 11. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 17. † Heb. there is a good which is comely, &c. 18 ¶ Behold *that* which I have seen: [r]† *it is* good and comely *for one* to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun † all the days of his life, which God giveth him: [s]for it *is* his portion. † Heb. *the number of the days.* s ch. 2. 10. & 3. 22.

That which I have seen, i. e. learned by study and experience. *Good and comely*; *good* or comfortable to man's self, and *comely* or amiable in the eyes of other men, as penuriousness is base and dishonourable. *His portion*, to wit, of worldly goods; for he hath another and a better portion in heaven. This liberty is given to him by God, and this is the best advantage, as to this life, which he can make of them.

19 [t]Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this *is* the gift of God. t ch. 2. 24. & 3. 13. & 6. 2.

Hath given him power, Heb. *hath given him the dominion*; who is the lord and master of his estate, not a slave to it. Of this and the former verse, see the notes on Eccles. ii. 24; iii. 12, 13. *To take his portion* to his own use, to use what God hath given him.

20 ‖For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth *him* in the joy of his heart. ‖ Or, *Though he give not much, yet he remembereth, &c.*

He shall not much remember; so as to disquiet or vex himself therewith. *The days*; either, 1. The troubles; *days* being here put for evil or sad days, by a usual synecdoche, as Job xviii. 20; Psal. cxxxvii. 7; Obad. 12; Micah vii. 4. Or, 2. The time in general; which is irksome and tedious to men oppressed with discontent or misery, who usually reckon every hour or minute that passeth, and have their minds and thoughts constantly fixed upon the vanity and uncertainty of this life, upon the afflictions which they have already endured and may further expect; whereas to men of contented and cheerful minds the time is short and sweet, and passeth over them before they are aware of it, and they enjoy their present comforts without perplexing themselves about former or future events. *Answereth him*; answereth, either, 1. His labours with success, as *money* is said to *answer all things*, Eccles. x. 19, because it is equivalent to all, and able to purchase all things. Or, 2. His desires. *In the joy of his heart*; in giving him that solid joy and comfort of his labours which his heart expected and desired.

CHAP. VI.

The vanity of riches without use, 1, 2. *Of children and old age without competent wealth; their obscurity is worse than not to have been*, 3—6. *All labour is for necessaries of life, which one getteth as well as another*, 7, 8. *It is good for us to enjoy what we have, and not to desire what we have not; for our portion is appointed us; and we ourselves are vain; and other things do but increase our vanity*, 9—12.

a ch. 5. 13. [a]THERE is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among men:

2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, [b]so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, [c]yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil disease. b Job 21. 10. &c. Ps. 17. 14. & 73. 7. c Luke 12. 20.

Wealth; all sorts of riches, as gold and silver, cattle and lands, &c. *Of all that he desireth*; which he doth or can reasonably desire. *Giveth him not power to eat*; either because they are suddenly taken away from him by the hand and curse of God, and given to others; or because God gives him up to a base and covetous mind, which is both a sin and a plague. *Thereof*, i. e. any considerable part of it; whereas the *stranger eateth* not thereof, but *it*, i. e. all of it; devoureth it all in an instant.

3 ¶ If a man beget an hundred *children*, and

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live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and [d]also *that* he have no burial; I say, *that* [e]an untimely birth *is* better than he.

[d] 2 Kings 9. 35. Is. 14. 19, 20. Jer. 22. 19. [e] Job 3. 16. Ps. 58. 8. ch. 4. 3.

An hundred children, i. e. very many children, to whom he intends to leave his estate. *Live many years;* which is the chief thing that he desires, and which giveth him opportunity of increasing his estate vastly. *The days;* he saith *days*, because the years of men's life are but few. *Be not filled with good;* hath not a contented mind and comfortable enjoyment of his estate whilst he lives. *Have no burial;* and if after his death he hath either none, or a mean and dishonourable burial, because his sordid and covetous carriage made him hateful and contemptible to all persons, his children and heirs not excepted, and he was by all sorts of men thought unworthy of any testimonies of honour, either in his life or after his death. Thus he describes a man who lives miserably, and dies ignominiously. *An untimely birth;* which as it never enjoyed the comforts, so it never felt the calamities, of this life, which are far more considerable than its comforts, at least to a man that denied himself the comforts, and plunged himself into the toils and vexations, of this life.

4 For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

For; or rather, *although*, as this particle is frequently rendered. For this verse seems to contain not so much a reason of what he last said, *that an untimely birth is better than he*, as an answer to an exception which might be made against it. Although all that is here said be true of the abortive, yet it is better than he. *He;* either, 1. The covetous man. Or rather, 2. The abortive; of whom alone, and not of the former, that passage is true, *he hath not seen the sun*, ver. 5. *Cometh in;* into the world, this word being oft put for a man's being born, as Job i. 21; Eccles. v. 15. *With vanity;* or, *in vain*, to no purpose; without any comfort or benefit by it, which also is in a great measure the case of the covetous wretch. *Departeth in darkness;* dieth obscurely, without any observation or regard of men. *Shall be covered with darkness;* shall be speedily and utterly forgotten; whereas the name of such wicked men shall rot, and be remembered to their shame.

5 Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known *any thing:* this hath more rest than the other.

He hath not seen the sun; he never beheld the light, and therefore it is not grievous to him to want it; whereas the covetous man saw that light was very pleasant, and therefore the loss of it was irksome to him. *Nor known any thing;* hath had no knowledge, sense, or experience of any thing, whether good or evil. *Hath more rest*, because he is perfectly free from all those encumbrances and vexations to which the covetous man is long exposed.

6 ¶ Yea, though he live a thousand years twice *told*, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

Live a thousand years twice told; wherein he seems to have a privilege above an untimely birth. *Hath he seen no good;* he hath enjoyed little or no comfort in it, and therefore long life is rather a curse and mischief than a blessing or advantage to him. *Do not all*, whether born out of and before their time, or in due time, whether their lives be long or short, *go to one place;* to the grave. And so after a little time all are alike as to this life, of which he here speaks; and as to the other life, his condition is infinitely worse than that of an untimely birth.

7 [f]All the labour of man *is* for his †mouth, and yet the †appetite is not filled.

[f] Prov. 16. 26. † Heb. soul.

For his mouth; for meat to put into his mouth, that he may get food; and as bread is oft put for all food, so food is put for all necessary provisions for this life, as Prov. xxx. 8, and elsewhere; whereof this is the chief, for which a man will sell his house and lands, yea, the very garments upon his back. *Is not filled:* although all that a man can get by his labours is but necessary food, which the meanest sort of men commonly enjoy, as is observed in the next verse; yet such is the vanity of this world, and the folly of mankind, that men are insatiable in their desires, and restless in their endeavours, after more and more, and never say they have enough.

8 For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?

The fool, to wit, in these matters. Both are equally subject to the same calamities, and partakers of the same comforts of this life. *Before the living*, to wit, before the poor, that doth not know this; which words are easily understood by comparing this clause with the former. And such defects are usual, both in Scripture and other authors, as hath been formerly noted, by a figure which the learned call *anantapodoton*. And by this phrase, *that knoweth*, &c., he means such a poor man who is ingenious and industrious; who is fit for service and business, and knows how to carry himself towards rich men, so as to deserve and gain their favour, and to procure a livelihood.

9 ¶ Better *is* the sight of the eyes †than the wandering of the desire: this *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

† Heb. *than the walking of the soul.*

The sight of the eyes, i. e. the comfortable enjoyment of what a man hath; for *seeing* is oft put for enjoying, as Psal. xxxiv. 12; Eccles. ii. 1; iii. 13, &c. *The wandering of the desire;* restless and insatiable desires of what a man hath not, wherewith covetous rich men are perpetually haunted and tormented. *This*, this wandering of the desire wherein most men indulge themselves, *is also vanity and vexation of spirit;* is not the way to satisfaction, as they imagine, but to vexation.

10 That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it *is* man: [g]neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.

[g] Job 9. 32. Is. 45. 9. Jer. 49. 19.

This verse is added either as a proof of what he last said concerning the vanity and wandering of insatiable desires, or as a further instance of the vanity of all things in this life. *That which hath been* (or, *is*, for the Hebrew verb may be rendered either way, to wit, man considered with all his endowments and enjoyments, whether he be wise or foolish, rich or poor; man, who is the chief of all visible and sublunary beings, for whom they all were made) *is named already*, to wit, by God, who, presently after his creation, gave him the following name, to signify what his nature and condition was or would be. Heb. *What is that which hath been*, or *is*, it *is*, or *hath been named already*. Others understand it thus, All the several conditions which men have had or shall have in the world, riches or poverty, &c., are already named, i. e. appointed or determined by God's unchangeable counsel and invincible providence. But though this be true, it seems not to suit so well with the following clause as the other interpretation doth. *It is known that it is man;* this is certain and manifest, that that being which makes all this noise and stir in the world, howsoever magnified by themselves, and sometimes adored by flatterers, and howsoever differenced from or advanced above others, by wisdom, or riches, or the like, is but a *man*, i. e. a mean earthly mortal and miserable creature, as his very name signifies, which God gave him for this very end, that he might be always sensible of his vain, and base, and miserable estate in this world, and therefore never expect satisfaction or happiness in it. *With him that is mightier than he*, i. e. with Almighty God, with whom men are very apt to contend upon every slight occasion, and against whom they are ready to murmur for this vanity, and mortality, and misery of mankind, although they brought it upon themselves by their own sins. So this is seasonably added to prevent the abuse of the foregoing passage.

11 ¶ Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what *is* man the better?

This seems to be added as a conclusion of the disputation managed in all the foregoing chapters, *Seeing* not only man is a vain creature in himself, as hath been now said, but *there are* also *many* other *things* in the world, *which* instead of removing or diminishing, as might be expected, do but

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increase this *vanity*, as wisdom, pleasure, power, wealth, and the like, the vanity of all which hath been fully and particularly declared. Seeing even the good things of this life bring so much toil, and cares, and fears, &c. with them. *What is man the better*, to wit, by all that he can either desire or enjoy here? Hence it is evident that all these things cannot make him happy, but that he must seek for happiness elsewhere.

† Heb. *the number of the days of the life of his vanity.*
[h] Ps. 102. 11. & 109. 23. & 144. 4. Jam. 4. 14.
[i] Ps. 39. 6. ch. 8. 7.

12 For who knoweth what *is* good for man in *this* life, †all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as [h]a shadow? for [i]who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

Who knoweth what is good for man? no man certainly knows what is best for him here, whether to be high or low, rich or poor, because those great things which men generally desire and pursue are very frequently the occasions of men's utter ruin, as hath been noted again and again in this book. *Vain life;* life itself, which is the foundation of all men's comforts and enjoyments here, is a vain, and uncertain, and transitory thing, and therefore all things which depend upon it must needs be so too. *A shadow;* which, whilst it abides, hath nothing real, and solid, or substantial in it, and doth speedily pass away, and leaves no sign behind it. And as no man can be happy with these things whilst he liveth and enjoyeth them, so he can have no content in leaving them to others, because he knoweth not either who shall possess them, or how the future owners will use or abuse them, or what mischief they may do by them, either to others, or even to themselves.

CHAP. VII.

A good name desirable; and the house of mourning and rebuke better than songs and laughter, 1—6. *Exhortations to patience and perseverance,* 7—10. *Wisdom and money a defence,* 11, 12. *God's providence should render us contented: our duty both in prosperity and adversity,* 13, 14. *Prudence and the fear of God necessary in this world,* 15—18. *The praise of wisdom,* 19. *All men are sinners,* 20. *Other men's opinions of thee not too much to be minded: the motive thereto,* 21, 22. *The Preacher's experience thereof,* 23—25. *An evil woman more bitter than death,* 26—28. *God created man good,* 29.

Having largely discoursed of the vanity of all worldly things, and having now said in the foregoing verse that no man knew what was best for him, he now proceeds to prescribe some remedies against these vanities, and to direct men to the right method of obtaining that felicity which is not to be expected or found in this world.

[a] Prov. 15. 30. & 22. 1.

A [a]GOOD name *is* better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

A good name; a good and well-grounded report from wise and worthy persons. Heb. *a name*, which is put for a good name by a synecdoche, that only being worthy to be called a name, because evil and worthless men quickly lose their name and memory. Thus *a wife* is put for *a good wife*, Prov. xviii. 22, and *a day* for *a good day*, Luke xix. 12, 14. *Precious ointment;* which was very fragrant, and acceptable, and useful, and of great price, especially in those countries. See Deut. xxxiii. 24; Psal. xcii. 10; cxxxiii. 2; Isa. xxxix. 2. *The day of death*, to wit, of a good man, or one who hath left a good name behind him, which is easily understood both from the former clause, and from the nature of the thing; for to a wicked man this day is far worse, and most terrible. Yet if this passage be delivered with respect only to this life, and abstracting from the future life, as many other passages in this book are to be understood, then this may be true in general of all men, and is the consequent of all the former discourse. Seeing this life is so full of vanity, and vexation, and misery, it is a more desirable thing for a man to go out of it, than to come into it; which is the more considerable note, because it is contrary to the opinion and practice of almost all mankind, to celebrate their own or children's birth-days with solemn feasts and rejoicings, and their deaths with all expressions of sorrow.

2 ¶ *It is* better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that *is* the end of all men; and the living will lay *it* to his heart.

The house of mourning; where mourners meet together to celebrate the funerals of a deceased friend. *That*, to wit, death, the cause of that mourning, *is the end of all men;* it brings men to the serious consideration of their last end, which is their greatest wisdom and interest. *Will lay it to his heart;* will be seriously affected with it, and awakened to prepare for it; whereas feasting is commonly attended with mirth, and levity, and manifold temptations, and indisposeth men's minds to spiritual and heavenly thoughts. Hence it is evident that those passages of this book which may seem to favour a sensual and voluptuous life, are not spoken by Solomon in his own name, or as his opinion, but in the person of an epicure.

3 ‖ Sorrow *is* better than laughter: ‖ Or, *Anger.*
[b] for by the sadness of the countenance [b] 2 Cor. 7. 10.
the heart is made better.

Sorrow; either for sin, or any outward troubles. *The sadness of the countenance;* which is seated in the heart, but manifested in the countenance. *Made better;* more weaned from the lusts and vanities of this world, by which most men are insnared and destroyed, and more quickened to seek after and embrace that true and everlasting happiness which God offers to them in his word.

4 The heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, even when their bodies are absent. They are constantly, or very frequently, meditating upon sad and serious things, such as death and judgment, the vanity of this life, and the reality and eternity of the next, because they know that these thoughts, though they be not grateful to the sensual part, yet they are absolutely necessary, and highly profitable, and most comfortable in the end, which every wise man most regards. *The heart of fools is in the house of mirth;* their minds and affections are wholly set upon feasting and jollity, because, like fools and brutish creatures, they regard only their present delight, and mind not how dearly they must pay for them.

5 [c] *It is* better to hear the rebuke of [c] See Ps. 141. 5. Prov. 13. 18. & 15. 31, 32.
the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

The rebuke of the wise, though it causeth some grief, yet frequently brings great benefit, even reformation and salvation, both from temporal and from eternal destruction, both which are the portion of impenitent sinners. *The song;* the flatteries, or other merry discourses, which are as pleasant to corrupt nature, as songs or music.

6 [d] For as the †crackling of thorns [d] Ps. 118. 12. ch. 2. 2. † Heb. *sound.*
under a pot, so *is* the laughter of the fool:
this also *is* vanity.

The crackling of thorns, which for a time make a great noise and blaze, but presently waste themselves, and go out without any considerable effect upon the meat in the pot. *So;* so vanishing and fruitless.

7 ¶ Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; [e] and a gift destroyeth the [e] Ex. 23. 8. Deut. 16. 19.
heart.

Oppression; either, 1. Active. When a wise man falls into the practice of this sin of oppressing others, he is besotted by it, and by the vast riches which he by his great wit gets by it. Or rather, 2. Passive. When a wise man is oppressed by foolish and wicked men, it makes him fret and rage, and speak or act like a madman; for the wisest men are most sensible of indignities and injuries, whereas fools are stupid, and do not much lay them to heart. *A gift*, a bribe given to a wise man, *destroyeth the heart;* deprives him of the use of his understanding, which is oft called *the heart*, as Exod. xxiii. 8; Deut. xvi. 19; Hos. iv. 8, or makes him mad, as was said in the former clause.

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So this verse discovers two ways whereby a wise man may be made mad, by suffering oppression from others, or by receiving bribes to oppress others. And this also is an argument of the vanity of worldly wisdom, that it is so easily corrupted and lost, and so it serves the main design of this book.

8 Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: *and* [f]the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit.

[f] Prov. 14. 29.

If this verse relates to that next foregoing, it is an argument to keep men's minds from being disordered, either by oppression or bribery, because the end of those practices will show, that he who oppresseth another doth himself most hurt by it, and that he who taketh bribes is no gainer by them. But if this be independent upon the former, as divers other verses here are, it is a general and useful observation, that the good or evil of things is better known by their end than by their beginning; which is true both in evil counsels and courses, which are pleasant at first, but at last bring destruction; and in all noble enterprises, in the studies of learning, and in the practice of virtue and godliness, where the beginnings are difficult and troublesome, but in the progress and conclusion they are most easy and comfortable; and it is not sufficient to begin well, unless we persevere to the end, which crowns all. *The patient in spirit*, who quietly waits for the end and issue of things, and is willing to bear hardships and inconveniences in the mean time, *is better than the proud;* which he puts instead of *hasty* or *impatient*, which the opposition might seem to require, partly because pride is the chief cause of impatience, Prov. xiii. 10, and makes men unable to bear any thing either from God or from men, whereas humility makes men sensible of their own unworthiness, and that they deserve, at least from God, all the indignities and injuries which they suffer from men by God's permission, and therefore patient under them; and partly to correct the vulgar error of proud men, who think highly of themselves, and trample all others, especially such as are meek and patient, under their feet.

9 [g]Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

[g] Prov. 14. 17. & 16. 32. Jam. 1. 19.

Be not angry with any man without due consideration, and just and necessary cause; for otherwise anger is sometimes lawful, and sometimes a duty. *Resteth;* hath its settled and quiet abode, is their constant companion, ever at hand upon all occasions, whereas wise men resist, and mortify, and banish it. *In the bosom;* in the heart, the proper seat of the passions.

10 Say not thou, What is *the cause* that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire †wisely concerning this.

† Heb. *out of wisdom.*

Say not thou, to wit, by way of impatient expostulation and complaint against God, either for permitting such disorders in the world, or for bringing thee into the world in such an evil time and state of things. Otherwise a man may say this by way of prudent and pious inquiry, that by searching out the cause he may, as far as it is in his power, apply remedies to make them better. *Better;* either, 1. Less sinful. Or rather, 2. More quiet and comfortable. For this, and not the former, is the cause of most men's murmurings against God's providence. And this is an argument of a mind discontented and unthankful for the many mercies which men commonly enjoy even in evil times, and impatient under God's hand. *Thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this;* this question showeth thy great folly in contending with thy Creator, and the sovereign Lord and Governor of all things, in opposing thy shallow wit to his unsearchable wisdom, and thy will to his will.

11 ¶ Wisdom ‖*is* good with an inheritance: and *by it there is* profit [h]to them that see the sun.

‖ Or, *as good as an inheritance, yea, better too.*
[h] ch. 11. 7.

Good, i. e. very good; the positive being put for the superlative, as it is frequently in the Hebrew text. When wisdom and riches meet in one man, it is a happy conjunction; for wisdom without riches is commonly contemned, Eccles. ix. 16, and wants opportunities and instruments of discovering itself, and of doing that good in the world which it is both able and willing to do; and riches without wisdom are like a sword in a madman's hand, an occasion of much sin and mischief, both to himself and others. *By it there is profit;* by wisdom joined with riches there comes great benefit; Heb. *and* it is *an excellency*, or *privilege*, or *advantage*. *To them that see the sun*, i. e. to mortal men; not only to a man's self, but many others who live with him in this world; whereby he intimates that riches bear no price and have no use in the other world.

12 For wisdom *is* a †defence, *and* money *is* a defence: but the excellency of knowledge *is*, *that* wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

† Heb. *shadow.*

Is a defence, Heb. *is a shadow;* which in Scripture uso notes both protection and refreshment. And thus far wisdom and money agree. But herein knowledge or wisdom (which commonly signifies the same thing) excels riches, that whereas riches frequently expose men to death or destruction, true wisdom doth oftimes preserve a man from temporal, and always from eternal ruin.

13 Consider the work of God: for [i]who can make *that* straight, which he hath made crooked?

[i] See Job 12. 14. ch. 1. 15. Is. 14. 27.

The work of God; not of creation, but of providence; his wise, and just, and powerful government of all events in the world, which is proposed as the last and best remedy against all murmurings and sinful disquietments of mind, under the sense of the great and many disorders which happen in the world, as is implied, ver. 10, against which wisdom is prescribed as one remedy, ver. 11, 12, and now here is another. *Who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?* no man can withstand, or correct, or alter any of God's works; and therefore all self-tormenting frettings and discontents at the injuries of men, or calamities of times, are not only sinful, but also vain and fruitless. This reason implies that there is a hand or work of God in all men's actions, either effecting them if they be good, or permitting them if they be bad, and ordering and overruling them, whether they be good or bad. And God is here said to *make* things *crooked*, as he is said to *make the hearts* of sinners *fat* or *hard*, Isa. vi. 10, and elsewhere, not positively, but privatively, because he denies or withdraws from men that wisdom or grace which should make them straight.

14 [k]In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath †set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

[k] ch. 3. 4. Deut. 28. 47.
† Heb. *made.*

Be joyful; enjoy God's favours with cheerfulness and thankfulness. *Consider*, to wit, God's work, which is easily understood out of the foregoing verse. Consider that it is God's hand, and therefore submit to it; humble thyself under his hand, be sensible of it, and duly affected with it; consider also why God sends it, for what sins, and with what design. This is a proper season for serious consideration, whereas prosperity relaxeth the mind, and calls it forth to outward things. But this clause may be, and is by some, rendered thus, *and look for a day of adversity.* In prosperity rejoice with trembling, and so as to expect a change. *God also hath set the one over against the other;* God hath wisely ordained these vicissitudes that prosperity and adversity should succeed one another in the course of men's lives. *After him;* either, 1. After man himself, or, as it may be rendered, *after it*, i. e. after his present condition, whether it be prosperous or afflictive. So the sense is, that no man might be able to foresee or find out what shall certainly befall him afterwards, and therefore might live in a constant dependence upon God, and might neither despair in trouble, nor be secure or presumptuous in prosperity, because of the frequent and sudden changes from one to the other. Or, 2. After God, that no man might come after God, and review his works, and find any fault in them, or pretend that he could have managed things better, because this mixture of prosperity and adversity is most

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convenient both for the glory of God's wisdom, and justice, and goodness, and for the benefit of mankind, who have an absolute need of this vicissitude, lest they should be either corrupted and ruined by perpetual prosperity, as many have been, or overwhelmed with uninterrupted adversity.

15 All *things* have I seen in the days of my vanity: [l]there is a just *man* that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked *man* that prolongeth *his life* in his wickedness.

[l] ch. 8. 14.

All things; all sorts of events, both such as have been already mentioned, and such as I am about to declare. *In the days of my vanity;* since I have come into this vain and transitory life. *In his righteousness;* either, 1. Notwithstanding his righteousness; whom his righteousness doth not deliver in common calamities, Ezek. xxi. 3, 4; xxxiii. 12. Or, 2. For his righteousness, which exposeth him to the envy, and hatred, and rage of persecutors or wicked men. *In* is sometimes used for *for;* but it is not so taken in the next clause, which answers to this, and therefore the former seems to be the truer interpretation. *In his wickedness;* notwithstanding all his wickedness, whereby he provokes and deserves the justice both of God and men, who yet, for many wise and just reasons, is permitted to live long unpunished and secure.

16 [m]Be not righteous over much; [n]neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou †destroy thyself?

[m] Prov. 25. 16.
[n] Eccles. 3. 21, 22. Prov. 12. 3.
† Heb. *be desolate.*

This verse and the next have a manifest reference to ver. 15, being two inferences drawn from the two clauses of the observation there recorded. And this verse was delivered by Solomon, either, 1. In the name and person of an ungodly man, who taketh occasion to dissuade men from the practice of righteousness and true wisdom, because of the danger which attends it, and is expressed in the middle of the former, and the end of this verse. Therefore, saith he, it is not good to be more nice than wise, take heed of strictness, zeal, and forwardness in religion. And then the next verse contains an antidote to this poisonous suggestion; yea, rather, saith he, be not wicked or foolish over-much; for that will not preserve thee, as thou mayst imagine from the last clause of ver. 15, but will occasion and hasten thy ruin. But seeing these words are very capable of another sense, and there is no proof or evidence of this sense in them, as there is in all other places where Solomon speaks in the person of an epicure, this interpretation may seem to be dangerous, and liable to misconstruction. Or, 2. In his own person. And so these words are a caution to prevent, as far as may be, that destruction which oft attends upon righteous men, as was observed, ver. 15. *Be not righteous over-much;* either, 1. By being too severe in observing, censuring, and punishing the faults of others beyond the rules of equity, without giving any allowance for human infirmity, extraordinary temptations, the state of times, and other circumstances. Or, 2. By being more just than God requires, either laying those yokes and burdens upon a man's self or others which God hath not imposed upon him, and which are too heavy for him, of which see on Matt. xxiii. 4, or condemning or avoiding those things as sinful which God hath not forbidden, which really is superstition, but is here called *righteousness* abusively, because it is so in appearance, and in the opinion of such persons. So he gives them the name, but by adding *over-much* denies the thing, because righteousness, as well as other virtues, avoids both the extremes, the excess as well as the defect. Or, 3. By an imprudent and unseasonable ostentation or exercise of righteousness where it is not necessary, as if a protestant travelling in a popish country should publicly profess his religion to all whom he meets with, or when a man casts the pearl of reproof before swine, against that caution, Matt. vii. 6. So this is a precept that men should manage their zeal with godly wisdom, and with condescension to others, as far as may be. But this is not to be understood, either, 1. Of such prudence as keeps a man from the practice of his duty, but only of that prudence which directs him in ordering the time, manner, and other circumstances of it. Or, 2. As if men could be too good, or too holy, since the strictest holiness which any man in this life can arrive at falls far short both of the rule of God's word, and of those examples of God and Christ, and the holy angels, which are propounded in Scripture for our imitation. *Neither make thyself over-wise;* be not wise in thine own conceit, nor *above what is written,* 1 Cor. iv. 6, nor above what is meet; which he here implieth to be the cause of being *righteous over-much. Why shouldest thou destroy thyself?* for thereby thou wilt unnecessarily expose thyself to danger and mischief.

17 Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: [o]why shouldest thou die †before thy time?

[o] Job 15. 32. Ps. 55. 23. Prov. 10. 27.
† Heb. *not in thy time.*

Be not over-much wicked; do not take occasion, either from the impunity of sinners, ver. 15, or from the prohibition of excessive righteousness, to run into the contrary extreme, the defect of righteousness, or to give up thyself to the practice of all manner of wickedness, as the manner of many men is, chap. viii. 11. But this is not to be understood as if he allowed a lower degree of wickedness, no more than that prohibition of not *letting the sun go down upon* a man's *wrath,* Eph. iv. 26, permits him to keep his wrath all the day long; and no more than the condemnation *of excess of riot,* and of *abominable idolatries,* 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4, doth justify any kind of rioting or idolatry. *Neither be thou foolish;* which he adds to show that such sinners, howsoever they esteem themselves wise, yet in truth are egregious fools, as the following words prove. *Die before thy time;* either by the justice of the magistrate, or by the vengeance of God. For though I said that sometimes a wicked man prolongeth his days, &c., ver. 15, yet commonly such persons are cut off, and thou hast sufficient reason to expect and fear it.

18 *It is* good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

Take hold of, embrace and practise, *this;* this counsel last given, ver. 17. *Also from this;* from that foregoing advice, ver. 16. It is good to avoid both those extremes. *Withdraw not thine hand* from the practice of it. *He that feareth God,* who ordereth his actions so as to please God, and keep his commands, and walk by the rule of his word, *shall come forth of them all;* shall be delivered from both these, and from all other extremes, and from all the evil consequences of them. The word *all* is sometimes put for both, as being used of two only, as Eccles. ii. 14.

19 [p]Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty *men* which are in the city.

[p] Prov. 21. 22. & 24. 5. ch. 9. 16, 18.

Wisdom; true wisdom, which is always joined with the fear of God, and which teacheth a man to keep close to the rule of his duty, without turning either to the right hand or to the left. *Strengtheneth the wise;* supporteth him in and secureth him against troubles and dangers. *Ten,* i. e. many, uniting the forces together.

20 [q]For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

[q] 1 Kings 8. 46. 2 Chr. 6. 36. Prov. 20. 9. Rom. 3. 23. 1 John 1. 8.

For; so this is a reason either, 1. Of the foregoing counsels, ver. 16—18, the 19th verse being interposed only as a proof of the last clause of ver. 18. Or, 2. To show the necessity and advantage of that wisdom commended ver. 19, because all men are very prone to folly and sin, and therefore need that wisdom which is from above to direct and keep them from it. But this particle may be, and elsewhere is, commonly rendered *yet;* and so the sense is, Although wisdom doth exceedingly strengthen a man, yet it doth not so strengthen him, as if it would keep him from falling into all sin. Or, *because;* or, *seeing that;* and so this relates to the following verse, Seeing all men sin, we should be ready to pardon the offences of others against us, either by word or deed. Or, *surely;* and so it is an entire sentence, such as there are many in this book. *There is not a just man upon earth,* whereby he manifestly implies that the just in heaven are perfect and sinless, *that doeth good, and sinneth not;* who is universally and perfectly good, and free from all sin.

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† Heb. give not thine heart.

21 Also †take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee:

Take no heed; do not severely observe nor strictly search into them, nor listen to hear them, as many persons out of curiosity use to do. *Unto all words that are spoken,* to wit, concerning thee, or against thee. Under this one kind of offences of the tongue, which are most frequent, he seems to understand all injuries which we suffer from others, and adviseth us that we do not too rigidly examine them, nor too deeply resent them, but rather neglect and forget them. *Lest thou hear thy servant curse thee;* which will vex and grieve thee, and may provoke thee to vengeance and cruelty against him.

22 For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

Heart; mind or conscience, as that word is frequently used. *Hast cursed others;* either upon some great provocation and sudden passion, or possibly upon a mere mistake, or false report; in which case thou hast both needed and desired the forbearance and forgiveness of others, and therefore by the rules of justice, as well as of piety and charity, thou art obliged to deal likewise with others.

23 ¶ All this have I proved by wis-
r Rom. 1.22. dom: [r]I said, I will be wise; but it *was* far from me.

All this, or *all these things,* of which I have here discoursed, *have I proved,* I have diligently examined and found all this to be true, *by wisdom;* by the help of that singular wisdom which God had given me. *I said, I will be wise;* I determined within myself that I would by all possible means seek to attain perfection of wisdom, and I persuaded myself that I should attain to it. *But it was far from me;* I found myself greatly disappointed, and the more I knew, the more I saw mine own folly and misery.

s Job 28. 12, 20. 1 Tim. 6. 16. t Rom. 11.33. 24 [s]That which is far off, and [t]exceeding deep, who can find it out?

No human wit can attain to perfect wisdom, or to the exact knowledge of God's counsels and works, and the reasons of them, because they are unsearchably deep, and far above our sight; some of them being long since past, and therefore utterly unknown to us, and others yet to come, which we cannot foreknow.

† Heb. *I and my heart* or *myself.* Chap. 1. 17. & 2. 12.

25 †[u]I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason *of things,* and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness *and* madness:

I applied mine heart; I was not discouraged, but provoked by the difficulty of the work to undertake it; which is an argument of a great and generous soul. *To know, and to search, and to seek out;* he useth three words signifying the same thing, to intimate his vehement desire and vigorous and unwearied endeavour after it. *The reason of things,* both of God's various providences, and of the differing and contrary counsels and courses of men. *To know the wickedness of folly,* that I might clearly and fully understand the great evil of sin, and all that wickedness and folly or madness which is bound up in the hearts of all men by nature, and which discovers itself in the course of their lives.

x Prov. 5. 3, 4. & 22. 14. 26 [x]And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart *is* snares and nets, *and* her hands *as* bands: † whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.

† Heb. he that is good before God.

I find, by my own sad experience; which Solomon here records, partly as an instance of that folly and madness which he expressed in general, ver. 25, and partly as a testimony of his true repentance for his foul miscarriages, for which he was willing to take shame to himself, not only from the present, but from all succeeding generations. *More bitter;* more vexatious and pernicious, as producing those horrors of conscience, those reproaches, and diseases, and other plagues, both temporal and spiritual, from God, which are far worse than simple death, and, after all these, everlasting destruction. *The woman,* the strange woman, of whom he speaks so much in the Proverbs, *whose heart is snares and nets;* who being *subtle of heart,* Prov. vii. 10, is full of crafty devices to insnare men; *and her hands,* either by gifts, or rather by lascivious actions, *as bands;* wherewith she holds them fast in cruel bondage, so that they have neither power nor will to forsake her, notwithstanding all the dangers and mischiefs which they know do attend upon such practices. *Whoso pleaseth God,* Heb. he that is *good before God;* either, 1. Whom God loves and favours. Or rather, 2. Who is good sincerely, or in the judgment of God, who cannot be deceived, whereas hypocrites are frequently good in the eyes or opinions of men; which sense seems to be confirmed from the opposition of *the sinner* to him, both here and Eccles. ii. 26. Hereby he intimates that neither a good temper of mind, nor great discretion, nor good education and instruction, nor any other thing, except God's grace, is a sufficient preservative from the dominion of this lust. *Shall escape from her;* shall be prevented from falling into that sin; or if by surprisal or strong temptation he be drawn to it, he shall be recovered out of it by true repentance. *The sinner;* the wilful and obstinate sinner, who gives himself up to the common practice of this or other sins; he who is *a sinner before the Lord,* as the Sodomites are called, Gen. xiii. 13, who is fitly opposed to him that is *good before God;* he in whom there is not a dram of true goodness; for otherwise all men are sinners, as was said, ver. 20. *Shall be taken by her;* shall be entangled and kept fast in her chains, as is implied, because this is opposed to *escaping from her.*

y ch. 1. 1, 2. ‖ Or, weighing one thing after another, to find out the reason.

27 Behold, this have I found, saith [y]the preacher, ‖ *counting* one by one, to find out the account:

Behold; it is a strange thing, and worthy of your serious observation. *The preacher;* or, *the penitent,* who speaks what he hath learned, both by deep study and costly experience. *Counting one by one;* considering things or persons very exactly and distinctly, one after another; and not only in general and confusedly, in which case a man may very easily be mistaken; and comparing them together, whereby I was enabled to make the truer judgment of them. *To find out the account,* that I might make a true and just estimate in this matter: Or, as it is in the margin, and was rendered ver. 25, *the reason,* to wit, of that which I am about to say. I considered the persons severally and critically, that from thence I might understand the reason of the thing.

28 Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: [z]one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.

z Job 33. 23. Psa. 12. 1.

My soul seeketh; it seemed so wonderful to me, that I suspected I had not made a sufficient inquiry, and therefore I returned to search again with more earnestness and accurateness. *I find not;* that it was so he *found out,* as he now said, ver. 27, but the whole truth and reason of the thing he could not find out. *One man;* one worthy of the name of a man; a wise and virtuous man. *Man* is put for a worthy or good man, as *name* is put for *a good name,* above, ver. 1, and *wife* for *a good wife,* as was noted before. *Among a thousand,* with whom I have conversed. He is supposed to mention this number in allusion to his thousand wives and concubines, as they are numbered by parcels, 1 Kings xi. 3. *A woman;* one worthy of that name; one who is not a dishonour to her kind and sex, who is not brutish in her disposition and conversation. *Among all those* in that thousand whom I have taken into intimate society with myself; whereby he also passeth a severe censure upon himself that he had associated himself with such persons, and not with the virtuous women, which doubtless there were in his time, as appears from Prov. xxxi. It is not Solomon's design to disparage this sex, nor to make a general comparison between men and women in all places and ages, but only to suggest his own experience concerning it.

29 Lo, this only have I found, [a]that God hath made man upright; but [b]they have sought out many inventions.

a Gen. 1. 27. b Gen. 3. 6, 7.

This only have I found; though I could not find out all

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the streams of wickedness, and their infinite windings and turnings in the world, yet I have discovered the fountain of it, to wit, original sin, and the corruption of nature, which is both in men and women. *God hath made man*, God made our first parents, Adam and Eve, *upright*, Heb. *right*, without any imperfection or corruption, conformable to his nature and will, which is the rule of right, after his own likeness, understanding, and holy, and every way good. *They*, our first parents, and after them their posterity treading in their steps, *have sought out many inventions*; were not contented with their present state, but aimed at higher things, and studied new ways of making themselves more wise and happy than God had made them, and readily hearkened to the suggestions of the devil to that end. And we their sinful and wretched children, after their example, are still prone to forsake the certain rule of God's word, and the true way to happiness, and to seek new methods and inventions of attaining to it, even such as Solomon hath discoursed of in this book.

CHAP. VIII.

Kings to be greatly respected, 1—5. *Our times uncertain; death not to be resisted*, 6—8. *An evil magistrate buried and forgot*, 9, 10. *Men hardened in sin, because not presently punished; but they shall not escape, but it shall go ill with them*, 11—13; *as it doth also sometimes with the righteous, whilst the wicked prosper*, 14. *Mirth therefore, and a contented enjoyment of God's gifts, preferable to immoderate care and search*, 15. *God's work herein past finding out*, 16, 17.

WHO *is* as the wise *man?* and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? [a] a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and †[b] the boldness of his face shall be changed.

a Prov. 4. 8, 9. & 17. 24. See Acts 6. 15.
† Heb. *the strength.*
b Deu. 28. 50.

Who is as the wise man? who is to be compared with a wise man? He is incomparably the most excellent man in the world. Or rather, who is truly wise? the particle *as* being here not a note of similitude, but of reality, as it is John i. 14, and in many other places, as hath been noted. There are very few or no truly wise men in this world. This seems best to agree with the next clause, which is not, *who is as he that knoweth*, but *who knoweth*, &c. *Who knoweth the interpretation of a thing?* how few are there who understand the reasons of things, and can rightly expound the word and works of God, and instruct and satisfy himself and others in all the doubtful and difficult cases of human actions! *A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine*; maketh a man illustrious and venerable, cheerful, and mild, and amiable in his carriage to others. *The face* is put for the mind or inward frame, because the mind discovers itself in the countenance. *The boldness of his face*; the roughness or fierceness, the pride or impudence of his disposition, as this phrase is used, Deut. xxviii. 50; Prov. vii. 13; xxi. 29; Dan. viii. 23; *shall be changed* into gentleness and humility.

2 I *counsel thee* to keep the king's commandment, [c] and *that* in regard of the oath of God.

c 1 Chro. 29. 24. Ezek. 17. 18. Rom. 13. 5.

I counsel thee; which verb is necessarily understood to make the sense full and complete. See the like defects of speech, Psal. cxx. 7; Isa. v. 9, &c. *To keep the king's commandment*; observe and obey all his commands; which is not to be understood universally, as if the king should have commanded them to deny or blaspheme God, or to worship idols, in which case every Christian man who reads and believes the Bible must needs confess that the Israelites especially were obliged to obey God rather than man, but only of such commands as are not contrary to the will of God. *In regard of the oath of God*; either, 1. Because of that oath which thou hast taken to keep all God's laws, whereof this of obedience to superiors is one; or, 2. Because of that covenant or oath of fealty and allegiance whereby thou hast engaged thyself to him, of which see 1 Chron. xi. 3; xxix. 24; Ezek. xvii. 16, 18. Though this may also be understood, and is by some learned interpreters taken, as a limitation of their obedience to kings, the words being thus rendered, as the Hebrew will very well bear, *but according to the word of the oath of God*; obey the king's commands, with this caution, that they be agreeable and not contrary to the laws of God, which thou art obliged by thy own and by thy parents' oaths oft renewed to observe in the first place.

3 [d] Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

d ch. 10. 4.

To go out of his sight, Heb. *to go from his face or presence*, to wit, in dislike, or in discontent, withdrawing thyself from thy king's service or obedience, as malcontents use to do; for this will both provoke him, and lead thee by degrees into sedition or rebellion. *Stand not in an evil thing*; if thou hast offended him, persist not in it, but humbly acknowledge thine offence, and beg his pardon and favour. *He doeth whatsoever pleaseth him*; his power is uncontrollable in his dominions, and therefore thou canst neither resist nor avoid his fury.

4 Where the word of a king *is*, *there is* power: and [e] who may say unto him, What doest thou?

e Job 34. 18.

There is power; whatsoever he commandeth he wants not power nor instruments to execute it, and therefore can easily punish thee as he pleaseth. *Who may say?* Heb. *who shall say?* Who will presume or dare to say so? He doth not affirm that it is unlawful to say so, for Samuel said so to Saul, 1 Sam. xv., and Nathan to David, 2 Sam. xii., and several other prophets to the kings of Judah and Israel, but only that it is difficult and dangerous.

5 Whoso keepeth the commandment †shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

† Heb. *shall know.*

The commandment; either, 1. Of the king, of which he hath hitherto spoken. Or, 2. Of God; for *the word*, or *commandments*, or *law* are oft used emphatically for the *word*, *law*, or *command of God*, as hath been formerly and frequently observed, and the *commandment* is put for the *commandments*, as is very usual. And so Solomon passeth from his former to a new subject. *Shall feel no evil thing*; shall be delivered from those mischiefs which befall the disobedient. *Both time and judgment*; both when, and how far, and in what manner he may or must keep the commands of the king or God. For the word here rendered *judgment* doth signify *right*, as Deut. xxi. 17, as also a *cause* or *controversy*, as Numb. xxvii. 5, and the *manner* or *rule* of actions, as Judg. xiii. 12. The sense is, A wise man knows both what he ought to do, and what are the fittest seasons for doing it, which he seeketh and embraceth.

6 ¶ Because [f] to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man *is* great upon him.

f ch. 3. 1.

There is time and judgment; there is a fit way and season for the happy accomplishment of every business which a man designeth or undertaketh to do, which is known to God, but for the most part hidden from man, as is implied and may be gathered from the following words. See the notes on chap. iii. 1. *Therefore*; because there are very few who have that wisdom which is necessary to discern this, as was now said, ver. 5, and most men do by their ignorance and loss of opportunities deprive themselves of many advantages, and expose themselves to manifold miseries.

7 [g] For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him ‖ when it shall be?

g Prov. 24. 22. ch. 6. 12. & 9. 12. & 10. 14.
‖ Or, *how it shall be?*

Men are generally ignorant of all future events, and of the success of their endeavours, and therefore their minds are greatly disquieted, and their expectations frequently disappointed, and they fall into many mistakes and miscarriages, which they could and would prevent if they did foresee the issues of things. *Who can tell him?* no wise man, no astrologer or other artist, can discover this.

8 [h] *There is* no man that hath power

h Ps. 49. 6, 7.

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Job 14. 5. over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither *hath he* power in the day of death: and *there is* no ‖ discharge in *that* war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

‖ Or, *casting off* weapons.

The spirit, i. e. the soul of man, which is oft called a *spirit*, as Job vii. 7; x. 12; Psal. lxxviii. 39; civ. 29, &c. *To retain the spirit;* to keep it in the body beyond the time which God hath allotted to it. This is added as another evidence of man's misery. *In the day;* or, *against the day*, i. e. to avoid or delay that day. *There is no discharge*, as there is in other wars, when soldiers either are dismissed from the service, or escape by flight or otherwise. *In that war;* in that fatal conflict between life and death, between nature and the disease, when a man is struggling with death, though to no purpose, for death shall always be conqueror. *Neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it;* and although wicked men, who most fear death, use all possible means, whether good or bad, to free themselves from this deadly blow, yet they shall not escape it.

9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: *there is* a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.

All this; all these things before mentioned. *Applied my heart unto every work;* I have been a diligent observer of all actions and events. *There is a time wherein one man ruleth over another;* there are some kings who use their power tyrannically and wickedly, whereby they do not only oppress their people, but hurt themselves, by bringing the vengeance of God and men upon their own heads; which is here noted, partly for the terror of tyrants, and partly for the caution and comfort of subjects groaning under those heavy pressures which they are not able to remove, that they may forbear unlawful or rebellious courses, and quietly commit themselves and their cause to God, who judgeth righteously, and who both can and will call the greatest monarchs to a sad account for all their impious and unrighteous courses.

10 And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this *is* also vanity.

And so, in like manner, or such another vanity or disorder, *I saw the wicked;* wicked princes or rulers, as the next clause limits this. *Buried;* die quietly in their beds, and afterward be buried with state and pomp, whereas in truth they deserved an untimely end, and no other than the burial of an ass. *Who had come and gone;* who had administered public justice and government, which is frequently signified by the phrase of *coming in* and *going out before the people*, as Numb. xxvii. 17; Deut. xxxi. 2. The seventy Jewish interpreters, whom some others follow, render the word, *they were praised*, applauded and adored, by the variation of one letter in the Hebrew word, which also is very like that letter which is in the text. *The place of the holy;* by which he understands either, 1. The holy city Jerusalem, or the Holy Land, where Israel dwelt; which may be added to aggravate the wickedness of such persons, from the obligations, and counsels, and examples which they had to do better things. Or, 2. The seat of majesty and judgment, which may well be called *the place* or *seat of the Holy*, i. e. of God, who is called *the Holy One*, Hab. iii. 3, and oft elsewhere, who is in a special manner present in and president over those places, whose work, and for whom, and in whose name and stead, magistrates act, who therefore are called *gods;* of all which see Exod. xxii. 28; Deut. i. 17; 1 Chron. xxix. 23; Psal. lxxxii. 1, &c. And the throne or tribunal seems to be so called here, to aggravate their wickedness, who being sacred persons, and advanced by God into so high and sacred a place, betrayed so great a trust, and both practised and encouraged that wickedness which by their office they were obliged to suppress and punish. *They were forgotten;* whereas they designed to spread and perpetuate their names and memories to succeeding ages, Psal. xlix. 11. *Where they had so done*, i. e. come to and go from the place of the holy; where they lived in great splendour, and were buried with great magnificence; which might have kept up their remembrance at least in that place. *This is also vanity;* that men should so earnestly thirst after and please themselves with worldly greatness and glory, which is so soon extinct, and the very memory of it quickly worn out of the minds of men.

11 [k]Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

k Ps. 10. 6. & 50. 21. Is. 26. 10.

Sentence against an evil work; or, *the decree*, &c. God's determinate counsel or sentence for the punishment of tyrants and all evil-doers. *Therefore;* because God's forbearance makes them presumptuous and secure, and confident of impunity. *Is fully set*, Heb. *is filled*, is carried on with full sail, as the LXX. understand it, like a ship with a strong and violent wind; or, is bold or presumptuous, as the same phrase is understood, Esth. vii. 5; Acts v. 3.

12 ¶ [l]Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his *days* be prolonged, yet surely I know that [m]it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him:

l Is. 65. 20. Rom. 2. 5.

m Ps. 37. 11, 18, 19. Prov. 1. 32, 33. 1. 3. 10, 11. Matt. 25. 34, 41.

An hundred times; frequently and innumerably. *His days;* the time of his life and prosperity. *It shall be well with them that fear God;* whereby he implies, both that good men might for a time suffer grievous things from such wicked tyrants, and that it should be very ill with the wicked, which is manifest from the contrary course and condition of good and bad men, and which is expressed in the following words: compare Psal. ii. 12. *Before him;* or, at *his presence;* who stand in awe of God, and forbear and fear to sin out of a sincere respect and reverence to God.

13 But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong *his* days, *which are* as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.

It shall not be well, i. e. it shall go very ill with him; great miseries are prepared for him; which is a figure oft used in Scripture, as hath been formerly and frequently observed. *Neither shall he prolong his days*, to wit, very long, or for ever, as he desireth. *As a shadow;* his life, though it may be or seem to be long, yet in truth is but a mere shadow, which will quickly vanish and disappear, and be as if it never had been; and many times, like a shadow, when it is longest, it is nearest to abolition. *Because he feareth not before God;* this is the punishment of his wickedness, and his casting off the fear and service of God. For although the lives of good men upon earth are short, as well as the lives of the wicked, yet their days are not like a shadow, because they are prolonged far beyond this mortal state, even to all eternity, and death itself doth but open the way for them to an endless life.

14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just *men*, unto whom it [n]happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked *men*, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also *is* vanity.

n Ps. 73. 14. ch. 2. 14. & 7. 15. & 9. 1, 2, 3.

Which is done; either by wicked potentates, who do commonly advance unworthy men, and oppress persons of greatest virtue and merit; or by God's providence, who sees it fit for many weighty reasons so to manage the affairs of the present world. *Unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked*, i. e. the merit of their work; *the work* being oft put for *the recompence* given or belonging to it, as Lev. xix. 13; Job vii. 2; Psal. cix. 20. The sense is, who meets with such hard usage as the worst of men deserve. *To whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous;* who, instead of those just and dreadful punishments which they deserve by the laws of God and men, receive those encouragements and rewards which are due to virtuous and worthy men. *This also is vanity;* this is a very unreasonable and foolish thing, if it be considered without respect unto another life, as it is here, where Solo-

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mon is discoursing of the vanity of the present life, and of the impossibility of finding satisfaction and happiness in it.

o ch. 2. 24. & 3. 12, 22. & 5. 18. & 9. 7.

15 °Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.

This he speaks, either, 1. In the person of a sensual man. Things being so, as was related, ver. 14, it is best to give a man's self up to eating and drinking, and all manner of carnal delights. Or, 2. In his own name and person. Upon these considerations I concluded that it was most advisable for a man not to perplex and torment himself with the thoughts of the seeming inequality of Divine Providence, and of the great disorders which are in the world, or with cares and fears about future events, or with infinite and insatiable desires of worldly things; but quietly, and cheerfully, and thankfully to enjoy the comforts which God gives him. See on Eccles. ii. 24; iii. 12, 13. *That shall abide with him of his labour;* this is the best advantage which he can make of this world's goods as to the present life.

16 ¶ When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also *there is that* neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:)

I applied mine heart to know wisdom: this he seems to add as the reason of that judgment which he had now passed, ver. 15, because he had diligently studied wherein man's wisdom did consist, and had observed the restlessness of men's minds and bodies in other courses. *To see the business;* either, 1. To find out the work of God, as the next verse may seem to explain it, and all the mysteries of God's providence in the government of this present and lower world. Or, 2. To observe men's various designs and employments, and their toilsome and unwearied businesses or labours about worldly things; which sense seems best to agree, both with the use of this Hebrew word, which is constantly used in this sense in all the places of Scripture where it is, which are Eccles. i. 13; ii. 23, 26; iii. 10; iv. 8; v. 3, 14; viii. 16, and never concerning the works of God; and with the foregoing and following words, as we shall see. *There is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:* the sense of the words thus translated and pointed seems to be this, There is a certain man, whom it is needless to name, (which is a modest designation of himself, like that of St. Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 2, *I knew a man in Christ,* &c.,) who studied those matters day and night, and therefore is very capable of passing a judgment about them. But, with submission, there seems to be no need of a *parenthesis* to cut off these words from the former, with whom they have a fit connexion. For having now mentioned the *business which is done,* or which man doeth, *upon earth,* he further adds, as an evidence of man's eagerness in pursuing his business, *for even by day and by night he* (to wit, the busy man, which is easily understood from the foregoing clause) *seeth not sleep with his eyes,* i. e. he grudgeth himself even necessary refreshments, and disquiets himself with endless cares and labours, the fruit whereof he doth but little enjoy; and therefore it is better *to eat and drink,* &c., as I now said, ver. 15. As for the phrase of *seeing* sleep, it is a figurative expression used in other authors, and is like that of *seeing death,* Psal. lxxxix. 48.

17 Then I beheld all the work of God, that ᵖa man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek *it* out, yet he shall not find *it;* yea farther; though a wise *man* think to know *it,* ᵠyet shall he not be able to find *it.*

p Job 5. 9. ch. 3. 11. Rom. 11. 33.

q Ps. 73. 16.

Then, Heb. *and,* or *moreover, I beheld all the work of God;* I considered the counsels and ways of God, and the various methods of his providence towards good and bad men, and the reasons of them. *A man cannot find out;* no man, though never so wise, and inquisitive, and studious, as it follows, is able fully and perfectly to understand these things; and therefore it is best for man not to perplex himself with endless and fruitless inquiries about these matters, but quietly to submit to God's will and providence, and to live in the fear of God, and the comfortable enjoyment of his blessings.

CHAP. IX.

All things in the hand of God: his love or hatred not visible in them; but the like happeneth to good and bad in this life, and in death they know nothing hereof, and are themselves forgotten, 1—6. *It is best therefore for a man to enjoy the gifts of God with cheerfulness,* 7—9; *to be diligent in his calling,* 10, *and leave the issue to God,* 11, 12. *The praise of wisdom,* 13—18.

FOR all this † I considered in my heart even to declare all this, ᵃthat the righteous, and the wise, and their works, *are* in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred *by* all *that is* before them.

† Heb. *I gave,* or, *set to my heart.*

a ch. 6. 14.

For; or, *therefore,* as the seventy interpreters render it. *All this;* all that I have said concerning the methods of Divine Providence towards good and bad men. *To declare all this;* to make this evident, first to myself, and then to others, as occasion required. *The righteous and the wise;* whom he mentions not exclusively, as if wicked men were not in God's hand, for the next clause relates both to good and bad men; but eminently, because by the course of God's providence towards them they might seem to be quite neglected and forsaken by God. *Their works;* either efficiently, all their actions and employments; or objectively, all things done to them, all events which befall them. *Are in the hand of God;* are subject to his power, and governed by his providence, as this phrase is used Prov. xxi. 1; John iii. 35, compared with Matt. xxviii. 18. And therefore although we cannot fully understand the reasons of all God's works, as he now said, chap. viii. 17, yet because they are done by his unerring hand, we may be assured that they are done both righteously and justly, and that no man hath cause to murmur at the prosperity of the wicked, or at the calamities of good men. *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them;* no man can judge by their present and outward conditions or dispensations of God's providence whether God loves or hates them, for whom he loves he chastens, and permitteth those whom he hates to prosper in the world. And this translation and interpretation agreeth well with the following verse. But I must confess it differs from almost all other, both ancient and modern, translations. And these words with the foregoing clause are translated otherwise, and that word for word according to the Hebrew, *the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God; also love and hatred* (understand out of the foregoing clause, *are in God's hand.* And this may be meant either, 1. Of God's love and hatred, which he disposeth when, and to whom, and in what manner he pleaseth. Or, 2. Of men's love and hatred, *also* their *love* and their *hatred,* the pronoun *their* being repeated out of the former clause, as is frequent in Scripture. And so the sense is, that not only men's works, as he now said, but even their inward passions or affections, which seem to be most in their own power, are as much in God's disposal as their outward actions. Then follows the last clause in the same order in which the words lie in the Hebrew text): *no man knoweth all,* or *any thing, which is before him.* Which I thus understand, Whereas all men, and all their affections, and actions, and the events of them, are perfectly known to God, and disposed by him, men know nothing, no, not such things as are most plain, and easy, and familiar to them, and can neither foresee the plainest things, nor dispose of the smallest things as they please; but all things are wholly ordered and overruled by God's providence, not as men imagine or desire, but as he sees fit.

2 ᵇAll *things come* alike to all: *there is* one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacri-

b Job 21. 7, &c. Ps. 73. 3, 12, 13. Mal. 3. 15.

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ficeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; *and* he that sweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath.

All things come alike to all; the good and evil things of this world do equally happen to good and bad men. *The clean;* either, 1. Morally clean or holy men. Or, 2. Legally, who made conscience of keeping himself pure from all legal defilements, according to the law then in force, and consequently from all other sins upon the same ground. *That sacrificeth;* that worshippeth God sincerely, though it be to his cost. *As is the good, so is the sinner,* as to all outward things. *That sweareth,* to wit, customarily, unnecessarily, rashly, without due consideration and reverence, or falsely and wickedly. For otherwise that some swearing was then allowed, and in some cases required, none do or can deny. *That feareth an oath;* who is afraid of offending God, or abusing his name, by vain, or rash, or false oaths.

3 This *is* an evil among all *things* that are done under the sun, that *there is* one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness *is* in their heart while they live, and after that *they go* to the dead.

An evil; a great trouble and temptation to a considerate and good man. *The heart of the sons of men,* of wicked men, such as the generality of mankind are, *is full of evil;* either, 1. Of grief upon this occasion. Or rather, 2. Of wickedness, as appears from the next clause, and by comparing this place with Eccles. viii. 11. *Madness is in their heart;* upon this account they go on madly and desperately in evil courses, without any fear of an after-reckoning. *After that they go to the dead;* after all their mad and wicked pranks in the whole course of their life, they die in the same manner as the best men do. So hitherto there is no difference. For Solomon here forbears the consideration of the future life. Only he seems to intimate, that as the madness, so the happiness of the wicked is ended by death, which is more fully expressed in the following words.

4 ¶ For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

That is joined to all the living; that continueth in the land and society of living men. Or, according to the reading of the Hebrew text, *that is chosen or allotted to life,* whom God hath appointed yet to live in the world, when he hath appointed that many others shall die; or who are *written among the living,* as the phrase is, Isa. iv. 3, which is borrowed from the custom of cities, where men are first chosen, and then enrolled citizens. *There is hope;* he hath not only some comfort for the present, but also hopes of further and greater happiness in this world, which men are very prone to entertain and cherish in themselves. Yea, they may have the hopes of a better life, if they improve their opportunities. But he seems to confine himself here to the present life. *Better,* i. e. much happier, as to the comforts and privileges of this world, though in other respects death be better than life, as was said, Eccles. vii. 1.

5 For the living know that they shall die: but [c] the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for [d] the memory of them is forgotten.

c Job 14. 21. Is. 63. 16.
d Job 7. 8, 9, 10. Is. 26. 14.

The living know that they shall die; whereby they are taught to improve life, whilst they have it, to their greatest comfort and advantage. *The dead know not any thing,* to wit, of the actions and events in this world, as this is limited in the end of the next verse. Compare Job xiv. 21; Isa. lxiii. 16. *A reward;* the reward or fruit of their labours in this world, which is utterly lost as to them, and enjoyed by others. See Eccles. ii. 21. For otherwise, that there are future rewards after death, is asserted by Solomon elsewhere, as we have seen, and shall hereafter see. *Is forgotten,* to wit, amongst living men, and even in those places where they had lived in great power and glory; as was noted, chap. viii. 10.

6 Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.

They neither love, nor hate, nor envy any person or thing in this world, but are now altogether unconcerned in all things done under the sun. *In any thing that is done under the sun;* in any worldly thing; by which limitation he sufficiently insinuates his belief of their portion in the other world.

7 ¶ Go thy way, [e] eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

e ch. 8. 15.

Go thy way, make this use of what I have said, *eat thy bread;* thine own, the fruit of thy own labours, not what thou takest unjustly from others. *Bread;* necessary and convenient food; by which he excludes excess. *With a merry heart;* cheerfully and thankfully enjoy thy comforts, avoiding all distracting care and grief for the occurrences of this world. *God now accepteth thy works;* is gracious to thee, hath blessed thy labours with success, and alloweth thee a comfortable enjoyment of his blessings.

8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

Always; in all convenient times and circumstances; for there are times of mourning, Eccles. iii. 4; vii. 2: compare Prov. v. 19. *White;* decent, and splendid, as far as is suitable to thy condition. The Eastern people of the best sort used white garments, especially in times of rejoicing, as Esth. viii. 15: compare Rev. iii. 4, 5; vi. 11. But by this whiteness of garments, he understands a pleasant and cheerful conversation. *Let thy head lack no ointment;* which upon joyful occasions was poured upon men's heads, Amos vi. 6; Luke vii. 46; John xii. 3.

9 † Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: [f] for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

† Heb. *See, or, enjoy life.*
f ch. 2. 10, 24. & 3. 13, 22. & 5. 18.

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest; so he limits him to lawful delights; whereby it is evident that Solomon doth not speak this in the person of an epicure, as some understand it. *Of the life of thy vanity;* of this vain and frail life; which expression he industriously useth to moderate men's affections even towards lawful pleasures, and to mind them of their duty and interest in making sure of a better life, and more solid comforts. *Thy portion,* allowed to thee by God, and the best part of worldly enjoyments, *in this life;* by which addition he is again admonishing him of seeking another portion in the future life.

10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, what thou hast opportunity and ability to do in the duties of thy calling, and in order to thy comfort and benefit, *do it with thy might;* with unwearied diligence, and vigour, and expedition; whereby he again discovers that he doth not persuade men to an idle and sensual life, but only to a sober enjoyment of his comforts in God's fear, and with an industrious prosecution of his vocation. *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave;* thou canst neither design nor act any thing there tending to thy own comfort or advantage; therefore slip not thine only season.

11 ¶ I returned, [g] and saw under the sun, that the race *is* not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

g Amos 2. 14, 15. Jer. 9. 23.

I returned, and saw: this may have some respect to the foregoing verse; for having pressed men to labour with all their might, he now adds, by way of caution, that yet they must not be confident of their own strength, as if they

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were sure of success by it, but in all, above all, to look up to God for his blessing, without which all their endeavours will be in vain. But it seems chiefly to be added, either, 1. As another instance of the liberty and power of God's providence in the disposal of human affairs, of which he spoke above, ver. 1—3. Or, 2. As another of the vanities of this present life. *The race;* either ability to run, or success and victory in running. *The battle;* the victory in battle. *Men of understanding;* who yet are most likely to get and to keep riches. *Favour;* good acceptance and love from men. *Men of skill;* who know how to manage themselves and all affairs, whereby they are necessary and serviceable to others, and therefore most likely to find favour in their eyes. *Time and chance happeneth to them all;* there are some times or seasons unknown and casual to men, but certain and determined by God, in which alone he will give men success.

h ch. 8. 7.

12 For [h]man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught

i Prov. 29. 6. Luke 12. 20, 39. & 17. 26, &c. 1 Thess. 5. 3.

in the snare; so *are* the sons of men [i]snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

His time, to wit, the time of his death, or of some other sore distress which God is bringing upon him; which is opposed to the time of success mentioned in the foregoing verse, and man is said to be ignorant both of the one and of the other. *That are taken in an evil net;* that whilst they are sporting and feeding themselves, are suddenly and unexpectedly insnared to their ruin. *When it falleth suddenly upon them;* when they are most careless and secure.

13 ¶ This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it *seemed* great unto me:

This wisdom have I seen; I have observed this among many other instances and effects of wisdom; which he seems to add for the commendation of wisdom, notwithstanding its insufficiency for man's safety and happiness without God's blessing. *It seemed great unto me;* I judged it very praiseworthy, though others despised it, as it follows.

k See 2 Sam. 20. 16,—22.

14 [k]*There was* a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it:

It matters not whether this was a real history, or only a parable to represent the common practices of men in such cases.

15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.

He was soon neglected, and his great service so far from being recompensed according to its merit, that both it and he were quite forgotten; which may be noted as another great vanity.

l Prov. 21. 22. & 24. 5. ch. 7. 19. ver. 18. m Mark 6. 2, 3.

16 [l]Then said I, Wisdom *is* better than strength: nevertheless [m]the poor man's wisdom *is* despised, and his words are not heard.

Wisdom is better than strength, as was manifest in the foregoing instance. *The poor man's wisdom is despised,* because men are generally vain and foolish, and have a greater value for outward ornaments than for true worth.

17 The words of wise *men are* heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

Wise men, though poor, as may be gathered both from the foregoing relation, and because he is opposed to the *ruling fool* in the next clause, *are heard,* to wit, by wise men; or should be *heard,* as such words are oft taken, as Mal. i. 6, and elsewhere; for that they were not always actually heard, he declared in the last words of the foregoing verse. *In quiet;* uttered with a modest and low voice, to which the following *cry* is opposed. *The cry,* the clamorous and senseless discourses, *of him that ruleth among fools;* of a rich and potent, but foolish man, who hath some influence upon fools, like himself, but is justly neglected, and his words disregarded, by wise men.

18 [n]Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war: but [o]one sinner destroyeth much good.

n ver. 16. o Josh. 7. 1, 11, 12.

Than weapons of war; than armed power. *Sinner;* a wicked fool; by which expression and opposition of a *sinner* to a *wise man* he gives us a key to understand his meaning in divers places of his books, that by *wisdom* he means true piety, and by *folly* wickedness; and withal, showeth that sin, as it is the greatest folly, so it is more pernicious to men than mere folly properly so called. *Destroyeth much good;* by his wicked counsels and courses brings much damage and mischief, both to himself and others.

CHAP. X.

Observations on wisdom and folly, 1—3. *Of rulers,* 4—7. *Of wrong and injustice,* 8—10. *Of talkativeness, imprudence, and its mischiefs,* 11—15. *Kings hurtful and desirable,* 16, 17. *Of sloth,* 18. *Feasts,* 19. *The king must not be cursed,* 20.

DEAD †flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: *so doth* a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom *and* honour.

† Heb. *Flies of death.*

Dead flies falling into it, and abiding and being putrefied in it, especially in those countries, where there were more filthy and venomous flies, and where the ointments were more pure, and where the air was more hot, than in these parts. *So doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour;* which comes to pass, partly because all the actions, and consequently the follies, of such men are most diligently observed, and soonest discerned, and tossed about in the mouths of men, whereas fools and all their carriages are generally disregarded; and partly because of that envious and malicious disposition of men's minds, which makes them quick-sighted to discover, and glad to hear and forward to declare, the faults of such as by their greater eminency did outshine and obscure them.

2 A wise man's heart *is* at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left.

A wise man's heart, i. e. his understanding or wisdom, *is at his right hand;* is always present with him, and ready to direct him in all his actions. He manageth all his affairs prudently and piously. He mentions *the right hand,* because that is the chief and most common instrument of actions, which by most men are done with more strength, and expedition, and orderliness, and comeliness by their right hand than by their left. *A fool's heart at his left;* his understanding and knowledge serves him only for idle speculation and vain ostentation, but is not at all useful or effectual to govern his affections and actions. He acts preposterously and foolishly, like one without heart, as it follows.

3 Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, †his wisdom faileth *him,* [a]and he saith to every one *that* he *is* a fool.

† Heb. *his heart.* a Prov. 13. 16. & 18. 2.

Walketh by the way; not only in great undertakings, but in his daily conversation with men, in his looks, and gestures, and common talk. *His wisdom faileth him;* or, *he wants a heart;* as if he had said, Did I say, his heart is at his left hand? I must recall it, for in truth he hath no heart in him. *He saith to every one that he is a fool;* he publicly discovers his folly to all that meet him, or converse with him.

4 If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, [b]leave not thy place; for [c]yielding pacifieth great offences.

b ch. 8. 3. c 1 Sam. 25. 24, &c. Prov. 25. 15.

The spirit; the passion or wrath, as is manifest from the following words, which is oft called *spirit,* as Judg. viii. 3; 2 Chron. xxi. 16; Prov. xxv. 28; Eccles. vii. 9. *Leave not thy place,* to wit, in anger or discontent. Withdraw not thyself rashly and hastily from his presence and service, according to the advice, chap. viii. 3. Continue in a diligent and faithful discharge of thy duty, as becomes a

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subject; do not return anger for anger, but modestly and humbly submit thyself to him. *Yielding*, Heb. *healing;* a gentle and submissive carriage, which is of a healing nature; whereas pride and passion do exasperate and widen the breach already made. *Pacifieth*, Heb. *maketh* them *to rest* or *cease;* preventeth or removeth them. *Great offences*, Heb. *great sins;* either, 1. Such sins as the offended ruler might commit in the prosecution of his wrath against thee. Or rather, 2. Such as possibly thou hast committed against him, for which he is incensed against thee; or the greatest offences or injuries that one man commits against another, and much more those slight miscarriages of thine towards the ruler. Let not therefore a false opinion concerning his unreconcilableness to thee make thee desperate, and draw thee into rebellion.

5 There is an evil *which* I have seen under the sun, as an error *which* proceedeth †from the ruler:

† Heb. *from before.*

I have observed another great vanity and misdemeanour amongst men. *As an error which proceedeth from the ruler;* so the sense is, like those errors which rulers commonly commit. Or rather, which is *indeed an error proceeding from the ruler;* for the following miscarriage must needs come from those who have power of conferring honour and power, &c. So the Hebrew *caph* is not a note of likeness, but of reality, as it is Judg. xiii. 23; Neh. vii. 2; Hos. iv. 4; v. 10, and oft elsewhere.

6 [d] Folly is set †in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.

d Esth. 3. 1. † Heb. *in great heights.*

Folly is set in great dignity; foolish and unworthy persons are frequently advanced by the favour or humour of princes into places of highest trust and dignity, which is a great reproach and mischief to the prince, and a sore calamity to all his people. *The rich;* wise and worthy men, as is evident, because these are opposed to fools in the former clause; such as are rich in endowments of mind. The ground of the expression may be this, that rich men are capable of all the advantages of men or books for the attainment of wisdom, and therefore are supposed to be wise in some measure. *Sit in low place;* neglected and despised, or removed from those high places to which their merits had raised them.

7 I have seen servants [e] upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.

e Prov. 19. 10. & 30. 22.

Servants; men of a servile condition and disposition, who are altogether unfit for places of dignity. *Upon horses;* riding upon horses, as a badge of their dignity, as Esth. vi. 8, 9; Jer. xvii. 25; Ezek. xxiii. 23. *Princes walking as servants upon the earth*, which was the case of his own father, 2 Sam. xv. 30.

8 [f] He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

f Ps. 7. 15. Prov. 26. 27.

He that diggeth a pit with this design, that another may unawares fall into it, *shall fall into it;* shall through God's just judgment be destroyed by his own wicked devices. *Breaketh an hedge;* whereby another man's fields, or vineyards, or orchards are distinguished and fenced, that he may either enter upon them, and take away their fruits, or by that means enlarge his own adjoining fields. Possibly he may have a particular respect unto magistrates or rulers, whom God hath hedged or fenced in, both with his own institution of magistracy, and with his laws, strictly requiring obedience from their subjects; and so he notes the danger of rising and rebelling against them. *A serpent*, which oft lurks in hedges, and bites those who come within its reach.

9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; *and* he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.

Whoso removeth stones; either, 1. The stones which belong to others, and limit or distinguish their grounds, of which see Deut. xxvii. 17. Or, 2. Great stones too heavy for them; which rashly attempt things too high and hard for them; which seems better to agree with the following clause than the former interpretation doth. *Shall be hurt therewith;* may easily receive hurt by the stones falling unexpectedly and violently upon him. *He that cleaveth wood*, with an iron instrument, as the manner is, he being unskilful in that art. Possibly he designs a man who causeth discord and mischief among friends, or in a family, or kingdom. *Shall be endangered thereby;* may peradventure cut himself.

10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom *is* profitable to direct.

The iron, to wit, the axe whereby he cut the wood, in the former verse, which by the danger there mentioned may be supposed to be sharp; but now, saith he, if it happen to be blunt. *Put to more strength;* which is necessary to make it cut. *But wisdom is profitable to direct*, Heb. *and wisdom*, &c. And as wisdom instructs a man in the smallest matters, as in this very matter of cutting of wood, where it teaches him in this case to use his utmost strength; so it is useful for a man's direction in all his great and weighty affairs. And so he insensibly slides into the commendation of wisdom, and the censure of folly, which is the principal design and business of this chapter.

11 Surely the serpent will bite [g] without enchantment; and a †babbler is no better.

g Ps. 58. 4, 5. Jer. 8. 17. † Heb. *the master of the tongue.*

Without enchantment; if not seasonably prevented by the art and care of the charmer; which practice he doth not justify, but only mention by way of resemblance. See on Psal. lviii. 5. *A babbler*, Heb. *a master of the tongue;* which may be understood, either, 1. Of the detractor or slanderer, who like a serpent bites secretly; who may be so called, because he takes liberty to use his tongue as he lists, without any regard either to the offence of God, or to the injury of others; like them who said, *Our lips are our own; who is lord over us?* But I do not see either why this phrase should be limited to the detractor, which equally belongs to all abusers of the tongue in any other way; or how this particular vice of detraction comes to be inserted here among things of a quite differing nature. Or, 2. Of an eloquent person, who may well be called *a master of the tongue*, or *of speech*, nothing being more usual in the Hebrew, than to call a man *master* of that which he excels in, or hath a full and free power to use. And this clause is and may be rendered thus, *And* there is *no excellency* or *profit to the master of the tongue*, i. e. the most eloquent person, who doth not understand and in due time use the charmer's art, cannot by all his eloquence afterward hinder the biting of the serpent, or mischievous effects of it; and so this agrees with the principal scope of the chapter, which is to show the necessity and usefulness of wisdom, and the mischief of folly.

12 [h] The words of a wise man's mouth *are* †gracious; but [i] the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.

h Prov. 10. 32. & 12. 13. †Heb. *grace.* i Prov. 10. 14. & 18. 7.

Gracious, Heb. *grace;* as profitable, so also acceptable to others, procuring him favour with those who hear him. *Will swallow up himself;* his discourses are ungracious and offensive to others, and therefore pernicious to himself.

13 The beginning of the words of his mouth *is* foolishness: and the end of †his talk *is* mischievous madness.

† Heb. *his mouth.*

All his talk from the beginning to the end is foolish and mischievous, and the more he talks, the more doth his folly appear; he proceeds from evil to worse, and adds wilfulness to his weakness, and never desists till he hath done mischief to himself or to others.

14 [k] A fool also †is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and [l] what shall be after him, who can tell him?

k Prov. 15. 2. † Heb. *multiplieth words.* l Ch. 3. 22. & 6. 12. & 8. 7.

Full of words; either, 1. Talkative. Or, 2. Forward to promise and brag what he will do, which is the common practice of foolish men; he is a man of words, as we use to say. *Who can tell him?* these words contain either, 1. A mimical representation of his folly in using vain repetitions of the same words, such as those, *a man cannot tell*, &c., and *who can tell*, &c. Or, 2. A confutation of folly in promising or boasting of things which are wholly out of his power; for what shall be no man can either himself foreknow, or learn it from others.

15 The labour of the foolish wearieth every

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one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.

Fools discover their folly, as by their words, of which he hath hitherto spoken, so also by their actions, and by their endless and fruitless endeavours after things which are too high and hard for them. For he is ignorant of those things which are most easy and most necessary for him, as of the way to the great city whither he is going, or obliged by his business to go, which being a great and beaten road, is known even to children and natural fools.

m Is. 3. 4, 5, 12. & 5. 11.

16 ¶ [m] Woe to thee, O land, when thy king *is* a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!

A child; either, 1. In age. Or, 2. (which is more agreeable to the following clause) In childish qualities, as ignorance, inexperience, injudiciousness, rashness, frowardness, fickleness, or wilfulness, and the like, in which sense this word is used, 2 Chron. xiii. 7, compared with 1 Kings xiv. 21; Isa. iii. 4, 12; 1 Cor. xiv. 20; Eph. iv. 14. *Thy princes eat;* give up themselves to eating and drinking excessively and intemperately, as it is explained in the next verse. *In the morning;* the fittest time for God's service, and for the despatch of weighty affairs, and for sitting in judgment, Psal. ci. 8; Jer. xxi. 12. Which circumstance is added as a plain evidence of men that wholly devote themselves to vanity and luxury; which must needs occasion gross neglect of the great concerns of the kingdom, the oppression of the people to support such extravagancies, and a woeful and general corruption of the people by their example, and otherwise; which makes him say, *Woe* to that people!

n Prov. 31. 4.

17 Blessed *art* thou, O land, when thy king *is* the son of nobles, and [n] thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!

The son of nobles; not so much by birth, as even the worst of kings commonly are, and have been, as by their noble and worthy dispositions, and endowments, and carriages; for such a one is opposed to the *child* in the former verse. *Sons of nobles* are put for *noble persons*, as *the sons of men* for men, and *the sons of physicians* for *physicians*. *Eat in due season;* so as may further, and not hinder, their main business. *For strength;* to refresh and strengthen their natures, that they may be fit for action and business. *Not for drunkenness;* not only nor chiefly to please their palates, and indulge themselves in sensuality.

18 ¶ By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.

That house which is neglected by its owner, and not repaired, must needs come to ruin; whereby he intimates that the sloth and carelessness of princes in the management of public affairs, which is a usual attendant upon that luxury of which he hath now discoursed, is most destructive, both to themselves and to their people.

o Ps. 104. 15. † Heb. *maketh glad the life.*

19 ¶ A feast is made for laughter, and [o] wine †maketh merry: but money answereth all *things*.

The design and effect of feasting and drinking wine is, that men may exhilarate their minds with the society of their friends, and with the use of the creatures. *Money answereth all things;* it procures not only meat and drink for feasting, but for all other things; as *the heavens* are said to *answer the earth*, when they give it those showers which it desires and needs to make it fruitful, Hos. ii. 21. And this clause seems to be added as an aggravation of the sin and folly of luxury, because princes do thereby waste that money and treasure which is so highly necessary for the support and preservation of themselves, and of their kingdoms, and are forced to squeeze money out of their people by oppressive, and dishonourable, and dangerous practices, that they may have more to spend in riotous courses.

p Ex. 22. 28. Acts 23. 5. ‖ Or, *conscience, figure like,* Luke 19. 40.

20 ¶ [p] Curse not the king, no not in thy ‖ thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

Curse not the king. Having spoken of the miscarriages of kings, he now gives a caution to their subjects, that they should not thence take occasion to speak irreverently or contemptuously of them, or wish or design any evil against their persons or government; for though vices may be condemned, wheresoever they are, yet both reverence and obedience are due to magistrates, as they are God's vicegerents and ordinances, notwithstanding their vices, as is manifest from Rom. xiii. 1, &c.; 1 Pet. ii. 13, &c. *In thy thought;* in the most secret manner, by giving way to such thoughts or affections; for these will very probably break forth into such words and practices. *Curse not the rich;* the princes or governors under the king, who are commonly rich; or any other rich men, who can oppress or punish thee by their wealth, as well as kings can do it by their power. *In thy bed-chamber*, where thy wife or servant may hear thee, and afterwards through folly or passion discover it to thy ruin. *A bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter;* the king will hear of it by unknown and unsuspected hands, as if a bird had chanced to be at the window when thou didst speak the words, and did hear them, and carry the report of it unto the king. It is a proverbial expression, as when we say, *Hedges have ears*, and, *The walls will speak*. Hence kings are said to have long ears.

CHAP. XI.

Liberality to the poor commanded. We know not what we may come to: God giveth rain plentifully; and our time of doing good is short: not too much regarding difficulties: the providence of God is full of mysterious events; which must quicken us to duty and diligence, 1—6. *Life sweet; but the days of death shall be many*, 7, 8. *Young men are exhorted in the midst of their delights to think of the day of judgment*, 9, 10.

a See Isa. 32. 20. † Heb. *upon the face of the waters.* b Deut. 15. 10. Prov. 19. 17. Matt. 10. 42. 2 Cor. 9. 8. Gal. 6. 9, 10. Heb. 6. 10.

CAST thy bread [a] †upon the waters: [b] for thou shalt find it after many days.

Cast thy bread upon the waters. Solomon having discovered divers vanities, and amongst others the vanity of heaping up riches, he now teacheth us that it is our interest as well as duty, not so much to lay them up, as to lay them out in pious and charitable uses; and having taught us the true and best use of worldly things, for our present comfort and benefit, which is to enjoy them with a cheerful and contented mind, he now directs us to the best improvement of them, for our future and greater advantage; and having acquainted us with our duty towards our superiors, he now directs us in our carriage towards our inferiors, and especially to such of them as are poor. The sense of these words is either, 1. *Cast thy seed* (which is here called *bread*, as it is also Job xxviii. 5; Isa. xxviii. 28, and elsewhere) *beside* (for so the Hebrew particle *al* is oft used) *the waters*, i. e. either by the river's side, or in moist and waterish grounds, which usually are very fruitful. Or, 2. *Cast* (freely and liberally bestow) *thy bread* (i. e. thy money or provisions, which are oft signified by the name of *bread*. By saying *thy bread*, he cautions us that we give away only that which is our own, and not that which is another's; as they do who give either what they get from others by fraud or power, or what they owe to others, and are unable to pay, and so exercise charity to the hinderance of justice, or of the payment of their just debts) *upon the waters*, i. e. upon those poor creatures upon whom, by reason of their unthankfulness or inability to make any returns to thee, it may seem to be as utterly lost as the seed which a man casts into the sea or river. This sense agrees much better, 1. With the words; for he doth not barely mention *the waters*, (for then the particle *al* might have been translated *beside*,) but *the face*, i. e. the surface or top, *of the waters*, in which and such-like cases *al* constantly signifies *upon*. 2. With the design and scope of the place, which is to persuade men to be liberal and charitable, notwithstanding the discouragements which they meet with in so doing, of which see the next clause, and the next verse. *Thou shalt find it;* it shall not be lost, as covetous men, or thine own corrupt heart, may suggest, but it shall certainly be restored unto thee, either by God or by men, and that with great honour and

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advantage. This is added to prevent an objection, and to quicken us to the duty enjoined. *After many days;* not immediately, but in due time, and when you least expect it. So you must be content to wait for it with patience, as the husbandman doth for the fruits of the earth.

c Ps. 112. 9. Luke 6. 30. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. d Mic. 5. 5. e Eph. 5. 16.

2 cGive a portion dto seven, and also to eight; efor thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

Give a portion; a part of thy estate or provisions. He alludes to the ancient custom, whereby the master of the feast did distribute several parts to each guest, and withal sent portions to the poor; of which custom see 2 Sam. vi. 19; Neh. viii. 10, 12; Esth. ix. 22. *To seven, and also to eight;* to as many as thou art able; a certain number for an uncertain, as Micah v. 5, and oft elsewhere. *Thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth;* great calamities may come, whereby thou mayst be brought to poverty, and so both utterly lose that blessed opportunity of doing good, which now thou hast in thine hands, whereby thou mayst gain unspeakable honour, and comfort, and advantage to thyself, and moreover need the charity of others, which thou mayst comfortably expect, either from men, or at least from the powerful providence of God, disposing the hearts of men to pity and help thee, if thou hast been kind and merciful to others; as, on the contrary, they can expect no mercy from God or men, who have showed no mercy to others. Thus he not only answers, but retorts, the argument by which the covetous man excuseth his uncharitableness, because he must lay up against a rainy day.

3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty *themselves* upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: learn, O man, the practice of liberality from the very lifeless creatures, from the clouds; which when they are filled with water, do not hoard it up, or keep it to themselves, but plentifully pour it forth for the refreshment both of the fruitful field and of the barren wilderness. *In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be:* these words contain either, 1. An argument to persuade men to charity, because they must shortly fall or die, and then all opportunity of being charitable will be lost, and they must expect certainly and eternally to reap whatsoever they have sown, whether it hath been mercy or unmercifulness. Or rather, 2. An answer to a common objection against it, because we are not certain whether the person who desires our charity doth really need it, or be worthy of it. To this he answers, As a tree when it falls, either by the violence of the wind, or being cut down by its owner's order, it is not considerable whether it falls southward or northward, for there it lies ready for the master's use; so thy charity, though it may possibly be misapplied by thee, or abused by the receiver, yet being conscientiously given by thee, it shall assuredly return to thee, and thou shalt reap the fruit of it.

4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

He who neglects or delays the necessary works of sowing and reaping, because the weather is not exactly suitable to his desires, may possibly lose his harvest; whereby he intimates what is easily understood out of the foregoing verses, that men will never do good here, which is expressed by *sowing*, Psal. cxii. 9; 2 Cor. ix. 6, and consequently not receive good hereafter, which is called *reaping*, Gal. vi. 7, 8, if they be discouraged and hindered from it by every doubt or difficulty, such as covetous worldlings object to themselves, that others either do not want their charity, or will abuse it, that they may possibly need it hereafter.

f John 3. 8. g Ps. 139. 14, 15.

5 As fthou knowest not what *is* the way of the spirit, g*nor* how the bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

Of the spirit; of the spirit or soul of man, how it first comes into the body of the child in the womb, whether from God by creation, or from the parents by propagation; nor how it is united with and so fixed in the body, that it cannot get out of it when it would; nor how and whither it goes out of the body; all which things are great mysteries. Others translate it, *of the wind, whence it cometh, and whither it goeth*, as is observed John iii. 8, or how violently it will blow, or how long it will last. But the former translation seems to agree better with the following clause. *The bones*, i. e. the whole body, which is elsewhere signified by the bones, as Psal. xxxiv. 20; xxxv. 10, because they are a principal part, and the very foundation and support, of the body. *Grow in the womb;* how it comes to pass that one and the same small quantity of seed should diversify itself into skin, and flesh, and sinews, and veins, and bones, and entrails, or how it receiveth nourishment and growth. *The works of God;* what God is doing and will do with thee and others; the counsels and methods of God's providence in the future time of thy life, what evil God will send upon the earth, ver. 2, or what weather he will send, of which ver. 4, how long or how little a while God will continue thy life or estate, and how soon God will call thee to an account. These and many other future events thou canst not foresee, and therefore thy wisdom and duty is to cast off all distracting cares and distrustful fears about them, and cheerfully to commit thyself, and all thy affairs, into the hand of God in well doing.

6 In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether †shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both *shall be* alike good.

† Heb. *shall be right.*

In the morning, and in the evening; early and late, in all seasons and occasions; do it speedily and continually, be not weary of it. *Sow thy seed;* do all good works, and especially that of almsgiving, as *sowing* is understood, 2 Cor. ix. 6; Gal. vi. 7. *Withhold not thine hand* from working or giving. *Whether shall prosper;* which shall prosper most, as the next clause explains it; the positive degree being put for the comparative, or the superlative, which is not unusual in the Hebrew text. Which shall best answer thine end, or do most good to others, or which shall tend most to the comfort of thy great and last account; for thy morning alms may possibly be given to an unworthy person, or to one who did not need it, and will abuse it, and thy evening alms may fall upon a person of eminent worth, yea, upon an angel in human shape, which is remembered as a motive to hospitality, Heb. xiii. 2, or upon one in extreme necessity, who might possibly have perished both in soul and body, if thou hadst not comforted and relieved him: or one time thou mayst give with more sincere intention, and with more tender compassion, than another time, and so one will be more right and more acceptable to God than the other. *Alike good;* equally successful to the receiver, or to the giver.

7 ¶ Truly the light *is* sweet, and a pleasant *thing it is* for the eyes hto behold the sun:

h ch. 7. 11.

It cannot be denied that this present life (which is called *light*, Job iii. 20; xxxiii. 30; Psal. lvi. 13, and which is expressed synecdochically, by *seeing the sun*, Eccles. vi. 5; vii. 11) is in itself a great blessing, and very desirable; but it is not perpetual nor satisfactory; which is here implied and expressed in the next verse.

8 But if a man live many years, *and* rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh *is* vanity.

Live many years; which is a privilege granted but to few persons comparatively. *And rejoice in them all;* and suppose he enjoy all the comforts, and escape all the imbitterments, of human life, all his days; which also is a great rarity. *Let him remember*, it is his duty and interest seriously to consider, *the days of darkness;* of death, or of the state of the dead, which is oft expressed by *darkness*, as Job x. 21; Psal. lxxxviii. 12, &c., and here is opposed to the foregoing *light*. *They shall be many*, i. e. far more than the days of this short life, especially if to the time of lying in the grave be added that greater and utter darkness which is reserved for impenitent sinners, and which is everlasting, Matt. xxii. 13; xxv. 30; 2 Pet. ii. 17; Jude 13. And this

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is added for the caution of mankind, that they may not rejoice excessively in, nor content themselves with, the happiness of the present life, but may seek for something more durable, and more satisfactory. *All that cometh;* all things which befall any man belonging only to this life, whether they be comfortable or vexatious, they are but vain and inconsiderable, because they are short and transitory.

9 ¶ Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in
i Num. 15. 39. the days of thy youth, [i]and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all
k ch. 12. 14. Rom. 2. 6,— 11. these *things* [k]God will bring thee into judgment.

This verse is to be understood either, 1. As a serious advice to this purpose, Seeing life is short and transitory, improve it to the best advantage, take comfort in it whilst you may, only do it with moderation, and the fear of God. Or rather, 2. As an ironical concession, such as are usual both in Scripture, as 1 Kings xviii. 27; xxii. 15; Ezek. xxviii. 3, 4; Matt. xxvi. 45, and in other authors; for this agrees much better with the context, and with the expressions here used. And so the sense is, I foresee what evil use some men will make of what I have now said. Things being thus, *let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die;* as they also reasoned, 1 Cor. xv. 32. *O young man;* he speaks to young men particularly, because they have both the greatest ability and the strongest inclinations to pursue sensual pleasures, and are most impatient either of restraint or admonition. *Let thy heart cheer thee;* indulge thy frolic and jolly humour, and take thy fill of delights. *Walk in the way of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes;* whatsoever thine eye or heart lusteth after, deny it not to them; as this phrase is taken, Numb. xv. 39, nor is it ever used in a good sense. Compare Job xxxi. 7; Psal. lxxxi. 12; Jer. xviii. 12; 2 Pet. ii. 14; 1 John ii. 16. *But know thou;* but in the midst of thy feastings and jollity it will become thee, if thou art a reasonable creature, to consider thy reckoning, and whether thou dost not purchase thy gold too dear. *For all these things,* for all thy follies and sinful lusts, which thou slightest as tricks of youth, *God will bring thee into judgment;* will force thee to appear before his judgment-seat, to give a serious account of all thy youthful and exorbitant courses, and to receive that sentence which thy own conscience will then say thou dost justly deserve. And if thou likest thy sensuality upon these terms, much good may it do thee; I do not envy thee, nor desire to partake of thy delicates.

10 Therefore remove ‖ sorrow from thy
‖ Or, *anger.*
l 2 Cor. 7. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 22. heart, and [l]put away evil from thy flesh:
m Psa. 39. 5. [m]for childhood and youth *are* vanity.

Sorrow, i. e. sensual and disorderly lusts, which he elegantly and emphatically calls *sorrow*, with respect to the foregoing words, to intimate, that although such practices do at present gratify and delight men's senses and vain minds, yet they will shortly and certainly bring a man to intolerable and eternal sorrows, which it is thy wisdom to prevent. *Sorrow;* or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by divers others, *anger;* a passion to which men are most prone in the heat of youth; whereby he may understand either anger against him for this sharp admonition; or rather against God, who hath laid such severe restraints upon them, and threatens such punishments to them for following their own natural inclinations. So the sense is, Do not quarrel with thy Judge, but submit and make thy peace with him by declaring war against all thy sins. *Evil;* all evil concupiscences or lusts, which though now they seem good to thee, will another day appear to be very evil and bitter things. *From thy flesh;* from thy bodily members; which he mentions not exclusively, as if he would allow them their spiritual evils; but emphatically, because young men, to whom he is here speaking, are most given to fleshly or bodily lusts. *Childhood and youth are vanity*, i. e. most vain, either, 1. In their temper and dispositions. Young men are frothy, and foolish, and inconsiderate, whereby they run into manifold dangers, and therefore they shall do well to hearken to the counsels of those who by their greater wisdom and experience are more capable judges of these matters. Or, 2. In their condition. The time of youth is vanishing and transitory, and old age and death will speedily come, against which every man in his wits will take care to lay in solid provisions and comforts.

CHAP. XII.

Early piety recommended before old age come on and death be near: old age described, and death, 1—7. *The conclusion: all is vanity,* 8. *The preacher's end in this book,* 9—12. *The sum of all learning, experience, and happiness is to fear God, and keep his commandments, because God will bring all to judgment,* 13, 14.

REMEMBER [a]now thy Creator in the
a Prov. 22. 6. Lam. 3. 27. days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh,
b See 2 Sam. 19. 35. [b]when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

Remember, to wit, practically, or so as to fear, and love, and faithfully serve and worship him, which when men do not, they are said to forget God, Psal. ix. 17; cvi. 21, and in many other places. *Thy Creator;* the first author and continual preserver of thy life and being, and of all the perfections and enjoyments which accompany it, to whom thou hast the highest and strongest obligations to do so, and upon whom thou hast a constant and necessary dependence, and therefore to forget him is most unnatural, and inhuman, and disingenuous. *In the days of thy youth;* for then thou art most able to do it, and thou owest the best of thy time and strength to God; then thou hast opportunity to do it, and thou mayst not live to old age; then it will be most acceptable to God, and most comfortable to thyself, as the best evidence of thy sincerity, and the best provision for old age and death; and then it is most necessary for the conquering those impetuous lusts and passions which drown so many thousands of young men in perdition, both in this life and in that to come. *The evil days;* the time of old age, which is *evil*, i. e. burdensome and calamitous in itself, and far more grievous and terrible when it is loaded with the sad remembrance of a man's youthful follies and lusts, and with the dreadful prospect of approaching death and judgment, which makes him see that he cannot live, and yet dare not die, and with the consideration and experience of the hardness of his heart, which in that age is rarely brought to true repentance, and so generally expires either in vain presumption, or in hellish desperation. *I have no pleasure in them;* my life is now bitter and burdensome to me, and worse than death; which is frequently the condition of old age.

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars be not darkened, Heb. *While the sun, and the light, and the moon*, &c. That clause, *and the light*, seems to be added to signify that he speaks of the darkening of the sun, and moon, and stars, not in themselves, or in their own bodies, but only in respect of that light which they afford to men. And therefore the same clause which is expressed after the sun, is to be understood after the moon and stars, as is very usual in Scripture in like cases. And those expressions are to be understood either, 1. Literally, of the dim-sightedness of old men, by reason whereof the light of the sun, &c. seems dark to them; which seems not to agree with the context, partly because the dimness of their sight is expressed in the next verse, and partly because both this and the following verses are wholly allegorical. Or rather, 2. Figuratively, and that either, 1. Of the outward parts of the body, and especially of the face, the beauty of the countenance, the lightsome and pleasant complexion of the cheeks, the liveliness of the eyes, which are compared to the sun, and moon, and stars, and which are obscured in old age, as the Chaldee paraphrast understands it. Or, 2. Of the inward parts of the mind, the understanding, fancy, memory, which may not unfitly be resembled to the sun, and moon, and stars, and all which are sensibly decayed in most old men. For it may seem improbable that Solo-

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mon in his description of the infirmities of old age should omit the decays of the most noble part of man, which are commonly incident to old age. And yet, with submission to those worthy persons who think otherwise, it seems not necessary that he should here speak of those inward decays, partly, because they are not so general in old men as the decays of the body are; partly, because he here directeth his speech to sensual men, who are more affected with corporal than with intellectual maladies; and partly, because both the foregoing and following passages concern the state of men's bodies, and their outward condition. Or rather, 3. Of external things, and of the great change of their joy and prosperity, which they had in their youthful time, into sorrow and manifold calamities, which are usually the companions of old age; for this interpretation seems best to agree both with the foregoing verse, in which he describes the miseries of old age, and with the following clause, which is added to explain and determine those otherwise ambiguous expressions; and with the Scripture use of this phrase, which is the best key for the understanding of Scripture; for a state of comfort and happiness is oft described by the light of the sun, &c., as Judg. v. 31; 2 Sam. xxiii. 4; Isa. xxx. 26; lx. 20, and a time and state of great trouble is set forth by the darkening of the light of the sun, &c., as Isa. xiii. 9, &c.; xxiv. 23; Joel ii. 10; iii. 15; Matt. xxiv. 29, and oft elsewhere. *Nor the clouds return after the rain:* this phrase notes a perpetual succession and reciprocation of rain, and clouds bringing rain, and then rain and clouds again, and so without end; whereby he expresseth either, 1. The rheums or defluctions which do abundantly and incessantly flow in and from old men, for want of natural heat and strength to prevent or remove them. Or rather, 2. The continual vicissitude of infirmities, diseases, and griefs in old men, one deep calling upon another, and one affliction beginning at the end of another; whereas in young men after rain the clouds are dispersed, and fair weather succeeds.

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and ‖ the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

‖ Or, *the grinders fail, because they grind little.*

The keepers of the house, i. e. of the body, which is oft and fitly compared to a house, as Job iv. 19; Psal. cxix. 54; 2 Cor. v. 1; whose *keepers* here are either, 1. The ribs and bones into which they are fastened, which are the guardians of the inward and vital parts, which also are much weakened and shaken by old age. Or rather, 2. The hands and arms, which are man's best instruments to defend his body from the assaults of men or beasts, and which in a special manner are subject to this *trembling*, by paralytical or other like distempers, that are most incident to old men. *The strong men;* either the back, or the thighs and legs, in which the main strength of the body doth consist, which in old men are very feeble, and unable both for the support of the body and for motion. *The grinders;* the teeth, those especially which are commonly so called, because they grind the meat which we eat. *Cease*, to wit, to perform their office, *because they are few*, Heb. *because they are diminished*, either, 1. In strength. Or, 2. In number; being here one, and there another, and not united together, and one directly against another, and consequently unfit for their work. *Those that look out of the windows;* the eyes. By *windows* he understands either, 1. The holes in which the eyes are fixed, Zech. xiv. 12. Or, 2. The eye-lids, which, like windows, are either opened or shut. Or, 3. Those humours and coats of the eyes noted by anatomists, which are the chief instruments by which the eye sees.

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all [c] the daughters of musick shall be brought low;

[c] 2 Sam. 19. 35.

The doors be shut in the streets; or, *towards the streets;* which lead into the streets. This is understood either, 1. Literally; because men, when they are very old, keep much at home, and have neither strength nor inclination to go abroad. Or rather, 2. Allegorically, as all the other clauses are understood. And so *the doors* are either, 1. The outward senses, which, as doors, let in outward objects to the soul. Or rather, 2. The mouth, or the two lips, here expressed by a word of the dual number, which are oft called a *door*, both in Scripture, as Psal. cxli. 3; Micah vii. 5, and in other authors, which, like a door, open or shut the way which leads into the streets or common passages of the body, such as the gullet, and stomach, and all the bowels, as also the windpipe and lungs; which also are principal instruments both of speaking and eating. And these are said to be *shut*, not simply and absolutely, as if they did never eat, or drink, or speak; but comparatively, because men in extreme old age grow dull and listless, having little or no appetite to eat, and are very much indisposed for discourse, and speak but seldom. *When the sound of the grinding is low;* or, *because the sound*, &c. So this may be added, not as a new symptom of old age, but only as the reason of the foregoing symptom. The sense is, When or because the teeth, called *the grinders*, ver. 3, are loose and few, whereby both his speech is low, and the noise which he makes in eating is but small. And this is one great cause of his indisposedness both to eating and to speaking. Some understand this of concoction, which after a sort doth grind the meat in the stomach, and in the other parts appointed by God for that work. But that is transacted inwardly, and without all noise or sound. *He shall rise up*, to wit, from his bed, being weary with lying, and unable to get sleep, *at the voice of the bird;* either, 1. Upon the smallest noise; which doth not consist with that deafness incident to old men, and described in the next words. Or rather, 2. As soon as the birds begin to chirp, which is early in the morning, whereas children and young men can lie and sleep long in the morning. *The daughters of musick;* all those senses or parts of the body which are employed in music and song, as well those which make it, as the parts of and within the mouth, as those which receive it, to wit, the ears. *Shall be brought low;* shall be cast down from their former excellency; they are become incapable either of making music, or of delighting in it.

5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to [d] his long home, and [e] the mourners go about the streets:

[d] Job 17. 13. [e] Jer. 9. 17.

They shall be afraid; the passion of fear is observed to be most incident to old men, of which divers reasons may be given. *Of that which is high;* either, 1. Of high things, lest they should fall upon them. Or rather, 2. Of high places, of going up hills or stairs, which is very irksome to them, because of their weakness, and weariness, and giddiness, and danger, or dread of falling. And this clause, together with the next, may be rendered thus, and that agreeably to the Hebrew text, *Also they shall be afraid and terrified* (two words expressing the same thing, which is very frequent in the Hebrew) *of* that which is *high in the way.* When they walk abroad, they will dread to go up any high or steep places. *And fears shall be in the way*, lest as they are walking, they should stumble, or fall, or be thrust down, or some infirmity or mischief should befall them. *The almond tree shall flourish;* their heads shall be as full of grey hairs as the almond tree is of white flowers. Such metaphors are not unusual in other authors. Hence Sophocles calls a grey or hoary head *flowery*, and again, *covered with white flowers. The grasshopper shall be a burden*, if it doth accidentally hop up and rest upon them. They cannot endure the least burden, being indeed a burden to themselves. But the words may be, and are by others, rendered, *the locust* (as the ancient interpreters and many others render it; or, as ours and some others, *the grasshopper*, which comes to the same thing; for these two sorts of insects are much of the same nature and shape) *shall be a burden to itself.* And by the *locust* or *grasshopper* may be understood, either, 1. The old man himself, who bears some resemblance to it; in shape, by reason of the bones sticking out; in the constitution of the body, which is dry and withering; and in the legs and arms, which are slender, the flesh being consumed. Or, 2. The back, which

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fitly follows after the head, upon which the almond tree flourished, in which the strength of the body lay, and which formerly was able to bear great burdens, but now, through its weakness and crookedness, is a burden too heavy for itself. And some of the Jewish and other interpreters understand this word, which others render *locust* or *grasshopper*, to be some part of the body, either the *back-bone*, or the *head of the thigh-bone*, or the *ankle-bone*, any of which may well be said to *be heavy or burdensome to itself*, when it moves slowly and listlessly, and not without difficulty and trouble. *Desire*, to wit, of meats, and drinks, and music, and other carnal delights, which are vehemently desired by men in the heat of their youth, but are unsavoury to old men; of which see an instance 2 Sam. xix. 35. It is true, the former expressions are metaphorical, but the two next following are proper, and to be understood literally; and so may this clause also. *Man goeth*, is travelling towards it, and every day nearer to it than other, *to his long home;* from this place of his pilgrimage into the grave, from whence he must never return into this world, and into the state and place of the future life, which is unchangeable and everlasting. *The mourners;* either such as were hired to that end, of whom see on Jer. ix. 17; Matt. ix. 23; xi. 17, or true mourners, near relations, and dear friends, accompany the dead corpse through the streets to the grave.

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

This verse is to be understood either, 1. Literally, of the ornaments of life, such as chains, and jewels, and vessels of gold and silver, and of the instruments by which the necessary provisions and supports of life are conveyed to us, such as fountains of water, and pitchers, &c.; which may be said to be loosed or broken, because they are neglected as useless things to the dead man. Or rather, 2. Allegorically, of those inward parts of man's body which are the chief instruments of life, or sense and motion, and of the vital or animal operations, whether such from which they first proceed, or in which they are first elaborated and contained, which may fitly be compared to a *bowl*, and *fountain*, or *cistern;* or such by which they are derived or conveyed to the several parts of the body, which are very conveniently designed by the *cord*, and *pitcher*, and *wheel;* all which are truly said to be *loosed* or *broken*, i. e. dissolved, or become useless and insufficient for the performance of their several functions. This in the general. But it seems most probable that Solomon, who was so profound a philosopher, and doubtless had an accurate knowledge of all the parts of man's body, and their several offices and operations, doth by these several expressions describe so many particular parts and offices. By *the silver cord*, it is generally and most probably conceived that he understands the pith or marrow of the back-bone, which comes from the brain, and thence goeth down to the very lowest end of the back-bone, together with the nerves and sinews, which, as anatomists observe, are nothing else but the production and continuation of the marrow. And this is most aptly compared to a *cord*, both for its figure, which is very long and round, and for its use, which is to draw and move the parts of the body; and to *silver*, both for its excellency and colour, which is white and bright, even in a dead, and much more in a living body. And this may properly be said to be *loosed*, or *dissolved*, or *broken*, or *removed*, as others render the word, the sense of all these translations being the same, because it is relaxed, or obstructed, or otherwise disenabled for its proper service. And answerably hereunto, by *the golden bowl* he understands the membranes of the brain, and especially that innermost membrane which is called by anatomists *the pious mother*, because it doth with a motherly care defend the brain, and assist and govern its actions, which insinuates itself into all the parts of the brain, following it in its various windings and turnings, keeping each parcel of it in its proper place, and distinguishing and dividing one part from another, to prevent disorder and mischief. This is not unfitly called a *bowl*, partly because it is round, and partly because it receives and contains in it all the substance of the brain; and a *golden* bowl, partly, for its great preciousness and usefulness; partly, for its ductility, being drawn out into a great thinness or fineness, as gold is capable of being drawn forth into thinner plates than other metals can bear; and partly, for its colour, which is somewhat yellow, and comes nearer to that of gold than any other part of the body doth. And this is well said to be *broken*, as for the reason above noted, so because upon the approach of death it is commonly shrivelled up, and many times broken. And as these two former clauses concern the brain, and the animal powers, so the two following clauses of this verse respect the spring and seat of the vital powers and operations, and of the blood, the great instrument thereof, which hath been commonly conceived, and consequently is here understood, to be the liver, but more truly and certainly is the heart, which is now known and confessed to be the source of the blood. And so Solomon here describes the chief organs or vessels appointed for the production, and distribution, and circulation of the blood in man's body. For although the doctrine of the circulation of the blood hath lain hid and unknown for very many generations together, and therefore the honour of the invention of it is justly ascribed to a famous physician of our country, yet it is not improbably supposed by some that it was well known to Solomon, although after his times it was lost, as doubtless many other things were, which he wrote concerning plants, and other things. According to this notion *the fountain* here is the right ventricle of the heart, which is now acknowledged to be the spring of life, and of the vital spirits, and the *pitcher* is the veins which convey the blood from it to other parts, and especially that arterious vein, as anatomists call it, by which it is transmitted to the lungs, and thence to the left ventricle of the heart, where it is better elaborated, and then by the pulse thrust out into the great artery, called *arteria aorta*, and by its branches dispersed into all the parts of the body, to give them life and vigour, which being done, the residue of the blood is carried back by the veins into the right ventricle of the heart, whence it is disposed, as hath been now mentioned, and so runs in a perpetual round, unless it be obstructed by some disorder in the body. And the *cistern* is the left ventricle of the heart, and the *wheel* seems to be the great artery which is joined to it, which is very fitly so called, because it is the first and great instrument of this rotation or circulation of the blood, which by its pulse is forcibly thrust out into all the parts of the body, whence by various windings and turnings it returns thither again, and so is sent again upon the same journey, which in like manner it performs again and again, as long as life and health continue; and when any of these parts are disenabled for the discharge of their offices, then are they fitly said to be broken. The *pitcher* may be said to *be broken at the fountain*, when the veins do not return the blood to the heart, but suffer it to stand still and cool within them, whence comes that coldness of the outward parts, which is a near forerunner of death. And the *wheel* may be said to *be broken at the cistern*, when the great arteries do not perform their office of conveying the blood into the left ventricle of the heart, and of thrusting it out thence into the lesser arteries, whence comes that ceasing of the pulse, which is a certain sign of approaching death.

7 [f]Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: [g]and the spirit shall return unto God [h]who gave it.

[f] Gen. 3. 19. Job 34. 15. Ps. 90. 3.
[g] ch. 3. 21.
[h] Num. 16. 22. & 27. 16. Job 34. 14. Is. 57. 16. Zech. 12. 1.

The dust; the body, called *dust*, both for its original, which was from the dust, and to signify its vile and corruptible nature, Job iv. 19; xxx. 19; Psal. ciii. 14. *Return to the earth as it was;* whence it was first taken. He alludes to that passage, Gen. iii. 19. *The spirit;* the soul of man, frequently so called, as Gen. ii. 7; Psal. xxxi. 5, &c., because it is of a spiritual or immaterial nature. *Return unto God;* into his presence, and before his tribunal, that there it may be sentenced to its everlasting habitations, either to abide with God for ever, if it be approved by him, or otherwise to be eternally shut out from his presence and favour. *Who gave it*, to wit, in a peculiar manner, by his creating power; for in a general sense *God giveth to every seed his own body*, 1 Cor. xv. 38; hence he is called *the Father of spirits*, Heb. xii. 9.

8 ¶ [i]Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all *is* vanity.

[i] Ps. 62. 9. ch. 1. 2.

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This sentence, wherewith he began this book, he here repeateth in the end of it, partly as that which he had proved in all the foregoing discourse, and partly as that which naturally and necessarily followed from both the branches of the assertion now laid down, ver. 7.

‖ Or, *the more wise the preacher was, &c.*

9 And ‖ moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and

k 1 Kings 4. 32.

sought out, *and* [k]set in order many proverbs.

The preacher was wise; which he affirmeth not out of vain ostentation, but partly to procure the more credit and acceptance to his doctrine and counsel here delivered; and partly to declare his repentance for his former follies, and God's great mercy in restoring his wisdom to him. *Taught the people knowledge;* as God gave him this wisdom, that he might be a teacher of others, so he used it to that end; therefore despise not his counsel. *He gave good heed;* he did not rashly and foolishly utter whatsoever came into his mind or mouth, but seriously pondered both his matter and words. *Sought out;* both by the exercise of his own mind, and by reading and learning from others. *Set in order;* or, *directed* or *fitted.* He selected such as were most useful. *Many proverbs;* excellent and wise sayings, which are oft called proverbs, as was noted before upon the Book of Proverbs.

10 The preacher sought to find out

† Heb. *words of delight.*

†acceptable words: and *that which was* written *was* upright, *even* words of truth.

Acceptable words, Heb. *desirable* or *delightful,* worthy of all acceptation, such as would minister comfort and profit to the hearers or readers. *Written* by the preacher in this and his other books. *Upright,* Heb. *right* or *straight,* agreeable to the mind or will of God, which is the rule of right, not crooked or perverse. *Words of truth;* not fables cunningly devised to deceive the simple, but true and certain doctrines, which commend themselves to men's own consciences or reasons; wholesome and edifying counsels.

11 The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd.

The words of the wise; not of secularly or politicly wise men, but of the spiritually wise and holy men of God; of which, and not of the former, this whole context treats. *As goads, and as nails,* piercing into men's dull minds and hard hearts, and quickening and provoking them to the practice of all their duties. *Fastened;* which do not only amuse and startle men for the present, as the wise and grave counsels of moral philosophers frequently do, but make powerful and abiding impressions in them; which is the peculiar effect of God's word. *By the masters of assemblies;* by the teachers of God's church and people, whether prophets or others, appointed by God for that work. *Which are given from one shepherd;* from God, or from Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd and Teacher of the church in all ages, by whose Spirit the ancient prophets, as well as other succeeding teachers, were inspired and taught, Jer. iii. 15; 1 Pet. i. 11; 2 Pet. i. 21. And this clause seems to be added partly as the reason of that admirable harmony and agreement which is amongst all the men of God in all ages and places, because they are all taught by one Master, and guided by the same hand; and partly to oblige us to the greater attention and reverence to all their doctrines and counsels, which we are to receive as the word of God, and not of men only, as it is said, 1 Thess. ii. 13.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and ‖ much study *is a* weariness of the flesh.

l Ch. 1. 18.

‖ Or, *reading.*

By these; by these wise men, and their words or writings, of which he spoke in the foregoing verse. *Be admonished;* take your instructions from them, for their words are right and true, as he said, ver. 10, whereas the words of other men are false, or at best doubtful. *Of making many books there is no end;* I could easily write many books and large volumes upon these matters, but that were an endless and needless work, seeing things necessary to be known and done lie in a little compass, as he informs us in the next verse. *Much study;* the reading of many books written by learned philosophers about these things; which it is more than probable were then extant, though since lost, which also Solomon, being so curious and inquisitive a person, would in all likelihood procure and peruse as far as he had opportunity. *Is a weariness to the flesh;* it wasteth a man's strength and spirits, and yet (which is implied) doth not satisfy the mind, nor sufficiently recompense the trouble and inconvenience to which man is exposed by it.

13 ¶ ‖ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: [m]Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.

‖ Or, *The end of the matter, even all that hath been heard, is.*

m Deut. 6. 2. & 10. 12.

The conclusion of the whole matter; the sum and substance of all that hath been said or written by wise men, so far as it is necessary for us to know. *Fear God;* which is synecdochically put here, as it is very frequently in Scripture, for all the inward worship of God, reverence, and love, and trust, and a devotedness of heart to serve and please God, and a lothness to offend him, and an aptness to tremble at his word and judgments. *Keep his commandments:* this is fitly added as a necessary effect and certain evidence of the fear of God. Make conscience of practising whatsoever God requires, how costly, or troublesome, or dangerous soever it be. *The whole duty;* in the Hebrew it is only, *the whole;* it is his whole work and business, his whole perfection and happiness, it is the sum of what he need either know, or do, or enjoy.

n ch. 11. 9. Matt. 12. 36. Acts 17. 30, 31. Rom. 2. 16. & 14. 10, 12. 1 Cor. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 10.

14 For [n]God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

For God shall bring every work into judgment: this is added either, 1. As a reason of what he last said, *this is the whole of man,* because all men must give an account to God of all their works, and this alone will enable them to do that with joy, and not with grief. Or, 2. As another argument to press the foregoing exhortation, *Fear God, and keep his commandments,* for you must be called to judgment about it, &c. *With every secret thing;* not only outward and visible actions, but even inward and secret thoughts.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

Before I come to the explication of this book, some things must be premised concerning it. 1. That it was of Divine inspiration is so clear and certain, that, as Jewish writers note, none ever questioned it, although some doubted of some other of Solomon's writings. And the same arguments which prove the divinity of other books are found here, such as the quality of the penman, who was confessedly a man inspired by God; the excellency and usefulness of the matter;

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the sacred and sublime majesty of the style, and the singular efficacy of it upon the hearts of sober and serious persons, who read it with due preparation; and those other characters which are commonly known, and therefore it is needless here to enumerate. 2. The form of this book is dramatical, wherein several parts or parcels of it are uttered by or in the name of several persons, which are chiefly four, the bridegroom and the bride, and the friends or companions of the one and of the other. Nor is it declared what or when each of them speak, but that is secretly couched, and is left to the observation of the prudent reader, as is usual in writings of this nature. 3. The design of the book in general is to describe the passionate loves and happy marriage of two persons, and their mutual satisfaction therein, and the blessed fruits and effects thereof. But then it is not to be understood carnally, concerning Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, as some have fancied, although the occasion of this love and marriage may be taken from that, or rather he makes an allusion to that; but spiritually, concerning God, or Christ, and his church and people. This is sufficiently evident from the descriptions of this bridegroom and bride, which are such as could not with any decency be used or meant concerning Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, as when he is brought in like a country shepherd, chap. i. 7, and is called his bride's brother, chap. v. 2, and when he gives such high and excessive commendations to himself, as we shall see, and when she is made the *keeper of vineyards* and *of sheep*, chap. i. 6, 8, and is said to be smitten and abused by the watchmen, chap. v. 7, and to be *terrible as an army*, chap. vi. 4, and to be like Pharaoh's horses, and to have *a head like Carmel, a nose like a tower, eyes like fishpools, teeth like a flock of sheep*, &c., chap. vii. 4, 5. And there are many such-like expressions and descriptions, which being applied to them, are absurd and monstrous. Hence it follows that this book is to be understood mystically or allegorically, concerning that spiritual love and marriage which is between God, or Christ, and his church, or every believing soul. And this will be more than probable to any man who shall consider the following particulars. 1. That the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament are full of mystical and allegorical passages; which being known and confessed, it is needless to prove. 2. That the doctrine of Christ, or the Messias, and of his being the Head, and Husband, and Saviour of God's church or people, was well known, at least to the prophets, and the wise and pious Israelites, in the time of the Old Testament; whereof we have many manifest and unquestionable evidences, not only in the New Testament, but in the writings of Moses, in the Books of Psalms and Proverbs, and in the prophets, as hath been noted in part, and will, God assisting, be further observed in the proper places. 3. That God compares himself to a bridegroom, and his church to a bride, Isa. lxii. 5, and calls and owns himself the *Husband* of his people, Isa. liv. 5; Hos. ii. 16, 19, 20. In which places, by comparing these with many other texts of Scripture, by God, or the Lord, is meant Christ, the second person in the Godhead, who then was to come down, and since did come from heaven to earth, for the consummation of that eternal project of marriage between God and his people; which also is fully confirmed by the writings of the New Testament, which were designed for the explication of the Old, in which Christ is expressly declared to be the Bridegroom or Husband of his church, as Matt. ix. 15; xxii. 2; John iii. 29; 2 Cor. xi. 2; Eph. v. 23; Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2; xxii. 17. 4. That the 45th Psalm, which is a kind of abridgement of this book, although it had its rise from or alludes to the marriage between Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, was written concerning the Messias, as all interpreters, both Christian and Jewish, agree, and concerning the mystical marriage between Christ and his church; of which see my notes upon that Psalm. From these considerations, and many others which might be suggested, and which will offer themselves to our thoughts from several passages of it, it is sufficiently manifest, that the main scope and business of this book is to describe the mutual love, union, and communion which is between Christ and his church in the various conditions to which it is liable in this world, as in the state of weakness, and desertion, and persecution from foolish shepherds, and the like, chap. i. 6, 7; iii. 1—4; v. 2, 7, &c. Moreover it is to be considered, that Solomon doth here vary his speech, sometimes speaking of the church in general, as one person or body; and sometimes of the particular members of it, or of several believers, both of such as really and sincerely are so, or such as profess to be so, and of their various dispositions and conditions. And hence comes the difference of persons here mentioned, the mother or spouse, and the children or daughters of Jerusalem, sixty queens, and eighty concubines; some that are strangers to the bridegroom, and some that are well acquainted with him, &c. These things being premised will give great light to the several passages of this book.

CHAP. I.

A description of the earnest longing of the church after Christ, 1—4. *A confession of her deformity; prayeth for direction*, 5—7. *Christ's direction and command*, 8. *He showeth his love to her both for her strength and comeliness*, 9, 10, *and giveth her gracious promises*, 11. *The church's commendation of Christ, both for the sweetness of fellowship with him, and the excellency of ordinances*, 12—17.

B. C. written cir. 1014. THE [a]songs of songs, which *is* Solomon's.

a 1 Kings 4. 32.

The song of songs; the most excellent of all songs, whether composed by profane or sacred authors, by Solomon or by any other. So this Hebrew phrase is understood in other cases, as the *holy of holies* signifies the most holy; and the highest King is called *King of kings*; and there are multitudes of such instances, as hath been oft observed. And so this might well be called, whether you consider the author of it, who was a great prince, and the wisest of all mortal men, the two Adams only excepted; or the subject of it, which is not Solomon, but *a greater than Solomon*, even Christ, and his marriage with the church, as hath been noted; or the matter of it, which is most lofty and mysterious, containing in it the greatest and noblest of all the mysteries contained either in the Old or the New Testament; most pious and pathetical, breathing forth the hottest flames of love between Christ and his people; most sweet, and comfortable, and useful to all that read it with serious and Christian eyes. Nor is it the worse because profane and wanton wits abuse it, and endeavour to fasten their absurd and filth† senses upon some passages in it. The truth is, this book requires a sober and pious, not a lascivious and foolish reader; for which reason some of the ancient Hebrews advised young men to forbear the reading of it, till they were thirty years old. *Which is Solomon's*; which was composed by Solomon; but whether before his fall, or after his repentance, is not easy to determine, nor necessary to be known.

2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: [b]for †thy love *is* better than wine.

b ch. 4. 10. † Heb. *thy loves.*

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. The beginning of this book is abrupt, and may seem disorderly; but is very suitable to and usual in writings of this nature, wherein things are not related in an historical and exquisite order, but that which was first done is brought in as it were accidentally after many other passages; as we see in Homer, and Virgil, and in the Greek and Latin comedians. These are the words of the spouse, as all acknowledge, wherein she breatheth forth her passionate love to the Bridegroom, whom she doth not name, but only intimate by the pronoun relative *him*, which is here put without and for the antecedent, as Psal. lxxxvii. 1; cxiv. 2; John xx. 15; which manner of expression she useth, because it was needless to name him, as being so well known to the person or persons to whom she speaks, and being the only person who was continually in her thoughts and speeches. By *kisses*, which were the usual tokens of love and good will, she means nothing else but the communications and manifestations of his love and favour to her, as the following clause

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explains this; his graces and comforts breathed into her from the mouth and Spirit of Christ. *Thy love:* this sudden change of the person is frequent, especially in such pathetical discourses. First she speaks of him as absent, and at a distance, but speedily grows into more acquaintance with him, and by ardent desire in faith embraceth him as present. *Than wine;* than the most delicious meats or drinks, or than all sensual delights, this one kind being synecdochically put for all the rest, as it is Esth. v. 6; Job i. 13; Prov. ix. 2; Eccles. ii. 3.

3 Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name *is as* ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

Because of the savour of thy good ointments; because of those excellent gifts and graces of God's Spirit wherewith thou art replenished, and which flow from thee upon thy members. *Thy name;* either, 1. Thou thyself; *names* being oft put for persons, as Acts i. 15; Rev. iii. 4. Or rather, 2. Thy fame or report, the very mention of thee, and all those things by which thou makest thyself known to men, thy word, and particularly thine offers and promises of pardon and salvation made to sinners, and all thy works, both ordinary and miraculous, especially that great work of redemption. *Is as ointment poured forth;* most lovely, and acceptable, and refreshing. *The virgins,* called *the companions* of the bride, Psal. xlv. 14, particular believers, who are called *virgins,* 2 Cor. xi. 2; Rev. xiv. 4, who have their senses exercised to perceive this sweetness and fulness of Christ.

4 [c]Draw me, [d]we will run after thee: the king [e]hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: ‖the upright love thee.

c Hos. 11. 4. John 6. 44. & 12. 32.
d Phil. 3. 12, 13, 14.
e Ps. 45. 14, 15. John 14. 2. Eph. 2. 6.
‖ Or, *they love thee uprightly.*

Draw me; by thy grace and Holy Spirit effectually inclining my heart to come unto thee, as this phrase implies, Jer. xxxi. 3; Hos. xi. 4; John vi. 44, 45. As thou hast outwardly called and invited me, so do thou inwardly move me, who am naturally averse and backward to follow thee. *We;* both I thy spouse, and the virgins my companions. And this change of numbers teaches us that the spouse in this book is one great body, consisting of many members, of whom therefore he speaks sometimes in the singular, and sometimes in the plural number. *Will run after thee;* will follow thee readily, and cheerfully, and swiftly; which is opposed to her former sluggishness and listlessness. We will not receive thy grace in vain, but will improve it, and co-operate with it, and stir up all our strength to serve and obey thee. *The king;* Christ, my Husband and Lord, the King of his church, as he is oft called, the King of kings, &c. *Hath brought me,* Heb. *hath caused me to come,* by drawing me as I desired. He hath answered my prayer. *Into his chambers,* where I may most freely and familiarly converse with him, and enjoy him. He hath taken me into intimate communion with himself. These *chambers* seem to note either, 1. Those heavenly mansions into which believers are sometimes said to be brought, even in this life, as Eph. ii. 6, because they have a lively faith, and a well-grounded hope and assurance, and some comfortable foretastes of that blessed state. Or rather, 2. Those places and conditions upon earth in which they enjoy the special favour and fellowship of God in Christ, as the public assemblies, in which Christ is in a peculiar manner present, Matt. xviii. 20, where his word and ordinances are dispensed, and where he poureth forth his Spirit and blessings, and speaks great peace, and gives forth his loves unto his people. Yea, even the private closets, wherein believers enjoy much of Christ by prayer, and praise, and reading, and meditation, are such chambers also; for it is not the place, but the state, or privilege, which is here signified, and which is considerable. *In thee;* or, *for thee;* in or for thy love and favour to us, which is the principal cause of our joy. *Remember,* or *commemorate,* or *celebrate.* This shall be the matter of our thoughts and discourses. *The upright;* those chaste and sincere virgins mentioned ver. 3, who are here opposed to hypocritical professors.

5 I *am* black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

I am black. It might be objected, Who art thou, that thou shouldst have or pretend to such a royal Bridegroom, and such honours and favours? To this the church answers, I confess, as to myself and outward appearance in the eyes of the world, I have not that pomp and beauty which men admire, but *am black,* contemptible and deformed, both for my own infirmities and disorders, and for the scandals of some of my own members, and for the reproaches and persecutions of worldly men. She alludes to the complexion of Pharaoh's daughter, who was black. *But comely;* yet I am *glorious within,* Psal. xlv. 13, and comely, through the beauty which my Husband hath put upon me, by his graces and blessings conferred upon me, such as justification and sanctification, &c. *Daughters of Jerusalem;* by which she understands particular believers, whose *mother* Jerusalem is called, Gal. iv. 26, who had joined themselves to her, especially young converts and weak Christians, who were startled and offended at the contemplation of her blackness. *Of Kedar,* i. e. of the wild Arabians, the posterity of Kedar, Gen. xxv. 13, who dwelt in tents, which were black and uncomely, both in themselves, and by the injuries of the weather, to which they were constantly exposed. *As the curtains of Solomon;* as the hangings wherewith Solomon's house was furnished, which none can doubt that they were most beautiful and glorious. So these two last clauses answer to the two first, and that in the same order in which they lie.

6 Look not upon me, because I *am* black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards; *but* mine own vineyard have I not kept.

Look not upon me, with wonder and disdain, because of my blackness, as it follows. *Because the sun hath looked upon me:* my blackness is not essential, and inseparable, but chiefly caused by the scorching beams of the sun, i. e. of sore persecutions and tribulations, which by God's permission have befallen me, which are represented by the sun, Matt. xiii. 6, 21. *My mother's children;* false brethren, who pretend that the church is their mother, when their actions demonstrate that God, the Husband of the church, is not their Father; hypocritical professors, who are, and ever were, the keenest enemies to the true church and people of God, Isa. lxvi. 5; Gal. iv. 29; false teachers, and their followers, who, by their corrupt doctrines, and divisions, and contentions which they raise, bring great mischief to the church. See 2 Cor. xi. 26; Gal. ii. 4. *Were angry with me;* or, *fought against me,* as the ancients render it, and so marred my beauty. *They made me keeper of the vineyards,* i. e. of their vineyards, for to these she opposeth her own, in the next clause. Having prevailed against me, they used me like a slave, putting me upon the most dishonourable and troublesome services, such as the keeping of the vineyards was esteemed, 2 Kings xxv. 12; Isa. lxi. 5; Matt. xx. 1—7. *Mine own vineyard have I not kept;* they gave me such a full and constant employment in their drudging work about their vineyards, that they left me no time to mind my own; they hindered me from doing my own duty, and from minding my own concerns; and therefore it is no wonder if in this posture and condition I be uncomely, and scorched by the sun. But because churches or societies of professors of religion, whether good or bad, are oft called *vineyards,* as Deut. xxxii. 32; Psal. lxxx. 8; Isa. v. 1, 2, 7, this and the foregoing clause may be thus understood, that they endeavoured to seduce and corrupt the church with false doctrines, and superstitious or idolatrous worship, and to oblige her to countenance and maintain them, and thereby disturbed and hindered her from her proper work, which was the propagation and advancement of the true doctrine and worship in particular assemblies and persons belonging, or to be brought in, to her.

7 Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest *thy flock* to rest at noon: for why should I be ‖as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

‖ Or, *as one that is veiled.*

Whom my soul loveth, notwithstanding all these dis-

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couragements and afflictions which I suffer for thy sake, and for my love to thee. Being reproached and persecuted by others, I flee to thee, O my only refuge and joy, and I beg direction and help from thee. *Where thou feedest*, understand, *thy flock*, as Gen. xxix. 7; xxxvii. 16. Seeing false teachers and churches bear thy name, Mark xiii. 21, 22, and thy true church sometimes lies hid, Rev. xii. 14, discover to me which is thy true church, and which are those assemblies and people where thou art present, and where thine ordinances are dispensed in purity and power, and where thou dost and wilt *command the blessing, even life for evermore*, as it is expressed, Psal. cxxxiii. 3, that I may join myself to them. This is the request of particular believers. For it must be minded, as that which will be useful to explain many difficulties in this book, that the church in this book is sometimes considered, and speaketh, or is spoken of, as one entire body, and sometimes with respect unto and in the name of her particular members, and that promiscuously; and in which of these capacities each place is to be understood is left to the prudent and diligent reader to gather out of the words and context. *At noon;* in the heat of the day, when the shepherds in those hot countries used to carry their flocks into shady places; whereby he means the time of hot persecution, when it is hard to find and discover the true church, partly because she is deformed by it, and partly because she is obscured and driven into the wilderness, as is said, Rev. xii. 14. *Be as one*, i. e. be really one, the particle *as* being here a note of truth, as it is in many other places. Why wilt thou by withdrawing thyself from me, and denying thy direction to me, suffer me, or give occasion to me, to be such a one? *One that turneth aside;* or, *a wanderer*, or *vagabond*, like a neglected and forlorn creature, exposed both to censure and danger, from both which it belongs to thee, my Husband, to protect and save me. *By*, or *about*, or *towards*, as this particle is elsewhere used, *the flocks of thy companions;* the assemblies of corrupt and false teachers and worshippers, by which I am like to be insnared, if thou dost forsake me. These he calls Christ's *companions*, partly because they profess the name of Christ, and their conjunction with him in God's worship; and partly because they set themselves up in Christ's stead, and usurp his power in delivering and imposing their own laws and doctrines upon men's consciences, and behave themselves like his equals or companions, not as becometh his subjects.

f ch. 5. 9. & 6. 1.

8 ¶ If thou know not, [f]O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

If thou know not, to wit, where I feed my sheep. For this is Christ's answer to his spouse or people. *O thou fairest among women;* though thou art black in thine own and others' eyes, yet thou art very beautiful and amiable to me, as being washed white in my blood, and beautified with my gifts and graces. *Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock;* observe and follow the paths which my sheep had trodden before thee, of my faithful servants, Abraham and others, whose examples are propounded for our imitation, Rom. iv. 12; Heb. vi. 12. For the church in all ages is one and the same, and there is but one way for the substance in which all the saints from the beginning to the end of the world do walk, *Christ* being *yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever*, Heb. xiii. 8, and *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, Rev. xiii. 8. *Feed thy kids;* take care for the feeding or teaching of all, and especially of young and weak Christians, who do and shall associate themselves to thee, whom the Holy Ghost calls *lambs*, John xxi. 15, 16, as here *kids*. For although grown and wanton *goats* are commonly used in Scripture in a bad sense, yet the *kids* of the *goats* do sometimes note believers, as Isa. xi. 6. and *kids* were among those sacrifices which represented Christ, Heb. ix. 12—14. *Beside the shepherds' tents;* under the conduct, and according to the instruction, of my faithful shepherds, or pastors; first and chiefly those who have gone before thee, the prophets and apostles, and after, and in subordination to them, and to their writings, others whom I shall raise from time to time to feed my people with wisdom and understanding.

g ch. 2. 2, 10, 12. & 4.

9 I have compared thee, [g]O my love, [h]to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

h 2 Chron. 1. 16, 17.

I have compared thee, Heb. *I have made thee like;* which may be understood either, 1. Verbally, by comparing. Or, 2. Really, by making a real resemblance in quality or condition. *To a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots;* either, 1. For comeliness; for a horse is a very stately and beautiful creature, and the Egyptian horses were preferred before others, 1 Kings x. 28; Isa. xxxi. 1, and Pharaoh's own chariot horses were doubtless the best of their kind. Or, 2. For excellent order and usefulness, as those horses did equally and orderly draw the chariot, and carried Pharaoh with ease and speed whither he designed to go. Or rather, 3. For strength and courage, to overcome all thine enemies. For horses are famous for that property, Job xxxix. 21, &c. And the strength of the battle was then thought to consist very much in horses, Prov. xxi. 31, and chariots, and especially in a company or multitude of them. And the church in this book is represented not only as fair and beautiful, but also as *terrible* to her enemies, Cant. vi. 10. Compare Rev. xix. 11, 14.

i Ezek. 16. 11, 12, 13.

10 [i]Thy cheeks are comely with rows *of jewels*, thy neck with chains *of gold*.

Rows of jewels; which being fastened to the heads of brides, used to hang down upon and to adorn their cheeks, according to the manner in those times. He mentions the *cheeks* as the chief seat of beauty; and he intimates that the church's beauty is not natural, nor from herself, but from the jewels wherewith Christ adorns her. *Thy neck;* which is mentioned as another visible part and seat of beauty, Hos. x. 11. But to accommodate every part and ornament named in this book to some particular thing in the church, seems to have more of curiosity and artifice than of solidity and use. *Chains of gold;* whereby, as well as by *the rows of jewels*, he may seem to design all those persons and things wherewith the church is made beautiful in the eyes of God and of men, such as excellent ministers and saints, righteous laws, holy ordinances, and the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, all which are given by God to the church, and are her best ornaments.

11 We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

We; I thy Bridegroom, with the co-operation of my Father, and of the Holy Spirit. Such plural expressions are sometimes used in Scripture concerning one God, to note the plurality of persons in one Divine essence, as hath been noted upon Gen. i. 26, and elsewhere. *Borders of gold with studs of silver;* beautiful and honourable ornaments, such as those ver. 10. Variety of expressions are used to signify the various kinds and improvements of the gifts and graces which are bestowed by Christ upon the church. The phrase here used may be compared with that of *apples of gold in pictures of silver*, Prov. xxv. 11.

12 ¶ While the king *sitteth* at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

The King, my royal Husband, *sitteth at his table;* either, 1. With the spirits of just men and blessed angels in heavenly glory, to which Christ was advanced after his sufferings, and from which he poureth down his Spirit upon his people. Or rather, 2. With me in his gospel and ordinances, in which Christ entertaineth his people, and is in a special, and gracious, and glorious manner present with them, Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 20, which also is oft represented in Scripture under the motion of a feast or banquet, of which see Prov. ix. 1—3, 5; Isa. xxv. 6; Matt. viii. 11; xxii. 2; 1 Cor. x. 21. *My spikenard;* the graces of his Spirit conferred upon me, and drawn forth by his powerful presence, which is here compared to those sweet ointments which the master of the feast caused to be poured out upon the heads of the guests, of which see Mark xiv. 3; Luke vii. 38, in which ointments spikenard was a chief ingredient, John xii. 2, 3. *Sendeth forth the smell thereof;* which notes the exercise and manifestation of her graces, which is a sweet-smelling savour in the nostrils of her Husband, and of her companions.

13 A bundle of myrrh *is* my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

A bundle of myrrh; or, *a bag of myrrh;* in which there

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was a considerable quantity of the gum which droppeth from the myrrh tree. Myrrh is bitter to the taste, but sweet to the smell, and therefore was ever reckoned amongst the best perfumes. See Exod. xxx. 23; Psal. xlv. 8; John xix. 39. *Is my Beloved unto me;* he is most precious and comfortable to me, and the author of my sweet smell last mentioned. *Betwixt my breasts;* in the place where bundles or bags of myrrh or other perfumes hang down, being fastened about their necks, which yet were taken away and laid aside by night. But the church intimates that she will not part with Christ, neither day nor night. Or this phrase may note the church's intimate union with and hearty affection unto Christ.

‖ Or, *cypress.* ch. 4. 13.

14 My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluster of ‖ camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.

Camphire; or, *cypress*, as others render it. It was an odoriferous plant growing in vineyards, and some think that it was a most pleasant kind of vine, like that which bears muscatel grapes; yea, some very learned men understand it of that plant which dropped balm, which grew in or near the place here specified, as is affirmed not only by the Jews, but also by pagan writers, as Diodorus and Trogus. Nor are we concerned to know which or what it was; it being confessed and evident, that it was some pleasant and grateful plant, and that it sets forth that great delight which the church hath in the enjoyment of Christ. *En-gedi;* a pleasant and well-watered place in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 62; Ezek. xlvii. 10, where there were many pleasant plants, whence it was called *Hazazon-tamar*, 2 Chron. xx. 2.

k ch. 4. 1. & 5. 12. ‖ Or, *my companion.*

15 k Behold, thou *art* fair, ‖ my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes.

Behold, thou art fair: this is the speech of Christ. The words are doubled, partly to note the certainty of the thing, notwithstanding her mean and modest opinion of herself; and partly to manifest his high esteem and fervent affection for her, and to assure her that, notwithstanding all her infirmities, he was very well pleased with her. *Thou hast doves' eyes;* which are, 1. Comely and pleasant. 2. Modest and humble, not lofty, as the looks of some other creatures are. 3. Mild and harmless, not fierce and fiery, not looking and watching for prey, as the eyes of ravenous birds are. 4. Chaste and faithful, looking only to their mates; so that *if any of them cast a lustful eye upon another, her companions are enraged against her, and quickly tear her in pieces;* as some natural historians write. And such are the church's eyes said to be. And by *the eyes* he seems to design partly her looks and outward behaviour or conversation, and partly and chiefly the inward disposition of her mind, which is commonly discovered, and in Scripture is oft signified, by the eye; in which sense we read of *an evil eye*, Prov. xxiii. 6; Matt. vi. 23, of *a bountiful eye*, Prov. xxii. 9, of *a single eye*, Luke xi. 34, of *a proud* or *lofty look*, all which signify such tempers of men's minds.

16 Behold, thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed *is* green.

Behold, thou art fair, my beloved. The church here again speaks, and retorts Christ's words upon himself: If I am fair, it is only by thy grace and favourable acceptation; thou, and thou only, art fair indeed, thy beauty is exquisite and perfect. *Pleasant;* as thou art beautiful in thyself, so thou art amiable and pleasant in thy condescension to me, and converse with me, in communicating thy blessed counsels, and graces, and comforts to me. *Our bed;* either, 1. Upon which we sit at meat, as the manner then was, Esth. i. 5, 6; Ezek. xxiii. 41. Or rather, 2. Upon which we lie, our nuptial bed; for the union and communion between Christ and his church is here represented under the notion of marriage. And accordingly the bed seems to denote the place or places where the church enjoyeth sweet fellowship with Christ, by his Spirit accompanying his ordinances, and imparting his merits, and graces, and comforts to her. *Is green;* is pleasant, as that colour is to the eye; is prepared for us, being adorned with green garlands, or boughs and herbs, as the manner seems to have been with country brides, such as the spouse in this book is represented to be. Or, as others, both ancient and later interpreters, render it, is *flourishing*, i. e. fruitful. So it is a happy presage, that the church should not be barren, but bring forth many children to Christ; of which see Isa. liv. 1, &c. By these and the following words the church invites Christ to her bed and house, where she may freely and fully enjoy spiritual communion with him.

17 The beams of our house *are* cedar, *and* our ‖ rafters of fir.

‖ Or, *galleries.*

The beams of our house are cedar; not only strong and incorruptible, but also fragrant and delightful. Though I am in myself but a mean and rustic person, yet the house to which I invite thee, and where thou and I shall dwell together, is, by thy favour, built with cedar; whereby is here signified the stability of God's church upon earth, which is called *God's house*, 1 Tim. iii. 15, and the firmness and sureness of God's word and promises. *Rafters;* the lesser beams. Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by others, *galleries*, wherein we may walk. *Of fir;* or, as the ancients and others render it, *of cypress*, which was used in buildings, which also was strong and fragrant, and therefore suits well with cedars.

CHAP. II.

The excellency of the majesty of Christ, 1, *and of his church*, 2. *The benefits which the church receives from him*, 3. *Christ's love to his church*, 4. *The church sick of love; her prayer for help*, 5. *His care for her in this condition*, 6. *The hope and calling of the church*, 10—13. *Christ's care of the church*, 14, 15. *The profession of the church; her faith and hope*, 16, 17.

I *AM* the rose of Sharon, *and* the lily of the valleys.

These are the words either, 1. Of the spouse, continuing her discourse. Or rather, 2. Of the bridegroom, drawing forth the church's affections to him. He compares himself to the *rose* and *lily*, for fragrancy and beauty. Nor is it in the least degree indecent that Christ should thus commend himself, partly because his excellency is so transcendently great, that he is free from all suspicion of vanity and self-flattery; and partly because it is suitable to the style of such writings, and to the present design of recommending himself to the affection of his spouse. He mentions *the rose of Sharon*, which was a very fruitful place, as is evident from 1 Chron. xxvii. 29; Isa. xxxiii. 9; lxv. 10, and famous for roses, as may seem probable from Isa. xxxv. 1, 2. Or, as others translate it, *the rose of the field*, which may note that Christ is not only pleasant and beautiful, but free and communicative, offering himself to all that come to him. The *lily* is a beautiful and glorious creature, Matt. vi. 29, especially to one who beholds it through a magnifying glass. He saith, *the lily of the valleys*, because they grew and flourished best in such low and waterish grounds.

2 As the lily among thorns, so *is* my love among the daughters.

As the lily among thorns; compared with thorns, which it unspeakably exceeds in glory and beauty; *so is my love among the daughters;* so far, and much more, doth my church or people excel all other assemblies or people. The title of *daughter* is oft given to whole nations; whence we read of the *daughter of Babylon*, and of *Egypt*, and of *Edom*, &c., Isa. xlvii. 1; Jer. xlvi. 11; Lam. iv. 21. These are Christ's words, to which the spouse makes the following reply. And it is observable here, that as Christ is here represented as a shepherd, and the spouse as a country virgin, so the similitudes here used are agreeable to that estate.

3 As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so *is* my beloved among the sons. †I sat down under his shadow with great delight, a and his fruit *was* sweet to my †taste.

† Heb. *I delighted and sat down, &c.* a Lev. 22. 1, 2. † Heb. *palate.*

As the apple tree, whose fruit is very pleasant and wholesome, *among the trees of the wood*, which are either barren, or bear ungrateful and worthless fruit. *I sat down under his shadow;* being weary and heavy laden with manifold

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sins and troubles, inward and outward, I confidently reposed myself under his protection, (which is commonly signified by a *shadow*, as Isa. iv. 6; xxv. 4, &c.,) and by him was defended from the scorching heat of God's wrath, and from the curse of his fiery law, and from the mischief or hurt of all sorts of distresses. *His fruit;* the benefits which I received by him, the clear, and full, and certain knowledge of God's will, and the way of salvation, adoption, and remission of sins, faith and repentance, and all manner of grace, and assurance of glory. Thus he was to me both a *sun and a shield*, as is said, Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

† Heb. *house of wine.*

4 He brought me to the †banqueting house, and his banner over me *was* love.

Banqueting-house, Heb. *house of wine*, or, by a common synecdoche, of feasting. By which he understands the places in which, or the means and instruments by which, believers receive the graces and blessings of Christ, to wit, the Holy Scriptures, ministers, and public assemblies, and all Christ's institutions. *His banner over me;* or, *to* or *towards me;* by the lifting up or displaying whereof I was invited and encouraged to come in to him, and to list myself under him, as soldiers are by the lifting up of a banner or ensign, of which see Isa. xi. 10; xlix. 22. *Was love;* the love of Christ crucified, which, like a banner, is displayed in the gospel, whereby sinners are drawn and engaged to come to Christ: see John iii. 14; xii. 32; 2 Cor. v. 14. The motto or device of Christ's banner was not like those of other great generals, a lion, or leopard, or eagle, but *love*, by which alone Christ made all his conquests.

† Heb. *straw me with apples.*

5 Stay with me flagons, †comfort me with apples: for I *am* sick of love.

Stay me; or, *support me;* keep me from sinking or fainting. The spouse speaks this to her bridemaids, *the daughters of Jerusalem*, as it is expressed, ver. 7, or to the servants or friends of the Bridegroom there waiting, and to the Bridegroom himself; as a person ready to faint cries to any or all that are near to him or her for help. *With flagons;* with wine, which is a good cordial, Psal. civ. 15; Prov. xxxi. 6, 7, and which was there present, ver. 4. *Flagons* are here, and 1 Chron. xvi. 3, put for *flagons of wine*, as it is fully expressed, Hos. iii. 1, or for the wine contained in them, as the *cup* is put for wine, Luke xxii. 20, by a common metonymy. *Comfort me with apples;* with odoriferous apples, such as pomegranates, or the like, the smell whereof was grateful and useful to persons ready to faint. By these metaphors understand the application of the promises, and the comfortable and quickening influences of the Spirit. *I am sick of love;* either, 1. With transports of joy, which sometimes causes a fainting of the spirits, as Gen. xlv. 26; 1 Kings x. 5. Or, 2. With grief for his departure from her, of which we read chap. iii. 1, 2, or for fear of it. Or rather, 3. With ardent desire of a stricter union, and clearer discoveries of his love, and perfect and uninterrupted communion with him in glory. That sickness is sometimes the effect of love hath been oft observed by physicians.

b ch. 8. 3.

6 [b]His left hand *is* under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

Is under my head, as a pillow for me to rest upon. No sooner did I cry out for help, but he was at hand to succour me, and did manifest his tender care and dear love to me.

† Heb. *I adjure you.* c ch. 3. 5. & 8. 4.

7 †[c]I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

This verse is spoken either, 1. By the Bridegroom, who having reposed the sick church in his arms, chargeth them not to disturb her *till she please*, as the last clause in this case must be rendered. Or rather, 2. By the bride, as may be gathered, 1. From the connexion, because both the foregoing and following words are hers. 2. Because it was more decent for the bride than for the Bridegroom to give this charge to the bridemaids, *the daughters of Jerusalem;* and therefore in all places in this book where they are mentioned the person speaking to them is the bride, and not the Bridegroom, and particularly chap. iii. 5; viii. 4, where this verse is repeated, and is confessedly and evidently spoken by the spouse. *Daughters of Jerusalem;* my bridemaids, friends, and members, over whom I have authority. *By the hinds;* either, 1. By the kindness you have to those pretty and amiable creatures, as you would not injure nor disturb them, nor drive them away, but please yourselves with the sight of them, as shepherds and country damsels commonly do. Or, 2. By the example of those creatures, which are pleasant and loving in their carriage towards one another. *Of the field;* which have their usual abode in the fields. *That ye stir not up, nor awake;* that you do not disturb nor offend him by your miscarriages, but permit him and me to enjoy a quiet repose. Do nothing to grieve him, or molest me. *My love;* my dearly beloved, called *love* emphatically, to express her great passion for him. So *love* is used Cant. vii. 6, and in other authors. *Till he please*, i. e. never, as this word *until*, in such like phrases, is commonly used, as Gen. xxviii. 15; 2 Sam. vi. 23; Isa. xxii. 14. For neither can sin ever please him, nor can the church bear it that Christ should ever be offended, or that her sweet fellowship with him should be interrupted.

8 ¶ The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

The voice of my Beloved! methinks I hear his voice. The spouse being now refreshed and revived with Christ's presence, awakes out of sleep, and breaks forth into this joyful exclamation. Christ's voice is nothing else but the word of grace revealed outwardly in the gospel, or the evangelical passages of the Old Testament, and inwardly to the heart of the spouse by the Spirit of God. *Behold, he cometh;* either, 1. He is coming, or will shortly come, into the world; which Solomon and the rest of the Old Testament prophets and saints did earnestly desire and confidently expect. Or, 2. He is coming to me for my support and comfort. *Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills;* he saith *leaping* and *skipping*, to note that Christ came readily and swiftly, with great desire and pleasure; and he adds, *upon the mountains and hills*, either with respect to Mount Zion or Jerusalem, in and from which Christ first discovered himself; or to signify Christ's fixed resolution to come, in spite of all discouragements and difficulties which stood in his way; or to show that his coming was manifest and visible to the eye of her faith. Or in this phrase he may have a respect to the *roes* and *harts* here following.

9 [d]My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, †shewing himself through the lattice.

d ver. 17.

† Heb. *flourishing.*

Like a roe or a young hart; either, 1. In loveliness. Or rather, 2. In swiftness, by comparing this verse with the former. The swiftness of roes is noted 2 Sam. ii. 18; 1 Chron. xii. 8. He is coming to me with all speed, and will not tarry a moment beyond the appointed and proper season. *He standeth behind our wall;* and whilst he doth for wise and just reasons forbear to come, he is not far from us. Though he be not yet come into the door of our house, yet he stands behind the wall of our house, and is always at hand, to give me that succour and comfort which I do or may need or desire. Both this and the following phrases seem to note the obscure and imperfect manner and degree of Christ's manifesting himself to his people, either, 1. Under the law, in comparison of his discoveries in the gospel. Or, 2. In this life, in comparison of what he will do in the future life. *He looketh forth*, from his high and heavenly palace, towards me, to watch over me, and refresh me with the prospect of his favour. *At the window:* this phrase, and that, *through the lattice*, intimate that the church doth indeed see Christ, but, as *through a glass, darkly*, as it is said even of gospel revelations, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, and was much more true of legal administrations.

10 My beloved spake, and said unto me, [e]Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

e ver. 13.

My Beloved spake; invited and called me outwardly by his word, and inwardly by his Spirit. *Rise up;* shake off sloth and security, and disentangle thyself more fully from all the snares of this world, and of thy own lusts, that thou mayst be more ready to come to me, and more fit for my embraces. *Come away* unto me, and with me; follow me

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fully, serve me more perfectly, labour for a nearer union and more satisfying communion with me.

11 For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone;

The winter; which made the ways in some sort unpassable, and so might seem to hinder or affright thee from coming to me. This *winter*, and the following *rain*, may be understood either, 1. Of worldly tribulations, which he intimates to be past and gone, to wit, so far that they shall not destroy nor hurt the church, but, on the contrary, do her much good, both by multiplying her members, and increasing her graces, and promoting her eternal happiness. Or rather, 2. Of spiritual troubles arising in the minds and consciences of sinners, from a deep sense of the guilt of sin, the justice and wrath of God, the sentence and curse of the law; all which made them afraid to come unto God, and desirous, if possible, to run away from him. But, saith Christ, I have removed this great impediment, God is ready to be reconciled, and therefore cast off all discouragements and excuses, and come unto me.

12 The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing *of birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;

The flowers appear on the earth: this and the following clauses are here alleged as evidences of the spring time, which in the mystical and principal sense seems to signify the day of grace, or the glad tidings of salvation proposed to sinners in the time of the law, by types, and shadows, and promises, but much more clearly and fully in the gospel, and all the discoveries and communications of God's grace to mankind in holy ordinances, in the gifts, and graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed unto and appearing in believers, as buds and blossoms do in the spring time. *The time of the singing of birds;* when birds sing most freely and sweetly, as they do in the spring. Or, as the ancient translators render it, *of cutting* or *cropping*, not trees, which agrees not with that season, but the flowers last mentioned, for nosegays, or other uses. *The turtle;* which changeth its place according to the season, as is observed. Jer. viii. 7, and by all other writers, who affirm that it disappears in winter, and appears in the spring, as some other birds also do; but this seems particularly to be mentioned, because it doth not only give notice of the spring, but also doth aptly represent the Spirit of God, which even the Chaldee paraphrast understands by this *turtle*, which appeared in the shape of a dove, and which worketh a dove-like meekness, and chastity, and faithfulness in believers. *In our land;* in *Immanuel's land*, as Canaan is called, Isa. viii. 8, in the church.

13 The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines *with* the tender grape give a *good* smell. [f]Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

[f] ver. 10.

Green figs; which it shooteth forth as soon as it doth leaves, in the spring time, Matt. xxiv. 32. *A good smell;* which, though not strong, is pleasant and grateful, and given by it in the progress of the spring. *Come away:* these words are here repeated, to show both the church's infirmity and indisposition, which needs so many calls and arguments to press so necessary and advantageous a duty; and Christ's tender compassion to her weakness, and fervent desire of converse with her.

14 ¶ O my dove, *that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, [g]let me hear thy voice; for sweet *is* thy voice, and thy countenance *is* comely.

[g] ch. 8. 13.

My dove; so the church is called, partly for her dove-like temper and disposition, because she is chaste, and mild, and harmless, &c.; and partly for her dove-like condition, because she is weak, and exposed to persecution, and given to mourning, as doves are, Isa. xxxviii. 14; lix. 11; Ezek. vii. 16, and subject to many fears, and therefore forced to hide herself in rocks, as it follows, *in the clefts of the rock;* where she hid herself, either, 1. For fear of her enemies, whom to avoid she puts herself into the protection of the Almighty. Or, 2. Out of modesty, and a humble sense of her own deformities and infirmities, which makes her endeavour to hide herself even from her Beloved, as ashamed to appear in his presence, which is frequently the case of God's people, especially after falls into sin. And this sense seems to be favoured by the following words, in which Christ relieveth her against such discouraging thoughts. *In the secret places of the stairs;* in the holes of craggy and broken rocks, which resemble stairs. So the same thing is here repeated in other words. *Let me see thy countenance;* be not afraid nor ashamed to appear before me; come boldly into my presence, and acquaint thyself with me. *Thy voice;* thy prayers and praises. *Sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely;* thy person and services are accepted by me, and are amiable in my sight.

15 Take us [h]the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines *have* tender grapes.

[h] Ps. 80. 13. Ezek. 13. 4. Luke 13. 32.

The Bridegroom gives this charge to his bridemen or friends, whose office it is to attend upon him, and to observe his commands; by whom he understands those magistrates and ministers to whom, under Christ, the custody of the vineyards, to wit, the churches, principally belong. These he commands to *take* the foxes, i. e. to restrain them from doing this mischief. *Us*, Heb. *for us*, i. e. at our instance, and for our common good, as this spoiling of the vines was injurious and grievous to them both. *The foxes;* the disturbers of the vineyard, or the church; seducers or false teachers, who are fitly compared to *foxes* here, and Ezek. xiii. 4, partly to distinguish them from great tyrants and persecutors, who are compared to *wild boars*, or other *wild beasts*, Psal. lxxx. 13, as to *lions*, 2 Tim. iv. 17; and partly for their fox-like qualities and actions, because they are very crafty and deceitful, 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14; Eph. iv. 14, and very mischievous also, Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3; 2 Tim. ii. 17; Tit. i. 10, 11; 2 Pet. ii. 2. He mentions *foxes*, because these abounded in that country, as is manifest from Judg. xv. 4; Psal. lxiii. 10; Lam. v. 18, &c., but under them he comprehends all noxious creatures, upon the same reason. *The little foxes:* this he adds, not as if the great foxes were excused or exempted, but for more abundant caution, to teach the church to prevent errors and heresies in the beginnings of them, before they spread and grow strong and incurable. *That spoil the vines*, which foxes do many ways, as those who write of them have observed, by gnawing and breaking the little branches and leaves, and the bark, by digging holes in the vineyards, and so spoiling the roots, by eating the grapes, and other ways. *Have tender grapes;* which gives us hopes of a good vintage, and which are easily spoiled, if great care be not used to prevent it.

16 ¶ [i]My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his: he feedeth among the lilies.

[i] ch. 6. 3. & 7. 10.

My Beloved is mine, and I am his: these are the words of the bride, who having come to him upon his gracious invitation, now maketh her boast of him, and of that intimate union and communion which was between them. *He feedeth among the lilies;* either, 1. He feedeth his flock in sweet and lovely pastures, where there is not only herbage to feed them, but lilies to delight them. Or rather, 2. He feedeth himself, i. e. he abideth and refresheth himself amongst his faithful people, which are compared to *lilies*, above, ver. 2, and Hos. xiv. 5, as Christ also is here, ver. 1.

17 [k]Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou [l]like a roe or a young hart upon the ‖mountains of Bether.

[k] ch. 4. 6.

[l] ver. 9. ch. 8. 14.

‖ Or, *of division.*

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away; until the morning of that great and blessed day of the general resurrection and judgment, when all the shadows, not only of ignorance, and sin, and calamity, but even of all ordinances and outward administrations, shall cease, and make way for the immediate enjoyment of my Beloved. And this clause may be joined either, 1. With the foregoing words; and so the sense is, Christ doth and will abide with his church as long as this life and world lasts; which agrees with Christ's promises of being with his church to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20. But neither that nor this place imply that Christ will then forsake his people, but only secures God's people against that which was the chief, if not only, matter

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of their fear, to wit, lest Christ should leave them, and cast them off in this life, which, if he did not, they were assured that hereafter they should *be ever with the Lord*, 1 Thess. iv. 17. For it is well known, and hath been oft observed already, that the word *until* doth not always exclude the time to come. Or, 2. With the following words, *Turn thou, my Beloved, until the day break*, &c. *Turn;* return to me. For although Christ had come to her, and she had gladly received and embraced him, yet he was gone again, as is here implied, and evidently appears from the next following verse; which sudden change is very agreeable both to the nature and method of such dramatical writings and amatorious transactions, and to the state of God's people in this world, where they are subject to frequent changes and vicissitudes of Christ's withdrawing from them, and returning to them again. *Like a roe or a young hart*, in swiftness; make haste to help me, for I am ready to faint. *Bether;* a place in the Land of Promise, possibly the same called *Bithron*, 2 Sam. ii. 29, where it seems those creatures were in great abundance, or where they were commonly hunted, and so being pursued, they made all possible haste to escape.

CHAP. III.

The church seeking Christ, 1—3. *Her great joy; she findeth him*, 4. *Her charge to the daughters of Jerusalem not to awake her Beloved*, 5. *The manner of Christ's coming out of the wilderness*, 6. *His bed, guard, and chariot*, 7—9. *Its maker, matter, and furniture*, 10. *An invitation of the faithful to the kingdom of glory*, 11.

a Is. 26. 9. BY [a]night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

By night on my bed; either, 1. In a time of tribulation, which is commonly signified by the *night*, and sometimes by a *bed*, as Rev. ii. 22. Or, 2. When I expected to find him; for the husband who by his occasions is oft forced to be absent from his wife in the day time, but at night returns to her, and beds with her. Or, 3. When others compose themselves to rest and sleep, my thoughts were troubled and my affections were working towards him, and I was very desirous to enjoy him. *I sought him;* I sought for Christ's gracious and powerful presence, in and by the word, and prayer, and meditation. *I sought him:* this repetition notes her perseverance and unweariedness in seeking him. *But I found him not;* for he had withdrawn himself and the manifestations of his love from me, either because I had not sought him diligently, or because I had abused his favour, or to try and exercise my faith, and patience, and love, and other graces.

2 I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

I will rise now; I will immediately apply myself to seek him, without whom my bed can give me no rest nor comfort. *The city;* the city of God, the church, in which Christ resides. *In the streets, and in the broad ways:* not finding him in private prayer and meditation, I sought him in the places of public assemblies and ordinances; for the people frequently met together in the streets, not only for civil, but for religious ends, 2 Chron. xxxii. 6; Neh. viii. 1, 3, 16; Prov. i. 20, 21; Luke xiii. 26. *I found him not;* he saw fit still to delay the discoveries of his grace, partly, to chastise my former folly; partly, to try my sincerity and constancy; and partly, that he might be more welcome when he came to me.

b ch. 5. 7. 3 [b]The watchmen that go about the city found me: *to whom I said*, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

The watchmen; the ministers of Christ, and rulers of the church, who are oft called *watchmen*, as Isa. lxii. 6; Ezek. iii. 17, and elsewhere. *That go about the city*, to prevent disorders and dangers by night. *Found me*, whilst they walked round about the city, according to their duty. *To whom I said*, without either fear or shame, as being transported and wholly swallowed up with love, *Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?* she doth not name him, because she thought it needless, as supposing that a person of such transcendent excellency could not be unknown to men in that public capacity. Their answer is not mentioned, either because they gave her no answer, at least no satisfactory answer, or because by their silence she gathered that they were unable or unwilling to inform her; and being eager in the pursuit of her Beloved, she would not lose time in impertinent discourses with them.

4 *It was* but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

I found him; Christ met me, and manifested his love to me, according to his promise made to those that seek him constantly and diligently, Prov. viii. 17; Matt. vii. 7, &c. *I held him, and would not let him go*, being taught by my late experience how doleful a thing it was to lose him, and how hard it was to find and recover him when he was lost. *Until I had brought him into my mother's house*, that there I might entertain and embrace him, and gain my mother's consent, and so proceed to the consummation of the marriage. She saith her *mother's* rather than her *father's* house, because the men and the women had several and separated apartments in the house. For the mystical meaning, which is the principal sense intended in this book, as the spouse here, and in many other places of this book, signifies particular believers, so her mother is the universal church, or the true Jerusalem, which hath its rise from above, *which is the mother of us all*, Gal. iv. 26, in which Christ and believers are united, and have sweet communion together in holy ordinances, into which believers are said to bring Christ by faith and prayer, and the preparation of their hearts for him, whereby they invite and in some sort engage Christ to go with them into the public assemblies, and there to give them his loves, although otherwise it is Christ who properly brings believers into the church. But all particulars in allegorical scriptures are not to be strictly urged, as all learned interpreters agree, many being added only for the decency of the allegory. *Her that conceived me;* Christ is as it were the father that begets, and the church the mother that conceiveth and bringeth forth, believers.

c ch. 2. 7. & 8. 4. 5 [c]I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

This verse is repeated from chap. ii. 7, where it is explained. The spouse exhorts herself and all her fellow members to be very circumspect, lest by any unkind or provoking carriage they should give Christ any cause to depart from them. He is supposed to allude to the custom of awakening the bridegroom and bride by songs and musical instruments.

d ch. 8. 5. 6 ¶ [d]Who *is* this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?

Who is this? the persons speaking seem to be the daughters of Jerusalem, who, upon occasion of the bride's speech to them, make this reply; or the friends of the Bridegroom. The person spoken of is the spouse or bride. *That cometh out of the wilderness;* from the country, which, in comparison of cities, is oft called a *wilderness*, as Isa. xlii. 11; Luke i. 80; iii. 2, and elsewhere, from whence we little expected to see so beautiful and glorious a bride to come, such persons being usually bred in courts or noble cities. This phrase implies that believers were, and were to be, called out of the world, which for its barrenness, and disorder, and replenishment with wild beasts, may fitly be compared to a wilderness; and not only out of the Holy Land, which was as the garden of God, but also out of the Gentile world, which in prophetical writings is frequently described under the notion of a *wilderness*, as Isa. xxxv. 1; xliii. 19, 20. Withal he seems to allude to the people of Israel, which to the wonder and astonishment of all those

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parts came up out of the wilderness into Canaan. *Pillars of smoke;* to which the church may not unfitly be compared, partly for its excellent order and comely proportions; partly, for its direct and constant motion towards heaven; and partly, to imply that though she was really and inwardly glorious, yet she was outwardly obscure and despicable in the eyes of the world. Possibly the words may be rendered thus, *as* with (which particle is very frequently understood, as hath been showed in divers foregoing texts) *pillars*, or *a pillar*, (for the plural number is oft put for the singular.) *of smoke.* And so the sense may be either, 1. Being conducted out of the wilderness as by a pillar of smoke going before them, as the Israelites were led through the wilderness to Canaan by *a pillar of cloud and fire*, Exod. xiii. 21, 22. Or rather, 2. Attended with many prayers and praises, and other holy performances, which are perpetually ascending from her and offered by her unto God. So he alludes to those pillars of smoke which all the day long ascended from those numerous sacrifices which were offered in the temple, which also was a type of the prayers of the saints offered by Christ unto his Father, as may be gathered from Rev. viii. 3—5. But this I only propose. *Perfumed:* this doth not belong to the *pillars*, as appears by the difference of the numbers in the Hebrew words, *the pillars* being plural, and this word singular; but to the person, to wit, the spouse, who is said to be thus perfumed, partly, for her good name or renown, which is compared to perfumes, Eccles. vii. 1; partly, for her excellent virtues and religious services, which are pleasant and acceptable to God, and to angels, and men; and partly, for the merits and graces of Christ, which are a *sweet savour* to God, Eph. v. 2, and wherewith she is enriched and beautified. *Powders of the merchant;* which are fetched by the merchants from Arabia, or other remote parts of the world, for the use of perfuming.

7 Behold his bed, which *is* Solomon's; threescore valiant men *are* about it, of the valiant of Israel.

Behold his bed: these are the words either, 1. Of the bridemen, who spake ver. 6, and here continue their speech, and from the admiration of the bride proceed to the admiration of the Bridegroom. Or, 2. Of the spouse, who being admired by the bridemen, turns their eyes and thoughts to the Bridegroom, and directs them to the study of his excellencies, and intimates that all her comfort and safety is from him. The *bed*, the place of rest and conjugal converse, seems to denote the church, which is comely through Christ's beauty, and safe by his protection, in which Christ is glorified, and believers enjoy sweet fellowship with him, both here in the church militant, and especially hereafter in the church triumphant. *Which is Solomon's;* which is the bed, not of an ordinary man, but of a great King, whom Solomon represents or typifies, and who is greater than Solomon. Nor is it hard to understand the Messias under the name of Solomon, his type and progenitor, seeing he is, upon the same reason, called David, Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, and elsewhere, especially considering that this whole book is by the confession both of Jewish and Christian interpreters to be mystically understood. *Threescore*, i. e. very many, the certain number being put for an uncertain, as is frequent. *The valiant of Israel;* he alludes to Solomon's guard, or watchmen, whereby he designs all those creatures, whether angels, princes, ministers, or others, whose ministry God useth for the protection of his church.

8 They all hold swords, *being* expert in war: every man *hath* his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

Hath his sword upon his thigh; is prepared and ready to fight, as this phrase notes, Exod. xxxii. 27; Psal. xlv. 3. *Because of fear in the night;* to prevent those dangers and mischiefs which are most frequent and most dreadful in the night season. *The night* may note either, 1. The time of tribulation, temptation, or desertion. Or, 2. The whole time of this life, which may well be called *night*, in respect of that ignorance, and error, and other kinds of darkness wherewith it is attended, as the future life is compared to a *day*, this life being the only time wherein such a guard is necessary.

9 King Solomon made himself ‖ a chariot of the wood of Lebanon. ‖ Or, *a bed.*

A chariot, in which the royal Bridegroom and bride might ride together in state, as the manner was in the nuptial solemnities of such persons. By this *chariot* he seems to understand the word of Christ dispensed by his ministers in the church, whereby both Christ is exalted and rides triumphantly in the world, conquering his enemies, and subduing the world to the obedience of the gospel, and all believers are carried with safety and comfort through this present evil world, into those blessed mansions of heavenly glory. *Of the wood of Lebanon*, i. e. of cedars, for which Lebanon was famous; which wood, being incorruptible, doth fitly signify *the word of the gospel, which endureth for ever*, 1 Pet. i. 25, and is called *the everlasting gospel*, Rev. xiv. 6, in opposition to the legal institutions, which were to continue only *until the time of reformation*, as we read Heb. ix. 10.

10 He made the pillars thereof *of* silver, the bottom thereof *of* gold, the covering of it *of* purple, the midst thereof being paved *with* love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.

The pillars thereof; whereby the chariot is either supported or adorned; which may signify either, 1. Ministers, who are called *pillars*, Gal. ii. 9, and that of silver, because they are, or should be, pure and precious, like silver. Or, 2. The firmness and certainty of Christ's word, both of his doctrines and promises, which also are *pure as silver*, Psal. xii. 6. Although there is no necessity that either this or the following particulars should be distinctly applied to several things in or about the gospel; but this in the general may suffice, that as all these particulars are added to show the perfection and beauty of the chariot, so they do imply that Christ's word is every way amiable, and perfect, and able to make the man of God perfect. *The bottom;* either, 1. The couch or seat, which was made of or covered with cloth of gold. Or, 2. The under and lower part, which was at least covered with pure gold. Whereby he may seem to understand the foundation of the word and promises, which is either God's covenant, or Christ's mediation, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. *The covering;* either, 1. The curtains, whereby persons in the chariot are covered or hid from the sight of the people. Or rather, 2. The uppermost part of it, either in the outside or the inside of it. Some render the word, *the seat or seats. Of purple;* which represents Christ's blood, which is our propitiatory or covering to shelter us from God's wrath. *The midst;* the inward parts, especially those between the upper and lower parts, which have been already mentioned. *Paved*, covered and adorned, *with love;* with beautiful and lovely ornaments, such as curious embroidery, enriched with gold and precious stones; *love* being here put for lovely objects, as *fear* is oft put for terrible things, as hath been oft noted. Whereby we may understand the love of Christ to the sons of men, or his lovely life, and death, and resurrection, &c.; which is the most amiable part and matter of the word or gospel. *For the daughters of Jerusalem;* for their delight and comfort, who are all concerned and bear a part in this marriage.

11 Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

Go forth; the bride, to wit, the church, bids particular believers *go forth* to see this sight; whereby is implied that Christians must go out of the world, to wit, in affection, and out of themselves, by denying themselves, and putting off the old man, their corrupt nature, if they desire to see and enjoy Christ. *Daughters of Zion;* the same with *daughters of Jerusalem;* for Zion and Jerusalem are ofttimes promiscuously used in Scripture. *Behold king Solomon;* looking in and through him upon the Messias, who is *the King of peace*, and of whom Solomon was an illustrious type. *The crown wherewith his mother crowned him;* which being applied to Solomon, may design either, 1. The crown royal, wherewith *his mother*, Bathsheba, is said to have *crowned him*, because Solomon was crowned

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by David's order upon her suggestion, and by virtue of his promise confirmed by an oath to her, 1 Kings i. 16, &c. Or, 2. That garland or crown which was usually worn in nuptial solemnities, as may be gathered from Ezek. xvi. 12, and is expressly affirmed by divers ancient writers. But being applied to Christ, it notes that honour and glory which was given to him, which though principally done by his Father, yet is here ascribed to his *mother*, i. e. to the universal church, or congregation of believers, which in respect of his humanity may be called his *mother*, partly because he was born in and of her, and one of her members, and therefore was subject to her institutions, whence she is represented as a woman in travail, bringing forth a man child, to wit, Christ, Rev. xii. 1—5; and partly because in a spiritual sense she is said to conceive and bring forth Christ in particular believers, Gal. iv. 19. And this mother may be said to *crown* Christ, both because it is the great design and business of the church to advance Christ's honour in the world, and because she brings forth believers, whom Christ esteems as *his crown and glory*, as God calls them, Isa. lxii. 3. *In the day of his espousals;* when the church is betrothed or married to him, Jer. ii. 2; Hos. ii. 19; 2 Cor. xi. 2; which is done when the covenant is made or confirmed between them, or when faithful persons are converted and united to Christ, and more completely when they are received by Christ into his more full and immediate fellowship in the kingdom of glory. *In the day of the gladness of his heart;* when he *rejoiseth over his bride*, as the phrase is used, Isa. lxii. 5. So this is the same thing expressed in other words. The conversion and salvation of sinners is the joy of Christ, as appears from Isa. liii. 11; Luke xv. 32, and many other places of Scripture.

CHAP. IV.

Christ commendeth his church for her beauty, 1—7. *He calleth her to go with him*, 8, *manifesting his love and affection for her*, 9. *A further commendation of her*, 10—15. *She prayeth for the effectual operation of his Holy Spirit on her to make her fruitful*, 16.

[a] ch. 1. 15. & 5. 12. BEHOLD, [a]thou *art* fair, my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair *is* as a [b] ch. 6. 5. ‖ Or, *that eat of, &c.* [b]flock of goats, ‖that appear from mount Gilead.

These and the following words are evidently spoken by the Bridegroom to and concerning his spouse. *Thou art fair*, not in thyself, but by my beauty, being clothed with my righteousness, and adorned with all the graces of my Spirit, which I acknowledge to be in thee. *Thou art fair;* he repeats it, both to confirm the truth of his assertion, and to show the sincerity and fervency of his affection to her. *Thou hast doves' eyes;* thou art harmless, chaste, &c., as appears by thine eyes, which commonly discover the temper of the mind or person. See more of this phrase chap. i. 15. And whereas the beauty of the spouse is here described in her several parts, we need not labour much about the application of each particular to some distinct member or grace of the church, this being the chief design of this description of a bride which is beautiful in all points, to show that completeness and absolute perfection which the church hath in part received, and shall more fully receive from Christ in the future life. Yet because the church is a body, consisting of divers members, and enriched with variety of gifts and graces, I know no reason but the several parts of this description may have a more special regard to one or other of them. And so her *eyes* may here note, either, 1. Her teachers, who are *instead of eyes* to her, as the phrase is, Numb. x. 31, whence they are called *seers* and *guides*, &c. Or, 2. The disposition of her mind or heart, which is compared to the *eye*, Matt. vi. 22, 23, and is oft discerned in the eye. *Within thy locks;* which being decently composed, make the eyes appear more amiable: withal this intimates the modesty of her looks; her eyes are not wanton, and wandering, or lofty, but sober, and humble, and confined within their proper bounds, looking directly upon her husband, not looking asquint upon other lovers, nor minding other Gods or Christs. If the *eyes* signify teachers, the *locks* may note the people assembled together to hear their teachers, to whom they are a great ornament when they thrive by his teaching. *Thy hair;* the hair of thine head, which is a great ornament to the female sex, 1 Cor. xi. 15. This *hair* may signify either, 1. The inward thoughts and meditations; or rather, 2. The outward conversation and visible fruits of holiness, which do greatly adorn the professors and profession of religion, as hair doth the head, as is implied, 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 3—5. *As a flock of goats;* which are comely and orderly in going, Prov. xxx. 29, 31, and afford a goodly prospect. Or rather, *as* the hair (which word is here to be understood, as appears both from the comparison itself, and from divers places where *goats* are put for *goats' hair*, as it is in the Hebrew text, Exod. xxv. 4; xxvi. 7; xxxv. 26) of a *flock of goats*, which in these parts was of extraordinary length, and thickness, and softness, and comeliness, and much more like to the hair of a man or woman than the hair of our goats is, as is evident both from Scripture, as Gen. xxvii. 16; 1 Sam. xix. 13; and from the testimony of other ancient writers, as Apuleius, Martial, &c. *That appear from Mount Gilead;* that feeding there, or coming down thence, or going up thither, show themselves evidently to those who stand below it, or near them. Or, as it is rendered in our margin, and by others, *that eat*, or *graze of*, or *upon*. He mentions it as a very fruitful place, and fit for the breeding of all sorts of cattle, as is manifest from Numb. xxxii. 1; Jer. l. 19; Micah vii. 14; and especially of goats, partly because it was a hilly and woody country, and partly because it abounded with resinous, and oily, and gummy trees, as appears from Gen. xxxvii. 25; Jer. viii. 22; xlvi. 11, wherewith the goats are much delighted, as Dioscorides observes. And some affirm that the hair of these goats was commonly of a yellow colour, as may seem probable from 1 Sam. xix. 13, 16, compared with 1 Sam. xvi. 12, and from Cant. vii. 5; which also was in ancient times esteemed a beauty in men or women, as the learned know.

2 [c]Thy teeth *are* like a flock *of sheep* [c] ch. 6. 6. *that are even* shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none *is* barren among them.

Thy teeth are like a flock, numerous, and placed in due order, *of sheep;* which is here fitly supplied out of Cant. vi. 6, where it is expressed. *Even shorn;* smooth and even, as also clean and white, whereas unshorn sheep retain much filth in their wool, even after their washing. *Every one bear twins;* which seems to note the two rows of teeth, like twins, one directly answering to the other; which is a great part of the beauty or comeliness belonging to the teeth. Nor let any wonder to hear of *sheep bearing twins;* for that there were many such in the Eastern countries is apparent, not only from Holy Scripture, but also from the express testimony of Aristotle, and other ancient writers. *None is barren among them;* not one tooth is lacking. By the *teeth* some understand the teachers, which may be compared to teeth, because they prepare, and as it were chew, spiritual food for the people, and to such teeth as are here described for their great number and excellent order, and for that purity and fruitfulness which is required of them. Others understand some gracious qualification or action of the faithful, either their faith, which is compared to eating, John vi. 41, &c., and elsewhere; which also purifies the heart and life, and produceth good works in abundance; or their meditation or study of God, and of his word, whereby, like the clean beasts under the law, they chew the cud; which also much promotes their purity and fertility. But, as I said on the first verse, there is no need of a distinct application of every particular, as it is in parables, where many things are added for decency, which belong not to the main scope, and therefore are neglected in the interpretation of them. The scope of this place is only to set forth the church's perfection and beauty by the resemblance of a beautiful woman, and one part of beauty consists in the colour and order of the teeth.

3 Thy lips *are* like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech *is* comely: [d]thy temples [d] ch. 6. 7. *are* like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

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Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet; fine, and smooth, and soft, and round, and red, in which the beauty of the lips consisteth. *Thy speech is comely;* which is added, partly as another ingredient of an amiable person, and partly to explain the foregoing metaphor. The communication or discourse of believers is edifying, and comfortable, and acceptable to God and to serious men. Compare Psal. xlv. 2; Col. iv. 6. *Thy temples;* under which doubtless he comprehends the cheeks, which are joined to them, and in which a great part of beauty lies, which therefore would not have been omitted in this description. *Like a piece of a pomegranate;* in which there is a lovely mixture of red and white. This may note both the church's beauty and her modesty, which showeth itself by blushes in those parts when she hath fallen into any sin, as the highest believers in this world sometimes do. *Within thy locks;* a further evidence both of beauty and modesty. See on ver. 1.

e ch. 7. 4. f Neh. 3. 19.

4 [e]Thy neck *is* like the tower of David builded [f]for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

Thy neck: this may seem to represent the grace of faith, by which we are united to Christ, as the body is to the head by the neck, and through which Christians receive their spiritual food, and consequently their strength and ability for action. *Is like the tower of David;* round, and smooth, and white, long, and straight, and upright, firm, and strong; and moreover, adorned with chains of gold or pearl, or the like ornaments; all which things, as they set forth the beauty of the neck, so they may signify the various excellencies and uses of faith. By this *tower* he understands either, 1. The strong hold of Zion, of which see 2 Sam. v. 7. Or rather, 2. Some other tower built by David, when he repaired, and enlarged, and fortified his royal city, 1 Chron. xi. 8, and used by him as an armoury. See Neh. iii. 19, 25—27. *A thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men;* either, 1. Such as are fit and reserved for the use of mighty men. Or, 2. Such as had been used either by themselves, or by their enemies, from whom they took them by force, and were hung up there as trophies or monuments of victory; which is added, to show that the church is not only beautiful and glorious, but also strong and victorious over all her enemies, and to intimate the great power and exploits of faith, of which read Heb. xi., and which is compared to a *shield*, Eph. vi. 16. A *thousand* is here put indefinitely for a great number.

g See Prov. 5. 19. ch. 7. 3.

5 [g]Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

Thy two breasts; another part in which beauty consists, Ezek. xvi. 7. By which some understand the two testaments, or the two sacraments; but these are rather Christ's than the church's breasts. Others, the church's fervent love to Christ, and to all the saints, for the breasts signify love, Prov. v. 19; Cant. i. 13. Others, her fruitfulness, both in good works, and in bringing up children unto Christ, like a nurse with her breasts. But the following similitude seemeth not to respect the use of the breasts, or the love which is signified or manifested by them, but their comeliness. And therefore this is generally to be understood of the church's beauty in all parts, as hath been said. *Among the lilies*, i. e. in the fields where lilies grew, as is evident, both from Matt. vi. 28, where they are called *the lilies of the field*, and from other scriptures, and from the testimony of other writers. The *lilies* being white and swelling, and the *roes* of a reddish colour, and their bodies being hid from sight by the lilies, their heads only appearing above them, bear some resemblance to the red nipples appearing in the top of the lily white breasts. But we must remember that this book is a sacred pastoral, and the Bridegroom is represented as a shepherd, and the bride as a country maid; and therefore such similitudes are used as are agreeable to persons of that quality, and such are usual in profane writers of this kind, as the learned have observed. They are compared to *roes* for their loveliness, of which see Prov. v. 19; to *young* ones for their smallness, which in breasts is a beauty; to *twins* for their exact likeness,

6 [h]Until the day †break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

h ch. 2. 17. † Heb. *breathe.*

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away: these words are uttered by the bride, chap. ii. 17, and here returned by the Bridegroom, as an answer to that request. And this place may be understood either, 1. Of the day of the gospel, when all legal shadows shall vanish; or, 2. Of the day of glory, or of the general resurrection, when all manner of shadows and ordinances shall cease; till which time either the spouse *feeds among lilies*, as was now said, ver. 5, or the Bridegroom *gets* him *to the mountains*, &c., as it follows. For the words are by most joined with the foregoing, and by some with the following clause. *To the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense;* either, 1. To the temple at Jerusalem, which is oft and fitly expressed by the name of a *mountain* or *hill*, because it was built upon a mountain, and which may be called *a mountain of myrrh* and *frankincense*, because of the abundance of myrrh and frankincense which was there used and offered; in which place the church was to feed, and Christ would continue his presence, until the dawning of the gospel day. Or, 2. To my church upon earth, which was typified by the mountain of Moriah, and the temple upon it, and which in prophetical writings is called a *mountain*, as Isa. ii. 2, 3; Micah iv. 1, 2, and elsewhere; and which may well be called a *mountain of myrrh and frankincense*, both for the acceptable services which are there offered to God, and for the precious gifts, and graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit, which are of a sweet-smelling savour to God and men, and which there, and there only, are poured forth. Thus Christ directs his bride, to wit, particular believers, where they may find and enjoy him, namely, in his church and ordinances.

1 Eph. 5. 27.

7 [i]Thou *art* all fair, my love; *there is* no spot in thee.

Thou art all fair; it is needless to mention the several beauties of all thy parts, for, in one word, thou art wholly beautiful; and it may be said more truly of thee than it was of Absalom, 2 Sam. xiv. 25, that from the sole of thy foot to the crown of thy head there is no blemish in thee. *There is no spot in thee;* which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, as if the people of God were really perfect, and free from all sin; but either, 1. Comparatively, no such spot or blemish as is in wicked men, or as is inconsistent with true grace, of which Moses speaks, Deut. xxxii. 5. Or, 2. In regard of God's gracious acceptation, in which respect he is said not to *behold iniquity in Jacob*, Numb. xxiii. 21. God doth not look upon them with a severe eye, as they are in themselves, but in and through Christ, in whom he accepts them as if they were perfect, partly because it is their chief design, desire, and endeavour to be so, and partly because Christ hath undertaken to make them so, Eph. v. 25, 27, and they shall one day be such.

8 ¶ Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir [k]and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.

k Deut. 3. 9.

Come with me unto the mountains of myrrh, &c., mentioned ver. 6, *from Lebanon*, a known mountain in the north of Canaan, which is sometimes mentioned as a pleasant and glorious place, as Cant. v. 15; Isa. xxxv. 2; Hos. xiv. 6, &c., in regard of its goodly cedars; and sometimes as a barren wilderness, as Isa. xxix. 17, and seat of wild beasts, as 2 Kings xiv. 9, &c. Which latter sense seems more agreeable, both to the opposition which is here tacitly made between this mountain and the *mountain of myrrh*, and to the quality of the other mountains here joined with Lebanon, and to the last clause of the verse. *My spouse;* this is the first time that Christ gives her this name, which he now doth, both to encourage and oblige her to go with him. *Look* to the place to which I invite thee to go, which from those high mountains thou mayst easily behold, the sight of which will certainly inflame thee with desire to go thither. He alludes to Moses's beholding the Promised Land from Mount Pisgah. *Amana;* not that Amana which

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divided Syria from Cilicia, which was too remote from these parts, but another of that name, not far from Lebanon. *Shenir and Hermon* may be the names of two tops of the same mountain, as Horeb and Sinai seem to have been. Or, *Shenir* or (the copulative *and* being put disjunctively for *or*, as it is in many places, which have been observed before) *Hermon*, for this mountain is called both *Shenir* and *Hermon*, Deut. iii. 9, and the latter name, *Hermon*, may be added to the former, as being better known to the Israelites. *From the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards;* from these or other such-like mountains, which are inhabited by lions and leopards; which seems to be added as an argument to move the spouse to go with him, because the places where now she was were not only barren, but also dangerous, as being the habitations of tyrants and persecutors, and wild or savage people, who are oft described by the names of wild beasts, whose natures they have, and whose practices they imitate.

‖ Or, *taken away my heart.*

9 Thou hast ‖ravished my heart, my sister, *my* spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

Thou hast ravished my heart; I am overcome with thy beauty, and therefore am so desirous of thy company. *My sister;* so he calls her, partly because both he and she had one and the same father, to wit, God, yea, and mother too, being both at this time born in and of the commonwealth and church of Israel; and partly to show the greatness of his love to her, which is such as cannot be sufficiently expressed by any one relation, but must borrow the perfections and affections of all to describe it. *With one of thine eyes;* with one glance of one of thine eyes: by which phrase he intimates the modesty and humility of the church, which was ashamed or afraid to look fully and directly upon the Bridegroom with both her eyes; and withal alludes to the ancient custom of virgins, who used to cover their faces with a veil, and to look out only with one of their eyes for the direction of their steps. By this *one eye* he seems to mean that fundamental grace of faith, by which Christians look upon Christ, and discern his beauty, and which is precious in the sight of God and of Christ. *With one chain of thy neck;* with one of those other graces and perfections wherewith thou art adorned. How then should I be ravished if thou didst discover both thine eyes, and thy whole countenance, and all thy excellent gifts and graces!

1 ch. 1. 2.

10 How fair is thy love, my sister, *my* spouse! [1]how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!

How fair, how amiable and acceptable to me, *is thy love!* I do not disdain thy love, as I might do, but take it kindly, and prize it highly. *How much better is thy love than wine!* of which see on chap. i. 2, 4. *Of thine ointments;* of the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, wherewith thou art anointed. Compare Isa. lxi. 1; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

m Prov. 24. 13, 14. ch. 5. 1.

n Gen. 27. 27. Hos. 14. 6, 7.

11 Thy lips, O *my* spouse, drop *as* the honeycomb: [m]honey and milk *are* under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments *is* [n]like the smell of Lebanon.

Thy lips drop as the honey-comb; thy speeches both to me in prayer and praises, and to men for their edification, are highly acceptable to me. *Honey and milk;* words more sweet and comfortable than honey or milk. *Under thy tongue;* by which phrase he may possibly intimate that her words were not uttered in hypocrisy, or with evil design, as many fair and smooth speeches are, but proceed from her very heart, which is under her tongue, as *mischief* is said to be *under his tongue*, Psal. x. 7, who devised it in his heart. *The smell of thy garments;* of that righteousness wherewith I have clothed and adorned thee. Christ and the graces of the Spirit are oft compared to garments, as Rom. xiii. 14; Eph. iv. 24; 1 Pet. v. 5. *The smell of Lebanon;* which is also mentioned and commended Hos. xiv. 6, which must needs be very sweet and grateful in regard of the great numbers of sweet-smelling spices and trees which grew in that mountain.

† Heb. barred.

12 A garden †inclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

A garden, for order and beauty, for pleasant walks, and flowers, and fruits. *Enclosed;* either, 1. Defended by the care of my providence; or, 2. Reserved for my proper use. She will not admit of other lovers, either false teachers or worldly lusts, but keeps herself close for me. She is chaste, and pure, and modest, as virgins are or should be. *A spring;* either, 1. For others, sending forth the wholesome streams of saving doctrine, for the refreshing, and healing, and cleansing of those who receive it. Or, 2. Within herself, being well watered, i. e. replenished with spiritual graces and blessings, which are frequently compared to waters, both in the Old and New Testament, as Isa. xliv. 3; John iv. 10; vii. 38, for which the church is compared to a *watered garden*, or *spring of water*, Isa. lviii. 11. *Shut up;* either, 1. To preserve it from all pollution or injury; or, 2. To reserve it for the use and service of its owner, for which reason springs were shut up in those countries where water was scarce and precious, as Gen. xxix. 3. *A fountain sealed;* the same thing is here repeated in other words.

‖ Or, *cypress.* ch. 1. 14.

13 Thy plants *are* an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; ‖camphire, with spikenard,

Thy plants, the plants of thy garden, believers which are planted in thee, *are an orchard;* are like the plants or fruits of an orchard, which are pleasant to the eye, and delicious to the taste or smell, such as are here mentioned in the following words; whereby he signifies the variety and excellency of gifts and graces in the several members of the church. *Spikenard;* which he mentions both here with *camphire* or *cypress*, and in the next verse with *saffron*, because it is mixed with both these, and being so mixed, yieldeth the more grateful smell.

14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

Trees of frankincense; such trees as produce frankincense. Or, as others, both ancient and modern, render it, *trees of Lebanon;* such sweet-smelling trees and plants as grew in Lebanon, of which see above on ver. 11.

o John 4. 10. & 7. 38.

15 A fountain of gardens, a well of [o]living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

These are the words either, 1. Of the bride, who returns this answer to the Bridegroom. Thou callest me a fountain, but in truth thou only art that fountain from whence I derive all my streams of comfort; or rather, 2. Of the Bridegroom, who hath hitherto been speaking to and of the church, and still continues his speech. He seems to add this by way of correction to or exposition of what he said, ver. 12. Though my spouse be in some sort a fountain shut up or sealed, yet that is not so to be understood as if she kept her waters to herself, for she is like a fountain or well of living or running water, which floweth into gardens, and maketh the flowers and plants to grow and flourish. The church conveyeth those waters of life which she receiveth from Christ unto particular believers and congregations. *Streams from Lebanon;* like those sweet and refreshing rivers which flow down from Mount Lebanon, of which Jordan is one.

p ch. 5. 1.

16 ¶ Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, *that* the spices thereof may flow out. [p]Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

Awake; or, *arise;* either, 1. To be gone, as being commonly hurtful to plants and gardens; or rather, 2. To come, as the next clause explains it. For both the north wind and the south wind have their several uses in gardens; the former to purge and cool the air, and to bring fair weather; the latter to warm and moisten the earth, and cherish the plants. And these winds may signify the several dispensations either of God's providence, or rather of his Spirit, which is compared to the wind, John iii. 8, whereby the following effects are produced. *My garden:* this verse is spoken by the spouse, as appears from the last clause of it. And

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she calls the garden both *hers* and *his*, because of that oneness which is between them, chap. ii. 16, whereby they have a common interest one in another's person and concerns. *That the spices thereof may flow out;* that my graces may be exercised to thy glory, the edification of others, and my own comfort. *Let my Beloved come into his garden*, let Christ afford his gracious presence more and more to his church, *and eat his pleasant fruit;* and let him delight himself in that service and glory which is given to him, both by the religious worship and by the holy conversations of his people.

CHAP. V.

Christ answereth the church's invitation, and showeth her the delight he took in her fruit, 1. *She acknowledges her negligence to Christ in not opening the door,* 2—6. *Of the harsh usage she met with,* 7. *She tells the daughters of Jerusalem she is sick of love to Christ.* 8. *Their question concerning him,* 9. *A description of Christ by his graces,* 10—15, *in whom she boasteth,* 16.

a ch. 4. 16. I [a] AM come into my garden, my sister, *my* spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; [b] I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O [c] friends; drink, ‖ yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

b Heb. 4. 11. c Luke 15. 7, 10. John 3. 29. & 15. 14. ‖ Or, *and be drunken with loves.*

I am come into my garden: this is the Bridegroom's answer to her request, delivered in the next foregoing words. *I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk;* I have eaten of my pleasant fruits, as thou didst desire. I have taken notice of, and delight in, the service and obedience of my people. *Friends;* the friends of the Bridegroom; whereby he understands either, 1. The holy angels and glorified saints, who in a sublime and spiritual sense may be said to eat and drink in heaven, the happiness whereof is frequently represented under the name and notion of a feast. Or rather, 2. Believers or members of the church militant upon earth, who by the argument of Christ's gracious presence with them, and acceptation of their works signified in the last words, are here invited and encouraged with great freedom and cheerfulness to eat and drink their spiritual food, to feed upon God's holy word and sacraments, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, who here gives them a hearty welcome to this feast.

2 ¶ I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it* d Rev. 3. 20. *is* the voice of my beloved [d] that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night.

I sleep, Heb. *I was asleep*, i. e. I was dull, and sluggish, and insensible of his kind expressions and offers of grace. *But my heart waketh;* yet in my very sleep my thoughts were running upon my Beloved, as is not unusual in such cases, which at last awakened me. Thus she implies the conflict which was between the flesh and the Spirit, and the Spirit's victory in the combat. *It is the voice of my Beloved;* between sleeping and waking I fancied that I heard his voice. *That knocketh*, by his word, and providence, and Spirit, at the door of mine heart, desirous that I would receive him by faith and love. Compare Rev. iii. 20. *Saying, Open to me;* inviting me to accept of his gracious offers, and to let him in to my soul. *My sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled:* this heap of kind compellations signifies Christ's sincere and fervent affection to his people, notwithstanding her manifold imperfections and infirmities. The title of *dove* signifies her chastity and constant faithfulness to her Husband, for which doves are famous. How she is undefiled, see on chap. iv. 7. *My head is filled with dew*, whilst I wait without thy door. He alludes to the custom of lovers, which oft and willingly suffer such inconveniences for their hopes and desires of enjoying their beloved, and signifies his sufferings for the church's good. *The drops of the night;* the dew which falls in the end of the night, or towards the morning, whence it is called *morning dew*, Hos. vi. 4.

3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

I have put off my coat, my day clothes, as persons use to do when they go to rest. *How shall I put it on?* it is inconvenient and troublesome to do it at this time. Thus she tacitly reflects upon the Bridegroom for coming to her so unseasonably, and giving her such disturbance, and puts him off to another time, and excuseth her non-admission of him by her present indisposition, and the difficulty of the thing required of her. *I have washed my feet;* which the Eastern people commonly did when they went to bed, partly to cool their feet, and partly to cleanse them from that dust and sweat which they had contracted in the day time by labour and travel, as being used to go barefoot.

4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*, and my bowels were moved ‖ for him. ‖ Or, (as some read) *in me.*

My Beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door; he assayed to open the door. When his word would not prevail, his Spirit, which is called *the finger of God*, Luke xi. 20, compared with Matt. xii. 28, wrought inwardly upon my conscience, and affected mine heart. *My bowels were moved for him*, with compassion for him and his sufferings, and with affection to him; for both these ways is this phrase oft used, as Job xxxvii. 1; Phil. ii. 1, 2, &c.

5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers *with* † sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. † Heb. *passing*, or, *running about.*

I rose up to open to my Beloved; I repented of my former drowsiness and neglect, and went forth to receive him. *My hands dropped with myrrh*, i. e. with oil or ointment made of myrrh, which either, 1. She had taken out of her own stock to prepare herself for the entertainment of the Bridegroom; or rather, 2. Dropped from the Bridegroom's hand upon the door in great abundance, when he *put it into the hole of the door*, ver. 4, and consequently upon her hands and fingers when she touched the door to open it. By which she signifies that Christ, though he withdrew himself from her, yet left a sweet savour behind him, infusing into her, and stirring up in her, the graces of the Spirit, such as repentance, which is bitter as myrrh, earnest desire after Christ, &c. *With sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock*, Heb. *with myrrh passing* or *flowing upon the handles of the lock*, which place the Bridegroom had touched when he attempted to open it.

6 I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone: my soul failed when he spake: [e] I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer. e ch. 3. 1.

Withdrawn himself; denied me his gracious and comfortable presence, as a just punishment for my former neglect and folly. *And was gone;* either she repeats the same thing to show how deeply she was affected with it; or this is added to imply that he had not only stepped aside, but was quite gone away. *My soul failed*, Heb. *went out* of me. I fainted and was ready to die away through excessive passion, as this phrase is used, Gen. xxxv. 18; xlii. 28, and elsewhere. *When he spake;* or, *for what he spoke;* for those endearing expressions related ver. 2, which then I did not heed, but this sad occasion brings them to my remembrance; as ofttimes that word which is ineffectual when it is preached, is afterwards brought to a man's mind, and produceth blessed effects. *I sought him* by diligent inquiry and importunate prayer. *He gave me no answer;* that so he might both chastise her folly, and quicken her desires, and prepare the way for a more hearty welcome, and his longer abode with her.

7 [f] The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me. f ch. 3. 3.

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The watchmen that went about the city; the governors of the church, as chap. iii. 3, who, though by their place and office they be obliged to comfort and protect the faithful, do frequently discourage and oppress them, as they manifestly did both in the days of Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and the other holy prophets, and in the time of Christ and his apostles, and in divers other ages. *They wounded me* with bitter calumnies and persecutions. *The keepers of the walls;* the same with the watchmen, whose office is to keep the gates and walls of the city. *Took away my veil;* which was an ornament of her sex, Isa. iii. 23, and a badge of her modesty, Gen. xxiv. 65, or an ensign of her relation and subjection to Christ, Gen. xx. 16; 1 Cor. xi. 5. And so the taking of this veil away signifies their contemptuous and injurious usage of her, their endeavours to blast her reputation, and to represent and treat her as a common and impudent prostitute, and as one that had no relation to Christ.

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jeru-
† Heb. *what.* salem, if ye find my beloved, †that ye tell him, that I *am* sick of love.

Daughters of Jerusalem; of whom see on chap. i. 5; ii. 7. The church having passed the watchmen, and patiently borne, and in a manner forgotten, their injuries, proceeds in the pursuit of her Beloved, and inquires of every particular believer or professor whom she meets concerning him. *That I am sick of love;* that I am ready to faint for want of his presence, and the tokens of his favour. Use all your interest and importunity with him on my behalf.

9 ¶ What *is* thy beloved more than
g ch. i. 8. *another* beloved, [g]O thou fairest among women? what *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

What is thy Beloved more than another beloved? wherein doth he excel them? which professors of religion might ask, because they were ignorant of Christ's excellency; and true believers might ask it, that they might be more fully informed of it, and might give the spouse occasion to discourse of that subject which was very grateful to them. *O thou fairest among women;* whose beauty may command the respects and affections of the most worthy persons; and therefore we conclude it must be some person of transcendent excellency with whom thou art so highly enamoured.

† Heb. *a standard-bearer.* 10 My beloved *is* white and ruddy, †the chiefest among ten thousand.

White and ruddy; which two colours rightly mixed together make a face beautiful. Or the *white* may note his pure and spotless innocency, and the brightness of his glory and majesty, and the *ruddy* colour may intimate his bloody passion, which made him amiable both to God and men. *The chiefest,* Heb. *the standard-bearer;* for such are usually persons of great eminency, both for stature, and courage, and dignity. *Among ten thousand;* among all persons, angels or men. A certain number is put for an uncertain. There are other kings, and priests, and prophets, but none to be compared with him.

11 His head *is as* the most fine gold,
‖ Or, *curled.* his locks *are* ‖bushy, *and* black as a raven.

His head is as the most fine gold; it shines like gold, not in respect of the hair, which is black, as it followeth, but by reason of his crown of pure gold upon his head, Rev. xiv. 14; whereby she implies that her Bridegroom was a King, which she declared above, chap. iii. 11. *His locks;* in which a part of man's beauty consists. I shall not trouble my reader with a distinct application of this and the following particulars unto some special part or excellency of Christ, because such things are mere conjectures without any solid grounds, and the only design of this description seems to be this, to set forth the beauty of Christ under the notion of a most complete and amiable person, in whom there is no defect nor blemish, from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet. *Black as a raven;* which is mentioned, partly because this was esteemed a beauty, and partly because it was an evidence of his youth and vigour, as grey hairs are characters of age and infirmity, Hos. vii. 9.

12 [h]His eyes *are* as *the eyes* of doves
h ch. i. 15 & 4. 1. † Heb. *sitting in fulness,* that is, *fitly placed, and set as a precious stone in the foil of a ring.* by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* †fitly set.

His eyes are as the eyes of doves, lovely and pleasant, chaste and innocent. *By the rivers of waters;* where they delight to abide, and wherewith they bathe themselves, and wash their eyes; where also their eyes are most lively and beautiful, both by the reflection of the waters, and from that pleasure which they take in such places. *Washed with milk;* which may belong either, 1. To the eyes, which are supposed to be washed with water, as white and pure as milk; or, 2. To the doves, which are intimated to be of a milk-white colour, which in those parts was most esteemed, which colour also made the eyes appear more lovely. *Fitly set;* neither sinking into the head, nor standing out too much, but in a moderate and comely situation. Heb. *sitting in fulness;* which may note a full and competently large eye, which is esteemed one beauty of the eye.

13 His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices,
‖ Or, *towers of perfumes.* *as* ‖sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

His cheeks; his face or countenance, an eminent part whereof is the cheeks, in which the beauty or deformity of a face doth much consist. *As a bed;* which being higher than other parts of the garden, fitly represents the cheeks, which are higher than other parts of the face. *Of spices;* not of dry spices, for they are not in beds; but of aromatical flowers, which delight both the eye with a pleasant prospect, and the smell with their fragrancy. This may also signify the down or hair upon the Bridegroom's cheeks, which is the evidence of his mature and vigorous age, and may denote that Christ's sweetness and gentleness is accompanied with majesty, and gravity, and just severity. *Sweet flowers:* this may be added to explain the former phrase. Or, *towers of perfumes,* i. e. boxes in which perfumes were put, which by their height or form had some resemblance to a turret. *His lips like lilies;* beautiful and pleasant. Or this is meant of that sort of lilies which were of a red or purple colour, as ancient writers affirm, and so signify the grateful colour of the lips. This may note that grace which was poured into Christ's lips, and which flowed from them in sweet and excellent discourses. *Dropping sweet-smelling myrrh;* not only graceful to the eye, as lilies are, but also fragrant to the smell.

14 His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires.

His hands; the instruments of action and of distribution, which may design the actions of Christ, and particularly his distributing gifts and graces to his members. *As gold rings set with the beryl;* beautiful and precious, and richly adorned, as it were with gold rings set with precious stones. *His belly;* which seems to be here used, either, 1. Metonymically for the bowels, which are contained in the belly. Or rather, 2. Synecdochically, for the whole body, reaching from the neck to the bottom of the belly, which is distinguished from the face and the joints, which are described in the other clauses. For he speaks here of those parts which are visible to the eye. And thus here is a complete description of Christ's beauty in all parts, from his head to his feet. *As bright ivory overlaid with sapphires;* of a pure and bright white colour, intermixed with blue veins; for some sapphires are of a bright blue colour.

15 His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

His legs; the instruments of local motion, and the supporters of the body. *As pillars of marble;* white, and straight, and well shaped, and strong; which may note the firmness and stability of Christ's kingdom in spite of all opposition. *Set upon sockets of fine gold;* which add both beauty and strength to them. These may note his feet compared to gold, either for their great price and worth, or for their singular brightness, for which they are compared to *fine brass,* Rev. i. 15; or, as others, for his golden shoes, wherewith they were covered or adorned, as the spouse is commended from her shoes, Cant. vii. 1. *His countenance,*

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Heb. *his aspect* or *appearance;* his form or person, as this Hebrew word is elsewhere used. *As Lebanon*, in respect of its cedars, as the next words explain it, to wit, tall, and upright, and stately, and withal pleasant to the eye.

† Heb. *His palate.*

16 † His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

His mouth is most sweet, which was said before in other words, ver. 13, and is here justly repeated, because it was a principal part of Christ's beauty, and the chief instrument of the spouse's comfort and happiness, which wholly depends upon his sweet and excellent speeches, his holy precepts and gracious offers and promises contained in the gospel. *He is altogether lovely;* not to run out into more particulars, in one word, there is no part of him which is not exquisitely beautiful. *This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem*, and therefore you have no cause to wonder or to blame me if I am transported with love to so excellent a personage.

CHAP. VI.

An inquiry after Christ, 1. *The church's answer*, 2. *The church confesseth her faith in Christ*, 3. *Christ showeth the graces of his church*, 4, *and the beauty of several parts*, 5—10. *He acquaints her where he had been, and what he had been doing*, 11; *and discovers his affection to her*, 12; *with an invitation of her to return to him again*, 13.

a ch. 1. 8.

WHITHER is thy beloved gone, [a]O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

These are the words of the daughters of Jerusalem, last mentioned, whom this full and pathetical description of the Bridegroom's excellency had inflamed with love to him. *Whither is thy Beloved turned aside*, to wit, from thee, as thy words imply, ver. 6, 8; where dost thou use to look for him, and to find him, when thou hast lost him? O thou who art well acquainted with all the places both of his usual abode, and of his diversion, inform us who are ignorant of them. *That we may seek him with thee;* we ask not with any evil design, but only because we desire an interest in him.

2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

The spouse had hitherto been at a loss for her Beloved, but having diligently sought him, and inflamed both her own and others' affections with love to him by her just commendations, now at last she meets with a gracious answer from God, directing her where to find him, which also comes very seasonably, not only for her own relief and comfort, but also for the benefit of others, who inquired after him. The *garden* seems to signify the church catholic, and *the gardens*, as it follows here, as also *the beds*, may note the particular assemblies of the faithful, in which Christ affordeth his presence and his blessing. *Beds of spices;* in which the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, which are fitly compared to spices or aromatical flowers, do appear and grow. *To feed;* to refresh and delight himself, or to gather the flowers and fruits of it, as men use to do in their gardens. *To gather lilies;* which may note either, 1. Particular believers, whom Christ gathereth to himself in his church, who are compared to lilies, Cant. ii. 2. Or, 2. The prayers and praises tendered to him by his people in the public congregations, and all their gracious dispositions and actions.

b ch. 2. 16. & 7. 10.

3 [b]I *am* my beloved's, and my beloved *is* mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

4 ¶ Thou *art* beautiful, O my love, as

c ver. 10.

Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, [c]terrible as *an army* with banners.

Thou art beautiful, O my love: these are the words of Christ, who had now again manifested himself to his church; whereby he declares, that though he had for a season hid his face from her, yet still he retained a sincere and fervent affection to her, and that, notwithstanding her manifold infirmities, she was yet beautiful in his eyes. *Tirzah;* a very pleasant city, as its very name signifies, and therefore made the royal seat of the kings of Israel; of which see 1 Kings xiv. 17; xv. 21, 33; xvi. 6, &c. *Comely as Jerusalem;* which was beautiful, both for its situation, Psal. xlviii. 2, and for its goodly buildings, especially the temple. See Lam. ii. 15. *Terrible;* either, 1. To strangers, whom by her grave and majestic looks and carriage she affrights from rude or bold attempts, whereas some women invite others to familiarity with them by their loose and wanton carriage. Or, 2. To her enemies, whom God will certainly destroy.

5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for ‖ they have overcome me: thy hair *is* [d]as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

‖ Or, *they have puffed me up.* d ch. 4. 1.

Turn away thine eyes from me, for I can scarce bear the lustre of them. It is a poetical and amatorious expression, signifying how beautiful the church was in Christ's eyes, and how passionately he loved her. *Thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead:* this clause, and the whole following verse, are repeated from chap. iv. 1, 2. And this repetition is not vain nor absurd, but very agreeable to the nature of a pastoral and song of love, as being an effect and testimony of vehement affection, and besides it confirms what was said before, and showeth that the church's miscarriages, and Christ's desertion of her upon it, had not made him change his opinion of her, or affection to her.

6 [e]Thy teeth *are* as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and *there is* not one barren among them.

e ch. 4. 2.

7 [f]As a piece of a pomegranate *are* thy temples within thy locks.

f ch. 4. 3.

This is also repeated from chap. iv. 3.

8 There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

Threescore queens, and fourscore concubines; a certain number for an uncertain. The sense seems to be this, There are many beautiful queens and concubines in the world, in the courts of princes, and particularly in Solomon's court; but none of them is to be compared with my spouse, and my heart is set upon none of them, but only upon my spouse, as the following verse declareth. Or *the queens* and *concubines* may note the particular congregations which are called by Christ's name, and *the virgins* may signify the particular believers or professors; all which do make up one catholic church, as it follows. Compare the notes on Psal. xlv. 10, 14, 15. *Virgins;* either, 1. Which wait upon the queens and concubines. Or, 2. Which were reserved as a nursery, out of which queens and concubines were to be taken.

9 My dove, my undefiled is *but* one; she *is* the *only* one of her mother, she *is* the choice *one* of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; *yea*, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

Is but one; the only beloved of my soul, my only spouse, in comparison of whom I despise all others. *She is the only one of her mother;* of Jerusalem above, *which is the mother of us all*, Gal. iv. 26. Or if this seem to confound the mother and daughter, the words may be thus rendered, *she is the only one of her mother*, i. e. she is as dear and as precious to me as only children use to be to their parents, and especially to their mothers. So there is only a defect of the note of similitude, which is frequently understood, as hath been formerly noted and proved by undeniable instances. *Daughters*, called *virgins*, ver. 8. *They praised her;* as more beautiful and worthy than themselves, which was so evident that they were forced to confess it.

10 ¶ Who *is* she *that* looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, [g]*and* terrible as *an army* with banners?

g ver. 4.

These are the words, either, 1. Of the Bridegroom; or,

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2. Of the queens and concubines last mentioned, as praising of her. And they are either words of inquiry, or rather of admiration and commendation: *Who*, i. e. what manner of person, is this? how excellent and glorious! and so this pronoun *who* is understood Psal. xxiv. 8; Mark iv. 41, compared with Matt. viii. 27. *As the morning;* as the morning light, which coming after the darkness of the night is very pleasant and amiable, which also suddenly spreadeth itself from the east to the west. *Fair as the moon*, to wit, when it is full and *walking in brightness*, as the phrase is, Job xxxi. 26. But withal he seems to intimate that the church, like the moon, may have her eclipses, and be in darkness for a time. *Clear as the sun;* without any such spots or dark specks as are in the moon; which is to be understood in the same sense that she is said to be *without spot*, or *wrinkle*, or *blemish*, Eph. v. 27, which she is partly by God's gracious acceptation of her as such in Christ, and through his righteousness; and partly because she shall be such in the future life. *Terrible as an army with banners:* see above, ver. 4.

11 I went down into the garden of nuts
[h] ch. 7. 12. to see the fruits of the valley, *and* [h] to see whether the vine flourished, *and* the pomegranates budded.

I went down, to wit, when I went away from thee. So this is an account of the reason of his former departure from her. Or, *I am come down* to visit thee, *my garden*, Cant. iv. 12. Either way these are the words of the Bridegroom. *Into the garden of nuts;* in which nuts and other fruits are planted. By *nuts* may be meant, either, 1. Ordinary nuts; and so this is supposed to intimate the mean and contemptible condition of the church in her outward estate, and that her sweetness is all inward and spiritual. Or, 2. Aromatical nuts, to wit, nutmegs; and so this notes how acceptable the church and her productions are to Christ. *The valley;* which being low, and well watered, is most fruitful. *To see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded;* what beginnings or appearances there were of good fruits or works among believers; whether their practices answered their professions.

† Heb. *I knew not.* ‖ Or, *set me on the chariots of my willing people.*

12 †Or ever I was aware, my soul ‖made me *like* the chariots of Ammi-nadib.

Or ever I was aware; I was surprised with a sudden and vehement desire of enjoying my spouse; which is to be understood figuratively, and so as to agree with the majesty and omniscience of Christ. *My soul made me;* I made myself; which may signify Christ's activity in stirring up his affections to the church: or, I was made; for the active phrase is oft understood passively, and the *soul* is commonly put for the person. *Like the chariots of Ammi-nadib;* eager in my desire and swift in my motion towards the church. Ammi-nadib is supposed to be some eminent charioteer then well known, and famous for his speed in driving chariots. But this clause with the former is otherwise rendered, both in the margin and by others, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew words, *my soul set me on the chariots of my willing* (or, as others, *noble* or *princely*) *people*, i. e. which mine and the bride's friends had prepared to bring me to the bride with more expedition, into which I ascended with all my soul, as longing to come to my bride.

13 Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee.
‖ Or, *of Mahanaim.* Gen. 32. 2. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company ‖ of two armies.

Return: Christ recalls his spouse, who as when Christ was gone she pursued after him, so now when Christ was coming or come to her, she was ready to wander and go astray from him, according to the common and corrupt disposition and custom of mankind; and therefore he seeks to stop or to reclaim her, and to oblige her to return to her first love, and to repent more thoroughly than she had yet done. *Return:* this word is here repeated four times, to signify both Christ's passionate love to her, and earnest desire of her return, and her backwardness to it, which made so many calls necessary. *Shulamite:* this title signifies either, 1. One born in or belonging to Jerusalem, called also *Salem*, Psal. lxxvi. 2. Or, 2. The wife of Solomon, thus called after her husband's name: see Isa. iv. 1. And as Christ is called by the name of Solomon, chap. iii. 7, 9, 11, so the church is fitly described by the title of Solomon's wife. *That we may look upon thee;* that I and my companions and friends may contemplate thy beauty. *What will ye see?* but what do you my friends expect to discover in her? Christ proposeth the question, that he may give the following answer, and that they should take special notice of this as a very remarkable thing in her. *The company*, whereby he intimates that this one and only spouse was made up of the whole multitude of believers, *of two armies;* either, 1. Opposite one against the other; and so this may note the conflict between the flesh and Spirit which is in all the faithful in this life. Or, 2. Confederate together; and so this may signify either, 1. The re-collection and union of Jews and Gentiles which shall one day be under Christ as their common Head, Eph. ii. 15. Or, 2. The safety and strength of the church, which is compared to an *army with banners*, above, ver. 4. 10, and here to a numerous host distributed into *two armies;* wherein also there may be an allusion to that story, Gen. xxxii. 1, where this very word, here rendered *two armies*, is used.

CHAP. VII.

A further description of the church's graces, 1—7. *His design to visit the church, with the blessed effect thereof*, 8, 9. *She professeth her faith and desire*, 10. *She inviteth him to communion with her*, 11. *The end thereof*, 12, 13.

The Bridegroom, who spake the last words, here continueth his speech, and breaks forth into an elegant and particular description and commendation of the spouse, partly from the parts of her body, and partly from her ornaments; in which the same thing is to be observed which was noted concerning her description of the Bridegroom, that there is no necessity of a distinct application of every parcel of it, the design being only this, to describe the beauty and glory of the church under the representation of a beautiful and noble woman. This also is observable, that in the description of Christ she begins at the head, and so goeth downward, chap. v. 11, &c., but Christ in the description of the spouse proceedeth from the feet upwards.

HOW beautiful are thy feet with shoes,
[a] Ps. 45. 13. O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs *are* like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.

Feet being the chief instrument of our motion from place to place, is oft used metonymically for the motion itself, and so may here signify either the inward motions, the workings of the affections, or the outward motions, the steps or actions of the life, both which are right and amiable in believers. *Shoes* were anciently evidences of a free and comfortable state, whereas slaves and mourners use to go barefoot, 2 Sam. xv. 30; Isa. xx. 4, which also in women of high quality were adorned with gold and other ornaments; of which see Isa. iii. 18. These may also signify that the feet of believers should be *shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*, Eph. vi. 15. *Prince's daughter*, both by birth, being born of God, and by disposition and deportment agreeable to that quality. *The joints of thy thighs;* either, 1. The hollow place in which the hip or thigh-bone moveth and turneth itself; or rather, 2. The hip or thigh-bone which moveth there; for this is more fitly compared to a jewel well set. Some understand this of some ornaments worn by women upon those parts; for the word rendered *joints* may signify *girdles*, or any ornament which encompasseth any part of the body, and the same words which signify *thighs* are both in Hebrew and other languages sometimes used concerning the *legs;* which being admitted, this might seem to be understood of the bride's garters about her legs, which not unfitly follows the shoes upon her feet last mentioned. But this sense seems not to suit so well with the following comparison as the former doth. *Like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman;* like jewels orderly and excellently set by a skilful artist. So this signifies the uprightness and decency of her

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going, which depends very much upon the right situation of the hip or thigh-bone, which when it is dislocated or disordered causeth a lameness or uncomeliness in going; whereby he understands the orderliness and amiableness of her conversation.

2 Thy navel *is like* a round goblet, *which* wanteth not † liquor: thy belly *is like* an heap of wheat set about with lilies.

† Heb. mixture.

Thy navel is like a round goblet, to which it is not unfitly compared, because it is of a round form, and hollow, and hath windings and circlings in it, *which wanteth not liquor;* thy navel is not only comely, but fruitful. For the navel is the proper instrument of nourishing the child or children which are in the womb. And so this seems to signify the church's fruitfulness, partly in herself, in cherishing and improving all the graces and good motions of God's Spirit within her; and principally in reference to those many children which she bears and feeds in her womb with the wholesome liquor of God's ordinances. *Thy belly*, in which thy children are for a time contained and fed, *is like a heap of wheat*, i. e. of wheat corn, round and swelling, as it is in women with child, and full of nourishment, not only of liquor, as was last said, but also of meat, which may note the various provisions which Christ hath laid up in his church according to the several capacities of her children, milk for babes, and stronger meat for those who are grown up. *Set about with lilies;* not for defence, which the church doth not need, having the strong God for her Protector, but for ornament and beauty; whereby is implied that she is not only fruitful, but beautiful, and that her children are not only numerous and well fed, but also comely and delightful to the eye, as lilies are, and withal pure and innocent, in which respect both Christ and the church are compared to lilies, Cant. ii. 1, 2.

b ch. 4. 5. 3 [b] Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes *that are* twins.

Which is repeated from chap. iv. 5, where it is explained.

c ch. 4. 4. 4 [c] Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory; thine eyes *like* the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

Thy neck, of which see on chap. iv. 4, *is as a tower of ivory*, clear, and smooth, and long, and straight, and erected. *Thine eyes*, of which see on chap. i. 15; iv. 1, *like the fishpools*, full, and clear, and quiet, and pleasant. Possibly here were two fish-pools, which being conveniently seated in a large field, might bear some resemblance to the eyes placed in the head. *Heshbon;* a pleasant and well-watered city, beyond Jordan, as we may guess from Numb. xxxii., where doubtless there were some eminent and well-known fish-pools, as further appears by the exact description of the particular place here following, in which they were. *Thy nose;* the instrument of smelling, and discerning between pleasant and loathsome things; which may signify the church's sagacity in discerning between good and evil; *is as the tower of Lebanon;* which though it be not elsewhere mentioned, was in all probability built by Solomon in the mountain of Lebanon, which was the northern border of the land of Israel towards Damascus, and therefore a very fit place for a watch-tower. To this tower her nose is compared, not for its greatness, but for its comely and convenient proportions, and beautiful aspect, which doubtless were in this as well as in the rest of Solomon's buildings. *Which looketh toward Damascus;* which words seem to be added to distinguish this from another tower or building in or near to Jerusalem, which was called *the house of the forest of Lebanon*, 1 Kings vii. 2.

‖ Or, crimson. † Heb. bound. 5 Thine head upon thee *is* like ‖ Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king *is* † held in the galleries.

Thine head, which may signify the church's mind or understanding, which is seated in the head, *upon thee*, which is upon thee, or above the rest of thy body, *is like Carmel*, eminent and pleasant to the eye, and fruitful as Mount Carmel was, as hath been formerly noted; which may note that her mind was adorned and replenished with knowledge and other excellent gifts of the Holy Ghost. Or, as others render it, *like crimson* or *purple*, which is called *Carmel*, 2 Chron. ii. 7; iii. 14, because those fishes out of which they had their purple were taken in the sea bordering upon Mount Carmel. And so the same thing is repeated in the next clause in other words. *Like purple;* which colour was anciently much esteemed and commended, as by sacred, so also by profane writers. *The king is held in the galleries;* in which he walketh, and having once espied thee, is captivated by thee, and unable or unwilling either to depart or to take off his eyes from thee, as if he were fast bound and chained to thee. The *galleries* may note either the ordinances, or rather the churches, in which Christ walketh, Rev. ii. 1, in which Christ and believers converse together.

6 How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!

How fair and how pleasant art thou! it were infinite to reckon up all the particulars of thy beauty; in one word, thou art universally amiable beyond expression. *For delights;* for those various lovely features which are in thee, and for the great and manifold delights which are or may be enjoyed in conversing with thee.

7 This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters *of grapes*.

Like to a palm tree, tall and straight, or upright, as a tree. And he seems to mention the palm tree rather than any other, partly because it grows more directly upward than other trees; and partly because it is constantly green and flourishing, and groweth upward in spite of all pressures, and therefore was used in festival solemnities, Lev. xxiii. 40; John xii. 13, and was a symbol of victory, Rev. vii. 9; in all which respects it fitly represents the state of believers. *Clusters*, large, and round, and full of juice. See on ver. 3. This particular is added as an evidence of her maturity and married estate, and of her fruitfulness. *Grapes;* which word may easily be supplied out of the next verse. Although the fruit of the palm tree also is said to grow in clusters.

8 I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples;

I said within myself, I resolved, *I will go up to the palm tree;* I will climb up, that so I may *take hold*, as it follows, *of the boughs*, which do not grow out of the sides, as in other trees, but only at the top of it. *I will take hold of the boughs thereof*, partly to prune and dress them, and partly to gather the fruit; whereby is signified Christ's care of his church, and his delight in her. *Of thy nose;* of thy breath; which is oft called *the breath of* or *in* a man's *nostrils*, Gen. vii. 22; Isa. ii. 22; Lam. iv. 20. *Like apples;* either, 1. Common apples, which sometimes yield a very pleasant smell. Or, 2. Odoriferous apples. See on chap. ii. 5.

9 And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth † sweetly, causing the lips ‖ of those that are asleep to speak.

† Heb. straightly. ‖ Or, of the ancient.

The roof of thy mouth; either, 1. Thy speech, the palate being one of the principal instruments of speech; or rather, 2. Thy taste, whereof the palate or roof of the mouth is the most proper and principal instrument, Job xxxiv. 3. But then this is not to be understood actively of her taste, but passively of the taste or relish which her Beloved had of her; as in the foregoing clause, *the smell of her nose* was not meant subjectively or actively of that sense of smelling which was seated in her nose, but objectively or passively of the breath of her nostrils, which was sweet to the smell of her Beloved. *Like the best wine*, grateful and refreshing. *For my beloved;* either, 1. For thee my beloved, who reapest the comfort and benefit of that pleasure which I take in thee; or, 2. For me thy Beloved, or, according to thy usual expression, *for my Beloved;* which words Christ takes as it were out of her mouth, and repeats them emphatically; which agrees very well to the style and usage of these dramatical and amatorious writings. And this clause further intimates the church's loyalty or faithfulness to Christ, that she reserves herself and all her loves for Christ alone.

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That goeth down sweetly; whereas bad wine either goeth down slowly and tediously, or is not permitted to go down at all; Heb. *that walketh directly;* or, *that moveth itself aright;* which is given as the character of good wine, Prov. xxiii. 31. *Causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak;* causing the most dull, and stupid, and sleepy-headed persons to speak, and that fluently and eloquently, which is a common effect of good wine.

d ch. 2. 16. & 6. 3. e Ps. 45. 11. 10 ¶ [d] I *am* my beloved's, and [e] his desire *is* toward me.

This and the following verses contain the words of the bride, in answer to the Bridegroom's most endearing expressions delivered in the foregoing verses. *His desire is toward me;* I perceive, and am fully satisfied, that he heartily loves me. It is my duty to have my desire towards him as my Husband, according to God's sentence, Gen. iii. 16, but it is a wonderful condescension in him, that his desire is towards me.

11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.

Let us go forth into the field; that being retired from the crowd, we may more freely and sweetly converse together, and may observe the state of the fruits of the earth. *In the villages;* in one of the villages, as *cities* is put for *one of the cities,* Judg. xii. 7.

12 Let us get up early to the vine-
f ch. 6. 11. yards; let us [f] see if the vine flourish,
† Heb. open. *whether* the tender grape †appear, *and* the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

Let us get up early: the church having offended and lost her Beloved by her former laziness, now doubles her diligence, and discovers how earnestly she was set upon the following work. *To the vineyards;* to particular congregations. See Cant. vi. 11; Isa. v. 1. *Let us see if the vines flourish, &c.;* let us inquire into the success of our labours, what souls are brought in and built up, how they prosper and grow in grace, whether they abound in good works, &c. *There will I give thee my loves;* there I will discover the sincerity and fervency of my affections to thee, and maintain communion with thee in thy holy ordinances.

g Gen. 30. 14. h Matt. 13. 52. 13 The [g] mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates [h] *are* all manner of pleasant *fruits,* new and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

Mandrakes: this Hebrew word is used Gen. xxx. 14, 15, and the signification of it is very much doubted and disputed by interpreters; of which see my Latin Synopsis on that place. But this is certain, that the word signifies sweet and pleasant flowers; and therefore if it be understood of mandrakes, they were of another sort than ours, as it is no unusual thing for flowers of the same kind in several climates to have very differing natures and qualities. *At our gates;* either, 1. Growing there upon the walls, or in gardens, or orchards, near the door of our dwelling-house. Or rather, 2. Brought thither by divers persons to congratulate and adorn our nuptials, or laid up for our entertainment, as may be gathered from the nature of the fruits, which were not only *new,* and growing, but also *old,* and *laid up,* as it here follows. *Fruits new and old;* fruits of this year and of the former, that the variety might delight; which seems to be spiritually meant of the various fruits and operations of the Spirit and degrees of grace in several believers. *Which I have laid up for thee;* which have been produced by my ministry for thy service and glory.

CHAP. VIII.

The church expresseth her desire of familiarity with Christ, 1, *by the entertainment she would make him,* 2, 3. *She charges the daughters of Jerusalem not to disturb her Beloved,* 4. *A commendation of the church for her faith in Christ.* 5. *She prayeth for full assurance of his love; her invincible desire,* 6; *which is insatiable,* 7. *The calling of the Gentiles, with their intent, and her condition,* 8—13. *Christ's coming prayed for,* 14.

O THAT thou *wert* as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! *when* I should find thee without, I would kiss
† Heb. they should not despise me. thee; yea, †I should not be despised.

Oh that thou wert as my brother, most intimate, and free, and familiar with me, as brethren and sisters commonly are, *that sucked the breasts of my mother!* that came out of the same womb, and sucked the same breasts, and consequently were brother and sister by father and mother too; for such are most dear to one another. See Gen. xliii. 29; Deut. xiii. 6, Heb. *sucking the breasts,* &c.; so she wisheth that he were as a little sucking brother, with whom she might innocently and inoffensively delight herself, as sisters do with such a brother. The church here expresseth her passionate desire of a stricter union and closer communion with Christ than yet she had attained. And in particular these may be the breathings of the ancient Jewish church after Christ's incarnation, whereby he was to be their brother, Rom. viii. 29; Heb. ii. 11, 12, and a sucking infant. *Without;* in the open streets; I might then express my affections to thee, and kiss thee openly, without any scandal or contempt. Or, *without,* i. e. come forth from the Father's bosom into the world, John xvi. 28. *I would kiss thee;* I would demonstrate my reverence, and subjection, and affection to thee, of all which kissing was a token in those times and places, as hath been oft observed in divers foregoing texts. *Yet I should not be despised;* then should I not be ashamed or censured, as if I had done an indecent or immodest action, because such expressions of love are usual amongst persons so nearly and dearly related.

2 I would lead thee, *and* bring thee into my mother's house, *who* would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of [a] spiced wine of the juice of my pome- a Prov. 9. 2.
granate.

Bring thee, with joy and triumph, as the bridegroom was usually brought to the bride's house. See Psal. xlv. 14, 15. *Into my mother's house;* either, 1. My mother's-in-law, my husband's mother, as the custom was, Gen. xxiv. 67; Judg. xii. 9. Or, 2. My own mother's, to show her extraordinary respect and affection to him. In the mystical sense both come to one; for the universal church was in some sort both his and her mother. *Who would instruct me,* to wit, how I should behave myself towards thee. Or, where *she did instruct* or *educate me. I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate;* I would give thee the best entertainment which the house affords. My gifts and graces should all be employed to serve and glorify thee.

3 [b] His left hand *should be* under my b ch. 2. 6.
head, and his right hand should embrace me.

The same expressions are used chap. ii. 6. The sense is, He would not despise me for my forwardness in showing my affections to him, as men commonly do in like cases, but would kindly accept of my love, and return love for it.

4 [c] I charge you, O daughters of Jeru- c ch. 2. 7. & 3. 5.
salem, †that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* † Heb. why should ye stir up, or, why, &c. love, until he please.

This verse is here repeated again, from chap. ii. 7; iii. 5, where see the explication of it.

5 [d] Who *is* this that cometh up from d ch. 3. 6.
the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth *that* bare thee.

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness? these words are repeated from chap. iii. 6, of which see the notes there. This and the next clause are the words either, 1. Of the daughters of Jerusalem, or the friends of the bride and Bridegroom, admiring and congratulating this happy conjunction. Or, 2. Of the Bridegroom, who proposeth the question, that he may give the answer here following. *Leaning upon her Beloved;* which implies both great freedom and familiarity, and fervent affection, and dependence

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upon him. If these be the Bridegroom's words, he speaketh of himself in the third person, which is usual in the Hebrew language. *I raised thee up*, when thou wast fallen, and laid low, and wert dead in trespasses, and in the depth of misery I revived thee. *Under the apple tree;* under my own shadow; for she had compared him to an apple tree, and declared that under the shadow of the tree she had both delight and fruit, Cant. ii. 3, which is the same thing with this *raising up*. *There thy mother brought thee forth;* under that tree either the universal or the primitive church did conceive and bring thee forth.

e Is. 49. 16. Jer. 22. 24. Hag. 2. 23.

6 ¶ [e]Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love *is* strong as death; jealousy *is* †cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame.

‖ Heb. hard.

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: these are undoubtedly the words of the bride. The sense is, Let thy mind and thy heart be constantly set upon me, let me be engraven upon the tables of thine heart. He seems to allude to the engraven tablets which are frequently worn upon the breast, and to the signet on a man's arm or hand, which men prize at a more than ordinary rate, as appears from Jer. xxii. 24; Hag. ii. 23, and which are continually in their sight. *For love*, my love to thee, from whence this desire proceeds, *is strong as death;* which conquers every living thing, and cannot be resisted nor vanquished. *Jealousy*, or *zeal;* my ardent love to thee, which also fills me with fears and jealousies, lest thou shouldst bestow thine affections upon others, and cool in thy love to me, or withdraw thy love from me; for true believers are subject to these passions. *Cruel*, Heb. *hard;* grievous and terrible, and sometimes ready to overwhelm me, and swallow me up; and therefore have pity upon me, and do not leave me. *Are coals of fire;* it burns and melts my heart like fire.

7 Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

f Prov. 6. 35.

It is the nature of love in general, and of my love to thee, that it cannot be taken off, neither by terrors and afflictions, which are commonly signified in Scripture by *waters* and *floods*, Psal. xxxii. 6; xlii. 7, and elsewhere; nor by temptations and allurements. Nothing but the presence and favour of the beloved person can quiet and satisfy it. And therefore do not put me off with other things, but give me thyself, without whom, and in comparison of whom, I despise all other persons and things.

g Ezek. 23.

8 ¶ [g]We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?

These are manifestly the words of the bride, still continuing her speech. The present church, which was that of the Jews, speaks of another future church, which was to consist of the Gentiles, which she calls *little*, because she was the younger sister, and then scarce had a being; and she calls her her *sister*, partly because she was so in the purpose of God, their common Father, though at present she was a stranger to him; and partly to intimate that the Gentile church should be admitted to the participation of the same privileges with that of the Jews. *She hath no breasts;* no grown and full breasts, as virgins have when they are ripe for marriage, Ezek. xvi. 7. This signifies the present doleful estate of the Gentiles, which as yet were not grown up into a church estate, and wanted the milk or food of life, as for itself, so also for its members. *What shall we do for our sister?* teach us to know and perform our duty to them, which is to embrace them with sincere and fervent affections, to promote their coming in to Christ, and to rejoice in it, and not to envy it, and murmur at it, as the Jews did in the days of Christ and of his apostles. *In the day when she shall be spoken for*, to wit, for bringing her into the state of matrimony; when Christ and his apostles, and others, the first ministers of the gospel, who were members of the Jewish church, did speak and act for the conversion of the Gentiles.

9 If she *be* a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she *be* a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.

This seems to be Christ's answer to the foregoing question of the Jewish church concerning their sister church of the Gentiles, for which they were very solicitous. Christ therefore engageth himself to take care of her, and to provide for her, as the matter doth require, and as suits best with her condition. If the Gentiles, when they are converted, shall be like a *wall*, strong and firm in faith, stedfast against all assaults and temptations, for a *wall* in Scripture use signifies strength, Isa. xxvi. 1; Jer. xv. 20, and elsewhere, *we*, my Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost, as the principal builders, and my ministers as workers with and under us, *will build upon her a palace of silver;* will add more strength and beauty to her, will enlarge and adorn her, make her more amiable in mine eyes, and more visible and glorious in the eyes of the world. *And if she be* as *a door*, which is weaker than a wall, and where the enemy doth or may break in upon her; if she be weak in faith, and sometimes overcome by the tempter, yet we will not therefore reject and forsake her, but *we will enclose*, or (as many others render the word) *strengthen*, or *fortify, her with boards of cedar*, which are not only beautiful, but also strong and durable. If she be sincere, and open the door of her heart to me, though she be weak, I will come in to her, and make her stronger.

10 I *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found †favour.

†Heb. peace.

These seem to be the words of the Jewish church to Christ: O Lord, by thy grace I am what thou wouldst have my sister to be, *a wall*, and therefore do humbly beg and hope that, according to thy promise to her in that case, thou wilt build upon me a palace of silver. *My breasts like towers;* which stand out from and above the wall, and are an ornament and defence to it. Of the church's breasts, see before, chap. iv. 5; vii. 3, 7. *Then was I in his eyes as one that found favour;* when by his grace I was made a wall, he was well-pleased with me, and with his own workmanship in me.

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; [h]he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand *pieces* of silver.

h Matt. 21. 33.

Baal-hamon; a place not far from Jerusalem, where Solomon had, as it seems, a noble vineyard. *Every one was to bring a thousand pieces of silver;* whereby he signifies both the vast extent of the vineyard, which required so many keepers, and its singular fertility, which afforded so great a rent.

12 My vineyard, which *is* mine, *is* before me: thou, O Solomon, *must have* a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.

My vineyard; my church, which is oft compared to a vineyard, and is here opposed to Solomon's vineyard. It is much doubted and disputed whether this verse be spoken by Christ or by the spouse; the first clause seems to agree best to the former, and the following clause to the latter. Possibly the difficulty may be reconciled by ascribing the first clause to Christ, and the latter to the spouse; such interlocutions being familiar in this book, and in other writings of this kind. *Which is mine:* this repetition is not idle, but very emphatical, to show that Christ had a more eminent and special title to his vineyard, the church, than Solomon had to his vineyard, because it was purchased not by his money, but by his blood, and because it was his, not only for the short time of this present life, as Solomon's was, but to all eternity. *Is before me;* is under my own eye and care, and is not wholly committed to the care and management of others, as Solomon's was: *I the Lord do keep it night and day*, as we read, Isa. xxvii. 3. *I am with it to the end of the world*, Matt. xxviii. 20. *Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand:* these are the church's return to Christ, who is here called Solomon, as he was chap. iii. 9, 11, as elsewhere he is called David. Dost thou, O Christ,

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keep thine own vineyard, which Solomon did not? Then surely it is meet that thou shouldst receive, and thou shalt receive, as large a revenue from thy vineyard as he did from his. *Those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred;* though the chief revenue belongeth and is justly given to thee, yet thy ministers who serve thee in thy vineyard shall have, and are allowed by thee to receive, some encouragement for their service. See 1 Cor. ix. 7.

13 Thou that dwellest in the gardens,
the companions hearken to thy voice:
1 ch. 2. 14. [i]cause me to hear *it*.

Thou that dwellest: the Hebrew word is of the feminine gender, which plainly showeth that Christ speaks here to his spouse, being about to depart from her for a season, as the next verse showeth. *In the gardens;* not in the wilderness of the world, for believers are *chosen* or *called out of the world,* John xv. 19; but in the church, the garden of God, which God hath fenced and appropriated to himself. He saith *gardens,* because of the many particular congregations into which the church is divided. *The companions,* the friends of the bride and Bridegroom, *hearken to thy voice;* diligently observe all thy words and carriages towards me, and all the transactions between thee and me. *Cause me to hear it;* when I am gone from thee, let me hear thy prayers, and praises, and the preaching of my gospel in the world.

14 ¶ [k]† Make haste, my beloved, and [l]be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

k See Rev. 22. 17, 20.
† Heb. *Flee away.*
l ch. 2. 17.

Seeing we must part for a time, make haste, O my beloved Bridegroom, and speedily finish the work which thou hast to do in the world, that so thou mayst take me to thyself, that I may live in thine everlasting embraces. The words of this verse are borrowed from chap. ii. 17, where they are explained.

THE BOOK
OF
THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE teachers of the ancient church were of two sorts: 1. Ordinary, the priests and Levites. 2. Extraordinary, the prophets. These were immediately called by God, and inspired, as with other singular gifts and graces, so particularly with a supernatural knowledge of Divine mysteries, and of future things, and invested by God with an authority superior not only to the ordinary teachers of the church, but in some sort even to the civil powers of the nation. These holy prophets, whose writings are contained in the sacred Scripture, are sixteen. Of these Isaiah is first in place, and, as may seem probable, in time also. But undoubtedly he was contemporary with Hosea, whom others suppose to have been before him. Compare Isa. i. 1, with Hos. i. 1. The Jews tell us that he was of the blood royal of Judah, which is uncertain. But undoubtedly he was the prince of all the prophets, whether we consider the great extent and variety of his prophecies, the excellency and sublimity of those mysteries which were revealed to him and by him, the majesty and elegancy of his style, or the incomparable liveliness and power of his sermons. He doth so evidently and fully describe the person, and offices, and sufferings, and kingdom of Christ, that some of the ancients called him *the fifth evangelist.* And it is observed, that there are more testimonies and quotations in the New Testament taken out of Isaiah than out of all the other prophets.

CHAP. I.

Judah's sins, 1—4; *her judgments,* 5—9; *her worship is rejected,* 10—15. *Exhortations to repentance; promises of grace and mercy; threatenings of sore judgments; and complaints by reason of their backsliding,* 16—31.

B. C. cir. 760. THE [a]vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz,
a Num. 12. 6. which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

The vision, or, *the visions;* the word being here collectively used, as it is chap. xxii. 1; 1 Sam. iii. 1. The sense is, This is the book of the visions or prophecies. As prophets were called *seers,* 1 Sam. ix. 9, so prophecies are called *visions,* because they were as clearly and certainly represented to the prophets' minds as bodily objects are to men's eyes. *Amoz;* either the brother of Amaziah king of Judah, as the Hebrew writers fancy; or rather, some other person then well known. *Saw,* i. e. foresaw and foretold. But he speaks, after the manner of the prophets, of things to come as if they were either past or present. *Concerning Judah and Jerusalem;* principally, but not exclusively. For he prophesieth also concerning Egypt and Babylon, and divers other countries; which yet he doth with respect to Judah. *In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah;* in the time of their reign; whence it may be gathered that Isaiah exercised his prophetical office above fifty years together: see 2 Kings xv., xvi.

2 [b]Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, [c]I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

b Deut. 32. 1 Jer. 2. 12. & 6. 19. & 22. 29. Ezek. 36. 4. Mic. 1. 2. & 6. 1, 2.
c ch. 5. 1, 2.

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: he directeth his speech to these senseless creatures, that thereby he might more awaken and affect the Israelites, whom he hereby proclaimeth to be so dull and stupid that they were past hearing, and therefore gives them over as desperate, and calleth in the whole creation of God to bear witness against them. *The Lord hath spoken:* this is his plea against them, of the equity whereof he is willing that all the creatures should be judges. *I have nourished and brought up children;* I first made them a people, and until this time I have sustained and blessed them above all other nations.

3 [d]The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: *but* Israel [e]doth not know, my people [f]doth not consider.

d Jer. 8. 7.
e Jer. 9. 3, 6
f ch. 5. 12.

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; the most stupid brute beasts acknowledge and obey their Lord and Benefactor, as experience showeth. *Israel doth not know,* to wit, me, their Owner and Master, which is

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easily and necessarily understood out of the former clause. *Knowing* is here taken practically, as it is usually in Scripture, and includes reverence and obedience.

† Heb. *of heaviness.* g ch. 57. 3, 4. Matt. 3. 7.

4 Ah sinful nation, a people †laden with iniquity, [g]a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are †gone away backward.

† Heb. *alienated, or, separated.* Ps. 58. 3.

Ah: this particle implies both his wonder, and anger, and grief, and shame that they were such. *Laden with iniquity*, Heb. *of heaviness of iniquity*, i. e. of heavy or great sins; for *heavy* is commonly put for *great* or *grievous*, as Isa. xxi. 15; xxx. 27. Laden not with the sense of sin, as Matt. xi. 28, but with the guilt and bondage of sin. *A seed of evil-doers;* the children of wicked parents, whose guilt they inherit, and whose evil example they follow. *That are corrupters*, Heb. *that corrupt*, to wit, themselves, or their ways, or others by their counsel and example. Or, *that destroy* themselves and their land by their wickedness. *They have forsaken the Lord*, not in profession, but in practice and reality, neglecting or corrupting his worship, refusing his yoke and conduct. *They have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger;* they have lived as if it were their great design and business to provoke him. *They are gone away backward;* instead of proceeding forward, and growing in grace, which was their duty, they are all fallen from their former professions, and grown worse and worse, and have impudently turned their backs upon me.

h ch. 9. 13. Jer. 2. 30. & 5. 3. † Heb. *increase revolt.*

5 ¶ [h]Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will †revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

Why should ye be stricken any more? it is to no purpose to seek to reclaim you by one chastisement after another; and therefore I will utterly forsake and destroy you at once. *Ye will revolt more and more;* I see you are incorrigible, and turn even your afflictions into sin. *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint;* your disease is mortal, as being in the most noble and vital parts, the very head and heart of the body politic, from whence the plague is derived to all the other members, as it follows. And this is to be understood either, 1. Of their sins; or rather, 2. Of their miseries. Which best suits, 1. With the foregoing words, this being added as a reason why it was in vain to strike them any more, or to expect any amendment that way, because he had stricken them already, and that very terribly, even in their head and heart, whose wounds are most dangerous, and yet they were not at all better for it. 2. With ver. 7, 8, where this metaphor is so explained.

6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is* no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores:

i Jer. 8. 22. ‖ Or, *oil.*

[i]they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ‖ ointment.

From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; you have been all of you punished, from the highest to the lowest, from the worst to the best. *They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment;* I have suffered you to lie under your maladies for a time, without applying any remedies, to try whether the length and continuance of your affliction might not work that cure which the strength of it could not do, but all in vain.

k Deut. 28. 51, 52. † Heb. *as the overthrow of strangers.*

7 [k]Your country *is* desolate, your cities *are* burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and *it is* desolate, †as overthrown by strangers.

All this and what follows was verified in the days of king Ahaz, 2 Chron. xxviii., in whose time, and upon which occasion, this prophecy seems to have been delivered, as more exactly agreeing with that time than with any other. If any object, that this being the first of his prophecies, must rather belong to the days of Uzziah, they must take notice, and it is agreed by interpreters, and it is undeniably true, that the prophecies of Isaiah, as also of the other prophets, are not set down in the same order in which they were delivered, but oftentimes the latter are put before the former. *In your presence;* which your eyes shall see to torment you, when there is no power in your hands to deliver you. *As overthrown by strangers*, Heb. *as the overthrow of strangers*, i. e. which strangers bring upon a land which is not theirs, nor likely to continue in their hands, and therefore they spare no persons that come in their way, and they spoil and destroy all things, which is not usually done in wars between persons of the same or of a neighbour nation.

8 And the daughter of Zion is left [l]as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, [m]as a besieged city.

l Job 27. 18. Lam. 2. 6. m Jer. 4. 17.

The daughter of Zion, i. e. Zion, or Jerusalem; for these two names are promiscuously used of the same place; the name of *daughter* being frequently given to cities or countries. Thus *the daughter of Babylon* is put for Babylon itself, Psal. cxxxvii. 8; Isa. xlvii. 1. In the same sense we read of *the daughter of Tyre*, Psal. xlv. 12, and *of Zidon*, Isa. xxiii. 12, and *of Egypt*, Jer. xlvi. 11, 24, and *of Edom*, Lam. iv. 21. *Is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers;* is left solitary, all the neighbouring villages and country round about it being laid waste.

9 [n]Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as [o]Sodom, *and* we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

n Lam. 3. 22. Rom. 9. 29. o Gen. 19. 24.

If God, by his infinite power and goodness, had not restrained our enemies, and reserved some of us, the whole nation and race of us had been utterly cut off, as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were; so great was the rage and power of our enemies, and so utterly unable we were to deliver ourselves.

10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers [p]of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

p Deut. 32. 32. Ezek. 16. 46.

Hear the word of the Lord; I speak not my own fancies or passions, but the message of your Lord and Governor, to whom you owe all reverence and obedience. *Rulers of Sodom;* so called for their resemblance of them in wickedness: compare Deut. xxxii. 32; Ezek. xvi. 46, 48. *The law;* or, *doctrine*, as this word is commonly used; the message which I am now to deliver to you from God, your great Lawgiver, which ought to have the force of a law with you.

11 To what purpose *is* the [q]multitude of your [q]sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of †he goats.

q 1 Sam. 15. 22. Ps. 50. 8, 9. & 51. 16. Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27. ch. 66. 3. Jer. 6. 20. & 7. 21. Amos 5. 21, 22. Micah 6. 7. † Heb. *great he goats.*

To what purpose? they are vain and useless, being neither accepted by me, nor beneficial to you. *Unto me*, who am a Spirit, and therefore cannot be satisfied with such carnal oblations, but expect to be worshipped in spirit and truth, and to have your hearts and lives, as well as your bodies and sacrifices, presented unto me. *I am full of the burnt-offerings;* I am glutted with them, and therefore loathe them. *The blood;* he mentions *the fat* and *blood*, because these were in a peculiar manner reserved for God, Lev. iii. 15, 16; xvii. 11, to intimate that even the best of their sacrifices were rejected by him.

12 When ye come †[r]to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

† Heb. *to be seen.* r Ex. 23. 17. & 34. 23.

When ye come to appear before me, upon the three solemn feasts, Exod. xxiii. 17; xxxiv. 23, or upon other occasions. *Who hath required this at your hands*, to wit, in this manner, and upon these terms? The thing that I commanded was not only nor chiefly that you should offer external sacrifices to me, but that you should do it with true repentance for all your sins, with faith in my promises, with hearty love to me, and sincere resolutions of devoting yourselves to my service, without which you offer me a dead carcass

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instead of a living sacrifice. *My courts;* the courts of my temple, which were two, that of the priests, and that where the people assembled, 2 Chron. iv. 9. So this reproof seems to be directed against both priests and people, as unworthy to enjoy this privilege.

a Matt. 15. 9.

13 Bring no more [a]vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the

t Joel 1. 14. & 2. 15.

new moons and sabbaths, [t]the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it is*

l Or, *grief.*

‖ iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

Bring no more; I neither desire nor will accept of any upon these terms. *Oblations,* Heb. *meat-offerings;* of which see Lev. ii. 1; Numb. xv. 4. *Incense is an abomination unto me;* so far is it from being a sweet savour to me, as you foolishly imagine. *The new moons;* which were holy to God, and observed with great solemnity. See Numb. xxviii. 11, 14; Psal. lxxxi. 3. *The calling of assemblies;* all other solemn times wherein the people were obliged to meet together, as the three great yearly feasts, and other extraordinary seasons. *I cannot away with,* Heb. *I cannot bear;* it is burdensome and grievous to me. *It is also iniquity;* so far is it from pleasing me, that it is an offence to me; and instead of reconciling me to you, which is your design, it provoketh me more against you. *The solemn meeting;* the most solemn day of each of the three feasts, which was the last day, which is called by this very name, Lev. xxiii. 36; Numb. xxix. 35, and elsewhere; although the word be sometimes more generally used of any other solemn festival day.

u Num. 28. 11.
x Lev. 23. 2, &c. Lam. 2. 6.
y ch. 43. 24.
z Job 27. 9. Ps. 66. 18. Prov. 1. 28. ch. 59. 2. Jer. 14. 12. Micah 3. 4.
a Ps. 66. 18. 1 Tim. 2. 8.
† Heb. *multiply prayer.*
b ch. 59. 3.
† Heb. *bloods.*

14 Your [u]new moons and your [x]appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; [y]I am weary to bear *them.*

15 And [z]when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: [a]yea, when ye †make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of [b]†blood.

When ye spread forth your hands; when you pray with hands spread abroad, as the manner was; of which see Exod. ix. 29, 33; Job xi. 13, &c. *I will hide mine eyes from you;* which is a gesture of contempt and loathing. I will take no notice of your persons or requests. *Your hands are full of blood;* you are guilty of murder, and oppression, and other crying sins, which I abhor, and have forbidden, under pain of mine highest displeasure.

c Jer. 4. 14.
d Ps. 34. 14. & 37. 27. Amos 5. 15. Rom. 12. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 11.

16 ¶ [c]Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; [d]cease to do evil;

Make you clean; cleanse your hearts and hands from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and do not content yourselves with your ceremonial washings. *Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes;* reform yourselves so thoroughly, that you may not only approve yourselves to men, but to me, who search your hearts, and try all your actions.

e Jer. 22. 3, 16. Mic. 6. 8. Zech. 7. 9. & 8. 16.
‖ Or, *righten.*

17 Learn to do well; [e]seek judgment, ‖relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Learn to do well; begin and inure yourselves to live soberly, righteously, and godlily. *Seek judgment;* show your religion to God, by studying and practising justice to men, and neither give nor procure any unrighteous judgment. *Relieve the oppressed;* be not only just, but merciful. *Judge the fatherless;* defend and deliver them, as this word is used, Psal. vii. 8, 11; ix. 4, and oft elsewhere. *Plead for the widow;* maintain the righteous cause of poor and helpless persons against their unjust and potent adversaries; whereby you will show your love to justice and mercy, and that you fear God more than men.

f ch. 43. 26. Micah 6. 2.
g Ps. 51. 7. Rev. 7. 14.

18 Come now, and [f]let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, [g]they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Come now, and let us reason together; I am willing to lay aside my prerogative, and to submit the matter to a fair and equal trial, whether I do not deal justly in rejecting all your services, which are accompanied with such gross hypocrisy and wickedness, and whether I do not deal very graciously in offering mercy and pardon to you upon these conditions. *Though your sins be as scarlet,* red and bloody, as theirs were, ver. 15, great and heinous, *they shall be as white as snow;* they shall be washed and purged by the blood of the Messias, whereby you shall be made white and pure in God's sight. It is a metonymical expression, as *sins* are said to *be purged,* Heb. i. 3, when men are *purged from their sins,* Heb. ix. 14. *Shall be as wool;* which for the most part is white, and is compared to snow for whiteness, Rev. i. 14.

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

If ye be willing and obedient; if you are heartily willing and fully resolved to obey all my commands. *Ye shall eat the good of the land;* together with the pardon of your sins, you shall receive many temporal and worldly blessings.

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: [h]for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it.*

h Num. 23. 19. Tit. 1. 2.

If ye refuse and rebel; if you obstinately persist in your disobedience to me, as hitherto you have done. *The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it;* he hath said it, who can as easily do it as speak the words, and who cannot lie, and therefore will do it.

21 ¶ [i]How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

i Jer. 2. 20, 21.

How, a note of admiration at so strange, and sad, and sudden a change, *is the faithful city,* Jerusalem, which in the reign of former kings was faithful to God, *become an harlot!* is filled with idolatry, which is commonly called *whoredom. It was full of judgment;* judgment was duly and truly executed in all its courts. *Righteousness lodged in it;* it was famous for being the seat of justice, which did not only pass through it, like a wayfaring man, but had its settled abode in it. *But now murderers;* under that one gross kind he comprehends all sorts of unrighteous men and practices, as may be gathered by the opposition. Only their connivance at that horrid crime of murder is noted, to assure us that other crimes of a lower nature were not only unpunished, but even encouraged.

22 [k]Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

k Jer. 6. 28, 30. Ezek. 22. 18, 19.

Thou art woefully degenerated from thy former purity. If there be any remainders of religion and justice in thee, they are mixed with many and great corruptions.

23 [l]Thy princes *are* rebellious, and [m]companions of thieves: [n]every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they [o]judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

l Hos. 9. 15.
m Prov. 29. 24.
n Jer. 22. 17. Ezek. 22. 12. Hos. 4. 18. Mic. 3. 11. & 7. 3.
o Jer. 5. 28. Zech. 7. 10.

Thy princes are rebellious against me, their sovereign Lord; they cast off my yoke, and make their own wills and lusts the rule of their life and government. *Companions of thieves;* partly by giving them connivance and countenance, and receiving a recompence from them for it; and partly by practising the same violence, and cruelty, and injustice that thieves use. *Loveth gifts,* i. e. bribes given to pervert justice, which are severely forbidden, Deut. x. 17; xxvii. 25. *Followeth after rewards;* pursuing them with all eagerness, and by all means possible. *They judge not the fatherless, &c.;* they are so far from doing them justice, that they will not so much as give them a fair hearing of their cause, because they cannot make their way to them by gifts.

24 Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, [p]I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

p Deut. 28. 63. Ezek. 5. 13.

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I will ease me, Heb. *I will comfort myself;* ease my mind, and satisfy my justice, by taking vengeance, as the next clause explains this. The same expression is used in the same sense Ezek. v. 13. *Of mine adversaries;* of the Israelites, who, though they have called themselves my children and friends, yet by their temper and carriage towards me have showed themselves to be mine enemies.

† Heb. *according to purpose.*
q Jer. 6. 29. & 9. 7. Mal. 3. 3.

25 ¶ And I will turn my hand upon thee, and †[q]purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

I will turn my hand upon thee, to chastise thee again, which God threatened that he would not do, ver. 5, but now promiseth that he will do it, not in fury, or so as utterly to destroy them, but in mercy, and with moderation, so as to purge them, as it here follows. *And purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin;* I will purge out of thee and destroy those wicked men that are incorrigible and infectious to others; and for those of you that are curable, I will by my word, and by the furnace of affliction, purge out all that hypocrisy and corruption that yet remains in you, and requires so sharp a cure.

r Jer. 33. 7.
s Zech. 8. 3.

26 And I will restore thy judges [r]as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward [s]thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

I will restore thy judges. I will give thee such princes and magistrates, *as at the first*, Heb. *as* thou hadst *in the beginning;* either, 1. Of thy commonwealth, such as Moses and Joshua; or, 2. Of thy kingdom, such as David. *Thy counsellors;* thy princes shall have and hearken to wise and faithful counsellors, which is a singular blessing to a prince and people. *Thou shalt be called*, to wit, justly and truly; thou shalt be such; for *to be called* is oft put for *to be*, as Isa. iv. 3; lxi. 6; Matt. v. 9.

‖ Or, *they that return of her.*

27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and ‖her converts with righteousness.

Zion, the Jews that live in or near Zion, and worship God in Zion, *shall be redeemed*, shall be delivered from all their enemies and calamities, *with judgment;* or, *by judgment*, i. e. by God's righteous judgment, purging out those wicked and incorrigible Jews, who by their sins hindered the deliverance of the people, and punishing and destroying their unmerciful enemies, who kept them in cruel bondage, as he did to the Babylonians, whereby he made the way open for their deliverance. *Her converts*, Heb. *her returners*, those of them who shall come out of captivity into their own land, *with righteousness;* or, *by righteousness*, i. e. either by my faithfulness, in keeping my promise of delivering them after seventy years; or by my goodness; for both these come under the name of *righteousness* in Scripture use.

t Job 31. 3. Ps. 1. 6. & 5. 6. & 73. 27. & 92. 9. & 104. 35. & 119. 155. * Heb. *breaking.*

28 ¶ And the [t]†destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners *shall be* together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

And; or rather, *but*, as that particle is oft used; for here is a manifest opposition. *The destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together;* though I will deliver my people from the Babylonish captivity, yet those of them who shall still go on in their wickedness shall not have the benefit of that mercy, but are reserved for a more dreadful and total destruction.

u ch. 57. 5.
x ch. 65. 3. & 66. 17.

29 For they shall be ashamed of [u]the oaks which ye have desired, [x]and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.

They shall be ashamed; not with an ingennous and penitential shame for the sin, but with an involuntary and penal shame for the disappointment of their hopes which they had in their idols. *Which ye have desired;* which, after the manner of the heathen, you have consecrated to idolatrous uses, that under them you might worship your idols, as they did, Ezek. vi. 13; Hos. iv. 13: see also Isa. lvii. 5; Jer. ii. 20; iii. 6. *The gardens;* in which, as well as in the groves, they committed idolatry; of which we read Isa. lxv. 3; lxvi. 17. *That ye have chosen*, to wit, for the place of your worship, which is opposed to the place which God had chosen and appointed for his worship.

30 For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.

As you have sinned under the oaks and in gardens, so you shall be made like unto oaks and gardens, not when they are green and flourishing, but when they wither and decay.

y Ezek. 32. 21.
z ch. 43. 17.
‖ Or, *and his work.*

31 [y]And the strong shall be [z]as tow, ‖and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench *them*.

The strong; either, 1. Your idols, which you think to be strong, and able to defend you, as appears by your confidence in them. Or, 2. The strongest persons among you, who think to secure themselves against the threatened danger by their wealth, or power, or wisdom; and much more they that are weak and helpless. *Shall be as tow;* shall be as suddenly and easily consumed by my judgments as tow is by fire. *The maker of it;* the maker of the idol, who can neither save himself nor his workmanship. Or, *his work;* either all that he doth or can do, or that which he hath done, his wicked course of life, shall bring him to ruin.

CHAP. II.

A prophecy of Christ's kingdom, and the calling of the Gentiles, 1—5; *and rejection of the Jews for their idolatry and pride*, 6—9. *The great majesty and power of God; and his terrors on the wicked; with an exhortation to fear God, and not to trust in man*, 10—22.

THE word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

The word; or, the *matter* or *thing*, as this Hebrew word commonly signifies; the prophecy or vision.

a Mic. 4. 1, &c.
b Gen. 49. 1. Jer. 23. 20.
c Ps. 68. 15, 16.
‖ Or, *prepared.*
d Ps. 72. 8. ch. 27. 13.

2 And [a]it shall come to pass [b]in the last days, [c]*that* the mountain of the LORD's house shall ‖be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; [d]and all nations shall flow unto it.

And; or, *now*, as this particle is rendered, 1 Sam. ix. 1; Ezra i. 1, &c. *In the last days;* in the times of the Messias or the gospel, as the generality both of Jewish and Christian writers understand it, and as may further appear both from the use of this phrase in this sense, Jer. xlviii. 47; xlix. 39; Ezek. xxxviii. 8, 16; Dan. x. 14; Hos. iii. 5; Acts ii. 17; Heb. i. 2; 1 John ii. 18, and from the conversion of the Gentiles here promised, which was not to be till that time; and from the nature of the thing, for this really was the last time and state of the church in the world; the Jewish pedagogy was to be abolished, but Christ's institutions were to continue to the end of the world. *The mountain of the Lord's house;* the temple of the Lord which is upon Mount Moriah; which yet is not to be understood literally of that material temple, but mystically of the church of God, as appears from the next following words, which will not admit of a literal interpretation; and from the flowing of all nations to it, which was not to that temple, nor indeed was fulfilled till that temple was destroyed; and from the frequent use of this metaphor, *the temple*, or *the house of the Lord*, concerning the Christian church, both in the Old and the New Testament. *Shall be exalted above the hills;* shall be placed and settled in a most conspicuous and glorious manner, being advanced above all other churches and kingdoms in the world. *All nations*, those Gentiles, whom you now despise, and judge to be abhorred and quite forsaken by God, *shall flow unto it*, shall come in great abundance, and with great eagerness, like a river, as the word signifies.

e Jer. 31. 6. & 50. 5. Zech. 8. 21, 23.

3 And many people shall go and say, [e]Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the

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God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: [f] for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

[f] Luke 24. 47.

Shall go; shall not only have some weak desires of going, but shall be ready to take pains, and shall actually go. *And say;* such shall be their zeal, that they shall not only go themselves, but shall persuade and press others to go with them. *We will walk in his paths;* they show the truth of their conversion by their hearty desire to be instructed in the way or method of worshipping and serving God acceptably, and by their firm purpose of practising the instructions given to them. *For:* this last clause contains the reason why the people should be so forward to go, and to invite others to go with them; and they may be the words either of the people, continuing their speech; or of the prophet, now returning to speak in his own name. *The law;* the new law, the doctrine of the gospel, which is frequently called a *law*, because it hath the nature and power of a law, obliging us no less to the belief and practice of it than the old law did. *The word of the Lord from Jerusalem:* for the accomplishment of this promise, see Luke xxiv. 47; Acts i. 8; Rom. x. 18.

4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and [g] they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into ‖ pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, [h] neither shall they learn war any more.

[g] Ps. 46. 9. Hos. 2. 18. Zech. 9. 10.
‖ Or, *scythes.*
[h] Ps. 72. 3, 7.

He shall judge among the nations; Christ shall set up and use his authority among and over all nations, not only giving laws to them, as other rulers do, but doing that which no other powers can do, convincing their minds and consciences, conquering and changing their hearts, and ordering their lives. *Shall rebuke;* either verbally, by his word and Spirit reproving or convincing the world of sin; or really, by his judgments upon his implacable enemies, which obstruct the propagation of the gospel. *Neither shall they learn war any more;* he shall root out those great animosities and hostilities which were between the Jews and Gentiles, Eph. ii. 13, &c., and between several nations, subduing men's pride, and passions, and lusts, which are the causes of all wars and contentions; and working humility, and meekness, and self-denial, and true and fervent love to all men, from whence peace necessarily follows. This was the design of the gospel in all, and the effect of it in those that rightly received it. And that war and dissension which was occasioned by the preaching of the gospel, as was foretold, Matt. x. 21, 22, it was wholly accidental, by reason of men's corrupt interests and lusts, which the gospel opposed; and it was not amongst those who received the gospel in the love of it, but between them and those who were either open enemies or false friends to them and to the gospel. But if this place be understood of an external and general peace which was to be in the world in the days of the Messias, this also may in due time be verified, when all Israel shall be saved, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and both Jews and Gentiles shall be united together into one fold, under Christ their great Shepherd; all which is prophesied and promised, John x. 16; Rom. xi., and elsewhere. For it is not necessary that all the prophecies concerning the kingdom of the Messias should be accomplished in an instant, or at the beginning of it; but it is sufficient if they be fulfilled before the end of it. And some of them do manifestly belong to the last days of that kingdom. And therefore there is no truth nor weight in that argument which the Jews bring from this place against our Messias, because of those wars that have hitherto been and still are amongst Christians; for this doth not prove that these wars shall never cease, or that there shall not be such a peace in the world as they understand before the end of Christ's kingdom.

5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us [i] walk in the light of the LORD.

[i] Eph. 5. 8.

Come ye; seeing the Gentiles are thus ready and resolved to go to the Lord's house, let this oblige and provoke you, O ye Israelites, to go with them, or before them. Whereby he secretly intimates their backwardness, and that when the Gentiles did come into the church, they would apostatize from it. *Let us walk in the light of the Lord;* take heed that you do not reject that light which is so clear that even the blind Gentiles will discern it.

6 ¶ Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished ‖ [k] from the east, and [l] *are* soothsayers like the Philistines, [m] and they ‖ please themselves in the children of strangers.

‖ Or, *more than the east.*
[k] Num. 23. 7. 1 Deut. 18. 14.
[m] Ps. 106. 35. Jer. 10. 2.
[l] Or, *abound with the children, &c.*

Therefore; for the following reasons. Or, *but,* as this particle is oft used. But why do I persuade the Israelites to receive the light of the gospel? my labour is in vain. I foresee they will refuse it; and God, for their many and great sins, will give them up to apostacy and infidelity. *Thou hast forsaken;* wilt certainly forsake and reject. *The house of Jacob;* the body of that nation. *They be replenished from the east;* their land is full of the impious, and superstitious, and idolatrous manners of the Eastern nations, the Syrians and Chaldeans. *Are soothsayers:* these undertook to discover secret things, and to foretell future contingent things, by the superstitious observation of the stars, or clouds, or birds, or other ways of divination, which God had severely forbidden. See Lev. xix. 26. *Like the Philistines,* who are infamous for those practices; of which see one instance 1 Sam. vi. 2. *They please themselves;* they delight in their manners, and company, and conversation, making leagues, and friendships, and marriages with them. *In the children of strangers;* either, 1. In the children begotten by them upon strange women; or rather, 2. In strangers, as this phrase is used, Neh. ix. 2; Isa. lx. 10, and elsewhere.

7 [n] Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither *is there any* end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither *is there any* end of their chariots:

[n] Deut. 17 16, 17.

Neither is there any end of their treasures; they have heaped up riches immoderately, (which was forbidden even to their king, Deut. xvii. 17,) and by wicked practices; they are never satisfied, but still greedily pursuing after more and more wealth, making this their chief business and joy. *Their land also is full of horses;* which even their king was forbidden to multiply, Deut. xvii. 16, much more his subjects.

8 [o] Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made:

[o] Jer. 2. 28.

They give that worship to their own creatures which they deny to me their Creator, than which nothing can be more impious and absurd.

9 And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not.

The mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself; men of all ranks fall down and worship idols. *Forgive them not;* cut off these incorrigible idolaters. Such an imprecation is not strange, considering the heinousness and inexcusableness of the crime, the singular condition of the prophets, who spake such things not from any disorderly passion, but by Divine inspiration, and from a fervent zeal for God's glory, which ever was and ought to be dearer to them than all the interests of men, and from a pious care and fear lest others should be infected by their counsel or example. Yet the words may be taken as a prediction, *Thou wilt not forgive them;* by this I know thou hast determined utterly to destroy them; for the Hebrew particle *al* is sometimes taken only for a simple denial, as Psal. cxxi. 3; Prov. xii. 28.

10 ¶ [p] Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty.

[p] ver. 19, 21. Rev. 6. 15.

Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust: this is spoken ironically, and with derision. The sense is, Such dreadful calamities are coming upon you, that you will be ready to hide yourselves in rocks and caves of the earth,

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but all to no purpose. *For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty;* for fear of the glorious and terrible judgments of God.

q ver. 17. ch. 5. 15, 16. & 13. 11. r ch. 4. 1. & 11. 10, 11. & 12. 1, 4. & 24. 21. & 25. 9. & 26. 1, & 27. 1, 2, 12, 13. & 28. 5. & 29. 18. & 30. 23. & 52. 6. Jer. 30. 7, 8. Ezek. 38. 14, 19. & 39. 11, 22. Hos. 2. 16, 18, 21. Joel 3. 18. Amos 9. 11. Obad. 8. Mic. 4. 6. & 5. 10. & 7. 11, 12. Zeph. 3. 11, 16. Zech. 9. 16.

11 The [q] lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted [r] in that day.

Shall be bowed down judicially, as they bowed down voluntarily before their idols. So the punishment is very suitable to the sin. *Shall be exalted in that day;* his justice and power shall be magnified, and the vanity and impotency of all other gods shall be detected.

12 For the day of the LORD of hosts *shall be* upon every *one that is* proud and lofty, and upon every *one that is* lifted up; and he shall be brought low:

The day of the Lord; the time of God's taking vengeance upon sinners, which is called *God's day*, Isa. xiii. 6, 9; Ezek. xiii. 5; xxx. 3, and oft elsewhere.

s ch. 14. 8. & 37. 24. Ezek. 31. 3. Zech. 11. 1, 2.

13 And upon all [s] the cedars of Lebanon, *that are* high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,

Either, 1. Metaphorically, upon the highest and proudest sinners; or, 2. Literally, as may seem probable from the following verses, where there is distinct mention made of *mountains and hills*, ver. 14, of *towers and walls*, ver. 15, of *ships and pictures*, ver. 16. Whereby he intimates that the judgment should be so universal and terrible, that it should not only reach to men, but to things also, whether natural or artificial, in all which there should be manifest tokens of God's displeasure against the land. *The cedars and oaks* standing in the mountains shall be either thrown down by furious winds or earthquakes, or torn in pieces by thunder and lightning, and the stately houses built with cedars and oaks shall be destroyed.

t ch. 30. 25.

14 And [t] upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills *that are* lifted up,

To which men used to betake themselves in times of war and danger. It is usual with the prophets to describe God's judgments upon men by the shaking and smoking of the mountains, the trembling of the earth, and the like.

15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall,

To which you resorted and trusted for your defence.

u 1 Kings 10. 22. † Heb. *pictures of desire.*

16 [u] And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all † pleasant pictures.

The ships of Tarshish; the ships of the sea, as that word is used, Psal. xlviii. 7, whereby you fetched riches and precious things from the remote parts of the world.

x ver. 11.

17 [x] And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone

y ver. 11.

shall be exalted [y] in that day.

This he repeats again, partly to assure us of the certainty of it, and partly to fix it deeper in men's minds, because they are very backward to believe and consider things of this nature.

‖ Or, *the idols shall utterly pass away.*

18 And ‖ the idols he shall utterly abolish.

God will discover the impotency of idols to succour their worshippers, and thereby destroy their worship in the world.

z ver. 10. Heb. 10. 8. Luke 23. 30. Rev. 6. 16. & 9. 6. † Heb. *the dust.* a 2 Thess. 1. 9. b ch. 30. 32. Hag. 2. 6, 21. Heb. 12. 26.

19 And they shall go into the [z] holes of the rocks, and into the caves of † the earth, [a] for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth [b] to shake terribly the earth.

They, the idolatrous Israelites, *shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth;* their usual places of retreat in cases of danger; of which see Josh. x. 16; Judg. vi. 2; 1 Sam. xiii. 6. *To shake terribly the earth;* either properly, or rather figuratively, to send dreadful judgments upon the inhabitants of the land.

c ch. 30. 22. & 31. 27. † Heb. *the idols of his silver, &c.* ‖ Or, *which they made for him.*

20 [c] In that day a man shall cast † his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, ‖ which they made *each one* for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

Into the meanest and darkest places, in which moles and bats have their abode; whereas before they set them up in high and honourable places, where they might be seen and worshipped. This great and sudden change proceeded either from true repentance, which filled them with shame, and grief, and indignation against themselves, and all the instruments of their wickedness; or from a conviction of the vanity of their idols, which afforded them no help in the time of their need; or from a just fear lest God's judgment should have fallen more heavily upon them, if it had found them in the practice of idolatry; and that by this profession of repentance they might, if it were possible, either prevent or mitigate their calamity.

d ver. 19. e ver. 10, 19.

21 [d] To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, [e] for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

f Ps. 146. 3. Jer. 17. 5. g Job 27. 3.

22 [f] Cease ye from man, whose [g] breath *is* in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

Seeing God will undoubtedly bring down the highest and proudest of the sons of men into so much contempt and misery, from henceforth never admire nor place your trust in man, whose breath, upon which his life and strength depends, is in his nostrils, and therefore is quickly stopped and taken away. *Wherein is he to be accounted of?* what one real and valuable excellency is there in him, to wit, considered in himself, and without dependence upon God?

CHAP. III.

Great confusion on both people and rulers for their sin and impudence in it, 1—9. *Peace to the righteous, and misery to the wicked,* 10, 11. *The oppression and covetousness of the rulers,* 12—15. *The pride of women, and its judgments,* 16—26.

FOR, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, [a] doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah [b] the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,

a Jer. 37. 21. & 38. 9. b Lev. 26. 26.

Behold; look upon it as a thing as certain as if it were already done. *The stay and the staff;* all the supports of their state and church. *The whole stay of bread*, called elsewhere the *staff of bread;* whereby is understood either, 1. The nourishing power of bread, which wholly depend upon God's blessing; or rather, 2. Bread itself, as this phrase is understood, Lev. xxvi. 26; Psal. cv. 16; Ezek. iv. 16, and directly explained, Ezek. v. 16, bread which is the staff of life.

c See 2 Kin. 24. 14.

2 [c] The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient,

The mighty man; strong and valiant men. *The judge;* the civil magistrates. *The prophet;* either strictly so called, the want of whom is matter of grief; see Psal. lxxiv. 9; or largely, so as to include all skilful and faithful teachers. *The prudent;* whose wisdom and conduct was necessary to preserve them from ruin. *The ancient;* whose wisdom was increased by long experience.

† Heb. *a man eminent in countenance.* ‖ Or, *skilful of speech.*

3 The captain of fifty, and † the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the ‖ eloquent orator.

The captain of fifty; there shall not be a man left able to command and manage fifty soldiers, and much less such as could command hundreds or thousands, which yet were

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necessary. *The honourable man;* men of high birth, and place, and power, and reputation. *The counsellor;* wise and learned statesmen. *The cunning artificer*, who could make either ornaments for times of peace, or instruments for war; which therefore conquerors took away from those nations whom they subdued, 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 20; 2 Kings xxiv. 14. *The eloquent orator*, Heb. *the skilful of charm;* whereby he understands either, 1. Charmers, whom he threatens to take away, not as if such persons were blessings to a people, or the removing of such were a curse, but only because they made great use of them, and trusted to them. And so he signifies that God would remove all the grounds of their confidence, both right and wrong, and make their case desperate. As, in like manner, and for the same reason, God threatens the Israelites that they should be, as *without a sacrifice*, so *without teraphim*, Hos. iii. 4. Or, 2. As most understand it, such as could powerfully persuade, and, as it were, charm that ungovernable beast, the multitude of common people, by their eloquence, to do those things which were necessary for their peace and safety; for this word may be taken in a good sense, as *divination* is, Prov. xvi. 10.

d Eccles. 10. 16. 4 And I will give [d]children *to be* their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

Children; either, 1. In age, whose minority corrupt ministers of state commonly abuse to great mischiefs; or, 2. In understanding, experience, and manners; foolish, froward, unteachable, &c.

5 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

The people shall be oppressed, by the command or connivance of such childish rulers. *The child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable;* foolish and unworthy men shall by wicked arts gain the favour and abuse the power of the prince, and thereby behave themselves insolently towards their betters.

6 When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, *saying*, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and *let* this ruin *be* under thy hand:

A man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father; whereas envy ordinarily reigns in near relations, when one brother is advanced far above all the rest. *Thou hast clothing:* we are utterly undone, and have neither food nor raiment; but thou hast something yet left to support the dignity which we offer to thee, and to enable thee to execute thine office. *Be thou our ruler:* he showeth that misgovernment should cause the dissolution of the government, and that the former governors should be removed either by foreign force, or by domestic insurrection. *Let this ruin be under thine hand*, to wit, to heal it, as it is explained in the next verse. Undertake the charge of this tottering state.

† Heb. *lift up the hand*, Gen. 14. 22. 7 In that day shall he †swear, saying, I will not be an †healer; for in my house *is* neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people.

† Heb. *binder up.*

He shall swear, Heb. *he shall lift up;* understand either, 1. His voice; he shall cry aloud, to show his earnestness in refusing the offer; or, 2. His hand, which was the usual gesture in swearing, Gen. xiv. 22; Deut. xxxii. 40, &c., to show his resolvedness. *An healer;* a repairer of the ruins of the state. *In my house is neither bread nor clothing;* I have not sufficient provisions, either of food or raiment, for my own family; much less, as you falsely suppose, for the discharge of so high a trust.

e Mic. 3. 12. 8 For [e]Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings *are* against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

Of his glorious majesty, whom they ought to reverence and adore.

f Gen. 13. 13. & 18. 20, 21. & 19. 5. 9 ¶ The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as [f]Sodom, they hide *it* not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; their pride, and wantonness, and impiety manifestly shows itself in their very looks and carriages, and will be a swift witness against them both before God and men. *They declare their sin;* they act it publicly, casting off all fear of God, and reverence to men, and they glory in it. *They hide it not*, as men do who have any remainders of modesty or ingenuity. *They have rewarded*, i. e. procured a fit recompence for their wickedness, even utter ruin. Or, *they have done;* for this word is oft so used, without any signification of a recompence, as Psal. vii. 4. They cannot blame me, but themselves; their destruction is wholly from themselves. Compare Hos. xiii. 9.

g Eccles. 8. 12. h Ps. 128. 2. 10 Say ye to the righteous, [g]that *it shall be* well *with him:* [h]for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Say ye: God hath said it, and doth now by me say it; and you, O ye priests and Levites, say it in your sermons to the people. *They shall eat the fruit of their doings;* let not them fear, for God will be their safeguard and portion in the common calamity.

i Ps. 11. 6. Eccles. 8. 13 † Heb. *done to him.* 11 Woe unto the wicked! [i]*it shall be* ill *with him:* for the reward of his hands shall be †given him.

Woe unto the wicked! these heavy judgments are designed against them, and shall certainly find them out, though here they be mixed with the righteous.

k ver. 4. 12 ¶ *As for* my people, [k]children *are* their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, [l]‖they which lead thee cause *thee* to err, and †destroy the way of thy paths.

l ch. 9. 16. ‖ Or, *they which call thee blessed.* † Heb. *swallow up.*

Women; either, 1. Properly so called, by their favour and power with the rulers; or, 2. Weak and effeminate rulers, such being called *women* both in sacred and profane writings. *They which lead thee;* thy rulers, civil and ecclesiastical, whose duty it is to show thee the right way. Or, as others, *they that bless thee*, i. e. thy false prophets, which flatter thee, and speak peace to thee. *Destroy the way of thy paths;* keep thee from the knowledge or practice of that way which leads to thy salvation, and mislead thee into evil courses, by their wicked counsels or examples.

m Mic. 6. 2. 13 The LORD standeth up [m]to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

The Lord standeth up; he will shortly and certainly stand up as a judge, to inquire into the cause, and to give sentence. *To judge the people*, i. e. to defend and deliver them, or to judge for them, as this phrase is oft used.

‖ Or, *burnt.* n ch. 5. 7. Matt. 21. 33. 14 The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have ‖eaten up [n]the vineyard; the spoil of the poor *is* in your houses.

The ancients; the princes or rulers, as it is explained in the next clause, who are oft called *elders*, because such were commonly and fitly chosen out of those who were ripe in years. *Eaten up;* destroyed instead of preserving and dressing it, as you should have done. *The vineyard;* the church and commonwealth of Israel, which is oft called God's vineyard, as Psal. lxxx. 8, 14, 15; Isa. v. 1; Jer. ii. 21, &c., and here the *vineyard*, by way of eminency; or, the *vineyard* which was committed to your care to keep. *The spoil of the poor;* the goods which you have violently taken away from the poor.

o ch. 58. 4. Mic. 3. 2, 3. 15 What mean ye *that* ye [o]beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

What mean ye? what warrant have ye for it? how durst you presume to do it? *Grind*, or *batter*, as the word is used, Exod. xxxii. 20; smite them cruelly: see chap. lviii. 4.

16 ¶ Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with

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stretched forth necks and †wanton eyes, walking and ‖mincing *as* they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

† Heb. *decerning with their eyes.* ‖ Or, *frapping nicely.*

The daughters of Zion; the women; as hitherto he reproved the men. *Walk with stretched forth necks;* affecting stateliness, Psal. lxxv. 5, and to seem tall. *Wanton eyes;* or, as others, *twinkling with their eyes* in a lascivious manner. *Walking and mincing as they go,* after the manner of loose and wanton persons. *Making a tinkling with their feet,* by some ornaments which they wore upon their shoes.

17 Therefore the LORD will smite with [p] a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will †[q] discover their secret parts.

p Deut. 28. 27. † Heb. *make naked.* q ch. 47. 2, 3. Jer. 13. 22. Nah. 3. 5.

Will smite with a scab the crown of the head; will by sending scabs, or by other ways, take off the hair of their head, which is a woman's glory, 1 Cor. xi. 15, and which doubtless ministered to their pride and wantonness. Others render it, *he will make bald,* &c. *Discover their secret parts,* by giving her into the power of those enemies that shall either strip her of all her raiments, not leaving her sufficient to cover her nakedness; or otherwise abuse her, by such immodest and contemptuous actions. Compare Isa. xlvii. 3; Ezek. xvi. 37; xxiii. 10, 26.

18 In that day the LORD will take away the bravery of *their* tinkling ornaments *about their feet,* and *their* ‖cauls, and *their* [r] round tires like the moon.

‖ Or, *net works.* r Judg. 8. 21.

Cauls: as for this and the other Hebrew words here following, I judge it unnecessary and improper to trouble the English reader with the differing interpretations given of them by learned men, which the curious may find in my Latin Synopsis. It is agreed by all that they were ornaments used by that people in those times, and made fuel to their lusts. And it is of no concernment to the direction, either of our faith or manners, exactly to understand the nature and differences of them. And therefore I shall take them as they are in our translation. *Round tires like the moon;* there were in ancient time, and at this day there are, some jewels or other ornaments worn which carry a manifest resemblance to the moon or half moon. Compare Judg. viii. 21, 26.

19 The ‖chains, and the bracelets, and the ‖mufflers,

‖ Or, *sweet balls.* ‖ Or, *spangled ornaments.*

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the †tablets, and the earrings,

† Heb. *houses of the soul.*

The bonnets: these were ornaments to cover the head, common both to men, as Exod. xxxix. 28, and to women, as here. *The tablets,* Heb. *the houses of the soul,* or *of life,* or *of breath;* whereby he seems to mean boxes of excellent perfumes, which are of great efficacy to revive our drooping spirits, and to that end are oft applied to such as are ready to faint away.

21 The rings, and nose jewels,

Which were fastened to the head, and hung down upon the forehead to the beginning of the nose; of which see Gen. xxiv. 22, 47; Judg. viii. 24, &c.

22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

Of silver or gold, either used to curl the hair, or rather fastened and worn in the hair; which custom is not altogether disused at this day.

23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails.

The glasses; the looking-glasses, as we call them, though in truth they were not made of glass, but of bright and burnished brass.

24 And it shall come to pass, *that* instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair [s] baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; *and* burning instead of beauty.

s ch. 22. 12. Mic. 1. 16.

Instead of sweet smell, those perfumes mentioned ver 20, *there shall be stink,* from their scabs, mentioned ver. 17, or from other ill usages of their enemies. *Instead of a girdle,* which were fine and costly, and useful to gird their garments about them, *a rent;* either the rending of their garments for grief; or torn and tattered garments, not sufficient to cover their bodies. *Burning,* by the heat of the sun, to which they are now commonly exposed, from which they used formerly to guard themselves with great care.

25 Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy †mighty in the war.

† Heb. *might.*

26 [t] And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she *being* ‖†desolate [u] shall sit upon the ground.

t Jer. 14. 2. Lam. 1. 4. ‖ Or, *emptied.* † Heb. *cleansed.* u Lam. 2. 10.

Her gates; the gates of Zion or Jerusalem, which, by a figure very usual in sacred Scripture and all authors, are said to lament, to imply the great desolation of the place, that there should be no people to go out and come in by the gates, or to meet together in the gates, as they used to do. *Shall sit upon the ground,* like a mournful woman bewailing the loss of her husband and children.

CHAP. IV.

In the extremity of evils, Christ's glorious kingdom should appear to those who are left alive, 1, 2. *They shall be holy,* 3; *purged,* 4. *A glory and defence upon them,* 5. *A sanctuary from evils,* 6.

AND [a] in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will [b] eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only †let us be called by thy name, ‖to take away [c] our reproach.

a ch. 2. 11, 17. b 2 Thess. 3. 12. † Heb. *let thy name be called upon us.* ‖ Or, *take away.* c Luke 1. 25.

In that day, of which he hath hitherto been speaking, chap. ii., iii., and still continueth to speak. In that calamitous time. *Seven;* many. A certain number for an uncertain. *Shall take hold;* shall sue to him, and even lay hands upon him, contrary to their custom, and their natural modesty. *Of one man;* because few men shall survive that dreadful stroke. They who before were not contented with their own husbands, are now glad of a seventh part of a husband. *We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel;* we will ease thee of that charge, which otherwise would fall upon thee by God's law, Exod. xxi. 10. *Let us be called by thy name;* own us for thy wives. *Reproach:* virginity was esteemed a reproach, especially among that people, because it was a token of contempt from men, and of the curse of God; children, the usual fruit of marriage, being both an honour to their parents before men, and a great blessing of God, especially to that people, from some of whose loins the Messiah was to spring.

2 In that day shall [d] the branch of the LORD be †beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth *shall be* excellent and comely †for them that are escaped of Israel.

d Jer. 23. 5. Zech. 3. 8. & 6. 12. † Heb. *beauty and glory.* † Heb. *for the escaping of Israel.*

In that day; about and after that time; *when the Lord shall have washed away* (as this time is particularly expressed, ver. 4) *the filth of—Zion* by those dreadful judgments now described. *The branch of the Lord;* either, 1. The church and people of Israel, oft called God's *vine* or *vineyard,* as we saw before, and *the branch of God's planting,* Isa. lx. 21. Or, 2. The Messiah, who is commonly defined in Scripture by this title, *the Branch,* Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15; Zech. iii. 8, *whose name is* expressly said to be *the Branch,* Zech. vi. 12, of whom not only Christians, but even the Hebrew doctors, understand it. For after the foregoing miseries were brought upon the Jews, by the remainders of the Grecian empire, of which Daniel prophesies of exactly and particularly, and afterwards by the Roman empire, the Messiah was born; and after that utter destruction brought upon the Jewish city, and temple, and nation by Titus, the kingdom of the Messiah became *beautiful and glorious,* as it here follows. *The fruit of the earth shall be excellent;* the land which for the

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sins of the people was made barren, upon their repentance and return to Christ, shall recover its former fertility. Under this one mercy he seems to understand all temporal blessings, which, together with spiritual and eternal, God shall confer upon them; and withal to intimate the fruitfulness of the people (the *earth* or *land* being oft put for its inhabitants) in knowledge, and grace, and all good works. *That are escaped;* that shall survive all the forementioned calamities.

3 And it shall come to pass, *that he that is* left in Zion, and *he that* remaineth in Jerusalem, [e] shall be called holy, *even* every one that is [f] written ‖ among the living in Jerusalem:

e ch. 60. 21.
f Phil. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 5.
‖ Or, *to life.*

Shall be called holy, i. e. shall be really holy, as is said, chap. lx. 21. *To be called* is oft put for *to be*, as Gen. xxi. 12; Isa. i. 26; xliv. 5. *Every one that is written among the living:* so this is a restriction of the foregoing indefinite proposition. Not all that are left, but a great number of them, shall be holy, even *all that are written*, &c., i. e. all the elect, who are frequently described by this character, that they are *written in God's* or the *Lamb's book*, or *in the book of life*, or *of the living*, Psal. lxix. 28; Dan. xii. 1; Phil. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 5; xiii. 8; xvii. 8, &c. But this last clause of the verse is by some learned interpreters rendered thus, *all that are in Jerusalem* (i. e. a very great number of them, as such general expressions are frequently used, or the generality of them) *shall be written unto life*, i. e. shall be such as are elected unto salvation through sanctification; which may deserve consideration. So he notes the singular privilege of this people at this time above the former ages, in which many were called, but few were chosen. *In Jerusalem;* of the people living in or belonging to Jerusalem.

4 When [g] the LORD shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

g Mal. 3. 2, 3.

When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion: this shall be accomplished when God hath thoroughly cleansed the Jewish nation from their sins. *The blood;* the blood-guiltness, and especially that of killing the Lord of life, their own Messiah. *By the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning:* this is opposed to the former legal way of purification, which was by water. By *the Spirit* he seems to understand the Holy Spirit of God, to which this washing and purging work is commonly ascribed, as 1 Cor. vi. 11, and elsewhere; which Spirit did accompany the preaching of the gospel, and did this work in part in some of the Jews, and will do it more fully in the body of the nation. And this Spirit may well be called *a Spirit of judgment*, because it executes judgment in the church, and in the consciences of men, separating the precious from the vile, convincing men of sin, and righteousness, and judgment, John xvi. 8—11, manifesting the secrets of men's hearts in the preaching of the word, 1 Cor. xiv. 25; accusing, and terrifying, and punishing some, witnessing for and with others, and filling them with peace and joy in believing; hardening some, and softening and subduing others to God, as this Spirit is particularly promised to do to the Jews, Zech. xii. 10. And the same Spirit may be fitly called *the Spirit of burning*, as he is compared to *fire*, Matt. iii. 11, because he doth burn up and consume the dross which is in the church, and in the minds and hearts of men, and inflames the souls of believers with love to God, and zeal for his glory.

5 And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, [h] a cloud and smoke by day, and [i] the shining of a flaming fire by night: for ‖ upon all the glory *shall be* † a defence.

h Ex. 13. 21.
i Zech. 2. 5.
‖ Or, *above.*
† Heb. *a covering.* ch. 8. 14.

Will create; will in a marvellous manner produce, as it were by a new work of creation. *A cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night;* a pillar of cloud and fire, like that wherewith the Lord directed, and protected, and honoured the Israelites, when they came out of Egypt; whereby he implies that God would be their protector and their glory. *Upon all the glory;* upon all that church and people, which God will make so glorious, not only in his own eyes, but even in the eyes of the world; upon all holy assemblies of sincere Christians.

6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and [k] for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

k ch. 25. 4.

There shall be a tabernacle; or, *he*, i. e. the Lord, *shall be a tabernacle*, or *a tent*, to defend them from the violent heat of the sun, and other injuries of the weather, which was the use and benefit of tents.

CHAP. V.

Israel God's vineyard; his mercies, and their unfruitfulness; should be laid waste, 1—7. *Judgments upon covetousness*, 8—10; *upon drunkards, and the lascivious*, 11, 12. *The great misery of the Jews*, 13—17. *Judgments on impiety, scoffers at God's threatenings, those who corrupt the notions of good and ill, strong drinkers, and unjust judges*, 18—23. *God's anger and the Chaldeans' army against them*, 24—30.

NOW will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching [a] his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in † a very fruitful hill:

a Ps. 80. 8. Cant. 8. 12. ch. 27. 2. Jer. 2. 21. Matt. 21. 33. Mark 12. 1. Luke 20. 9.
† Heb. *the horn of the son of oil.*

Now will I sing; I will record it, to be a witness for God, and against you, as Moses did his song, Deut. xxxi. 19; xxxii. 1. *To my Well-beloved;* to the Lord of the vineyard, as appears by the last clause of the verse; to God or Christ, whom I love and serve, and for whose glory, eclipsed by you, I am greatly concerned. *A song of my Beloved;* not devised by me, not the effect of my envy or passion; but inspired by God, which therefore it behoveth you to lay to heart. *His vineyard;* his church, oft and very fitly called a *vineyard*, because of God's singular respect to it, and care of it, and his delight in it, and expectation of good fruit from it, &c. *In a very fruitful hill;* hills being places most commodious for vines: see Psal. lxxx. 10. Heb. *in a horn* (which may signify either, 1. The figure or shape of the land of Canaan, which resembles a horn; or, 2. The height and hilliness of that land, as horns are the highest parts of beasts; or, 3. The goodliness and excellency of it, as a *horn*, when it is ascribed to a man, signifies his glory and dignity, as Job xvi. 15; Psal. lxxxix. 17, 24, &c.) *the son of oil*, which, by a vulgar Hebraism, notes an oily or a fat soil.

2 And he ‖ fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also † made a winepress therein: [b] and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

‖ Or, *made a wall about it.*
† Heb. *hewed.*
b Deut. 32. 6. ch. 1. 2, 3.

Fenced it, that neither men nor beasts might spoil it. *Gathered out the stones thereof;* which otherwise would have marred the land; of which see 2 Kings iii. 19. The sense is, He removed all hinderances, and gave them all the means of fruitfulness. *Built a tower*, for the residence of the keepers, that they might be obliged and encouraged to watch over it with more diligence.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, [c] judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

c Rom. 3. 4.

I dare make you judges in your own cause, it is so plain and reasonable.

4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

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What work is there belonging to the office of a master or keeper of the vineyard which I have neglected? How unworthy and inexcusable a crime is it, that you have not only been unfruitful in good works, but also filled with all the fruits of wickedness!

5 And now go to; I will tell you what
[d] Ps. 80. 12. I will do to my vineyard: [d]I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; *and* break down the wall
† Heb. *for a treading.* thereof, and it shall be †trodden down:

I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; he graciously warns them beforehand, that they may have space and invitation to repent, and so to prevent the threatened miseries. *I will take away the hedge thereof, &c.;* I will withdraw my presence and protection from them, and give them up into the hands of their enemies.

6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

It shall not be pruned nor digged: vine-dressers use to dig up and open the earth about the roots of the vines, for divers good purposes. The meaning is, I will remove my ministers, who used great care and diligence to make you fruitful. *There shall come up briers and thorns;* I will give you up to your own wicked lusts. *I will also command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it;* I will deprive you of all my blessings, which are oft compared to rain, &c.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts *is* the house of Israel, and the men
† Heb. *plant of his pleasures.* of Judah †his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold †op-
† Heb. *a scab.* pression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; in whom God formerly delighted to dwell and converse. Compare Prov. viii. 31; Jer. xxxi. 20. *Behold the cry* from the oppressed, crying to men for help, and to God for vengeance.

[e] Mic. 2. 2. 8 ¶ Woe unto them that join [e]house to house, *that* lay field to field, till *there*
† Heb. *ye.* *be* no place, that †they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!

That join house to house, that lay field to field; that add new purchases of houses and lands to their former possessions; not that this was in itself unlawful, but because they did this from an inordinate and insatiable desire of riches, and with the injury of their brethren, as is manifest from the foregoing and following words. *That they may be placed alone;* that they alone may be the lords and owners, and all others only their tenants and servants.

[f] ch. 22. 14. † Or, *This in mine ears, saith the LORD, &c.* ‡ Heb. *If not, &c.* 9 [f]‖In mine ears *said* the LORD of hosts, †Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, *even* great and fair, without inhabitant.

In mine ears said the Lord; I heard God speak what I am now about to utter. Heb. *In the ears of the Lord;* which may relate either, 1. To the foregoing words; The cry of your sins, and of the oppressed, is come into God's ears; he hears and sees it, and will certainly punish it. Or, 2. To the following clause, which being of great importance, he ushers in with an oath; I speak it in God's ears as well as in yours; I call God to witness the truth of what I say. *Many houses shall be desolate;* the houses which you have so greedily coveted shall cast you out, and become desolate.

10 Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall
[g] See Exod. 16. 11. yield one [g]bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.

Ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, to wit, of wine. The bath contained about eight gallons. Thus an acre did not yield one gallon. *The seed of an homer shall yield an ephah;* which was of the same quantity with the bath, only the bath was the measure of liquid things, the ephah of dry things; and an ephah was the tenth part of an homer, Ezek. xlv. 11. So instead of that great increase which that fruitful land commonly yielded, they should lose nine parts of their seed. Thus a fruitful land was made barren for their wickedness, according to God's threatening, Psal. cvii. 34; and they had as little comfort in their lands as in their houses; which were the two kinds of their purchases, ver. 8.

11 ¶ [h]Woe unto them that rise up
[h] Prov. 23. 29, 30. Eccles. 10. 16. ver. 22. early in the morning, *that* they may follow strong drink; that continue until
‖ Or, *pursue them.* night, *till* wine ‖inflame them!

That rise up early in the morning; which was unusual, and scandalous in that case, Eccles. x. 16; Acts ii. 15. They made drinking their daily trade and business. *That continue until night;* thereby wasting both precious time, and God's good creatures, and the health of their bodies, as well as of their souls. He useth this word partly to show their folly and misery, because the wine was so far from quenching and satisfying their appetites, that it did indeed inflame and increase them; and partly to prevent the vain excuse of them, who thought themselves innocent because they did not drink to drunkenness, although they cast themselves into an intemperate heat through their excess.

12 And [i]the harp, and the viol, the
[i] Amos 6. 5, 6. tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but [k]they regard not the work of
[k] Job 34. 27. Ps. 28. 5. the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

They give up themselves wholly to luxury, and that in a very unseasonable time, as it follows. *But they regard not the work of the Lord;* what God hath lately done, and is yet doing, and about to do among them; his grievous judgments, partly inflicted, and partly threatened, which required another course of life, even to give themselves to fasting, and prayer, and reformation, that so they might remove the incumbent, and prevent the approaching calamities.

13 ¶ [l]Therefore my people are gone into
[l] Hos. 4. 6. captivity, [m]because *they have* no know-
[m] ch. 1. 3. Luke 19. 44. † Heb. *their glory are men of famine.* ledge: and †their honourable men *are* famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

Are gone into captivity; either, 1. Are actually gone, which was true of the ten tribes in Hezekiah's reign, 2 Kings xviii. 9, under whom this prophecy might be uttered; or, 2. Shall certainly and shortly go, as the two tribes afterward did. *They have no knowledge;* no serious consideration of God's works, and of their own duty and danger. *Their honourable men,* who thought themselves quite out of reach of famine.

14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

Hell; or, *the grave,* as this word most commonly signifies. *Opened her mouth without measure,* to receive those vast numbers which shall die by this famine, or otherwise, as is here implied. *Their glory;* their honourable men, as they were called, ver. 13, being distinguished both here and there from *the multitude. Their pomp;* all their glory, shall die with them. *He that rejoiceth;* that spendeth all his days in mirth and jollity, and casteth away all cares and fears.

15 And [n]the mean man shall be brought
[n] ch. 2. 9, 11, 17. down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:

All of them, both high and low, shall be brought to destruction.

16 But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and ‖†God that is
‖ Or, *the holy God.* † Heb. *the God the holy.* holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

Shall be exalted in judgment, by the execution of this just judgment upon his incorrigible enemies. *Shall be sanctified,* shall appear to be a holy God, *in righteousness;* by his righteous judgments.

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17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of
o ch. 10. 16. °the fat ones shall strangers eat.

Then; when God shall have finished that work of judgment upon the ungodly, he will extend mercy to a remainder. This is very usual in this prophet, in the midst of his threatenings, to insert something for the support of believers. *The lambs;* the poor and harmless people, who shall be left in the land when the rich are carried into captivity, as it fell out, 2 Kings xxv. 12. *Feed after their manner;* or, *by their fold*, as this word is manifestly used, Micah ii. 12, the only place of Scripture, except this, in which this word is found. *The waste places;* the lands left by their owners, who were either slain or carried into captivity. *Of the fat ones;* of the rich and great men, so called Psal. xxii. 29; lxxviii. 31; Isa. x. 16. *Strangers;* the poor Israelites, who were left *to be vine-dressers and husbandmen*, 2 Kings xxv. 12, who are called *strangers*, because they were so in reference to that land, not being the proper owners of it, nor related to them; as the Israelites of other tribes are called *strangers*, in opposition to the Levites, as Numb. i. 51, and elsewhere; yea, and the Levites are so called, in opposition to the seed of Aaron, Numb. xvi. 40.

18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:

That draw iniquity; that are not only drawn to sin by the allurements of the world, or by the persuasions of wicked men, being surprised and overtaken by sin, as sometimes good men are, Gal. vi. 1, but are active and industrious in drawing sin to themselves, or themselves to sin; that greedily and steadily pursue sin, and the occasions of it, and are not at rest till they have overtaken it; that sin wilfully, and resolvedly, and industriously. *With cords of vanity;* or, *with cords of lying*, as the last word frequently signifies, i. e. with vain and deceitful arguments and pretences, whereby sinners generally draw themselves to sin; among which, one follows in the next verse, to wit, the impunity which they promise to themselves. Or these cords may note the means which they use to accomplish that iniquity which they have devised. *With a cart rope;* with all their might, as beasts commonly do that draw carts with ropes.

p ch. 66. 5. Jer. 17. 15. Amos 5. 18. 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4. 19 ᵖThat say, Let him make speed, *and* hasten his work, that we may see *it:* and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know *it!*

Let him, to wit, God, in whose name thou and other prophets are always reproving and threatening us. *Hasten his work, that we may see it;* he only thinks to affright us with bugbears; but he either cannot or will not do us any harm: we do not fear him, let him do his worst; let him begin as soon as he pleaseth. Not that any of the Israelites were so impudent as to use these expressions; but this was the plain language of their actions; they lived as if they were of this opinion; their presumption and security showed their desperate contempt of God, and of all his judgments. *The Holy One of Israel;* who by his holiness is engaged to punish us. They scornfully repeated the title usually given by the prophets unto God.

† Heb. *that say concerning evil, It is good, &c.* 20 ¶ Woe unto them †that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

That call evil good, and good evil; that take away the difference between good and evil; that justify and approve wicked men and things, and condemn piety, or virtue, or righteous persons. Compare Prov. xvii. 15. Thus many call serious godliness, humorous singularity; and justice, morosity; and meekness, stupidity, &c.; as, on the contrary, they call pride, magnanimity; and covetousness, good husbandry. And men are very apt to follow the course of the world in their false judgments of things; which therefore the prophet so severely forbids.

q Prov. 3. 7. Rom. 1. 22. & 12. 16. † Heb. *before their face.* 21 Woe unto *them that are* ᵠwise in their own eyes, and prudent †in their own sight!

That being puffed up with an opinion of their own wisdom, despise the counsels and instructions of God by his prophets, and prefer their own vain fancies before the judgment of the all-wise God, as appears by the error before mentioned, ver. 20, that they affirmed that to be evil which God had declared to be good.

r ver. 11. 22 ʳWoe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

That are mighty to drink wine; that can drink much without intoxication, in which they gloried, as too many do at this day. *To mingle*, i. e. to drink; the antecedent being put for the consequent, which is usual; for they mingled it in order to drinking.

s Prov. 17. 15. & 24. 24. 23 Which ˢjustify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

Justify the wicked for reward; not by mistake or incogitancy, but wilfully for bribes. *Take away the righteousness of the righteous from him*, to wit, juridically; they pronounce sentence against him, as if he and his cause were unjust.

t Ex. 15. 7. † Heb. *the tongue of fire.* u Job 18. 16. Hos. 9. 16. Amos 2. 9. 24 Therefore ᵗas †the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, *so* ᵘtheir root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

Their root shall be as rottenness; they shall be like a tree which not only withers in its branches, but dies and rots at the roots, and therefore is past all hopes of recovery. The sense is, They shall be destroyed both root and branch. *Their blossom shall go up as dust;* shall vanish (for so the word *ascend* or *go up* is oft used, as Exod. xvi. 14; Job v. 26; Jer. xlviii. 15; Ezek. xi. 23, 24) as the dust, which is blown away with every wind; or, shall be resolved into dust, and yield no fruit. *They have cast away;* which implies disobedience joined with contempt.

x 2 Kings 22. 13, 17. 25 ˣTherefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and ʸthe hills did tremble, and their carcases *were* ‖ torn in the midst of the streets. ᶻFor all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

y Jer. 4. 24. ‖ Or, *as dung.* z Lev. 26. 14, &c. ch. 9. 12, 17, 21. & 10. 4.

The hills did tremble; a metaphorical and hyperbolical description of a grievous calamity, familiar in the prophets, as Isa. lxiv. 1, 2; Jer. iv. 24, and in other authors. *His hand is stretched out still*, ready to give you another and a sorer blow. This is not the end, as you vainly imagine, but, if you repent not, the beginning, of your sorrows, and an earnest of further calamities.

a ch. 11. 12. b ch. 7. 18. c Deut. 28. 49. Psa. 72. 8. Mal. 1. 11. d Joel 2. 7. 26 ¶ ᵃAnd he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will ᵇhiss unto them from ᶜthe end of the earth: and, behold, ᵈthey shall come with speed swiftly:

He will lift up an ensign, to call them together for his service, as generals used to do for the raising of armies, *to the nations from far;* either, 1. To the Assyrians, of whom he speaks more particularly chap. x., and that under this same character of a people that *come from far*, ver. 3, and who did not long after this prophecy invade Judea, and did much mischief in it. Although that part of the prediction, ver. 29, *They shall lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it*, do not seem to agree to them, nor that invasion; for the Assyrians were forced to retreat with great shame and loss, and the Jews were delivered from them. Or, 2. To the Chaldeans; for even Babylon is called a *far country*, Isa. xxxix. 3. And he saith *nations*, because the Chaldean army was made up of several nations. *Will hiss unto them;* or, *will whistle unto* or *for them;* will gather them together by his word, as

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shepherds gather their sheep. He intimates how easily and speedily God can do this work. *From the ends of the earth;* which is not to be understood strictly, but popularly, and with a latitude, from very remote places; although part of the Chaldean army did come from places not very far distant from the end of that part of the world, so far as it was then known.

27 None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor
e Dan. 5. 6. sleep; neither [e]shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken:

None shall be weary, though their march be long and tedious. As I have called them to this work, so I will strengthen and assist them in it. *None shall slumber nor sleep;* they shall all be watchful and diligent to take all opportunities and advantages of executing my judgments upon my people. *Neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken;* which otherwise would hinder, or at least slacken, them in their march. I will take all impediments out of their way.

f Jer. 5. 16. 28 [f]Whose arrows *are* sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind:

Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent; who are every way furnished and ready for my work, waiting only for my command. *Their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint*, because they shall not be broken or battered by the length or stoniness and ruggedness of the way. *Their wheels like a whirlwind;* partly for the swiftness of their march, and partly for the force and violence of their chariots in battle.

29 Their roaring *shall be* like a lion, they shall roar like young lions: yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry *it* away safe, and none shall deliver *it*.

They shall roar like young lions; which signifies both their cruelty, and their greediness and eagerness to catch and devour the prey. *None;* neither the Jews themselves, nor the Egyptians, to whose help they will trust, nor any of their confederates.

g ch. 8. 22. Jer. 4. 23. Lam. 3. 2. Ezek. 32. 7, 8. ‖ Or, *darkness.* ‖ Or, *when it is light, it shall be dark in the destructions thereof.*

30 And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: and if *one* [g]look unto the land, behold darkness *and* ‖ sorrow, ‖ and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

Like the roaring of the sea; which is violent and frightful. *Darkness and sorrow;* darkness, to wit, sorrow: the latter word explains the former, and the particle *and* is put expositively, as it is frequently. *The light is darkened in the heavens thereof;* when they look up to the heavens, as men in distress usually do, they see no light there; their comforts are wholly eclipsed, and their hopes are like the giving up of the ghost.

CHAP. VI.

The glory of the Lord, 1—4. *Isaiah is terrified*, 5; *is confirmed for his message*, 6—8. *The people's obstinacy unto desolation*, 9—12. *A remnant shall be saved*, 13.

cir. 758. a 2 Kings 15. 7. b 1 Kin. 22. 19. John 12. 41. Rev. 4. 2. ‖ Or, *the skirts thereof.*

IN the year that [a]king Uzziah died I [b]saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and ‖ his train filled the temple.

I saw in a vision or ecstasy. *The Lord;* either, 1. God the Son, who frequently appeared to the patriarchs and prophets, and that sometimes in the form of a man. Or rather, 2. The Divine Majesty as he subsisteth in three persons, as may be gathered both from the plural number *us*, used of this Lord, ver. 8, and comparing other scriptures; for God the Father is described as sitting upon a throne, Dan. vii. 9, 13, and elsewhere; and the glory of God here manifested is said to be Christ's glory, John xii. 41, and the words of the Lord here following are said to be spoken by the Holy Ghost, Acts xxviii. 25. *Sitting upon a throne*, in the posture of a judge, to hear causes, and give sentence. *Lifted up* towards the roof of the temple. *His train;* or, as the word properly signifies, and is here rendered by divers, *the skirts* or *borders of him*, or *of it*, to wit, his royal and judicial robe; for he is represented as a judge. *Filled the temple;* his glorious robes reached down to the bottom of the temple, and were spread abroad in the temple, which was an evidence of a more than ordinary majesty. *The temple* may be here taken either. 1. Largely, and so it includes the courts as well as the house, as that word is oft used; or, 2. Strictly, for the house itself, or for that part of the temple in which this vision was exhibited, which may seem to have been the porch, for that was much higher than the other parts.

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and [c]with twain he covered his c Ezek. 1. 11. feet, and with twain he did fly.

Above it stood, as ministers attending upon their Lord, and waiting to receive and execute his commands, *the seraphims;* certain holy and blessed angels, thus called from *fire* and *burning*, which this word properly signifies; to represent either, 1. Their nature, which is bright and glorious, subtile, and pure, and spiritual, like fire; or, 2. Their property, of fervent zeal for God's service and glory; or, 3. Their office and present employment, which was to execute God's vengeance upon the Jews, and to burn them up like dross. *Covered his face*, out of profound reverence, as being so sensible of the infinite distance between God and him, that he durst not presume to look directly upon him, and judged himself neither able nor worthy to behold the brightness of his glory. *Covered his feet;* either, 1. His secret parts, which sometimes come under that name, as Deut. xxviii. 57; Isa. vii. 20; xxxvi. 12; of which see more in my Latin Synopsis upon Exod. iv. 25. And so this is done for our instruction, to teach us modesty and chastity. Or, 2. Their feet properly so called, as that word is generally used; from which use we should not depart without necessity, which, with submission, seems not to be in this place. And so this may signify a sense of their own natural, though not moral infirmity, and a desire that God would not too severely examine all their ways and actions, which *the feet* commonly signify, because though they did not swerve from God's commands, yet they were not worthy of the acceptation, nor suitable to the dignity of so glorious a Majesty. *Did fly;* which signifies their great forwardness and expedition in executing God's commands. Compare Dan. ix. 21.

3 And †one cried unto another, and † Heb. *this cried to this.* said, [d]Holy, holy, holy, *is* the Lord of d Rev. 4. 8. hosts: †[e]the whole earth *is* full of his † Heb. *his glory is the fulness of the whole earth.* glory. e Ps. 72. 19.

One cried unto another; singing in consort the praises of their Lord. *Holy, holy, holy:* this is repeated thrice, either, 1. To intimate the Trinity of persons united in the Divine essence; or, 2. That he was most eminently and unquestionably holy in his present work of judgment, and in all his ways; such repetitions being very frequent in Scripture, for the greater assurance of the thing, as Jer. vii. 4; Ezek. xxi. 9. *The whole earth;* not only Canaan, to which the Jews did vainly and arrogantly confine the presence of God, but all the world; which seems to have a respect to the conversion of the Gentiles, which did accompany the plenary and last execution of this judgment here threatened against the Jewish nation, ver. 10, as is evident by comparing this with Matt. xiii. 14, 15; Acts xxviii. 26, 27, and other places of the New Testament. *Full of his glory;* of the effects and demonstrations of his glorious holiness, as well as of his power, and wisdom, and goodness.

4 And the posts of the †door moved † Heb. *thresholds.* at the voice of him that cried, and [f]the f Ex. 40. 34. 1 Kin. 8. 10. house was filled with smoke.

The posts of the door, together with the door itself, as if the door was to be removed, and the temple thereby to be exposed to the view and rapine of profane persons. Such

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violent motions were commonly tokens of God's anger. *Him that cried*, to wit, the angel, which cried, ver. 3. *Filled with smoke;* which elsewhere is a token of God's presence and acceptance, as Exod. xl. 34; 1 Kings viii. 10, but here of his anger, as Psal. xviii. 8, and elsewhere.

g Ex. 4. 10. & 6. 30. Judg. 6. 22. & 13. 22. Jer. 1. 6. † Heb. *cut off.*

5 ¶ [g]Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am †undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

I am a man of unclean lips; I am a great sinner, as many other ways, so particularly by my lips, which being in a special manner consecrated to God by my prophetical office, should have been entirely devoted to him; but, alas! my speeches, either to God in prayer, or from God in preaching and prophesying to the people, have been mixed and defiled with so much irreverence, dulness, distraction of thoughts and affections, carnal fear, and many other infirmities, that I dread the thoughts of appearing before thy judgment-seat, which I see erected in this place. For Isaiah had been a prophet before this time, chap. i. 1, and was now called, not in general to his prophetical office, but to the delivery of this special message. *I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;* I am an unclean branch of an unclean tree; and besides my own uncleanness, I have both by my omissions and commissions involved myself in the guilt of their sins, and therefore may justly fear to partake with them in their plagues. *Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts;* the sight of this glorious and holy God gives me cause to fear that he is come to judgment against me, together with others. Whilst sinners are secure and presumptuous, the holiest persons have ever been filled with great reverence, and oftimes with doubts and fears, at any extraordinary manifestation of God's presence. See Gen. xvi. 13; xvii. 3; Judg. xiii. 22.

† Heb. *and in his hand a live coal.* h Rev. 8. 3.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, †having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off [h]the altar:

Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, by God's command, *having a live coal;* both a token and an instrument of purification, as the next verse explains it. *From off the altar* of burnt-offering, which stood in the court of the priests near the porch, and which had always coals of fire upon it, Lev. vi. 12, 13. Hence he took it, to show that men are to expect purification and expiation of sin only by such means as God hath appointed, and particularly by Christ, whom that altar did manifestly represent, Heb. xiii. 10.

† Heb. *caused it to touch* i See Jer. 1. 9. Dan. 10. 16.

7 And he †[i]laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

He laid it upon my mouth slightly, so as only to touch my lips, and not to burn them; which God could easily effect. *Thy sin purged;* this is a sign that I have pardoned and purged the uncleanness of thy lips, and do own and accept thee as a fit minister for my service.

k Gen. 1. 26. & 3. 22. & 11. 7. † Heb. *Behold me.*

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for [k]us? Then said I, †Here *am* I; send me.

Whom shall I send, and who will go for us, to deliver the following message? The change of the number, *I* and *us*, is very remarkable; and both being meant of one and the same Lord, do sufficiently intimate a plurality of persons in the Godhead. *Here am I; send me:* God's last and great favour to him did both encourage and oblige him to be forward in God's service.

l Ch. 43. 8. Matt. 13. 14. Mark 4. 12. Luke 8. 10. John 12. 40. Acts 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8. ‖ Or, *without ceasing*, &c. † Heb. *hear ye in hearing*, &c. † Heb. *in seeing.*

9 ¶ And he said, Go, and tell this people, [l]Hear ye ‖†indeed, but understand not; and see ye †indeed, but perceive not.

This people; not *my people*, for I disown them, as they have rejected me. *Understand not, perceive not:* the Hebrew words are imperative; yet they are not to be taken as a command what the people ought to do, but only as a signification and prediction what by their own wickedness, and by God's just judgment, they did and would do, as is manifest by Matt. xiii. 14; Acts xxviii. 26, where they are so rendered. And imperative words among the Hebrews are frequently put for the future, as is well known to the learned. The sense is, Because you have so long heard my words, and seen my works, to no purpose, and have hardened your hearts, and will not learn nor reform, I will punish you in your own kind, your sin shall be your punishment. I will still continue my word and works to you, not in mercy, and for your good, but to aggravate your sin and condemnation; for I will blind your minds, and withdraw my Spirit, so that you shall be as unable, as now you are unwilling, to understand or perceive any thing that may do you good.

m Ps. 119. 70. Isa. 63. 17. n Jer. 5. 21.

10 Make [m]the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; [n]lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Fat, i. e. stupid and senseless; for the fat which is in the body is without sense; and fatness in the heart makes it dull and heavy. Thus this phrase is used Psal. cxix. 70. And this seems best to agree with the following words. This making of their hearts fat is here ascribed to the prophet, as it is ascribed to God in the repetition of this prophecy, John xii. 40, because God inflicted this judgment upon them by the ministry of the prophet, partly by way of prediction, foretelling that this would be the effect of his preaching; and partly by way of judicial operation, withdrawing the light and help of his Spirit, and giving them up to the power and arts of Satan, and to their own mistakes and lusts, whereby they are easily and commonly led to turn God's word, as they do other things, into occasions of sin. *Make their ears heavy;* make them dull of hearing, as Isa. lix. 1; Zech. vii. 11, as sometimes the ears are made by an excessive noise. *Shut their eyes*, Heb. *daub their eyes*, as the word is used also Isa. xliv. 18. *Lest they see;* that they may not be able, as before they were not willing, to see. *Convert;* turn from their sinful practices unto God. *Be healed* of sin, which is the disease of the soul, by remission and sanctification, and of all the deadly effects of sin.

o Mic. 3. 12. † Heb. *desolate with desolation.*

11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, [o]Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be †utterly desolate,

Lord, how long? an abrupt speech, arising from the prophet's great passion and astonishment. How long shall this dreadful judgment last? *Until the land be utterly desolate;* until this land be totally destroyed, first by the Babylonians, and afterward by the Romans.

p 2 Kings 25. 21.

12 [p]And the LORD have removed men far away, and *there be* a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

Have removed men far away; have caused this people to be carried away captive into far countries. *And there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land;* till houses and lands be generally forsaken of their owners, either because fled away from the sword into strange lands, or because they went into captivity.

‖ Or, *when it is returned, and hath been browsed.* † Or, *stock*, or, *stem.* q Ezra 9. 2. Mal. 2. 15. Rom. 11. 5.

13 ¶ But yet in it *shall be* a tenth, ‖and *it* shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose ‖†substance *is* in them, when they cast *their leaves: so* [q]the holy seed *shall be* the substance thereof.

A tenth; a small remnant reserved, that number being put indefinitely, as is very usual. *Shall return*, to wit, out of the Babylonish captivity, into their own land. *Shall be eaten;* that remnant shall be devoured and destroyed a second time by the kings of Syria, and afterwards more effectually by the Romans. *As a teil tree, and as an oak,*

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or, yet *as*, &c.; or, nevertheless *as*, &c.; such particles being frequently understood in the Hebrew, as hath been noted again and again. So the sense of the following words of the verse seems to be this, Although the Jewish nation shall undergo a second and a greater desolation by the Romans, yet there shall be another remnant, not such a one as that which came out of Babylon, which for the most part were corrupt and degenerate, as appears by the sacred histories and prophecies relating to that time; but a holy seed, a number of elect and godly Israelites, who shall afterwards look upon him whom they pierced, and mourn over him, as is said, Zech. xii. 10, and by me be received to mercy. *Whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves;* who, when their leaves are withered and cast, as it is in winter, have a substance, or subsistence, or support within themselves, to wit, a vital principle, which preserves life in the root and body of the tree, and in due time sends it forth into all the branches. But others take the Hebrew word *shallecheth* for the proper name of a place, to wit, a causeway which led from the palace to the temple, 1 Chron. xxvi. 16; and so the place is and may be rendered thus, *as a teil tree*, (or, *an elm*,) *and as an oak*, (the singular number for the plural, as is very frequent,) *as the elms and the oaks which* are *at* or *by Shallecheth* (on both sides of which way such trees were planted, to beautify and to support that causeway, as some have observed) *have subsistence* or *support in them;* either, 1. For themselves: they stand fast and firm, when other trees are blown down: or, 2. For the way which they uphold. *The substance thereof;* or rather, *the support* (as the same word seems to be taken in the next foregoing clause) *thereof*, to wit, of the land or people, which, were it not for the sake of these elect persons, should be totally and finally rooted out; or, of that tenth part, which shall be delivered and preserved for the sake of that holy seed, those true-hearted Israelites which are among them.

CHAP. VII.

Ahaz, afraid of Rezin and Pekah, is comforted by Isaiah, 1—9; *refusing to choose a sign, Christ is promised for one*, 10—16; *his judgment should come by Assyria*, 17—25.

cir. 742. a 2 Kin. 16. 5. 2 Chron. 28. 5, 6.

AND it came to pass in the days of [a]Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, *that* Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it.

In the days of Ahaz, a most wicked king; yet no prophecies are more comfortable than those which were delivered in his time; God so ordering it, partly for the encouragement of the faithful that lived under his tyrannical and impious reign; and partly to manifest the riches and freeness of his grace, in conferring such favours upon a most worthless generation. *To war against it;* which they attempted before in Jotham's reign, 2 Kings xv. 37, but now more seriously undertook, though without success, as is noted here, and 2 Kings xvi. 5.

† Heb. *resteth on Ephraim.*

2 And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria † is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.

The house of David; Ahaz, and his royal relations and courtiers. He calls them *the house of David*, to intimate that the following comfortable message was sent to Ahaz, not for his own sake, but only for the sake of his worthy progenitor, David, to whom God had promised an everlasting kingdom. *Ephraim;* the kingdom of the ten tribes, commonly called *Ephraim*, as Isa. xxviii. 1; Hos. xii. 1, because that was far the most numerous and potent of all of them. *Was moved* with excessive fear, arising partly from the conscience of their own guilt, whereby they had put themselves out of God's protection; and partly from the consideration of the great strength and power of his enemies, who having prevailed against him severally, 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 8, and having now united their forces, he, having no faith in God, nor confidence to desire or expect his help, concluded his case desperate and deplorable.

b ch. 10. 21. ‖ That is, *The remnant shall return*: See ch. 6. 13. & 10. 21. c 2 Kin. 18. 17. ch. 36. 2. ‖ Or, *causeway.*

3 Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, [b]and ‖ Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the [c]conduit of the upper pool in the ‖ highway of the fuller's field;

Go forth now to meet Ahaz, though he do not seek nor send to thee, as he ought. This is an eminent instance of preventing mercy. *Shear-jashub;* whose very name carried in it a sign and pledge of the promised deliverance. *At the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field;* whither he probably went to take care about the waters, which thence were brought into the city, either to secure them to himself, or to keep them from the enemy, as Hezekiah afterward did, 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4.

† Heb. *let not thy heart be tender*

4 And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, † neither be faint-hearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.

Take heed, and be quiet; see that thou be quiet, abandon thy fears, and settle thy mind by the belief of that joyful message and promise which I am now to deliver thee from the Lord. *Smoking fire-brands;* they are not whole firebrands burning in the fire, but small pieces or ends of them, taken out of the fire, in which there is more smoke than fire, and the fire will be speedily extinguished. They have more of show and terror than of strength. *The son of Remaliah;* Pekah king of Israel, ver. 1, whom here, and in the next verse, he calls only *the son of Remaliah*, to intimate that he was unworthy of the name of king, as having got that title and power by usurpation, and the murder of his master and king Pekahiah, 2 Kings xv. 25.

5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying,

‖ Or, *waken.*

6 Let us go up against Judah, and ‖ vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, *even* the son of Tabeal:

Let us make a breach therein; either, 1. Break and divide that country into two parts, one for thee, and another for me; or rather, 2. Break their power and kingdom, and subdue it to ourselves: for, 1. The same word and phrase is so used 2 Chron. xxxii. 1, where there was no such division intended. 2. Because the next clause intimates that the kingdom of Judah was still to be united under another king, who should pay tribute to them severally, as they should agree. *The son of Tabeal;* some considerable captain, in whose fidelity both of them had good confidence; but whether he was an Israelite or Syrian is uncertain, and not material.

d Prov. 21. 30. ch. 8. 10.

7 Thus saith the Lord GOD, [d]It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

Their evil counsel, as it is called, ver. 5.

e 2 Sam. 8. 6.

8 [e]For the head of Syria *is* Damascus, and the head of Damascus *is* Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, † that it be not a people.

† Heb. *from a people.*

Is Damascus; or rather, *shall be Damascus;* for the verb is not expressed in the Hebrew text, and therefore may be either way supplied. The sense is, Damascus shall still continue to be the capital and chief city of the kingdom of Syria; and therefore Jerusalem shall not be taken, nor become a part of Rezin's dominion; but he shall be kept within his own bounds, and be king of Damascus only, and not, as he hopes, of Jerusalem. *Within threescore and five years;* to be computed either, 1. From the prophecy of Amos, who prophesied *in the days of Uzziah, two years before the earthquake*, Amos i. 1, which the Jews affirm to have happened about the time of his usurpation of the priest's office, and being smitten with leprosy, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, &c., which though it be not proved, yet it may

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be admitted, because it cannot be disproved. And it is more than probable that that action and accident was divers years before his death, during which time Jotham acted as his viceroy, 2 Chron. xxvi. 21. And the prophecy of Amos being express and full concerning the destruction of the people and commonwealth of Israel, being also fresh in the memory of many now living, the prophet Isaiah might well have respect to it. So the sense is as if he had said, There shall be but sixty-five years between the delivery and the execution of that prophecy. And so the number of years may be thus made up. Fix the beginning of them ten years before Uzziah's death, add the sixteen years of Jotham's reign, and then the sixteen years of Ahaz's reign, and then six of Hezekiah's reign, in which Israel was carried captive, 2 Kings xviii. 10, these make up forty-eight years; and for the seventeen years which yet remain of the sixty-five, they may be taken out of the rest of Hezekiah's reign. For although the transportation of that people began in the sixth year of Hezekiah, yet it might be continued or repeated divers years after, and completed seventeen years after, Jer. lii. 28—30. Or rather, 2. These years may be computed from the time of this prophecy of Isaiah. And whereas it may objected against this opinion, that the judgment here threatened was executed in the sixth year of Hezekiah, as was before noted, and therefore within eighteen or nineteen years of this prophecy, which was delivered in the third or fourth year of Ahaz; two things may be answered, 1. That the Israelites were not transported in the sixth year of Hezekiah; for although Samaria be said to be taken in the sixth year of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 10, and the transportation of the Israelites be mentioned immediately after it, ver. 11, yet it doth not thence follow that it was done immediately, and at that one time; because this is not unusual in Scripture, in historical relations to mention those things together which were done at a considerable distance of time one from another, as it is recorded, Acts vii. 15, 16, *Jacob ——died, he and our fathers, and were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre of Abraham*, &c., although it was above two hundred years ere all which is said in those few words was done. And other instances of like nature might easily be produced. 2. That this work of transportation was not done at once, but successively, and by degrees. Thus it certainly was in the transportation of Judah, which was begun in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year, continued in his eighteenth year, and perfected in his three and twentieth year, Jer. lii. 28—30. And thus it might be, and probably was, in this transportation. It might be begun presently after the taking of Samaria, and afterwards continued, until at last the whole body of the people was removed; and as soon as that was done, and not before, the king of Assyria brought into their place those new colonies mentioned 2 Kings xvii. 24. Which that it was not done at the time of the taking of Samaria, but many years after it, seems to me evident, because those colonies were not brought thither by Shalmanezer, who took Samaria, 2 Kings xviii. 10, no, nor by Sennacherib, his next successor; but by Esar-haddon, as is affirmed, Ezra iv. 2, who was the son and successor of Sennacherib, 2 Kings xix. 37, and reigned above fifty years; for he seems to have begun his reign about the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, by comparing 2 Kings xviii. 13, and xix. 35—37; and so he reigned with Hezekiah about fifteen years, and with Manasseh above forty years, as the learned Sir John Marsham affirms in his Chronicus Canon, &c., p. 496. And this work of transporting the remainders of the Israelites, and bringing the new colonies, might not be done till towards the end of his reign; which delay might be occasioned by his wars, or other great affairs. And lest this should seem to be only my own private conjecture, if the reader consult Sir John Marsham's fourth and last chronological table, inserted after p. 589 of his work, he will find that learned chronologer to be of the same mind, and to make above fifty years' distance between the taking of Samaria, and the translation of the new colonies into those parts. And thus these sixty-five years might well be accomplished in his time. And so this place agrees with other scriptures, and the difficulties objected against other interpretations seem to be avoided.

9 And the head of Ephraim *is* Samaria, and the head of Samaria *is* Remaliah's son. [f] ‖ If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

[f] See 2 Chro. 20. 20.
‖ Or, *Do ye not believe? it is because ye are not stable.*

Is Samaria; or rather, *shall be Samaria;* and the sense is the same as in the foregoing verse, Samaria shall continue to be the chief city of the kingdom of Israel, and Pekah shall not conquer Jerusalem, as he hoped and designed to do. *Ye shall not be established;* if you do not believe this and the other promises of God, but, in distrust of God, shall seek to the Assyrians for succour, to which I perceive you are inclined, instead of that deliverance and settlement which you expect, you shall be distressed and consumed thereby; the accomplishment of which threatening is recorded 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. And by this threatening he implies, that if they did rely upon God's word and help, they should be established. Only he delivereth it in the form of a threatening, rather than of promise, partly because he foresaw that they would choose the worse part, and bring the judgment threatened upon themselves; and partly because this was most necessary for them, to affright them out of their present security and infidelity.

10 ¶ †Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying,

† Heb. *And the LORD added to speak.*

11 [g] Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ‖ ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.

[g] Judg. 6. 36, &c. Matt. 12. 38.
‖ Or, *make thy petition deep.*

Ask thee a sign of the Lord; I perceive thou dost not believe God's word and message now delivered by me; yet God is so patient and merciful to thee, that he gives thee liberty to demand of him any signal or miraculous work, whereby thou mayst be assured of the truth and certainty of this promise. *Thy God;* both by right of dominion, and by virtue of his gracious covenant made with all Israel, of whom thou art a member and king; and by thy own profession, for he still worshipped God together with his idols; and by the continuance of his care and kindness to thee and to thy people, notwithstanding all your wickedness; whereof this promise and offer is a clear demonstration. *Ask it either in the depth, or in the height above;* demand some prodigy to be wrought, either in earth or in heaven, at thy pleasure.

12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.

I will not ask: this refusal proceeded not from the strength of his faith, but from his contempt of God, and total distrust and disregard of his word, and inward resolution to take another course; as is manifest both from the following words, and from the history of Ahaz, 2 Chron. xxviii. *Neither will I tempt the Lord;* either, 1. By asking a sign, as if he questioned the truth of his word: so this was deep hypocrisy. Or, 2. By neglecting any means necessary for my preservation, which were indeed a tempting of God. And therefore I shall not sit still and rely upon God till I be destroyed, which will be the effect of thy counsel; but I shall do as becometh a wise king, seek for succour from potent allies, such as the Assyrian is. So this is flat rebellion against God.

13 And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; *Is it* a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?

House of David; of which see above, ver. 2. He reproveth them all, because they were the king's counsellors, and promoted the design of sending for the Assyrian succours. *Is it a small thing for you?* is not that wickedness more than enough? must you add more to it? *To weary men;* to vex God's prophets and people, and the generality of your subjects, with your oppressions and horrid impieties. *Will ye weary my God also,* by your cursed ingratitude, and unbelief, and disobedience to his commands? He saith, *my God,* i. e. the God whose servant and prophet or messenger I am, to intimate that this heinous offence was not committed against a weak and foolish man, such as they might think the prophet to be, but against God himself, who sent the message. Compare Exod. xvi. 8.

14 Therefore the LORD himself shall give you a sign; [h] Behold, a virgin shall

[h] Mat. 1. 23. Luke 1. 31, 34.

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conceive, and bear [1] a son, and ‖ shall call his name [k] Immanuel.

[1] ch. 9. 6. ‖ Or, *thou, O Virgin, shalt call:* See Gen. 4. 1, 25. & 16. 11. & 29. 32. & 30. 6, &c. 1 Sam. 4. 21. [k] ch. 8. 8.

Therefore; because you despise me, and the sign which I now offer to you, God of his own free grace will send you a more honourable messenger, and give you a nobler sign, to try whether that will cure you of your infidelity. Or, *nevertheless*, as this particle seems to be understood, Isa. xxx. 18; Jer. xvi. 14; xxx. 16. Although you deserve no sign nor favour, yet, for the comfort of those few believers which are among you, and to leave you without excuse, I shall mind you of another and a greater sign, which God hath promised, and will in his due time perform; which also is a pledge of the certain accomplishment of all God's promises. Or, *surely*, as this particle is sometimes used, as Gen. iv. 15; Jer. ii. 33; v. 2; Zech. xi. 7. *A sign*, to wit, of your deliverance. *Quest.* How was this birth of a virgin, which was not to come till many ages after, a sign of their deliverance from the present danger? *Answ.* 1. Because this was a clear demonstration of God's infinite power, and goodness, and faithfulness, and consequently of the certain truth of all God's promises from time to time, which can never fail so long as those attributes of God stand; and men's faith is either strong or weak, as they believe them or doubt of them; of which see Psal. lxxvii. 8; lxxviii. 19, 20; Rom. iv. 20, 21. And so this was a proper remedy for Ahaz's disease, which was a secret suspicion that God either could not or would not deliver them. 2. Because that promise, I say not only the actual giving, which was long after, but even the promise, of the Messiah, which had been made long since, and oft renewed, and was universally believed by all the people, was the foundation of all God's mercies and promises unto them, 2 Cor. i. 20, and a pledge of the accomplishment of them. 3. Because this promised birth did suppose and require the preservation of that city, and nation, and tribe, in and of which the Messiah was to be born; and therefore there was no cause to fear that utter ruin which their enemies now threatened to bring upon them. 4. This is one, but not the only sign here given, as we shall see at ver. 16. *Behold;* you who will not believe that God alone is able to deliver you from the united force of Syria and Israel, take notice, for your full satisfaction, that God is not only able to do this work, but to do far greater and harder things, which he hath promised, and therefore both can and will accomplish. *A virgin;* strictly and properly so called. The Jews, that they may obscure this plain text, and weaken this proof of the truth of Christian religion, pretend that this Hebrew word signifies a *young woman*, and not a *virgin*. But this corrupt translation is easily confuted, 1. Because this word constantly signifies a *virgin* in all other places of Scripture where it is used, which are Gen. xxiv. 43, compared with ver. 16; Exod. ii. 8; Psal. lxviii. 25; Cant. i. 3; vi. 8; to which may be added Prov. xxx. 19, *The way of a man with a maid*, or *a virgin:* for though it be supposed that he did design and desire to corrupt her, and afterwards did so; yet she may well be called a *virgin*, partly because he found her a virgin, and partly because she seemed and pretended to others to be such, which made her more careful to use all possible arts to preserve her reputation, and so made the discovery of her impure conversation with the man more difficult, whereas the filthy practices of common harlots are easily and vulgarly known. 2. From the scope of this place, which is to confirm their faith by a strange and prodigious sign, which surely could not be that a young woman should conceive a child, but that a virgin should conceive, &c. *Bear a Son;* or rather, *bring forth*, as it is rendered, Matt. i. 23, and as this Hebrew word is used, Gen. xvi. 11; xvii. 19; Judg. xiii. 5. *And shall call;* the virgin, last mentioned, *shall call;* which is added as a further evidence of her virginity, and that this Son had no human father, because the right of naming the child (which, being a sign of dominion, is primarily in the husband, and in the wife only by his consent or permission, as is evident from Gen. v. 29; xxxv. 18; Luke i. 60, 63, and many other places of Scripture) is wholly appropriated to her. *Immanuel;* which signifies, *God with us;* God dwelling among us, in our nature, John i. 14, God and man meeting in one person, and being a Mediator between God and men. For the design of these words is not so much to relate the name by which Christ should commonly be called, as to describe his nature and office; as we read that *his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor*, &c., Isa. ix. 6, and that *this is* said to be *his* (the Messiah's) *name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6, although he be never called by these names in any other place of the Old or New Testament; but the meaning of these places is, He shall be wonderful, and our Counsellor, &c., and our Righteousness; for *to be called* is oft put for *to be*, as Isa. i. 26; iv. 3, &c.

15 Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

Butter and honey; the common food of children in that country, where they were in great abundance, and of the best sort. *He;* the virgin's Son last mentioned, who, though he be God blessed for ever, yet shall become man, and, to show the truth of his humanity, shall not only be conceived and brought forth, but also shall be nourished and brought up, by the same means and steps as other children; which is justly mentioned here as a stupendous and miraculous work of God. *That he may know;* that by this food he may grow up, and so may know, &c. Or, *until he know*, as it is rendered by divers learned men, and, among others, by the Chaldee interpreter, who best knew the use of this particle among the Hebrews. *To refuse the evil, and choose the good;* to discern between things morally good and evil; which children are capable of doing, in some measure, when they are five or six years old. Compare Deut. i. 39, where young children are described by this character, that they *had no knowledge between good and evil.*

16 [l] For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of [m] both her kings.

[l] See ch. 8. 4. [m] 2 Kin. 15. 30. & 16. 9.

For; or, *yea;* for so this particle is used by way of amplification or addition, Isa. xxxii. 13; Jer. xiv. 5, 18. So the sense is, Not only this land of thine shall be preserved until the virgin's Son be born, but thine enemy's land shall be sorely scourged, and these two kings destroyed, within a very little time. *The child*, Heb. *this child;* not the virgin's Son, but the prophet's child, Shear-jashub, whom in all probability the prophet, to prevent mistakes, pointed at, and who was brought hither by God's special command, ver. 3, and that for this very use; for otherwise his presence was wholly insignificant. *The land;* the lands, to wit, of Syria and Israel, as is evident from the next words. It is an enallage of the singular for the plural. *That thou abhorrest*, for its cruel designs and practices against thee. Or, *which vexeth* or *molesteth thee*, as this word is used, Exod. i. 12; Numb. xxii. 3, &c. *Shall be forsaken of both her kings;* so far shall Pekah and Rezin be from conquering thy land, that they shall lose their own lands, and their lives too; which they did within two years after this time, being both slain by the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xv. 29, 30; xvi. 9.

17 ¶ [n] The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that [o] Ephraim departed from Judah; *even* the king of Assyria.

[n] 2 Chron. 28. 19. [o] 1 Kings 12. 16.

The Lord shall bring; but although God will deliver you at this time for his own name's sake, yet he will remember and requite all your present and following wickedness, and hath a dreadful judgment in store for you. *Upon thee;* for part of this Assyrian storm fell in Ahaz's reign, 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. *Upon thy father's house;* upon thy sons and successors, the kings of Judah; the accomplishment whereof is recorded in their history. *Days*, to wit, evil days, by a synecdoche; or calamities; for *days* are oft put for the events which happen in them, and especially for judgments or tribulations, as Job xviii. 20; Psal. cxxxvii. 7; Isa. ix. 4; Obad. 12. *The day that Ephraim departed from Judah;* when ten tribes revolted from thy father's house, and set up another opposite kingdom. *Even the king of Assyria;* who may well be called their plague or calamity, as he is called *the rod of* God's *anger*, Isa. x. 5. Or, *with* (as this Hebrew particle oft signifies) *the king*, &c.; or, by

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the king, &c. And *king* is here put for *kings*, as Dan. ii. 37; viii. 21.

18 And it shall come to pass in that
p ch. 5. 26. day, *that* the LORD [p] shall hiss for the fly that *is* in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that *is* in the land of Assyria.

In that day; known to God, and appointed by him for the execution of these judgments. *Shall hiss:* see on Isa. v. 26. *The fly;* the flies. So he calls these enemies, to imply either their great numbers, or their speedy march, or their unavoidable assault. *In the uttermost part;* in, or near, or towards their extremity or end, where they go out into the sea. *Of the rivers;* of the river Nilus, which may be called *rivers*, either for its greatness, for which cause the title of *rivers* is given also to Euphrates, Psal. cxxxvii. 1, and to Tigris, Nah. ii. 6; or because, towards the end of it, it is divided into seven famous streams, by which it emptieth itself into the midland sea, Isa. xi. 15. He seems plainly to design and describe the Egyptians, who were always dangerous neighbours to Judah, and did probably animate and assist the Philistines, and Edomites, and others against them, and at last made a formal invasion and conquest of their land, 2 Kings xxiii. 33, &c. Besides, when the Chaldeans had in good measure subdued the Egyptians, it is very probable that great numbers of the Egyptian soldiers did list themselves in the Chaldean army, and with them invade the land of Judah. *The bee;* the bees, the Assyrian army, who are compared to bees, as for their numerous forces and orderly march, so for their fierce attempts and mischievous effects. *In the land of Assyria;* in the empire of Assyria, or Babylon; for these two were united into one empire, and therefore in Scripture are promiscuously called sometimes by one title, and sometimes by the other.

19 And they shall come, and shall rest
q ch. 2. 19. Jer. 16. 16. ‖ Or, commendable trees. all of them in the desolate valleys, and in [q] the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all ‖ bushes.

They; the flies, and especially the bees. *Shall rest all of them;* they shall have an easy victory; few or none of them shall be slain in the attempt. *The desolate valleys;* either, 1. Such as were and had long been desolate. So it signifies the vast numbers of their enemies, which filled all places, both such as were well inhabited, and such as were in a great measure desolate. Or, 2. Such as they found very fruitful, but made them desolate. *The rocks;* to which possibly the Israelites fled for refuge. *Bushes;* which he mentions, partly because flies and bees use frequently to rest there, and partly to intimate that no place should escape the fury of this enemy.

20 In the same day shall the Lord shave
r 2 Kings 16. 7, 8. 2 Chron. 28. 20, 21. See Ezek. 5. with a [r] razor that is hired, *namely*, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard.

Shave with a razor, i. e. utterly spoil and destroy, as *shaving* takes away all the hair, and leaves not any thing of it visible, as there is when the hair is only cut or polled. *Hired;* either, 1. By Ahaz, who did hire them, 2 Kings xvi. 7, 8. And so the prophet notes the just judgment of God, in scourging them with a rod of their own making; and by this threatening he endeavours to prevent that wicked design which then was on foot, of hiring Assyrian succours. Or, 2. By God, who did stir them up, and send them upon his errand against Judah, as he threatens, Isa. x. 6, and paid them liberally for that service, as he did Nebuchadnezzar, of which see Jer. xxv. 9; xxvii. 6, 7; Dan. ii. 37, 38. *The river* Euphrates, called *the river*, by way of eminency, Psal. lxxii. 8; Jer. ii. 18, beyond which Assyria lay. *By the king of Assyria;* by the successive kings of the Assyrian empire, Sennacherib, 2 Kings xviii. 13, &c., Esarhaddon, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11, and especially by Nebuchadnezzar, who having subdued the Assyrian monarchy, from thenceforth was king of Assyria as well as of Chaldea. And the prophet rather mentions Assyria than Chaldea or Babylon, partly because the Assyrian began and continued to execute this judgment, although the Babylonian completed it; and partly to inform them that they laid the foundation of their own ruin, by opening the door to the Assyrian, who afterwards entered at his pleasure, and left it open for Nebuchadnezzar. *The hair of the feet;* of the lower or secret parts, which come under that name, Ezek. xvi. 7, 25, and elsewhere, as it hath been noted again and again; and which the Jewish writers affirm to have been shaved in the purification of lepers and Levites, Lev. xiv. 8, 9; Numb. viii. 7. *The beard*, which they highly esteemed, as a great ornament. By these metaphorical expressions he signifies the total destruction of their state, from head to foot, from the highest to the lowest.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep;

This and the following verse contain either, 1. A mitigation of the foregoing calamity, or some comfort for the remainders of the people, after the public devastation; or rather, 2. A further declaration of the threatened desolation; which best agrees not only with the foregoing, but also with the following verses. So the sense of this verse is this, They who formerly used to keep great herds of cattle, and many flocks of sheep, shall esteem it a great happiness if they can keep but one cow and two sheep, to keep themselves from extremity of famine.

22 And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk *that* they shall give that he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left † in the land. † Heb. *in the midst of the land.*

For the abundance of milk that they shall give; because they shall have excellent and large pastures, by reason of the great scarcity of cattle; whereas formerly their lands were oftimes overstocked with cattle. *Butter and honey* may be here mentioned, either, 1. As mean and vulgar food, being very common in those parts; which are opposed to that flesh and corn, and other excellent fruits of the earth, wherewith their land formerly abounded. Or, 2. As very good and pleasant food, which the poorer sort had formerly used to sell, to procure more necessary and cheaper food for themselves; but now the land should be so destitute of people, that there were none to whom they could sell them, and those few who did survive might freely eat all sorts of provisions.

23 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, [s] it shall *even* be for briers and thorns. s ch. 5. 6.

A thousand vines at a thousand silverings; or, *pieces of silver*, as the same word is commonly rendered. Whereby we may understand either, 1. So many pounds; a pound for each vineyard, to wit, for the annual rent. Or, 2. So many shekels, which word is most commonly understood, when no particular kind of coin is expressed, as 2 Sam. xviii. 11, 12; Matt. xxvi. 15; and then the meaning is, not that the thousand vineyards were let for a thousand shekels, a vineyard for a shekel, which is a contemptible price; but that each of the thousand vineyards might have been sold or let for a thousand shekels, which was the yearly rent of some excellent vineyards, as may be gathered from Cant. viii. 11; except we understand this not of so many vineyards, as other interpreters do, but of so many single vines, as the word properly and generally signifies, planted together in one large vineyard, which may be here meant by *the place* of the river, and then each vine may be valued at a shekel. But this place may possibly be otherwise rendered, and that exactly according to the Hebrew text, *every place where there are a thousand vines, shall be for a thousand pieces of silver*, i. e. it shall be valued or offered, either to be let, or rather to be sold, at that price; which was a very low price, and therefore fitly signifies the greatness of the desolation. *It shall even be for briers and thorns*, because it shall be utterly neglected, and therefore overspread with them. Or, yea, *it shall be for briers and thorns.* No man will either buy or hire it upon any terms.

24 With arrows and with bows shall *men* come

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thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns.

With arrows and with bows; either to hunt, or to defend themselves from wild beasts, which commonly abide in such desolate and overgrown grounds.

25 And *on* all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

That shall be digged; or, *that were digged*, to wit, formerly; that used to be digged and dressed for the planting of vines, or other choice fruit trees. *There shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns:* the words thus rendered sound like a promise, but that doth no way agree with the scope of the place. And they may be, and are by some, understood not of briers and thorns growing in those grounds, which would hinder the feeding of cattle there, but of such wherewith they were fenced, and by which the cattle were affrighted or hindered from breaking into them, which cause of their fear being now removed by the general devastation, they might now enter there, and feed at pleasure, as the next words imply. Or they may be rendered thus, as they are by a late learned interpreter, that *there might not come thither*, &c., which is mentioned as the reason why they were digged and dressed, that they might be freed from briers and thorns. And so there is only a defect of the Hebrew particle *asher*, which is frequent, and that not only as it signifies *which*, but as it is taken finally for *that*, as Isa. v. 11; x. 2, and elsewhere. *It shall be;* or, *even* (as this particle is oft rendered) *there shall be*, to wit, a place; which word is understood, 2 Sam. vii. 1; 1 Kings xviii. 12. Or the words may be thus rendered, *and all hills that shall be digged—and thorns, even they* or *each of them shall be;* the singular being taken collectively, as is very usual. *For the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle;* all sorts of cattle may fairly enter, and feed there, the fences being broken down, and the owners generally slain, or carried into captivity.

CHAP. VIII.

Syria and Israel should be subdued by Assyria, 1—4. *Judah also should be afflicted,* 5—8. *God's judgments irresistible, and to be feared,* 9—13. *The Lord is a sanctuary to the godly, a stone of stumbling to the wicked,* 14, 15. *The prophecy sure; God to be waited on; necromancers not to be consulted, but the prophecy; their misery,* 16—22.

MOREOVER the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and [a]write in it with a man's pen concerning †Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

a ch. 30. 8. Hab. 2. 2.
† Heb. *in making speed to the spoil he hasteneth the prey,* or, *make speed, &c.*

A great roll; or, *a great volume*, because the prophecy to be written in it was large, and God would have it written in very large and legible characters. *With a man's pen;* with such a pen as writers use, Psal. xli. 6; Jer. viii. 6, that so all may read and understand it. *Concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz;* concerning that thing which is signified by the name of thy child, which is here mentioned by way of anticipation, as not being given him till ver. 3, i. e. concerning that which God is making haste to do, the giving up the kingdoms of Syria and Israel for a prey to the Assyrian, as this name is explained, ver. 4.

2 And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, [b]Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

b 2 Kings 16. 10.

Persons of unquestionable reputation, who should bear witness that the following name and prophecy was written and published by me, according to God's command.

3 And I †went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

† Heb. *approached unto.*

I went unto, Heb. *I came near* to her. A modest expression of the conjugal act. *The prophetess;* so called, partly as she was the prophet's wife, wives being frequently denominated from their husbands' titles, as the wives of *mayor*, or *doctor*, &c., are commonly called *mayoress, doctoress*, &c.; and partly because she did concur with the prophet to the procreation of this prophetical child.

4 [c]For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, ‖[d]the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

c See ch. 7. 16.
‖ Or, *he that is before the king of Assyria shall take away the riches, &c.*
d 2 Kings 15. 29. & 16. 9. ch. 17. 3.

To cry, My father, and my mother; to speak, and to know his parents; which is within the space of two years. And this agrees with the other prophecy, Isa. vii. 16, *Before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good*, which requires a longer time than to distinguish his parents from strangers; which suits well to Shear-jashub, who, being born some years before this, was capable of that further degree of knowledge as soon as this was capable of the lower degree. *The riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away;* the kingdoms of Syria and Israel, here signified by their two capital cities, shall be stripped of their wealth and power, as they were by Tiglath-pileser, within the time here limited, 2 Kings xv. 29. *Before the king of Assyria;* in his presence, and by himself and his forces; for in Scripture use that is said to be before a man, which is in or is put into a man's power, as Gen. xiii. 9; xx. 15, &c.; and men are said to be smitten *before* their *enemies*, when they are smitten by them, as Numb. xiv. 42; Deut. i. 42; Judg. xx. 39, and oft elsewhere. Others refer this phrase to the ancient custom of conquerors, of sending or carrying their spoils before them into their own country.

5 ¶ The LORD spake also unto me again, saying,

6 Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of [e]Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice [f]in Rezin and Remaliah's son;

e Neh. 3. 15. John 9. 7.
f ch. 7. 1, 2, 6.

This people; either, 1. The people of Judah, which are supposed to have grown weary of their present government, and out of distrust of God's protection designed to revolt from God, and from the house of David, and to put themselves under the power and protection of the kings of Syria and Israel. But there are no footsteps of any such design or practice of that people. And the following clause of *rejoicing in Rezin*, &c. cannot with any colour be ascribed to the Jews, whom at this time they sought to destroy. Or rather, 2. The people of Israel, of whom he last spake, ver. 4, and who are the chief subject of this whole prophecy, contained in this and the foregoing chapter; and who did rejoice not only in their own king Pekah, but also in the assistance of so powerful an ally as Rezin was. *Refuseth;* or rather, *despiseth*, as the word properly and most frequently signifies. *The waters of Shiloah;* that small and contemptible river or brook which ran by that city, which is here secretly opposed to the great rivers of Tigris and Euphrates, by which the Assyrian empire was fortified. Hereby he understands the munitions and strength of the Jews, which their enemies derided and contemned. *That go softly;* gently, as little rivers do.

7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, *even* [g]the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks:

g ch. 10. 12.

Therefore; because they despise the opposition which they have from Shiloah and Jerusalem, they shall have a more potent enemy. *Upon them;* upon Israel. See on the foregoing verse. *Of the river* of Euphrates, oft called *the river*, for its eminent greatness; whereby he understands the Assyrian forces, as the next words explain the metaphor. *All his glory;* his numerous and puissant army, in which he gloried. See Isa. x. 8. *He shall come up over all his channels;* this great river shall overflow its own proper channels. The meaning is, This great monarch shall enlarge his dominions, and add the lands of Syria and

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Israel to them. Some render the words, *he shall come up with all his channels* or *streams;* for the Hebrew particle *all* sometimes signifies *with*, as Job xxxviii. 32. But it seems hard to understand the same particle one way in this clause, and another in the last clause. Besides, the last clause favours the former interpretation, the same thing being repeated in it, as is usual in the sacred writings. Or this may be understood of the channels and banks of the people or land of Israel. The enemy being represented under the metaphor of a river breaking in upon their land, may fitly be said to overflow all their channels and banks, to wit, all places, both low and high, so that nothing shall be able to withstand his fury.

h ch. 30. 28. + Heb. *the fulness of the breadth of thy land shall be the stretchings out of his wings.* i ch. 7. 14.

8 And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, [h] he shall reach *even* to the neck; and [+] the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O [i] Immanuel.

He; or, *it*, to wit, the river, ver. 7, which yet designs the same person and thing, to wit, the invasion of the king of Assyria. *Shall pass through Judah;* and when he shall have finished his work against you, he shall invade the land of Judah, as Sennacherib did some few years after his conquest of Samaria, 2 Kings xviii. 9, 13. *He shall reach even to the neck;* so as they shall be in great danger of being drowned or destroyed. He persists in the metaphor of a river swelling so high as to reach to a man's neck, and be ready to overwhelm him. Such was the danger of Judah's land, *when Sennacherib took all the fenced cities of Judah*, 2 Kings xviii. 13, and sent his army against Jerusalem. *Of his wings;* of his forces, or of the wings of his army, as they anciently were and still are called. *Of thy land, O Immanuel;* of the land of Judah, so called because the Messiah, who is called by God himself *Immanuel*, chap. vii. 14, should certainly be born, and live, and die there. And this is added emphatically for the consolation of God's people, to assure them, that notwithstanding this dreadful scourge, yet God would make a difference between Israel and Judah; and whereas Israel should be *so broken* by the *Assyrian, that they should not be a people*, as was threatened, chap. vii. 8, Judah should be restored and preserved, for the sake of the Messiah, to be the place of his birth and ministry, according to that famous prophecy, Gen. xlix. 10.

k Joel 3. 9, 11. l Or, *yet.*

9 ¶ [k] Associate yourselves, O ye people, [l] and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.

O ye people; Syrians and Israelites. Immanuel's name inspireth the prophet with new courage, and makes him send a challenge to all God's enemies, and foretell their certain downfal. *Ye of far countries;* whosoever you be, whether far or near, who do or shall conspire against Immanuel's land. *Gird yourselves* with sword and belt; prepare yourselves for war. *Ye shall be broken in pieces:* this is repeated for the greater assurance of the thing, and the comfort of God's people, who are apt to despond upon such occasions.

l Job 5. 12. m ch. 7. 7. n ch. 7. 14. Acts 5. 38, 39. Rom. 8. 31.

10 [l] Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, [m] and it shall not stand: [n] for God *is* with us.

Speak the word; declare and fix your purpose, and make your boast of it. *God is with us;* the almighty and only true God fighteth for us, and against you. He gives the interpretation of the name Immanuel expressed before, ver. 8; for though the word in the Hebrew be the same here and there, yet there it seems to be taken properly, and here appellatively.

† Heb. *in strength of hand.*

11 ¶ For the LORD spake thus to me [†] with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying,

With a strong hand; with a vehement and more than ordinary inspiration, strongly imprinting it in my mind. *Of this people;* of the generality of the people of Judah; whose eminent danger and calamity he foretells, ver. 8, but withal gives them full assurance that God would deliver them out of it, ver. 9, 10; which he doth to aggravate the present sin of Ahaz and his people, in forsaking God, and seeking to the king of Assyria for help, as they did, 2 Kings xvi. 6—8.

12 Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them to* whom [o] this people shall say, A confederacy; [p] neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.

o ch. 7. 2. p 1 Pet. 3. 14, 15.

Say ye not, thou, Isaiah, and thine and my children, *A confederacy;* do not approve of or consent to this wicked design of making a confederacy with the king of Assyria. *Their fear;* that thing which they fear, that if they do not call in the Assyrian succours, they shall certainly be destroyed by those two potent kings united against them, and that God either cannot or will not deliver them.

13 [q] Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and [r] *let* him *be* your fear, and *let* him *be* your dread.

q Num. 20. 12. r Ps. 76. 7. Luke 12. 5.

Sanctify the Lord of hosts; give him the glory of his power, and goodness, and faithfulness, by trusting to his promises for your deliverance. *Let him be your fear;* let God, and not the kings of Syria and Israel, be the chief object of your fear.

14 And [s] he shall be for a sanctuary; but for [t] a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

s Ezek. 11. 16. t ch. 28. 16. Luke 2. 34. Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 8.

Your sanctuary; a sure refuge to all that truly fear him, and rely upon him. *For a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence;* an occasion of sin and ruin, at whom they will take offence and stumble, so as to fall and be broken, as it is expressed, ver. 15. *To both the houses of Israel;* to the two royal families of Israel, largely so called; that of Judah, to wit, the house of David; and that of Ephraim: or, to the two kingdoms, that of the ten tribes, and that of the two tribes. *For a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* which are distinctly mentioned, as a very observable and wonderful thing, because Jerusalem was the seat of the temple, and of God's solemn worship, where all the means of knowledge and grace were in greatest power and plenty, where the thrones of civil and ecclesiastical judicature were established, where the most wise and learned doctors had their constant or frequent abode. And that such a place and people should reject Immanuel, or their Messiah, when he should appear, was so great and strange an occurrent, that the prediction of it was highly necessary, lest otherwise, when it came to pass, it should shake the faith of all who did believe on him; whereas now the accomplishment hereof was a notable confirmation of their faith, and an evidence that Christ was the true Messiah.

15 And many among them shall [u] stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

u Matt. 21. 44. Luke 20. 18. Rom. 9. 32. & 11. 25.

Many among them; not all, for there shall be a remnant, as was foretold, Isa. iv. 2; vi. 13. *Shall stumble* at that stone or rock, mentioned ver. 14. This was accomplished at the coming of the Messias, whom the Jews rejected to their own destruction.

16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

These are, by the consent of all, God's words to the prophet. By *the testimony* and *the law* or *doctrine* (for so this word is frequently taken) he understands one and the same thing, as he doth also ver. 26, to wit, the word of God, and especially that which is the main scope and substance thereof, the doctrine of the Messias, which, though now professed by all the Israelites, shall be disowned by the generality of them, when the Messiah shall come. *Bind up* and *seal* are to be understood prophetically, Declare and prophesy that it shall be bound up and sealed; as Isaiah is said to *make fat*, and to *blind*, &c., Isa. vi. 10, and Jeremiah to *root out* and *pull down*, &c., Jer. i. 10, when they foretell these events. Moreover, *bind up* and *seal* design the same thing, and that is, either, 1. Security and certainty,

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as things are bound up or sealed that they may not be lost. So he signifies, that although this doctrine would be lost among the body of the Israelites, yet it should be preserved among his disciples. Or, 2. Secrecy, as many things are bound up or sealed that they may be hid from the eyes of others. And so he informeth them that this doctrine now was and should be hid in a great measure among all God's people, even till the accomplishment of it; and that even when it was accomplished, it should still continue to be as a secret and mystery, known indeed to his true disciples, but hid from the body of the nation, who would not see it, and therefore should be blinded by God's just judgment, that they should not see it, as was prophesied, Isa. vi. 9, 10. Or, 3. Both security and secrecy, signifying that it should certainly be fulfilled, yet withal kept secret from the unbelieving Jews. For why may not these two be joined in the exposition of this text, as they were in the event? By God's *disciples* he means those who were *taught of God*, as it is expressed, Isa. liv. 13, where this very word is used; or, *every one that hath heard and learned of the Father*, and therefore *cometh unto Christ*, as it is explained, John vi. 45.

17 And I will wait upon the LORD, that [x]hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I [y]will look for him.

x ch. 54. 8.
y Hab. 2. 3. Luke 2. 25, 38.

And, or, as this particle is rendered Jer. ii. 32, 35, and elsewhere, *yet*, notwithstanding this dreadful prophecy concerning the unbelief and rejection of Israel, *I will wait upon the Lord;* I will refer myself and this matter unto God, casting my care upon him, and expecting the accomplishment of his promise in sending the Messiah, and in conferring upon me and all believing Israelites all his mercies and blessings, to be procured by and through his blood and merits. *That hideth his face;* that now doth, and threateneth that he will hereafter, withdraw his favour and blessing, as this phrase signifies, Psal. x. 1; xxvii. 9, and oft elsewhere. *From the house of Jacob;* from the family or people of Israel. *I will look for him* with an eye of faith and expectation, till his time cometh.

18 [z]Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me [a]*are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

z Heb. 2. 13.
a Ps. 71. 7. Zech. 3. 8.

Behold; it is worthy of your observation and admiration. These words are literally spoken by Isaiah concerning himself, but withal mystically concerning Christ, of whom he speaks more frequently and fully than any other prophet, and of whom he was an evident type; and therefore they are fitly applied to Christ, Heb. ii. 13. *Children;* either, 1. His natural children, whose very names were prophetical, and signs of future events, chap. vii. 3; viii. 3, 4; or, 2. His spiritual children, whom he had either begotten or brought up by his ministry. For the prophets were called *fathers* not only with respect to the young prophets, who were commonly called *the sons of the prophets*, but also in relation to others, as 2 Kings ii. 12; xiii. 14. And this sense seems more probable than the former, because it agrees best, 1. With the following words, which seem to be too lofty and emphatical to be used concerning his natural children; for their prophetical names, which, if they were *signs*, could not properly be called *wonders*. 2. With the context and scope of the place, which is to set forth the incredulity of the Israelites, and their contempt and rejection of Christ, and of all his faithful messengers, both the prophets, who were sent as harbingers before his coming, and the apostles, who were witnesses of his coming. 3. With Heb. ii. 13, where they are expounded of spiritual children. *Are for signs and for wonders in Israel;* are a gazingstock to and admired by them, for our folly in believing God's promises. For so the believing Jews now were to Ahaz and the generality of the people, who thought it their wisdom and interest to procure aid from Assyria, and esteemed those fools who, upon pretence of relying upon God, would neglect so great an advantage. And so the prophet foretells that they should be when the Messiah did come; which is the mystical, as the other is the literal sense; and so both of them may be meant in this place. *In Israel;* even amongst the Israelites, who have been taught and do profess better things. *From the Lord of hosts;* which come to pass by the wise counsel and providence of God, in which I willingly acquiesce. *Which dwelleth in Mount Zion;* where the temple now was, and where the Messiah was to set up his kingdom.

19 ¶ And when they shall say unto you, [b]Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards [c]that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living [d]to the dead?

cir. 741.
b 1 Sam. 28. 8. ch. 19. 3.
c ch. 29. 4.
d Ps. 106. 28.

When they, the Israelites, to whom I and my children are signs and wonders, who are fallen from God, and his true religion and worship, into superstition and idolatry, and will endeavour to seduce you into the same impiety, *shall say unto you*, my children, whom the prophet here arms against the common temptation. *Seek unto them* for advice and help, and seek no more to the prophets, who have hitherto deluded you with vain words. This was the counsel of the ungodly and unbelieving Jews. *Wizards;* of whom see Lev. xix. 31; xx. 27; Deut. xviii. 11. *That peep, and that mutter;* that speak with a puling and low voice, as these two words signify; which they affected to do, speaking rather inwardly in their bellies, than outwardly and audibly with their mouths and voice, as the title of *ventriloqui*, commonly given to them, signifies. *Should not a people seek unto their God?* this answer the prophet puts into their mouths, to the foregoing counsel. Doth not every nation, in cases of difficulty or distress, seek to their own gods for relief? Much more should we do so, that have the only true God for our God. *For the living to the dead;* shall they seek (which words are easily understood out of the foregoing clause) *for the living*, &c.? That living men should inquire of the living God is proper and reasonable; but it is highly absurd for them to forsake him, and to seek to dead idols, either to the images, or to the spirits of dead men, which are supposed to dwell and speak in them.

20 [e]To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because [f]*there is* †no light in them.

e Luke 16. 29.
f Mic. 3. 6.
† Heb. *no morning.*

To the law and to the testimony; let this dispute between you and them be determined by God's word, which is here and in many other places called *the law*, to signify their obligation to believe and obey it; and *the testimony*, because it is a witness between God and man of God's mind and will, and of man's duty; and so these two titles contain two arguments against these idolatrous practices. *If they;* your antagonists, that seek to pervert you, ver. 19. *It is because there is no light in them;* this proceeds from the darkness of their minds, because they are blind, and will not see, and God hath shut their eyes that they cannot see. But these words are by divers learned interpreters understood not as a declaration of their ignorance, but a commination and prediction of their misery, *light* being most commonly used in Scripture for comfort and happiness, and *darkness* for sorrows and calamities. And this sense seems to be much favoured by the following passages. And then the words may be thus rendered, *assuredly* (for the Hebrew particle *asher* is frequently used as a note of asseveration, as 1 Sam. xv. 20; Psal. x. 6; xcv. 11, &c., as hath been more than once observed before) *no light* or *morning light* shall be (for that may as well be understood as *is*) *to them;* a night of misery shall come upon them, and they shall never have a morning of deliverance from it; they shall be swallowed up in endless calamities.

21 And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and [g]curse their king and their God, and look upward.

g Rev. 16. 11.

And they, the idolatrous and apostatical Israelites, *shall pass through it*, or, *in it*, to wit, their own land, which is easily understood out of the context, and from the phrase itself; the pronoun relative being put without an antecedent, as it is in other places. which have been formerly noted. They shall either pass through it into captivity, or wander hither and thither in it, like distracted men, not knowing whither to go, nor what to do; whereas if they had not for-

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saken God, they might have had a quiet and settled abode in it. *Hardly bestead;* sorely distressed, as this word is used, Gen. xxxv. 16; Job xxx. 25; *and hungry;* destitute of food, and of all necessaries, which are oft signified by food. *Curse their king;* either because he doth not relieve them, or because by his foolish counsels and courses he brought them into these miseries. *Their God;* either, 1. The true God; or rather, 2. Their idols, to whom they trusted, and whom they now find too late unable to help them. *Look upward* to heaven for help, as men of all nations and religions in great calamities use to do.

h ch. 5. 30. i ch. 9. 1.

22 And [h] they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, [i] dimness of anguish; and *they shall be* driven to darkness.

They shall look unto the earth; finding no help from heaven, they turn their eyes downward, looking hither and thither for comfort. *Trouble and darkness, &c.;* many words expressing the same thing are put together, to signify the variety, and extremity, and continuance of their miseries.

CHAP. IX.

Joy in the midst of affliction, 1—5. *The birth, person, office, and kingdom of Christ,* 6, 7. *Judgments for their pride,* 8—12; *for their impenitency and hypocrisy,* 13—21.

cir. 840. a ch. 8. 22. b 2 Kings 15. 29. 2 Chr. 16. 4. c Lev. 26. 24. 2 Kings 17. 5, 6. 1 Chro. 5. 26. cir. 771. cir. 740. ‖ Or, *populous.*

NEVERTHELESS [a] the dimness *shall* not *be* such as *was* in her vexation, when at the [b] first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and [c] afterward did more grievously afflict *her by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee ‖ of the nations.

The dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation: the words thus rendered contain a mitigation of the foregoing threatening; and so the sense of the verse may be this, The calamity of this land and its inhabitants shall be great, yet not such as that which was brought upon the kingdom of the ten tribes by the king of Assyria, who at first indeed dealt more gently with them, but afterwards quite rooted them out, and carried them away into a dreadful captivity, from whence they were not to return, no, not when the Messiah came into the world; for after this darkness, of which I have now spoken, there shall come a glorious light, as it follows in the next verse. The Dutch interpreters take it in the same sense, and render the words thus. *But* the land *that was distressed shall not be* utterly *darkened.* To the same purpose they may be thus rendered, according to the Hebrew, *But darkness shall not be* (i. e. shall not abide or continue; for to *be* is sometimes put for to *abide* or *continue to be,* as 1 Sam. xii. 14; Prov. xxiii. 5; Matt. xvii. 4; Heb. viii. 4) *unto her,* (to wit, the land, which by the consent of interpreters is understood here, as it was chap. viii. 21,) *to whom* this *distress* is or shall be. She shall be distressed and darkened, as I said before, chap. viii. 22, but not irrecoverably, nor for ever. Some understand the words to be an aggravation of the darkness or misery threatened chap. viii. 22, rendering the words thus, *for the dimness shall not be.* &c. And so the sense is, This shall not be so slight an affliction as that which befell them by Pul, 2 Kings xv. 19, nor as that which succeeded it by Tiglath-pileser, who, at the desire of Ahaz, did about this time make another invasion into the land of Israel, 2 Kings xv. 29, and was a heavier stroke than the former: but this shall be far heavier than either of them. But the former sense seems better to agree, both with the following verses, and with Matt. iv. 14—16, where these words are expounded as a promise, and said to be fulfilled by Christ's preaching the gospel in these parts. *At the first;* in the first invasion which the king of Assyria made upon Israel. *He,* to wit, God, who is oft understood in such cases, and who is here supposed to be the author or inflicter of this judgment. Or it is an impersonal speech, *he afflicted* for *was afflicted,* than which nothing is more common in the Hebrew language. *Lightly afflicted;* either, 1. By Pul; or rather, 2. By Tiglath-pileser, who at this time invaded and subdued these parts, as it is expressed, 2 Kings xv. 29; *the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali:* these parts are particularly mentioned, because this storm fell most heavily upon them; but under them the other parts of the land are understood by a common figure called *synecdoche. Did more grievously afflict her;* either, 1. By Tiglath-pileser; or rather, 2. By Shalmaneser, who took Samaria, and carried Israel into captivity, 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6; of which calamity, though yet to come, the prophet speaks as if it were past, as the manner of the prophet is. *By the way of the sea;* in that part of the land which bordereth upon the sea, to wit, the lake of Gennesaret, which is very commonly called *a sea,* as Matt. iv. 18; John xxi. 1, &c., and upon which the portions of Zebulun and Naphtali bordered. *Beyond Jordan;* or, *on this side Jordan;* for this preposition is used both ways. and this land might be said to be either *beyond* or *on this side Jordan,* in divers respects. *Galilee of the nations,* or *Galilee of the Gentiles,* to wit, the *Upper Galilee,* so called because it bordered upon the Gentiles. But this last clause, and the two foregoing clauses, are otherwise rendered and interpreted by divers learned men, as a prophecy concerning the light of the gospel that should shine in those parts: *As at the first time* (to wit, in the former ages of the Israelitish church and commonwealth) *he made the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali vile* or *contemptible;* (as he might be said to have done, partly, by putting those people at so great a distance from his sanctuary; partly, by exposing them to some calamities which other tribes escaped; and partly, by denying them those honours and privileges which he afforded to other tribes, of which see John vii. 52, *Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet;* and John i. 46, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* which was an eminent city of Galilee;) so in the *latter* or *last* time (to wit, in the days of the Messiah, or of the gospel, which are frequently so called in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament) *he made it* (i. e. he will make it, for the prophet speaks of things to come as past, as he doth most commonly in this prophecy) *glorious* (to wit, by Christ's first preaching the gospel in those parts) *in* or *towards the way of the sea,* (to wit, of Galilee or Gennesaret,) *beyond* or *on this side Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles:* which interpretation I thought fit to propose, as deserving further consideration.

d Matt. 4. 16. Eph. 5. 8, 14.

2 [d] The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

The people; the people of God, Israel and Judah, and especially those of them mentioned in the foregoing verse. *Walked;* in Matt. iv. 16, it is *sat.* It notes not their gesture, but their state or condition, they lived or abode. Only *walking in darkness* is more perilous than sitting. *Darkness:* the expression is general, and so may well comprehend both the darkness of calamity, and the darkness of ignorance, and idolatry, and profaneness, in which those parts were eminently involved, by reason of their great distance from God's sanctuary, and by their frequent converse with the Gentiles, who bordered upon them, and of which this place is expounded, Matt. iv. *Have seen,* i. e. shall see, at the coming of the Messiah. *The land of the shadow of death;* which notes both extreme, and dangerous, or deadly darkness.

‖ Or, *to him.* e Judg. 5. 30.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, *and* ‖ not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, *and* as *men* rejoice [e] when they divide the spoil.

Thou hast multiplied the nation; thou hast made good thy promise to Abraham concerning the multiplication of his seed, Gen. xv. 5; xxii. 17, by adding his spiritual seed unto the carnal, by gathering in the Gentiles to the Jews, and making them both one people in Christ, John x. 16; Eph. ii. 14, &c. For in Scripture account the believing Gentiles are the seed of Abraham as well as the Jews; of which see Gal. iii. 7—9. Or, *thou hast magnified the nation;* honoured them with peculiar privileges above all other nations, and especially with this transcendent privilege, that the Messiah and Saviour of the world should be born of them, and live among them; of which he speaks more fully ver. 6, 7. *And not increased the joy;* or, yet *not increased their joy;* which might very truly and fitly be said of the Jewish

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nation upon this occasion, partly because they did not rejoice in the conversion of the Gentiles, as they should have done, but murmured, and grieved, and stumbled at it; and partly because, through their perverseness and unbelief, that would be unto them an occasion of their utter ruin, the conversion of the Gentiles being attended with the rejection of the Jews. But because this translation seems not to agree with the following words, which ascribe great joy to them, some render the words otherwise; either thus, and *wilt thou not increase their joy?* to which question the next words give an affirmative answer. So the Hebrew particle *lo* is put interrogatively for *halo*, as it is in many other places, which I have formerly observed. Or thus, and *hast increased to it*, or *him*, or *them* (to that nation) their *joy*. For though the Hebrew *lo* be written like an adverb, yet it may be read like a pronoun, as it is both by Jewish and Christian interpreters acknowledged to be in many places; of which see more in my Latin Synopsis. *They joy before thee;* in thy presence, and in the place of thy worship; not with a carnal and worldly, but with a spiritual and religious joy, giving thee the praise and glory of all thy favours afforded to them. *According to the joy in harvest;* when men receive with great joy that for which they have laboured much and long waited. See Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6. *When they divide the spoil;* when, after a bloody fight, and a glorious victory, they come to take the spoil.

‖ Or, *When thou breakest.*
f ch. 10. 5. & 14. 5.
g Judg. 7. 22. Ps. lxxxiii. 9. ch. 10. 26.

4 ‖ For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and [f]the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of [g] Midian.

Thou hast broken: this notes the matter and occasion of the foregoing joy. *The yoke of his burden;* his burdensome and heavy yoke, as *the throne of holiness* is put for *the holy throne*, Psal. xlvii. 8. *The staff of his shoulder;* either the staff wherewith his shoulders were smitten, or the staff or staves by which he was forced to carry burdens upon his shoulders. *The rod*, wherewith he beat him. Or, *the sceptre;* the power and tyranny which he exercised over him. *Of his oppressor;* of all his oppressors, but especially of sin and of the devil. *As in the day of Midian;* when God destroyed the Midianites in so admirable a manner, and by such unlikely and contemptible means, by three hundred men, and they not fighting, but only holding lamps in their hands, and sounding their trumpets; which was an eminent type of Christ's conquering the devil, and all his enemies, by dying upon the cross, and by the preaching of a few unlearned and despicable persons, &c.

‖ Or, *Where the whole battle of the warrior was, &c.*
h Heb. 66. 15, 16.
i Or, *and it was, &c.* † Heb. *meat.*

5 ‖ For every battle of the warrior *is* with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; [h]‖ but *this* shall be with burning *and* † fuel of fire.

With confused noise; with the triumphant exclamations of the conqueror, and the bitter lamentations of the conquered, and the differing cries of the same persons, sometimes conquering, and sometimes conquered. *And garments rolled in blood;* with great difficulty and slaughter. *But this shall be with burning and fuel of fire;* but this victory which God's people shall have over all their enemies, shall be more easy to them, and more terrible to their adversaries, whom God will suddenly and utterly consume, as it were by fire.

f ch. 7. 14. Luke 2. 11.
k John 3. 16. 1 John 4. 9.
l Matt. 28. 18. 1 Cor. 15. 25.
m Judg. 13. 18.
n Tit. 2. 13.
o Eph. 2. 14.

6 [f]For unto us a child is born, unto us a [k]son is given: and [l]the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called [m]Wonderful, Counsellor, [n]The mighty God, The everlasting Father, [o]The Prince of Peace.

Having spoken of the glorious light, and joy, and victory of God's people, he now proceeds to show the ground of it, and by what person these things are procured. *Unto us;* unto us Jews, of whom Christ was born, and to whom he was primarily sent, Matt. xv. 24, for our use and benefit. *A Child;* the Messiah, by the consent of interpreters, not only Christian, but Jewish; for so the ancient Hebrew doctors understood the place, and particularly the Chaldee paraphrast; although the later Jews, out of opposition to Christ, wrest it to Hezekiah; which extravagant conceit, as it hath no foundation at all in this or any other text of Scripture, and therefore may be rejected without any further reason, so it is fully confuted by the following titles, which are such as cannot without blasphemy and nonsense be ascribed to Hezekiah, nor indeed to any mere mortal man, as we shall see. But all the following particulars do so truly and exactly agree to Christ, that they cannot without great violence be alienated from him, or ascribed to any other. *Is born*, for *shall be born*, as the prophets generally speak. *A Son;* so he determines the sex of the child. Or, *the Son*, to wit, of the virgin, of whom I spake before, chap. vii. 14. *Is given;* is freely and graciously given to us by God. Other children also are said to be given by God, Gen. xxx. 6; xlviii. 9, but this in a peculiar manner, and therefore he is called *the gift of God*, John iv. 10. *The government*, to wit, of Israel, or of God's people, to whom he is given, *shall be upon his shoulder*, i. e. upon him, or in his hands. He mentions *shoulders*, because great burdens are commonly laid upon men's shoulders; and as all government, if it be rightly managed, so this especially, is a very heavy burden, requiring extraordinary care, and diligence, and self-denial. Possibly here may be also an allusion to the ancient custom of carrying the ensigns of government before the magistrate upon the shoulders of their officers; or to the cross of Christ, which was laid upon his shoulders, John xix. 17, which also was the way to his kingdom or government, Luke xxiv. 26. *His name shall be called;* either, 1. He shall be called; for *names* are oft put for persons, as Acts i. 15; Rev. iii. 4; xi. 13. Or, 2. His name shall be; for *to be called* in Scripture is oft put for *to be*, as I have noted before on chap. i. 26, and oft elsewhere. But this is not to be taken for a description of his proper name, by which he should be commonly called, but of his glorious nature and qualities. See my notes on Isa. vii. 14. *Wonderful, Counsellor:* these words may be taken either, 1. Severally, as they are in our translation, and by many others. This the Jews apply to Hezekiah, who, as they say, is called *wonderful*, because of the miracle which God wrought for him, 2 Kings xx. 2, &c.; and *counsellor*, because he took counsel with his princes about God's worship, and the defence of the city, 2 Chron. xxix. 4, &c., and gave good counsel to others; which ridiculous account is sufficient to overthrow that exposition. But they agree most eminently to the Lord Christ, who is truly *wonderful*, in his person, and natures, and words, and works, being made up of wonders, in whom there was nothing which was not wonderful; who also may well be called *Counsellor*, because he knew the whole counsel of God, and (so far as it was necessary) revealed it to us, and is the great Counsellor of his church and people in all their doubts and difficulties. Or, 2. Jointly, *wonderful Counsellor;* which may seem best to agree both with the following titles, each of which is made up of two words, and with Isa. xxviii. 29, where God is called *wonderful in counsel*, and makes the title more full and emphatical. To call Christ simply *a Counsellor*, may seem too mean a character, being common to many others with him; but to say he is a *wonderful Counsellor*, is a singular commendation. And so Christ is, because he hath been the Counsellor of his church in all ages, and the author and giver of all those excellent counsels delivered not only by the apostles, but also by the prophets, as is evident from 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, and hath gathered, and enlarged, and preserved his church by admirable counsels and methods of his providence, and, in a word, hath in him *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. *The mighty God:* this title can agree to no man but Christ, who was God as well as man, to whom the title of *God* or *Jehovah* is given, both in the Old and New Testament, as Jer. xxiii. 6; John i. 1; Rom. ix. 5, and in many other places. And it is a most true observation, that this Hebrew word *El* is never used in the singular number, of any creature, but only of the Almighty God, as is evident by perusing all the texts where this word is used. And although the title of *Elohim*, which is of the plural number, be twice or thrice given to some men, yet there is constantly added some diminishing expression to it, as when they are said to *be afraid*, Job xli. 25, and to *die*, Psal. xlix. 10; whereas here he adds the epithet of *mighty*, which is ascribed to the great God, Deut. x. 17, and elsewhere. *The everlasting Father*, Heb. *the Father of eternity.* Having called him a *Child*, and a *Son*

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in respect of his human nature, lest this should be misinterpreted to his disparagement, he adds that he is *a Father also*, even *the God and Father of all things;* the work of creation being common and commonly ascribed to each of the persons of the blessed Trinity, the Maker and Upholder of all creatures, as he is said to be, John i. 3; Heb. i. 3, and the Father of all believers, who are called his *children*, Heb. ii. 13, and *the Father of eternity;* either, 1. The first *author* (such persons being called *fathers*, as Gen. iv. 20, and elsewhere) *of eternal salvation*, as he is called, Heb. v. 9. Or, 2. As we render it, *the everlasting Father*, who, though as man he was then unborn, yet was and is from everlasting to everlasting. They who apply this to Hezekiah render it, *the father of an age*, and expound this of his long life and numerous posterity; which I the rather mention, to show what absurd shifts they are forced to use who interpret this text of any other but Christ. For he did not live very long, nor had he, that we read of, more than one son, Manasseh. And if both these things had been true of him, they were more eminently true of many other men. Besides, this Hebrew word being used of God, as here it is of him who was now called *the mighty God*, constantly signifies *eternity*, as Isa. xxvi. 4; lvii. 15, &c. *The Prince of Peace:* this title doth not fully agree to Hezekiah, whose reign was not free from wars, as we see, 2 Kings xviii.; but it agrees exactly to Christ, who is called *our peace*, Micah v. 5; Eph. ii. 14, and is the only purchaser and procurer of peace between God and men, Isa. liii. 5, and of peace between men and men, Jews and Gentiles, Eph. ii. 15, and of the peace of our own consciences, and leaves peace as his legacy to his disciples, John xiv. 27; xvi. 33.

7 Of the increase of *his* government and peace [p] *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The [q] zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

p Dan. 2. 44. Luke 1. 32, 33.

q 2 Kings 19. 31. ch. 37. 32.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; his peaceable and happy government shall be enlarged without end; either without end of duration, *for ever;* but that is expressed in a following clause of this verse: or without end of limitation, or without bounds. It shall not be confined to a narrow spot of ground, the land of Canaan, but shall be extended far and wide to all the ends of the earth. *The throne of David;* which was promised to David, and to his seed for ever. *With judgment and with justice;* not with oppression and tyranny, by which other kingdoms are commonly managed, but by the administration of justice. *From henceforth even for ever;* from the beginning of it unto all eternity. *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this;* this great work, which surpasseth all the power and skill of men, shall be brought to pass by Almighty God, out of that fervent affection which he hath to his own name and glory, and to the honour of his dearly beloved Son, and unto his church and people.

cir. 738. 8 ¶ The LORD sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.

Sent a word; a prophetical and threatening message by me; for now the prophet, having inserted some consolatory passages for the support of God's faithful people, returns to his former work of commination against the rebellious Israelites. *It lighted*, Heb. *it fell*, i. e. it shall fall, in the prophetical style. It shall certainly be accomplished. *Israel;* the same with Jacob in the former clause, the posterity of Jacob or Israel.

9 And all the people shall know, *even* Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart,

Shall know, to wit, by experience; they shall know whether my word be true or false; they shall feel the effects of it. *Even Ephraim;* the people of the ten tribes, and particularly Ephraim, the strongest and proudest of them all. *The inhabitant of Samaria;* the strongest place, and the seat of the king and court, who were most secure and presumptuous. *That say* within themselves, and one to another. They purpose and boast of it.

10 The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycomores are cut down, but we will change *them into* cedars.

The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones. It is true, we have received some damages from our enemies; but Rezin and the Syrians being now our friends and confederates, we doubt not we shall quickly repair them with great glory and advantage. *Sycomores;* wild fig trees, a contemptible sort of trees, if compared with cedars. 1 Kings x. 27. *We will change them into cedars;* putting cedars into our buildings instead of sycomores. See Jer. xxii. 13, 15.

11 Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and † join his enemies together;

† Heb. *mingle.*

Therefore; to chastise your pride, and defeat your hopes and resolutions. *Set up*, Heb. *exalt;* advance their power, and give them success against him. *The adversaries of Rezin;* the Assyrians, who, presently after this prophecy, fought and prevailed against him, 2 Kings xvi. 7. He mentions Rezin, partly because he was confederate with Ephraim, and so his enemies were their enemies also, and partly because the Israelites trusted to his powerful assistance. *Against him;* either, 1. Against Rezin last mentioned; or rather, 2. Against Ephraim or Israel, who may easily be understood either from the foregoing or following verse; for against them this prophecy is directed, and of them he speaks both in the next clause of this verse, and in the next verse; and it seems reasonable that *him* in this clause, and *his* in the next clause, should be understood of the same persons. *Join*, Heb. *mingle*, i. e. unite them so that they shall agree together to fight against Israel, and shall invade him from several quarters. *His;* not Rezin's, but Ephraim's, as appears from the next verse, which is added to explain this clause.

12 The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel † with open mouth. [r] For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

† Heb. *with whole mouth.*

r ch. 5. 25. & 10. 4. Jer. 4. 8.

The Syrians; for although Rezin king of Syria was destroyed, yet the body of the nation survived, and submitted themselves to the king of Assyria, and served under him in his wars, and upon his command invaded Israel afterwards. *Before*, Heb. *on the east;* for Syria stood eastward from Israel. *The Philistines behind;* on the western side of the land of Israel. *With open mouth;* like wild and furious beasts, with great greediness and cruelty. *His hand is stretched out still;* his justice is not fully satisfied, but he will yet take further vengeance upon them.

13 ¶ For [s] the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts.

s Jer. 5. 3. Hos. 7. 10.

Turneth not from their wicked courses unto God by true repentance. *Neither do they seek the Lord of hosts;* they do not study and endeavour to procure his favour by sincere and fervent supplication, and by removing the causes of his just displeasure.

14 Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, [t] in one day.

t ch. 10. 17. Rev. 18. 8.

Head and tail; high and low, honourable and contemptible, as the next verse explains it. *Branch;* the goodly branches of tall and strong trees, the mighty and noble. *Rush;* the bulrush, the weakest and meanest persons. *In one day;* all together, one as well as another, without any distinction.

15 The ancient and honourable, he *is* the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he *is* the tail.

He is, i. e. signifies, as that word is commonly used in the Hebrew tongue, as Gen. xli. 26, 27, and every where. *The prophet that teacheth lies;* whose destruction he mentions, not as if it were a punishment to them to be deprived

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of such persons, but partly to show the extent of the calamity, that it should reach all sorts of persons; and partly to beat down their vain presumptions of peace and prosperity, by showing that those false prophets, which had fed their vain hopes, should perish, and all their false prophecies of peace with them. *He is the tail;* these I mean by the tail, as being in truth the basest part of the whole body of the people.

u ch. 3. 12. ‖ Or, *they that call them blessed.* ‖ Or, *they that are called blessed of them.* † Heb. *swallowed up.*

16 For u ‖ the leaders of this people cause *them* to err; and ‖ *they that are* led of them *are* † destroyed.

The leaders; their governors, both civil and ecclesiastical, and especially the latter, their teachers, even the false prophets last mentioned. Or, *they that bless* or *praise them*, to wit, the false prophets, that flatter them in their wicked ways, with hopes and promises of peace, as their manner was, Jer. vi. 14; xxviii. 9. Both ways the sense is the same. *Cause them to err;* either compelling them by power, or deceiving them by false doctrines and evil counsels and persuasions. *Are destroyed;* shall certainly perish; nor will it excuse them that they followed the counsel and conduct of their leaders.

x Ps. 147. 10, 11.

17 Therefore the LORD x shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: y for every one *is* an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh ‖ folly. z For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

y Mic. 7. 2. ‖ Or, *villany.* z ver. 12. 21. ch. 5. 25. & 10. 4.

Shall have no joy in their young men; shall not rejoice over them to do them good, as he doth to his people, Isa. lxii. 5; Zeph. iii. 17; will not have mercy or pity on them, as the next clause explains it, but will abhor and utterly destroy them; for more is here intended than is expressed, as Prov. xvii. 21. *Neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows,* who are the special objects of his care and pity, Deut. xvi. 11, 14; xxiv. 19, 20, and much less upon others. *Every one;* not precisely, for there were seven thousand elect persons among them, when they seemed to Elijah to be universally corrupt, 1 Kings xix. 18; but the body or generality of the people. *Is an hypocrite;* for though they professed to worship and serve the true God, yet indeed they had forsaken him. Or, *a profane person*, as this word is rendered, Jer. xxiii. 15, as also Isa. xxxii. 6. *An evil-doer;* elsewhere called *a worker of iniquity*, as Job xxxi. 3; Psal. v. 5; Matt. vii. 23; one that gives up himself to a constant course and custom of sinning. *Speaketh folly*, i. e. wickedness, which is commonly called *folly*. They are not ashamed to proclaim their own wickedness, and the corruption of their hearts breaketh forth into ungodly speeches.

a ch. 10. 17. Mal. 4. 1.

18 ¶ For wickedness a burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up *like* the lifting up of smoke.

Wickedness burneth, i. e. shall burn you, as it follows, *shall devour*. Your *iniquity shall be your ruin*, as God threatens, Ezek. xviii. 30. *The briers and thorns;* either, 1. The wicked, who are oft compared to *briers and thorns*, as 2 Sam. xxiii. 6; Isa. xxvii. 4; or rather, 2. The low and mean persons; for these are opposed to *the thickets of the forest*, in the next clause. *In the thickets of the forest;* in the wood, where the trees are tall, and stand thick, having their boughs entangled together, which makes them more ready both to catch and to spread the fire. *Like the lifting up of smoke;* sending up smoke like a vast furnace. Heb. with *height* or *pride of smoke*, i. e. with aspiring smoke, which in that case riseth high, and spreadeth far, and filleth all the neighbouring air.

19 Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is b the land darkened, and the people shall be as the † fuel of the fire: c no man shall spare his brother.

b ch. 8. 22. † Heb. *meat.* c Mic. 7. 2, 6.

Darkened, either with the smoke last mentioned, or with misery. Or, *burnt up*, as the LXX., Chaldee, and Arabic interpreters render it. *No man shall spare his brother;* they shall destroy one another, as they did in their civil wars, which were frequent among them. The name *brother* is oft largely used among the Hebrews, even of the remoter kindred, yea, of the fellow members of one city, or tribe, or nation.

20 And he shall † snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, d and they shall not be satisfied: e they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm:

† Heb. *cut.* d Lev. 26. 26. e ch. 49. 26. Jer. 19. 9.

Shall snatch; every one shall greedily and violently seize upon any provisions that come in his way; which implies, either great scarcity, or insatiable covetousness, as is manifest from the next clause. *Shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm;* either, 1. Properly; so it notes extreme famine; in which case men are apt to eat their own flesh. Compare Jer. xix. 9. Or, 2. Metaphorically, which seems best to suit with the following verse, the flesh of his brethren by nation and religion, which are as it were our own flesh, and are so called, Isa. lviii. 7; Zech. xi. 9; and consequently, the flesh of their arm is in a manner the flesh of our own arm. And one tribe was to another as an arm, i. e. a support or strength, which is called *an arm*, 2 Chron. xxxii. 8; Jer. xvii. 5, and elsewhere.

21 Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: *and* they together *shall be* against Judah. f For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

f ver. 12, 17. ch. 5. 25. & 10. 4.

Manasseh, Ephraim; though more near and dear to one another than any other tribe, being both sons of Joseph. *They together shall be against Judah;* which might be accomplished either before Shalmaneser took Samaria, or afterwards. For though the Israelites were miserably destroyed at that time, yet they were not utterly rooted out; of which see my notes on Isa. vii. 8.

CHAP. X.

The woe of unjust oppressors, 1—4: *of Assyria for their pride and ambition:* g *his folly in it*, 5—19. *A remnant of Israel shall be saved, and that speedily*, 20—27. *Sennacherib marching toward Jerusalem*, 28—31. *His judgment*, 32—34.

WOE unto them that a decree unrighteous decrees, and ‖ that write grievousness *which* they have prescribed;

cir. 713. a Ps. 58. 2. & 94. 20. ‖ Or, *to the writers that write grievousness.*

Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees! unto those magistrates who make unjust laws, and give unjust sentences. *That write;* either, 1. The scribes, who were assistant to the magistrates, and oftimes did promote or execute such decrees; or, 2. The unjust magistrates, whose decrees were usually written. So the same thing is repeated in other words. Only this *writing* may note their obstinacy or perseverance in their unjust decrees, and their proceeding to the execution of them. *Grievousness;* grievous things, such unjust decrees as cause grief and vexation to their subjects.

2 To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and *that* they may rob the fatherless!

From judgment; or, *from* their *right*, as it is in the next clause; or, from obtaining a just sentence, because they either denied or delayed to hear their causes, or gave a wrong sentence. *From the poor*, whom I have in a special manner committed to your care. *Of my people;* of Israelites, who profess themselves to be my people, and whom I did take into covenant with myself; and therefore this is an injury not only to them, but to me also.

3 And b what will ye do in c the day of visitation, and in the desolation *which*

b Job 31. 14. c Hos. 9. 7. Luke 19. 44.

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shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?

What will ye do to save yourselves? *In the day of visitation;* when I shall come to visit you in wrath, as the next words limit it, and as this phrase is oft used; although sometimes it signifies a visitation in mercy, as Luke xix. 44, and elsewhere. *From far;* from the Assyrians. This he adds, because the Israelites, having weakened the Jews, and being in amity with the Syrians their next neighbours, were secure. *To whom will ye flee for help?* to the Syrians, as now you do? But they shall be destroyed together with you, as they were, 2 Kings xvi. *Where will you leave,* to be kept safe for your use, and to be restored to you when you call for it, *your glory?* either, 1. Your power and authority, which now you so wickedly abuse; or, 2. Your wealth, got by injustice, as *glory* is taken, Gen. xxxi. 1; Psal. xlix. 16, 17, &c.

4 Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. [d] For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

[d] ch. 5. 25. & 9. 12, 17, 21.

Without me they shall bow down: the words thus translated seem to contain an answer to the foregoing questions: In vain do you seek for a refuge and help from others; for *without me,* without my favour and help which you have forfeited, and do not seek to recover, and which I shall withdraw from you, or because you are without me, or forsaken by me, *you shall bow down,* notwithstanding all your succours. In the Hebrew here is a change of the person and number, which is very usual in prophetical writings. The LXX., and some others, join these words to the foregoing verse, and translate them thus, *that you may not bow down:* so the sense of the place is, What will you do to prevent your captivity or slaughter? And it is true, that the first word is elsewhere taken for a negative particle. But the former translation seems more genuine. *Under the prisoners;* or rather, *in the place* (as this particle signifies, and is rendered by interpreters, Gen. xxx. 2; 1. 19; Exod. xvi. 29; Josh. v. 8, and elsewhere) *of the prisoners,* or *among the prisoners;* and so in the next clause, *among* or *in the place of the slain.*

‖ Or, *Woe to the Assyrian.* † Heb. *Asshur.* [e] Jer. 51. 20. ‖ Or, *though.*

5 ¶ ‖O †Assyrian, [e]the rod of mine anger, ‖and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

O Assyrian: so it is God's call or invitation to him to take the charge, and set upon the work. Or, *Woe to the Assyrian!* because though he do my work, yet he doth it in a wicked manner, and for wicked ends, as we shall see. *The rod of mine anger;* the instrument of mine anger, wherewith I shall chastise my people. *The staff in their hand is mine indignation;* mine anger against my people puts the weapons of war into their hand, and gives them strength and success in this expedition.

[f] ch. 19. 17. [g] Jer. 34. 22. † Heb. *to lay them a treading.*

6 I will send him against [f]an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I [g]give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and †to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

I will send him, not by express commission, but by the secret yet powerful conduct of my providence, giving him both occasion and inclination to this expedition. *Hypocritical:* see on chap. ix. 17. *The people of my wrath;* the objects of my just wrath, devoted to destruction. *Give him a charge,* by putting this instinct into his mind. *To tread them down like the mire of the streets;* which signifies that he should easily conquer them, and utterly destroy them, as he did after this time.

[h] Gen. 50. 20. Mic. 4. 12.

7 [h]Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but *it is* in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.

He meaneth not so; he doth not at all design the execution of my will, and the glory of my justice, in punishing mine enemies; but only to enlarge his own empire, and satisfy his own lusts; which is seasonably added, to justify God in his judgments threatened to the Assyrian, notwithstanding this service. *To destroy and cut off nations not a few;* to sacrifice multitudes of people to his own ambition and covetousness; which is abominable impiety.

8 [i]For he saith, *Are* not my princes altogether kings?

[i] 2 Kings 18. 24, 34, &c. & 19. 10, &c.

Equal for power, and wealth, and glory to the kings of other nations, though my subjects and servants.

9 *Is* not [k]Calno [l]as Carchemish? *is* not Hamath as Arpad? *is* not Samaria [m]as Damascus?

[k] Amos 6. 2. [l] 2 Chron. 35. 20. [m] 2 Kings 16. 9.

Is not Calno as Carchemish? have not I conquered one place as well as another, the stronger as well as the weaker? Have I not from time to time added new conquests to the old? *Calno* seems to be the same with *Calneh,* Gen. x. 10; Amos vi. 2, a great and strong city. *Carchemish* was a city upon Euphrates, of which 2 Chron. xxxv. 20; Jer. xlvi. 2. *Is not Hamath as Arpad? Hamath* was an eminent city of Syria, not far from Euphrates, called *Hemath,* or *Hamath the great,* Amos vi. 2; of which see 2 Kings xiv. 28; xvii. 24; Jer. xlix. 23. *Arpad* seems to have been an obscure place, not being elsewhere named. Is not that as soon conquered as this? *Is not Samaria as Damascus?* or, shall *not Samaria* be *as Damascus?* Shall I not take that as I have done this city? For although Damascus possibly was not yet taken by the Assyrian, yet the prophet speaks of it as actually taken, because these words are prophetically delivered, and supposed to be uttered by the king of Assyria at or about the siege of Samaria, when Damascus was taken.

10 As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;

Hath found, i. e. hath taken, as this word is used, Prov. i. 13, and oft elsewhere, the antecedent being put for the consequent, because what men find they commonly take to themselves. *The kingdoms of the idols;* which worshipped their own proper idols, and vainly imagined that they could protect them from power. He calls the gods of the several nations, not excepting Jerusalem, *idols,* by way of contempt, because none of them could deliver their people out of his hands, as he brags, Isa. xxxvii. 11, 12, and because he judged them to be but petty gods, far inferior to the sun, which was the great god of the Assyrians. *Excel them,* to wit, in reputation and strength; which blasphemy of his proceeded from his deep ignorance of the true God.

11 Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?

I shall certainly do it, and neither God nor man can hinder me.

12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, *that* when the Lord hath performed his whole work [n]upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, [o]I will †punish the fruit †of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

[n] 2 Kings 19. 31. [o] Jer. 50. 18. † Heb. *visit upon.* † Heb. *of the greatness of the heart.*

Wherefore; because of this impudent blasphemy. *Hath performed his whole work,* of chastising his people so long and so much as he sees fit and necessary for them. *Punish,* Heb. *visit,* to wit, in wrath, as before on ver. 3. *The glory of his high looks;* his insolent words and carriages, proceeding from intolerable pride of heart.

13 [p]For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done *it,* and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants ‖like a valiant *man:*

[p] Is. 37. 24. Ezek. 28. 4, &c. Dan. 4. 30. ‖ Or, *like many people.*

He saith, not only within himself, but before his courtiers and others. *By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom;* I owe all my successes to my own power, and valour, and wise conduct, and to no other god or man. *I have removed the bounds;* I have invaded their lands, and

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added them to my own dominions, as this phrase is used, Prov. xxii. 28; Hos. v. 10. *Their treasures*, Heb. *their prepared* things, their gold and silver, and other precious things, which they had long been preparing and laying in store. *I have put down;* deprived of their former glory and power.

q Job 31. 25.

14 And [q]my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs *that are* left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

Hath found as a nest; as one findeth young birds in a nest, the *nest* being put for the birds in it, as Deut. xxxii. 11. No less easily do I both find and take them. *Eggs that are left;* which the dam hath left in her nest. This is more easy than the former; for the young birds might possibly make some faint resistance, or flutter away; but the eggs could do neither. *All the earth;* all the riches of the earth or world. An hyperbole not unusual in the mouths of such persons, upon such occasions. *That moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped;* as birds do, which, when they see and cannot hinder the robbing of their nests, express their grief and anger by hovering about them, and by mournful cries.

r Jer. 51. 20.

15 Shall [r]the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? *or* shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? ‖as if the rod should shake *itself* against them that lift it up, *or* as if the staff should lift up ‖*itself, as if it were* no wood.

‖ Or, as if a rod should shake [or] that lift it up.
‖ Or, that which is not wood.

Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? How absurd and unreasonable a thing is it for thee, who art but an instrument in God's hand, and canst do nothing without his leave and help, to blaspheme thy Lord and Master, who hath as great a power over thee, to manage thee as he pleaseth, as a man hath over the axe wherewith he heweth! *As if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up;* or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by other interpreters, *as if a rod should shake* (i. e. shall pretend to shake, or should boast that it would or could shake; which may easily be understood out of the foregoing words) *them that lift it up. As if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood;* as if a staff should forget that it was wood, and should pretend or attempt to lift up itself either without or against the man that moveth it; which is absurd in the very supposition of it, and were much more unreasonable in the practice. Nor are thy boasts less ridiculous.

16 Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his [s]fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

s ch. 5. 17.

The Lord of hosts; the sovereign Lord and General of thine and all other armies. *Send among his fat ones leanness;* strip him, and all his great princes and commanders, of all their wealth, and might, and glory. *He shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire;* he will destroy his numerous and victorious army, and that suddenly and irrecoverably, as the fire doth those combustible things which are cast into it; which was fulfilled 2 Kings xix. 25.

17 And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;

t ch. 9. 18. & 27. 4.

The light of Israel, that God who is and will be a comfortable light to his people, *shall be for a fire* to the Assyrians, who shall have heat without light, as it is in hell. *His thorns and briers;* his vast army, which is no more able to resist God, than dry thorns and briers are to oppose the fire which is kindled among them.

18 And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of [u]his fruitful field, †both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.

u 2 Kings 19. 23.
† Heb. *from the soul, and even to the flesh.*

Of his forest; of his great army, which may not unfitly be compared to a forest, either for the multitude of their spears, which, when lifted up together, resemble the trees of a wood or forest; or for the numbers of men, which stood as thick as trees do in a forest. *Of his fruitful field;* of his soldiers, which stood as thick as ears of corn do in a fruitful field. Heb. *of his Carmel;* wherein it is not improbably conjectured by our late most learned Mr. Gataker, that there is an allusion to that brag of the Assyrian, who threatens that he would *go up to the sides of* (Israel's) *Lebanon,* and to *the forest of his Carmel,* and there *cut down the tall cedars thereof:* which though it was not uttered by the Assyrian till some years after this time, yet was exactly foreknown to God, who *understandeth* men's *thoughts,* and much more their words, *afar off,* Psal. cxxxix. 2—4, and therefore might direct the prophet to use the same words, and to turn them against himself; Whereas thou threatenest to destroy Israel's Carmel, I will destroy thy Carmel. *Both soul and body,* i. e. totally, both inwardly and outwardly, both strength and life. Heb. *from the soul to the flesh;* which may possibly signify the manner of their death, which should be by a sudden stroke of the destroying angel upon their inward and vital parts, which was speedily followed by the consumption of their flesh. See Isa. xxxvii. 35, 36. *They shall be,* the state of that king, and of his great and valiant army, shall be, *as when a standard-bearer fainteth;* like that of an army when their standard-bearer either is slain, or rather flees away, which strikes a panic terror into the whole army, and puts them to flight.

19 And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be †few, that a child may write them.

† Heb. number.

The rest of the trees of his forest; the remainders of that mighty host. *That a child may write them;* that they may be easily numbered by the meanest accomptant. A child may be their muster-master.

20 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, [x]shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

x See 2 Kin. 16. 7. 2 Chr. 28. 20.

The remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob; such Jews as shall be preserved from that sweeping Assyrian scourge, by which great numbers both of Israel and Judah were destroyed, and from their succeeding calamities. For that this place looks beyond the deliverance from the Assyrian army, and unto the times of the New Testament, seems probable, 1. From the following verses, which belong to that time, as we shall see. 2. From the state of the Jewish nation, which, after that deliverance, continued to be very sad and corrupt, and averse from that reformation which Hezekiah and Josiah prosecuted with all their might; and therefore the body of that people had not yet learned this lesson of sincere trusting in God alone. 3. From St. Paul's explication and application of these words, Rom. ix. 27, of which more may be said when I come thither. And for the words *in that day,* which may seem to restrain this to the time of the Assyrian invasion, they are frequently used in the prophets of the times of the gospel, as Isa. ii. 11; iv. 2; xi. 10, &c. *Shall no more again stay upon him that smote them;* shall learn by this judgment and experience never to trust to the Assyrians for help, as Ahaz and his people now did. *In truth;* not only by profession, but sincerely.

21 [y]The remnant shall return, *even* the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

y ch. 7. 3.

The remnant; or, *a remnant;* or, but *a remnant;* or, *a remnant* only; which particles are oft understood, as hath been formerly and frequently observed, and may be here supplied from the following verses. *Unto the mighty God;* unto the Messiah, expressly called *the mighty God,* Isa. ix. 6.

22 [z]For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, [a]*yet* a remnant †of them shall return: [b]the consumption decreed shall overflow ‖with righteousness.

z Rom. 9. 27.
a ch. 6. 13.
† Heb. in, or, *among.*
b ch. 28. 22.
‖ Or, in.

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Israel; or, *O Israel;* to whom by an apostrophe he directeth his speech. *A remnant;* or, *a remnant* only, as before; for that this is a threatening in respect of some, as well as a promise in respect of others, is evident from the rest of this and from the following verse. *The consumption decreed shall overflow;* the destruction of the people of Israel was already decreed or determined (as it is in the next verse) by the fixed counsel of God, and therefore must needs be executed, and like a deluge overflow them. *With righteousness,* as this word is rendered, Rom. ix. 28; the preposition *in* or *with* being here understood, as it is every where. And this is added, to show, that although this judgment of God may seem very severe, yet it is most just, not only by the laws of strict and rigid justice, but even by the rules of equity and clemency, as this word oft signifies, inasmuch as he hath spared a considerable remnant of them, when he might have destroyed them utterly. And so this word is added as a reason why a remnant, and why but a remnant, should return, because God would both glorify his justice, and manifest his mercy. And in this mixed sense the apostle seems to expound this place, Rom. ix. 27, 28.

c ch. 28. 22. Dan. 9. 27. Rom. 9. 28.

23 [c]For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

Shall make a consumption, even determined; the same thing is repeated in other words, with some addition; God will execute his own decree concerning the destruction of Israel, which he is well able to do, because he is the Lord of hosts. *In the midst of all the land;* in all the parts of the land, not excepting Jerusalem, which was to be preserved in the Assyrian invasion, when almost all the other fenced cities of Judah should be taken; but should afterwards be taken and destroyed, as it was, first by the Babylonians, and then by the Romans.

24 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest

d ch. 37. 6.

in Zion, [d]be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, ‖ and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of [e]Egypt.

‖ Or, *but he shall lift up his staff for thee.*

e Exod. 14.

Therefore: this is an inference, not from the words immediately foregoing, but from the whole prophecy. Seeing the Assyrian shall be destroyed, and a remnant of my people preserved and restored. *In Zion;* in Jerusalem, which is frequently called *Zion,* as Psal. xlviii. 12; lxxvii. 2; Isa. i. 8, 27; xxxiii. 20, &c.; which he mentions, because this was the principal object of the Assyrians' design and rage, and there were the temple, and thrones of justice, and the king and his princes, and multitudes had fled thither from the Assyrian. *He shall smite thee with a rod;* he shall afflict thee, but not destroy thee. Compare 1 Kings xii. 11. *After the manner of Egypt;* as the Egyptians formerly did, and with the same ill success to themselves, and comfortable issue to you.

f ch. 54. 7. g Dan. 11. 36.

25 [f]For yet a very little while, [g]and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

The indignation; mine anger, as it is explained in the next clause; either, 1. Towards my people; which shall weaken the Assyrian, whose great strength lay there; of which see above, ver. 5. Or, 2. Towards the Assyrian, with whom God was very angry, ver. 12, &c., yea, so angry, as not to be satisfied without their destruction, as it follows. *Shall cease;* as anger commonly doth, when vengeance is fully executed.

26 And the LORD of hosts shall stir up

h 2 Kings 19. 35. i Judg. 7. 25. ch. 9. 4. k Ex. 14. 26, 27.

[h]a scourge for him according to the slaughter of [i]Midian at the rock of Oreb: and [k]*as* his rod *was* upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

Shall stir up a scourge; shall send a destroying angel, Isa. xxxvii. 36. *According to the slaughter of Midian;* whom God slew suddenly, and unexpectedly, and in the night, as he did the Assyrians. *At the rock of Oreb;* upon which one of their chief princes was slain, and nigh unto which the Midianites were destroyed. *Was upon the sea,* to smite and divide it, and so to make way both for thy deliverance, and for the destruction of the Egyptians. *After the manner of Egypt;* as he did in Egypt, to bring his plagues upon that land and people.

27 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* [l]his burden †shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of [m]the anointing.

l ch. 14. 25. † Heb. *shall remove.* m Ps. 105. 15. Dan. 9. 24. 1 John 2. 20.

His burden; the burden of the Assyrian; for so it was actively, because imposed by him; though passively it was Israel's burden, as being laid upon him. *Because of the anointing;* out of the respect which I bear to that holy unction which I have established amongst you. And so this may relate either, 1. To the body of the people, who were in some sort anointed, being made by God *a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation,* Exod. xix. 6; or, 2. To that sacred kingdom which God had, by his positive precept and solemn covenant, established in David and his posterity for ever. The Jews therefore, and some others, understand this of Hezekiah, to whom God had a singular respect, and upon whose prayers God gave this deliverance, as we read, Isa. xxxvii. 15, &c. Possibly it might be better understood of David, who is oft mentioned in Scripture by the name of God's *anointed,* as Psal. xx. 6; lxxxix. 20; cxxxii. 17, and elsewhere; and for whose sake God gave many deliverances to the succeeding kings and ages, as is expressly affirmed, 1 Kings xi. 32, 34; 2 Kings viii. 19. And, which is more considerable, God declareth that he would give this very deliverance from the *Assyrian for David's sake,* 2 Kings xix. 34; xx. 6. But the Messiah, I doubt not, is here principally intended, of whom David was but a type, and who was in a peculiar manner *anointed* above all *his fellows,* as is said, Psal. xlv. 7. For he is the foundation of all the promises, 2 Cor. i. 20, and of all the deliverances and mercies granted to God's people in all ages; whence this very prophet makes use of this great promise of the Messiah, as an assurance that God would make good his promises of particular deliverances from their present or approaching calamities, as Isa. vii. 14, &c.; ix. 4, &c. And therefore the prophet might well say, that God would grant this deliverance for Christ's sake; especially if it be considered, that this was the very reason why God had promised, and did so constantly perform, his mercy promised unto the tribe of Judah, and unto the house of David, until the coming of the Messiah, because the Messiah was to come of the tribe of Judah, and of the posterity of David, and was to succeed David in his throne and kingdom; and he was to be known by this character; and therefore this tribe, and house, and kingdom were to continue, and that in a visible manner, till Christ came.

28 He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages:

He is come to Aiath: here the prophet returns to his former discourse concerning the Assyrian invasion into Judah; which he describes, after the manner of the prophets, as a thing present, and sets down the several stages by which he marched towards Jerusalem. The places here named are most of them towns of Benjamin, and some of Judah, as appears from other scriptures; of which it is needless to say more in this place. *He,* to wit, Sennacherib, king of Assyria. *is come* in his way to Jerusalem. *He hath laid up his carriages;* leaving such things there as were less necessary, that so he might march with more expedition. Heb. *he visited his vessels* or *instruments;* which may be meant of his taking a survey of his army and artillery, to see that all things were ready for his enterprise.

29 They are gone over [n]the passage: they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; [o]Gibeah of Saul is fled.

n 1 Sam. 13. 23. o 1 Sam. 11. 4.

The passage; some considerable passage then well known, possibly that 1 Sam. xiv. 4. The people fled to Jerusalem for fear of the Assyrian.

30 †Lift up thy voice, O daughter [p]of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto [q]Laish, [r]O poor Anathoth.

† Heb. *Cry shrill with thy voice.* p 1 Sam. 25. 44. q Judg. 18. 7. r Josh. 21. 18.

O daughter of Gallim: Jerusalem was the mother city,

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and lesser towns are commonly called *her daughters*, as hath been oft noted.

s Josh. 15. 31. 31 s Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee.

t 1 Sam. 21. 1 & 22. 19. Neh. 11. 32. u ch. 13. 2. x ch. 37. 22. 32 As yet shall he remain t at Nob that day: he shall u shake his hand *against* the mount of x the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

He shall shake his hand, by way of commination. But withal he intimates that he should be able to do no more against it, and that there his proud waves should be stayed, as it is declared in the following verses, and in the history.

33 Behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and y the high ones of stature *shall be* hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled.

y See Amos 2. 9.

The bough; the top bough, Sennacherib; or, *the boughs*, his valiant soldiers or commanders of his army, which he compareth to a forest, ver. 18, 34. *With terror;* with a most terrible and amazing stroke by an angel.

34 And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall ‖ by a mighty one.

‖ Or, mightily.

With iron; or, as *with iron*, as the trees of the forest are cut down by instruments of iron. *And Lebanon;* or, his *Lebanon*, the pronoun being oft understood in the Hebrew text; the Assyrian army, which being before compared to a forest or wood, and being called his *Carmel* in the Hebrew text, ver. 18, may very fitly, upon the same ground, be called his *Lebanon* here; especially considering that the king of Assyria is called *a cedar of Lebanon*, Ezek. xxxi. 3. *By a mighty one;* by a mighty angel, Isa. xxxvii. 36.

CHAP. XI.

Christ, a Branch out of the root of Jesse, endued with the Spirit of the Lord, should set up a kingdom by the preaching of his word, 1—5. *The members of his church should live in peace and unity*, 6—9; *and be victorious over their enemies; and to him should the Gentiles seek*, 10—16.

a ch. 53. 2. Zech. 6. 12. Rev. 5. 5. b Acts 13. 23. ver. 10. c ch. 4. 2. Jer. 23. 5. AND a there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of b Jesse, and c a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

The prophet having despatched the Assyrian, and comforted God's people with the promise of their deliverance from that formidable enemy, now he proceeds further, and declares that God will do greater things than that for them, that he will give them their long-expected and much-desired Messiah, and by him will work wonders of mercy for them. For this is the manner of the prophets, to take the occasion of particular deliverances, to fix the people's minds upon their great and everlasting deliverance from all their enemies by the Messiah. And having said that the *Assyrian yoke should be destroyed because of the anointing*, chap. x. 27, he now more particularly explains who that anointed person was. *A rod*, or *twig*, called a *Branch* in the next clause. Parents are oft compared to roots or trees, and their children to branches. He speaks of the most eminent Branch, of that famous Son of a virgin, Isa. vii. 14, of that wonderful Child, Isa. ix. 6; not of Hezekiah, as some of the Jews and judaizing Christians conceit; but of the Messiah, as will evidently appear from the following description. *The stem*, or *trunk;* or rather, *stump;* for the word properly signifies a trunk cut off from the root; or, *root*, as the LXX. here render the word, and as it is explained in the next clause. By which he clearly implies that the Messiah should be born of the royal house of David, at that time when it was in a most forlorn and contemptible condition, like a tree cut down, and whereof nothing is left but a stump or root under ground; which really was the state of David's family when Christ was born, as is notoriously known, but was in a far better condition when Hezekiah was born. *Of Jesse;* he doth not say of David, but *of Jesse*, who was a private and mean person, 1 Sam. xviii. 18, 23; xx. 30, to intimate, that at the time of Christ's birth the royal family should be reduced to its primitive obscurity. *A Branch shall grow:* he speaks of one not yet born, and therefore not of Hezekiah, who was born divers years before his father Ahaz (in whose time this prophecy was delivered) was king, by comparing 2 Kings xvi. 2; xviii. 2; but of the Messiah. *Out of his roots;* out of one of his roots, i. e. branches, as this word *root* is sometimes used, by a very usual figure called a *metonymy*, as it is here below, ver. 10; Isa. liii. 2; Hos. xiv. 5.

d ch. 61. 1. Matt. 3. 16. John 1. 32, 33. & 3. 34. 2 d And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

The Spirit of the Lord; the Holy Ghost, wherewith he was anointed, Acts x. 38, and by whom his mother was overshadowed, Luke i. 35. *Shall rest upon him;* not only come upon him at certain times, as he did upon the prophets now and then at his pleasure, but shall have its constant and settled abode in him; although the same phrase be sometimes used of other prophets in an inferior sense, as Numb. xi. 17; 2 Kings ii. 15. *The Spirit of wisdom and understanding;* which hath these perfections in itself, and confers them upon him. It is neither easy, nor at all necessary, exactly to distinguish these two gifts; it is sufficient that they are necessary qualifications for a governor, and for a teacher, both which offices were to meet in the Messiah; and it is evident that they signify a practical and perfect knowledge of all things necessary for the discharge of his trust, and for his own and people's good, and a sound judgment, to distinguish between things that differ. *Of counsel and might;* of prudence, to give good counsel; and of might and courage, to execute it; which are two necessary qualifications of a ruler. *Of knowledge;* of the perfect knowledge of the whole will and counsel of God, especially that which concerns the salvation of men, the prosecution whereof was his great work, as also of all secret and hidden things, yea, of the hearts of men, the knowledge whereof is ascribed to Christ, Matt. ix. 4; Rev. ii. 23. *Of the fear of the Lord;* not a fear of diffidence or horror, but of reverence; a care to please him, and loathness to offend him; which well became the Messiah towards his God and Father.

† Heb. *scent*, or, *smell.* 3 And shall make him of † quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

Shall make him of quick understanding, Heb. *he shall make him smell*, i. e. perceive, as that word is used, Judg. xvi. 9; Job xxxix. 25; understand or judge, as it is explained in the next clause. Or, *his smelling shall be. Smelling* is put for judging, because the sense of smelling, where it is quick and good, is more exact and sure in the judging of its proper objects, than the senses of seeing and hearing are. *In the fear of the Lord;* which is added, either, 1. As the object of his judging; he is most perspicacious and judicious in the things which concern the *fear*, i. e. the worship and service of God, which he was to order and establish in his church. Or rather, 2. As the rule and manner of his judging, as may be gathered from the opposite and following clause. So the sense is, He shall not judge rashly and partially, but considerately and justly, as the fear of God obligeth all judges to do. *He shall not judge*, of persons or causes. And *judging* seems to be here synecdochically put for absolving or giving sentence for a person, as it is used Psal. vii. 8, 11, and in many other places, because this is opposed to *reproving* in the next clause. *After the sight of his eyes;* according to outward appearance, as men must do, because they cannot search men's hearts. 1 Sam. xvi. 7, or with respect of persons, but with *righteous judgment*, which is opposed to *judging by appearance*, John vii. 24. *Reprove.* i. e. condemn or pass sentence against a person; for Christ is here supposed to be a Judge, and so he speaks of a judicial reproof. *After the hearing of his ears*, by false or uncertain rumours or suggestions, but shall thoroughly examine all causes, and search out the truth of things, and the very hearts of men.

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e Ps. 72. 2, 4. Rev. 19. 11.
‖ Or, *argue.*

4 But e with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and ‖reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall f smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

f Job 4. 9. Mal. 4. 6. 2 Thess. 2. 8. Rev. 1. 16. & 2. 16. & 19. 15.

Judge the poor; defend and deliver them, as *judging* is oft used, as Deut. xxxii. 36; Jer. v. 28; xxii. 16, &c. Or, *judge for the poor;* the prefix *lamed* being understood out of the next clause, as is usual in the Hebrew language. He mentions *the poor*, partly to signify the justice of this Judge, because human judges commonly neglect and oppress the poor; and partly to declare the nature of Christ's kingdom, and the quality of his subjects, who should, for the generality of them, be the poor and contemptible sort of men, Matt. xi. 5; James ii. 5. *Reprove;* or, as this word seems to be taken, ver. 3, condemn, to wit, their malicious and furious enemies. *For the meek;* on their behalf, or giving sentence for them. He calls them *meek*, whom before he called *poor*, partly to show his justice in defending them who are most exposed to the contempt and injuries of men; and partly to signify that his subjects should be poor in spirit as well as in the world, and not poor and proud, as many worldly men are. *Smite*, i. e. slay, as this word is used, Isa. xxxvii. 36, and very commonly, and as it is expounded in the next clause. *The earth;* the men of the earth, *the wicked*, as it is in the next branch of the verse; fitly called *earth*, either because of their earthly minds and conversations, as they are called *the men of this world that have their portion here* upon the earth, Psal. xvii. 14, or because the far greatest part of the inhabitants of the earth is wicked; *the whole world lies in wickedness.* 1 John v. 19; for which reason they are oft called *the world*, as John xvi. 20; xvii. 9, 25, &c. *With the rod of his mouth;* with his word, which is his sceptre, and *the rod of his power*, Psal. cx. 2, which is *sharper than a sword*, Heb. iv. 12; by the preaching whereof he subdued the world to himself, and will destroy his enemies, 2 Thess. ii. 8. This he adds, further to declare the nature of Christ's kingdom, that it is not of this world, and that his sceptre and arms are not carnal, but spiritual, as it is said, 2 Cor. x. 4. *With the breath of his lips;* with his word breathed out of his lips, whereby he explains what he meant by the foregoing *rod*. *Shall he slay the wicked;* either spiritually, by inflicting deadly plagues upon their souls; or properly, which he doth very frequently by his terrible judgments executed upon many of them, and will certainly do, and that fully and universally, at his coming to judgment.

g See Eph. 6. 14.

5 And g righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Shall be the girdle of his loins; it shall adorn him, and be the glory of his government, as a girdle was used for ornament, Isa. iii. 24, and as an ensign of power, Job xii. 18; and it shall constantly cleave to him, in all his administrations, *as a girdle cleaveth to a man's loins*, which is the prophet's similitude, Jer. xiii. 11. *The girdle of his reins;* the same thing in other words.

h ch. 65. 25. Ezek. 34. 25. Hos. 2. 18.

6 h The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, &c.; the creatures shall be restored to that state of innocency in which they were before the fall of man. But this is not to be understood literally, which is a gross and vain conceit of some Jews; but spiritually and metaphorically, as is evident. And the sense of the metaphor is this, Men of fierce, and cruel, and ungovernable dispositions, shall be so transformed by the preaching of the gospel, and by the grace of Christ, that they shall become most humble, and gentle, and tractable, and shall no more vex and persecute those *meek* and *poor* ones mentioned ver. 4, but shall become such as they; of which we have instances in Saul being made a Paul, and in the rugged jailer, Acts xvi., and in innumerable others. But how can this be applied to Hezekiah with any colour? *A little child shall lead them;* they will submit their proud and rebellious wills to the conduct and command of the meanest persons that speak to them in Christ's name.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Shall feed together, as it follows, without any danger or fear. *The lion shall eat straw*, the grass and fruits of the earth, as they did at first, Gen. i. 29, 30, and shall not devour other living creatures, as now they do.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the ‖cockatrice' den.

‖ Or, *adder's.*

The asp; a most fierce and poisonous serpent, Deut. xxxii. 33; Job xx. 14, 16, which also will not be charmed by any art of man, Psal. lviii. 5. *The cockatrice;* a serpent of more than ordinary cunning and cruelty, Prov. xxiii. 32. The meaning is, They shall not fear to be either deceived or destroyed by those who formerly watched all opportunities to do it.

9 i They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for k the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

i Job 5. 23. ch. 2. 4. & 35. 9. k Hab. 2. 14.

In my holy mountain; in Zion, in my church. Wherever the gospel comes and prevails, it will have this effect. *The earth;* metonymically put for the inhabitants of the earth; and as before it was used for the greater part, ver. 4, so here it is used for the better part of the world. *Of the knowledge of the Lord;* of saving and practical knowledge; whereby he intimates that all that savageness and malignity which is in wicked men towards true Christians proceeded from their deep ignorance, and particularly from ignorance of God; and withal, that a right knowledge of God will make a marvellous and thorough change in the dispositions and conversations of men. *The sea;* the channel of the sea, the thing contained being put for the thing containing, by a metonymy common in Scripture and all authors.

10 ¶ l And in that day m there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the n Gentiles seek: and o his rest shall be †glorious.

l ch. 2. 11. m ver. 1. Rom. 15. 12. n Rom. 15. 10. o Heb. 4. 1, &c. †Heb. *glory.*

A root; a branch growing upon the root; of which see on ver. 1. *Shall stand for an ensign;* shall grow up into a great and high tree, shall become a visible and eminent ensign. *Of the people;* which not only the Jews, but all nations may discern, and to which they may and shall resort. *To it shall the Gentiles seek;* as the gospel shall be preached to the Gentiles, so they shall receive it, and believe in the Messiah. *His rest;* his resting-place, as this word frequently signifies, as Gen. viii. 9; xlix. 15; Psal. cxxxii. 8, 14; Isa. xxxiv. 14; Micah ii. 10; his temple or church, the place of his presence and abode. *Shall be glorious;* shall be filled with greater glory than the Jewish tabernacle and temple were; of which see on Hag. ii. 9; only this glory shall be spiritual, consisting in glorious ordinances, in the plentiful effusions of the excellent gifts, and graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit.

11 And it shall come to pass p in that day, *that* the LORD shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, q from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

p ch. 2. 11. q Zech. 10. 10.

The second time: the first time, to which this word *second* relates, seems to be, either, 1. The deliverance out of Egypt, as most both Jewish and Christian interpreters understand it; and then this second deliverance must be that out of Babylon. Or, 2. The deliverance out of Babylon; and then this second deliverance must be in the days of the Messiah; which, with submission to better judgments, seems to me

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more probable, 1. Because that first deliverance is supposed to be, like the second, a deliverance of the remnant of this people from several countries, into which they were dispersed; whereas that out of Egypt was a deliverance not of a remnant, but of the whole nation, and that out of Egypt only. 2. Because this second deliverance was universal, extending to the generality of the outcasts and dispersed ones, both of Israel, or the ten tribes, and of Judah, or the two tribes, as is evident from ver. 12, 13; whereas that out of Babylon reached only to the two tribes, and to some few of the ten tribes which were mixed with them, as is acknowledged, both by Jews and Christians. 3. Because this second deliverance was given them in the days of the Messiah, and did accompany or follow the conversion of the Gentiles, as is evident from ver. 9, 10; whereas that out of Babylon was long before the coming of the Messiah, and the calling of the Gentiles. *From Assyria, &c.;* from all places, both far and near, into which either the ten tribes or the two tribes were carried captives; for the places of both their captivities are here named; of which it is needless to discourse particularly, because they are well known, and have been considered in former texts. Only *Pathros* was not named before; and that was a province in Egypt, which yet is sometimes distinguished from Egypt strictly so called. See on Jer. xliv. 1, 15; Ezek. xxix. 14; xxx. 14.

12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together [r] the dispersed of Judah from the four † corners of the earth.

[r] John 7. 35. Jam. 1. 1. † Heb. wings.

For the nations; all nations, Jews and Gentiles, who shall then embrace the true faith and the Messiah, as was said, ver. 10. *The outcasts;* that were driven and banished out of their own land into foreign parts, as the word implies. *Of Israel;* strictly so called, or of the ten tribes, as is manifest, both from their opposition to Judah in this verse, and from the mention of Ephraim in the next verse.

13 [s] The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

[s] Jer. 3. 18. Ezek. 37. 16, 17, 22. Hos. 1. 11.

Of Ephraim, i. e. of the ten tribes, frequently called by the name of Ephraim, as hath been already and frequently observed, between whom and Judah there were great emulations and contentions. *Shall depart;* of enemies they shall be made friends, and of wolves lambs, as was said before on ver. 6; they shall be united together in one church, under the Messiah, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *The adversaries of Judah;* not the body of Ephraim, for they are supposed to be reconciled, and they shall not be cut off, but live in love with Judah, as we see by the next clause; but those few of them which possibly may continue in their enmity against them, together with all the rest of their adversaries. *Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim;* not only all outward hostilities shall cease, but also their inward animosities.

14 But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil † them of the east together: [t] † they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; † and the children of Ammon [u] shall obey them.

† Heb. *the children of the east.* t Dan. 11. 41. † Heb. *Edom and Moab shall be the laying on of their hand.* † Heb. *the children of Ammon their obedience.* u ch. 60. 14.

Shall fly upon the shoulders; either it is a metaphor from birds and beasts of prey, which commonly fasten upon the shoulders of cattle; or from wrestlers, who endeavour to catch hold of their adversaries' shoulders, that they may throw them down. Or, *shoulder* is put for *a side,* as Numb. xxxiv. 11; Josh. xv. 8, 10, or for part or quarter of a country, as Deut. xxxiii. 12. *They shall spoil them;* they shall subdue them; which is to be understood of the spiritual victory which the Jewish Messiah shall obtain by his apostles and ministers over all nations, in bringing them to the obedience of his gospel. For it is the manner of the prophets to speak of the spiritual things of the gospel under such corporal representations.

15 And the LORD [x] shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, [y] and make *men* go over † dryshod.

[x] Zech. 10. 11. [y] Rev. 16. 12. † Heb. *in shoes.*

Shall utterly destroy; shall not only divide it, as of old, but will quite dry it up, that it may be a highway, as it is explained in the next verse. *The tongue of the Egyptian sea;* the Red Sea, which may well be called *the Egyptian sea,* both because it borders upon Egypt, and because the Egyptians were drowned in it, which is called *a tongue* in the Hebrew text, Josh. xv. 2, 5, as having some resemblance with a tongue; for which reason the name of *tongue* hath been given by geographers to promontories of land which shoot forth into the sea, as this sea did shoot out of the main ocean into the land. *Shake his hand;* he alludes to Moses's shaking of his hand with the rod of God in it over the sea; *over the river,* to wit, of Egypt, Nilus, as appears both from the foregoing and from the following words. *The seven streams;* for which Nilus is famous in all authors, and by which it emptieth itself into the sea.

16 And [z] there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; [a] like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

[z] ch. 19. 23. [a] Ex. 14. 29. ch. 51. 10. & 63. 12, 13.

From Assyria; as there was another highway from Egypt in the former verse. So the sense is, that all impediments shall be removed, and a way made for the return of God's Israel from all parts of the world. He mentions Assyria, because thither the ten tribes were carried, 2 Kings xvii. 23; whose case seemed to be most desperate.

CHAP. XII.

A thanksgiving of the faithful for their redemption.

AND [a] in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

[a] ch. 2. 11.

In that day; when this great work of the reduction of God's Israel, and of the conversion of the Gentiles, promised in the foregoing chapter, shall be fulfilled.

2 Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD [b] JEHOVAH *is* my [c] strength and *my* song; he also is become my salvation.

[b] Ps. 83. 18. [c] Ex. 15. 2. Ps. 118. 14.

God is my salvation; my salvation hath not been brought to pass by man, but by the almighty power of God.

3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw [d] water out of the wells of salvation.

[d] John 4. 10, 14. & 7. 37, 38.

Your thirsty and fainting souls shall be filled with Divine graces and comforts, which you may plentifully draw from God in the use of gospel ordinances, which was oft signified by *water,* both in the Old and in the New Testament. He seems to allude to the state of Israel in the wilderness, where when they had been tormented with thirst, they were greatly refreshed and delighted with those waters which God so graciously and wonderfully afforded them in that dry and barren land, Numb. xx. 11; xxi. 16—18.

4 And in that day shall ye say, [e] Praise the LORD, ‖ call upon his name, [f] declare his doings among the people, make mention that his [g] name is exalted.

[e] 1 Chr. 16. 8. Ps. 105. 1. ‖ Or, *proclaim his name.* [f] Ps. 145. 4, 5, 6. [g] Ps. 34. 3.

Among the people; in all the earth, as it follows, ver. 5; unto the Gentile world, who shall partake in the blessing, and will join with you in the praising of God for it.

5 [h] Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this *is* known in all the earth.

[h] Ex. 15. 1, 21. Ps. 68. 32. & 98. 1.

The knowledge of this glorious work of our redemption

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by the Messiah shall no longer be confined to Israel's land, as it hitherto hath been; but shall reach to all nations.

i cn. 54. 1. Zeph. 3. 14. † Heb. inhabitress. k Ps. 71. 22. & 89. 18. ch. 41. 14, 16.

6 [i]Cry out and shout, thou †inhabitant of Zion: for great *is* [k]the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

CHAP. XIII.

God's armies, 1—5. *The destruction of Babylon by the Persians and Medes: their great distress and anguish; and their utter desolation*, 6—22.

cir. 712. a ch. 21. 1. & 47. 1. Jer. 50. & 51.

THE [a]burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

The burden: this title is commonly given to sad prophecies, which indeed are grievous burdens to them upon whom they are laid. See 2 Kings ix. 25; Jer. xxiii. 33. 36. *Of Babylon;* of the city and empire of Babylon by Cyrus, for their manifold and great sins, and in order to the deliverance of his people.

b ch. 5. 26. & 18. 3. Jer. 50. 2. c Jer. 51. 25. d ch. 10. 32.

2 [b]Lift ye up a banner [c]upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, [d]shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

Lift ye up a banner, to gather soldiers together for this expedition. *Upon the high mountain;* whence it may be discerned at a considerable distance. Withal he seems to intimate that their enemies should come from the mountainous country of Media. *Unto them;* to the Medes, who are named below, ver. 17. *Shake the hand;* beckon to them with your hand, that they may come to this service. *That they may go into the gates of the nobles;* that they may go and fight against Babylon, and take it, and so enter into the palaces of the king, and of his princes, and spoil them at their pleasure; which the Medes and Persians did. The manner of expression implies how easily and expeditiously they did their work, that, like Cæsar, they might say they only came, and saw, and overcame.

3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called [e]my mighty ones for mine anger, *even* them that [f]rejoice in my highness.

e Joel 3. 11. f Ps. 149. 2, 5, 6.

My sanctified ones; the Medes and Persians, fitly so called, because they were solemnly designed and set apart by God for his own service, and for this holy work of executing his just vengeance upon them. *My mighty ones;* those whom I have made mighty for this work. *In my highness;* or, as others render it, *in my glory*, materially considered, to wit, in the doing of that work which tends much to the advancement of my glory, in destroying of the Babylonian empire. For otherwise the Medes had no regard to God nor to his glory, but only to their own carnal ends.

4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, †like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the LORD of hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

† Heb. *the likeness of.*

The kingdoms of nations; the Medes and Persians, and other nations which served under them in this war; of which see Jer. xxv. 14; xxvii. 7; l. 41.

5 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, *even* the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

From the end of heaven; from the ends of the earth under heaven, as Matt. xxiv. 30; which is not to be understood strictly and properly, but popularly and hyperbolically, as such expressions are commonly used in sacred and profane authors. And yet in some respects this might be truly said of Persia, which on the south side was bounded by the main ocean; as for the same reason Sheba, a part of Arabia, is called *the utmost parts of the earth*, Matt. xii. 42. *The weapons of his indignation;* the Medes and Persians, who were but a rod in God's hand, and the instruments of his anger, as was said of the Assyrian, Isa. x. 5. *To destroy the whole land*, to wit, of Babylon, of which he is now speaking.

6 ¶ Howl ye; [g]for the day of the LORD *is* at hand; [h]it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

g Zeph. 1. 7. Rev. 6. 17. h Joel 1. 15.

It shall come as a destruction; or rather, *a destruction* or *devastation shall come*, as the LXX. and vulgar Latin render it. For this was not *as a destruction*, but was a destruction indeed. And the particle *as* is not seldom used to express, not the likeness, but the reality of the thing, as John i. 14. *From the Almighty;* who fighteth for your adversaries, and against you, and therefore your destruction is unavoidable.

7 Therefore shall all hands ‖ be faint, and every man's heart shall melt:

‖ Or, *fall down.*

8 And they shall be afraid: [i]pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall †be amazed †one at another; their faces *shall be as* †flames.

i Ps. 48. 6. ch. 21. 3. † Heb. *wonder.* † Heb. *every man at his neighbour.* † Heb. *faces of the flames.*

They shall be amazed one at another, to see so populous and impregnable a city as Babylon was, so easily and unexpectedly taken. *Flames*, Heb. *faces of flame;* either pale with fear, or inflamed with rage and torment, as men in misery frequently are. Some render it *the faces of Lehabim*, a people descending from Mizraim, Gen. x. 13; 1 Chron. i. 11, i. e. black with pain, as men use to be; of which see Joel ii. 6; Nah. ii. 10.

9 Behold, [k]the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy [l]the sinners thereof out of it.

k Mal. 4. 1. l Ps. 104. 35. Prov. 2. 22.

Cruel both with wrath and fierce anger; divers words are heaped together, to signify the extremity of his anger. *The sinners thereof;* the inhabitants of that city, who were guilty of so much idolatry and cruelty, and all sorts of luxury.

10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be [m]darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

m ch. 24. 21, 23. Ezek. 32. 7. Joel 2. 31. & 3. 15. Matt. 24. 29. Mark 13. 24. Luke 21. 25.

The constellations; which consist of many stars, and therefore give a greater light. *The sun shall be darkened;* either, 1. Properly and really, by an eclipse; for prodigies in heaven do sometimes go before or accompany great and public calamities upon earth. Or, 2. Figuratively, and in appearance. All things shall look darkly and dismally; men shall have no comfort nor hope. See the like descriptions of a most calamitous state, Isa. v. 30; xxxiv. 4; Joel ii. 10, 31, &c. *In his going forth;* as soon as he riseth, when he is most welcome to men, and giveth them hopes of a pleasant day. As soon as they have any appearance or hope of amendment, they shall be instantly disappointed.

11 And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; [n]and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

n ch. 2. 17.

The world; the Babylonish empire, which is called *the world*, as the Roman empire afterward was, Luke ii. 1, because it was extended to a great part of the world, and because it was vastly populous, and Babylon itself looked more like a world than one city. *Of the terrible;* of them who formerly were very terrible for their great power and cruelty.

12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

The city and nation shall be so depopulated, that few men shall be left in it.

13 [o]Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of

o Hag. 2. 6.

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her place, in the wrath of the LORD of
[p] Ps. 110. 5. Lam. 1. 12. hosts, and in [p] the day of his fierce anger.

I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place; a poetical and prophetical description of great horrors and confusions, as if heaven and earth were about to meet together.

14 And it shall be as the chased roe,
and as a sheep that no man taketh up:
[q] Jer. 50. 16. & 51. 9. [q] they shall every man turn to his own
people, and flee every one into his own
land.

And it, to wit, Babylon. *shall be as the chased roe;* fearful in itself, especially when it is pursued by the hunter. *As a sheep that no man taketh up;* in a most forlorn and neglected condition. *Every man;* those soldiers of other and more warlike nations whom she had hired to assist her; which she used to do at other times, but especially upon this great occasion; of which see on Jer. l. 16; li. 9.

15 Every one that is found shall be thrust
through; and every one that is joined *unto them*
shall fall by the sword.

That is found in Babylon, at the taking of it; the expectation whereof made them flee away with all speed.

[r] Ps. 137. 9. Nah. 3. 10. Zech. 14. 2. 16 Their children also shall be [r] dash-
ed to pieces before their eyes; their
houses shall be spoiled, and their wives
ravished.

Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes, as a just recompence for the like cruelty acted by them upon the Jews, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17, which also was foretold, Psal. cxxxvii. 9.

[s] ch. 21. 2. Jer. 51. 11. Dan. 5. 28, 31. 17 [s] Behold, I will stir up the Medes
against them, which shall not regard
silver; and *as for* gold, they shall not
delight in it.

The Medes; under whom he comprehends the Persians, who were their neighbours and confederates in this expedition. *They shall not delight in it;* which is to be understood comparatively. They shall more eagerly pursue the destruction of the people than the getting of spoil; whereby it shall appear that they are only the executioners of my vengeance against them; they will accept no ransom to save their lives.

18 *Their* bows also shall dash the young men
to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the
fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare
children.

Their bows; under which are comprehended their arrows, and possibly other weapons of war; for so generally sometimes is *the bow* used in Scripture, as 2 Sam. i. 18; Psal. lxxviii. 9; Isa. xli. 2. *Shall dash the young men to pieces;* or, *shall pierce the young men through,* as the Chaldee renders it.

[t] ch. 14. 4, 22. [u] Heb. *as the overthrowing.* [u] Gen. 19. 24, 25. Deut. 29. 23. Jer. 49. 18. & 50. 40. 19 ¶ [t] And Babylon, the glory of king-
doms, the beauty of the Chaldees' ex-
cellency, shall be † as when God over-
threw [u] Sodom and Gomorrah.

The glory of kingdoms; which once was the most noble and excellent of all the kingdoms then in being, and was more glorious than the succeeding empires, whence it was represented by the *head of gold,* Dan. ii. 32. *The beauty of the Chaldees' excellency;* the famous and beautiful seat of the Chaldean monarchy. *Shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah;* shall be totally and irrecoverably destroyed, as is more fully expressed in the following verses; which yet was not done immediately upon the taking of the city by Darius and Cyrus, but was fulfilled by degrees, as is confessed by historians, and appears this day.

[x] Jer. 50. 3, 39. & 51. 29, 62. 20 [x] It shall never be inhabited, neither
shall it be dwelt in from generation to
generation: neither shall the Arabian
pitch tent there; neither shall the shep-
herds make their fold there.

It shall never be inhabited, after the destruction threatened shall be fully accomplished. *Neither shall the Arabian,* who dwelt in tents, and wandered from place, where they could find pasture; but shall avoid this place, either because the land, once noted for great fruitfulness, is now become barren; or because the land is accursed by God, and abhorred by all men; or for fear of the wild beasts, as it follows.

[y] ch. 34. 11, —15. Rev. 18. 2. † Heb. *Ziim.* ‖ Heb. *Ochim.* ‖ Or, *ostriches.* † Heb. *daughters of the owl.* 21 [y] But † wild beasts of the desert shall
lie there; and their houses shall be full of
†doleful creatures; and ‖† owls shall
dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; the land being forsaken by men, shall be possessed by wild beasts, which love solitary places. What the Hebrew words used here, and in the next verse, signify, the learned may see in my Latin Synopsis; and for others, it may suffice to know that in which all the learned agree, that these are frightful and solitary creatures; of which if I should particularly discourse, I should rather perplex than edify the vulgar reader.

† Heb. *Iim.* ‖ Or, *palaces.* [z] Jer. 51. 33. 22 And † the wild beasts of the islands
shall cry in their ‖ desolate houses, and
dragons in *their* pleasant palaces: [z] and
her time *is* near to come, and her days
shall not be prolonged.

Her time is near to come; so it was, though not according to man's rash judgment and impatient expectation, yet according to God's estimation, and to the eye of faith, whereby Abraham saw Christ's day as present, many ages before it came, John viii. 56: and comparatively; for it happened within two hundred years; which is but a small proportion of time, if it be compared either with the foregoing or following ages of the world, or with the immense duration of eternity, from whence it was decreed by God, and therefore might well be said now to be near the accomplishment of it. In like manner the apostles speak of the day of judgment as near in their time, though it was at many ages distance. *Her days shall not be prolonged* beyond the time prefixed and appointed by God. Compare Hab. ii. 3.

CHAP. XIV.

Israel should be delivered from the Babylonish captivity: their triumphant insultation over Babel, 1—23. *God's purpose against Assyria,* 24—27. *Palestina is threatened,* 28—32.

[a] Ps. 102. 13. [b] Zech. 1. 17. & 2. 12. [c] ch. 60. 4, 5, 10. Eph. 2. 12, 13, &c. FOR the LORD [a] will have mercy on Ja-
cob, and [b] will yet choose Israel, and set
them in their own land: [c] and the strangers
shall be joined with them, and they shall
cleave to the house of Jacob.

The Lord will have mercy on Jacob; God will pity and deliver his people; and therefore will destroy Babylon, which hinders it, and set up Cyrus, who shall promote it. *Will yet choose Israel;* will renew his choice of them; for he had refused and rejected them. *The stranger shall be joined with them:* so they did in part at their coming from Babylon, being thereunto moved either by the favour which the Jews had in the Persian court, or by the consideration of their wonderful deliverance, and that exactly in the time designed by their holy prophets. But what was then begun was more fully accomplished at the coming of the Messiah.

[d] ch. 49. 22. & 60. 9. & 66. 20. † Heb. *that had taken them captives.* [e] ch. 60. 14. 2 And the people shall take them,
[d] and bring them to their place: and the
house of Israel shall possess them in the
land of the LORD for servants and hand-
maids: and they shall take them captives,
†whose captives they were; [e] and they
shall rule over their oppressors.

Which they might do literally, and sometimes did, after their return into their own land, either by their power with the Persian monarchs, as in the days of Cyrus and Darius,

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and especially of Ahasuerus; or by their own prowess, as in the time of the Maccabees. But this was more evidently and eminently verified in a spiritual sense, in the days of the gospel, when the apostles and other ministers, who were of the Jewish nation, conquered a great part of the Gentile world to the worship and obedience of their Messiah.

3 And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve,

From thy fear; for besides their present hard service, they were in perpetual fear of further severities and sufferings, at the pleasure of their cruel lords and masters.

f ch. 13. 19. Hab. 2. 6. ‖ Or, *taunting speech.* ‖ Or, *exactress of gold.* g Rev. 18. 16.

4 ¶ That thou [f]shalt take up this ‖ proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the ‖ [g]golden city ceased!

Shalt take up into thy mouth, as it is fully expressed, Psal. l. 16. *How hath the oppressor ceased!* this is spoken by way of astonishment and triumph. Who would have thought this possible? *The golden city*, as they used to call themselves; which therefore he expresseth here in a word of their own language.

h Ps. 125. 3.

5 The LORD hath broken [h]the staff of the wicked, *and* the sceptre of the rulers.

This is an answer to the foregoing question. It is God's own work, and not man's; and therefore it is not strange that it is accomplished.

† Heb. *a stroke without removing.*

6 He who smote the people in wrath with †a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, *and* none hindereth.

In anger; with rigour, and not with clemency, as many conquerors have done. *None hindereth;* neither the Babylonians themselves, nor their confederates, could withstand the power of the Medes and Persians.

7 The whole earth is at rest, *and* is quiet: they break forth into singing.

The whole earth; the inhabitants and subjects of that vast empire, who groaned under their cruel bondage.

i ch. 55. 12. Ezek. 31. 16.

8 [i]Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, *and* the cedars of Lebanon, *saying*, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.

The cedars of Lebanon, which were felled down for the service of her pride and luxury, but now are suffered to stand and flourish. It is a figure usual in sacred and profane writers, called *prosopopœia.*

k Ezek. 32. 21. ‖ Or, *The grave.* † Heb. *leaders.* ‖ Or, *great goats.*

9 [k] ‖ Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet *thee* at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, *even* all the †‖ chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

Hell; or, *the grave*, as the same word is rendered, ver. 11, and in innumerable other places; to which he elegantly ascribeth sense and speech, as poets and orators frequently do. *The chief ones*, Heb. *the he-goats;* which lead and govern the flock. *From their thrones;* from their several graves, which he seems to call their *thrones* by way of irony or derision, the only thrones now left to them. Thrones both paved and covered with worms, as is noted, ver. 11, instead of their former thrones made of ivory or silver, and adorned with gold and precious stones.

10 All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us?

Thou, who wast king of kings, and far superior to us in power and authority, that didst neither fear God nor reverence man, that *didst slay whom thou wouldst, and keep alive whom thou wouldst*, Dan. v. 19.

11 Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, *and* the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave; all thy glory is lost and buried with thee. *The noise of thy viols;* all thy musical and melodious instruments, which were much used in Babylon, Dan. iii. 5, 7, 10, and were doubtless used in Belshazzar's solemn feast, Dan. v. 1, at which time the city was taken; to which possibly the prophet here alludes. *The worm is spread under thee*, instead of those rich and stately carpets upon which thou didst frequently tread.

1 ch. 34. 4. ‖ Or, *O day star.*

12 [l]How art thou fallen from heaven, ‖ O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

From heaven; from the height of thy glory and royal majesty. As kings are sometimes called *gods* in Scripture, so their palaces and thrones may be fitly called their *heavens. O Lucifer;* which properly is a bright and eminent star, which ushers in the sun and the morning; but is here metaphorically taken for the high and mighty king of Babylon. And it is a very usual thing, both in prophetical and in profane writers, to describe the princes and potentates of the world under the title of the sun or stars of heaven. Some understand this place of the devil; to whom indeed it may be mystically applied; but as he is never called by this name in Scripture, so it cannot be literally meant of him, but of the king of Babylon, as is undeniably evident from the whole context, which certainly speaks of one and the same person, and describes him as plainly as words can do it. *Son of the morning:* the title of *son* is given in Scripture not only to a person or thing begotten or produced by another, but also in general to any thing which is any way related to another; in which sense we read of *a son of stripes*, Deut. xxv. 2, *the son of a night*, Jonah iv. 10, *a son of perdition*, John xvii. 12, and, which is more agreeable to the present case, *the sons of Arcturus*, Job xxxviii. 32.

m Matt. 11. 23. n Dan. 8. 10. o Ps. 48. 2.

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, [m]I will ascend into heaven, [n]I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, [o]in the sides of the north:

I will ascend into heaven; I will advance myself above the state of a weak and mortal man. Great monarchs are easily induced, by their own vain imaginations, and the flattery of their courtiers, to entertain an opinion of their own divinity; so far that many of them have received and required Divine worship to be paid to them. *Above the stars of God;* either, 1. Above all other kings and potentates whom he hath set up; or, 2. Above the most eminent persons of God's church and people, who are frequently called *stars*, as Dan. viii. 10; Rev. i. 16, 20; xii. 1, which sense the next words favour. *I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation;* I will establish my royal throne upon Mount Zion, where the Jews meet together to worship God. *In the sides of the north:* this is added as a more exact description of the place of the temple, which stood upon Mount Moriah, which was northward from the hill of Zion strictly so called, and was a part of the hill of Zion largely so called. See on Psal. xlviii. 2.

p ch. 47. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 4.

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; [p]I will be like the most High.

Above the heights of the clouds, to wit, into heaven, as he said, ver. 13. *Like the Most High*, in the uncontrollableness of my power, and the universal extent of my dominion over all the earth.

q Matt. 11. 23.

15 Yet thou [q]shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying*, *Is* this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;

Shall narrowly look upon thee; as hardly believing their own eyes, because this change seemed impossible to them. *The earth;* all the nations of the earth.

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17 *That* made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; *that* ‖ opened not the house of his prisoners?

‖ Or, *did not let his prisoners loose homewards.*

Whereby he signifies both his irresistible power, and his continued cruelty. He neither was willing to give them any liberty or ease, nor could any force him to do it.

18 All the kings of the nations, *even* all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.

All of them; other kings most commonly do, as the word *all* is frequently used. *Every one in his own house;* are buried in their own sepulchres, having stately monuments erected to their honour and memory.

19 But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, *and as* the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.

Cast out of thy grave; or, *cast from thy grave* or *burying-place;* which very probably happened to Belshazzar, who was slain in the night, Dan. v. 30, when his people had neither opportunity nor heart to bestow an honourable interment upon him, and the conquerors would not suffer them to do it. *Like an abominable branch;* like a useless and rotten twig of a tree, which he that pruneth the trees cutteth off, and casteth away with abhorrency, and suffers to lie rotting more and more upon the ground; or, like a degenerate plant of a noble vine, which is abominable. *As the raiment of those that are slain;* which, being cut and mangled, and besmeared with mire, and defiled with blood, was cast away with contempt, and abominated as an unclean thing, as it was in divers respects, in that age and state of the church. *That go down to the stones of the pit;* which persons being slain, they, together with their garments, are cast into some pit. He saith, *to the stones of the pit*, either because such bodies are commonly thrown into the next pits, and pits were frequently made by digging stones out of their quarries; or because there usually are a great number of stones in the bottoms of pits, either naturally, or being cast in thither upon divers occasions; and when dead bodies are cast in thither, men use to throw a heap of stones upon them. *As a carcass trodden under feet;* neglected, like such a carcass. Or this might literally happen to Belshazzar's dead body, through military fury and contempt, or from other causes.

20 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, *and* slain thy people: [r] the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

r Job 18. 19. Ps. 21. 10. & 37. 28. & 109. 13

Thou shalt not be joined with them; not in place, for so the kings of several nations did not use to be joined in the same sepulchre; but in condition, not be buried as they are. *Thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people;* thou hast exercised great tyranny and cruelty, not only to thine enemies, but even to thine own subjects; which it is more than probable Belshazzar did, and it is certain that his parents and predecessors had done, whose sins contributed, together with his, to bring down God's judgments upon that empire. *The seed of evil-doers*, such as Belshazzar was, being descended from that Nebuchadnezzar who had made such horrid slaughters and devastations in the world, merely to gratify his own unsatiable lusts, and who had been so impious towards God and his temple, and so bloody towards his church and people. *Shall never be renowned;* or, *shall not be renowned for ever.* Although I have long borne with thee and thy family, and suffered them to get a great name in the world, yet I will now put a period to the renown of thy family and empire.

21 Prepare slaughter for his children [s] for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.

s Ex. 20. 5. Matt. 23. 35.

Prepare slaughter for his children; O ye Medes and Persians, cut off all the branches of the royal family of Babylon. *For the iniquity of their fathers;* in the guilt whereof the children are justly involved, partly because of that community of nature and interest which is between parents and children, which makes them for the most part bear a share with them, as in their rewards and advantages, so also in their punishments and miseries; and partly because they justified their sins by their impenitency, and imitation of their wicked example. *Do not rise*, i. e. not recover their former splendour and power. *With cities;* erected by them, either as instruments of tyranny, to keep the country round about them in slavery, or as monuments of their power and riches, as Babylon was, Dan. iv. 30.

22 For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon [t] the name, and [u] remnant, [x] and son, and nephew, saith the LORD.

t Prov. 10. 7. Jer. 51. 62. u 1 Kings 14. 10. x Job 18. 19.

The name and remnant; the remembrance of those that are dead, and the persons of those who yet survive.

23 [y] I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.

y ch. 34. 11. Zeph. 2. 14.

The bittern; a great water fowl, which thrusting its bill into some broken reed, or hollow thing, makes a great noise; which also delights in solitary places, as also in waterish grounds, such as those were about Babylon. Others render the word *hedge-hog*, or *porcupine;* but this being not considerable in itself, nor at all necessary for the clearing of the text, I shall not trouble the English reader with any discourse about it; and the learned may consult my Latin Synopsis. *Pools of water:* the ground about Babylon was of itself very moist and waterish, because of the great river Euphrates running by it, which was kept from overflowing the country with charge and labour; which being neglected, as it must needs be when the city was destroyed and dispeopled, it was easily turned into pools of water.

24 ¶ The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, *so* shall it stand:

I will not repent of this threatening, as I did of that against Nineveh, Jonah iii. 4, 10. And this solemn oath is added to confirm the faith of God's people, because otherwise the destruction of this vast and mighty empire might seem incredible. But it is to be diligently observed, that this verse doth not only concern this present prophecy of Babylon's destruction by the Medes and Persians, but is also to be extended unto the foregoing prophecy concerning the overthrow of Sennacherib and the Assyrian host, chap. x., as appears by the next verse, where the sum of that prophecy is repeated. Nor is this any digression, but very pertinent to the main design and business of this chapter; inasmuch as the overthrow of that great Assyrian host, and of the deliverance of God's people at that time, was a pledge of the certain accomplishment of that future destruction of the city and empire of Babylon, and of their deliverance out of that captivity.

25 That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall [z] his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

z ch. 10. 27.

The Assyrian; Sennacherib, and his Assyrian army. *In my land;* in Judea, which is my land in a peculiar manner, being chosen by me, and consecrated to my use and service, and inhabited by my people. *Upon my mountains;* in my mountainous country, for such Judea was, Deut. viii. 9; Psal. cxxxiii. 3; Ezek. vi. 2, 3; xxxix. 2, 4, 17, especially about Jerusalem, Psal. cxxv. 2, upon some of which probably his army was lodged. *Then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders;* which words are repeated from Isa. x. 27, where they are explained.

26 This *is* the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this *is* the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.

Upon the whole earth; upon this vast empire, now in the hands of the Assyrians, and shortly to come into the hands of the Babylonians. *The whole earth* is put synecdochically

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for a great part of it. *The hand;* the providence of God executing his purpose.

a 2 Chro. 20. 6. Job 9. 12. & 23. 13. Ps. 33. 11. Prov. 19. 21. & 21. 30. ch. 43. 13. Dan. 4. 31, 35.

27 For the LORD of hosts hath [a]purposed, and who shall disannul *it?* and his hand *is* stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

b 2 Kings 16. 20.

28 In the year that [b]king Ahaz died was this burden.

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This following burdensome prophecy concerning the Philistines, who in Ahaz's time made an inroad into Judah, and took divers of their cities and villages, 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.

c 2 Chron. 26. 6.

29 ¶ Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, [c]because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a ‖cockatrice, [d]and his fruit *shall be* a fiery flying serpent.

‖ Or, *adder.*

d 2 Kings 18. 8.

Of him that smote thee: most understand this of Uzziah, who did them much mischief, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6; but he was dead thirty-two years before this time, and therefore their joy for his death was long since past. Others understand it of Ahaz; but he was so far from smiting them, that he was smitten by them, as was noted on ver. 28. It seems better to understand it more generally of the royal race or foregoing kings of Judah, who had been a terrible scourge to them, whose rod might be said to be broken, because that sceptre was come into the hands of slothful and degenerate princes, such as Ahaz was, who had been lately broken by the Philistines, and who probably was alive when this prophecy was delivered, because he here speaks of Hezekiah not as a present, but as a future king. It is said indeed that *this burden was in the year that Ahaz* died; but so it might be, though it was before his death. *His fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent;* from the root and race of David shall come Hezekiah, who, like a serpent, shall sting thee to death, as he did, 2 Kings xviii. 8.

30 And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety: and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.

The first-born of the poor; the people of the Jews, who are brought to extreme poverty by the cruelty and the malice of other enemies. The first-born were the chief of all the children. Hence the title of *first-born* is given to persons or things which are most eminent in their kinds, as to the people of Israel, Exod. iv. 22, to David, Psal. lxxxix. 27, to a grievous death, Job xviii. 13, and here to persons eminently poor. *Shall feed;* shall have plenty of provisions, in spite of all thine attempts against them. *I will kill thy root;* I will utterly destroy thee both root and branch, so that there shall not be a remnant of thy people reserved, as it follows. It is a metaphor from a tree, which for want of nourishment is dried up by the roots.

31 Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, *art* dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and ‖none *shall be* alone in his ‖appointed times.

‖ Or, he *shall not* be *alone.*

‖ Or, *assemblies.*

O gate: the gate is put either, 1. Metaphorically, for the people passing through the gates, or for the magistrates and others who used to meet in the gate for judgment, or upon other occasions; or, 2. Synecdochically, for the city, as *gates* are commonly put, as Jer. xxii. 19, and as it is explained in the next words. *O city: city* is here put collectively for their cities, of which see 1 Sam. vi. 17. *Dissolved,* Heb. *melted;* which may be understood either, 1. Of the fainting of their spirits and courage, as Exod. xv. 15; Josh. ii. 9, 24, &c.; or, 2. Of the dissolution of their state. *From the north;* either, 1. From Judea; which lay northward from some part of the Philistines' land. But in truth Judea lay more east than north from Palestine, and therefore the Philistines are said to be on *the west,* Isa. xi. 14, and never, so far as I remember, on the north. Or, 2. From Chaldea, as may be gathered, 1. From the Scripture use of this phrase, which generally designs that country, as Jer. i. 14, 15; vi. 1, 22, &c. 2. From Jer. xlvii., where destruction is threatened to the *Philistines from the north,* ver. 2, which all understand of the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. And whereas it is speciously objected, That this suits not with the next verse, which speaks of Zion's safety at the time of this destruction of the Philistines, whereas Zion and the land and people of Judah were destroyed together with the Philistines by Nebuchadnezzar; I humbly conceive it may be answered, that that verse is added to express the far differing condition of God's people and of the Philistines in the events of that Babylonian war; and that whereas the Philistines should be irrecoverably and eternally destroyed thereby, and no remnant of them should be left, as was said, ver. 30, God's people, though they should be sorely scourged, and carried into captivity, yet they should be strangely preserved, and after some years delivered, and restored to their own land and temple; whereby it would appear that Zion stood upon a sure foundation, and, albeit it was grievously shaken, yet it could not be utterly and finally overthrown. *A smoke;* a grievous judgment and calamity, which is oft signified by *smoke,* as Gen. xv. 17; Deut. xxix. 20; Joel ii. 30, either because smoke is generally accompanied with fire, or because it causeth a great darkness in the air; for afflictions are frequently described under the names of *fire* and *darkness. In his appointed times:* when God's appointed time shall come for the execution of this judgment, not one person of all that numerous army, which is signified by the *smoke* last mentioned, shall retire and desert his colours, or lag behind the rest; but they shall march with great unanimity and alacrity, and none of them shall withdraw his hand till the work be finished, till the Philistines be utterly destroyed.

e Ps. 87. 1, 5. & 102. 16. f Zeph. 3. 12. Zech. 11. 11. ‖ Or, *betake themselves unto it.*

32 What shall *one* then answer the messengers of the nation? That [e]the LORD hath founded Zion, and [f]the poor of his people shall ‖trust in it.

What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? what shall a Jew say to the people of other nations, who shall either be sent or come to inquire concerning the state of Zion in that day, when not only the Philistines, but even the Jews themselves, shall fall by the hands of one and the same enemy? *Nation* is put collectively for *nations,* as *gate* and *city* for *gates* and *cities* in the foregoing verse. They shall give them this answer, That although Zion at present be in a very distressed and deplorable condition, and seems to be forsaken by her God; yet she stands upon a firm foundation, and God, who first founded her, will again restore and establish her, and his poor despised people shall resort to her, as to a strong and sure refuge.

CHAP. XV.

The destruction of Moab.

THE [a]burden of Moab. Because in the night [b]Ar of Moab is laid waste, *and* ‖brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, *and* brought to silence;

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a Jer. 48. 1, &c. Ezek. 25. 8,—11. Amos 2. 1.

b Num. 21. 28.

‖ Or, *cut off.*

The burden of Moab; a prophecy of the destruction of the Moabites, the inveterate and implacable enemies of the Jews, begun by the Assyrian, and finished by the Babylonian emperors. *In the night;* or, *in a night;* suddenly and unexpectedly; for men sleep securely in the night, and therefore the evils which then overtake them are most terrible to them. *Ar;* the chief city of Moab, Numb. xxi. 28; Deut. ii. 9. *Brought to silence;* or rather, *is cut off,* as the word oft signifies, as Jer. xlvii. 5; Hos. x. 7, 15, and elsewhere. *Kir;* another eminent city of Moab, called more largely and fully *Kir-heres,* and *Kir-hareseth,* Isa. xvi. 7, 11; Jer. xlviii. 31, 36.

2 [c]He is gone to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: [d]on all their heads *shall be* baldness, *and* every beard cut off.

c ch. 16. 12.

d See Lev. 21. 5. ch. 3. 24. & 22. 12. Jer. 47. 5. & 48. 1, 37, 38. Ezek. 7. 18.

Bajith signifies *a house.* It is supposed to be the name

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of a place, so called from some eminent house or temple of their idols which was in it. It is called more fully *Beth-baal-meon*, that is, *The house of Baal's habitation*, Josh. xiii. 17. *Dibon;* another city of Moab, as is manifest from Jer. xlviii. 18, 22, where also was their other eminent high place. To these two places they used to resort in case of great difficulties and troubles. *To weep;* to offer their supplications with tears to their idols for help. *Over Nebo and over Medeba;* two considerable cities, anciently belonging to the Moabites, from whom they were taken by the Amorites, and from them by the Israelites, and possessed by the Reubenites, Numb. xxi. 30; xxxii. 3, 38; but were, as it seems, recovered by the Moabites, in whose hands they now were, as is evident, for Nebo, Jer. xlviii. 1, 22, and for Medeba, from this text. *On all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off;* the hair of their heads and beards (which was their ornament) was shaved, as was usual in great mournings, as hath been oft observed upon divers preceding texts. See on Lev. xix. 27, 28; xxi. 5.

c Jer. 48. 38. † Heb. *descending into weeping, or, coming down with weeping.*

3 In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth: [c]on the tops of their houses, and in their streets, every one shall howl, †weeping abundantly.

Shall gird themselves with sackcloth: this was another practice of mourners. *The tops of their houses*, which were made flat, Deut. xxii. 8; to which men used to go up, either to walk, or to cry to God in heaven or to men for help. *In their streets;* publicly, without shame; whereas in ordinary sorrows men are wont to seek secret places for their mourning.

f ch. 16. 9.

4 And Heshbon shall cry, [f]and Elealeh: their voice shall be heard *even* unto Jahaz: therefore the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; his life shall be grievous unto him.

Heshbon and Elealeh; two other Moabitish cities; of which see Numb. xxi. 25, 26; xxxii. 3, 37. *Jahaz;* another city in the utmost borders of Moab, Numb. xxi. 23, called also *Jahazah*, Josh. xxi. 36. *The armed soldiers*, who should be, and use to be, the most courageous. *His life shall be grievous unto him;* the Moabites shall generally long for death, to free themselves from those dreadful calamities which they perceive unavoidably coming upon them.

g ch. 16. 11. Jer. 48. 31. ‖ Or, *to the borders thereof.* h ch. 16. 14. Jer. 48. 34. i Jer. 48. 5. † Heb. *breaking.*

5 [g]My heart shall cry out for Moab; ‖his fugitives *shall flee* unto Zoar, an [h]heifer of three years old: for [i]by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up; for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of †destruction.

My heart shall cry out for Moab; their destruction approaching is so dreadful, that although they are a most vile nation, and by their implacable enmity against God and his people do abundantly deserve it, yet the respect which I have to human nature fills me with horror at the very thoughts of it. Compare Isa. xvi. 11. *His fugitives;* or, *his bars*, as others render it, and as this word is frequently taken, as Exod. xxvi. 26, 27; Psal. cvii. 16, &c.; whereby we may understand their valiant men, or their princes and rulers, who as they are called *the shields of the earth*, Psal. xlvii. 9, because, like shields, they do or should defend their people; so for the same reason they may be called *bars*, because bars are the strength of the gates of cities or castles, and therefore are mentioned as such, Psal. cxlvii. 13; Prov. xviii. 19; Jer. li. 30. *Shall flee unto Zoar;* or, shall cry *unto Zoar;* either shall cry as they go along the way, even till they come to *Zoar;* or shall cry so as they may be heard to *Zoar;* which may easily be understood out of the foregoing verse. Zoar was a town bordering upon Moab; of which see Gen. xix. 20—22; Deut. xxxiv. 3. *An heifer of three years old;* which some understand of the city of Zoar, so called for her strength and wantonness. But such a description of Zoar seems very improper and impertinent in this place. The words therefore are to be translated here, as they are by our translators, Jer. xlviii. 34. as *an heifer of three years old;* and so they belong to their cry, and signify that it is strong and loud, like that of such an heifer. *In the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry;* he signifies that the cry should be universal, in all places where they come, and reaching from one side of the country to another. Of *Luhith*, see Jer. xlviii. 4. 5. *Of destruction;* such a cry as men send forth when they are just falling into the pit of destruction.

k Num. 32. 36. † Heb. *desolations.*

6 For the waters [k]of Nimrim shall be †desolate: for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing.

The waters; either, 1. Properly, they shall be dried up; or, 2. Figuratively, the waterish grounds, as *waters* seem to be taken, Eccles. xi. 1; Isa. xxxii. 20. These being very fruitful, are commonly most inhabited and cultivated; but now they also, and much more the dry and barren grounds, shall be desolate, and without inhabitant. *There is no green thing*, by the just and special judgment of God. Thus God and man conspire together to destroy them.

‖ Or, *valley of the Arabians.*

7 Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the ‖brook of the willows.

Shall they, to wit, their enemies, which is plainly implied, *carry away to the brook of the willows;* unto some brook or river having great numbers of willows growing by it, by which they might convey them to some eminent and strong city built upon the same river. Possibly he means some such river which ran into Euphrates, and so gave them opportunity of carrying their spoils by water unto Babylon. Though the words may be rendered, *into the valley of the Arabians;* whither the spoils might be first carried, in order to their transportation into Assyria or Chaldea; for part of Arabia lay between Moab and those countries. But the former translation seems better, because these very words are so rendered, Lev. xxiii. 40.

8 For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beer-elim.

Their cry fills all the parts of the country.

† Heb. *additions.* l 2 Kings 17. 25.

9 For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: for I will bring †more upon Dimon, [l]lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land.

Dimon: this seems to be the same place with Dibon, mentioned ver. 2, here called Dimon for the great bloodshed in it, as it here follows; such changes of a letter being not unusual in proper names, as in Merodach for Berodach, Isa. xxxix. 1. *More;* either, 1. More than upon other parts of the country, that being one of their high places, ver. 2; or rather, 2. More than hath been already mentioned. *Lions upon him that escapeth of Moab;* God shall send lions to find out those that escape the fury of men

CHAP. XVI.

The Moabites exhorted to entertain kindly the banished Jews, 1—5. They are threatened for their pride and arrogance, 6—8. The prophet bewaileth them, 9—11. Their judgment, 12—14.

a 2 Kin. 3. 4. b 2 Kin. 14. 7. ‖ Or, *Petra.* † Heb. *a rock.*

[a]SEND ye the lamb to the ruler of the land [b]from ‖†Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion.

The prophet continues his prophecy against Moab in this chapter, and here turneth his speech to them, and gives them counsel what to do, to prevent, if possible, the threatened desolation. In these first words he adviseth them to the practice either, I. Of justice; Pay that tribute of lambs and goats which you obliged yourselves to pay unto David, and to his posterity, 2 Sam. viii. 2, and pay it not unto Israel, as you have done, 2 Kings iii. 4, but unto the king of Judah, who is the rightful heir of David, and king of the land. Or, 2. Of piety; *Send a lamb*, for a sacrifice, unto God, who is *Ruler of the land*, to wit, of your land, no less than of ours; or, *of the earth*, as the word is commonly rendered, who is *the God of the whole earth*, as he is called, Isa. liv. 5,

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the God of all the kingdoms of the earth, Isa. xxxvii. 16. Make your peace with God, by sacrifice, for all your injuries done to him, and to his people. These words may be understood ironically, and the design of them may be to represent their miserable and desperate condition; as if he had said, You have tried all other ways, and sought to your idols, chap. xv. 2, and all in vain; now seek to the God of Israel, who alone can help you. But, alas! he is highly incensed against you, and coming to destroy you. But this seems rather to be a serious advice, by comparing these words with ver. 3, 4. *Sela;* an eminent city of Moab, seated upon a rock, which is here named, either because the king and his court at this time resided there, or for some other reason then evident, though now unknown. *To the wilderness;* to the wilderness of Moab, of which we read Numb. xxi. 11; Deut. ii. 8, and so onward to Zion, as it follows. Or this may be added as a description of the place called *Sela*. Hence some render the words, *Sela of the wilderness;* and others, *Sela* which lieth or looketh *towards the wilderness*. And this limitation might be the more necessary, to distinguish this from other places of Moab called by the same name, which, signifying *a rock*, might be common to several places in that rocky country. *Unto the mount of the daughter of Zion;* unto the temple upon Mount Zion.

2 For it shall be, *that*, as a wandering bird ‖ cast out of the nest, *so* the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of [c] Arnon.

‖ Or, *a nest forsaken.*

c Num. 21. 13.

For; or, *otherwise*, as this particle is sometimes used; if you do not follow my advice. *As a wandering bird cast out of the nest;* which knows not whither to go, nor what to do. *At the fords of Arnon;* which was the border of the land of Moab, where they were, either being carried that way into captivity, or rather with design to flee out of their own land, although they knew not whither, as the foregoing metaphor showeth.

† Heb. *Bring.*

3 † Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth.

Take counsel; consider seriously among yourselves what course to take to prevent your utter ruin. *Execute judgment;* do those things which are just and right, as to all men, so particularly to my people, to whom you have been most unrighteous and unmerciful. *As the night;* or, *as* the shadow *of the night*, large and dark, as the shadow of the earth is in the night season. The meaning is, Conceal and protect my people in the time of their distress and danger, as this metaphor is explained in the rest of this and in the following verse. *The outcasts; mine outcasts*, as it follows, ver. 4, those of my people which are driven out of their land. *Bewray not him that wandereth* unto their enemies, as thou hast treacherously done in former times.

4 Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the † extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, † the oppressors are consumed out of the land.

† Heb. *wringer.* † Heb. *the treaders down.*

Mine outcasts; whom though I have forsaken, and sorely chastened, yet I do, and still will, own for my people; and I do observe, and will requite, both the kindnesses and the injuries done to them. *The extortioner is at an end;* shall shortly be destroyed, and my people shall ere long be restored, and then thou wilt not lose the fruit of thy kindness. The present tense is put for the future, as it is usually in prophecies.

d Dan. 7. 14, 27. Mic. 4. 7. Luke 1. 33. ‖ Or, *prepared.* e Ps. 72. 2. & 96. 13. & 98. 9.

5 And in mercy [d] shall the throne be ‖ established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, [e] judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

In mercy; by my mercy. Though they have sinned, and I am now punishing their sins, yet I will deliver them for my own mercy's sake. *The throne;* the kingdom of Judah. Therefore for thine own sake show them kindness in this day of their distress; for they will be capable of requiting thee. *He;* their king, which is easily and necessarily understood. *Shall sit upon it in truth;* which may respect either, 1. The manner of his government, exercising truth and justice. But that is more plainly and fully expressed in the last part of the verse. Or, 2. The continuance of it, *in truth*, i. e. firmly and constantly; for *truth* is oft put for the stability and certainty of a thing, as 2 Chron. xxxii. 1; Prov. xi. 18; Isa. lxi. 8. And this makes the argument more considerable to the present purpose. The kingdom shall not only be restored, but firmly settled; therefore it is your interest, O Moabites, to be kind to my people. *In the tabernacle;* in the house, or palace, which is called *a tent*, or *tabernacle*, either because houses are frequently so called in Scripture, as 2 Sam. xx. 1; 1 Kings viii. 66; xii. 16, or with respect unto the unsettledness of David's house, which now indeed was more like a tabernacle than a strong palace; and yet, notwithstanding its present imbecility, should be firmly established. *Seeking judgment;* searching out the truth of causes and things with care and diligence, which is the duty of a judge. *Hasting righteousness;* neither denying nor yet delaying justice. And these good qualifications seem to be here mentioned, partly to teach the rulers of Moab their duty towards their own people, and the Israelites which were among them; and partly as a reason and evidence of that stability which he had promised to the house of David.

6 ¶ We have heard of the [f] pride of Moab; *he is* very proud: *even* of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath: [g] *but* his lies *shall* not *be* so.

f Jer. 48. 29. Zeph. 2. 10. g ch. 28. 15.

The prophet, having spoken to the Moabites, and acquainted them with their duty and interest, now he turneth his speech to God's people, whom he armeth and comforteth against their approaching misery. The scope and sense of the prophet in this verse is this, I do not expect that my counsels will have any good effect upon Moab, they will still carry themselves insolently and outrageously towards you, and they promise themselves that they shall now effect what they have long desired, even satisfy their malice in your total and final destruction; but they shall be disappointed of their hopes. It is well known to me, and you, and all their neighbours, that they are a haughty and furious people; and therefore they will scorn my advice, and doubt not to stand upon their own legs. *His lies shall not be so;* his vain imaginations, and false and crafty counsel, shall not take effect. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered, but *his strength* (as this word is rendered, Job xviii. 13; Heb. *bars*, which are the strength of gates or doors) is *not so;* not equal to his pride or fury. Or thus, exactly according to the words and order of the Hebrew text, *not so lies*. A concise speech, such as are very common in this and other prophets. And these words may possibly be brought in as the words of the Moabites, making this short reply to the prophet's counsels and threatenings, directed to them in the foregoing verses of this chapter: It is not or shall not be so as thou sayest; thy words are but lies, we fear not thy threats against us. But this I propose with submission.

7 Therefore shall Moab [h] howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations [i] of Kir-hareseth shall ye ‖ mourn; surely *they are* stricken.

h Jer. 48. 20. i 2 Kin. 3. 25. ‖ Or, *mutter.*

For Moab; for itself; the noun put for the pronoun, as is usual in the Hebrew text. Or, *to Moab*. One Moabite shall howl or lament to or for another. *Kir-hareseth;* an ancient and eminent city of Moab, called *Kir*, chap. xv. 1, and *Kir-haresh*, ver. 11, which signifies, *The city of the sun*, probably because there was the temple of the sun; which city was preserved when their other cities were ruined, 2 Kings iii. 25, and therefore the destruction of it was more lamented. *Shall ye mourn;* or, *ye shall meditate* or *talk*, as this word commonly signifies. Your thoughts and discourses will run much upon the ruin of such a city. *Stricken;* or, *broken;* overthrown or destroyed.

8 For [k] the fields of Heshbon languish, *and* [l] the vine of Sibmah: the lords of

k ch. 24. 7. l ver. 9.

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the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come *even* unto Jazer, they wandered *through* the wilderness: her branches are ‖ stretched out, they are gone over the sea.

‖ Or, *stacked up.*

The fields of Heshbon languish; either for want of rain, as chap. xv. 6, or because there are no men left to till and manure them. *The lords of the heathen;* the Assyrians or Chaldeans, the great rulers of the Eastern nations. *The principal plants;* the choicest vines; under which one particular he seems to understand not only all other fruits and goods, but even their persons and choicest people. *They are come even unto Jazer;* either, 1. The lords of the heathen are come as far as Jazer, which is the utmost border of Moab; or, 2. The people of Moab are going into captivity, and part of them are already gone as far as Jazer. Some understand this and the following clauses of the vines, which are here commended, to aggravate the loss and ruin of them, and render the words, which *reached even unto Jazer*, which vineyards were planted for many miles together, even as far as Jazer. *They wandered through the wilderness;* others of the Moabites fled away for their lives, and wandered hither and thither in the wilderness of Moab; of which see Numb. xxi. 11; Deut. ii. 8. *Her branches*, i. e. her people, called *plants* before. *Are stretched out;* or, *are spread abroad*, as this word signifies, Numb. xi. 32; Judg. xv. 9; 1 Sam. xxx. 16; are driven from their own homes, and dispersed into several countries. *Over the sea;* over the Dead Sea, which was the border of Moab. They were forced to flee out of their own country to save their lives.

m Jer. 48. 32. n ch. 15. 4. ‖ Or, *the alarm is fallen upon, &c.*

9 ¶ Therefore [m] I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, [n] O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for ‖ the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen.

I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: so the sense is, I will bewail Sibmah as I did bewail Jazer, which, they say, was destroyed before Sibmah: or, *the weeping of Jazer* might be a proverbial expression; for it is used also Jer. xlviii. 32, like that of *the mourning of Hadadrimmon*, Zech. xii. 11, though the reason of it be now unknown, as it is in many other proverbs. The words are by others rendered, and that more agreeably to the Hebrew text, *I will bewail with weeping* (which is a usual Hebraism for I will bitterly bewail) *Jazer*, and (which particle is oft understood) *the vine of Sibmah*. But our translation seems to be justified by the parallel place, Jer. xlviii. 32, where it is, *O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer. The shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen;* those joyful shouts and acclamations, which were customary in the time of harvest and vintage, Isa. ix. 3; Jer. xxv. 30, shall cease, because thy land shall be wasted, and thy people destroyed. Or, as it is in the margin, *the shout or alarm is fallen upon thy summer fruits and thy harvest*, instead of that joyful shout which was then used, to which he here alludes; which seems to be the truer translation, not only because this Hebrew word is elsewhere used concerning *the shout* of an enemy falling upon a people, as Jer. xxv. 30; li. 14, but especially by considering the parallel place, Jer. xlviii. 32, where, for *the shout is fallen*, it is, *the spoiler is fallen upon*, &c. If it be objected, that the next verse speaks of the ceasing of their joyful shouts, and that this Hebrew word is there used for *vintage shouting*, which at first made me incline to the former interpretation, that seems to be fully answered from Jer. xlviii. 33, which speaks likewise of the ceasing of their joy and joyful shouts, but withal adds, in the close of the verse, what may end this controversy, *their shouting shall be no* shouting; they shall indeed have a shouting, but not such a one as they used to have, a joyful shouting of their own people, but an insulting shout of their enemies.

o ch. 24. 8. Jer. 48. 33.

10 And [o] gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in *their* presses; I have made *their vintage* shouting to cease.

The treaders: in those times they used to squeeze out the juice of their grapes by treading them with their feet, in vessels appointed for that use, Judg. ix. 27; Neh. xiii. 15.

p ch. 15. 5. & 63. 15. Jer. 48. 36.

11 Wherefore [p] my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-haresh.

Shall sound, through compassion to them; of which see on Isa. xv. 5. In excessive griefs the bowels are sometimes rolled and tumbled together, so as to make an audible noise. Hereby he signifies the greatness of their approaching calamity, which being so grievous to him, must needs be intolerable to them.

q ch. 15. 2.

12 ¶ And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on [q] the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail.

When it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place; when it shall appear to them and others that all their other devotions are vain and ineffectual. *To his sanctuary;* to the temple of his great god, Chemosh, Numb. xxi. 29; 1 Kings xi. 7; Jer. xlviii. 46, from whom he shall seek and expect succour. *He shall not prevail;* his god can neither hear nor help him.

13 This *is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning Moab since that time.

Since the beginning of God's revelation to me concerning Moab, and hitherto; which exposition seems to be confirmed by the following words, *but now.*

r ch. 21. 16. ‖ Or, *not many.*

14 But now the LORD hath spoken, saying, Within three years, [r] as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all that great multitude; and the remnant *shall be* very small *and* ‖ feeble.

Hath spoken; hath made this further discovery of his mind to me. *Within three years;* to be computed either, 1. From the time of Jerusalem's destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, who did, as is confessed by all, invade the Moabites at or about that time, and execute the judgment first foretold by this prophet, and afterwards by Jeremiah, chap. xlviii. Or rather, 2. From the time of the delivery of this prophecy; which being uncertain, leaves us the greater latitude for the determination of the precise time when this was fulfilled. But this is certain, from Isa. i. 1, that this prophecy must be delivered, at furthest, before the end of Hezekiah's reign. And then there ariseth this great difficulty, How this can consist with the prophecy of Jeremiah, who above or about a hundred years after this time speaketh of Moab as a people that had *been at ease from their youth*, and *had not gone into captivity*, Jer. xlviii. 11, and prophesieth against them in the very same words which Isaiah useth in this prophecy? The answer is, That they do not speak of the same time, nor of the same calamity; but Isaiah of a former tribulation, and Jeremiah of their latter devastation. It is true, Jeremiah useth the same words which Isaiah doth, and so do the later prophets sometimes use the words of the former, to other purposes than they were first delivered, as we shall see hereafter, and as is most evident from the *Revelation of St. John*, in which the same words are used concerning mystical Babylon, which were used by the foregoing prophets concerning the first and literal Babylon. And although the foregoing prophecy of Isaiah seems to speak of the same destruction threatened by Jeremiah, and inflicted by Nebuchadnezzar; yet this prophecy contained in this verse, and ushered in with another preface, seems to be of a differing nature, and to speak of a more speedy and less grievous affliction that should befall them, which should be as a pledge to assure them of the certain accomplishment of the other prophecy, and of their utter destruction. And therefore it is observable, that the prophet doth not here say, *Within three years* all that I have foretold and threatened shall be fulfilled; but only, *the glory of Moab shall be contemned*, &c., which is quite another thing; and as the terms here used are much milder, so the judgment here denounced seems much less, than in the

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foregoing prophecy. And therefore this verse may very well be understood of some great blow given to the Moabites, either by Sennacherib, or by his son Esarhaddon, from which notwithstanding they in a little time recovered themselves, and flourished again, and continued so to do till Nebuchadnezzar completed their destruction. And this may well enough consist with what is said of Moab's *being at ease from his youth*, Jer. xlviii. 11, which is not to be understood simply, as if they had been wholly free from war and other calamities; for the contrary is evident, both from Scripture, as 2 Sam. viii. 2; 2 Kings iii. 24. 25, and from other histories; but comparatively, that they had not been brought to desolation, nor carried away into captivity, as it is explained in the following words, and as Israel had been at that time, and Judah was threatened to be. *As the years of an hireling*, i. e. within three years precisely accounted; for hirelings are very punctual in observing the time for which they are hired; and their thoughts and desires run much upon it, because then they are to receive their wages; of which see Job vii. 1, 2; xiv. 6. And this exposition is confirmed by comparing this place with Isa. xxi. 16, where the same phrase is used of one year. So groundless is that opinion which the Jewish writers gather from this place, compared with Deut. xv. 18, that three years was the usual and appointed time for the generality of hired servants. *The glory of Moab;* their strength, and wealth, and other things in which they glory. *Shall be contemned;* shall be made contemptible to those who formerly admired them. *With all that great multitude;* with the great numbers of their people, of which they boasted. *Shall be very small and feeble*, comparatively to what they were before; which might be very true, and yet afterwards, in a hundred years' space, they might be sufficiently recruited.

CHAP. XVII.

Damascus, Samaria, Israel, and their cities, to be ruined by the Assyrians, 1—5. *A remnant shall consider and repent*, 6—8. *The rest plagued for their impiety*, 9—11. *The woe of Israel's enemies*, 12—14.

cir. 741. a Jer. 49. 23. Amos 1. 3. Zech. 9. 1. fulfilled 740, 2 Kin. 16. 9.

THE [a]burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from *being* a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap.

The burden of Damascus; both of that city and kingdom, as appears from ver. 2, 3. *It shall be a ruinous heap:* this was fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser, 2 Kings xvi. 9, although afterwards it was re-edified and possessed by another sort of inhabitants.

2 The cities of Aroer *are* forsaken: they shall be for flocks, which shall lie

b Jer. 7. 33.

down, and [b]none shall make *them* afraid.

The cities of Aroer; of that part of Syria called Aroer, from a great city of that name; of which see Deut. ii. 36; iii. 12. These cities were possessed by the Reubenites and Gadites, whom Tiglath-pileser carried into captivity, 1 Chron. v. 26. These he mentions here, as he doth Ephraim in the next verse, because they were confederate with Syria against Judah. *None shall make them afraid*, because the land shall be desolate, and destitute of men who might disturb them.

c ch. 7. 16. & 8. 4.

3 [c]The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the LORD of hosts.

The fortress; either Samaria, their chief fortress; or all their fortresses or strong holds, the singular number being put for the plural; or all their strength and glory, which answers to the *kingdom* in the next clause. *And the remnant of Syria;* or, *and* from (which particle is easily understood from the former clause) *the remnant of Syria.* So the sense is, The remainders of Damascus and Syria shall be a headless body, a people without a king. *They shall be as the glory;* an ironical speech, implying their contemptible condition; for their glory is supposed to be departed from them, by what he had already said of them. The sense is, Syria shall have as much glory as Israel, i. e. neither of them shall have any at all.

4 And in that day it shall come to pass, *that* the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and [d]the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean.

d ch. 10. 16.

Shall be made thin; or, *shall be emptied*, as this word is rendered, Isa. xix. 6.

5 [e]And it shall be as when the harvest-

e Jer. 51. 33.

man gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.

Reapeth the ears with his arm; taking care, as far as may be, that all may be gathered in, and nothing left. So shall the whole body of the ten tribes be carried away captive, some few gleanings only being left of them, as it is in the harvest. *The valley of Rephaim;* a very fruitful place near Jerusalem, Josh. xv. 8; xviii. 16.

6 ¶ [f]Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two *or* three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four *or* five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the LORD God of Israel.

cir. 741. f ch. 24. 13.

Some few Israelites were left after their captivity, who joined themselves to the kingdom of Judah, and were carried captive to Babylon with them, from whence also they returned with them, as we find in the history of their return in Ezra and Nehemiah.

7 At that day shall a man [g]look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel.

g Micah 7. 7.

Shall a man, those few men that are left, *look to his Maker*, they shall sincerely respect, and trust, and worship (all which are understood by *looking to*) God, and God only, as the next verse explains it. Their afflictions shall at last bring them to repentance.

8 And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect *that* which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the ‖images.

‖ Or, *sun images.*

Not look to the altars; not resort or trust to them, or to the worship offered to idols upon them. *The work of his hands;* their own inventions; for otherwise the altars made by God's command were the work of men's hands. *The groves*, which were devised and planted by men, as fit places for the worship of their gods; and therefore were forbidden, Deut. xvi. 21; 1 Kings xiv. 15. *The images*, worshipped in their groves. The word properly signifies *images of the sun*, either having the form and shape of the sun, or at least erected to his honour and worship; of which see Deut. iv. 19; xvii. 3; 2 Kings xxiii. 5, 11; Jer. viii. 2; vii. 18; xliv. 17, 18.

9 ¶ In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation.

In that day; in the day of Jacob's trouble, of which he spake ver. 4, and continueth his speech unto these words, and afterwards. *An uppermost branch;* which he that pruneth the tree neglecteth, either because he esteems it useless and inconsiderable, or because he cannot reach it. *Which they left because of the children of Israel:* the sense is either, 1. *Which they*, to wit, the enemies, *left*, or, *which shall be left*, (the active verb being put impersonally, as it frequently is in the Hebrew text,) *because of* or *for the children of Israel;* which God inclined their hearts to leave or spare, out of his love to his Israel. Thus this is mentioned as a mercy, or mitigation of the calamity. But this seems not to agree either with the foregoing or following words, both which manifestly speak of the greatness of the judgment. And that their strong cities were not left for them, but taken from them, seems evident from ver. 3, 4. Or, 2. As the cities (which words are easily understood out of the former part of the verse, where they are expressed) *which they* (to wit, the Canaanites, as the seventy inter-

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preters express it; and it was needless to name them, because the history was so well known to them to whom the prophet writes) *left* or *forsook* (which they did either by departing from them, or being destroyed out of them) *because of* (or *before*, or *for fear of*) *the children of Israel.* And this was a very fit example, to awaken the Israelites to a serious belief of this threatening, because God had inflicted the same judgment upon the Canaanites, and that for the same sins of which they were guilty.

h Ps. 68. 19.

10 Because thou hast forgotten [h]the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips:

Thou, O Israel. *The Rock of thy strength;* that God who was thy only sure defence. *Pleasant plants;* excellent flowers and fruit trees. *Strange slips;* fetched from far countries, and therefore highly esteemed. The sense is, Thou shalt use much industry and cost, but to no purpose, as it follows.

‖ Or, removed in the day of inheritance, and there shall be deadly sorrow.

11 In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: *but* the harvest *shall be* ‖ a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.

In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; thou shalt from day to day, beginning early in the morning, use all care and diligence that what thou hast planted and sown may thrive; and thou shalt see some effect of thy labours, and some hopes of success. *But the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow:* the sense of the words thus rendered is this, But in the time of your grief, &c., or when this grievous calamity shall come, all your harvest shall be but one heap, which in itself is very inconsiderable, and is easily carried away by your enemies. But the place is and may be otherwise rendered, and that very agreeably both to the words and order of the Hebrew text; But *the heap* (or, *heaps*, the singular number being most commonly put for the plural) *of the harvest* (i. e. instead of those heaps of corn which thou didst expect, and which men usually reap in harvest) *in the day* or *time* (to wit, of the harvest; or, *in the day* of calamity, of which I have spoken, ver. 4, 9; or, *in a day*, i. e. speedily or suddenly) shall be (or, thou shalt have) *grief and desperate sorrow.* This shall be all thy harvest, and the event of thy labours.

‖ Or, noise.

i Jer. 6. 23.

12 ¶ Woe to the ‖ multitude of many people, *which* make a noise [i]like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, *that* make a rushing like the rushing of ‖ mighty waters!

‖ Or, many.

This is a new prophecy, added for the present support and comfort of God's people. *The multitude of many people*, combined together against Judah. It matters not whether you understand this of the Syrians and Israelites who were united against Judah, or of the Assyrians, whose army consisted of vast numbers, and of men of several nations. The following words agree to either of them. *Which make a noise like the noise of the seas;* which invade my land and people with great force and fury, as the sea doth, either in its own channel, or when it enters into the land by a breach.

k Ps. 9. 5.

13 The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but *God* shall [k]rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and [l]shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like ‖ a rolling thing before the whirlwind.

l Ps. 83. 13. Hos. 13. 3.

‖ Or, thistledown.

Shall rebuke them; not in words, but deeds; shall discomfit and overthrow them. *Like a rolling thing*, which is easily moved by every slight touch, and much more by a violent wind. Or, *like a wisp*, to wit, of straw, which is sometimes rolled together.

14 And behold at eveningtide trouble; *and* before the morning he *is* not. This *is* the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.

Behold at evening-tide trouble; and before the morning he is not: at even there is a great terror and consternation among God's people, for fear of their enemies; and ere the morning cometh, their enemies are cut off by the hand of God. This was literally and eminently fulfilled in the destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem. Although the words may be more generally understood of any great and sudden change, and unexpected deliverance, granted to God's people, when their enemies were ready to devour them. And this place may be compared with that in Psal. xxx. 5, *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us:* this is a triumphant conclusion, uttered by the prophet in the name of God's people.

CHAP. XVIII.

God, in defence of his church and punishing her enemies, will destroy the Ethiopians, 1—6: an access thereby shall be to the church, 7.

WOE [a]to the land shadowing with wings, which *is* beyond the rivers of Ethiopia:

a ch. 20. 4, 5. Ezek. 30. 4, 5, 9. Zeph. 2. 12. & 3. 10.

cir. 714.

The land; either, 1. Of Arabia; or, 2. Of Ethiopia beyond Egypt; or, 3. Of Egypt, as some both ancient and later interpreters judge; of whom he speaks more darkly in this chapter, and then explains himself more clearly in the next chapter. But this controversy will be best determined by examining the following description. *Shadowing with wings:* the title of *wings* is oft given, both in Scripture and in other authors, unto divers things which have some general kind of resemblance to wings, as to the battlements of a house or temple, as Matt. iv. 5; to the skirts of a garment, as Ruth iii. 9, and oft elsewhere; to an army, as Isa. viii. 8; Jer. xlviii. 40; xlix. 22; and to the sails of a ship, as this word is here commonly understood, and as it is unquestionably used in other authors. And *shadowing with wings* is nothing else but overspread or filled with them; which title may be given either to Ethiopia or Egypt, in regard of the great numbers, either, 1. Of their armies; or rather, 2. Of their ships or vessels sailing upon the sea or rivers: for, 1. In these they exceeded most of those nations who had dealings with the Jews, whereas other nations equalled or exceeded them in numerous armies. But they had an innumerable company of ships or boats, not only because of the commodiousness of the river Nilus, and its many branches, and the Red Sea, and the Midland Sea, for navigation; but also because of the frequent overflowings of the river Nilus over their land, which made them absolutely necessary. 2. This best suits with the next verse. 3. Those ancient and venerable interpreters, the LXX. and the Chaldee, who best understood the Hebrew words and phrases, expound it so. *Beyond;* or, *on this side*, as this particle is rendered, Numb. xxi. 13; xxii. 1, and in many other places. Or, as others translate it, *besides*, which may comprehend both sides; and so the land of which he speaks is supposed to be situated on both sides of this river or rivers; which is most true both of Egypt and of Ethiopia. *The rivers:* a late learned writer understands this of three or four rivers of Arabia Chusæa, whereof one flows into the Red Sea, another into the Midland Sea, and a third into a great lake; which being obscure and very inconsiderable rivers, and running in so distant channels, it is not probable that this land should receive its denomination from them. And therefore it seems more reasonable to understand this of the great river Nilus, which comes from Ethiopia, and runs through the length of that land, and through Egypt, into the Midland Sea; and which is here called *rivers*, in the plural number, as it is also Exod. vii. 19; Isa. vii. 18; Ezek. xxix. 3, 4, and unquestionably Nah. iii. 8. And so it might well be called, either for its greatness, or for the many rivulets that run into it, or for the various streams or channels into which it is divided; as Tigris, upon the same reasons, hath the same title of *rivers* ascribed to it, Nah. ii. 6. *Of Ethiopia*, Heb. *of Cush;* by which he seems to understand either, 1. Arabia, which in many places of

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Scripture comes under that name, though not in all places, as some learned men contend. Nor doth this place seem to be understood here, because these rivers were not interposed between Judea, in which Isaiah wrote this prophecy, and Arabia; nor were the rivers of Arabia, mentioned before, interposed between Judea and Egypt or Ethiopia: and besides, those rivers were but small and inconsiderable: and therefore, as was noted before, this land, whatsoever it is, would not have been denominated from them, especially when it is not properly situated either beyond them, or on this side of them. But if this Cush be Arabia, peradventure it were better to understand *the rivers*, or *the river*, as it was explained before, of the Red Sea, beyond which indeed both Egypt and Ethiopia were, in reference to Arabia. And whereas it may be objected that the title of *river* or *rivers* is very improperly given to the sea, it may be fairly answered, that as rivers are sometimes called by the name of *the sea*, as Euphrates is, Isa. xxi. 1; Jer. li. 36; so this very word here rendered *river* is used concerning the sea in the Hebrew text, Jonah ii. 3, and indeed may not unfitly be given to the Red Sea, which both for its length and breadth hath a manifest resemblance unto some large rivers which are in the world. And so the words may be very truly understood either of Egypt or of Ethiopia, both which countries in this sense are *beyond the rivers* or *river of Arabia*. But this I only propose, and submit to the reader's judgment. Or, 2. Ethiopia, properly so called; for the Cushites or Ethiopians are distinguished by Herodotus, and divers other both ancient and later writers, into the eastern, which seem to be the Arabians, and the western, which seem to be the Ethiopians under Egypt. And it is probably thought that these Cushites were first planted in Arabia, and, upon their increase, part of them passed over into Africa by crossing the Red Sea, which was a very short and an easy passage, and settled there. And according to this interpretation of the word, the description of the land given in the last clause of this verse agrees either to Ethiopia or to Egypt, as is evident from what hath been already said for the clearing of this dark and difficult verse.

2 That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, *saying*, Go, ye swift messengers, to [b] a nation ‖scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; ‖†a nation meted out and trodden down, ‖whose land the rivers have spoiled!

[b] ver. 7. ‖ Or, *outspread and polished.* ‖ Or, *a nation that meteth out, and treadeth down.* † Heb. *a nation of line, line, and treading under foot.* ‖ Or, *whose land the rivers despise.*

That sendeth ambassadors; that at this time are sending ambassadors, after their manner, to strengthen themselves with leagues and alliances, whereby they think to prevent those judgments and calamities which, notwithstanding all their endeavours, I will bring upon them. The first part of this verse seems to contain a further description of the people of the land, mentioned in the foregoing verse. *By the sea;* either by the Midland Sea, or by the Red Sea, or by great lakes which were both in and near the land of Egypt; it being usual among the Hebrews to give the title of *seas* to lakes, or any great collections of waters, as hath been oft observed before. *In vessels of bulrushes;* for both the Egyptians and Ethiopians, as Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo, and Pliny relate, did commonly use boats of rushes or reeds, which were more convenient for them than those of wood, because they were both cheaper, and swifter, and lighter for carriage from place to place, for which they had frequent occasion in those parts; and safer, because of the many rocks, and shelves, and waterfalls of Nilus. *Upon the waters*, Heb. *upon the face* or *surface of the waters;* which is properly expressed, because such vessels being very light, did not sink so deep into the waters as those of wood do. *Saying:* this word is supplied here, as it is in many other places. And the words here following are supposed to contain the commission and direction given by the people hitherto described unto their messengers, to go to the people described in the following words. But this word *saying* is not in the Hebrew text, nor is it supplied either by the LXX. or by the Chaldee; nor doth it seem necessary to be understood. And it seems very improbable that the people to whom the messengers were sent should be described in such general and ambiguous terms, and in so large a manner, and not a word said concerning their message. And therefore, with submission, I humbly conceive these to be the words of the prophet, who having in God's name pronounced a woe against the land hitherto described, here continues his speech, and gives a commission from God to these *messengers* following to go to this *nation scattered*, &c. Then he calls to all nations to be witnesses of the message sent by these messengers, ver. 3. And then the message follows in the succeeding verses. And so the coherence seems to be clear. *Go, ye swift messengers:* O you, my angels, or men, whom I have appointed for this work, go speedily to them, and tell them what I am about to do with them, or inflict the following judgment upon them. *Scattered*, not by banishment, but in their habitations; which agrees well to the Cushites or Ethiopians, both for the vastness of the land inhabited by them, to wit, Ethiopia and Arabia, and for the manner of their habitation, which is more scattered than that of other people. Or these people may be called *scattered* prophetically, not that they were so, but that they should be so. Or this word may be rendered, as it is in the margin, and by some others, *outspread*, or *drawn out at length;* which exactly suits to Egypt, which is much more extended in length than in breadth. *Peeled;* either, 1. Without hair; for so were the Ethiopians in a great measure, through the great heat of their country. Or, 2. Having their hair shaven or plucked off; for the word doth not signify a natural want of hair, but a violent taking away of hair, as appears from Ezra ix. 3; Neh. xiii. 25; Isa. l. 6. And this plucking or shaving of the hair is metaphorically used in Scripture, to signify some great calamity, whereby men are stripped of all their comforts, as Isa. vii. 20, and elsewhere. And this title may be given to them prophetically, to signify their future and approaching destruction. *Terrible from their beginning hitherto;* such were the Egyptians and Ethiopians or Cushites, as appears both from sacred and profane histories. And this may be here added as an aggravation of their impending miseries, that they who had been for a long time terrible to others, should now become a contemptible and wretched people. *Meted out*, Heb. *of line, line*, i. e. meted out as it were with lines to destruction; of which phrase and custom see 2 Sam. viii. 2; 2 Kings xxi. 13; Psal. lx. 6; Isa. xxxiv. 11. *Trodden down* by Divine sentence, and to be trodden down by their enemies. *The rivers have spoiled:* which may be taken either, 1. Literally, because Egypt and Ethiopia were frequently overflowed by those two great rivers Niger and Nilus; although that overflow was rather an advantage to the land, by making it fruitful, than a mischief. Or, 2. Metaphorically and prophetically, of the Assyrians or Babylonians breaking in upon them like a river, and destroying their land and people; of which see more on Ezek. xxx. For powerful enemies invading a country are oft compared to a river, as Isa. viii. 7, 8; lix. 19; Jer. xlvi. 7, 8.

3 All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, [c] when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.

[c] ch. 5. 26.

See ye; take notice of what I say and God will do. Or, *ye shall see* it; you shall be eye-witnesses of this dreadful woe or judgment which I am bringing upon the people of whom I have spoken. The prophet doth in a manner summon all nations to bear witness of his prophecy, and of the accomplishment thereof. *When he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains, and when he bloweth a trumpet;* when God shall gather together the nations, as it were, by the lifting up of an ensign, or by the sound of a trumpet, to execute his judgments upon this people. Heb. *as when* a man *lifts up an ensign upon the mountains*, which men can easily see; and *as when* a man *sounds a trumpet*, they can hear: no less visible and manifest shall this judgment of God be. *Hear ye; ye shall hear* it, as in the other branch.

4 For so the LORD said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will ‖consider in my dwelling place like a clear heat ‖upon herbs, *and* like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

‖ Or, *regard my set dwelling.* ‖ Or, *after rain.*

I will take my rest; I will sit still, and not bestir myself,

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either to help this people, or to hinder their enemies. God is said in Scripture *to rest* or *sit still*, when he doth not work on the behalf of a person or people; as, on the contrary, he is said *to bestir* himself when he acts for them. *I will consider*; or, *I will contemplate* or *look upon* them, to wit, the people of whom I am here speaking. So it is only an ellipsis of the pronoun. Now God's *looking* in Scripture is variously used; sometimes in way of favour and mercy, as Psal. xxv. 18; Isa. lxvi. 2, &c.; and sometimes in a way of anger and judgment, as Exod. xiv. 24; Psal. xxv. 19, and, as I humbly conceive, in this place. I know some learned men render this and the next word, *I will look upon my dwelling-place*, and interpret the place of God's gracious respect to his church or people, to preserve and deliver it in the midst of all the confusions and combustions that happen in the world; which interpretation seems altogether unsuitable to the scope and business of the chapter, which in all the foregoing and following verses speaks of another sort of people, even of the Egyptians or Ethiopians, of whom therefore this verse also must be understood, or otherwise we make a breach in the context. *In my dwelling-place*; in heaven, the place where God dwells, and where he is said to *hear* prayers, 1 Kings viii. 30, 32, as here to *consider* men and things, as elsewhere he is said to *hear* and to *look from heaven*, as 2 Chron. vi. 21; Isa. lxiii. 15; the Hebrew particles *beth*, *in*, and *mem*, *from*, being put promiscuously one for another, as hath been noted before. *Like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.* The sense is, that God would look upon them, as the sun with clear heat looks upon herbs, &c. But this may be understood either, 1. In way of mercy, as most take it. And so the sense is, that God would look out and shine forth upon his church and people, and be as comfortable and refreshing to them as *the clear heat* which shines *upon the herbs*; or, as others render it, *after the rain*; or, *as a cloud of dew* is *in the heat of harvest*. Or, 2. In way of judgment. And so the sense is, that God would look upon them with as uncomfortable an influence *as* the sun with *a clear heat upon the herbs*, which are scorched and killed by it; and *as a cloud of the dew*, which brings dew or rain, *in the heat of harvest*, when it is unwelcome and hurtful. And this sense seems best to agree with the following verse, which continueth the metaphor of a harvest, and manifestly speaks not of refreshing, but of the destruction of the fruits thereof.

5 For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away *and* cut down the branches.

Afore the harvest; before they receive the end of their hopes, and finish the work which they have designed and begun. *When the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower*; when the bud or flower is turned into a perfect but unripe grape, which gives hopes of a good vintage. The body of this people are compared to a vine tree. *He*; the Lord, who is easily understood from the foregoing verse, and who is here represented under the notion of a husbandman or vine-dresser. *Take away and cut down the branches*; instead of the gathering of the grapes, he shall cut down the body and branches of the tree, and throw it into the fire.

6 They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.

The sprigs and branches being cut down and thrown upon the ground, with the unripe grapes upon them, they shall lie upon the earth neglected by men, as being unripe, and unfit for their use, so that either birds or beasts may shelter themselves with them, or feed on them, both summer and winter. You are not to understand that the summer is appropriated to the fowls, and the winter to the beasts; but this is only an elegancy of the Hebrew language to use such distributions, of which we have many instances in prophetical writings.

7 ¶ In that time [d] shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people ‖ scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.

[d] See Ps. 68. 31. & 72. 10. etc. 16. 1. Zeph. 3. 10. Mal. 1. 11.

‖ Or, *spread and polished*: See ver. 2.

In that day; which is to be taken largely and indefinitely, as it is frequently in the prophets, as we have already seen, and shall more fully see hereafter. At or after that time, when the judgment threatened in the foregoing verses shall be fully and completely executed, whereby that people will be awakened to repentance. *A people*; the people of whom I am speaking shall present and offer themselves and their sacrifices unto the true God. He speaks of their conversion to God and Christ by the preaching of the gospel; the accomplishment of which promise is recorded in the histories of the church.

CHAP. XIX.

The confusion of Egypt; their intestine dissension; their idols deceive them; cruel lords over them; waters fail them; their trade dead; their princes and counsellors made foolish; their terror before the Lord, 1—17. *The calling of Egypt to the church,* 18—22. *The covenant of Egypt, Assyria, and Israel,* 23—25.

THE [a] burden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD [b] rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and [c] the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

[a] Jer. 46. 13. Ezek. 29, & 30. [b] Ps. 18. 10. & 104. 3. [c] Ex. 12. 12. Jer. 43. 12.

The burden of Egypt. Some learned men conceive that what was said more generally and darkly in the foregoing chapter, is here more particularly and clearly explained to be meant of Egypt; it being usual for the prophets to mix obscure and plain passages together, and to clear the one by the other. Others understand that chapter of Ethiopia, and this of Egypt. But this controversy must be decided by an exact consideration of all the passages of the former chapter. *The Lord rideth*, as a general in the head of his army, or as a judge riding the circuit to execute judgment. *Upon a swift cloud*; which phrase showeth that the judgment shall come speedily, unexpectedly, and unavoidably. And clouds being very unusual in Egypt, the appearance of a cloud was a kind of prodigy, and a prognostic of some grievous calamity. *Shall be moved* from their seats, and from their former reputation. Or, *shall shake* or *tremble*. So far shall they be from helping the Egyptians, as they expect, that they shall tremble for themselves; which divers of the Egyptian gods, being living creatures, might properly do. *The heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it*; they shall lose all their ancient strength and courage, for which they had been famous formerly.

2 And I will † [d] set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, *and* kingdom against kingdom.

† Heb. *mingle*. [d] Judg. 7. 22. 1 Sam. 14. 16, 20. 2 Chron. 20. 23.

I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians; I will raise civil wars among them. *Kingdom against kingdom*; for although all Egypt was now one kingdom, and under one king, yet not many years after this time it was divided into twelve several kingdoms, between whom there were many and cruel wars, as is related by the historians of those times, and particularly by Herodotus and Diodorus.

3 And the spirit of Egypt † shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will † destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall [e] seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.

† Heb. *shall be emptied*. † Heb. *swallow up*. [e] ch. 8. 19. & 47. 12.

The spirit; either, 1. Their courage. But of that he spake ver. 1. Or, 2. Their understanding, as it is explained in the next clause; for the word *spirit* is oft put for the reasonable soul, as Eccles. iii. 21; xii. 7, and for the thoughts

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of the mind, as Prov. xxix. 11; Ezek. xiii. 3. *They shall seek to the idols*, as not knowing what to do without the help of a higher power.

Or, *shut up.* f ch. 20. 4. Jer. 46. 26. Ezek. 29. 19.

4 And the Egyptians will I ‖ give over [f] into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

A fierce king; either, 1. The king of Assyria or Chaldea; or, 2. Those twelve petty kings, the singular number being put for the plural; or, 3. Psammetichus, who being at first one of those twelve kings, waged war with the rest, and subdued them, and conquered all the land of Egypt, and ruled it with rigour.

g Jer. 51. 36. Ezek. 30. 12.

5 [g] And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.

The waters shall fail from the sea; which may be understood either, 1. Metaphorically, of the taking away of their dominion or commerce, &c.; or rather, 2. Properly, as may be gathered from the following words and verses. For as the river Nilus, when it had a full stream, and free course, did pour forth a vast quantity of waters by its seven famous mouths into the sea; so when that was dried up, which is expressed in the next clause, those waters did truly and properly fail from the sea. So there is no need of understanding by *sea* either the river Nilus, or the great lake of Mœris, which, after the manner of the Hebrews, might be so called. *The river*, to wit, Nilus, upon whose fulness and overflow both the safety and the wealth of the land depended, as all authors agree; and therefore this was a very terrible judgment. *Dried up*, not totally, but in a very great measure, as such phrases are commonly used.

h 2 Kings 19. 24.

6 And they shall turn the rivers far away; *and* the brooks [h] of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.

They shall turn the rivers far away; which is to be taken impersonally, as such expressions are very frequently, for, *the rivers* (those small rivulets by which the waters of Nilus were conveyed and distributed into several parts of the land) *shall be turned far away*, as they must needs be, when the greater river Nilus, which fed them, was dried up. *The brooks of defence;* the several branches of the river Nilus, which were a great defence to Egypt, as is well known. *The reeds and flags;* which were very useful to them for making their boats, which were absolutely necessary in that country, and divers other things. *Shall wither;* as they commonly do for want of water.

+ Heb. *and shall not be.*

7 The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, † and be no *more*.

The paper reeds; which by a needle, or other fit instrument, were divided into thin and broad leaves, which being dried and fitted, were used at that time for writing, as our paper is; and consequently was a very good commodity. *Sown by the brooks;* and much more what was sown in more dry and unfruitful places.

8 The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.

Because they could catch few or no fish, by which trade they got their living; which also was a great plague to the people, whose common diet this was, because out of superstitious conceits they killed and eat but few living creatures, as appears both from sacred and profane writers.

i 1 Kings 10. 28. Prov. 7. 16. ‖ Or, *white works.*

9 Moreover they that work in [i] fine flax, and they that weave ‖ networks, shall be confounded.

That work in fine flax; that make fine linen, which was one of their best commodities; of which see 1 Kings x. 28; Prov. vii. 16; Ezek. xxvii. 7.

+ Heb. *foundations.* + Heb. *of living things.*

10 And they shall be broken in the † purposes thereof, all that make sluices *and* ponds † for fish.

Thereof, i. e. of Egypt, or of the Egyptians. They shall lose their ends and hopes; for the fishes in them shall die for want of water.

k Num. 13. 22.

11 ¶ Surely the princes of [k] Zoan *are* fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I *am* the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?

Zoan; the chief city, in which the king and court frequently resided. See Psal. lxxviii. 12. *Brutish;* exceeding foolish, and destructive to themselves. *How say ye unto Pharaoh?* why do you put such false and foolish words into Pharaoh's mouth? *I am the son of the wise;* wisdom is hereditary and natural to me. This vain opinion of himself they cherished by their flatteries, although he undid himself and his people by his folly. *The son of ancient kings:* he derides the vanity of the Egyptians, who used to make great brags of the antiquity of their nation, and especially of their kings, who, as they pretended, had reigned successively for above ten thousand years; which number of years they made up by this craft, by making those successive kings, which reigned together at the same time, in their several Nomi, or provinces.

l 1 Cor. 1. 20.

12 [l] Where *are* they? where *are* thy wise *men?* and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.

Thy wise men; who pretended that either by their deep policy, or by their skill in astrology or magic, they could certainly foresee things to come.

m Jer. 2. 16.

13 The princes of Zoan are become fools, [m] the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, *even* ‖ † *they that are* the stay of the tribes thereof.

‖ Or, governors. † Heb. corners.

Noph; another chief city, and one of the king's seats, so called also Jer. ii. 16; xliv. 1; called also *Moph* in the Hebrew text, Hos. ix. 6; and by other and later authors, *Memphis*. *Even they that are the stay*, Heb. even *the corner*, or the corner-stone, which is the chief support of the building. Whereby he may design either, 1. The king; or, 2. Some eminent statesman of that age, upon whose counsels both king and people depended; or, 3. Their chief counsellors, the singular number being here put collectively, as it is in many other places. *The tribes* of the provinces, which he calls by a title borrowed from the Hebrews, in whose language he spake and wrote this prophecy.

† Heb. *a spirit of perverseness.* n 1 Kings 22. 22. ch. 29. 10.

14 The LORD hath mingled † [n] a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken *man* staggereth in his vomit.

Hath mingled; or, *hath poured out* or *given* them *to drink*, as appears from their drunkenness, expressed in the end of the verse; which also suits with the Scripture phrase, whereby *a cup* signifies God's judgments, as Isa. li. 17, 21, 22; Jer. xxv. 15. *A perverse spirit*, Heb. *a spirit of perversities* or *crookednesses;* or, as the LXX. and Chaldee render it, *of error* or *delusion;* a disposition of mind very apt to mistake, and to mislead them into foolish and crooked counsels and courses; which God could easily effect, partly by laying occasions of stumbling in their way, and partly by withdrawing or darkening that wisdom which he had infused, by which alone men can discern their way. *In every work thereof;* in all their designs and undertakings. *Staggereth in his vomit;* when he is so excessively drunk, that he reels to and fro, and vomits up his drink.

o ch. 9. 14.

15 Neither shall there be *any* work for Egypt, which [o] the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.

All people, both high and low, shall be at their wits' end, not knowing what to do.

Jer. 51. 30. Nah. 3. 13.

16 In that day shall Egypt [p] be like

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unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand
q ch. 11. 15. of the LORD of hosts, q which he shaketh over it.

Like unto women; feeble and fearful, as it follows. *Because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts;* because they shall perceive that they do not fight with men only, but with the Lord of hosts, who now lifts up his hand against them, as he did against their forefathers, Exod. xiv., the very remembrance whereof is very terrible to them.

17 And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it.

The land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt; either, 1. Because of Judah's calamities and desolations; for Judah was their bulwark against the Assyrians and Babylonians; and when this bulwark was removed, the Egyptians, their neighbours and confederates, had just cause to fear. Or, 2. Because of their manifold both former and later injuries against Judah, for which they now apprehend that God is calling them to an account; which interpretation seems to be favoured by the following words; for their fear of mentioning Judah's name seems to have proceeded partly from the sense of their guilt and miscarriages towards Judah, and partly from their apprehensions and experience of the irresistible power and justice of the God of Judah, whom they had provoked, and who was now marching to plead his own and Judah's cause against them. Compare Jer. xxiii. 34, &c. *Which he hath determined;* because God is now about to execute his appointed judgment. *Against it;* against Egypt.

18 ¶ In that day shall five cities in the
r Zeph. 3. 9. land of Egypt r speak † the language of
* Heb. *the lip.* Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts;
‖ Or, *of Heres*, or, *of the sun.* one shall be called, The city ‖ of destruction.

In that day; after that time, as this phrase is used, Isa. iv. 2; xviii. 7, and oft elsewhere. In the times of the gospel, which are oft noted in the prophets by that very expression. *Five cities;* a considerable number of their chief cities, a certain number being put for an uncertain. *Speak the language of Canaan;* profess the Jewish religion, agree with them in the same mind; which is fitly signified by speaking the same language, because *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* Thus the changing and purifying of a people's lips is used to signify the change of their hearts and lives, Zeph. iii. 9; and praising God with one mouth, to note their unity or consent in the faith, Rom. xv. 6. *Swear to the Lord of hosts:* it is well observed by some learned interpreters, that he doth not say *swear by the Lord*, which is the most common phrase, and which, being one eminent part and act of worship, is put for the whole; but *swear to the Lord;* which phrase is also used 2 Chron. xv. 14; Psal. cxxxii. 2; Isa. xlv. 23; and it implies the dedication, or oblation, and yielding up of a person or thing to the Lord, by a solemn vow, or covenant, or oath, as appears by the places now quoted. In like manner God is said to *swear to* a man, Deut. xxvi. 15, and one man to another, Gen. xxi. 23, when they oblige themselves by oath to do such or such a thing for them. And therefore what is called *swearing to God*, Isa. xlv. 23, is rendered or expounded *bowing the knee* (which signifies the subjection of a man's self) *to God*, and *confessing to God*, Rom. xiv. 11. *One;* not one of the five, for they are supposed to be saved in the foregoing clause; but one city, or another city, the sixth city. As divers cities shall be converted and saved, so some other cities shall continue in their impenitency, and be destroyed. †Others render this clause thus, *one* of them *shall be called*, (or, *shall be;* for *to be called* is oft put for *to be.*) *The city of the sun;* or, as the Grecians call it, *Heliopolis;* which the Egyptians called *On;* Gen. xli. 45; which was a very eminent city, and a chief seat of idolatry, being a city of priests, as Strabo reports; and therefore its conversion to the faith was more wonderful.

19 In that day s shall there be an altar
s Gen. 28. 18. Ex. 24. 4. Josh. 22. 10, 26, 27. to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD.

An altar for God's worship; not a Levitical, but a spiritual and evangelical altar, as appears from hence, because that was confined to one place, Deut. xii. 13, 14. The *altar* is put for the worship of God, as it is in many places both of the Old and New Testament. And nothing is more common in the prophets than to speak of gospel worship in the phrases of the law. *A pillar;* a monument of the true religion. Here also he alludes to the ancient custom of erecting pillars to God; of which see Gen. xii. 7; xxviii. 18, &c.; Josh. xxii. 10; xxiv. 26, 27. *At the border thereof;* as before, *in the midst* of it. The meaning is, There shall be evidences of their piety in all places.

20 And t it shall be for a sign and for
t See Josh. 4. 20, & 22, 27. a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.

And it, the altar or pillar last mentioned, *shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord,* to testify that they own the Lord for their God. *They shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors;* being sorely distressed, and finding the weakness of their idols, they shall turn unto the true God. *A Saviour, and a great one;* a great or mighty Saviour, by a common figure called *hendiaduo*, as *a cloud and smoke* is put for *a smoking cloud*, Isa. iv. 5; or, *a Saviour and a Prince*, even Christ, who is so called, Acts v. 31, as is evident from the whole context, which apparently speaks of gospel times. And the emphatical phrase here used directed them to look for an extraordinary Saviour.

21 And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and u shall do sacrifice
u Mal. 1. 11. and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform *it.*

Shall know the Lord; shall acknowledge, and love, and serve him; for words of knowledge in Scripture commonly include affection and practice, as hath been often observed. *Shall do sacrifice and oblation;* shall worship God spiritually; which yet is signified by typical phrases, as it is Mal. i. 11, and in many other places. *And perform it;* they shall not only profess and promise piety, but shall seriously and diligently practise it.

22 And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal *it:* and they shall return *even* to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.

He shall smite and heal it; God will afflict them by oppressors, ver. 20, and otherwise; and by those afflictions he will convert and save them.

23 ¶ In that day x shall there be a high-
x ch. 11. 16. way out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

The Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; they who were implacable enemies one to another, and both to the church and people of God, shall now be reconciled and united together in the service of God, and love to his church. *Shall serve,* to wit, the Lord, who is easily understood from ver. 21, 25.

24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, *even* a blessing in the midst of the land:

The third; the third party, to wit, in that sacred league, whereby all of them oblige themselves to God. *With Egypt and with Assyria:* these people are named because they were the most obstinate and malicious enemies to God's church, and therefore in a special manner accursed

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by God; but they are here put synecdochically for all the Gentiles. *Even a blessing:* this is peculiar to Israel, who is not only a *third* party, as the others are, but is the most eminent and blessed of the three, as being the fountain, or rather the conduit-pipe, by which the blessing is conveyed to the other two, because Christ was to be born of them, and the gospel church and ordinances were first established among them, and from them derived to the Gentiles. *In the midst of the land;* or, *of the earth;* which may be added, to imply that God's blessing should be conveyed from and by Israel, not only to the Egyptians and the Assyrians, but to all the nations of the earth, in the midst of which the land of Israel might well be said to lie. Or, *of that land* of which I am here speaking; or, the singular number being put for the plural, *of those lands*, Egypt and Assyria, between which Israel lay.

25 Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed *be* Egypt my people, and Assyria [y] the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

y Ps. 100. 3. ch. 29. 23. Hos. 2. 23. Eph. 2. 10.

Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless; whom, i. e. which people, to wit, Israel, Egypt, and Assyria, expressed both in the foregoing verse, and in the following clause of this verse; of whom he speaks as of one people, in the singular number, because they are all united into one body and church. Or, *For* or *because* (as this particle is taken, 1 Sam. xv. 15, and elsewhere) *the Lord of hosts shall bless him* or *them*. So this is added as a reason why he said Israel should be a blessing to them all. *My people:* this title, and those which follow, that were peculiar to the people of Israel, shall now be given to these and all other nations of the world.

CHAP. XX.

The captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia represented, to take off the Jews from seeking to them for help.

IN the year that [a] Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;

a 2 Kings 18. 17.

Tartan; a great commander in Sennacherib's army, 2 Kings xviii. 17. *Ashdod;* an eminent and strong city of the Philistines, Josh. xiii. 3; 1 Sam. v. 1, in the utmost part of the land of Canaan, towards Egypt. *Sargon:* what king of Assyria this was is much disputed. It is well known, and confessed, that one and the same person hath frequently several names, both in Scripture, as hath been observed again and again, and in other authors. And therefore this may be either, 1. Shalmaneser, who, when he took Samaria, might also by Tartan take this place. Or, 2. Sennacherib, who, before he came to Jerusalem, *came up against and took all the fenced cities of Judah*, 2 Kings xviii. 13, of which Ashdod might be reckoned one, as being in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xiii. 3; xv. 47, and taken by Hezekiah from the Philistines, as it seems very probable from that passage, 2 Kings xviii. 8, *He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.* Or, 3. Esarhaddon, Sennacherib's son, who, by cutting off the first letter, is called *Sarchedon*, Tob. i. 21, and thence possibly, by abbreviation, *Sargon;* who might do this thing in Hezekiah's time, some years after his father's death, and his coming to the empire, although it be not recorded in Scripture; for no man doubts that there were many great actions in those times which are wholly omitted in the sacred writings.

2 At the same time spake the LORD † by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose [b] the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, [c] walking naked and barefoot.

† Heb. *by the hand of Isaiah.*
b Zech. 13. 4.
c 1 Sam. 19. 24. Mic. 1. 8, 11.

Loose the sackcloth; ungird it and put it off: the antecedent put for the consequent, which is very usual, as hath been often noted. God would sometimes have his prophets to add to their word a visible sign, to awaken people's minds to a more serious consideration of the matters proposed to them. *The sackcloth;* either, 1. His coarse and hairy garment, which the prophets used to wear, 2 Kings i. 8; Zech. xiii. 4, as many understand it. But that is expressed by another word in the places quoted, and never, to my knowledge, by this word. Or, 2. His mournful habit, which was commonly made of sackcloth, and which he wore in token of his hearty grief for the great calamities which were already come upon Israel, and were either come or coming upon Judah. *From off thy loins;* upon which the upper garments were commonly girt, 1 Kings xx. 32; 2 Kings ix. 1. *Walking naked;* not wholly naked, which had been indecent and scandalous, and withal very dangerous, at least to do so for three years, as he did, ver. 3; but without his upper garment, as slaves and prisoners used to do, whose posture he was to represent, ver. 4. And so the word *naked* is used 1 Sam. xix. 24; 2 Sam. vi. 20; John xxi. 7. Thus also men are said to be *naked* when they are ill clothed, as Job xxii. 6; Matt. xxv. 36; 1 Cor. iv. 11; James ii. 15. *Barefoot;* after the manner of mourners, 2 Sam. xv. 30, and captives, Jer. ii. 25.

3 And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years [d] *for* a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia;

d ch. 8. 18.

Walked naked and barefoot three years; not constantly, but when he went abroad among the people, to whom this was appointed for a sign. Some think it was only three days, a *day* being usually put for a year in prophetical scriptures, as Numb. xiv. 33, 34; Ezek. iv. 4—6. But although *a day* be put for *a year*, yet *a year* is never put for *a day*. *A sign;* either, 1. When this judgment should come, to wit, three years after this prophecy. Or, 2. How long it should continue, for three years; for some have observed that the Chaldeans spent so much time in conquering Egypt and Ethiopia.

4 So shall the king of Assyria lead away † the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, [e] even with *their* buttocks uncovered, to the † shame of Egypt.

† Heb. *the captivity of Egypt.*
e 2 Sam. 10. 4. ch. 3. 17. Jer. 13. 22, 26. Mic. 1. 11.
† Heb. *nakedness.*

Lead away, like beasts, of which this word is commonly used. *Their buttocks uncovered;* having their garments cut off by the middle, to the discovery of their buttocks and their secret parts. Compare 2 Sam. x. 4; Isa. xlvii. 2.

5 [f] And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

f 2 Kings 18. 21. ch. 30. 3, 5, 7. & 36. 6.

They; all they that shall trust to them, and glory in them, as appears from the following words; the pronoun *they* being put indefinitely here, as it is Isa. ii. 19, and elsewhere. But under this general expression the Israelites not only are comprehended, but seem to be principally intended, because to them this prophecy was delivered, and they were eminently guilty of this sin; of which see Isa. xxx. 2; xxxi. 1.

6 And the inhabitant of this ‖ isle shall say in that day, Behold, such *is* our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?

‖ Or, *country*, Jer. 47. 4.

Of this isle; of this land, in which the prophet was, and to whose inhabitants these words were uttered. For the title of *isles* or *islands* in Scripture is frequently given not only to lands encompassed with the sea, but also to such countries as lay upon the sea-coasts, as Psal. lxxii. 10; Ezek. xxvi. 15, 18, as Palestina or Canaan did, yea, to such countries as are remote or separated from that place in or of which the words are spoken, as Esth. x. 1; Isa. xxiv. 15; xlii. 4, 10, &c., as Canaan was from Egypt, or at least from Ethiopia. Add to this, that Canaan had some resemblance with an isle, either because it was almost encompassed with the Midland Sea on one side, and with the Dead Sea, and the Sea of Galilee or Tiberias and Jordan on the other side; or because, as isles are separated from other lands by the sea, so this land and people were separated from all the rest of the world by God's special

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providence, and presence, and worship. *Such is our expectation;* so vain is our hope placed upon such a people as are unable to deliver themselves, and much more to deliver us. *Whither we flee for help;* to whom we now and usually trust; for this was the common disease of the people of Israel, although Hezekiah was in a good measure free from it, as we read, 2 Kings xviii. 5. *How shall we escape?* either by their help, who cannot defend themselves; or by our own strength, seeing they who were much more potent than we are could not escape.

CHAP. XXI.

The prophet's fear and trouble at his vision of Babylon's ruin by the Medes and Persians, 1—4. *He mocketh Babel.* 5—9. *Edom, scorning the prophet, is called to repentance,* 11, 12. *The time of Arabia's calamity set,* 13—17.

THE burden of the desert of the sea.
[a] As [a]whirlwinds in the south pass through; *so* it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land.

[a] Zech. 9. 14.

The desert of the sea; Babylon, as is evident both from her destroyers, the Medians, ver. 2, and especially from ver. 9, where she is named. She seems to be called *desert* prophetically, to intimate, that although she was now a most populous city and kingdom, yet shortly she should be turned into a desolate wilderness, as was threatened, chap. xiii. 19, &c. But the word here rendered *desert* sometimes signifies *a plain,* as a very learned interpreter hath observed, and thus it most properly agrees to Babylon, and the land about it, which geographers note to be a very plain country, without any considerable mountains in it. It is called the *desert of the sea,* because it is situate by the sea, as *the isles of the sea,* Esth. x. 1, are those countries which were beside the sea. And the title of *the sea* might well be given to the waters of Babylon, because of the great plenty and multitude of them, the great channel of Euphrates, and the several several lesser channels cut out, and the vast lakes of water; in which respects it is said to *sit upon many waters,* Jer. li. 13, the name of *sea* being given by the Hebrews to every great collection of waters. *In the south;* in those parts which lay southward from Judea, where there were many and great deserts, in which the winds have greater force. See Job i. 19; Jer. iv. 11. *Pass through;* as meeting with no stop or opposition. *It;* the burden or judgment. Or, *he,* the Median, as it is in the next verse. *Cometh from the desert;* from Media and Persia; thus expressed, either because those countries were full of deserts, or because a great desert lay between them and Chaldea, as geographers and historians report. *From a terrible land;* from the Medes, a warlike and formidable people, as appears both from sacred and profane writers.

† Heb. *hard.*
[b] ch. 33. 1.
[c] ch. 13. 17. Jer. 49. 34.

2 A †grievous vision is declared unto me; [b]the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. [c]Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.

A grievous vision; a vision or prophecy, containing dreadful calamities which were to fall upon Babylon. *The treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth:* this is spoken either, 1. Of the Chaldeans, as their sin, for which God sends the following judgment. So the sense is, The Chaldeans still persist in the practice of treachery and rapine, to which they have been so long accustomed. Or, 2. Of the Medes and Persians, who are here noted to pay the Babylonians in their own coin, and to use the same treachery and violence towards them which they had done to others. To which purpose the words are and may well be rendered otherwise; either thus, *the treacherous dealer* hath found *a treacherous dealer, and the spoiler* hath found *a spoiler;* or thus, *O thou that dealest treacherously with the treacherous dealer, and that spoilest the spoiler, go up, O Elam, &c.,* as it followeth. These words will be much illustrated by compared them with Isa. xxxiii. 1. There is no doubt to be made but the Medes and Persians used treachery as well as force against Babylon. And besides other instances now unknown, we have one upon record, of their entertaining those two traitors, Gadatas and Gobrias, and following their counsel and conduct in taking the city, which made them partakers of their treason. *Go up,* to fight against her. These are God's words, either giving them command and commission to do so, or rather foretelling what they would do; which is oft done in this form of speech. *Elam;* Persia, called *Elam* synecdochically, because Elam was an eminent province of Persia, bordering upon the Medes. *Besiege,* to wit, Babylon, ver. 9. *All the sighing thereof;* either, 1. Babylon's sighing, which shall cease, because they shall have no time to sigh, or lament their miseries, being suddenly surprised, and cut off in a moment, as they were. As God is said to *seek out the wickedness* of wicked men *till he find none,* Psal. x. 15, when he utterly destroyeth them in or with their sins. Or, 2. The sighing and groanings of God's people and other nations under the heavy oppressions of that potent and cruel empire; the pronoun *her,* or *thereof,* being taken here not passively, as commonly it is; but actively, or efficiently, as sometimes it is, as Deut. xi. 25, *your fear,* i. e. the fear of you; and Job xxxiii. 7, *my terror,* i. e. the terror or dread of me upon thee.

3 Therefore [d]are my loins filled with pain: [e]pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing *of it;* I was dismayed at the seeing *of it.*

[d] ch. 15. 5. & 16. 11.
[e] ch. 13. 8.

My loins; which he mentions with respect to the following similitude of child-bearing, in which the loins are sorely pained. And this the prophet speaks, either, 1. In the name and person of the Babylonian. Or rather, 2. In his own name; which is most natural, and agrees best with the last clause of the verse, which plainly speaks of the torment which he had in the mere hearing of the word, and seeing the vision, and not of that which they had in the feeling of it; although the latter is implied in the former; and the prophet expresseth his horror in hearing and seeing, to intimate the dreadful horror which should seize upon them when it came upon them. *As the pangs of a woman that travaileth;* sharp and grievous pains.

4 ‖My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: [f]the night of my pleasure hath he †turned into fear unto me.

‖ Or, *My mind wandered.*
[f] Dan. 5. 6, 7.
† Heb. *put.*

The night of my pleasure; the night, in which I used to have a sweet repose and sleep. He seems to have had this vision in a night. But withal this horror of the prophet by night was typical, and did signify that grievous horror and destruction which should befall the Babylonians in a night of great feasting and jollity, as it did, Dan. v. 1, 30. *Hath he,* God, who showed him that vision, *turned into fear unto me;* into a time and matter of fear.

5 [g]Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, *and* anoint the shield.

[g] Dan. 5. 5.

Prepare the table; furnish it with meats and drinks, as it follows. The prophet foretells what the Babylonians would be doing when their enemies were at their doors, that they would give up themselves to feasting and security. *Watch in the watch-tower,* to give us notice of any approaching danger, that in the mean time we may more securely indulge ourselves in mirth and pleasures. *Arise, ye princes;* either, 1. Ye Medes and Persians; whilst your enemies the Babylonians are feasting securely, prepare to make your assault. Or, 2. Ye princes of Babylon; arise from the table and run to your arms. Which sudden alarm and change of their posture proceeded from tidings out of the watch-tower, as may be gathered from the former clause, and is more fully expressed in the following verses. *Anoint the shield;* prepare yourselves and your arms for the battle approaching. *The shield* is put for all their weapons of offence and defence. They used to anoint their shields with oil, partly to preserve and polish them, and partly to make them slippery, that their enemies' darts might not fasten in them, but slide off from them.

6 For thus hath the LORD said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth.

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Thus hath the Lord said unto me; I speak not my own fancies, but what God hath made me to see and hear in a vision; the particulars whereof are related in the following verses. *A watchman;* either, 1. A prophet; such being oft so called, as Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 2. Or rather, 2. A military watchman. For this was now done only in a vision, which yet did foresignify what should be done really afterwards. *Let him declare,* to thee in vision, to them really.

h ver. 9.

7 h And he saw a chariot *with* a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, *and* a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed:

And he saw; a short speech for he told me that he saw. *A chariot,* not for burden, but for war, in which chariots were then much used. *With a couple of horsemen;* attended with two horsemen. So there were both chariots and troops of horsemen. Or, with *a couple of horses,* as this word is sometimes used, as 1 Sam. viii. 11; 2 Sam. i. 6. The chariot was drawn with two horses. *A chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels;* two chariots, one drawn by asses, (under which title some understand mules, as being engendered of asses,) and the other by camels; whereby he signifies the variety and abundance of warlike provisions which the Medes and Persians should have for this expedition, and particularly of chariots, whereof some were for the carriage of necessary things, and others for the battle. *He hearkened diligently;* he carefully observed what he saw, and what he could further discover.

‖ Or, *cried as a lion.*
i Hab. 2. 1.

8 And ‖he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the i watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward ‖whole nights:

‖ Or, *every night.*

And he cried, A lion: the sense of the words thus rendered is this, The watchman cried out, I see also a lion, to wit, marching before the horsemen and chariots already mentioned; which they suppose to represent Cyrus or Darius marching in the head of their armies. Or, as it is rendered in the margin, and by divers others, *he cried* as (which particle is oft understood, as hath been formerly and frequently noted) *a lion,* with a terrible cry, as being affrighted with the vision, and withal signifying the dreadfulness of that judgment which was here represented as coming upon Babylon. *My lord;* the watchman speaks these words either to God, or to the prophet, who by command from God had set him in this place and station; to whom therefore he gives the following account of his discharge of the work wherewith he was intrusted. *I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day time, and I am set in my ward whole nights;* according to thy command I have stood, and do yet stand, continually, both day and night, upon my watch-tower.

9 And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, *with* a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, k Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and l all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

k Jer. 51. 8. Rev. 14. 8. & 16. 2.
l Isa. 46. 1. Jer. 50. 2. & 51. 44.

Behold; the sum of what I have discovered is this. *A chariot of men;* not filled with goods, as chariots of burden used to be; but provided with men, to fight from or with them. *With a couple of horsemen;* understand, *and a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels;* which is easily understood from ver. 7, where they are expressed. *He;* the prophet Isaiah, who set the watchman; or the Lord, by whose command he was set, ver. 6, who here gives an explication of the vision. *All the graven images of her gods;* which is mentioned as an evidence that she was fully conquered, because otherwise they would not have suffered their idols to have been thrown to the ground. *He hath broken;* God, by the hands of Cyrus, his instrument. Or it is an indefinite speech, *he hath broken,* &c., for *they are broken,* &c.

m Jer. 51. 33.
† Heb. *son.*

10 m O my threshing, and the †corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

Threshing is here put for the corn threshed, as it is explained in the following words; the act being frequently put for the object, as *captivity* for the captives, *fear* for the thing feared, &c., as hath been noted before. And the corn threshed is here metaphorically put for people sorely afflicted and punished, which is oft expressed by threshing, as Isa. xxv. 10; xli. 15; Micah iv. 13, &c. This is spoken either, 1. Of the Jews, to whom he now turneth his speech, whom God did grievously thresh and afflict by the Babylonians, and whom he here comforts with these tidings, as if he had said, Though thou wilt be threshed first, yet Babylon shall be threshed last, and most dreadfully, and their threshing shall be thy deliverance. This interpretation is thought necessary, because of the latter clause of the verse, wherewith this is to be joined. Or, 2. Of Babylon. *O my threshing;* or, thou art *my threshing,* whom I have undertaken to thresh and punish. And so this is fitly mentioned here, to assure them that this prophecy of Babylon's fall must necessarily be accomplished, because the Almighty was engaged in the work. And this interpretation seems not to be inconsistent with the rest of the verse, as we shall see. *The corn of my floor;* the corn which I will cause to be threshed upon the floor, Heb. *the son of my floor.* For the title of *son* is oft given to lifeless things, as arrows are called *the sons of the bow,* or *of the quiver,* Job v. 7; xli. 28, &c. *That which I have heard of the Lord of hosts have I declared;* what I have foretold is not my own invention, but the word of God, and therefore shall infallibly come to pass. *Unto you;* either, 1. Unto you my people, or hearers; for all the prophecies, even concerning other nations, were published to them, and for their use and comfort: or, 2. Unto (or concerning, as this Hebrew particle is sometimes used, as the learned know) you Babylonians, to whom this was in some sort declared, because it was published amongst the Jews, and by their means might easily come to the knowledge of other people, and consequently of the Babylonians. Nor is it unusual for the prophets, in their prophecies delivered to God's people concerning Babylon, by an apostrophe to turn their speech to the Babylonians themselves; of which we have instances, Jer. l. 24, 31; li. 13, 14, 25, 26.

11 ¶ n The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?

n 1 Chr. 1. 30. Jer. 49. 7, 8. Ezek. 35. 2. Obad. 1.

Of Dumah; either, 1. Of a part of Arabia, so called from Dumah, one of Ishmael's race, Gen. xxv. 14; 1 Chron. i. 30. Or rather, 2. Of Edom or Idumea, as seems most probable from the mention of Mount Seir, which was a part of Edom; which may here be called *Dumah,* either by an abbreviation, or cutting off the first letter from Idumea, as Ram is put for Aram, 1 Chron. ii. 9; Job xxxii. 2, or rather prophetically and sarcastically; for Dumah signifies *silent;* whereby he intimates that Edom, which was much given to vain boasting and railing against God, and against his people, as we read elsewhere, should be brought to silence and utter ruin. And such new, and enigmatical, and significant names are elsewhere given by the prophets to divers known places, as Babylon is called *Sheshach,* Jer. xxv. 26, and Egypt *Mazor,* &c. *He,* to wit, Dumah, or the people of Dumah, of whom he speaks, or one of them in the name and by the appointment of the rest. *Calleth to me;* to the watchman, as appears by the following words; for the prophet delivers his prophecy in the form of a dialogue between the people and the watchman. *Out of Seir;* out of Edom, which is frequently called *Seir* as Gen. xxxii. 3; xxxvi. 8; 2 Chron. xx. 10; xxv. 11, &c. *Watchman;* whereby he means either, 1. The prophet Isaiah, whom they call *watchman,* either seriously, or in scorn, because the prophets were so called by God, and by the people of the Jews; or, 2. The watchman of Edom, whom they had set, as people use to do in times of great danger. *What of the night? the night* is taken either, 1. Metaphorically, for a time of tribulation. So they ask the prophet what he hath to say concerning that night of calamity which he had so long and oft threatened to them, whereof as yet they saw no appearance. Or, 2. properly, *the night* being the proper and chief time in which the watchman's care is most necessary, because then their enemies had opportunity to do them most harm. So the people are supposed to come to him very early in the morning, to inquire what had happened in the night; which shows a state of great

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perplexity and fear, which might well be called a *burden*, both because fear in itself is a great torment, and because this fear was a sign or presage of their approaching miseries. *What of the night?* the repetition of the same words shows the greatness of their solicitude and fear.

12 The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come.

The morning cometh, and also the night: the night is past without any great mischief to you, and the comfortable light of the morning is approaching, which freeth men's minds from the terrors of the night; but although the morning be coming, it will be gone, and the night will return, and your fears with it. The *night* seems to be here taken properly, as the *morning* is; yet so that he alludes to the metaphorical signification of the word, and intimates that the night of affliction was coming upon them. *If ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come.* If this watchman be the prophet Isaiah, then the sense of these words is this, *If you will be inquiring, inquire* sincerely and seriously of God, by me, concerning your danger, and the way to prevent it; *return* unto the Lord by true repentance, who alone can secure you, and *come* unto me for direction. But if it be their own watchman, which, with submission, I conceive most probable, the sense is, *If you will inquire, inquire:* I perceive, by what I have observed this night, that your danger is not passed, and there will be occasion for further inquiries from time to time; and therefore *return, come*, i. e. either *return* to them that sent you with this message, and then come to me for further tidings; or come again, as *return, lie down*, is put for *lie down again*, 1 Sam. iii. 5; come to me the next morning, as you have reason to do, and so from morning to morning, for I see every night is likely to bring some evil tidings to you.

13 ¶ [o]The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies [p]of Dedanim.

[o] Jer. 49. 28.

[p] 1 Chron. 1. 9, 32.

In the forest; not as you used to do, in the houses or tents of the Arabians; whereby he implies that that populous country should be turned into a desolate wilderness. *Travelling companies:* in those parts travellers then did and still do go together in companies. See Gen. xxxvii. 25, 28; Job vi. 19. *Dedanim;* or, Dedamites; of whom see on Gen. xxv. 3; Jer. xxv. 23; xlix. 8. These were merchants, and used to trade with Tyre, Ezek. xxvii. 20; xxxviii. 13, and their way lay through the same parts of Arabia.

14 The inhabitants of the land of Tema ‖brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled.

‖ Or, *bring ye.*

Tema; a part of Arabia; of which see Job vi. 19; Jer. xxv. 23. *They prevented with their bread him that fled;* whereby he implies that those other Arabians, against whom this prophecy is principally directed, should be reduced to great scarcity of all necessary provisions, and forced to flee for their lives from a bloody enemy, as is more fully expressed in the next verse.

15 For they fled ‖† from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.

‖ Or, *for fear.* † Heb. *from the face.*

16 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, [q]according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of [r]Kedar shall fail:

[q] ch. 16. 14.

[r] Ps. 120. 5. ch. 60. 7.

Within a year, from the time of this prophecy. *According to the years of an hireling,* to wit, an exact year; for hirelings diligently observe and wait for the end of the year, when they are to receive their wages. *All the glory;* their power, and riches, and all things wherein they used to glory. This was executed by the Assyrians. *Kedar;* of whom see on Psal. cxx. 5; Jer. xlix. 28.

17 And the residue of the number of † archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken *it.*

† Heb. *bows.*

Archers; bows and arrows were their chief weapons, and they were expert in the use of them, both against beasts and men, as occasion required.

CHAP. XXII.

The anguish of Judah: the prophet much grieved, 1—5, *by the Persians, Medes, and Assyrians,* 6, 7. *He reproveth their human wisdom,* 8—11, *and profane joy,* 12, 13; *which God would certainly punish,* 14. *Shebnah's deprivation for his pride,* 15—19. *Eliakim put in his place: his glory,* 20—25.

THE burden of the valley of vision. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops? cir. 712.

Of the valley of vision; of Judah; and especially of the city of Jerusalem, as the next verse showeth; which is called a *valley*, because a great part of it stood in a valley, and comparatively to those higher mountains wherewith it was encompassed; of which see Psal. cxxi. 1; cxxv. 2; Isa. lii. 7; and *the valley of vision*, because of the many and clear visions or revelations of God's mind in that place, above all other parts of the world. As the prophets are called *seers*, 1 Sam. ix. 9, so prophecy is frequently called *vision*, as 1 Sam. iii. 1; Isa. i. 1; Ezek. vii. 13, 26. *Gone up to the housetops*, as they used to do in times of great confusion and consternation, that they might mourn, and look, and cry to Heaven for help. Compare Isa. xv. 3; Jer. xlviii. 38.

2 Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, [a]a joyous city: thy slain men *are* not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.

[a] ch. 32. 13.

Thou art full of stirs; or, *thou* who *wast full of stirs*, or *noises*, to wit, of joyful shouts, as the following words limit it, and as this word is used, Zech. iv. 7, though elsewhere it be taken for doleful cries. *Tumultuous;* or, *streperous;* full of noise and clamour, through revelling and jollity. See Prov. xx. 1; Zech. ix. 15. *Not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle*, but either by famine or pestilence in the siege, as many died, Jer. xiv. 18; xxxviii. 2, or in their flight, as others were; both which were inglorious kinds of death.

3 All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound † by the archers: all that are found in thee are bound together, *which* have fled from far.

† Heb. *of the bow.*

Thy rulers; Zedekiah and his chief commanders, whose flight he foretells. *They are bound by the archers*, Heb. *from the bow*, i. e. so as they were disenabled from using the bow; which is a usual Hebraism; as *from a king* is put for *from being a king*, 1 Sam. xv. 23; and *from seeing*, Psal. lxix. 23, is rendered *that they cannot see*, Rom. xi. 10. But this word is by some, and may very well be, joined to the foregoing clause; for the words in the Hebrew lie thus, *All thy rulers are fled together from the bow*, (or, *bow-men*, as this word is rendered, Isa. xxi. 17,) *they are bound;* which seems most plain and unforced, and suits best with the following words, as also with the prophet's use of the same phrase, chap. xxi. 15, *they fled—— from the bent bow*, &c. *All that are found in thee;* that remained there with Zedekiah in the siege; for those who had fled to the Chaldeans saved their lives and liberties. *Are bound together* in fetters, Jer. lii. 11. *Which have fled from far;* which fled to Jerusalem from the remotest parts of the land. But he rather speaks of those who fled from Jerusalem, and from their enemies, whereof some had fled away, but were pursued and overtaken by their enemies, and bound, as others had been. And the words seem to be well rendered, *they fled far away*, as this very word is used, Isa. xxiii. 7; which may be understood either of the same persons who fled, but were taken in their flight, as was now said; or of others, who fled away, when others abode there and were bound.

4 Therefore said I, Look away from me; [b]† I will weep bitterly, labour not

[b] Jer. 4. 19. & 9. 1. † Heb. *I will be bitter in weeping.*

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to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.

Look away from me; take off your eyes and thoughts from me, and leave me alone, that I may take my fill of sorrows. *Labour not to comfort me;* for all your labour will be lost, I neither can nor will receive any consolation. *Of the daughter of my people;* of that city and nation whereof I am a member. The title of *daughter* is oft given both to cities and nations, as hath been noted before.

c ch. 37. 3. 5 [c] For *it is* a day of trouble, and of
d Lam. 1. 5. & 2. 2. treading down, and of perplexity [d] by the Lord GOD of hosts in the valley of vision, breaking down the walls, and of crying to the mountains.

Of treading down; in which my people are trodden under foot by their insolent enemies. *Of perplexity by the Lord God of hosts:* this is added, partly to show that this did not happen without God's providence; and partly to aggravate their calamity, because not only men, but God himself, fought against them. *Breaking down the walls* of the strong cities of Judah; which was done by Sennacherib, 2 Kings xxv. 10. *Crying to the mountains*, with such loud and dismal outcries as should reach to the neighbouring mountains, and make them ring again therewith.

e Jer. 49. 35. 6 [e] And Elam bare the quiver with
f ch. 15. 1. †Heb. *made naked.* chariots of men *and* horsemen, and [f] Kir †uncovered the shield.

Elam; the Persians, who now, and for a long time after, were subject to the Assyrian and Chaldean emperors, and were employed by them in their wars. *Bare the quiver*, being expert bow-men, as appears from Jer. xlix. 35, and from Strabo's testimony. *With chariots of men and horsemen;* as some of them fought on foot, so others fought from chariots and horses. *Kir;* the Medes, so called by a synecdoche from Kir, an eminent city and region of Media, of which see 2 Kings xvi. 9; Amos i. 5. *Uncovered;* prepared it and themselves for the battle; for in times of peace arms were wrapt up and covered, to preserve them clean, and fit for use. *The shield;* their defensive and offensive weapons.

†Heb. *the choice of thy valleys.* 7 And it shall come to pass, *that* † thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall set themselves in
‖Or, *toward.* array ‖ at the gate.

Thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots: valleys were the most proper places for the use of chariots: see Josh. xvii. 16. *The horsemen shall set themselves in array at the gate*, to assist and defend the footmen whilst they made their assault, and withal to prevent and take those who endeavoured to escape.

8 ¶ And he discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to
g 1 Kings 7. 2. & 10. 17. the armour [g] of the house of the forest.

He; the enemy, Sennacherib, of whose invasion he seems to speak. *The covering of Judah:* he took those fenced cities, which were a covering or safeguard both to the people of Judah, who fled to them, and to Jerusalem, which was begirt and defended by them. *Thou didst look in that day to the armour;* thy hope and trust was wholly or chiefly placed in the arm of flesh. For although Hezekiah was commended for his trust in God, yet the generality of the people were guilty of distrust in God, and confidence in the creature. *The house of the forest;* more fully called *the house of the forest of Lebanon*, 1 Kings vii. 2, not because it was built in Lebanon, for it was in Jerusalem; but either because it was built of the trees of Lebanon, for which cause the temple is called *Lebanon*, Zech. xi. 1, or for other reasons. See my notes on 1 Kings vii. 2.

h 2 Kings 20. 20. 2 Chron. 32. 4, 5, 30. 9 [h] Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool.

Ye have seen, i. e. observed or considered, as this word is used, Exod. xxxii. 9, and elsewhere, in order to the reparation of them, and to fortify the city, as the next words manifest. *Ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool*, that you might both deprive the enemy of water, and supply the city with it; of which see on 2 Chron. xxxii. 4, 5.

10 And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall.

Ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem; that they might exactly know their own strength, and the number of their people, and so lay the burdens more equally upon them, and make sufficient provisions for them. *The houses* which stood upon or without the walls of their city, and so gave their enemies any advantage against them, and hindered the searching or fortifying the walls and city.

11 [i] Ye made also a ditch between the
i Neh. 3. 16. two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye have not looked unto [k] the maker
k See ch. 37. 26. thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.

The two walls; either those 2 Kings xxv. 4, or those 2 Chron. xxxii. 5, in both which places we read of two walls. *For the water of the old pool;* to receive the waters conveyed into it by pipes from the old pool. *The maker thereof;* either, 1. Of the water; for both the springs and the rain which filleth the pools are from God alone: or, 2. Of Jerusalem, expressed in the foregoing verse, and easily understood here, because all these works were undertaken for Jerusalem's defence and provision. And it is usual in Scripture for the pronoun relative to be put by itself, without any express mention of the person or thing to which it belongs, which is left to the reader to gather out of the foregoing or following words; of which see the notes on Psal. lxxxvii. 1; Cant. i. 1. *Him that fashioned it*, Heb. *the former* or *framer of it*, God; who made it a city, and the place of his special presence and worship; which also he had undertaken to protect, if the people would observe his commands; to whom therefore they should have resorted and trusted in this time of their distress. *Long ago;* which clause may be added to aggravate their sin, in distrusting that God who had now for a long time given proof of his care and kindness in defending this city.

12 And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts [l] call to weeping, and to mourn-
l Joel 1. 13. m See Ezra 9. 3. ch. 15. 2. Mic. 1. 16. ing, and [m] to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:

Call; invite and oblige them by the course of his providence, and require this by the precepts requiring these things in such times and conditions. *To baldness;* to make themselves bald, by plucking or shaving off the hair of their heads, as was usual in great sorrows, as Ezra ix. 3; Job i. 20; Micah i. 16, although it was forbidden in case of the death of relations, for a special reason; of which see on Lev. xix. 27, 28; xxi. 5.

13 And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: [n] let us eat and drink;
n ch. 56. 12. Wisd. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 15. 32. for to-morrow we shall die.

Eating flesh; not only for necessity, but to excess and luxury, as *eating and drinking* are taken, Matt. xxiv. 38. *Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die:* the prophets tell us that we shall certainly and suddenly be destroyed; it concerns us therefore to make our best of the present time, and to be merry whilst we have the opportunity. A most perverse and desperate conclusion, proceeding from obstinate profaneness, and contempt of God's judgments.

14 [o] And it was revealed in mine ears
o ch. 5. 9. by the LORD of hosts, Surely this iniquity [p] shall not be purged from you till ye die,
p 1 Sam. 3. 14. Ezek. 24. 13. saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

It was revealed in mine ears; what I am saying is not my own invention, nor uncertain reports, but what I heard with these ears of mine. The like phrase we have 1 Sam. ix. 15, *the Lord had told Samuel in his ear. This iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die;* you shall feel the sad effects of this wickedness, and my just displeasure for it, as long as you live. This is not spoken exclusively, as

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if it should be purged after their death, which is absurd and impious to imagine, at least concerning such as lived and died in this desperate and impenitent condition; but emphatically, to show that God will have no mercy upon them in that time of life, in which he useth and delighteth to give repentance and remission of sins to mankind.

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, *even* unto [q]Shebna, [r]which *is* over the house, *and say*,

q 2 Kin. 18. 37. ch. 36. 3. r 1 Kings 4. 6.

Get thee unto this treasurer; which the prophet might boldly do, because he had the protection not only of God, who sent him upon this errand, but probably of Hezekiah also, who at the time of this prophecy was either king, or his father's viceroy, or at least heir-apparent to the crown. *Shebna;* who seems to have been advanced by wicked Ahaz, and to have been a great patron of impiety and injustice in his reign, and by politic compliance with Hezekiah thought to gain his favour, and so to keep his place and power at court. *Over the house;* over the house of David, as is more fully expressed below, ver. 22. Possibly he was not only the lord treasurer, but also the king's prime minister of state.

16 What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hewed thee out a sepulchre here, ‖ *as* he [s]that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, *and* that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?

‖ Or, *O he.* s See 2 Sam. 18. 18. Matt. 27. 60.

What hast thou here? or, *What dost thou here?* what right hast thou to this place and office? *Whom;* either, 1. What friends, in whom thou canst confide? Thou hast so ill managed thyself and thy affairs, that thou art universally hated. Or, 2. What kindred or relations? For the Jews say he was a stranger by birth; which is the more probable, because his pedigree is not mentioned in any of those places of Scripture where he is named. *Hewed thee out a sepulchre,* as great and ambitious men used to do. *Here;* not in thine own country, the proper place for such a monument; but in Jerusalem, which should not be defiled nor disparaged with it. *On high;* in a high and eminent place, as Isa. lvii. 7. *An habitation;* either, 1. A sepulchre, which is called a man's *house,* Job xxx. 23; or, 2. A dwelling-house. He erected, or is compared to one that doth erect, a stately house to live in, and a stately sepulchre to receive him when he dies. And these two are fitly joined together, because their sepulchres were commonly built in or near their houses. See Isa. xiv. 18; John xix. 41. *In a rock;* a fit place both for strength and state. Thus we read of *a sepulchre hewed out of a rock,* Matt. xxvii. 60.

‖ Or, *the* LORD *who covered thee with as rebellious covering, and clothed thee gorgeously, shall surely, &c.* ver. 18. † Heb. *the captivity of a man.* t Lam. 3. 53.

17 Behold, ‖ the LORD will carry thee away with †a mighty captivity, [t]and will surely cover thee.

Will carry thee away with a mighty captivity; will cause thee to be carried into captivity by a strong hand, or by the hand of a mighty man, from which therefore thou shalt not be able to escape. Or, *will cast thee away with the casting of a mighty man,* i. e. with great force; or, *in casting will cast thee away, O thou mighty man. Will surely cover thee,* to wit, with confusion, as is here implied, and as this phrase is more fully expressed, Psal. lxxxix. 40; cix. 29. Or *covering* may be put for obscuring his glory, which he designed to publish, and to that end erected stately monuments, &c. Or this may be an allusion to the ancient custom of covering the faces of condemned persons; of which see Esth. vii. 8. Compare Job ix. 24; Ezek. xii. 6, 12.

† Heb. *large of spaces.*

18 He will surely violently turn and toss thee *like* a ball into a †large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory *shall be* the shame of thy lord's house.

He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball, Heb. *Wrapping he will wrap thee up like a ball,* which consists of materials wrapped and bound together, that it may be tossed far away. Or, *Rolling he will roll thee with the rolling of a ball. Into a large country;* like a ball which is cast into a large and plain spot of ground, where being thrown by a strong man, it runs far and wide. Or, to a far country, which seems to be here called *large of spaces,* not so much in itself, for that was inconsiderable to him, whether the land of his captivity was large or little, as in respect of its distance from the place of his birth and abode. *The chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's house.* The sense of the words thus rendered seems to be this, Thy glorious chariots, wherein thou didst ride in great state at Jerusalem, shall then and there be turned into shame to thyself, and to thy master, to whom it is just matter of reproach, that he was so foolish as to advance and trust such a faithless and unworthy person. But the words are by divers others fitly rendered, *there the chariots of thy glory* shall be, (or, shall die or vanish, i. e. that shall be the end of all thy pompous chariots, and other monuments of thy pride,) O thou who art *the shame of thy Lord's house;* who by thy unjust and wicked practices hast exposed thy king and master, and the royal family, to reproach and contempt.

19 And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down.

And I; the Lord, whose words these are, ver. 15, as is manifest from the following verses. *Shall he;* the Lord; such sudden changes of persons being very usual in these writings.

20 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant [u]Eliakim the son of Hilkiah:

u 2 Kings 18. 18.

I will call, by my Spirit fitting him, and by my powerful providence moving Hezekiah's heart to call him.

21 And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle: there was a peculiar sort of robe and girdle which was the badge of his office, which should be taken from him, and given to Eliakim. *He shall be a father;* he shall not only have the authority of a father, which thou now hast, in which respect all rulers are called *fathers,* as Exod. xx. 12; Numb. xxxvi. 1; but shall also govern them with fatherly care and affection, and not with rigour and cruelty, as thou dost.

22 And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall [x]open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

x Job 12. 14. Rev. 3. 7.

The key; the government, the power of opening and shutting, of letting men into it or putting them out of it, whereof a *key* is a fit emblem; whence the delivering of the keys of a house or city into the hands of another, is a sign to signify and confirm the giving him the power and possession of it. *Lay upon his shoulder;* he mentions *the shoulder* rather than the hand, in which keys are commonly carried, either from some ceremony then in use, of carrying a key upon the shoulder, either of the officer of state himself, or of another in his name and stead; or to signify that this was a key of greater weight than ordinary, and that government, which is designed by this key, is a heavy burden, and therefore in Scripture phrase said to be *upon the shoulder,* as Isa. ix. 6. *None shall shut* against his will, or without his commission or consent.

23 And I will fasten him *as* [y]a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house.

y Ezra 9. 8.

I will fasten him; I will establish the power in his hands. *In a sure place;* in the strong walls, or solid timber, in the house; which is opposed to Shebna's instability, signified by a ball, ver. 18. *He shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house;* by his prudent and righteous government he shall procure great glory, not only to himself, but to all

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that have any relation to him. This also is opposed to what is said of Shebna in the end of ver. 18.

24 And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the ‖ vessels of flagons.

‖ Or, instruments of viols.

Of his father's house; of his own kindred and family, who shall all depend upon him, and receive glory from him; of the house of David, which is called *his father's house*, either because kings are called *the fathers* of all their subjects, both in Scripture, as 1 Sam. xxiv. 11; 2 Kings v. 13; xvi. 7, and in other authors; or, as Calvin ingeniously conjectures, because he was of the blood royal. Otherwise this had been no great commendation to him, that he studied so much the advancement of his own private family. And this seems more probable, because this character is opposed to that of Shebna, who was *the shame of his lord's*, to wit, the king's, *house* or family, ver. 18. *The offspring and the issue;* great and small, the children and grandchildren of his father's house. *All vessels of small quantity;* the meanest of them shall receive a lustre and advantage from their relation to him. *From the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons;* all sorts of vessels, great or small, mean or precious, may be hanged upon him, without any fear of falling; whereas ordinary nails or pins, if they be oppressed with too great weight, are easily broken down, and the vessels fall with them.

25 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that *was* upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

The nail that is fastened in the sure place; Shebna, who seemed to be so, both in his own eyes, and in the eyes of others. *The burden that was upon it;* all those wicked officers that were advanced and supported by his power.

CHAP. XXIII.

The destruction of Tyre, from God, for their pride, 1—14. *The time of her rising again,* 15—17, *and conversion to God,* 18.

cir. 715. THE [a]burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: [b]from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.

[a] Jer. 25. 22. & 47. 4. Ezek. 26, & 27, & 28. Amos 1. 9. Zech. 9. 2, 4.
[b] ver. 12.

The burden of Tyre; the prophecy of the heavy calamity and destruction of Tyre; which now stood in its strength and glory, being seated in an island, upon a rock, abounding in riches, mighty in naval power, having lately conquered that navy which the Assyrians brought against them. Yet this city was, according to this prophecy, destroyed; and that twice, first by Nebuchadnezzar, and long afterward by Alexander the Great. And although this prophecy seem directly and properly to respect the former destruction, yet it seems to have some reference to the latter also; only it is intimated, that after seventy years Tyrus should recover her former power and glory, before her second and final destruction. *Howl, ye ships;* either, 1. Properly; to which howling and lamenting is ascribed by a known figure called *prosopopœia:* or, 2. Metonymically, the merchants and owners of ships, who had much commerce with this illustrious mart. *Of Tarshish;* either, 1. Of Tarsus, a great port of Cilicia, which anciently had the dominion of that part of the sea; or, 2. Of the ocean, which is so called, 1 Kings x. 22; Psal. xlviii. 7; Isa. ii. 16. *It is laid waste;* it shall shortly be laid waste; which was fulfilled not by Shalmaneser, as some would have it; for though he straitened it for some time, yet he never took it; but by Nebuchadnezzar. *No entering in;* so effectually wasted, that there is not a house left in it, nor any merchants or others that go into it, either to trade in it, or to repair it. *It is revealed to them:* the sense of the words thus rendered may be this, *it,* i. e. this burden or destruction of Tyre, *is,* i. e. shall be, *revealed,* declared or made known, *unto them;* either, 1. To the Tyrians, to whom this notice should be sent concerning the preparations of their enemies against them: or, 2. To the ships, by which he means their owners or merchants, *from the land of Chittim;* which may be here mentioned, either because they first had and gave them notice of it, as was now said; or because their last and sorest destruction was brought upon them by Alexander, who was *of the land of Chittim,* as is affirmed by that very ancient and venerable, though apocryphal writer, 1 Mac. i. 1; viii. 5. But this place is otherwise rendered, both by ancient and later interpreters, which seems to be more natural and easy, and no less agreeable to the Hebrew text; either thus, *that she is laid waste, so that there is no house, nor entering* or *coming in* (to wit, for traffic) *from the land of Chittim, is made known to them,* to wit, to the ships or merchants that used to resort thither for traffic: or rather thus, *for it is laid waste, so that there is no house,* (not any houses left for the citizens to dwell in,) *nor entering* or *coming in* (to wit, of merchants) *from the land of Chittim; she* (to wit, her people) *is removed or gone into captivity,* as this word properly signifies, and is rendered, Isa. xxxviii. 12. And for the last Hebrew word, *lamo,* which is rendered *to them,* (which is the only objection against this interpretation,) it is only added as an elegancy of the Hebrew language, and hath no further signification, as it is also Psal. lviii. 7, and as the particle *lo,* which signifies the same thing, and such other pronouns, are frequently redundant and insignificant in the Hebrew text, as hath been oft observed by grammarians and interpreters. He mentions *the land of Chittim,* because this was an eminent place for shipping and trading, as is manifest from Numb. xxiv. 24; Ezek. xxvii. 6; Dan. xi. 30, and therefore doubtless had great dealings and commerce with Tyre, and may here be put synecdochically for all other countries which traded with her. It is not necessary, for the understanding of this text, to determine what Chittim is, whether it was Italy, or Greece, or the islands in those parts; it is sufficient to know that it was a seafaring place in the Midland Sea, and so much startled and concerned in the destruction of Tyre.

2 Be † still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished.

† Heb. silent.

Be still, Heb. *Be silent,* as one confounded, and not knowing what to say, or as mourners use to be, Job ii. 8, 13; Isa. xlvii. 5; boast no more of thy wealth and power, as thou usedst to do. *Of the isle,* Heb. of Tyrus, which now was an island, Ezek. xxvii. 3; xxviii. 2, till Alexander joined it to the continent, as Pliny reports. Although the title of *islands* is oft given by the Hebrews to places bordering upon the sea. *Zidon;* an eminent city of Palestina, nigh unto Tyre, much concerned with her and for her. *That pass over the sea;* that are a seafaring people. *Have replenished;* with mariners, Ezek. xxvii. 8, and commodities.

3 And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, *is* her revenue; and [c]she is a mart of nations.

[c] Ezek. 27. 3.

By great waters; by the sea, which is very fitly called *the great waters,* Psal. cvii. 23; understand, *cometh,* or is brought to her. *The seed of Sihor;* the corn of Egypt, wherewith Egypt abounded, and furnished divers other parts of the world, whence it was called the granary of the Roman empire; which also was easily conveyed by sea from Egypt to Tyre, and thence to divers other countries. This is called *seed* here, as also Hag. i. 10, and elsewhere, by a usual metonymy; and *the seed of Sihor,* because it grew up the more abundantly because of the overflow of the river, as all sorts of authors have noted. For Sihor is nothing else but Nilus, as appears from Jer. ii. 18, which is called *Sihor,* as by the Greeks it was called *Melas,* from its black colour. And this and no other river seems to be that Sihor, which is so oft mentioned as one of the bounds of the land of Canaan, as Numb. xxxiv. 5, &c., because that land, at least in that extent which God allotted and gave it to the Israelites, though they through neglect or cowardice might

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not actually possess it, did reach to one of the branches of that river. And indeed, if Sihor be not Nilus, that great and neighbouring river is not named in all the Scripture, which seems very improbable. *The harvest of the river:* this clause explains the former; that plentiful harvest of corn which comes from the influence and inundation of Nilus, which is emphatically called *the river*, as here, so also Exod. i. 22; Isa. xix. 5; Ezek. xxix. 3, 9, as Euphrates is in other texts of Scripture. *Is her revenue;* is as easily procured and plentifully enjoyed by her, as if it grew in her own territories. *A mart of nations;* a place to which all nations resort for traffic.

4 Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, *even* the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, *nor* bring up virgins.

Be thou ashamed, O Zidon; for Zidon was a great city near Tyre, and strongly united to her by commerce and league, and called by some the mother of Tyre, which they say was built and first inhabited by a colony of the Sidonians; and therefore she must needs be greatly concerned in the destruction of Tyrus. *The sea;* that part of the sea in which Tyrus was, and from which ships and men were sent into all countries. *The strength of the sea:* this is added to explain what he meant by *the sea*, even Tyrus, who might be called *the strength of the sea*, either actively, because it defended that part of the sea from piracies and injuries; or passively, because it was defended and strengthened by the sea, which encompassed it. And this title is here given to Tyrus, to show what great cause of confusion and fear Zidon had from this example, which for strength was much inferior to Tyrus. *I travail not, nor bring forth children, &c.;* I, who was so exceeding fruitful and populous, that I sent forth colonies into other countries, (of which the famous city of Carthage was one,) am now become barren and desolate.

d ch. 19. 16. 5 [d]As at the report concerning Egypt, *so* shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre.

According to this translation the sense is, All the neighbouring nations shall be no less terrified at the tidings of the destruction of Tyrus, than they were of old upon the report of God's former and dreadful judgments upon the Egyptians, of which see Exod. xv. 14—16; Josh. ii. 9, 11, because they shall despair of resisting that enemy against whom that vast and potent city, which was deemed impregnable, could not defend itself. But the words are by the LXX., and other both ancient and later interpreters, rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, *When the report* (to wit, of the destruction of Tyre) came, or shall come, (which word is easily understood, as it is above, ver. 3, and in other texts of Scripture before mentioned,) *to the Egyptians, they shall be sorely pained according to the report of Tyre;* their grief shall be answerable to the report; as the report is very dreadful, so their grief and anguish shall be very great: or, they shall fear lest they should be destroyed in like manner as Tyrus was destroyed.

6 Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle.

Pass ye over to Tarshish; flee from your own country to Tarsus of Cilicia, and there bewail your calamities. Or rather, as others render the place, *Pass over the sea*, which is oft called *Tarshish*; of which see on ver. 1. *Of the isle;* of Tyrus, as before, ver. 2.

e ch. 22. 2. 7 *Is* this your [e]joyous *city*, whose antiquity *is* of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her †afar off to sojourn.

† Heb. *from afar off.*

Is this your joyous city, that formerly lived in so much pomp, and pleasure, and security? *Whose antiquity is of ancient days;* being built before Joshua's time, as is manifest from Josh. xix. 29. *Her own feet shall carry her;* whereas before, like a delicate lady, she would not set the sole of her foot to the ground, as the expression is, Deut. xxviii. 56, but used to be carried in stately chariots, or magnificent vessels. *To sojourn;* to seek for new habitations. For as some of the Tyrians were taken and carried captive into Chaldea, and other places, so others fled by sea into several parts of the world, Carthage, and divers other towns of the Midland Sea, as is recorded by ancient historians.

8 Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, [f]the crowning *city*, whose merchants *are* princes, whose traffickers *are* the honourable of the earth?

f See Ezek. 28. 2, 12.

Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre? words of admiration: who and where is he that could imagine or durst attempt such a thing as this? This is the work of God, as is expressed, ver. 9, and not of man. *The crowning city;* which was a royal city, Jer. xxv. 22, and called a *kingdom*, Ezek. xxviii. 2, 12, and carried away the crown from all other cities, and crowned herself and her citizens with glory and delights. *Whose merchants are princes;* equal to princes for wealth, and power, and reputation.

9 The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, †to stain the pride of all glory, *and* to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.

† Heb. *to pollute.*

The Lord of hosts hath purposed it; this is the Lord's own doing; therefore do not doubt it, nor wonder at it. God's design is by this one example to abate and abase the pride of all the potentates of the earth, that they may see and know what weak and wretched creatures they are, when God leaves them, and sets himself against them

10 Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish: *there is* no more †strength.

† Heb. *girdle.*

Pass through thy land; tarry no longer in thy own territories, but flee through them, and beyond them, into other countries, for safety and relief. *As a river;* swiftly, lest you be prevented; and continually, till you be all gone; and in shoals and multitudes. *O daughter of Tarshish;* O Tyrus; for of her he speaks both in the foregoing and following words. And Tyrus might well be called *the daughter of Tarshish*, i. e. of the sea, as that word is used, ver. 1, and elsewhere, because it then was an island, and therefore as it were born of the sea, and nourished and brought up by it. *No more strength*, Heb. *no more girdle:* the girdle, which strengthens the loins of a man, is put for strength, as Job xii. 21; xxxviii. 3. It behoveth you, O people of Tyrus, to flee away, as I advise you; for your city is unable to defend you; your wealth, the sinews of war, is lost; your walls broken down; the sea, which, like a girdle, surrounded and defended you, is now in part filled up by your enemies, who have joined you to the main land; your former friends and allies forsake you.

11 He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the LORD hath given a commandment ‖against †the merchant *city*, to destroy the ‖strong holds thereof.

‖ Or, *concerning a merchantman.* † Heb. *Canaan.* ‖ Or, *strengths.*

He, the Lord, expressed ver. 9, *stretched out his hand* to strike it, the antecedent being put for the consequent, *over the sea;* or, *against the sea*, i. e. against Tyrus, the daughter of the sea, as she was now called; and consequently against all those ships and men which used to traffic with Tyrus, and were enriched by that trade, and therefore suffered in her fall. *He shook the kingdoms*, Heb. *he made the kingdoms to tremble;* either, 1. The two kingdoms of Tyre and Sidon; or rather, 2. The neighbouring and confederate kingdoms, as appears by comparing this with Ezek. xxvi. 15—18, who might justly quake at her fall, partly, for the dreadfulness and unexpectedness of the thing; partly, because Tyre was a bulwark, and a refuge, and a great advantage to them; and partly, because her fall made way for their ruin, as being destroyed by their common enemy. *Hath given a commandment;* hath contrived and purposed it, as was said, ver. 8, 9; hath put this design into the heads and hearts of her enemies, and given them courage to attempt, and strength to execute, so difficult an enterprise. *Against the merchant city*, Heb. *against Canaan;* the word *Canaan* being taken either, 1. For a *merchant*, as it is used, Job xli. 6; Hos. xii. 7; or rather, 2. For the proper name of a place or people, as it is generally used; for the Tyrians and Sidonians were descended from Canaan, Gen.

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x. 15, and were the only considerable remainders of that cursed race whom God had devoted to destruction. And so this phrase may be here used both as an evidence and as an argument of their intended and approaching ruin.

g Rev. 18. 22. 12 And he said, [g]Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, [h]pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.

h ver. 1.

O thou oppressed virgin: so he calls her, either for her pride and beauty, and living in great ease and pleasure; or because she had hitherto never borne the yoke of a conquering enemy; though withal he declares that she should be *oppressed* or defloured very suddenly. *Daughter of Zidon;* whereby he understands either, 1. Zidon herself, who suffered in and with Tyre; for so this phrase seems generally to be used, *the daughter of Zion*, or *of Jerusalem*, or *of Babel*, or *Egypt*, &c., being nothing else but *Zion*, *Jerusalem*, *Babel*, *Egypt*, &c. Or rather, 2. Tyrus, as most interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, understand it, of whom this whole context and prophecy speaks; which may well be called *the daughter of Zidon*, because she was first built and possessed by a colony of the Sidonians; as Pliny calleth Carthage the daughter of Tyre, because she was built by a colony of Tyrians. And the title of *daughter* is ofttimes given in Scripture to towns or cities which had their being from or dependence upon other cities; in which sense we read of *the daughter of Heshbon*, Numb. xxi. 25, and *of Rabbah*, Jer. xlix. 2, 3, and *of Sodom*, and *of Samaria*, Ezek. xvi. 46, 49, 53. And *the daughter of Tarshish* here above, ver. 10, is not meant of Tarshish itself, but of Tyrus, which had a relation to and dependence upon Tarshish. *Pass over to Chittim;* of which place see on ver. 1. *There also shalt thou have no rest;* thither thine enemies shall pursue thee, and there shall they overtake thee, although thou wilt think thyself secure when thou art fled to remote parts beyond the sea.

13 Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, *till* the Assyrian founded it for [i]them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; *and* he brought it to ruin.

i Ps. 72. 9.

Behold the land of the Chaldeans; you Tyrians, who think your city impregnable, cast your eyes upon the land and empire of the Chaldeans, or Babylonians; which though now it be a flourishing kingdom, and shall shortly grow far more glorious and potent, even *the glory of kingdoms*, as it is called, Isa. xiii. 19, yet shall certainly be brought to utter ruin; and therefore your presumption is most vain and unreasonable. *This people was not:* the Chaldeans at first were not a people, not formed into any commonwealth or kingdom. *Till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness;* till Nimrod, the head and founder of the Assyrian monarchy, built Babel, Gen. x. 10, now the head of the Chaldean monarchy, which he built for those people, who then lived in tents, and were dispersed here and there in wild and waste places, that he might bring them into order, and under government, and thereby establish and promote his own empire. *They set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof;* the Chaldeans being by this means brought together into a body, fell to the work of building their city, and its towers and palaces, and thereby got power and dominion over their neighbours, till at last they grew the greatest of all the monarchies that then were upon earth. *He;* the Lord, who is expressed before, and is frequently designed in Scripture by this indefinite pronoun *he*, as hath been many times observed; whereby he insinuates the true reason why neither the Chaldeans nor the Tyrians should be able to stand, because the Almighty God was engaged against them. *Brought it to ruin;* will infallibly bring that great empire to ruin. He speaks of a future thing as if it were already past, as the prophets use to do. The Chaldeans shall now return to their first nothing, and become no people again.

k ver. 1. Ezek. 27. 25, 30. 14 [k]Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.

Your strength; the city of Tyre, where you found safety and wealth.

15 And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years †shall Tyre sing as an harlot.

† Heb. *it shall be unto Tyre as the song of an harlot.*

Forgotten; neglected and forsaken by those who used to resort thither. *Seventy years;* during the whole time of the Jewish captivity in Babylon. For Tyrus was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxvii. 3, 8; Ezek. xxvi. 7, a little after the taking of Jerusalem, and was restored by the favour of the Persian monarchs after the return of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon. *Of one king;* either, 1. Of the kingdom of Babylon, which lasted so long after this time; the word *king* being put for *kingdom*, as it is Dan. vii. 17; viii. 21; or, 2. Of one royal race, of Nebuchadnezzar, including his son, and his son's son, in whom his family and kingdom were to expire. *After the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot;* she shall by degrees return to her former state of prosperity and traffic, whereby she shall easily entice the merchants of the world to converse and trade with her, as harlots use to entice their customers by lascivious songs.

16 Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.

Take an harp, go about the city; as harlots use to do, to allure customers. *Thou harlot;* so he calleth Tyre, partly because she enticed merchants to deal with her by various artifices, and even by dishonest practices, as harlots use; and partly because of the great and general uncleanness which was both committed and tolerated in it. *That thou mayest be remembered* by those who had forgotten thee, ver. 15.

17 ¶ And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and [l]shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

l Rev. 17. 2.

Visit Tyre, to wit, in mercy, as this phrase is used, Ruth i. 6; Psal. lxv. 9, and elsewhere. *Her hire:* the Hebrew word properly signifies, *the hire of an harlot;* which agrees well with the *fornication* in the next clause; although these phrases are not to be understood properly, but metaphorically, of trading or commerce with others. *Shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world;* shall trade promiscuously with people of all sorts of nations, as harlots entertain all comers.

18 And her merchandise and her hire [m]shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for †durable clothing.

m Zech. 14. 20, 21.

† Heb. *old.*

Her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord: he speaks not here of what the Tyrians would do immediately after their restitution, but some time after it, even in the days of the Messiah; of which even some of the Jewish rabbies understand it, and to which the prophets have a special respect in their several prophecies, and Isaiah among and above the rest of them. So this is a prophecy concerning the conversion of the Tyrians to the true religion, of the accomplishment whereof something is said Acts xxi. 3—5, and more in other authors. *It shall not be treasured nor laid up*, either out of covetousness, or for the service of their pride and luxury, as they formerly did; but now they shall freely lay it out upon pious and charitable uses. *For them that dwell before the Lord;* for the support and encouragement of the ministers of holy things, who shall teach the good knowledge of the Lord, who dwell in God's house, and minister in his presence; the support of such persons being not only an act of justice and charity, but also of piety, and of great use and necessity to maintain and propagate religion in the world. Although

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this doth not exclude, but rather imply, their liberality in contributing to the necessities of all Christians.

CHAP. XXIV.

Judgments on Judah for their defilements and transgressions, 1—12. *A remnant shall praise God*, 13—15. *God, by his judgments on his people and their enemies, will advance his kingdom*, 16—23.

cir. 712. BEHOLD, the LORD maketh the earth
† Heb. perverteth the face thereof. empty, and maketh it waste, and † turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

The earth; or, *the land*, to wit, of Canaan, or Israel, or Judea. It is usual with all writers, when they write of their own country, to call it *the land*, by way of eminency. There are many things in this prophecy which manifestly concern this land and people; and nothing, at least before ver. 21, which may be taken as a new and additional prophecy, which is necessary to be understood of other nations. But this I speak with submission, and due respect to those learned and judicious interpreters who take this to be a prophecy against Judea, and all the neighbouring nations. *Maketh it waste;* he will shortly make it waste, first by the Assyrians, and then by the Chaldeans. *Turneth it upside down;* bringeth it into great disorder and confusion.

2 And it shall be, as with the people,
‖ Or, prince. [a] Hos. 4. 9. so with the ‖ [a] priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so
[b] Ezek. 7. 12, 13. with her mistress; [b] as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

It shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; the approaching calamity shall be universal, without any respect or distinction of persons or ranks of men; the priests themselves, having been partakers of the people's sins, shall also partake with them in their plagues. *As with the buyer, so with the seller;* the purchaser of lands shall have no more left than he that hath sold all his patrimony; and all persons shall be made equal in beggary and slavery.

3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

4 The earth mourneth *and* fadeth away, the world languisheth *and* fadeth
† Heb. the height of the people. away, † the haughty people of the earth do languish.

The world: from this word some infer that this prophecy concerns not only the land of Judea, but also the neighbouring countries. But if the proper signification of that word be urged, this prophecy must be extended to all the parts of the world, which these learned men will not allow. And *the world*, both in Scripture and other authors, is often used synecdochically for that which in truth is but a small part of it, at least in comparison with the whole; as it is not only of the Roman empire, as Luke ii. 1; Acts xi. 28, but also of Babylon, Isa. xiii. 11, and, which cometh nearer to the point, of this very land of Judea, as John xii. 19; xviii. 20, and elsewhere. And therefore it may well be so understood here, especially when this word *world* is explained by those other words *the earth* and *the land*, which the very next verse showeth to be meant of Israel or Judea, as we shall there discover. *The haughty people;* not only common people, who use to be of low spirits; but the high and lofty ones, who use to be stout in their words and carriages towards me, and to deride my threatenings.

[c] Gen. 3. 17. Num. 35. 33. 5 [c] The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

The earth also, Heb. *And the land;* or, *this land;* for here is an emphatical article in the Hebrew text. *Is defiled under the inhabitants thereof;* by the wickedness of its people; of which see Lev. xviii. 25, 27; Numb. xxxv. 33, &c. *The laws;* the laws of God revealed to them, and pressed upon them in a singular manner, called simply *the laws*, as the word of God is ofttimes called *the word*, by way of eminency. *The ordinance;* God's ordinances concerning his worship and service; the singular being put collectively for the plural. *The everlasting covenant;* the covenant made between God and Abraham, and all his posterity, renewed with the Israelites at Sinai, which was everlasting, both on God's part, who, upon the conditions therein expressed, engaged himself to be a God to them and to their seed for ever; and on Israel's part, who were obliged thereby to constant and perpetual obedience through all generations. All these clauses clearly prove that *the earth* or *land* which this prophecy concerns, is no other than the land of Israel and Judah.

6 Therefore hath [d] the curse devoured [d] Mal. 4. 6. the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

The curse; the curse of God threatened to transgressors, Deut. xxviii. 15, &c; xxix. 20, and imprecated by and upon themselves, if they should not persist in their obedience to God, Deut. xxvii. 26, and elsewhere. *Are burned;* are consumed by the wrath of God, which is commonly compared to fire.

7 [e] The new wine mourneth, the vine [e] ch. 16. 8, 9. Joel 1. 10, 12. languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh.

The new wine mourneth, because there are either none, or none but the enemies of God and Israel, to drink it. Grief is ascribed to senseless creatures by a figure usual in all authors. *The vine languisheth;* either because there are no people left to dress it, or gather its grapes; or because it is broken down and spoiled by the enemy. *All the merry-hearted*, that made their hearts merry with wine, Psal. civ. 15.

8 The mirth [f] of tabrets ceaseth, the [f] Jer. 7. 34. & 16. 9. & 25. 10. Ezek. 26. 13. Hos. 2. 11. Rev. 18. 22. noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.

Tabrets; which they used in their feasts and revellings. *The noise:* the word properly signifies a roaring noise and confused clamour, such as drunken men make, Psal. lxxviii. 65; Zech. ix. 15.

9 They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

Because of the fears and miseries wherewith it is mixed.

10 The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in.

The city; Jerusalem, and other cities; for the singular word may be here taken collectively. *Of confusion;* or, *of vanity*, or *emptiness*, or *desolation;* for this Hebrew word signifies all these things. And the city may be thus called, either, 1. In regard of the judgments of God coming upon it, as if he had said, a city devoted to desolation or destruction, to be emptied of its goods and people; or, 2. For its sin, a city of confusion or disorder, breaking all the laws and orders which God had established among them; or a city that *walketh with* or *after vanity*, as the Scripture speaks, Job xxxi. 5; Jer. ii. 5, that *loveth* and *speaketh vanity*, as they did, Psal. iv. 2; xii. 2. And this may seem most convenient, that the sin of the city should be noted in this word, as the punishment is expressed in the next. *Every house is shut up;* either for fear of the enemy who have entered the city; or rather, because the inhabitants are either fled, or dead, or gone into captivity, and so there are none to go into it, or come out of it.

11 *There is* a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.

There is a crying for wine; for the want or loss of their wine, and spoil of their vines, whereby they were deprived of the means both of their delight and profit; whereby he intimates their gross sensuality and sottishness, that instead of crying for their sins, and humbling themselves under God's judgments, did only *howl for their corn, and wine, and oil*, as they did, Hos. vii. 14.

12 In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.

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The gates of the city are totally ruined, that the enemy may enter when and where they please.

13 ¶ When thus it shall be in the midst
g ch. 17. 5, 6. of the land among the people, g *there shall be* as the shaking of an olive tree, *and* as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

When thus it shall be, when this judgment shall be executed, *in the midst of the land;* in the land. But withal this phrase may intimate that the judgment should not be slight and superficial, and in the skirts of the land; but that it should reach their very heart, their most inward and best defended parts. *There shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, &c.;* there shall be left a remnant, and that but a very small remnant; as there are some few, and but a few, olives or grapes left after the vintage is over; which, by comparing this with the following verse, seems to be added by way of mitigation, to signify that God would in judgment remember mercy.

14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

They; the remnant preserved. *For the majesty of the Lord;* for his glorious power and goodness manifested in their deliverance. *They shall cry aloud*, in way of exultation and thanksgiving to God. *From the sea;* from the isles of the sea, as this is explained in the next verse; from those parts beyond the sea, into which they were carried captive, and in which they were miraculously preserved.

15 Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in
‖ Or, *valliis.* the ‖ fires, *even* h the name of the LORD
h Mal. 1. 11. God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

Glorify ye the Lord: these are the words either, 1. Of the remnant, who being themselves delivered, do encourage and exhort their brethren to glorify God with them; or, 2. Of the prophet, directing and exciting God's people to glorify God in their afflictions, because of that deliverance which he had promised, and would assuredly give to them. *In the fires;* when you are in the furnace of affliction; although this word is never used in Scripture in this sense. Others therefore render the word, *in the valleys;* and others, *in the holes*, you that are now forced to hide yourselves in holes. Possibly it may be better rendered, *for light* or *illumination;* which may be understood either of the light of the truth which God would reveal to them, or for the comfort and felicity which God would confer upon them; light being frequently taken both ways in Scripture. For this Hebrew word, in all other places of Scripture where it is found, signifies that Urim which was in the high priest's breastplate, and which properly signifies *illumination*, as both Jews and Christians render it, whereof that was both a sign and instrument; of which see on Exod. xxviii. 30. Add to this, that this part of the prophecy seems to concern the days of the gospel, and that light which the Jews should then receive by the Messias, of whom the high priest with his ephod and Urim was a type. And so this is an exhortation to the converted Jews to bless God for the true Urim, even for Christ and the gospel. And some of the ancient translators had this signification of the word in their eye, as the vulgar Latin, who render it, *in doctrines;* and the Chaldee, who translate it, *when light shall come to the just.* But this I propose with submission. *In the isles of the sea;* in remote countries beyond the sea, which in Scripture are commonly called *isles*, as hath been formerly and oft observed; whereby he seems to imply that he here speaks not so much of a temporal felicity which the Jews should receive and enjoy in their own country, as of a spiritual advantage which they should have by the Messias in the places where they were dispersed.

† Heb. *wing.* 16 ¶ From the †uttermost part of the
earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to
† Heb. *Leanness to me*, or, *My secret to me.* the righteous. But I said, † My leanness,
i Jer. 5. 11. my leanness, woe unto me! i the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

From the uttermost part of the earth, from all the parts of the earth or land in which the Jews are or shall be, *have we heard songs*, songs of joy and praise. *Even glory to the righteous;* or, *glory* be *to the righteous;* which may seem to be the matter of the song. By *the righteous* may be understood either, 1. The generation of righteous and holy men, who formerly were despised, but now upon this eminent deliverance shall be highly honoured; or, 2. The Lord, whom they were exhorted to glorify in the foregoing verse, and who may well be called *the righteous one*, as he is frequently styled *the Holy One*, as Hos. xi. 9; Hab. iii. 3, &c.; or, 3. The Messiah, to whom this title of *just* or *righteous* is frequently given, as Isa. liii. 11; Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. ix. 9, &c. And the believing Jews call him *righteous* emphatically, partly to intimate that he is the author and procurer of all true righteousness, and partly in opposition to their unbelieving brethren, who rejected and condemned him as a malefactor; all which the prophet foresaw by the Spirit of prophecy. *But I said;* but in the midst of these joyful tidings I discern something which interrupts my joys, and gives me cause of bitter complaint and lamentation. *My leanness, my leanness;* I faint and pine away for grief, for the following reason. *The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously;* the Jews, who have been frequently guilty of great perfidiousness towards God, are now acting the same part; which he speaks either, 1. Of those who lived in his time; or rather, 2. Of those who should live when the Messias was upon earth, of whom he foresaw by the Spirit that they would forsake God, and reject their Messiah, and thereby bring utter destruction upon themselves. For even the Hebrew doctors expound this place of the perfidiousness of some Jews in the times of the Messiah. And it is not strange that so sad a sight made the prophet cry out, *My leanness*, &c. *The treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously;* he repeats it to show the horridness of the crime, and how deeply he was affected with it.

17 k Fear, and the pit, and the snare,
k See 1 Kin. 19. 17. Jer. 48. 43, 44. Amos 5. 19. *are* upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

Great and various judgments, some actually inflicted, and others expected and justly feared, as the punishment of their last-mentioned treachery.

18 And it shall come to pass, *that* he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for l the windows from on
l Gen. 7. 11. high are open, and m the foundations of
m Ps. 18. 7. the earth do shake.

He who fleeth from the noise of the fear; upon the report of some terrible evil coming towards him; the act, *fear*, being here put for the object, or the thing feared, as it is in many places. And thus this very phrase is taken Job xv. 21. *Shall fall into the pit;* when he designs to avoid one danger, by so doing he shall plunge himself into another and a greater mischief. *The windows from on high are opened, and the foundations of the earth do shake;* both heaven and earth conspire against him. He alludes to the deluge of waters which God poured down from heaven, and to the earthquakes which he ofttimes causeth below.

19 n The earth is utterly broken down,
n Jer. 4. 23. the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

This is repeated again, partly to show the dreadfulness and certainty of these judgments, and partly to awaken and affect the stupid Israelites, who greatly needed it.

20 The earth shall o reel to and fro like
o ch. 19. 14. a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

The earth; the people of the earth. *Shall reel to and fro like a drunkard;* shall be sorely perplexed and distressed, not knowing whither to go, nor what to do. *Like a cottage;* or *like a lodge* in a garden, of which this word is used, Isa.

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i. 8, which is soon taken down, and set up in another place, as occasion requires. Or, as others render it, *like a tent*, which is easily and commonly carried from place to place. *The transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it;* those sins which they formerly esteemed light and pleasant shall now be most burdensome and grievous to them, because of the dreadful punishments which shall follow them.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall † punish the host of the high ones *that are* on high, [p] and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

† Heb. visit upon.
p Is. 56. 12.

In that day; either when God shall punish the apostatical Jews, or about or after that time, or in a time known to God; for this phrase is oft used indefinitely, and without any respect to the time designed in the foregoing passages. *The high ones that are on high;* the proud and potent enemies of God, and of his people, who possess the high places of the earth. *The kings of the earth;* either, 1. The great monarchs of the world, who now scorn and trample upon God's people; or, 2. The princes and rulers of Israel or Judah; for the name of *king* is frequently given in Scripture unto mean and inferior rulers, as Judg. i. 7; 1 Kings xx. 1, 12; Psal. cxix. 46, and elsewhere.

† Heb. with the gathering of prisoners.
‖ Or, dungeon.
‖ Or, found wanting

22 And they shall be gathered together, †*as* prisoners are gathered in the ‖pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be ‖visited.

They shall be gathered together, by God's special providence, in order to their punishment, as the following words show. And thus the unbelieving Jews were generally gathered together at Jerusalem, to their solemn feast, when Titus came and besieged, and after some time took and destroyed them; which was a very remarkable hand of God, as Josephus and other historians observed. And I know nothing to the contrary but this very thing may be meant in this place, it being confessed that divers passages of this chapter concern the times of the Messiah. *Shall be shut up in the prison;* as malefactors, which are taken in several places, are usually brought to one common prison, where they are reserved in order to their trial and punishment. *Shall they be visited;* either, 1. In judgment, as *visiting* is oft used. So the sense is, After they have been punished with long imprisonment, and tormented with expectation and fear, they shall be brought forth to receive condign punishment. Or rather, 2. In mercy. And so the sense may be either, 1. After the Jews shall have suffered many and grievous things from the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, and others, at last their Messiah and Deliverer shall come into the world, &c. Or, 2. After the unbelieving and apostate Jews shall have been shut up in unbelief and in great tribulations for many ages together, they shall be convinced of their sin in crucifying their Messiah, and brought home to God and Christ by true repentance.

q ch. 13. 10. & 60. 19. Ezek. 32. 7. Joel 2. 31. & 3. 15.
r Rev. 19. 4, 6.
s Heb. 12. 22.
‖ Or, there shall be glory before his ancients.

23 Then the [q] moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall [r] reign in [s] mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and ‖before his ancients gloriously.

The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed. The sun and *moon* are here considered either, 1. As they were abused to idolatry; for these two were most eminent idols, and most generally worshipped, especially in those Eastern countries, Deut. iv. 19; xvii. 3; Job xxxi. 26, &c., and so may be put for all idols, which were confounded by Christ at his coming, as was foretold in Scripture, and verified by the testimony of ancient, yea, even of heathen historians. Or, 2. As they were the most eminent and glorious lights of the world, and were oft used, both in Scripture and other authors, to signify the great kings, and potentates, and glories of the world, as hath been formerly noted, and we shall have further occasion to remember. So the sense is, that all earthly powers and glories should be obscured with the far greater splendour of Christ, the King of kings, at whose feet even the kings of the earth shall fall down and worship, as we shall see in other parts of this prophecy. *The Lord of hosts;* the Messiah, who, though man, yet is also God, and the Lord of hosts, and is so called, Zech. ii. 8, 11. *Shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem;* shall come in the flesh, and set up his kingdom, first in Jerusalem, and afterward in all other nations. *Before his ancients;* before his ministers, who are in some sort the courtiers of this King of glory, as being continually attending upon him, and enjoying his presence, and executing the powers and offices of his kingdom; and especially before his apostles, who were the witnesses of his Divine words and works, and particularly of his resurrection and ascension, by which he entered upon his kingdom; and of this exercise of his royal power, in subduing both Jews and Gentiles to himself. The word *ancient* or *elder* is not a name of age, but of office, as it is in very many texts of Scripture. And *the ancients* are here put synecdochically for the whole church, in whose name and for whose service they act. *Gloriously,* Heb. in *glory,* for that preposition is very frequently understood.

CHAP. XXV.

God glorious in his judgments on Babel, 1—5, *and his people's salvation,* 6—12.

O LORD, thou *art* my God; [a] I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; [b] for thou hast done wonderful *things;* [c] *thy* counsels of old *are* faithfulness *and* truth. cir. 712.
a Ex. 15. 2. Ps. 118. 28.
b Ps. 98. 1.
c Num. 23. 19.

The prophet reflecting upon those great and glorious prophecies which he had delivered concerning the destruction of his enemies, and the protection and deliverance of his people, and the sending of the Messiah, and the establishment of his own kingdom in spite of all opposition, interrupteth the course of his prophecies, and breaketh forth into a solemn celebration of all these wonderful works. *Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth;* thy *counsels,* from which all thy works proceed, and which thou hast from time to time revealed to thy prophets and people, which were *of old,* being conceived from all eternity, and long since made known by thy threatenings and promises, are *true* and *firm,* and therefore shall certainly be accomplished.

2 For thou hast made [d] of a city an heap; *of* a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built. d ch. 21. 9. & 23. 13. Jer. 51. 37.

A city; which is put collectively for *cities.* He speaks of the cities of *strangers,* as the following clause explains it, or of enemies of God, and of his people. And under the name *cities* he comprehends their countries and kingdoms, of which cities are an eminent and commonly the strongest part. *A palace of strangers;* the royal cities, in which were *the palaces of strangers,* i. e. of the kings of strange people, or of the Gentiles. *It shall never be built;* their cities and palaces have been or shall be utterly and irrecoverably destroyed.

3 Therefore shall the strong people [e] glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee. e Rev. 11. 13.

Thy stoutest enemies observing thy wonderful works, in saving thy people, and in destroying others of thine and their adversaries, shall be either converted, or at least convinced, and forced to acknowledge thy power, and shall tremble before thee.

4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, [f] a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones *is* as a storm *against* the wall. f ch. 4. 6.

For thou hast been a strength to the poor, &c.; for thou hast defended thy poor and helpless people against the fiercest assaults of their enemies. *When the blast of the terrible one is as a storm against the wall;* or, *for* (as this particle commonly signifies; or rather, *therefore,* as it is frequently used, because thou art their defender) *the blast of the terrible,* or *strong,* or *violent one,* was *like a storm* (of hail, or rain, or wind) *against a wall,* which makes a great and terrible noise, but without any effect, for the wall stands firm in spite of it. It is probable the prophet in these words had

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a special respect to that miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the rage and attempt of Sennacherib; although the words be general, and include other deliverances of a like nature.

5 Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; *even* the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.

The noise; the tumultuous noise, as the word properly signifies, which he called their *blast* in the foregoing verse; by which he means their rage and furious attempts, which are commonly managed with much noise and clamour. *Of strangers;* of those strange and heathen nations that fought against God's people. *Even the heat with the shadow of a cloud;* with as much ease as thou dost in the course of thy common providence allay the heat of a dry season and place, either by the shadow of thy clouds, or by the rain which falleth from black and shadowy clouds. *The branch;* the arm or power, as a branch is the arm of a tree. Or, the prince or commanders; for the word *branch* is sometimes put for a person of eminent place and power, as Psal. lxxx. 15; Isa. iv. 2; Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12. But others render the word, *the song*, as it is used, Cant. ii. 12, their jovial and triumphant song.

g ch. 2. 2, 3. h Prov. 9. 2. Matt. 22. 4. i Dan. 7. 14. Matt. 8. 11.

6 ¶ And in [g]this mountain shall [h]the LORD of hosts make unto [i]all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

In this mountain; in Mount Zion, to wit, in God's church, which is very frequently meant by the names of Zion and Jerusalem, both in the Old and in the New Testament. *Make unto all people,* both Jews and Gentiles, who shall then be admitted to the participation of the same privileges and ordinances, *a feast of fat things;* a feast made up of the most exquisite and delicate provisions; which is manifestly meant of the ordinances, graces, and comforts given by God in and to his church. *Of wines on the lees;* which have continued upon the lees a competent time, whereby they gain strength, and afterwards drawn off from the lees, and so refined, as it is explained in the next clause.

† Heb. *swallow up.* † Heb. *covered.* k 2 Cor. 3. 15. Eph. 4. 18.

7 And he will †destroy in this mountain the face of the covering †cast over all people, and [k]the vail that is spread over all nations.

The face of the covering; which is put either, 1. For the covering of the face, by an *hypallage*, as *silver of shekels* is put for *shekels of silver*, Lev. v. 15; or, 2. For the covering or *veil*, as the next clause expounds it; the word *face* being oft superfluously used in the Hebrew language, as Gen. i. 2, 29, and elsewhere. *The veil;* the veil of ignorance of God, and of the true religion, which then was upon the Gentiles, and now is upon the Jews, 2 Cor. iii. 14—16, which, like a veil, covers men's eyes, and keeps them from discerning between things that differ. It may be also an allusion either to the veil which was put upon Moses's face, Exod. xxxiv. 33, 34, or to the veil of the sanctuary, by which the persons without it were kept from the sight of the ark. This is a manifest prophecy concerning the illumination and conversion of the Gentiles.

l Hos. 13. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 54. Rev. 20. 14. & 21. 4. m Rev. 7. 17. & 21. 4.

8 He will [l]swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will [m]wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

He, the Lord, expressed both in the foregoing and following words, even the Messiah, who is God and man, *will swallow up death;* shall by his death destroy the power of death, as is said, Heb. ii. 14; take away the sting of the first death, and prevent the second death, and give eternal life to the world, even to all that believe in him. *In victory,* Heb. *unto victory,* i. e. so as to overcome it perfectly; which complete victory Christ hath already purchased for, and will in due time actually confer upon, his people. *Will wipe away tears;* will take away from his people all sufferings and sorrows, and all the causes of them; which is begun here, and perfected in heaven. *The rebuke of his people;* the reproach and contempt which was daily cast upon his faithful people by the ungodly world, and, among others, by the apostate and unbelieving Jews, who accounted the Christians to be the scum and offscouring of all things. *From off all the earth;* or, *from off all this land,* i. e. from all the church and people of God, wheresoever they shall be, from all their faces, as was said in the foregoing clause. *The Lord hath spoken it;* therefore doubt not of it, though it seem incredible to you.

9 ¶ And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this *is* our God; [n]we have waited for him, and he will save us: this *is* the LORD; we have waited for him, [o]we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

n Gen. 49. 18. Titus 2. 13. o Ps. 20. 5.

It shall be said by God's people, in way of triumph and reply to their enemies, *Lo, this is our God:* your gods are senseless and impotent idols; but our God is omnipotent, and hath done these great and glorious works, which fill the world with admiration. We may well boast of him, for there is no God like to him. Possibly it may be an intimation that God should take flesh, and become visibly present amongst men. *We have waited for him;* our Messiah or Saviour, long since promised, and for whom we have waited a long time, now at last is come into the world, bringing salvation with him.

10 For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, and Moab shall be ‖trodden down under him, even as straw is ‖trodden down for the dunghill.

‖ Or, *threshed.* ‖ Or, *threshed in Madmenah.*

Shall the hand of the Lord rest; the powerful and gracious presence of God (which is oft signified in Scripture by God's hand) shall have its constant and settled abode; it shall not move from place to place, as it did with the tabernacle; nor shall it depart from it, as it did from Jerusalem; but shall continue in his church even to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20. *Moab;* the Moabites, which having been constant and implacable enemies to Israel, are synecdochically put for all the enemies of God's church, as the Edomites upon the same account are, Isa. xxxiv. 6; lxiii. 1. *Under him;* under his feet, as appears by the following similitude. *Even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill;* as easily and as effectually as the straw, which being left upon the ground, and mixed with the dung which lies there, is trampled upon by the feet of men and beasts.

11 And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth *his hands* to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.

He; either, 1. Moab, who being plunged into a sea of troubles, shall endeavour to swim out of it, but to no purpose; or rather, 2. The Lord, who is designed by this very pronoun *he*, both in the latter clause of this verse, and in the following verse; whose power they shall be no more able to resist, than the waters can resist a man that swims, who with great facility divides them hither and thither. *Shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them;* or, *stretch forth his hands* to the utmost, to smite and destroy them. *As he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands,* which he doth to the uttermost. *With the spoils of their hands;* with all that wealth which they have gained by rapine, and spoiling of God's people, and others. But the words are otherwise rendered by others, *with* or *by* (as this Hebrew particle is used, Esth. ix. 25,) *the arms of his hands;* which he may mention, because the strength of a man, and of his hands, consisteth in his arms; whence also *the arm* in Scripture is oft put for strength: or, *by the motion* or *stroke of his hands*, as all the ancient translators do in effect render it. And this seems to agree best with the metaphor here borrowed from one that swimmeth, which is performed in that manner.

12 And the [p]fortress of the high fort

p ch. 26. 5.

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of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, *and* bring to the ground, *even* to the dust.

The fortress of the high fort of thy walls; all thy walled cities and fortifications, to which thou trustest.

CHAP. XXVI.

A song of praise and confidence in God, for the blessings of righteousness, judgments on their enemies, and favour to his people: their chastisement, repentance, and hope.

clr. 712. a ch. 2. 11. b ch. 60. 18.

IN [a]that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; [b]salvation will *God* appoint *for* walls and bulwarks.

In that day, when God shall do such glorious works for the comfort of his people, and for the ruin of his and their enemies, as he hath described in the foregoing chapter. *In the land of Judah;* in the church of God, which in Scripture is oft signified by the titles of Judah, and Jerusalem, and Zion, or the like. *A strong city;* Jerusalem, or the church, which is oft called or compared to a city, as Psal. lxxxvii. 3; Rev. iii. 12; xi. 2; xxi. 2. *Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks;* God's immediate and saving protection shall be to his church instead of walls, &c. But I conceive, with submission, the words may very fitly be thus rendered, *He will send,* or *put,* or *make* her *walls and bulwarks salvation,* i. e. as safe as salvation itself; or, in *safety,* there being only a defect of the preposition, which is very frequent in Scripture.

c Ps. 118. 19, 20. † Heb. *truths.*

2 [c]Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the †truth may enter in.

Open ye the gates of the city, mentioned ver. 1. *The righteous nation;* either, 1. Those godly Jews who are returning from Babylon; or, 2. The whole body of righteous and holy men, whether Jews or Gentiles. For he seems to speak here, as he apparently did in the foregoing chapter, of the times of the gospel. *Which keepeth the truth;* which is sincere and stedfast in the profession and practice of the true religion.

† Heb. *peace.* ch. 57. 19. ‖ Or, *thought,* or, *imagination.*

3 Thou wilt keep *him* †in perfect peace, *whose* ‖mind *is* stayed *on thee:* because he trusteth in thee.

Heb. *The fixed thought* or *mind* (i. e. the man whose mind and thoughts are fixed and settled upon thee by faith, as the next clause explains it, the qualifications being put for the person so qualified, as *folly* and *wisdom* are put for a fool and a wise man, Prov. xxiv. 9; Micah vi. 9, and *peace* for a man of peace, Psal. cxx. 7) *thou wilt keep in peace, peace,* i. e. in all manner of peace, in constant and perfect peace. In the foregoing verse the righteous were admitted into the city, and here they were preserved and defended in it by God's almighty power.

d ch. 45. 17. † Heb. *the rock of ages.* Deut. 32. 4.

4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: [d]for in the LORD JEHOVAH *is* †everlasting strength:

For ever; in all times and conditions. *Everlasting strength,* Heb. *the Rock of ages;* a sure refuge to all those that trust in him, through all generations; therefore you may safely *trust in* him, and that *for ever.*

e ch. 25. 12. & 32. 19.

5 ¶ For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; [e]the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, *even* to the ground; he bringeth it *even* to the dust.

He bringeth down, Heb. *he hath brought down,* which yet may be put for the future, *he will bring down,* &c. You may trust him; for he can and doth raise some, and throw down others, according to his own good pleasure. *Them that dwell on high;* he speaks not so much of height of place as of dignity and power, in which sense also he mentions *the lofty city,* in the next clause. *The lofty city;* which may be understood either of proud Babylon; or collectively, of all the strong and stately cities of God's enemies.

6 The foot shall tread it down, *even* the feet of the poor, *and* the steps of the needy.

God will bring it under the feet of his poor, and weak, and despised people.

f Ps. 37. 23.

7 The way of the just *is* uprightness: [f]thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

Is uprightness; or, *most even* or *plain.* Heb. *evenness* or *plainness.* Which is understood either, 1. Of the rectitude or goodness of his actions or course; or rather, 2. Of the good success of his affairs; for this suits best with the coherence. When the way of the wicked is rugged, in which they easily stumble and fall into mischief, of which he spoke, ver. 5, 6, the path of just men is plain and smooth, and they walk safely and comfortably in it. *Thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just:* the sense of the words thus rendered is, *Thou,* O God, who art *most upright* in all thy ways, and therefore a lover of uprightness, and of all upright men, *dost weigh* (i. e. examine) *the path of the just,* the course of his actions, and, which is implied, dost approve of them, and therefore direct them to a happy issue. But the words are otherwise rendered by some late learned interpreters, to this purpose, *Thou dost level* or *make plain* (as this very word signifies, Psal. lxxviii. 50) *the path of the just exactly,* Heb. with *evenness,* or *evenly,* so as to make it very even. Thus the first clause declares that it was even or plain, and this showeth whence or by whom it is made such, even by God.

g ch. 64. 5.

8 Yea, [g]in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of *our* soul *is* to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee: and as we thy people have loved and served thee when thou hast made our way plain and easy for us; so we have not forsaken thee, but waited upon thee, when thou hast made it rugged and troublesome by thy judgments. He speaks of the same just men ver. 7—9, though it be with a change of the numbers and persons, which is usual in prophetical writings, *the just,* ver. 7, *we,* ver. 8, *I,* ver. 9. *To thy name, and to the remembrance of thee,* Heb. *to thy name and thy memory;* which by a known figure called *hendiaduo* may be put for the remembrance of thy name. And *the name of God* is here, as it is in many other places, put for God himself, as he hath made himself known by his word and works. And so the sense of this clause is, Our affections are not alienated from thee by thy judgments, but we still continue to desire thy presence and favour, and we support and comfort ourselves with the remembrance of what thou art, and what thou hast done, and what thou hast promised to be and do to thy people.

h Ps. 63. 6. Cant. 3. 1.

9 [h]With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments *are* in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

With my soul; sincerely and most affectionately, as Psal. lxiii. 1, and elsewhere. *Have I:* the prophet speaks this in the name of all God's people, by comparing this with the foregoing verse. *In the night;* either, 1. Figuratively, in the time of affliction, which is often called *night* or *darkness;* or rather, 2. Properly, as appears from the next clause, wherein *early* or *in the morning* is opposed to it. When others are sleeping, my thoughts and desires are working towards God. *Will I seek thee,* by fervent prayer for thy loving-kindness. *Early;* betimes in the morning, as the word signifies. *For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness:* and good reason it is that we should thus desire and seek thee in the way of thy judgments, because this is the very design of thy judgments, that men should thereby be awakened to learn and return to their duty; and this is a common effect of them, that those who have been careless in prosperity, are made wiser and better by afflictions. *The inhabitants of the world* seem to be here taken not in opposition to God's people, as if not they only, but even the wicked world, would do thus; but in a general notion, so as to include, yea principally to design, God's people, as

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may be gathered both from the former part of this, and the foregoing verse, in which he describes their pious carriage under affliction; as also from the two following verses, in which he speaks of *the wicked*, whom he seems to oppose to these *inhabitants of the world*, because these learn righteousness, whilst those wicked men remain incorrigible both under mercies and judgments, ver. 10, 11.

i Eccles. 8. 12. Rom. 2. 4.
k Ps. 143.10.

10 [i]Let favour be shewed to the wicked, *yet* will he not learn righteousness: in [k]the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.

Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness. this is the carriage of thy people; but the course of wicked men is directly contrary in all conditions; for if thou dost spare them, when thou punishest thine own people, they will not accept of that gracious invitation to repentance, nor walk worthy of so great a mercy. *In the land of uprightness;* even in God's church, and among his people, where righteousness is professed and taught, and by many practised; and where unrighteousness is discountenanced and punished; all which things are aggravations of his sin. *Will not behold the majesty of the Lord;* although God gives such plain and clear discoveries of his majesty and glory, not only in his word, but also in his works, and especially in this glorious work of his patience and mercy to wicked men, yet they wilfully shut their eyes at it, and will not acknowledge it.

l Job 34. 27. Ps. 28. 5. ch. 5. 12.
v Or, *toward thy people.*

11 LORD, *when* thy hand is lifted up, [l]they will not see: *but* they shall see, and be ashamed for *their* envy ‖ at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

When thy hand is lifted up, they will not see; and they are guilty of the same obstinate blindness when thou dost smite and punish them, which is commonly signified by *lifting up the hand*, as Ezek. xliv. 12; Micah v. 9. Compare also 2 Sam. xx. 21; 1 Kings xi. 26. Or, as others render it, *when thine hand is high* or *exalted*, i. e. when thy works are most evident and most glorious, when thou appearest most gloriously for the defence of thy people, and for the punishment of thine and their enemies, *they will not see. They shall see:* the same word is repeated in another sense. They shall feel and know that by sad and costly experience, which they would not learn by other and easier ways. *Seeing* is oft put for *feeling;* in which sense men are said to *see affliction*, Lam. iii. 1, and to *see death*, Psal. lxxxix. 48, and the like. *At the people;* or, *at* or *towards* thy *people*, the pronoun *thy* being repeated out of the following clause, as it is in many other places of Scripture, as hath been before noted. Their envy and hatred against God's people blinded their minds, that they neither could nor would see that God was on their side, though the tokens of it were most manifest and undeniable; which was the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, who were not sensible that *the Lord fought for Israel against the Egyptians*, as they said, Exod. xiv. 25, till it was too late. *The fire of thine enemies;* not efficiently, but objectively; such fire or wrath as thou usest to pour forth upon thine implacable enemies. As *my wrong*, Gen. xvi. 5, is not the wrong done by me, but to me; and *my violence*, Jer. li. 35, is *the violence done to me*, as we translate it, not *by me.*

12 ¶ LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our
t Or, *for us.* works ‖ in us.

Thou wilt ordain peace for us; as thou wilt destroy thine and our enemies, so thou wilt bless us thy people with peace and prosperity. *All our works;* either, 1. All the good works done by us, which are the effects of thy grace; or rather, 2. All the good and great works which have been wrought for us, all our wonderful deliverances and singular blessings, come from thee. And so the argument is this, God hath delivered us formerly upon all occasions, and therefore he will still deliver us, and give us peace; which inference is frequently made by holy men in Scripture. *In us*, Heb. *to* or *for us.*

m 2 Chron. 12. 8

13 O LORD our God, [m]*other* lords beside thee have had dominion over us: *but* by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

Other lords beside thee; others besides thee, who art our only *Judge, and King, and Lawgiver*, Isa. xxxiii. 22, and besides those governors who have been set up by thee, and have ruled us for thee, and in subordination to thee, even foreign and heathenish lords, such as the Philistines, and lately the Assyrians. *Have had dominion over us;* have exercised a tyrannical power over us. *By thee only;* by thy favour and help, by which alone (and not by our strength or merits) we have been rescued from their tyranny. *Will we make mention of thy name;* we will celebrate thy praise, and trust in thee for the future. Thou only hast given us both ability and occasion to magnify thy name, whereas without thy succour we had gone into the place of silence, where there is no remembrance of thee, as is said, Psal. vi. 5.

14 *They are* dead, they shall not live; *they are* deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.

They shall not rise; those tyrants and enemies are utterly and irrecoverably destroyed, so as they shall never live or rise again to molest us. Possibly he speaks of the miraculous destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem. *Therefore*, that they might be so effectually destroyed, thou didst undertake the work. Or rather, *because* (as this particle is used, Numb. xiv. 43; Psal. xlii. 6) *thou hast*, &c., as it follows. *Destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish;* thou hast destroyed both them and theirs, and all the monuments or memorials of their greatness and glory.

15 Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed *it* far *unto* all the ends of the earth.

Thou hast increased the nation, Heb. *Thou hast added to the nation;* which may be understood either, 1. In way of mercy, of adding to their numbers, as our translation takes it; and so we have in effect the same phrase 2 Sam. xxiv. 3, *The Lord add to the people*, &c., and Psal. cxv. 14, in the Hebrew text, *The Lord shall add upon* or *to you.* Or, 2. In way of judgment, of adding to their plagues or miseries, of which we read Rev. xxii. 18, in which sense the phrase is found in the Hebrew text, Psal. cxx. 3, *What shall be added to thee?* and in that usual form of imprecation, *The Lord do so to me, and more*, Ruth i. 17; 1 Sam. iii. 17, &c., where it is in the Hebrew, *The Lord do so to me, and add.* And this sense seems to be favoured by the context, as also by the ancient Greek translators, who render the words, *add to them evil* or *punishments.* And so the word *adding* may be used emphatically and sarcastically. God indeed will add to them; but what? Not numbers, and power, and glory, as they expected, but plagues and judgments one after another. This *nation* is supposed by the current of interpreters to be the people of Israel, emphatically called *the nation.* Possibly it may be the Assyrians, of whom he spoke in the last verse. But this I propose with submission. *Thou art glorified;* thy justice is glorified in their punishment or destruction. *Thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth;* which may be understood either, 1. Of Israel, and that either in a way of mercy, Thou hast by destroying the Assyrians enlarged thy people, who were shut up in Jerusalem, so that now they may go to the remotest parts of the land; or in way of judgment, Thou hast removed thy people out of their own land, and suffered them to be carried captive to the ends of the earth. Or, 2. Of the Assyrians; Thou hast removed them from Jerusalem, which they had besieged, and caused them to flee into their own country, which in Scripture phrase was *in the ends of the earth;* of which see Isa. v. 26; xiii. 5.

16 LORD, [n]in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a †prayer *when* thy chastening *was* upon them.
n Hos. 5. 15.
† Heb. *secret speech.*

They, to wit, thy people, as appears both from the matter of this verse, and from the following verses. *Visited*

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thee; come into thy presence, with their prayers and supplications, as the next clause explains it. *They poured out;* which notes the plenty or rather the earnestness of their prayers, as Psal. xlii. 4; cxlii. 2. *A prayer,* Heb. *a muttering* or *lowly speech,* such as charmers use, and such as Hezekiah used when he was in great distress, Isa. xxxviii. 14, *Like a crane or swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove;* and such as is usual in case of great humiliation and dejection of mind. *When thy chastening was upon them;* when thou wast punishing them for their sins.

o ch. 13. 8. John 16. 21.

17 Like as °a woman with child, *that* draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, *and* crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD.

So have we been, such was our anguish and danger, *in thy sight;* whilst thou didst only look upon us like a mere spectator, without affording us the least degree of pity or help. Or this phrase notes only the reality of the thing; God was witness of this our misery, and knoweth the truth of what I say.

18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have

p Ps. 17. 14. Pthe inhabitants of the world fallen.

We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have had the torment of a woman in child-bearing, but not the comfort of a living child, John xvi. 21, for we have brought forth nothing but wind; all our labours and hopes were vain and unsuccessful. The prophet here represents their deplorable and desperate condition before God appeared so eminently to deliver them. *We have not wrought any deliverance;* we found that we were utterly unable to deliver ourselves. *In the earth;* or, in the *land,* in our own country, where yet we had far greater advantages than we could have had elsewhere. *The inhabitants of the world;* the Assyrians, or our other enemies; for they are here opposed to God's people.

q Ezek. 37. 1, &c.

19 qThy dead *men* shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise.

r Dan. 12. 2. rAwake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew *is as* the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Thy dead men shall live. The prophet here turneth his speech to God's people, and gives them a cordial to support them in their deep distress, expressed in the foregoing verse. Thy dead men are not like those ver. 14, for they shall not live, as I there said; but thine shall live. You shall certainly be delivered from all your fears and dangers. Nothing is more frequent, both in Scripture and other authors, than for great calamities to be compared to *death,* and deliverance from them to *life,* and *reviving,* and *resurrection;* and particularly the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and their deliverance out of it, is largely expressed by this very similitude, Ezek. xxxvii. 11, &c. *Together with my dead body;* as I myself, who am one of your number, and of these dead men, shall live again. You shall be delivered together with me. Which he might add, to meet with an objection; for they might think that God would take some special care of this holy prophet, and would preserve him when they should be destroyed. No, saith he, as I am at present like a dead carcass no less than you, so you shall be restored to life no less than I. If the supplement of our translation seems to be too literal, it may be rendered to the same purpose, as *my body,* the particle *as* being oft understood, as I have divers times observed: As my dead body shall rise, so shall theirs also; we are equally dead, and shall equally live again. *Shall they arise* unto life, as appears from the former clause. *Awake* out of your sleep, even *the sleep of death,* as it is called, Psal. xiii. 3; death being oft compared to a sleep, as John xi. 11; Acts vii. 60, and restoration to life unto *awaking,* as 2 Kings iv. 31. *Ye that dwell in the dust;* you that are dead and buried in the dust, as the dead are said to *sleep in the dust,* Dan. xii. 2. *Thy dew;* the favour and blessing of God upon thee, which is oft compared to *the dew,* as Hos. xiv. 5; Micah v. 7. The pronoun *thy* is here taken not efficiently, but objectively, as *thy curse,* Gen. xxvii. 13, is the curse coming upon thee. *Is as the dew of herbs,* which gently refresheth and reviveth them, and maketh them to grow and flourish. *The earth shall cast out the dead,* as an abortive birth is cast out of the womb, to which the grave is compared. Job i. 21. But because the verb here used doth not signify to *cast out,* but to *cast down,* which seems not proper here, these words may be, and are, both by ancient and later interpreters, rendered otherwise, *and thou wilt cast down the land of the giants,* or *of the violent ones,* of the proud and potent tyrants of the world. For the word here rendered *dead* is elsewhere rendered *giants,* as 2 Sam. xxi. 16, 18. See also Job xxvi. 5; Prov. ix. 18; xxi. 16. But then the words seem to be better rendered, *and thou wilt cast the giants down to the ground:* either, 1. *Thou,* O God, who is oft understood in such cases; or rather, 2. *Thou,* O my people, to whom he speaks in the foregoing clauses of the verse, *thy dead body,* and *thy dew.* and here continueth his speech, *thou wilt* or *shalt cast,* &c., thou shalt subdue even the most giant-like and mighty enemies; which though it be properly God's work, the church is oft said to do, because she by her prayers engageth God to do it. And so as the former clauses of the verse speak of the deliverance and prosperity of God's church and people, so this clause speaks of the destruction of their enemies, which usually accompanieth it.

20 ¶ Come, my people, senter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were tfor a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

s Ex. 12. 22, 23.

t Ps. 30. 5. ch. 54. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Having foretold the wonderful deliverance and great happiness of God's people, and the utter destruction of their enemies, lest they should think they were now entering into the possession of this felicity, he adds what here follows, and intimates, that for the present they were to expect storms, and to prepare for them, and patiently to wait God's time for the accomplishment of so great a mercy. *Enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee;* withdraw thyself from the company and conversation of the wicked world, lest partaking with them in their sins thou dost also partake of their plagues; pour out thy prayers to God in thy closet, as this may be explained by comparing Matt. vi. 6; put thyself under the protection of my providence and grace by faith and prayer. He alludes to the common practice of men, who when there are storms or dangers abroad, betake themselves into their own houses or chambers for safety; or, as some think, to that history, Exod. ix. 19, 20, or to that command of *not going out of their houses,* Exod. xii. 22, or to the like charge given to Rahab, as the condition of her preservation, Josh. ii. *For a little moment;* whereby he intimates that all their afflictions, how long and tedious soever they may seem, are but short and momentary, in comparison of that happiness which is reserved for them. *The indignation;* the dreadful effects of God's anger, those sore judgments of God mentioned in the following verse.

21 For, behold, the LORD ucometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her †blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

u Mic. 1. 3. Jude 14.

† Heb. *bloods.*

Cometh out of his place; cometh down from heaven; which God in Scripture is frequently said to do, when he undertaketh any great and glorious work, either of delivering his people, or of destroying their enemies. The speech is borrowed from the manner of princes, who come out of their palaces either to sit in judgment, or to fight against their enemies, which is the case here. *The inhabitants of the earth;* all the enemies of God and of his people; for these are here opposed to God's people. Therefore take heed you be not found in the number of them. *The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain;* the innocent blood which hath been spilled upon the earth shall be brought to light, and shall be severely revenged upon the murderers. For the phrase, see on Gen. iv. 10; Job xvi. 18; Ezek. xxiv. 7.

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CHAP. XXVII.

God's care over his vineyard, 1—6. *His chastisements on them,* 7—9. *His severe judgments against them,* 10, 11. *Their return,* 12, 13.

IN that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the ‖piercing serpent, [a]even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay [b]the dragon that *is* in the sea.

‖ Or, *crossing like a bar.*
a Ps. 74. 13, 14.
b ch. 51. 9. Ezek. 29. 3. & 32. 2.

Shall punish leviathan; what kind of creature the leviathan is, see in my notes on Job xli. 1, &c.; whence it is evident that it was a very great and terrible sea-monster. But here it is certain that the expression is metaphorical, and that by this *leviathan, serpent,* and *dragon* (for all signify the same thing) he understands some very powerful enemy or enemies (for the singular number may be here put for the plural, as it is in many other places) of God, and of his church or people, which may well be called by these names, partly for their great might, and partly for the great terror and destruction which they cause upon the earth, as the leviathan doth in the sea. He seems to have a special respect to some particular enemy and oppressor of God's people; either the Assyrian emperor, who now was so; or rather the Babylonian, who should be so. Some understand this of the devil; but although it may be applied to him in a mystical sense, it seems to be literally meant of some potent and visible adversary; which seems more agreeable to the following verses, and to the usage of this and other prophets. *The piercing serpent;* which by its sting pierceth quickly and deeply into men's bodies. Or, *the bar* (as this word is elsewhere used) *serpent,* as this may be called, either for its length, or strength, or swift motion. *That crooked serpent;* winding and turning itself with great variety and dexterity; whereby he seems to signify the craftiness and activity of this enemy, which being added to his strength makes it more formidable. *The dragon;* or rather, *the whale,* as this word is rendered, Gen. i. 21; Job vii. 12, and elsewhere; which agrees better with the following words, *that is in the sea,* which possibly were added only to limit that general and ambiguous word to a sea-monster, and not to describe the place in which the enemy signified by this dragon had his abode. Although the *sea,* which here follows, may be metaphorically understood of the great largeness of his empire, and the multitude of his subjects, by comparing this with Rev. xvii. 1, 15.

2 In that day [c]sing ye unto her, [d]A vineyard of red wine.

c ch. 5. 1.
d Ps. 80. 8. Jer. 2. 21.

In that day; when this potent enemy shall be destroyed. *A vineyard of red wine:* the words in the Hebrew text lie thus, *A vineyard* (Behold, *a vineyard;* or, Jacob or Israel, my church and people, which is sufficiently understood from the next verse, and is expressed ver. 6, shall be *a vineyard,* shall be defended and dressed, shall thrive and flourish like a vineyard) *of red wine,* (i. e. of the choicest and best wine, which in those parts was red, as appears both from Scripture, as Prov. xxiii. 31, whence it is called *the blood of the grape,* Gen. xlix. 11; Deut. xxxii. 14, and from other authors,) *sing ye* (O you faithful souls, sing with joy and thanksgiving to God) *to* (or *of,* or *concerning,* as this prefix is elsewhere used) *her,* or *it,* to wit, the vineyard, or church, (which is frequently compared to a vineyard, as Psal. lxxx. 8; Isa. v. 7, and elsewhere,) now delivered from her great enemy, and blessed with peace and prosperity.

3 [e]I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest *any* hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

e Ps. 121. 4, 5.

I the Lord do keep it; I will secure it, that neither men, nor beasts, nor drought shall spoil it; which alone are the things that can hurt it. I will protect my church from all the assaults of her enemies, and supply her with all necessary provisions, with my ordinances, and with my Spirit and grace.

4 Fury *is* not in me: who would set [f]the briers *and* thorns against me in battle? I would ‖go through them, I would burn them together.

f 2 Sam. 23. 6. ch. 9. 18.
‖ Or, *march against.*

Fury, to wit, against my vineyard, or my people; which is easily understood both from the foregoing and following verses. I have been displeased with them, and have chastised them; but I am not implacable towards them, and resolved utterly to destroy them, as their enemies are, and would have me to be. *I would go through them, I would burn them together:* this is added as a reason of the foregoing clause and assertion; which may be conceived either, 1. Thus, I rather desire to contend with briers and thorns, i. e. with the wicked enemies of my church, who are thus called, Isa. x. 17; Ezek. xxviii. 24; and if my wrath was now kindled against them, as it is against my people, I would be furious towards them, and never leave till I had utterly consumed them; but I will deal more indulgently with my people. Which exposition seems to receive some light and strength from ver. 6—8. Or, 2. Thus, For I consider the weakness of my people, that if I should let loose my fury upon them, they could no more stand before me than briers and thorns (to which God's people, when they fall into sin, and provoke God, are not unfitly resembled) can stand before a devouring fire, and therefore they would in an instant be utterly destroyed; which I will not do. And this consideration of man's imbecility is elsewhere alleged as a reason of God's indulgence, as Psal. ciii. 13—16; Isa. lvii. 16. But this I deliver with submission.

5 Or let him take hold [g]of my strength, *that* he may [h]make peace with me; *and* he shall make peace with me.

g ch. 25. 4.
h Job 22. 21.

Or, or if at any time fury be, or seem to be, in me against my vineyard or people, *let him,* my people, as is clearly implied from the following words; for *there is no peace* to those who are not God's people, or *to the wicked,* Isa. lvii. 21, and is expressed in the following verse; *take hold of my strength,* i. e. take hold of my arm, which is metonymically *strength,* and stay it from giving the blow, not by force, which is impossible, but by humble submission and earnest supplication. Or, *strengthen himself,* or *be strong,* (as this word properly signifies, and is elsewhere used,) *by my strength;* not by his own strength, which he will oppose to mine, but by my strength, which he may by humble and frequent prayers not only restrain from doing him hurt, but effectually engage to assist him, and do him good. He seems to allude to that history of Jacob's wrestling with the angel of God, Gen. xxxii. 28, which he could never have done but by a strength received from God. *That he may make peace with me;* that instead of opposing me, he may in this manner reconcile himself to me. Or, and *he shall make peace with me,* as the same words are rendered in the next clause; which may be repeated to assure them of that great and important favour, that God would make peace with them. Or the words may be rendered in both clauses, *let him make peace with me,* yea, *let him make peace with me;* this future verb being taken imperatively, as the other is in the former clause of the verse.

6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob [i]to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

i ch. 37. 31. Hos. 14. 5, 6.

To take root; to be firmly settled in their possessions, and not tossed hither and thither, as they have been. *Fill the face of the world with fruit;* their posterity shall be so numerous, that their own land shall not be sufficient for them, but they shall be forced to seek habitations in other countries, and shall replenish them with people. But this seems to be understood of the spiritual seed of Jacob, or of believers, who are oft called God's Israel, as Rom. ix. 6, and elsewhere.

7 ¶ Hath he smitten him, †as he smote those that smote him? *or* is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?

† Heb. *according to the stroke of those.*

Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? the question implies a denial; he hath not so smitten him, to wit, Jacob. He hath not dealt so severely with his people as he hath dealt with his and their enemies, whom he

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hath utterly destroyed. This may look either, 1. Backward, upon times past. If you consult former experiences, you will find that God hath done so, hath spared and restored his people, and in judgment remembered mercy to them, when he hath totally ruined their enemies. Or, 2. Forward, upon the time to come, of which he speaks as of a thing past, after the manner of the prophets, and of which he speaks in the next verse. *Of them that are slain by him;* of those who were slain by Israel, or rather by God at the prayer and on the behalf of Israel. Heb. *of his slain ones,* i. e. of those of his smiters or enemies who were slain; which exposition is favoured by comparing this with the foregoing clause.

8 [k] In measure, ‖ when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: ‖ [1] he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.

k Job 23. 6. Ps. 6. 1. Jer. 10. 24. & 30. 11. & 46. 28. 1 Cor. 10. 13.
1 Or, *when thou sendest it forth.*
‖ Or, *when he removeth it.* 1 Ps. 78. 38.

In measure; with moderation, in certain proportions which God meteth out and fitteth to their strength. *When it shooteth forth;* when the vine shooteth forth its luxuriant branches, he, like the vine-dresser, cutteth them off, but so as not to spoil or destroy the vine. Or, as divers interpreters render it, and the word properly and frequently signifies, *in* or *by casting,* or *dismissing,* or *sending her* or *it out;* or, *when thou dost cast* or *send her out,* to wit, out of her own land, in which she was planted, into captivity. He alludes to a man that divorceth his wife, which is expressed by this word; but withal intimates that this shall not be peremptory and perpetual, as other divorces were. *Thou wilt debate with it;* God is said to *debate* or *contend* with men, when he executeth his judgments upon them, as Isa. xlix. 45; lvii. 16; Amos vii. 4. *He stayeth his rough wind;* he mitigateth the severity of the judgment. But I must confess I do not meet with any of the ancient or modern translators that agree with ours in this version; nor is the Hebrew verb used, so far as I know, in the signification of *staying* or *restraining;* besides, our translation takes no notice of the Hebrew preposition. But this word unquestionably signifies *to remove* or *take away,* as 2 Sam. xx. 13; Prov. xxv. 4, 5, and thus most interpreters understand it. And so the place is very fitly thus rendered, *he* (or, when *he,* which particle may easily be understood out of the former clause, as is usual) *removeth* (understand either *it,* to wit, the vine; or *them,* to wit, the enemies of God and his people. And so this agreeth with the former verse, in representing the different way of God's proceeding against his people, and his and their enemies. Either way there is only a defect of the pronoun, which I have before showed in divers places to be very usual in the Hebrew language) *with* or *by his rough wind;* by which sometimes vines and other trees are pulled up by the roots, as that did, 1 Kings xix. 11, whereby he understands his most terrible judgments. *In the day of the east wind;* in the time when he sendeth forth his east wind; which he mentions, because that wind in those parts was most violent, and most hurtful to trees and fruits, as hath been oft observed, and therefore is used to signify the most grievous calamities.

9 By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this *is* all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and ‖ images shall not stand up.

‖ Or, *sun images.*

By this, by this manner of God's dealing with his people, *therefore,* that the difference between Jacob and his enemies in their several sufferings may appear, *shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged,* Heb. *expiated* or forgiven upon their true repentance, which shall be the happy effect of their chastisement. *This is all the fruit to take away his sin;* the effect hereof shall not be to destroy the sinner, as it is in other men, but only to take away the guilt and power of their sins. *When he maketh;* which sin of Jacob's shall be purged and taken away, and the judgment removed, when he shall truly repent of all his sins, and especially of his idolatry, to which they were most inclined, and for which the most of God's judgments which they had hitherto felt had been inflicted upon them. *The altar;* which by a usual enallage may be put for the altars, to wit, their idolatrous altars, as is evident from the following words. Possibly he may say *the altar* with respect to that particular altar which Ahaz had set up in the place of God's own altar; and this prophecy might be delivered either to the prophet, or by him to the people, in Ahaz's time, while that altar stood and was used. *As chalk stones;* when he shall break all those goodly altars in pieces, which God by his law had enjoined. *That are beaten in sunder;* which kind of stones are of themselves apt to break into small pieces, and by the artificer are broken into smaller pieces for making mortar. He seems to allude to that fact of Moses, who, to show his detestation of idolatry, *took the* golden *calf, and burnt it,* and ground it to powder; and intimates, that when their repentance should be sincere, it would discover itself by their zeal in destroying the instruments of their idolatry. *The groves;* which were frequently erected to the honour of idols, of which we have many instances in Scripture, which God therefore commanded his people to destroy, Deut. vii. 5; xii. 3. *Shall not stand up;* shall be thrown down with contempt and indignation.

10 Yet the defenced city *shall be* desolate, *and* the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: [m] there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof.

m See ch. 17. 2. & 32. 14.

Yet; yet before this glorious promise concerning the removal of Israel's sin and calamity be fulfilled, a dreadful and desolating judgment shall first come upon them. *The defenced city;* Jerusalem, and the rest of the defenced cities in the land, the singular number being put for the plural. *The habitation;* the most inhabited and populous places. Or, as the Hebrew word properly signifies, *their pleasant habitations,* whether in the city or country. *Forsaken and left like a wilderness;* which was fulfilled in the time of the Babylonish captivity. *The calf;* which is synecdochically put for all sorts of cattle, which may securely feed there, because there shall be no men left to disturb or annoy them. *The branches thereof;* of their pleasant habitation; of the young trees which shall grow up in that ruinated country.

11 When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, *and* set them on fire: for [n] it *is* a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and [o] he that formed them will shew them no favour.

n Deut. 32. 28. ch. 1. 3. Jer. 8. 7.
o Deut. 32. 18. ch. 43. 1, 7. & 44. 2, 21, 24.

When the boughs thereof are withered; when they shall begin to wither, as they will when they are thus gnawed and cropped by cattle. *They shall be broken off,* that there may be no hopes nor possibility of their recovery. *The women;* he mentions *women,* either because it is their usual work in the country to make fires, and to gather fuel for them, or to signify that the men should be generally destroyed. *It is a people of no understanding;* they do not understand either me or themselves, either my word or works; they know not the things which concern their own peace and happiness, but, like brute beasts made to be destroyed, they blindly and wilfully go on in those courses which will bring them to certain ruin. *He that made them;* both as they are creatures, and as they are his people; for this also is expressed by *making* or *forming,* as Psal. c. 3; cii. 18; cxlix. 2. Thus he overthroweth their false and presumptuous conceits, that God would never destroy the work of his own hands, nor the seed of Abraham his friend for ever; and plainly declareth the contrary.

12 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.

Shall beat off; or, *shall beat out;* which is not meant in a way of punishment, which is rather designed by *threshing,* as Isa. xxi. 10; xxv. 10, than by *beating;* but as an act of mercy, as is evident from the following clause of this, and from the next verse. It is a metaphor from some grains

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which were beaten out with a rod or staff, of which see Isa. xxviii. 27, 28, and then were carefully gathered and laid up for the use of man. *From the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt;* from Euphrates to Nilus, which were the two borders of the Land of Promise, Josh. i. 4; xiii. 3. All the Israelites which are left in the land; which are here opposed to those of them that are dispersed into foreign parts, such as Assyria and Egypt. *Ye shall be gathered one by one;* which signifies either the smallness of the remnant of that numerous people; or rather God's exact and singular care of them, that not one of them should be lost.

p ch. 2. 11.
q Mat. 24. 31. Rev. 11. 15.

13 [p] And it shall come to pass in that day, [q] *that* the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

The great trumpet; which may be heard even to the remotest parts of the earth. God shall summon them all together as it were by sound of trumpet, to wit, by an eminent call or act of his providence on their behalf. He alludes to the custom of calling the Israelites together with trumpets; of which see Numb. x. 2, 3. *The land of Assyria,* where the ten tribes were carried captive. *The land of Egypt,* where many of the Jews were, as is manifest both from Scripture, as Jer. xliii. 7; xliv. 28; Hos. viii. 13; Zech. x. 10, and from other authors.

CHAP. XXVIII.

The drunkenness of Ephraim bringeth destruction on them: a remnant shall be honourable, 1—8. *Their unteachableness,* 9—13. *Their mock at God's threatenings,* 14, 15. *Christ prophesied for a sure foundation to believers,* 16, *and destruction to the mockers, who are exhorted to amend,* 17—22. *God's providence, its work and seasons towards the church set out by a husbandman,* 23—29.

cir. 725.
a ver. 3.
b ver. 4.
† Heb. *broken.*

WOE to [a] the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose [b] glorious beauty *is* a fading flower, which *are* on the head of the fat valleys of them that are †overcome with wine!

The crown of pride; that proud and insolent kingdom; for the *crown* is oft put for *the kingdom,* as Jer. xiii. 18, &c. *The drunkards;* either, 1. Metaphorically, drunk with proud self-confidence, and security, and prosperity; or rather, 2. Properly, by comparing this with ver. 7; Hos. vii. 5; Amos vi. 6, where the Israelites are taxed with this sin. For having many and excellent vines among them, they were exposed to this sin, and frequently overcome by it. *Of Ephraim;* of the kingdom of the ten tribes; which is commonly called by the name of Ephraim, as hath been oft noted before. *Whose glorious beauty is a fading flower;* whose glory and greatness shall suddenly wither and perish. *Which are;* which proud and drunken Israelites have their common and chief abode. Or, *which* is, i. e. which flower is; or which beauty or glory is. *The head of the fat valleys;* either, 1. In Samaria, which might well be called *the head,* as being seated upon a mountain; and the head of the kingdom, and *the head of the fat valleys,* because it was encompassed with many fat and rich valleys. Or, 2. Upon the chief or choicest (as this word signifies, Exod. xxx. 23; Cant. iv. 14; Isa. ix. 14, 15, and elsewhere) of the fat or rich valleys; which they made occasions and instruments of *luxury. That are overcome,* Heb. *that are smitten,* or *broken,* or *overthrown,* or *knocked down;* all which significations of this word fitly agree to drunkards.

c ch. 30. 30. Ezek. 13. 11.

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, [c] *which* as a tempest of hail *and* a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

The Lord hath, to wit, at his command, prepared and ready to execute his judgments, *a mighty and strong one;* the king of Assyria. *Shall cast down;* understand *it,* the crown of pride; or *them,* the drunkards of Ephraim. *With the hand;* or, by his *hand;* either by that king's force or strong hand; or by the hand of God, which shall strengthen and succeed him in this work.

d ver. 1.
† Heb. *with feet.*

3 [d] The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden † under feet:

The expression is emphatical; the crown which was upon their own heads shall be trodden under the feet of others; and they, whose drunkenness made them stagger and fall to the ground, shall be trodden down there.

e ver. 1.
† Heb. *swalloweth.*

4 And [e] the glorious beauty, which *is* on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, *and* as the hasty fruit before the summer; which *when* he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he †eateth it up.

As the hasty fruit; which coming before the season, and before other fruits, is most acceptable; which as soon as a man sees he covets it, and plucks it off, yet doth not long enjoy it, but through greediness devours it almost as soon as he can get it into his hand. And so shall it be with Ephraim's glory, which his enemies, as soon as they observe, shall covet and spoil, and devour it greedily, and with delight.

5 ¶ In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,

In that day; when the kingdom of Israel shall be utterly destroyed. *For a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty;* God shall give them eminent glory and beauty. *Unto the residue of his people;* unto the kingdom of Judah, who shall continue in their own country, when *Israel is carried* into captivity.

6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

He explains how, or wherein, God would glorify and beautify them, even by giving wisdom to their rulers, and courage to their soldiers; which two things contribute much to the strength, and safety, and glory of a nation. *To them that turn the battle to the gate;* to their warriors; whom he describeth by this phrase, to intimate that their valour should be crowned with success, and that they should not only drive their enemies from their own gates and land, but should pursue them into their own lands, and besiege them in their own cities, which Hezekiah did, 2 Kings xviii. 8.

f Prov. 20. 1. Hos. 4. 11.
g ch. 56. 10, 12.

7 ¶ But they also [f] have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; [g] the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment.

But, alas! Judah is guilty of the same sins with Israel, and therefore they also must expect the same calamities; of which he speaks afterward. They run into the same excess of wine and strong drink, whereby they besot themselves, and fall into many errors and miscarriages, both in sacred and civil things. The many emphatical phrases and repetitions of the same thing in other words, in this *verse,* seem to evince that he here speaks of drunkenness, properly so called, although he afterward chargeth them with ignorance, and error, and stupidity; which also were the companions, and in part the effects, of that sin. *The priest,* to whom strong drink was expressly forbidden in the time of their sacred ministrations, lest they should thereby be led into errors in their work, Lev. x. 9, 10. *The prophet;* the teachers, who should have been patterns of sobriety to the people, and to whom sobriety was absolutely necessary for the right discharge of their office. *Have erred,* in their conversation, and in their holy administrations. *They are*

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swallowed up; they are, as we say, drowned in it; their senses and reason are swallowed up and lost in it. They design only to swallow it, but indeed are swallowed up by it. *They err in vision;* the prophets miscarry in their sacred employment of prophesying or teaching, which is called *vision*, Prov. xxix. 18, and elsewhere. *They stumble in judgment;* the priests mistake in pronouncing the sentence of the law, which was their duty, Deut. xvii. 9—11.

8 For all tables are full of vomit *and* filthiness, *so that there is* no place *clean.*

All tables; at which the priests, and prophets, and other Jews did eat and drink. They hardly made one sober meal; drunkenness was their daily practice. *No place;* no table, or no part of the table; no, not so much as the holy places, in which the priests did frequently eat their meals.

h Jer. 6. 10.

9 ¶ [h]Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand †doctrine? *them that are* weaned from the milk, *and* drawn from the breasts.

† Heb. *the hearing.*

Whom shall he, to wit, the teacher, which is easily understood out of the following verb; either God, or his prophets, or ministers; *teach knowledge?* who is there among this people that are capable and willing to be taught the good knowledge of God? A minister may as soon teach a young child as these men.

‖ Or, hath been.

10 For precept ‖*must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little:

Precept must be upon precept; they must be taught, like little children, slowly, and by leisure; the same things being oft repeated, because of their great dulness. *Line upon line;* one line of the book after another, as children are taught to read.

† Heb. *stammerings of lips.* ‡ 1 Cor. 14. 21. ‖ Or, *he hath spoken.*

11 For with †[i]stammering lips and another tongue ‖will he speak to this people.

For; or, *therefore*, as this particle is oft used. For this seems to be the punishment of their dulness. *With stammering lips;* either, 1. In way of condescension, as mothers and nurses teach children, lisping and stammering with them. Or, 2. In way of judgment; which suits best with the next clause. *And another tongue;* by people of a strange language, whom he shall bring among them, and into whose power he shall deliver them; which is a great aggravation of their misery: see Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. v. 15; Ezek. iii. 5. *Will he speak to this people:* seeing they will not hear him speaking by his prophets and ministers, in their own language, they shall hear their enemies speaking to them in a strange and rough language.

12 To whom he said, This *is* the rest *wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and this *is* the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

To whom he said, to which people the Lord, by his ministers, said, *This,* this doctrine or precept, as it is expressed, ver. 9, 10, or the word of the Lord, as it follows, ver. 13, *is the rest;* the only way, in the observation of which you will find rest and satisfaction. *Cause the weary to rest,* Heb. *cause the weary* (understand either *soul* or *country*) *to rest.* As rest is offered to you by the prophets in God's name, do you embrace it; which is to be done by hearkening to God's word, as appears by the following clauses. So shall this people, which hath been so oft and so long wearied and harassed by great and manifold calamities, find rest and peace. *Yet they would not hear;* they are wilfully ignorant, and obstinately refused the very means of instruction.

13 But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

The sense of the words thus rendered may be this, They spake of God's word with scorn and contempt, repeating the prophet's words in a scoffing manner, and with a stammering and ridiculous tone, saying, *Precept upon precept,* &c.; as if they had said, It seems the prophet takes us to be mere children, that need to be taught our first rudiments, and that but slowly. That these were *scornful men* and *mockers* is affirmed, ver. 14, 22; and as scoffers frequently catch the words out of other men's mouths, and use them in way of derision, so it may be thought they did with the prophet's words. But the words may be, and by divers learned men are, rendered a little otherwise; *And the word of the Lord shall be unto them precept upon precept,* &c. As this method hath been used by them, and was altogether necessary for them; so it still is, and for the future shall be. As they were children in understanding, they shall still continue to be such; they shall be ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth; as they formerly would not, so now they shall not, profit by the word; and their sin shall be their punishment. And this seems to suit with the following clause, which notes the dreadful design and effect of that judicial blindness, *that they may* or *might go and fall backward,* &c. *That they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken:* according to the former, which is our translation, this clause notes only the event or consequent of their sin; according to the latter, it notes the judgment of God designed and inflicted for it; that God's word being so horribly abused by them, might be an occasion at which they might stumble and fall, and that backward, which is the worst and most dangerous way of falling; and so be broken to pieces, or by which they might be snared and taken.

14 ¶ Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which *is* in Jerusalem.

Ye scornful men; which make a mock at sin, and at God's words and threatenings; and doubt not by your witty devices, and by your wicked practices, to escape God's judgments, of which we read in the next verse.

15 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: [k]for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

k Amos 2. 4.

Because ye have said in your hearts, *We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement;* we are as safe from *death*, and *hell*, or the *grave*, as if they had entered into covenant with us, that they would not invade us. The word rendered *hell* most commonly signifies the *grave;* which also seems most proper in this place, that so the same thing may be repeated in other words, as is most usual in prophetical writings. *The overflowing scourge;* the judgment of God, which is called a *scourge*, for its sharpness and severity; and *overflowing*, for its universality; two differing metaphors being joined together; which is not unusual, both in Scripture and in other authors. *Shall pass through,* to wit, the land. *We have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves;* we shall secure ourselves by lying and dissimulation, by compliance with our enemies, and with their religion too, if it be necessary, and many crafty devices. Or by *lies* and *falsehood* he means their riches and strength, to which they trusted, to which he giveth these titles, not that they called or thought them such, but that he might signify what they really were, and would appear to be: see the notes on Prov. i. 11.

16 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation [l]a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

l Gen. 49. 24. Psa. 118. 22. Matt. 21. 42. Acts 4. 11. Rom. 9. 33. & 10. 11. Eph. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 6, 7, 8.

Therefore: the coherence is something obscure and difficult. It may be made either, 1. Thus, Therefore I will bring most terrible judgments upon you; which are fully expressed, ver. 17—21. But before he comes to the commination, to which *therefore* properly belongs, he first propoundeth a comfortable promise concerning the sending of the Messiah, partly for the support of believers, who are

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apt to tremble at God's word, and might otherwise be apt to despond at the prediction of such dreadful things; and partly to aggravate their misery, by comparing it with the safety and happiness which the godly and believing Jews, whom they despised and mocked, should find in Zion; and by signifying that that blessed and sure Foundation laid in Zion should yield them no support nor benefit, nor secure them from the vengeance of God. Or, 2. Thus, Because your refuges are so mean, and vain, and deceitful; therefore I will direct you to a better and surer Refuge, which will never fail those that trust to it, which God hath made in Zion. But if you shall despise and reject that Refuge, which I now offer to you all, if you will believe, then know that *I will lay judgment to the line*, &c., as it follows, ver. 17. And this seems to me to be the most natural and easy connexion. *I lay;* I have purposed and promised it, and will, in the fulness of time, actually perform it. *In Zion;* in my church, which is commonly called Zion; and in Jerusalem, where this Stone shall be first laid, which afterwards spread further, and filled the whole earth, as it is said of it, Dan. ii. 35. *For a Foundation*, upon which I will build my church, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, the Foundation of all the hopes, and comfort, and happiness of my people; the Foundation of my covenant made with my church, and of all my promises. *A Stone;* not Hezekiah, but the Messiah, as appears, 1. From those Scriptures of the Old Testament, in which Christ is called a *Stone*, as Psal. cxviii. 22; Isa. viii. 14; Dan. ii. 34, 35, 45; Zech. iii. 9. 2. From the New Testament, where this text is directly expounded of Christ, as Rom. ix. 32, 33; 1 Pet. ii. 4. 3. From the last clause, wherein he requires faith in this Stone, which is not to be given to any mere man, Jer. xvii. 5; and wherein he implies that this Stone was not yet come, nor to come speedily, into the world; whereas Hezekiah was king at the time of this prophecy. 4. From the usual practice of the prophets, and especially of this prophet, which is to comfort and fortify God's people against the dread of approaching calamities by that great and fundamental promise of the Messiah, in whom alone all other promises are yea and amen; whereof we have seen some instances already, and shall see more hereafter. *A tried Stone;* which I have tried, and approved as every way sufficient to be a Corner-stone, and a Foundation-stone. Such stones in buildings use to be chosen with care, and to be thoroughly examined by the builder. *Precious;* giving not only strength, but beauty and glory, to the building, as corner-stones frequently do, Psal. cxliv. 12. *Corner-stone;* uniting the several parts of the building together, making Ephraim and Judah, now sadly divided, *one stick*, Ezek. xxxvii. 19, 24; and Jews and Gentiles, now implacable enemies, one church and people, Eph. ii. 14, &c. *A sure Foundation*, upon whom you may securely rest; one who will not fail nor deceive you, as your lying refuges will. *He that believeth*, to wit, this promise, or in this Stone, as it is explained, 1 Pet. ii. 6, *shall not make haste;* shall not make more haste than he ought, or, as we say, more haste than good speed; shall not hastily and greedily catch at any way of escaping his danger, whether it be right or wrong, but shall patiently wait upon God in his way till he deliver him. Withal, here is a plain intimation that the mercy here promised was not to be given presently, but after some considerable time; and therefore that they should quietly and patiently submit to God's will under their present difficulties, and expect the accomplishment of it in God's due time: compare Hag. ii. 3. The word here rendered *make haste*, is by the seventy interpreters rendered *be confounded*, whom the apostles follow, Rom. ix. 33; 1 Pet. ii. 6, either because they thought it most convenient, in a matter where the difference was not considerable, to follow that translation which was most used and best understood by the generality of Jewish and Gentile Christians; or because the same word hath both these significations in the Eastern languages, as the most learned and worthy Dr. Pocock hath proved; or because the one follows upon the other, and precipitation or haste commonly exposeth men to shame and confusion; which also is implied in the following verses, wherein the dreadful judgments of God are denounced against those who should not believe, and would make haste to prevent or remove their dangers by any means whatsoever.

17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away [m]the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

[m] ver. 15.

Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; I will execute just judgment, as it were by a line and plummet annexed to it, i. e. with exactness and care. And this may be understood either, 1. That God would so order and settle things in his church, that justice and judgment should prevail, and not iniquity, as hitherto it had done; or rather, 2. That as God would build up and preserve all believers upon that Foundation-stone, so he would severely punish and utterly destroy all those unbelieving Jews who should reject that Stone. For *the line* and *plummet*, or *the plumb-line*, was not only used in erecting buildings, but also in pulling them down; those parts of the building being thus marked out which were to be demolished; and therefore is used in Scripture to signify the destruction of a place or people, as is evident from 2 Kings xxi. 13; Isa. xxxiv. 11; Lam. ii. 8; Amos vii. 7, 8. And this sense agrees best with the following clause and verse. *The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place;* my judgments, which in Scripture are compared to a storm of hail or rain, shall discover the vanity of all your crafty and wicked devices, and shall sweep you away with the besom of destruction in spite of them.

18 ¶ And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be †trodden down by it.

† Heb. *a treading down to it.*

Disannulled; made void, or of none effect; it shall stand you in no stead. *Ye shall be trodden down by it;* which you flattered yourselves that it should not come unto you, ver. 15.

19 From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only ‖*to* understand the report.

‖ Or, *when he shall make you to understand doctrine.*

From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; as soon as this overflowing scourge or judgment shall *go forth* from me into the land, it shall assuredly, and with the first, *take* or seize upon *you* scoffers, or *carry you away*, which agrees well, both with the Hebrew word, which is frequently taken in that sense, and with the metaphor of a flood, which is here used. *Morning by morning it shall pass over;* it shall not only come to you, contrary to your presumption, ver. 15, but it shall abide upon you; and when it hath passed over you, it shall return again to you, morning after morning; and shall follow you day and night, without giving you the least respite. *It shall be a vexation only to understand the report;* so dreadful shall the judgment be, that it shall strike you with great horror when you only hear the rumour of its approach, or of the sad effects of it upon other persons or parts of the land.

20 For the bed is shorter than that *a man* can stretch himself *on it:* and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself *in it.*

For those lying refuges to which you trust will not be able to give you that protection and comfort which you expect from them, no more than a man can stretch himself (as these luxurious Israelites used to do, Amos vi. 4) upon a bed which is too narrow for him, or wrap or keep himself warm with a covering or bed-clothes which are not large enough for him.

21 For the LORD shall rise up as *in* mount [n]Perazim, he shall be wroth as *in* the valley of [o]Gibeon, that he may do his work, [p]his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.

n 2 Sam. 5. 20. 1 Chron. 14. 11.
o Josh. 10. 10, 12. 2 Sam. 5. 25. 1 Chron. 14. 16.
p Lam. 3. 33.

Shall rise up, to act and fight against you; as he is said to *sit still*, when he doth forbear to act. *Mount Perazim;*

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where he fought against the Philistines, 2 Sam. v. 20. *The valley of Gibeon;* where he fought against the Canaanites, Josh. x. 10, &c., and afterwards against the Philistines, 1 Chron. xiv. 16. *His strange work;* the execution of his judgment against Israel, which he calleth his *strange work*, to intimate either, 1. That God would punish them not with ordinary punishments, but in a most dreadful, and singular, and extraordinary manner; such a judgment being called *a marvellous work*, Isa. xxix. 14, although the Hebrew word there used be not the same with this, but of a much differing signification. Or rather, 2. That this work of bringing total and irrecoverable destruction upon Israel was contrary to the benignity of his own nature, and to the usual way of dealing with his people, whom he used and delighted to protect, and spare, and bless; and whom, even when he is angry with them, and punisheth them, he handleth more gently than he doth other persons, in judgment remembering mercy to them, as was noted, Isa. xxvii. 7, 8: see also chap. xxvi. 11.

22 Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts [q] a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

[q] ch. 10. 22, 23. Dan. 9. 27.

Be ye not mockers; for your own sakes do not make a mock of God's word and threatenings, as you use to do. *Lest your bands be made strong;* lest thereby you make the judgments of God, which are oft compared to *bands*, as Psal. lxvi. 11; lxxiii. 4, and elsewhere, more sure and unavoidable, and more severe and terrible, as bands are when they are tied faster and more strongly upon a prisoner. *I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth;* God hath assured me that he will utterly root out and destroy the people of Israel; as indeed he did in Hezekiah's reign.

23 ¶ Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech.

Observe what I say, and do you judge if it be not reasonable.

24 Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground?

Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow? the ploughman doth not spend all his time in ploughing the ground, in order to the sowing it, or, as it follows, in opening it, and breaking its clods; but he hath several times for several works, a time for ploughing, and a time for sowing and harrowing, and a time for reaping, and a time for threshing, or beating, and bruising the corn for his own use; which wisdom God hath put into him. This is the sum of the similitude propounded here and in the following verses; the design and meaning whereof seems to be this, to teach them that God had his times and seasons for several works, and that the methods of his providence were various at several times, and towards several persons or people; and therefore that those scoffing Israelites were guilty of great folly, in flattering themselves, and despising God's threatenings, because of God's long patience towards them, and because of their present impunity and prosperity; for God would certainly and speedily take a time to thresh and break them with his judgments, as at present he ploughed and harrowed them, and so prepared them for it by his threatenings. *Doth he open;* understand, *all day*, or continually, out of the foregoing clause. *And break the clods of his ground;* which they used to do with a kind of harrow, or other proper instrument. See Jer. iv. 3; Hos. x. 11, 12.

‖ Or, *the wheat in the principal place, and barley in the appointed place.* ‖ Or, *spelt.* † Heb. *border.*

25 When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in ‖ the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the ‖ rie in their † place?

Made plain the face thereof, by breaking the clods, which made it ragged and uneven. *The principal wheat;* either, 1. The wheat, which is the principal or chief of all these grains; or, 2. The best wheat, which he prudently chooseth for seed. *The appointed barley;* that proportion of barley which he appointed. Or, as others, *the marked barley;* or, *the choice barley*, which they laid aside in a sack for seed; and therefore set aside with a peculiar mark upon it. *In their place*, Heb. in *his border;* each seed in a several and proper place.

‖ Or, *And he bindeth it in such sort as his God doth teach him.*

26 ‖ [r] For his God doth instruct him to discretion, *and* doth teach him.

[r] Eccles. 7. 15.

The sense of the words thus rendered is this, All this he performeth by that discretion which God hath put into him; and therefore be assured that God will order all his affairs with judgment, and will in due season execute the punishments which now he threatens, and will perfect his own works. But the words by some are rendered otherwise. *And he beateth it out* (as this word may be rendered, 1 Kings xii. 11; Prov. xix. 18; xxix. 17) *in such sort as his God doth teach him;* in a discreet manner, which being generally mentioned here, is particularly described in the following verse.

27 For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod.

A threshing instrument; which then and there was made like a sled shod with iron, which was drawn by men or beasts over the sheafs of corn, to bruise them, and beat the grain out of them. *A cart wheel;* a lesser and lower wheel than a cart wheel, but of the same form, upon which possibly the threshing instrument was drawn. *The fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod*, as being unable to bear harder usage.

28 Bread *corn* is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break *it with* the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it *with* his horsemen.

Bread corn is bruised with a threshing instrument, by comparing this with the foregoing verse and the following words. *Because;* or rather, *but*, or *nevertheless*, as the word is frequently used. The sense is, The husbandman doth indeed thresh the bread corn, but he doth it with moderation, and only for a time, not for ever. *Nor break it;* understand, *for ever*, out of the foregoing clause, as is usual in Scripture. *With his horsemen;* which governed the horse or horses that drew the threshing instrument. Or, *with horses;* for it is evident, and hath been observed before, that this Hebrew word signifies *horses* as well as *horsemen*. And this was another way of threshing out the corn, by driving horses, or other cattle, over the sheaves to tread it out; of which see Deut. xxv. 4; Micah iv. 13.

29 This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, [s] *which* is wonderful in counsel, *and* excellent in working.

[s] Ps. 92. 5. Jer. 32. 19.

This also; this part of the husbandman's discretion, expressed ver. 27, 28, as well as that expressed ver. 24, 25. *Which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working:* these words contain the application of the similitude. The husbandman manageth all his affairs with common discretion; but God governs the world and his church with wonderful wisdom; he is great and marvellous, both in the design or contrivance of things, and in the execution of them.

CHAP. XXIX.

The temple and city of Jerusalem destroyed, 1—6. *Her enemies unsatiable*, 7, 8; *their senselessness*, 9—12, *and deep hypocrisy*, 13—17. *The scorner and oppressor being cut off, the rest shall be converted*, 18—24.

WOE ‖ [a] to Ariel, to Ariel, ‖ the city [b] *where* David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them † kill sacrifices.

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‖ Or, *O Ariel, that is, the lion of God.* [a] Ezek. 43. 15, 16. ‖ Or, *of the city.* [b] 2 Sam. 5. 9. † Heb. *cut off the heads.*

Woe to Ariel! this word signifies *a strong lion*, or *the lion of God;* and is used concerning *lion-like* men, as it is rendered, 1 Chron. xi. 22; and of God's *altar*, as it is rendered, Ezek. xliii. 15, 16, which seems to be thus called, because it devoured and consumed the sacrifices put upon it, as greedily and as irresistibly as the lion doth his prey. If

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the altar be here meant, it is put synecdochically for the temple, and the words may be rendered, *Woe to Ariel, to Ariel* of or in *the city!* or, and *the city;* for that conjunction is sometimes understood, as Isa. xxii. 6; Hab. iii. 11. And so the threatening is denounced both against the temple and against Jerusalem. But he seems rather to understand it of Jerusalem, as may be gathered, 1. From the next words, which seem to be added by way of apposition, to explain what he meant by that obscure and ambiguous term, *Woe to Ariel, to Ariel,* even to *the city!* 2. From the following verses, which plainly declare that this *Ariel* is the place which God threatens that he would *distress* and fill with *heaviness,* ver. 2; and *lay siege* against her, ver. 3; and that *the nations* should *fight against her,* ver. 7; all which expressions agree much better to Jerusalem than to the altar. And this city might be called *Ariel,* or *the strong lion,* either, 1. For its eminent strength in regard of its situation and fortifications, by reason whereof it was thought almost impregnable, both by themselves and others, Lam. iv. 12. Or, 2. For its lion-like fierceness and cruelty, for which she is called *the bloody city,* Ezek. vii. 23; xxii. 2, and, in effect, Isa. i. 15; lix. 3; Jer. xix. 4; and for which her princes are called *lions,* Ezek. xix. 2; Zeph. iii. 3. Or, 3. In respect of the altar of God, which was erected in and confined to that city, and in which the strength and glory of that city did chiefly consist. *The city where David dwelt;* the royal city, and seat of David and his posterity; which is here mentioned as the ground of their confidence; and withal, it is implied that their relation to David, and their supposed interest in the promises made to him and to his seed, should not secure them from the destruction here threatened. *Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices;* go on in killing sacrifices from time to time, one year after another, whereby you think to appease me, and to secure yourselves; but all shall be in vain.

2 Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel.

Yet, notwithstanding all your sacrifices, *I will distress Ariel,* by bringing and strengthening her enemies against her. *It shall be unto me as Ariel:* the sense is either, 1. I will treat her like a strong and fierce lion, which the people among whom it is endeavour by nets, or pits, and all other ways, to take and to destroy; or, 2. I will make *Ariel* the city like *Ariel* the altar, filling it with sacrifices, even with men, whom I will slay in my anger; which act of God's is called *his sacrifice,* Ezek. xxxix. 17, 19.

3 And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee.

By those enemies whom I will assist and enable to destroy thee. This was fulfilled either, 1. By Sennacherib, as some learned men think. But what is here affirmed of these enemies is expressly denied concerning Sennacherib, Isa. xxxvii. 3. Or rather, 2. By the Chaldeans, 2 Kings xxv. 1, &c.

4 And thou shalt be brought down, *and* shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, [c] out of the ground, and thy speech shall † whisper out of the dust.

[c] ch. 8. 19. † Heb. *peep,* or, *chirp.*

Thy speech shall be low out of the dust; thou who now speakest so loftily and scornfully against the Lord's prophets and others, shalt be humbled and confounded, and afraid and ashamed to speak aloud, and shalt in a submissive manner, and with a low voice, beg the favour of thine enemies. *Thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground;* who, that they might possess the people with a kind of reverence and horror, used to speak and deliver their answers with a low voice, either out of their bellies, or from some dark cave under the ground.

5 Moreover the multitude of thy [d] strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones *shall be* [e] as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be [f] at an instant suddenly.

[d] ch. 25. 5. [e] Job 21. 18. ch. 17. 13. [f] ch. 30. 13.

Of thy strangers; either, 1. Of the strangers that encamp and fight against thee. Or, 2. Of the Egyptians, and other strangers, whom thou hast hired to assist thee, as indeed they did, when the Chaldeans came against them. This exposition seems to agree best, as with the phrase, *thy strangers,* so with the scope of the place, and with the whole context, especially the foregoing verses; which plainly shows that this is not a promise to Jerusalem, but a threatening against it. *Like small dust;* quickly blown away with the least wind, by comparing this with the following clause. *Of the terrible ones;* of thy great commanders and stoutest soldiers. *It shall be;* this dissipation and destruction of thy strangers and terrible ones shall come to pass.

6 [g] Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire.

[g] ch. 28. 2. & 30. 30.

Thou, O Ariel or Jerusalem, of or to whom this whole context manifestly speaks, *shalt be visited* with dreadful judgments, which are frequently expressed in the prophets by these and such-like metaphors.

7 ¶ [h] And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be [i] as a dream of a night vision.

[h] ch. 37. 36. [i] Job 20. 8.

Wherein it shall be so is explained in the next verse.

8 [k] It shall even be as when an hungry *man* dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, *he is* faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

[k] Ps. 73. 20.

His soul is empty; his appetite or desire (as *the soul* is taken, Psal. xli. 4; lxxviii. 18, and elsewhere) is unsatisfied. Or, his stomach or body (as *the soul* is used, Psal. xvi. 10) is empty. *So shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against Mount Zion;* no less unsatisfied and unsatiable shall the enemies of the Jews be, with all the cruelties which they have committed against you; and they shall be always thirsting after more of your blood, as if they had never tasted any of it.

9 ¶ Stay yourselves, and wonder; ‖ cry ye out, and cry: [l] they are drunken, [m] but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink.

‖ Or, *take your pleasure, and riot.* [l] See ch. 28. 7, 8. [m] ch. 51. 21.

Stay yourselves, and wonder; pause upon it, and you will see cause to wonder at the stupidity of this people, of which he is now about to speak. He directeth his speech, either to the religious part of the people, or to those particular persons who heard him when he delivered this prophecy. *Cry ye out, and cry;* cry out again and again, either in way of supplication for them; or rather through astonishment and horror. Or, *they take pleasure* or *sport themselves,* (as this word most commonly signifies,) *and riot;* in the midst of all these threatenings and dangers, they are secure, and give up themselves to sensuality; which is matter of just wonder. *They are drunken, but not with wine;* but either, 1. With drinking the cup of God's fury, wherewith they are said to be made drunk, Isa. li. 17, 20. And then, *they are drunk,* is put for, *they shall be drunk,* after the manner of the prophets. Or, 2. With the spirit of giddiness or stupidity, which makes them like drunken men, insensible of their danger, and not knowing what to do.

10 For [n] the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath [o] closed your eyes: the prophets and your † rulers, [p] the seers hath he covered.

[n] Rom. 11. 8. [o] Ps. 69. 23. ch. 6. 10. † Heb. *heads:* See ch. 3. 2. Jer. 26. 8. [p] 1 Sam. 9. 9.

Hath poured out upon you; which phrase notes the plenty

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and vehemency of this judgment. *The spirit of deep sleep;* hardness of heart, and insensibleness of your danger and misery, which God is said to send, because he denies or withdraws his light and grace, which alone can cure those maladies. *The prophets and your rulers, the seers;* your magistrates and ministers, whose blindness or stupidity is a great curse and plague to the people. Or, *the prophets, even the chief* (for *the head* is oft put for the chief of persons or things, as Exod. xxx. 23; 1 Chron. xii. 18, and elsewhere) *of your seers. Hath he covered* with the veil of ignorance and stupidity, or as to their eyes, which is understood out of the former clause. And this last clause is and may be rendered thus, The eyes (which may be repeated out of the foregoing clause) *of your prophets, and of,* or *even of, your principal seers,* (or, *and of your most intelligent rulers,*) *hath he covered.*

‖ Or, *letter.* [q] ch. 8. 16.

11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a ‖book [q]that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one that

[r] Dan. 12. 4, 9. Rev. 5. 1, —5, 9. & 6. 1.

is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: [r]and he saith, I cannot; for it *is* sealed:

12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

The vision of all; of all your prophets, whether the true or false ones. *As the words of a book that is sealed;* in which no man can read whilst it is sealed up, as books then sometimes were, 1 Kings xxi. 8; Esth. iii. 12, 13, being made in the form of rolls, which was convenient for that purpose. *The book is delivered to him that is not learned;* unsealed and opened, as the following clause implies. God so orders the manner of delivering this book, that neither the learned nor unlearned could read and understand it.

[s] Ezek. 33. 31. Matt. 15. 8, 9. Mark 7. 6, 7.

13 ¶ Wherefore the Lord said, [s]Forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is

[t] Col. 2. 22.

taught by [t]the precept of men:

Draw near me, to wit, in acts of worship, *with their mouth and with their lips;* with outward devotions, and the profession of religion. *But have removed their heart far from me;* they do not pay me that love, and fear, and obedience which I require, and prefer before all sacrifices and external services. *Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men;* they worship me not in such way and manner as I have commanded and prescribed, but according to their own and other men's inventions, preferring the devices and traditions of their false prophets before my institutions. For this was a common error among the Jews, as we learn from Jer. vii. 31; Hos. v. 11, and many other scriptures; and thus our blessed Saviour expounds this very place, Matt. xv. 7—9.

[u] Hab. 1. 5. † Heb. *I will add.*

14 [u]Therefore, behold, †I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, *even* a marvellous work and a wonder: [x]for the wisdom of their wise *men*

[x] Jer. 49. 7. Obad. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 19.

shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hid.

Shall disappear and vanish; for this answers to, *shall perish,* in the former clause. A veil shall be cast upon the eyes of their minds; they shall give no evidences or proofs of their wisdom, but their folly shall be made manifest. And this was indeed a wonderful thing for their wise men to be made fools.

[y] ch. 30. 1.

15 [y]Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and [z]they

[z] Ps. 94. 7. [a] Ecclus. 23. 18.

say, [a]Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?

That seek deep, Heb. *that make deep.* A metaphor from men who use to dig deep into the earth, that they may hide any thing there which they would keep safe and unknown. *To hide their counsel from the Lord;* vainly imagining that they can keep all their hypocrisy and secret wickedness out of God's sight, and that they can deceive, not only man, but God, by their external professions and services. *Their works are in the dark;* their wicked counsels are contrived, and their idolatry is practised, in secret and dark places, of which see Ezek. viii. 12. *Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?* we act so cunningly, that neither God nor man can discover us.

16 Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the [b]work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

[b] ch. 45. 9. Rom. 9. 20.

Your turning of things upside down; all your subtle devices, by which you turn yourselves into all shapes; and turn your thoughts hither and thither, and pervert the order which God hath appointed. *Shall be esteemed as the potter's clay;* it is no more to me than the clay is to the potter, who can not only discern it thoroughly, but alter and dispose it as he seeth fit. *Shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not, &c.?* and no less absurd and ridiculous is your conceit, that I, your Maker and supreme Governor, cannot discover and control all your artifices at my pleasure.

17 *Is* it not yet a very little while, and [c]Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?

[c] ch. 32. 15.

The forest of Lebanon, which was a barren mountain and a desolate wilderness, shall by God's wonderful providence become a fruitful and populous place; and these places, which are now fruitful and populous, shall then become as barren and desolate as that forest. The sense is confirmed by that parallel place, Isa. xxxii. 15. And from both places compared together, this seems to be a prophecy of the rejection of the wicked and unbelieving Jews, whose sins and marvellous judgments, and particularly infatuation, are declared in the foregoing verses; and of the calling of the Gentiles, of which he speaks in the following verse, as appears further by comparing that verse with Isa. xxxv. 5. And this opinion may receive some countenance from Matt. xv. 7, &c., where Christ expounds the foregoing words, ver. 13, upon which these have a dependence, of his own times.

18 ¶ And [d]in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

[d] ch. 35. 5.

The deaf; who were deaf before God by his word and grace did open their ears; even the deaf and blind Gentiles, as was now noted. Compare Isa. xxxv. 5. *Shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness;* being, by God's grace, brought out of that gross and worse than Egyptian darkness of ignorance and wickedness, in which they formerly lived, unto a clear and saving knowledge of the truth.

[e] ch. 61. 1. † Heb. *shall add.* [f] Jam. 2. 5.

19 [e]The meek also †shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and [f]the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

The meek; the humble and meek believers, opposed to those proud and scornful Israelites or Jews, of whom he speaks in this and in the foregoing chapter. *Shall increase their joy in the Lord;* shall greatly rejoice in this, that the Lord and Holy One of Israel is now their God and portion. *The poor;* either, 1. Spiritually, of which Matt. v. 3. Or, 2. Outwardly, mean and despicable people, such as the Gentiles were in the opinion of the Jews, and such as the greatest part of the first believing Christians were, Matt. xi. 5; 1 Cor. i. 26; James ii. 5.

20 For the terrible one is brought to nought, and [g]the scorner is consumed, and all that [h]watch for iniquity are cut off:

[g] ch. 28. 14, 22. [h] Mic. 2. 1.

The terrible one; the proud and potent enemies of those *meek* and *poor* believers now mentioned, such as the unbelieving Jews and the heathen potentates were in the first age of Christianity. *The scorner;* the scornful op-

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posers of God's word and people. *That watch for iniquity;* that early and diligently apply themselves to the practice of wickedness, or to do mischief to others.

21 That make a man an offender for a word, and [i] lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just [k] for a thing of nought.

[i] Amos 5. 10, 12.
[k] Prov. 28. 21.

That make a man an offender; that condemn and punish a man as if he were a great criminal. *For a word;* for a verbal reproof, as appears from the next clause. *For him that reproveth;* for God's faithful prophets and ministers, whose office it is to reprove ungodly men, such as these were. *In the gate,* publicly; which they took for a great affront and disgrace; although the reproof ought to be public, where the sin is public and scandalous. He mentions *the gate,* because there the people used to assemble, both upon civil and sacred accounts, and there prophets used to deliver their prophecies; of which see Jer. vii. 2; xvii. 19. *Turn aside,* to wit, *from judgment,* as this phrase is more fully delivered, Isa. x. 2, or from his right; which is elsewhere called *the perverting,* or overturning, or overthrowing of *a man's right* or *judgment,* as Deut. xxvii. 19; Prov. xvii. 23; Lam. iii. 35. *The just;* the faithful prophets and ministers of God, and among others Christ, who is oft called *the just* or *righteous one,* both in the Old and New Testament. *For a thing of nought;* not for any great advantage, but for a trifle, which is a great aggravation of their injustice. Or, *with vanity,* i. e. with vain and frivolous pretences, or without any colour of reason or justice.

22 Therefore thus saith the LORD, [l] who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

[l] Josh. 24. 3.

Who redeemed Abraham from manifold dangers, and especially from that idolatry in which his family and ancestors were generally involved, Josh. xxiv. 2, 3. *Jacob;* the Israelites or posterity of Jacob, who are oft called Jacob in Scripture, who had great cause to be ashamed, for their continued infidelity, and for their persecutions of God's prophets and righteous servants, and for their rejection of their own Messiah; but shall at last be brought back unto the God of their fathers, and to their Messiah. *Neither shall his face now wax pale,* through fear of their enemies, who, from time to time, have molested them; but now they shall be delivered from them all, and shall serve God without fear, as is said, Luke i. 74.

23 But when he seeth his children, [m] the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

[m] ch. 19. 25. & 45. 11. & 60. 21. Eph. 2. 10.

When he seeth his children; when the believing seed of Jacob shall see those children, whom they have begotten to God by the preaching of the gospel, even the Gentiles, converted by their ministry. *The work of mine hands; the children, not of the flesh, but of the promise,* Rom. ix. 8, whom I, by my almighty power and grace, have created or regenerated, of stones raising up children to Abraham. *In the midst of him;* which Gentiles shall be incorporated with the Jews into one and the same body and church. *They shall sanctify my name;* they shall not despise and hate the Gentiles, and envy them the grace of God, and an interest in their Messiah, but shall praise and glorify God with them and for them, as the believing Jews did, Acts xi. 18.

24 They also [n] that erred in spirit † shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

[n] ch. 28. 7.
† Heb. *shall know understanding.*

They also that erred in spirit; those Gentiles whose spirits or minds were ignorant of and erred from God's truth, and who were led aside by a lying spirit, or by the spirit of error and delusion, to idolatry, and all manner of impiety. *Shall come to understanding;* shall come to the knowledge of the truth. *They that murmured shall learn doctrine;* they that would not receive the doctrine of God, but murmured at God's faithful prophets and teachers, who delivered it, which was the practice of divers, both Jews and Gentiles, shall now learn doctrine, and receive God's truth in the love of it.

CHAP. XXX.

The prophet threateneth the people for their confidence in Egypt, 1—7, and contempt of God's word, 8—11; wherefore they shall be destroyed, 12—17. God's mercies towards the church, 18—26. God's wrath and his people's joy in the destruction of Assyria, 27—33.

WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, [a] that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, [b] that they may add sin to sin:

clr. 713.
[a] ch. 29. 15.
[b] Deut. 29. 19.

The rebellious children; the Jews, who call themselves God's children, though they are rebellious ones, as was said, Isa. i. 2. *That take counsel;* that consult together, and resolve to do what follows, ver. 2. *Not of me;* not following nor asking my advice, which they had command and encouragement from me to do. *That cover with a covering;* that seek protection. *Not of my Spirit;* not such as by my Spirit, speaking in my word, I have directed and required them to do; but such as I have severely forbidden to them; for the contrary affirmative is frequently implied in the negative; of which I have formerly given many instances. *That they may add sin to sin;* that unto those sins, by which they have deserved and procured my judgments upon them, they may add distrust of my power and mercy to save them, and confidence in an arm of flesh, which also is rebellion against my express command to the contrary.

2 [c] That walk to go down into Egypt, and [d] have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

[c] ch. 31. 1.
[d] Num. 27. 21. Josh. 9. 14. 1 Kings 22. 7. Jer. 21. 2. & 42. 2, 20.

That walk to go down into Egypt; that send ambassadors to Egypt for succour, as we read, ver. 4, which the Jews were forward to do upon all occasions, and did now upon the invasion of the king of Assyria, as is evident from Isa. xx. 5, 6, and did the like against the king of Babylon, Jer. xxxvii. 7; Ezek. xvii. 15. *Have not asked at my mouth;* either by the priests or prophets, as they were to do in weighty cases; of which see Numb. xxvii. 21; Josh. ix. 14; 1 Sam. xxiii. 9, 10; 1 Kings xxii. 7; Jer. xxi. 2; xlii. 2, 20; or by studying my word, which plainly directs them to another course, and forbids them this practice. *In the shadow;* in their power (as it is in the foregoing clause) and protection, which is oft signified by *the shadow,* as Judg. ix. 15; Psal. xvii. 8; xci. 1, 4.

3 [e] Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt *your* confusion.

[e] ch. 20. 5. Jer. 37. 5, 7.

As being not only unprofitable, but mischievous to you.

4 For his princes were at [f] Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

[f] ch. 19. 11.

His princes; the princes of Judah, either sent by the king, or by the appointment of their brethren. *Hanes;* an eminent city of Egypt, called more largely *Tahapanes,* and *Tahpanhes,* Jer. ii. 16; xliii. 8.

5 [g] They were all ashamed of a people *that* could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

[g] Jer. 2. 36

They; both the messengers, and they who sent them.

6 [h] The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence *come* the young and old lion, [i] the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their trea-

[h] ch. 57. 9. Hos. 8. 9. & 12. 1.
[i] Deut. 8. 15.

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sures upon the bunches of camels, to a people *that* shall not profit *them*.

The burden; either, 1. The prophecy; which is oft called *the burden;* or rather, 2. The burden of riches or treasures, as it is explained in the latter part of the verse. *Of the beasts of the south;* which is carried upon asses or camels, as it follows, into Egypt, which lay southward from Judea. *Into the land of trouble and anguish;* into Egypt and Ethiopia or Cush; for both are joined together in this matter, Isa. xx., whose land seems to be called *a land of trouble and anguish* prophetically, because they should distress them, and not help them; as was said of the Assyrians in the like case, 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. Some render it, *by* or *through the land*, &c., and understand it of the vast wilderness which lay between Judea and Egypt. But it was more proper and important to speak of the land to which these men and beasts went, than of that through which they were to pass; which it was needless so particularly to describe. Nor was the direct road from Judea to Egypt such a place as is here described. *The young and old lion;* which may be understood properly, because these and the following creatures did abound, and were very fierce and mischievous, in Egypt and Ethiopia; but withal, seems to design the craft and cruelty of that people, and the danger of their confederacy with them, and the harm which they should have from them. *Fiery flying serpent:* that there were flying serpents in those parts, is affirmed, not only in Scripture, but also by Herodotus, Cicero, and Ammianus, and divers other authors. *They;* the Jews, designed by the same pronoun, *they*, ver. 5, *will carry their riches;* either, 1. To secure them; or rather, 2. To procure their assistance. *Upon the shoulders of young asses;* much used there for carrying burdens, as is evident from Gen. xxxii. 15; xlv. 23, &c. *Upon the bunches;* upon the backs, which were strengthened with bunches, by a synecdoche.

k Jer. 37. 7.

7 [k]For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried ‖concerning this, [l]Their strength *is* to sit still.

‖ Or, *to her.* l ver. 15. ch. 7. 4.

Concerning this; concerning this counsel or practice. Or, *to her;* to Jerusalem or Judah. *Their strength is to sit still;* it is safer and better for them to sit quietly at home, seeking to me for help, than to go or send to Egypt for help. He seems industriously to use an ambiguous word, *Rahab*, which signifies both *strength*, as Job ix. 13; Psal. xc. 10, and *Egypt*, as Psal. lxxxvii. 4; Isa. li. 9, so called from its singular strength; to intimate that if they did not go to Rahab, Rahab, or what they expected from Rahab or Egypt, which was powerful succour, should come to them.

m Hab. 2. 2.

8 ¶ Now go, [m]write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may † be for the time to come for ever and ever:

† Heb. *the latter day.*

Write it; write this prophecy and warning which I have now delivered. *Before them;* in their presence, in the public assembly; for the prophets were many times commanded to do such actions, as well as to deliver their messages. *In a table, and note it in a book:* so this was to be written twice over; once in a table, to be hanged up in some public place, that all that were then and there present might read it; and again in a book, that it might be kept for the use of posterity. *That it may be for the time to come*, as a witness for me and against them, that I have given them fair warning, and that they have wilfully run upon their own ruin.

n Deut. 32. 20. ch. 1. 4. ver. 1.

9 That [n]this *is* a rebellious people, lying children, children *that* will not hear the law of the LORD:

Lying children; which profess one thing, and practise another. *The law of the Lord;* the commands of God, either contained in Scripture, or delivered by my mouth, whereby these practices are expressly forbidden to them.

o Jer. 11. 21. Amos 2. 12. & 7. 13. Mic. 2. 6. p 1 Kings 22. 13. Mic. 2. 11.

10 [o]Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, [p]speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:

He speaks not of the words of their mouths; for none could be so mad or impudent as to have or profess a desire to be cheated, but of the language of their actions. They do so discourage and threaten God's faithful prophets, and so encourage their own false prophets, as if they had rather be deceived to their destruction, than hear the truth for their preservation and salvation. They prefer the pleasing of their humours before the saving of themselves.

11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

Out of the way in which you now walk, out of your present course of preaching unsavoury and frightful things to us. *Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us;* do not trouble us with harsh and repeated messages from God, as you use to do.

12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in ‖oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:

‖ Or, *fraud.*

In oppression; in the wealth which you have gotten by oppression, whereby you now think to procure Egyptian succours; of which see on ver. 6. *And perverseness;* and in your perverse and rebellious course of sending to Egypt for help.

13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you [q]as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking [r]cometh suddenly at an instant.

q Ps. 62. 3. r ch. 29. 5.

This iniquity, of sending and trusting to Egypt for succour. *Whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant;* like a wall which is high, and seems to be strong, but swelling forth in some parts, which upon the least accident falleth down suddenly to the ground. Such shall be the issue of your high and towering confidence in Egypt.

s Ps. 2. 9. Jer. 19. 11. † Heb. *the bottle of potters.*

14 And [s]he shall break it as the breaking of †the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare; so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water *withal* out of the pit.

He shall break it; he, either God, or he whom God shall send against them. Or, *it shall be broken;* for such phrases are oft taken indefinitely and passively; *it, this iniquity* last mentioned, ver. 13, your carnal confidence, and all the grounds of it, and you that lean upon it.

15 For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; [t]In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: [u]and ye would not.

t ver. 7. ch. 7. 4. u Matt. 23. 37.

In returning, either from your present purpose of sending to Egypt, or unto God, as the LXX., and Syriac, and Arabic translators render it. Or, *in quietness;* for the verb from which this word comes is elsewhere used in that sense, as Psal. xxiii. 2; Jer. xxx. 10; xlvi. 27. *In quietness;* in sitting still, and quieting your own minds. *In confidence*, to wit, rightly placed upon me and my promises for your deliverance.

16 But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

We will flee out of this land from the king of Assyria; which it is very probable divers of the richer sort did, having sent their treasures before them, as we read, ver. 6.

17 [x]One thousand *shall flee* at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as ‖a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.

x Lev. 26. 8. Deut. 28. 25. & 32. 30. Josh. 23. 10. ‖ Or, *a tree bereft of branches, or, bought: or, a mast.*

Shall flee; which words are fitly supplied out of the following clause. *At the rebuke;* either, 1. At his real rebuke, upon his assault or onset; or rather, 2. At his verbal rebuke, upon his mere threats, as fearing that he will proceed

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from words to blows. *Shall ye flee;* all of you, how numerous soever. *Till ye be left as a beacon, &c.;* till you be generally destroyed, and but a few of you left.

18 ¶ And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD *is* a God of judgment: [y]blessed *are* all they that wait for him.

y Ps. 2. 12. & 34. 8. Prov. 16. 20. Jer. 17. 7.

Therefore; because of your general destruction and great misery; which is frequently mentioned in Scripture as a motive to God's mercy, as Deut. xxxii. 36, and in many other places, as hath been oft observed already. But some rendered this Hebrew particle *yet*, or *notwithstanding*, as it is supposed to signify, Isa. li. 21; Jer. xvi. 14; Ezek. xxxix. 25; Hos. ii. 14. *Wait;* patiently expect your repentance, and stop the course of his judicial proceedings against you, that you may have an opportunity of making your peace with him, and of preventing your utter ruin. *Will he be exalted;* he will lift up and bestir himself, and will work gloriously in your behalf, as this phrase is used, Psal. xxi. 13; xlvi. 10; Isa. xxxiii. 10, and oft elsewhere; and as the following verses explain it. *Is a God of judgment;* who carrieth himself towards his people (for of them only he speaks in this place) not with furious passion, but with judgment and discretion, or with equity and moderation; for *judgment* is oft opposed to fury and rigorous justice, as Psal. cxii. 5; Jer. x. 24; xxx. 11. *Blessed are all they that wait for him;* this waiting upon God, in his way, with faith and patience, is a surer way to your safety and happiness, than seeking to Egypt, or any other carnal remedies.

z ch. 65. 9.

19 For the people [z]shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; for although the time is coming, when the people shall be banished from Jerusalem, and carried captives into Babylon; yet after a set time they shall return to Jerusalem, and have a fixed and comfortable abode there: which was in part accomplished upon their return from Babylon; but more fully in the times of the gospel, when many of them were, and the whole body of them shall be, brought into Christ's church, which is oft called Zion and Jerusalem, both in the Old and New Testament. *He will answer thee;* whereas now he seems to be deaf to thy prayers.

a 1 Kings 22. 27. Ps. 127. 2.

‖ Or, *oppression.*

b Ps. 74. 9. Amos 8. 11.

20 And *though* the Lord give you [a]the bread of adversity, and the water of ‖affliction, yet shall not [b]thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction; and although in that time and state of the church you will be subject to many outward straits and afflictions. This phrase is borrowed from Deut. xvi. 3; 1 Kings xxii. 27. He seems to allude to the condition of besieged cities, and particularly of Jerusalem, as it was straitened and distressed by Sennacherib, and as it should be far more straitened by the Chaldeans; of which see 2 Kings xxv. 3. Heb. *And the Lord will give, &c.* Or, *the Lord indeed will give, &c. Yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more;* as they have been in former times, both in Israel and Judah, when the godly prophets and ministers were but few, and when they were persecuted and banished by their wicked rulers. But in the New Testament God hath made better provision for his church, sending his Son, the great Teacher of the church, into the world, and pouring forth the gifts and graces of the Spirit in abundance, and increasing the number of able and faithful ministers, and promising a continued succession of them to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. *Thine eyes shall see thy teachers;* thou shalt have their presence, and their instruction and assistance.

21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This *is* the way, walk ye in it, when ye [c]turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

c Josh. 1. 7.

Thine ears shall hear a word; as oft as need requires thou shalt hear the voice of God's word and Spirit directing thee in thy course. *Hear a word behind thee;* a metaphor borrowed either, 1. From the custom of shepherds, who use to follow their sheep, and to recall them when they go out of the way. Or, 2. From travellers, who when they are gone out of the right way, are ofttimes recalled and admonished of their error by some other passenger or person who is behind them, and therefore discerns their mistake; which he could not so easily discover if he were before them.

d 2 Chr. 31. 1. ch. 2. 20. & 31. 7.

† Heb. *the graven images of the silver.*

‡ Heb. *scatter.*

e Hos. 14. 8.

22 [d]Ye shall defile also the covering of †thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt ‡cast them away as a menstruous cloth; [e]thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

Ye shall defile, to show your contempt of it, and to make it unfit for your own or any other's use. *The covering;* the leaves or plates wherewith their wooden images were frequently covered; of which see Exod. xxxviii. 17, 19; Numb. xvi. 38, 39. *The ornament;* or, *the coat or covering.* Heb. *the ephod,* as this very word is rendered, Exod. xxviii. 8; xxxix. 5, which was a costly and glorious robe. The idolaters spared no cost in the making and adorning their idols; and, among others, the image of Jupiter in Sicily had a coat put upon it made all of massy gold. *Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth;* thou shalt so deeply abhor idolatry, that thou shalt cast away with indignation all the monuments and instruments thereof.

f Matt. 6. 33. 1 Tim. 4. 8.

23 [f]Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

The rain of thy seed; or rather, as others render it, *to* or *for thy seed,* when thou hast newly sown thy seed, which was called *the former rain;* or such as thy seed requires, which may include both the former and the latter rain. Their sins, the cause of all God's judgments which had befallen them, being removed by their sincere repentance, and God's gracious pardon, God showereth down all his blessings upon them. *Bread of the increase of the earth;* which shall be the fruit of thy own land and labour; which is a great mercy and comfort. *It shall be fat and plenteous;* thy bread shall be excellent for quality, which is called *fat,* Deut. xxxii. 14, and abundant for quantity.

‖ Or, *savoury.*

† Heb. *leavened.*

24 The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat ‖† clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

Clean provender; or, as learned Mr. Gataker renders it, *threshed,* which agrees well with the following clause, corn being first threshed, and then winnowed. The sense is, there should be such plenty of corn, that their very beasts, instead of straw, should eat corn; and that not in the ear, or with the straw, but the pure grain.

g ch. 2. 14, 15. & 41. 3.

† Heb. *lifted up.*

25 And there shall be [g]upon every high mountain, and upon every †high hill, rivers *and* streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

Upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill; which are commonly dry and barren, and destitute of rivers. *In the day of the great slaughter;* when God shall destroy the enemies of his people, he will shower down his blessings upon his church. *The towers;* either properly, the towers of Babylon, for which she was famous; or metaphorically, the high and mighty potentates, which fought against God's people, as Isa. ii. 15.

h ch. 60. 19, 20.

26 Moreover [h]the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the

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light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

As the light of the sun, for constancy and brightness; which, as also the following clause, is to be understood metaphorically, of the most glorious and comfortable condition of God's church, far surpassing what it was in former ages. And so this, as well as other passages in this chapter, concerns the times of the gospel. *As the light of seven days;* as if the light of seven days were combined together in one. Its light shall then be transcendently more bright and glorious than it hath hitherto been. Which magnificent expressions seem to be too high for the deliverance of the Jews, either from Sennacherib or out of Babylon; and do much better agree to the times of the gospel, in which the light is far more clear, and the grace of God much more abundant, than ever it was in former times. And this exposition seems the more probable, because it is the manner of the prophets, and especially of this, who is rightly called the *evangelical* prophet, to take all occasions to speak of the days of the Messiah, and of the blessed privileges of that time and state of the church, among which they constantly reckon *light*, whether you take it for knowledge or for comfort, to be one. *In the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound;* when God shall effectually cure the wounds and breaches of his people, first making up the breach between him and them, then making Israel and Judah to be one, who now are sadly divided; and making Jew and Gentile to be one fold under one Shepherd, even the Messiah, which the prophets foretell that it shall be in the times of the gospel.

27 ¶ Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning *with* his anger, ‖ and the burden *thereof is* †heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:

‖ Or, *and the grievousness of flame.* † Heb. *heaviness.*

Here begins the last part of the chapter, wherein he gives them an earnest of those greater mercies promised for times to come, by assuring them of the approaching destruction of the Assyrian forces. *The name of the Lord;* the Lord himself; for as *the names* of men are oft put for the men themselves, as Numb. xxvi. 53; Acts i. 15; Rev. iii. 4; xi. 13; so *the name of God* is frequently put for God, as Gen. iv. 26; Deut. xxviii. 58; Psal. xx. 1, 7, &c. *Cometh from far;* from a very remote place, even from heaven, whence God sent his angel to destroy them, Isa. xxxvii. 36. Possibly this expression may respect the judgment of the Assyrians, who looked upon God as one afar off, not only in his presence, which they thought to be confined to heaven, but in his care of and affections to the Jews; and therefore no more expected any opposition from him than from them who live in the ends of the earth. *The burden thereof is heavy;* he will inflict heavy judgments upon them. *His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire;* he hath pronounced a severe sentence against them, and will give command for the execution of it.

28 And [i]his breath, as an overflowing stream, [k]shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and *there shall be* [l]a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing *them* to err.

i ch. 11. 4. 2 Thess. 2. 8. k ch. 8. 8. l ch. 37. 29.

His breath; either, 1. *The breath of his nostrils*, as it is called, Job iv. 9; or *the blast of the breath of his nostrils*, as Psal. xviii. 15; in both which places it is mentioned as a sign and effect of God's anger, and the cause of the destruction of those against whom it is directed. And the expression seems to be borrowed from hence, that men discover their anger by a strong and vehement breathing through their nostrils. Or, 2. *The breath of his lips* or *mouth*, to which the destruction of God's enemies is elsewhere ascribed, as Job xv. 30; Isa. xi. 4, which may be the same thing with *his lips* and *tongue* in the foregoing verse, or may design a strong blast coming out of his mouth; for God is frequently said to destroy wicked men by *blowing* upon them, as Isa. xl. 7, 24; Ezek. xxi. 31; xxii. 21. *As an overflowing stream;* coming from him as vehemently as a mighty torrent of waters. *Shall reach to the midst of the neck;* shall bring him into a most dangerous condition, as a man who is in deep waters which reach to his neck is in danger of being drowned; and afterwards, as is related in the following verses, will utterly destroy him. And this was fulfilled in Sennacherib, who was highly endangered, when he lost so great a part of his army, and shortly after slain by his own sons. Although these words may be added as a description of *the overflowing stream* now mentioned, and may be thus rendered, which *reacheth even to the midst of the neck;* for the relative particle is frequently understood in Scripture. *To sift;* to shake and scatter, as it were, with a sieve; or to try and vex, as this metaphor signifies, Amos ix. 9; Luke xxii. 31. *The nations;* the Assyrian army, which was made up of the people of several nations. *With the sieve of vanity;* not with an ordinary sieve, which casteth away the chaff only, but keepeth the corn; but with a sieve which should shake them so long and so vehemently as to cast away all together, and to make a full end of them. *There shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people;* God will restrain and overrule them by his secret and powerful providence. *Causeth them to err;* whereas other bridles guide the bridled creatures into the right way, this shall turn them out of the way, by giving them up to their own mistakes, and foolish counsels, and wicked courses, which shall bring them to sore and certain ruin.

29 Ye shall have a song, as in the night [m]*when* a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into [n]the mountain of the LORD, to the †mighty One of Israel.

m Ps. 42. 4. n ch. 2. 3. † Heb. *Rock*, Deut. 32. 4.

Ye shall have a song; you shall have occasion of great joy and songs of praise for your stupendous deliverance from that formidable enemy. *As in the night when a holy solemnity is kept:* he mentions the night, either because the Jewish feasts begun at the evening, and were celebrated with great joy in part of the night season, as well as on the following day; or because he hath a particular respect to the solemnity of the passover, in which they spent some considerable part of the night in feasting, and rejoicing, and singing of psalms and songs before the Lord. *As when one goeth with a pipe;* like the joy of one that is going up to the solemn feasts with music, and the voice of joy and praise, as they used to do, Psal. xlii. 4, to cheer up themselves in the way, which to many of them was long, and would otherwise have been tedious.

30 [o]And the LORD shall cause †his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of *his* anger, and *with* the flame of a devouring fire, *with* scattering, and tempest, [p]and hailstones.

o ch. 29. 6. † Heb. *the glory of his voice.* p ch. 28. 2. & 32. 19.

His glorious voice; his thunder, which is called God's *voice*, and said to be *full of majesty*, Psal. xxix. 4. But then thunder is metaphorically taken for some terrible judgment, as it is in many places of Scripture. *The lighting down of his arm* upon the Assyrian, whom he will smite with a deadly blow in the face of the world. The phrase is taken from the gesture of a man who is about to smite another, who first lifts up his hand, and then lets it fall with great force upon him whom he designs to strike. *With the indignation of his anger;* with great wrath; which is signified by the heaping of so many words of the same signification together.

31 For [q]through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down, [r]*which* smote with a rod.

q ch. 37. 36. r ch. 10. 5, 24.

The voice of the Lord; that voice mentioned in the last verse. *Which smote with a rod;* which was the rod wherewith God smote his and other people, Isa. x. 5, 6. He who used to smite others shall now be smitten himself. Or, as the words may be, and by others are, rendered, *he* (the Lord last mentioned) *shall smite* him *with a rod*, or *with* his *rod*.

32 And †*in* every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the LORD

† Heb. *every passing of the rod founded.*

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† Heb. cause to rest upon him.
a ch. 11. 15. & 19. 16.
‖ Or, against them.

shall † lay upon him, *it* shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of [a] shaking will he fight ‖ with it.

The grounded staff, Heb. *the founded rod;* the judgment of God, which is frequently called a *rod* in Scripture, and may be here called *a founded rod*, or *the rod of foundation*, either because it was firmly established, and certainly to come, by God's immutable purpose and appointment; or because the rod should not slightly touch him, and pass over him, but strike deep, and be fixed, and as it were grounded or founded in his flesh, and made to rest upon him, as it follows in the next clause. *Shall lay*, Heb. *shall cause to rest;* which is contrary to the manner of God's dealing with his people, upon whom he will *not suffer the rod of the wicked to rest*, Psal. cxxv. 3. *Upon him;* upon the Assyrian, mentioned in the foregoing verse. *It shall be with tabrets and harps:* the sense is either, 1. Their destruction shall be celebrated by God's people with joy, and music, and songs of praise. Or, 2. The victory shall be got, not by warlike instruments and achievements, but as it were by tabrets and harps; wherein he may possibly allude to the victory which Jehoshaphat got against Moab and Ammon, not by fighting, but only by singing and praising God with the voice, and with musical instruments, 2 Chron. xx. 19, 21, 27, 28; God being pleased to fight for them by his own immediate power; which also was the case here, which made the people of God sing a triumph before the fight, Isa. xxxvii. 22. *In battles of shaking;* or, *with battles or fightings of shaking*, to wit, of shaking of the hand, of which kind of shaking this Hebrew word is constantly used, such as are performed by the mere shaking of the hand; namely, by God's shaking his hand against them, as he threatens to do against others, Isa. xi. 15; xix. 16, in which last place this very word is used, and in the former the verb from whence it comes. For that this shaking is an act of God seems more than probable, and from the following words, *will he*, i. e. God, as all understand it, *fight against it.* And so the sense of the place may be this, God will fight against them, and destroy them by his own hands. *Will he*, to wit, the Lord, who declareth himself to be the enemy of the Assyrian, both in the foregoing and following verses, *fight with it;* with the army of the Assyrians: or, according to the other Hebrew reading, *with them;* with the Assyrians.

† Jer. 7. 31. & 19. 6, &c.
† Heb. from yesterday.

33 [t] For Tophet *is* ordained † of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made *it* deep *and* large: the pile thereof *is* fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

Tophet was a place near Jerusalem, in which the idolatrous Israelites used cruelly to offer up their children to Moloch, 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; xxxiii. 6; see also Jer. vii. 31; xix. 6; and it may be put synecdochically for any place of torment or misery; and particularly it is put for hell, as well in the writings of the ancient Jewish doctors as in Holy Scripture, as Matt. xviii. 8, 9; xxiii. 15; Mark ix. 43, 44. And so this place may be understood either, 1. Literally, of Tophet in the valley of Hinnom, in which the Assyrian host was either slain by the angel, as Josephus reports, or buried or burnt. For although the Assyrians did not make any great attempt upon Jerusalem, Isa. xxxvii. 36, yet Rabshakeh came very near it with a great army, Isa. xxxvi. 2. Or, 2. Figuratively, of hell. *Is ordained;* or, was *ordered* or *prepared.* And it might be said, in some sort, to be prepared by Hezekiah for this end, by the care which he took to purge this and other places abused to idolatry, which made them more fit to receive so great a favour and deliverance from God. But for hell, that doubtless was ordained or prepared by God for the punishment of impenitent sinners. *Of old*, Heb. *from yesterday;* which phrase is sometimes used of a time but lately past, as 2 Sam. xv. 20; Job viii. 9, and sometimes of any time past, without limitation. *For the king;* for the king of Assyria; either, 1. For the kings, the singular number being put for the plural, whereby he may understand the princes or chief commanders of the host, by comparing Isa. x. 8, *Are not my princes altogether kings?* Or, 2. For Rabshakeh, the general of this army, who, according to the style of Scripture, might very well be called king. Or, 3. Sennacherib, for whom this place might be said to be ordained or prepared, partly because it was ordained for the destruction of his host; nothing being more ordinary, both in sacred and profane writers, than to entitle the king or general of the army to all the victories procured, or losses or slaughter sustained, by his army; and partly because the sudden destruction of the Assyrian army, supposed to be in this place, was the occasion of the conspiracy of that king's sons, and so of the king's death. But if this Tophet design hell, this is emphatically denounced against him, to intimate, that although he escaped that sudden plague which cut off his army, yet there was a more terrible judgment appointed for him, which he should be utterly unable to escape. *He;* the Lord, who is oft designed by this pronoun, as in the next foregoing verse, and elsewhere; and who is expressed in the following words. Or it is an indefinite expression, for, *it is made deep and large. Hath made it deep and large*, capable of receiving vast numbers; whereby he intimates that he designed to make a great and general destruction of the Assyrians; and withal, that it was a vain and foolish confidence which the Assyrians had in their numerous host, seeing the greatest numbers of God's enemies are wholly unable, either to oppose him, or to save themselves from his wrath and power. *The pile thereof is fire and much wood;* whereby he further implies that he intended to make a great slaughter among them. And he alludes in this phrase to the ancient custom, either of burning sacrifices, and particularly of burning children to Moloch, or of burning the dead bodies of men. *The breath of the Lord;* the immediate hand of God, or his word of anger: see on ver. 28. *Like a stream of brimstone;* he seems to allude to that shower of fire and brimstone, Gen. xix. 24. *Doth kindle it;* the pile of fire and wood now mentioned.

CHAP. XXXI.

The folly and punishment of trust in Egypt, 1—3. *God will fight for Jerusalem*, 4, 5, *if they will turn unto him*, 6, 7. *The fall of Assyria*, 8, 9.

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a ch. 30. 2. & 36. 6. Ezek. 17. 15.
b Ps. 20. 7. ch. 36. 9.
c Dan. 9. 13. Hos. 7. 7.

WOE to them [a] that go down to Egypt for help; and [b] stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because *they are* many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, [c] neither seek the LORD!

That go down to Egypt for help; as the Jews did, contrary to God's command, Deut. xvii. 16; xxvi. 68. *And stay on horses;* for Egypt had many and choice horses. *They look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord;* their confidence in the creature was accompanied with and did produce a distrust of God, and a neglect of seeking to him by prayer for his help.

d Num. xxiii. 19.
† Heb. remove.

2 Yet he also *is* wise, and will bring evil, and [d] will not † call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.

He also is wise: you think you are wise, and act wisely in engaging the Egyptians, who are a wise and warlike people, to help you; but God is not inferior to them in wisdom nor in strength, but much their superior; and therefore you have done foolishly and wickedly in preferring them before him. *Will bring evil;* will execute his judgments upon you, notwithstanding all that you or your allies the Egyptians can do to hinder it. *Will not call back his words*, his threatenings denounced against you, but will infallibly execute them. *Will arise;* though at present he sit still, yet he will bestir himself and fight. *Against the house of evil-doers;* against this wicked and rebellious people of the Jews. *The help;* the helpers, as it is explained in the next verse; the abstract being put for the concrete.

c Ps. 146. 3, 5.

3 Now the Egyptians *are* [c] men, and

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not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

Are men, and not God; and therefore utterly unable to defend you, either without or against my will. *Their horses flesh;* weak and frail, as that word signifies, Psal. lxxviii. 39; Heb. v. 7, and elsewhere. *Not spirit;* not like spiritual substances, such as the angels, who are immortal, and invisible by men; whereof we have instances, Exod. xii. 29, 30; Isa. xxxvii. 36.

4 For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, [f]Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, *he* will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the ‖noise of them: [g]so shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof.

f Hos. 11. 10. Amos 3. 8.

‖ Or, *multitude.*

g ch. 42. 13.

For; or, *but;* or, *nevertheless,* as this particle is elsewhere used, as hath been proved before. Although you have done evil in sending to Egypt for help, and they shall not be able to help you; yet the Lord himself will, of his own grace, and for the glory of his own name, give you that help and deliverance which you do not deserve, and have no reason to expect from him. And therefore desist from those evil counsels and courses, as those which are both unnecessary and pernicious. *Roaring on his prey;* when he is ready to seize upon it, and devour it. *He will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself:* it hath been observed of lions, that when they are pursued, they do not run away with all speed, as other creatures do, but march away slowly, and make an honourable retreat. *For:* although this Hebrew particle might be rendered *against,* and so this place might be understood of God's fighting against the Jews and Egyptians, of which he speaks ver. 3; yet it is better rendered *for,* as it is taken in many other places, as is manifest from the following similitude and verse.

5 [h]As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; [i]defending also he will deliver *it; and* passing over he will preserve *it.*

h Deut. 32. 11. Ps. 91. 4.

i Ps. 37. 40.

As birds flying; which come from above, and so cannot be kept off; which fly swiftly, and engage themselves valiantly and resolutely, when they perceive that their young ones are in eminent danger. He seems to allude, and to oppose this, to those boasting expressions of the Assyrian, Isa. x. 14: compare Deut. xxxii. 11, 12; Matt. xxiii. 37. *Passing over;* the destroying angel shall pass over Jerusalem untouched, and shall fall upon the Assyrians. He seems to allude to the history of God's passing over and sparing the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the Egyptians, in which this word is constantly used, Exod. xii. 12, 23, 27.

6 ¶ Turn ye unto *him from* whom the children of Israel have [k]deeply revolted.

k Hos. 9. 9.

Turn ye unto him; let the consideration of this gracious promise engage you to repent of your carnal policies, in seeking and trusting to Egypt for help, and sincerely to return to God. *The children of Israel;* either, 1. The Israelites, strictly so called, who are now utterly destroyed for their apostacy; and therefore take heed that you do not follow their example. Or, 2. You Jews, who are the children of Israel; which title he here gives them, partly to admonish them of their great and many obligations to God, and partly to aggravate the sin of their apostacy. *Have deeply revolted,* in neglecting and forsaking him, and seeking to Egypt for help; which he calls *a deep revolt,* partly because it was a heinous sin, being contrary to God's express command, and highly dishonourable to God; and partly because it was carried on with deep dissimulation, and with a public profession of cleaving to God, and with a design of *seeking deep to hide* this *their counsel from the Lord,* wherewith he charged this people, Isa. xxix. 15.

7 For in that day every man shall [l]cast away his idols of silver, and †his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you *for* [m]a sin.

l ch. 2. 20. & 30. 22.

† Heb. *the idols of his gold.*

m 1 Kings 12. 30.

For when the Assyrian shall invade your land, you shall find the vanity of those idols to which you have trusted; and therefore shall cast them away with indignation, and be forced to seek to me for help. So this is added as an argument to persuade them to practise his counsel of turning to God. *Which your own hands have made unto you for a sin;* which you have made as instruments of your sin of idolatry. Or, *which your sinful hands* (by a common Hebraism, called *hands of sin*) *have made for you.* Or, *the sin* (as an idol is called, Deut. ix. 21) *which your hands have made for you.* So there is only a transposition of one word, which is very usual in the Hebrew text.

8 ¶ Then shall the Assyrian [n]fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him: but he shall flee ‖from the sword, and his young men shall be ‖†discomfited.

n See 2 Kin. 19. 35, 36. ch. 37. 36.

‖ Or, *for fear of the sword.*

‖ Or, *tributary.*

† Heb. *for melting,* or, *tribute.*

Then; when you have cast away your idols, and seriously sought to me for help; both which things were performed by Hezekiah. *With the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man;* by the sword, not of any man, either mean or mighty, but of an angel. *From the sword;* from, or for fear of, that plague which so strangely and suddenly destroyed his army. *His young men,* Heb. *his choice young men;* his guards and valiant commanders and soldiers. *Shall be discomfited,* Heb. *shall melt* away, a great part of them being destroyed by the angel; and the hearts of the rest melting for fear.

9 And °†he shall pass over to ‖his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the LORD, whose fire *is* in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

o ch. 37. 37.

† Heb. *his rock shall pass away for fear.*

‖ Or, *his strength.*

He shall pass over to his strong hold; Sennacherib shall flee away, with all speed, from Jerusalem, to his strong city of Nineveh, Isa. xxxvii. 37. Or, as it is in the margin, and as the words lie in the Hebrew text, *his rock* (i. e. his strength, the greatest champions of his army, to whom he trusted) *shall pass away* (shall flee with all speed from Jerusalem) *for fear,* lest the sword of the destroying angel should overtake them. *Of the ensign;* either, 1. Of any ensign. This dreadful judgment shall strike them with such a terror, that they shall not dare to look any enemy in the face. Or, 2. Of the Lord's ensign, which he hath lifted up against them. *Whose fire is in Zion:* so the sense is either, 1. Whose fire is continually burning upon the altar in Zion; which signifies his presence and residence there. Or rather, 2. Who is and will appear to be in Zion, like a fire, to defend his people, and to consume their enemies; for which end God promiseth that he would *be unto Jerusalem a wall of fire round about,* Zech. ii. 5, &c.; and that he would *make the governor of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf;* and that *they* should *devour all the people round about.* Possibly these and the following words may be thus rendered, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew words, *who* will be *a fire* (to wit, a consuming fire) *to him* (to the king of Assyria, of whom he is here speaking) *in Zion,* (from whence he will send forth that fire which shall consume his army: or, for *Zion; for Zion's* sake; for the prefix here rendered *in* frequently signifies *for,* as hath been proved,) *and a furnace to him in* or *for Jerusalem.* But this I only propose, leaving it to the judgment of the intelligent reader. *His furnace in Jerusalem;* the same thing repeated in other words.

CHAP. XXXII.

Christ's kingdom, and its blessings, 1—8. *Careless women shall be troubled,* 9—11, *and the land laid waste,* 12—14, *until a restoration,* 15—20.

BEHOLD, [a]a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

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a Ps. 45. 1, &c. Jer. 23. 5. Hos. 3. 5. Zech. 9. 9.

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This seems to me to be a distinct prophecy from the former, and delivered at another time, and probably before that which is related in the former chapters. For this is certain, and confessed by all, that the prophecies are not always set down in that order in which the prophets delivered them. The foregoing prophecy seems to have been delivered, not in the time of Ahaz, for he sent to the Assyrian, and not to the Egyptian, for help; but in the days of Hezekiah, who *rebelled against the king of Assyria*, as is said, 2 Kings xviii. 7, and was too prone to *trust upon the staff of Egypt*, as the Assyrian expressly chargeth him there, ver. 21; to which course it is likely he was drawn or tempted by some of his wicked princes and counsellors, whom the prophet therefore severely censures and condemns in the two foregoing chapters. And this seems to have been delivered in the time of Ahaz, and to speak of Hezekiah, and of his righteous and happy government. But withal, as Hezekiah and his reign was an eminent type of Christ, and of his kingdom; so this prophecy looks through Hezekiah unto Christ, as many other scriptures in their literal sense do unquestionably concern David, which yet have a mystical sense, and are also meant of Christ, in whom those things were more fully and eminently accomplished. *A king;* Hezekiah, a type of Christ, and Christ typified by him. *Shall reign;* therefore Hezekiah was not king when this prophecy was delivered. And whereas some say that he speaks of the good government of Hezekiah after the destruction of Sennacherib, it is easy to observe that his government was as good before that time as afterward; and that in the very beginning of his reign he ruled with righteousness and the fear of God, as the history plainly declareth. *Princes;* the ministers of state, and justice, and war under the king. For a wise and good king will take care to have like ministers.

2 And a man shall be as an hiding
[b] ch. 4. 6. & 25. 4. place from the wind, and [b]a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry
† Heb. heavy. place, as the shadow of a †great rock in a weary land.

A man; either, 1. The man or king spoken of. Or, 2. Each or every one, to wit, of his princes. That king shall not patch up an old garment with new cloth, nor mingle good and bad together; but shall take care to purge out all the corrupt magistrates, and, as far as he can, to settle good ones in all places. *A man* is oft put for *every* or *any man*, as Isa. ii. 20; iii. 5, 6, and elsewhere. *Shall be as an hiding-place* unto the people under their government, especially to such as are oppressed or injured by those who are more potent than they. *From the wind;* from the rage and violence of evil men. *As rivers of water in a dry place;* no less refreshing and acceptable shall this king and his princes be to their subjects. *In a weary land;* in a dry and scorched country, which is called *weary* here, as also Psal. lxiii. 1, metonymically, because it makes travellers weary; as *death* is called *pale* in other authors, because it makes men's faces pale.

[c] ch. 29. 18. & 35. 5, 6. 3 And [c]the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.

This is meant either, 1. Of the princes or magistrates, who are instead of eyes and ears, both to the king and to the people, who, by their office, are to see and observe all things, and to hear all causes. These, saith he, shall not shut their eyes, nor suffer them to be blinded with gifts, to favour a rich man in an unjust cause; they shall not shut their ears against the complaints of the poor oppressed ones, as wicked princes commonly do. Or, 2. Of the people; they shall not shut their eyes and ears against the good counsels and examples of their religious king and rulers, as they have done formerly: both princes and people shall be reformed. This was done in some poor measure in Hezekiah's time; but far more fully and eminently in the days of the Messiah, who, by his grace, changeth men's hearts, and cureth them of that wilful and obstinate blindness whereof they had been guilty before; which clearly showeth that this prophecy looks through Hezekiah unto Christ. And the like may be said of the following verse.

† Heb. hasty. 4 The heart also of the †rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak
‖ Or, elegantly. ‖plainly.

The rash; who were hasty and heady in judging of things; which is an argument of ignorance and folly. *Shall understand knowledge;* shall become more knowing and considerate in their judgments and actions. *The stammerers;* that used to speak of the things of God darkly, and doubtfully, and unwillingly. As men's understandings shall then be enlightened, so their speech shall be reformed; which though it was in part fulfilled in Hezekiah; this reformation being effected in some measure by his counsel and example, and by the powerful preaching of the Levites, whom he excited and encouraged to *teach the good knowledge of the Lord*, as is said, 2 Chron. xxx. 22; yet was truly and fully accomplished only by Christ, who wrought this wonderful change in an innumerable company both of Jews and Gentiles.

5 The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said *to be* bountiful.

The vile person; base and worthless men. Heb. *the fool;* which in Scripture use commonly signifies a wicked man. *Shall be no more called liberal*, or *noble*, or a *prince*, or *lord*, as this word is used, Psal. cxviii. 9; cxlvi. 3, and elsewhere. The sense of the place is, either, 1. Unworthy men shall not be advanced to places of honour and power, as the LXX. and some others understand it; for *to be called* is oft put in Scripture for *to be*, as hath been frequently observed. Or, 2. Vicious and worthless persons shall no longer be reputed honourable and virtuous because of their high and honourable places, as commonly they are under wicked princes by means of flatterers; but wickedness shall be discovered and punished wheresoever it is, and virtue shall be manifested and rewarded, and all things shall be managed with sincerity and simplicity; which was eminently fulfilled under the gospel; by the preaching whereof, and by Christ's Spirit, hypocrites are detected, and men are enabled to discern between good and evil, both persons and things. *The churl;* the sordid and covetous man; which is a great vice in any man, but especially in magistrates; who therefore must be men *hating covetousness*, Exod. xviii. 21. But under this one vice all vices are understood by a synecdoche, very frequent in Scripture and in other authors; as under the opposite virtue of *bountifulness* all virtues are comprehended.

6 For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

For the vile person will speak villany: so this is a reason of the assertion, ver. 5; either thus, Such shall not be advanced to places of trust and dignity; for if they were, they would abuse them by unjust sentences and practices. Or thus, Men shall no longer be miscalled; for every one will discover what he is by his words and actions; which also shall be narrowly observed. But these and the following words are and may be otherwise rendered: *But* (as this particle oft signifies) he shall be called or said to be (which words are easily understood out of the former verse, as is very frequent in Scripture) *a fool*, who (which relative particle is understood in very many places) *shall speak villany, and whose heart shall work iniquity*, &c. *His heart will work iniquity;* he will, from time to time, be devising wickedness, that he may execute it when he hath opportunity. *To practise hypocrisy:* to do bad things, but with a pretence of religion and justice, which he shall use to keep himself from the disfavour of his prince, and from the lash of the law. Or, *to practise profaneness* or *wickedness*, as this word, at least sometimes, seems to signify. *To utter error against the Lord;* to pass unjust sentences, which is directly contrary to the will and command of God. *To make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail;* whereby they take away the bread and drink of the poor, and give it to their rich oppressors.

7 The instruments also of the churl *are* evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor

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with lying words, even ‖ when the needy speaketh right.

‖ Or, when he speaketh against the poor in judgment.

The instruments also of the churl are evil, Heb. *The vessels,* &c., which is a word of a very general signification among the Hebrews, and signifies any person or thing which is employed in a man's use and service. I say *person,* for the name of *vessel* is given to such persons as are instrumental to another, as to the Babylonians, who were God's instruments in executing his vengeance, Isa. xiii. 5; to God's ministers, Acts ix. 15; 2 Cor. iv. 5; and to useful Christians, 2 Tim. ii. 20; and to wives, 1 Pet. iii. 7. And so it may be here noted, that such covetous or wicked princes most willingly choose and employ wicked men in their affairs, because such men will, without any regard to conscience or justice, serve all their exorbitant desires or lusts. But withal, it seems to include his counsels, and practices, and arts, which are here declared to be generally evil. But this verse is and may be otherwise rendered, as the former was; *And* (repeat, *he shall be called) a churl* (as indeed he is one) whose *instruments are evil, and who deviseth,* &c.; which agrees with the order of the words in the Hebrew text, and with the order of the foregoing verses: for as he speaks of *the vile person,* and of *the churl,* ver. 5; so he gives a description of the vile person, ver. 6, and then of *the churl,* in this verse. *He deviseth wicked devices;* he useth all his wit and art to do injury to others, without any inconvenience to himself. *With lying words;* with false and unrighteous decrees. *When the needy speaketh right;* when their cause is just and good.

8 But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he ‖ stand.

‖ Or, be established.

He who is truly liberal and virtuous will show it by designing and practising liberal or virtuous actions; and he who doth so will not destroy himself thereby, as wicked men falsely suppose, but establish and advance himself. But this verse also, as well as the former, is and may be otherwise rendered; *And* (repeat, *he shall be called,* as before) *liberal, who deviseth liberal things, and persisteth* or *continueth in liberal things.* If it be thought strange that so many verses should be spent in affirming that which in effect was said ver. 5, it must be considered that these verses do not only contain an affirmation, that they should be called *vile persons,* or *churls,* or *liberal* that were so; but also a description of their qualities and practices, which was useful for their conviction, and for the instruction of others.

d Amos 6. 1. 9 ¶ Rise up, ye women [d] that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech.

Rise up; bestir and prepare yourselves to hear, as it follows, and shake off sloth and carelessness. *That are at ease;* that indulge yourselves in idleness and luxury. *Careless,* Heb. *confident* or *secure,* who are insensible of your sin and danger. *Daughters;* the same before called *women;* whom he here reproveth and threateneth for their sins, as he did the men before for seeking to Egypt for help, and divers other sins, whereof the men were most guilty.

† Heb. Days above a year. 10 † Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come.

Many days and years, Heb. *Days above a year,* i. e. a year and some days; which notes either, 1. The time from this prophecy to the beginning of this judgment; or rather, 2. The time of the continuance of it, that it should last for above one year; as indeed this did, and no longer; for Hezekiah reigned in all but *twenty-nine* years, 2 Kings xviii. 2, and Sennacherib came in his *fourteenth* year, and after his defeat and departure God promised and added to him *fifteen* years more, 2 Kings xx. 6. *The vintage shall fail,* during the time of the Assyrian invasion. And this commination is here added to qualify the foregoing promise, and to warn them, that although God would give them so good a king, and there should be some reformation of their former abuses under the government of Ahaz; yet as there were many sins among them not yet repented of, so they should be severely chastised for them. *The gathering,* to wit, of the other fruits of the earth; as that feast which was observed after the gathering of all the fruits was called *the feast of ingathering,* Exod. xxiii. 16.

11 Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird *sackcloth* upon *your* loins.

Strip you, and make you bare; put off your ornaments, as God commanded upon a like occasion, Exod. xxxiii. 5, that you may put on sackcloth instead of them, as mourners and penitents used to do.

12 They shall lament for the teats, for † the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine.

† Heb. the fields of desire.

They shall lament for the teats; either, 1. Properly, because through famine your teats are destitute of milk for the nourishment of your poor children. Or rather, 2. Metaphorically, as the following words explain it, for the pleasant and fruitful fields, which like teats yielded you plentiful and excellent nourishment, for which the land was said *to flow with milk,* Ezek. xx. 6. And the earth being compared to the womb that bare us, Job i. 21, it is not strange if its fruitful fields be compared to the breasts which nourish us.

e ch. 34. 13. Hos. 9. 6. 13 [e] Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns *and* briers; ‖ yea, upon all the houses of joy *in* [f] the joyous city:

‖ Or, burning upon, &c. f ch. 22. 2.

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers. If any of you think there is no great cause for such trembling and lamentation, which shall last but for a year and some days, know that this calamity by the Assyrians is but an earnest of further and sorer judgments; for the time is coming when this land shall be laid desolate, and instead of vines and other fruits, it shall yield nothing but briers and thorns; of which see on Isa. vii. 23, 24. *Upon all the houses of joy;* upon that ground where now your houses stand, in which you delight, and take your fill of mirth and pleasure.

g ch. 27. 10. 14 [g] Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the ‖ forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks;

‖ Or, clifts and watch-towers.

The palaces, Heb. *the palace;* the king's house, and other magnificent buildings in the city. *Shall be left;* or rather, *shall be forsaken,* to wit, of God, and given up into their enemies' hands. And the verb in the foregoing clause may be rendered, *shall be left. A joy of wild asses;* desolate places, in which wild asses delight to be, Job xxxix. 5, 6; Jer. ii. 24.

h Ps. 104. 30. Joel 2. 28. i ch. 29. 17. & 35. 2. 15 Until [h] the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and [i] the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high: and this calamity and desolation shall, in a manner, continue until the time come, in which God will *pour,* or, as the Hebrew word properly signifies, *reveal,* i. e. evidently and plentifully pour out, *his Spirit* from heaven upon his people; which was done in some sort upon the return of the people from Babylon, when God, by his Spirit, stirred up the spirit, both of Cyrus to give them liberty of returning to Jerusalem, and of the people to return and build the city and temple; but was far more clearly and fully accomplished in the days of the Messiah. And indeed the promises contained in these and the following words and verses were not fulfilled upon their coming out of Babylon, after which time they had but *a little reviving in* their *bondage,* as is said, Ezra ix. 8, and continued in servitude and distress under the Persian emperors, Neh. ix. 36, 37, and afterward suffered many and grievous calamities from the kings of Syria and Egypt, and from the Romans; which suits very ill with that glorious promise here following, ver. 18. And therefore these promises concern the times of the gospel, when God's Spirit was in a most evident and glorious manner poured forth upon the apostles, and other believing Jews, to the astonishment of their very adversaries; and when the following promises were in a good measure

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fulfilled, and are more fully to be accomplished in God's due time. *The wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest;* which is allegorically understood. The meaning may be this; God's people, who were desolate and destroyed, shall be revived and flourish, and their flourishing enemies shall be brought to desolation and destruction. It may also signify the conversion of the barren and despised Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, in the time of the Messiah.

16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

Judgment; just judgment, as the next clause explains it. Justice shall be executed in all the parts of the land, both in the barren and fruitful places, and shall be practised by all my people; which agrees with that promise, Isa. lx. 21, *Thy people shall be all righteous*, &c.

k Jam. 3. 18. 17 [k]And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

The work of righteousness shall be peace; the effect of this prevailing practice of righteousness shall be prosperity and outward felicity. *Quietness;* tranquillity, both of mind and outward estate. *Assurance;* or, *confidence.* The observation of God's precepts will beget in them a confidence and assurance of God's mercy, and the fulfilling of his promises.

18 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

My people; either the Gentiles, who then shall be my people; or the Jews, to whom this promise shall be made good upon their conversion to Christ in the latter times of the gospel.

l ch. 30. 30. m Zech. 11. 2. ‖ Or, *and the city shall be utterly abased.* 19 [l]When it shall hail, coming down [m]on the forest; ‖and the city shall be low in a low place.

When it shall hail, coming down on the forest, Heb. *And it shall hail*, &c. As my blessings shall be poured down upon my people, who from a wilderness are turned into a fruitful field, as it is said, ver. 15; so my wrath and judgments (which are signified by *hail*, Isa. xxviii. 2, 17, and elsewhere) shall fall upon them, who were a fruitful field, but are turned into a forest, as was said, ver. 15, i. e. upon the unbelieving and rebellious Jews, who seem there to be designed under that notion. *The city;* either, 1. Babylon, the great enemy and oppressor of God's people. Or, 2. Jerusalem, which, though now it was the seat of God's worship and people, yet he foresaw by the Spirit of prophecy that it would be the great enemy of the Messiah, and of God's people. *Shall be low in a low place,* Heb. *shall be humbled with humiliation;* which by an ordinary Hebraism signifies, *shall be greatly humbled*, or *brought very low.*

20 Blessed *are* ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth *thither* the feet of

n ch. 30. 24. [n]the ox and the ass.

Blessed are ye that sow: as the barren forest shall be destroyed with *hail*, ver. 19, so the fruitful field shall be improved, and bring forth much fruit; which is signified by a declaration of the blessedness of them that sow in it. *Beside all waters;* in all moist and fat grounds, which are like to yield good fruit. But this passage, as well as others in the foregoing verses, is to be understood mystically, and seems to respect the times of the gospel. The prophet reflecting upon his own unsuccessful labours, of which he complains, Isa. xlix. 4, and elsewhere, and foreseeing by the Spirit the great and happy success of his successors, the ministers of the gospel, tacitly bewails his own unhappiness, who sowed his seed upon dry and barren ground, by congratulating the happiness of the apostles, who sowed their seed more generally, upon all fit grounds, without any distinction between Jews and Gentiles; and who found the ground, to wit, the hearts of the people, more moistened and softened, and better prepared to receive the good seed of God's word. *The ox and the ass;* which creatures they employed in ploughing and sowing the ground, Deut. xxii. 10; Psal. cxliv. 14; Isa. xxx. 24.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The destruction of the enemies of the church; who are derided, 1—13; *which terrifieth the sinners in Zion,* 14. *The safety and privileges of the godly,* 15—24.

WOE to thee [a]that spoilest, and thou *wast* not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! [b]when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; *and* when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.

a cir. 713. a ch. 21. 2. Hab. 2. 8. b Rev. 13. 10.

Woe to thee that spoilest! to Sennacherib, who wasted the land of Judah. *Thou wast not spoiled;* thou didst not meet with any considerable opposition, but wast victorious over all thine enemies; of which the Assyrian boasteth, Isa. x. 8, 9; xxxvi. 18, 19. *Dealest treacherously;* as Sennacherib did with Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 14, 17. *They dealt not treacherously with thee;* none of thine enemies could prevail against thee, either by force, of which he speaketh in the former clause, or by treachery, as here. Or, *when they dealt not*, &c.; when Hezekiah did not deal treacherously with thee. If it be said that Hezekiah dealt treacherously with him, in breaking his faith, and rebelling against him, it may be answered, that Hezekiah neither promised nor owed him any service or subjection. What was done in that kind was done by Ahaz only; and he only begged his assistance for a particular work, and paid him well for it, 2 Kings xvi. 7, 8, and the king of Assyria did not keep his conditions with him; for *he distressed him, but strengthened him not,* 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. *When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled;* when thou hast performed the work of chastening my people, for which I sent thee, thou also shalt be spoiled by thine enemies.

2 O LORD, be gracious unto us; [c]we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.

c ch. 25. 9.

O Lord, be gracious unto us; the prophet contemplating the judgment which was now coming upon God's people, directeth his prayer to God for them. *Their arm;* our arm or strength. The change of persons is most frequent in prophetical writings. *Every morning;* when we offer the morning sacrifice, and call upon thee; which yet is not meant exclusively, as if he did not desire God's help at other times; but comprehensively, the morning being put synecdochically for the whole day. The sense is, Help us speedily and continually.

3 At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered.

At the noise of the tumult, which the angel shall make in destroying the army. *The people;* those of the army who escaped that stroke. *The nations;* the people of divers nations, which made up his army.

4 And your spoil shall be gathered *like* the gathering of the caterpiller: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them.

Your spoil, that treasure which you have raked together by spoiling divers people, *shall be gathered* by the Jews at Jerusalem, when you shall be forced to flee away with all possible speed, leaving your spoils behind you. *Like the gathering of the caterpillar;* either, 1. Passively, with as much ease, and in as great numbers, as caterpillars are gathered and destroyed. Or rather, 2. Actively, as appears from the next clause; as caterpillars or locusts (for the word signifies either) gather and devour all the fruits of the earth; which was a common plague in those countries. *As the running to and fro of locusts;* as locusts, especially when they are sent and armed by commission from God, come with great force, and run hither and thither, devouring all the fruits of the earth, wheresoever they find them.

5 [d]The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

d Ps. 97. 9.

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Is exalted; will get great glory by the marvellous destruction of so proud and potent an army, and by the defence of his people. *For he dwelleth on high;* for he is and will appear to be superior to his enemies, both in place and power. He dwelleth in the heaven, whence he can easily and irresistibly pour down judgments upon his enemies. Although these words may be, and by some are, joined with those that follow, thus, *for he that dwelleth on high hath filled*, &c. *He hath filled Zion*, he will fill Jerusalem, *with judgment and righteousness;* either, 1. With a glorious instance of his just judgment against the Assyrians. Or, 2. With the execution of justice by good Hezekiah, as before it was filled with impiety and injustice under Ahaz. The city shall not only be delivered from that wicked enemy, but shall also be established and blessed with true religion and righteousness; which was a great addition to that mercy.

6 And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, *and* strength of †salvation: the fear of the LORD *is* his treasure.

† Heb. *salvations.*

Wisdom and knowledge, to govern thyself and thy people well, *shall be the stability of thy times;* of thy reign; *times* being oft put for things done in those times, as 1 Chron. xii. 32; Psal. xxxi. 15; xxxvii. 18, &c. He turneth his speech to Hezekiah. The sense is, Thy throne shall be established upon the sure foundations of wisdom and justice. *Strength of salvation;* thy saving strength, or thy strong or mighty salvation. *The fear of the Lord is his treasure:* and although thou shalt have great treasures of gold and silver, &c., yet thy chief treasure and delight is, and shall be, in promoting the fear and worship of God; which shall be a great honour and safeguard to thyself and people. He saith, *his treasure*, for *thy treasure*, by a sudden change of the person, usual in these books.

‖ Or, *messengers.* e 2 Kings 18. 18, 37.

7 Behold, their ‖valiant ones shall cry without: [e]the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.

Behold: that the mercy here promised might be duly magnified, he makes a lively representation of their great danger and distress, in which it found them. *Their valiant ones;* or, *their heralds* or *messengers*, as the Hebrew doctors expound the word: either, 1. Those whom the king of Assyria sent to Jerusalem, 2 Kings xviii. 17. Or rather, 2. Those whom Hezekiah sent to treat with the Assyrian commissioners, 2 Kings xviii. 18, as the next clause showeth. *Shall cry without*, through grief and fear. *The ambassadors of peace*, whom he shall send to beg peace of the Assyrian, *shall weep bitterly*, because they cannot obtain their desires.

f Judg. 5. 6. g 2 Kings 18. 14, 15, 16, 17.

8 [f]The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: [g]he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.

The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth, because the Assyrian soldiers possessed and filled the land. *He hath broken the covenant;* Sennacherib broke his faith, given to Hezekiah, of departing for a sum of money, 2 Kings xviii. 14, 17. *He hath despised the cities;* the defenced cities of Judah, which he contemned and easily took, 2 Kings xviii. 13. *He regardeth no man;* either to spare them, or to fear them, or to keep faith with them. He neither feareth God, nor reverenceth man.

h ch. 24. 4. ‖ Or, *withered away.*

9 [h]The earth mourneth *and* languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed *and* ‖hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off *their fruits*.

The earth mourneth, being desolate and neglected. *Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down* by the Assyrians. Or, as the word signifies, and is here rendered by others, *withereth* or *languisheth*, because its trees are not now used by the Jews for their buildings, as they have been; and because they are spoiled and destroyed by the Assyrians. *Sharon;* a pleasant and fruitful place, as appears from 1 Chron. xxvii. 29; Cant. ii. 1; Isa. xxxv. 2. *Bashan and Carmel;* two places eminent for fertility, and especially for good pastures, Deut. xxxii. 14; 1 Sam. xxv. 2, which are here synecdochically put for all such places. *Shake off their fruits;* are spoiled of their fruits. Or, as it is rendered by some others, *yell* or *roar*, as this word is rendered Jer. li. 38.

10 [i]Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself.

i Ps. 12. 5.

In this extremity, I will appear on the behalf of my people and land.

11 [k]Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, *as* fire, shall devour you.

k Ps. 7. 14. ch. 59. 4.

Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble, instead of solid corn. Your great hopes and designs, O ye Assyrians! shall be utterly disappointed. *Your breath, as fire, shall devour you;* your rage against my people shall bring ruin upon yourselves.

12 And the people shall be *as* the burnings of lime: [l]*as* thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

l 1 ch. 9. 18.

Shall be as the burnings of lime; shall be burnt as easily and effectually as chalk is burned to make lime.

13 ¶ Hear, [m]ye *that are* far off, what I have done; and, ye *that are* near, acknowledge my might.

m ch. 49. 1.

My power and justice in destroying the Assyrians shall be so evident, that people, both far and near, shall be forced to acknowledge it.

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

The sinners in Zion are afraid: this is spoken, not of the Assyrians, as some would have it, but of the Jews, as appears both from the words themselves, and from the following verses. The prophet having foretold the deliverance of God's people, and the destruction of their enemies, ver. 10—12, for the greater illustration of that wonderful mercy, here returns to the description, and gives a lively representation of the dismal and frightful condition in which the Jews, especially such of them as were ungodly and unbelieving, were before this deliverance came. Although the godly Jews were, in some measure, supported by the sense of God's favour, and by God's promises delivered to them by Isaiah; yet the generality of the people were filled with horrors, and expectation of utter destruction. *Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* how shall we be able to abide the presence, and endure or avoid the wrath, of that God, who is a consuming fire; who is now about to destroy us utterly by the Assyrians, and will afterwards burn us with unquenchable fire? For seeing it is sufficiently evident, from both Old and New Testament, as hath been formerly observed and proved, that the Jews, except the Sadducees, did generally believe the rewards and punishments of the future life; and these temporal judgments, as they did frequently cut men off from this life, so they transmitted them into that future and endless life; it is not strange if their guilty consciences made them dread both the present judgment here, and the terrible consequences of it hereafter. Heb. *who shall dwell for us*, &c., i. e. in our stead? who will interpose himself between God's anger and us? How shall we escape these miseries? That this is the sense of this question may be gathered from the answer given to it in the following verse; in which he directs them to the right course of removing God's wrath, and regaining his favour.

15 He that [n]walketh †righteously, and speaketh †uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of ‖oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of †blood, and [o]shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;

n Ps. 15. 2. & 24. 4. † Heb. *in righteousnesses.* † Heb. *uprightnesses.* ‖ Or, *deceits.* † Heb. *bloods.* o Ps. 119. 37.

He that walketh righteously; who is just in all his dealings with men, of which the following clauses explain it: which is not spoken exclusively, as if piety towards God were not as necessary as righteousness towards men; but comprehensively, this being one evidence and a constant

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companion of piety. *Speaketh uprightly;* who speaks truly and sincerely, what he really intends. *That despiseth;* that refuseth it, not for politic reasons, as men sometimes may do, but from a contempt and abhorrency of injustice. *From holding;* or, *from taking* or *receiving;* as this verb signifies, Prov. iv. 4; v. 5; xxviii. 17. That will not receive, much less retain, bribes. *That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood;* who will not hearken or assent to any counsels or courses tending to shed innocent blood. *And shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;* that abhorreth the very sight of sin committed by others, and guardeth his eyes from beholding occasions of sin; of which see on Job xxxi. 1.

† Heb. *heights*, or, *high places.*

16 He shall dwell on †high: his place of defence *shall be* the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters *shall be* sure.

He shall dwell on high; out of the reach of danger. *Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure;* God will furnish him with all necessaries.

† Heb. *the land of far distances.*

17 Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold †the land that is very far off.

Shall see the king; first Hezekiah, and then Christ, as before. *In his beauty;* triumphing over all enemies, and ruling his own people with righteousness; in which two things the beauty and glory of a king and kingdom doth chiefly consist. *They shall behold the land that is very far off;* thou shalt not be shut up in Jerusalem, and confined to thine own narrow borders, as thou hast been; but thou shalt have free liberty to go abroad with honour and safety, where thou pleasest, even into the remotest countries, because of the great renown of thy king, and the enlargement of his dominions.

p 1 Cor. 1. 20. † Heb. *weigher.*

18 Thine heart shall meditate terror. [p]Where *is* the scribe? where *is* the †receiver? where *is* he that counted the towers?

Thine heart shall meditate terror: this is either, 1. A premonition concerning a future judgment, as if he said, Before these glorious promises shall be accomplished, thou shalt be brought into great straits and troubles. Or rather, 2. A thankful acknowledgment of deliverance from a former danger; as if he had said, When thou art delivered, thou shalt, with pleasure and thankfulness, recall to mind thy former terrors and miseries. *Where is the scribe, &c.?* these words are either, 1. Words of gratulation, and insultation over the enemy. Thou shalt then say, Where are the great officers of the Assyrian host? They are no where, they are not, they are dead or slain. Or rather, 2. The words of men dismayed and confounded, such as proceeded from the Jews in the time of their distress, and are here remembered to aggravate the present mercy. For the officers here mentioned seem not to be those of the Assyrian army, who were actually fighting against the Jews and Jerusalem, (for then he would rather have mentioned *the captains of the host*, as the Scripture commonly doth in these cases, than *the scribes and receivers*, &c.,) but rather of the Jews in Jerusalem, who, upon the approach of Sennacherib, began to make military preparations for the defence of the city, and to choose such officers as were necessary and usual for that end; such as these were, to wit, *the scribe*, whom we call *muster-master*, who was to make and keep a list of the soldiers, and to call them together, as occasion required. *The receiver;* who received and laid out the money for the charges of the war; and he *that counted the towers*, who surveyed all the parts of the city, and considered what towers or fortifications were to be made or repaired for the security of the city. And unto these several officers the people resorted, with great distraction and confusion, to acquaint them with all occurrences, or to quicken them to their several works, or to transact matters with them, as occasion required.

q 2 Kings 19. 32. r Deut. 28. 49. Jer. 5. 15. ‖ Or, *ridiculous.*

19 [q]Thou shalt not see a fierce people, [r]a people of deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a ‖stammering tongue, *that thou canst* not understand.

Thou shalt not see a fierce people: as Moses said of the Egyptians, Exod. xiv. 13, so I say of the Assyrians, that fierce and warlike people, whom thou hast seen, with great terror, near the walls of Jerusalem, Thou shalt see them again no more. *A people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive;* a foreign nation, whose language is abstruse and unknown to thee. *Of a stammering tongue;* of which see on Isa. xxviii. 11.

s Ps. 48. 12. t Ps. 46. 5. & 125. 1, 2. u ch. 37. 33. x ch. 54. 2.

20 [s]Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see [t]Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle *that* shall not be taken down; [u]not one of [x]the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

Look upon Zion; contemplate Zion's beauty and safety, and her glorious and peculiar privileges; it is an object worthy of thy deepest meditation. *The city of our solemnities:* this he mentions, as the chief part of Zion's glory and happiness, that God was solemnly worshipped, and the solemn assemblies and feasts kept in her. *A quiet habitation, &c.;* which was but very obscurely and imperfectly fulfilled in the literal Zion; but was clearly and fully accomplished in the mystical Zion, the church of God in the times of the gospel, against which, we are assured, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail*, Matt. xvi. 18.

† Heb. *broad of spaces*, or, *hands.*

21 But there the glorious LORD *will be* unto us a place †of broad rivers *and* streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

There, in and about Zion, *the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams:* though we have nothing but a small and contemptible brook to defend us; yet God will be as sure and strong a defence to us, as if we were surrounded with such great rivers as Nilus or Euphrates, which were a great security to Egypt and Babylon. *Wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby;* but although they shall have from God the security of a great river, yet they shall be freed from the disadvantage of it; which is, that the enemies may come against them in ships; for no galleys nor ships of the enemy's shall be able to come into this river to annoy them.

y Jam. 4. 12. † Heb. *statutemaker.* z Ps. 89. 18.

22 For the LORD *is* our judge, the LORD *is* our [y]†lawgiver, [z]the LORD *is* our king; he will save us.

The Lord is our Judge; to judge for us, to plead our cause against our enemies, as the ancient judges of Israel did, Judg. ii. 16. *Our Lawgiver;* our chief Governor, to whom it belongs to give laws, and to defend his people.

‖ Or, *They have forsaken thy tacklings.*

23 ‖Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey.

Thy tacklings are loosed; he directeth his speech to the Assyrians; and having tacitly designed their army under the notion of a *gallant ship*, ver. 21, he here represents their broken and undone condition by the metaphor of a ship tossed in a tempestuous sea, having her cables broken, and all her tacklings loose, and out of order, so as she could have no benefit of her masts and sails; and therefore is quickly broken or swallowed up by the sea. *They;* the Assyrians, of whom he still speaks, as in the first clause he spake to them. *Then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey;* they who came to spoil and prey upon my people shall become a prey to them, and shall be forced to flee away so suddenly, that they shall leave so many spoils behind them, that when strong and active men have carried away all that they desired, there shall be enough left for the lame, who come last to the spoil. The general sense of the place is, that God's people shall be victorious over all their enemies.

a Jer. 50. 20.

24 And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: [a]the people that dwell therein *shall be* forgiven *their* iniquity.

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The inhabitant, to wit, of Jerusalem, God's people, *shall not say, I am sick*; shall have no cause to complain of any sickness or calamity; shall be fully delivered from all their enemies and evil occurrents; shall enjoy perfect tranquillity and prosperity. *The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity*: this may be added, either, 1. As the reason of the foregoing privilege. Their sins, the main causes of all their distresses, shall be pardoned; and therefore their sufferings, the effects of sin, shall cease. Or, 2. As an additional favour. They shall not only receive from me a glorious temporal deliverance; but, which is infinitely better, the pardon of all their sins, and all those spiritual and everlasting blessings which attend upon that mercy.

CHAP. XXXIV.

God's fury and wrath against his church's enemies, 1—10. *Their land utterly desolate*, 11—15. *The certainty hereof, and duration*, 16, 17.

a Ps. 49. 1. b Deu. 32. 1. † Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

[a] COME near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: [b] let the earth hear, and † all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people; let the people of all nations take notice of what I am about to say and do, as that wherein they are generally concerned, and by the consideration whereof they may, if they will, be instructed, and so delivered from the calamity here denounced. *All things that come forth of it*, Heb. *all the offsprings of it*; either, 1. All the trees and fruits, and other productions of it; for it is usual with the prophets, by a figure, to turn their speech to these senseless creatures. Or, 2. All the inhabitants of the world, as the Chaldee and other ancients restrain and understand this general expression; which also is emphatical, and admonisheth the proud and insolent sons of men of their mean and obscure original, that how great and glorious soever they may seem to themselves or others, yet in truth they are but a better sort of mushrooms springing out of the earth; for *dust they are, and unto dust they must return*, as was said, Gen. iii. 19.

2 For the indignation of the LORD *is* upon all nations, and *his* fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

Upon all nations; not only upon the Assyrians, and those nations which were confederate with them in this expedition, but upon all other enemies of my people whatsoever. *He hath utterly destroyed them*; he will infallibly destroy all of them.

c Joel 2. 20.

3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and [c] their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

Shall be cast out into the fields, where they shall lie unburied, and be left for a prey to all ravenous birds and beasts; whereby he implies, either the vast numbers which shall be slain, so as they could not have time or place to bury them; or the curse of God upon them, and the people's contempt and abhorrency of them. *The mountains* about Jerusalem, where they are supposed to be gathered to fight against Jerusalem, as the Assyrians now were, and as other enemies afterward would be, Zech. xii. 2; xiv. 2. *Shall be melted with their blood*; shall be filled with their blood, which shall run down abundantly from the mountains with great force, and dissolve and carry down part of the earth of the mountains with it, as great showers of rain frequently do.

d Ps. 102. 26. Esa. 51. 6. & 54. 10. Joel 2. 31. & 3. 15. Matt. 24. 29. 2 Pet. 3. 10. e Rev. 6. 14. f ch. 14. 12. g Rev. 6. 13.

4 And [d] all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be [e] rolled together as a scroll: [f] and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a [g] falling *fig* from the fig tree.

All the host of heaven; the sun, and moon, and stars, which frequently come under this name in Scripture, as Deut. iv. 19; xvii. 3, and elsewhere. *Shall be dissolved*; shall seem to be dissolved. So great shall be the confusion and consternation of mankind, as if all the frame of the creation were broken into pieces. Some understand this of the general judgment; which some passages here following will not permit. But it is a very usual thing for prophetical writers, both in the Old and New Testament, to represent great and general calamities in such words and phrases as properly agree to the day of judgment; as, on the contrary, the glorious deliverances of God's people are set forth in such expressions as properly agree to the resurrection from the dead. See Ezek. xxxvii. 7; Joel ii. 31; iii. 15; Rev. vi. 12, 13. *The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll*, Heb. *as a book*; for books were then written in scrolls, which they usually rolled up together; and when they were so, no man could read any word in it; and no more shall any man be able to see those goodly lights of heaven, for they shall all be obscured and confounded. This phrase is used also Isa. viii. 1; Rev. vi. 14. *As the leaf that falleth off from the vine*, when it is withered. *As a falling fig*; which falleth, either through great maturity, or being thrust out by green figs coming forth, or by any other accident.

h Jer. 46. 10. i Jer. 49. 7, &c. Mal. 1. 4.

5 For [h] my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it [i] shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

Shall be bathed in the blood of these people; Heb. *is* or *shall be made drunk*. *In heaven*; either, 1. In my church, which is called *heaven*, Dan. viii. 10; Rev. iv. 1; xii. 1, in and against which these enemies are said to be gathered together. Or, 2. In the highest heaven, where God dwells; in which this is said to be done, because it was there decreed and appointed to be done. *Upon Idumea*; upon the Edomites, who, though they were nearly related to the Israelites, and were circumcised as well as they; yet were their most inveterate and implacable enemies, watching all opportunities, and being ready to join with all those that attempted, to destroy them; whereof we have many intimations and instances in Scripture. But these are not named exclusively, but rather comprehensively, and synecdochically, for all the enemies of God's church, of whom they were a considerable part, and an eminent type. *Upon the people of my curse*; to whom my curse belongs; or, whom I have cursed, and devoted to utter destruction, as this Hebrew word properly signifies.

k ch. 63. 1. Jer. 49. 13. Zeph. 1. 7.

6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, *and* with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for [k] the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

Is filled with blood; shall drink its fill of blood. The metaphor is here taken from a great glutton or drunkard, who is almost insatiable with meat and drink. *With the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams*: by *lambs*, and *goats*, and *rams*, he means people of all ranks and conditions, high and low, rich and poor. *A sacrifice*; so he calleth this bloody work, because it was done by God's command, and for his honour; and therefore was a service acceptable to him. *Bozrah*; a chief city of Edom, Isa. lxiii. 1; Jer. xlix. 13, and a type of those cities which should be most opposite and mischievous to God's people.

‖ Or, *rhinocerots.* ‖ Or, *drunken.*

7 And the ‖ unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be ‖ soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

The unicorns, Heb. *the reemim*. But what kind of beast this is, whether that beast which is commonly called *an unicorn*, which seems to be but a fiction in the judgment of the learned, or a rhinoceros, or a wild ox or bull, it is needless to trouble the ordinary reader about it; and the learned may consult my Latin Synopsis upon Numb. xxiii. 22 about it. It is confessed that it was a beast of great strength and fierceness; and it is certain that it is meta-

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phorically used in this place, to signify their princes and potentates. *Shall come down;* shall be humbled and cast down. The LXX. and Syriac render it, *they shall fall down*, as such beasts do when they have received a deadly blow. *With them;* with the lambs, and goats, and rams, last mentioned, ver. 6. *With fatness;* with the fat of the slain sacrifices, which shall be mingled with it.

8 For *it is* the day of the LORD's
1 ch. 63. 4. [1] vengeance, *and* the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

This is the time which God hath long since appointed and fixed, to avenge the cause of his oppressed and persecuted people against all their enemies.

m See Deut. 29. 23. 9 [m] And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.

The streams, which seem most secure from this danger, and much more the land. Idumea shall be dealt with as Sodom and Gomorrah were, even utterly destroyed, as it were, by fire, or burning pitch and brimstone thrown down upon it from heaven.

n Rev. 14. 11. & 18. 18. & 19. 3. o Mal. 1. 4. 10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; [n] the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: [o] from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.

It shall be irrecoverably ruined, and shall remain as a spectacle of God's vengeance to all succeeding ages.

p ch. 14. 23. Zeph. 2. 14. Rev. 18. 2. ‖ Or, *pelican.* q 2 Kin. 21. 13. Lam. 2. 8. 11 ¶ [p] But the ‖ cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and [q] he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.

The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it, the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; the inhabitants shall be wholly cut off, and it shall be entirely possessed by those creatures which delight in deserts and waste places. See the same or like expressions in the like case, Isa. xiii. 21, 22; xiv. 23. *He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness;* he shall use the line, or the stone or plummet joined to it, not to build them, but to mark them out to desolation and destruction, as workmen commonly use them to mark what they are to pull down.

12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none *shall be* there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there; they shall endeavour to heal their breaches, but in vain; the remnant of the people shall seek for any fit person, and offer the kingdom to him; but they shall not find any such who shall be willing to undertake the government. *Shall be nothing;* either shall be lost and cut off, or shall have no courage or strength left in them.

r ch. 32. 13. Hos. 9. 6. s ch. 13. 21, &c. ‖ Or, *ostriches.* † Heb. *daughters of the owl.* 13 And [r] thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and [s] it shall be an habitation of dragons, *and* a court for ‖ † owls.

This is another mark and evidence of extreme desolation, as it is also, Hos. ix. 6.

† Heb. *Ziim.* † Heb. *Ijim.* ‖ Or, *night monster.* 14 † The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with † the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the ‖ screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.

The satyr shall cry to his fellow: see on Isa. xiii. 21, 22. *The screech owl also shall rest there*, because there shall be no men left to disturb or affright them, Isa. xvii. 2.

15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

The great owl; whether this or what other creature is meant by this Hebrew word, the learned reader may find largely discoursed in my Latin Synopsis upon this place; for others, it may suffice to know, what all agree in, that, whether it be a bird or a serpent, it is a creature that lives in desert places. *Make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow*, as fearing no disturbance from any men.

t Mal. 3. 16. 16 ¶ Seek ye out of [t] the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.

Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; when this judgment is executed, if you peruse this book of holy writ, and particularly this prophecy of mine, you will find that all things shall exactly come to pass as I have told you. *No one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate:* as I have said, that the vultures should each have their mate, so shall it be; and this prophecy shall be exactly fulfilled, even in its smallest circumstances. *His Spirit;* my Spirit; such sudden changes of persons being frequent here. And God's *Spirit* may be put for his might and power, as it is in many places of Scripture. *Hath gathered them;* hath brought all these creatures together, as he formerly brought the creatures to Adam and to Noah, by an instinct which he put into them.

17 And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

He hath divided the land to them, as it were, by lot and line, as Canaan was divided among the Israelites.

CHAP. XXXV.

The joyful flourishing of Christ's kingdom, 1, 2. *The weak he strengthens and comforts*, 3, 4. *His miracles*, 5, 6. *The prosperity and peace of his people*, 7—10.

THE [a] wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. a ch. 32. 15. cir. 712.

And as the land of God's enemies, which was exceeding fruitful, shall be turned into a desolate wilderness, as was declared in the foregoing chapter; so, on the contrary, Emmanuel's land, or the seat of God's church and people, which formerly was deserted and despised like a wilderness, and which the rage and malice of their enemies had brought to desolation, shall flourish exceedingly. *For them;* for the wilderness and solitary place; or, *for these things*, which were prophesied in the foregoing destruction, concerning the ruin of the implacable enemies of God and his church. But that Hebrew letter which is in the end of this Hebrew verb, and is here rendered *for them*, is by all the ancient translators, and by divers others, neglected in their translations, as if it were only added to the verb paragogically, as grammarians speak; and therefore those two words may well be omitted.

2 [b] It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, *and* the excellency of our God. b ch. 32. 15.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; the wilderness shall be as pleasant and fruitful as Lebanon, and Carmel, and Sharon; which were eminent parts of the land of Canaan, as hath been oft noted. *They*, who are understood by *the wilderness, shall see the glory of the Lord;* the glorious discoveries and effects of God's power and goodness to his people.

3 ¶ [c] Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. c Job 4. 3, 4. Heb. 12. 12.

Ye prophets and ministers of God, comfort and encourage God's people, who are now ready to faint, with hopes and

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assurance of that salvation which, in due time, I will work for them. He mentions *hands* and *knees*, because the strength and weakness of any man eminently appears in those parts.

† Heb. *hasty.*

4 Say to them *that are* of a †fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompence; he will come and save you.

Your God will come; though he seem to be absent, and departed from you, he will come to you, and abide with you. He will shortly come in the flesh. For although this and the following promises may be metaphorically taken, concerning the temporal deliverance of his people from Babylonian and other oppressors; yet they are much more emphatically and literally understood concerning the redemption of God's people by Jesus Christ, as is sufficiently manifest, both from the words and phrases themselves, and from divers places of the New Testament, where they are so expounded by Christ and the apostles. *With vengeance;* to execute vengeance upon the enemies of God, and of his people; which also was verified in Christ, who was *set for the fall as well as for the rising of many in Israel*, Luke ii. 34, and who did accordingly inflict most dreadful judgments, both temporal and spiritual, upon the unbelieving and apostate Jews, who were the great persecutors of Christ and of his people.

d ch. 29. 18. & 32. 3, 4. & 42. 7. Matt. 9. 27, &c. & 11. 5. & 12. 22. & 20. 30, &c. & 21. 14. John 9. 6, 7. e Matt. 11. 5. Mark 7. 32, &c.

5 Then the [d]eyes of the blind shall be opened, and [e]the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

The most ignorant and stupid creatures shall be forced to acknowledge the wonderful works of God. Or rather thus, The poor Gentiles, who before were blind and deaf, shall now have the eyes and ears of their minds opened to see God's works, and to hear and receive his word. And in token hereof, many persons who are corporally blind and deaf shall have sight miraculously conferred upon them; all which being so fully and literally accomplished in Christ, and applied by Christ to himself, it is a plain proof that this prophecy belongs to the times of the gospel.

f Matt. 11. 5. & 15. 30. & 21. 14. John 5. 8, 9. Acts 3. 2, &c. & 8. 7. & 14. 8, &c. g ch. 32. 4. Matt. 9. 32, 33. & 12. 22. & 15. 30. h ch. 41. 18. & 43. 19. John 7. 38, 39.

6 Then shall the [f]lame *man* leap as an hart, and the [g]tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall [h]waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Then shall the lame man leap for joy, or go nimbly and readily. And this clause also, and that which follows, are to be understood both spiritually and literally, as in the former verse. *In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert;* the most dry and barren places shall be made moist and fruitful; which is principally meant of the plentiful effusion of God's grace upon such persons and nations as had been wholly destitute of it.

7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in [i]the habitation of dragons, where each lay, *shall be* ‖ grass with reeds and rushes.

i ch. 34. 13. ‖ Or, *a court for reeds, &c.*

Those dry and parched deserts, in which dragons have their abode, shall yield abundance of grass, and reeds, and rushes, which grow only in moist grounds, Job viii. 11.

8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; [k]the unclean shall not pass over it; ‖ but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*.

k ch. 52. 1. Joel 3. 17. Rev. 21. 27. ‖ Or, *for he* shall be *with them.*

An highway shall be there, and a way: the highway and *the way* are not to be taken for two different ways, but for one and the same way, even a causey or cast-way, which is both raised ground, as the first Hebrew word signifies, and a way; both signifying a convenient, prepared, plain, and common road or path for travellers, such as the doctrine of the gospel is, which is frequently compared to a *way*, both in the Old and New Testament, as hath been often observed. *It shall be called the way of holiness;* it shall be a holy way, trodden by holy men, and filled with holy practices. *The people* (walking in it) *shall be all* (i. e. a very great number of them, not so few as in the times of the law) *righteous*, as is declared and prophesied afterward, Isa. lx. 21. *The unclean shall not pass over it*, either to disturb or defile it. Unclean persons shall, in a good measure, be kept or cast out of my church, by the strict exercise of good discipline, here, and hereafter not one unclean person shall enter into my kingdom. *It shall be for those;* but this way shall be appropriated unto those persons above mentioned, the weak, and blind, and lame, whom God will heal and save, ver. 3—6. The pronoun relative is put without an antecedent, as it is in many other places. But this, and the following clause, is, and may well be, rendered otherwise, *and he* (to wit, God, who is oft designed by this pronoun, and is easily understood out of the context) shall be *to* or *with them walking* in the *way*, (their companion and guide in their way, which is a great felicity,) *that fools may not err therein. The way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein;* the way shall be so plain and straight, that even the most foolish travellers (who are described by this character, that *they know not the way to the city*, Eccles. x. 15) cannot easily mistake it.

9 [l]No lion shall be there, nor *any* ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk *there:*

l Lev. 26. 6. ch. 11. 9. Ezek. 34. 25.

It shall not only be a plain, but a safe way, free from all annoyance or danger from mischievous creatures. This is the same promise, for substance, with that Isa. xi. 9, *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.*

10 And the [m]ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and [n]sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

m ch. 51. 11. n ch. 25. 8. & 65. 19. Rev. 7. 17 & 21. 4.

The ransomed of the Lord; they whom God shall rescue and redeem from their corporal slavery in Babylon, and especially from their spiritual bondage under sin and Satan. *Shall return, and come to Zion;* shall come again to Zion, from whence they had been carried away captive. Or, *shall return*, to wit, to the Lord now mentioned, *and come to Zion*, i. e. join themselves to God's church and people. *Sorrow and sighing shall flee away;* which expressions are too magnificent and emphatical to be satisfied by the return of the Jews from Babylon to their own land, which was accompanied and followed with many sighs and sorrows, as appears, both from sacred and other historians; and therefore must necessarily be understood of gospel times, and of the joy and happiness purchased by Christ for his people, begun here, and continued to all eternity.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Sennacherib invadeth Judah, 1. He sendeth Rabshakeh, who by his blasphemous persuasions tempteth Hezekiah to despair, and the people to revolt, 2—22.

NOW [a]it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, *that* Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them. 713. a 2 Kings 18. 13, 17. 2 Chr. 32. 1.

2 And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field. 710.

3 Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the ‖ scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder. ‖ Or, *secretary.*

4 ¶ [b]And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the b 2 Kings 18. 19, &c.

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great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest?

5 I say, *sayest thou*, (but *they are but* †vain words) ‖ *I have* counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

† Heb. *a word of lips.* ‖ Or, *but counsel and strength are for the war.*

6 Lo, thou trustest in the [c]staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.

c Ezek. 29. 6, 7.

7 But if thou say to me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is it* not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?

8 Now therefore give ‖pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

‖ Or, *hostages.*

9 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

10 And am I now come up without the LORD against this land to destroy it? the LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

11 ¶ Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand *it:* and speak not to us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

12 ¶ But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men that sit upon the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

13 Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.

14 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you.

15 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us: this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

16 Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, ‖ †Make *an agreement* with me *by* a present, and come out to me: [d]and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern;

‖ Or, *Seek my favour by a present.* † Heb. *Make with me a blessing.* d Zech. 3. 10.

17 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

18 *Beware* lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

19 Where *are* the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?

20 Who *are they* among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?

21 But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

22 ¶ Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, that *was* over the houshold, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

The history related here, and in the three following chapters, is, for the substance of it, and almost wholly in the same words, contained 2 Kings xviii., xix., xx. It is fitly inserted here, to explain and confirm some of the foregoing predictions. It may seem to have been first written by this prophet, and from him to have been taken into the Book of Kings, to complete that history.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Hezekiah mourneth, and sendeth to Isaiah to pray for them, 1—5. *He comforteth them,* 6, 7. *Sennacherib, called away against the king of the Ethiopians, sendeth a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah,* 8—13. *His prayer,* 14—20. *Isaiah's prophecy,* 21—35. *An angel slayeth the Assyrians,* 36. *Sennacherib is slain at Nineveh by his own sons,* 37, 38.

AND [a]it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

a 2 Kings 19. 1, &c.

2 And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the houshold, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of ‖blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth.

‖ Or, *provocation.*

4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up *thy* prayer for the remnant that is †left.

† Heb. *found.*

5 So the servants of Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 ¶ And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will ‖send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

‖ Or, *put a spirit into him.*

8 ¶ So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

9 And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard *it*, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou

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rustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not
e given into the hand of the king of Assyria.
11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of
ssyria have done to all lands by destroying them
tterly; and shalt thou be delivered?
12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them
hich my fathers have destroyed, *as* Gozan, and
aran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden
hich *were* in Telassar?
13 Where *is* the king of [b] Hamath, and
the king of Arphad, and the king of the
city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?
14 ¶ And Hezekiah received the letter from
e hand of the messengers, and read it: and
ezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD,
d spread it before the LORD.
15 And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD,
ing,
16 O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwell-
between the cherubims, thou *art* the God,
u thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth:
u hast made heaven and earth.
17 [c] Incline thine ear, O LORD, and
hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see:
and hear all the words of Sennacherib,
which hath sent to reproach the living
God.
18 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of As-
syria have laid waste all the †nations,
and their countries,
19 And have †cast their gods into the
fire: for they *were* no gods, but the work
of men's hands, wood and stone: there-
fore they have destroyed them.
20 Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us
m his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth
y know that thou *art* the LORD, *even* thou only.
21 ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto
ezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of
el, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against
nacherib king of Assyria:
22 This *is* the word which the LORD hath
oken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter
Zion, hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to
n; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken
head at thee.
23 Whom hast thou reproached and blas-
med? and against whom hast thou exalted
voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even*
inst the Holy One of Israel.
24 †By thy servants hast thou re-
proached the Lord, and hast said, By
the multitude of my chariots am I come
up to the height of the mountains, to the
sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down
†the tall cedars thereof, *and* the choice
fir trees thereof: and I will enter into
the height of his border, *and* ‖the forest
of his Carmel.
25 I have digged, and drunk water;
and with the sole of my feet have I dried
up all the rivers of the ‖besieged places.
26 ‖Hast thou not heard long ago,
how I have done it; *and* of ancient
times, that I have formed it? now have
I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest
be to lay waste defenced cities *into* ruin-
ous heaps.
27 Therefore their inhabitants *were*
†of small power, they were dismayed and
confounded: they were *as* the grass of
the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the
grass on the housetops, and *as corn* blasted
before it be grown up.
28 But I know thy ‖abode, and thy
going out, and thy coming in, and thy
rage against me.
29 Because thy rage against me, and
thy tumult, is come up into mine ears,
therefore [d] will I put my hook in thy nose,
and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn
thee back by the way by which thou
camest.
30 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall
eat *this* year such as groweth of itself; and the
second year that which springeth of the same:
and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant
vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.
31 And †the remnant that is escaped
of the house of Judah shall again take
root downward, and bear fruit upward:
32 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth
a remnant, and †they that escape out of
mount Zion: the [e] zeal of the LORD of
hosts shall do this.
33 Therefore thus saith the LORD con-
cerning the king of Assyria, He shall not
come into this city, nor shoot an arrow
there, nor come before it with †shields,
nor cast a bank against it.
34 By the way that he came, by the same shall
he return, and shall not come into this city, saith
the LORD.
35 For I will [f] defend this city to save
it for mine own sake, and for my servant
David's sake.
36 Then the [g] angel of the LORD went
forth, and smote in the camp of the As-
syrians a hundred and fourscore and five
thousand: and when they arose early in
the morning, behold, they *were* all dead
corpses.
37 ¶ So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed,
and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.
38 And it came to pass, as he was wor-
shipping in the house of Nisroch his god,
that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons
smote him with the sword; and they
escaped into the land of †Armenia: and
Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

For the understanding of this, and the foregoing chapter, the reader is desired to consult my notes upon 2 Kings xviii., xix., and part of xx.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Hezekiah in his sickness receiveth from Isaiah a message of death, 1. *By prayer,* 2, 3, *hath his life lengthened: the sun goeth backward for a sign thereof,* 4—8. *His song of praise to God,* 9—20.

IN [a] those days was Hezekiah sick unto
death. And Isaiah the prophet the son
of Amoz came unto him, and said unto

now bring it to be laid waste, and defenced cities to be ruinous heaps? as 2 Kin. 19. 25.
† Heb. short of hand.
‖ Or, sitting.
d ch. 30. 28. Ezek. 38. 4.
† Heb. the escaping of the house of Judah that remaineth.
† Heb. the escaping.
e 2 Kings 19. 31. ch. 9. 7.
† Heb. shield.
f 2 Kings 20. 6. ch. 38. 6.
g 2 Kings 19. 35.
a 2 Kings 20. 1, &c. 2 Chron. 32.

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him, Thus saith the LORD, [b]†Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.

b 2 Sam. 17. 23. 1 Mac. 9. 55. † Heb. *Give charge concerning thy house.*

2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD,

3 And said, [c]Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept †sore.

c Neh. 13. 14.

† Heb. *with great weeping.*

4 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying,

5 Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

6 And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and [d]I will defend this city.

d ch. 37. 35.

7 And this *shall be* [e]a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken;

e 2 Kings 20. 8, &c. ch. 7. 11.

8 Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the †sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.

† Heb. *degrees by, or, with the sun.*

9 ¶ The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness:

Hezekiah was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and inspired by him to write this, both as a testimony of his own gratitude to God, and for the instruction of after-ages.

10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.

I said, to and within myself, I concluded it. *In the cutting off of my days*; when my days were cut off by the sentence of God, related here, ver. 1. *I shall go to the gates of the grave;* I perceive that I must die without any hopes of prevention. The grave is called a man's *long home*, Eccles. xii. 5, and *the house appointed for all living men*, Job xxx. 23, and death opens the gates of this house. We read also of *the gates of death*, Psal. ix. 13; cvii. 18. *I am deprived of the residue of my years;* which I might have lived, according to the common course of nature, and of God's dispensations; and which I expected and hoped to live, for the service of God and of my generation.

11 I said, I shall not see the LORD, *even* the LORD, [f]in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

f Ps. 27. 13. & 116. 9.

I shall not see the Lord; I shall not enjoy him; for *seeing* is put for *enjoying*, as hath been frequently noted. *In the land of the living;* in this world, which is so called, Psal. xxvii. 13; cxvi. 9; Isa. liii. 8; in his sanctuary: which limitation is prudently added, to intimate that he expected to see God in another place and manner, even in heaven, face to face. *I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world;* I shall have no more society with men upon earth.

12 [g]Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off ‖ with pining sickness: from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me.

g Job 7. 6.

‖ Or, *from the thrum.*

Mine age is departed; the time of my life is expired. *As a shepherd's tent*, which is easily and speedily removed. *I have cut off*, to wit, by my sins, provoking God to do it. Or, I do declare, and have concluded, that my life is or will be suddenly cut off; for men are oft said in Scripture to do those things which they only declare and pronounce to be done; as men are said to *pollute*, and *to remit* and *retain sins*, and the like, when they only declare men and things to be polluted, and sins to be remitted or retained by God. *Like a weaver*, who cutteth off the web from the loom, either when it is finished, or before, according to his pleasure. *He;* the Lord, who pronounced this sentence against him. *With pining sickness;* with a consuming disease, wasting my spirits and life. Some render this word, *from the thrum;* from those threads at the end of the web, which are fastened to the beam. So the similitude of a weaver is continued. *From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me:* the sense is either, 1. This sickness will kill me in the space of one day. Or rather, 2. Thou dost pursue me night and day with continual pains, and wilt not desist till thou hast made a full end of me; so that I expect that every day will be my last day.

13 I reckoned till morning, *that*, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me.

When I was filled with pain, and could not rest all the night long, even till morning, my thoughts were working and presaging that God would instantly break me to pieces, and that every moment would be my last; and the like restless and dismal thoughts followed me from morning till evening. But he mentions only the time before morning, to aggravate his misery, that he was so grievously tormented, when others had sweet rest and repose.

14 Like a crane *or* a swallow, so did I chatter: [h]I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail *with looking* upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; ‖ undertake for me.

h ch. 59. 11.

‖ Or, *ease me.*

Like a crane or a swallow; or, *a crane* and *a swallow;* the conjunction *and* being here, as it is Hab. iii. 11, and elsewhere, understood, as is manifest from Jer. viii. 7, where it is expressed with these very words. *So did I chatter;* my complaint and cry was like to the noise of a swallow, quick and frequent; and like that of a crane, loud and frightful. And this very comparison is used of mourners, not only in Scripture, but in other authors; concerning which the learned reader may consult my Latin Synopsis. *I did mourn as a dove;* whose mournful tone is observed Isa. lix. 11; Ezek. vii. 16, and elsewhere. *Mine eyes fail with looking upward;* whilst I lift up mine eyes and heart to God for relief, but in vain. *I am oppressed* by my disease, which like a serjeant hath seized upon me, and is haling me to the prison of the grave. *Undertake for me;* stop the execution, and rescue me out of his hands.

15 What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done *it:* I shall go softly all my years [i]in the bitterness of my soul.

i Job 7. 11. & 10. 1.

What shall I say? I want words sufficient to express my deep sense of God's dealings with me. *He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it;* he did foretell it by his word, and effect it by his hand. This clause and verse is either, 1. A continuance of his complaint hitherto described: God hath passed this sentence upon me, and hath also put it in execution, and to him I must submit myself. Or, 2. A transition or entrance into the thanksgiving, which is undoubtedly contained in the following verses. So the sense is, God hath sent a gracious message to me by his prophet, concerning the prolongation of my life; and he, I doubt not, will make good his word therein. And this sense seems the more probable, 1. Because here is mention of his *years* to come, whereas in his sickness he expected not to live to the end of a day. 2. Because the Chaldee paraphrast, and the LXX., and Syriac, and Arabic interpreters expound it so in their versions. 3. Because this suits best with the context and coherence of this verse, both with the former and with the following verse. For as he endeth the foregoing verse with a prayer to God for longer life, so in this verse he relates God's gracious answer to his prayer. And if this verse be thus understood, the next verse hath a very convenient connexion with this; whereas it seems to be

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very abrupt and incoherent, if the thanksgiving begin there. *I shall go softly;* I shall walk in the course of my life, either, 1. Humbly, with all humble thankfulness to God for conferring so great a favour upon so unworthy a person; or, 2. Easily and peaceably, with leisure, not like one affrighted, or running away from his enemy; or, 3. By slow and gentle paces, as men commonly spin out their days by degrees unto a just length, which is not unfitly opposed to his former state and time of sickness, wherein his *days* were *swifter than a weaver's shuttle*, and *than a post*, as Job complained upon the same occasion, Job vii. 6; ix. 25, and were cut off like a weaver's web, as he complained, ver. 12. *In the bitterness of my soul;* arising from the remembrance of that desperate condition from which God had delivered me; for great dangers, though past, are oftimes very terrible to those that reflect upon them. But the words may be rendered, *upon* or *after* (as this particle is rendered, Isa. xviii. 4) *the bitterness of my soul;* after the deliverance from this bitter and dangerous disease; which may be compared with ver. 17, where he saith, *for* or *after peace I had great bitterness*, as here he presageth and assureth himself of the contrary, that he should have peace after his great bitterness. The Chaldee paraphrast renders the words, *because of my deliverance from bitterness of soul; bitterness* being put for *deliverance from bitterness*, as *five* is put for *lack of five*, as we render it, Gen. xviii. 28, and *fat* for *want of fat*, Psal. cix. 24, and *fruits* for *want of fruits*, Lam. iv. 9. And other such-like defects there are in the Hebrew, which is a very concise language.

16 O Lord, by these *things men* live, and in all these *things is* the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

By these things; by virtue of thy gracious word or promise, and powerful work; by thy promises, and thy performances of them, mentioned in the foregoing verse. This place may be explained by comparing it with Deut. viii. 3, *Man doth not live by bread, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.* The sense is, Not I only, but all men, do receive, and recover, and hold their lives by thy favour, and the word of thy power; and therefore it is not strange that one word of God hath brought me back from the very jaws of death. *In all these things is the life of my spirit;* and as it is with other men, so hath it been with me in a special manner; for *in these above all* other things *is the life of my spirit* or *soul*, i. e. either the comfort (which is sometimes called *life*) of my spirit; or rather, that life which is in my body, from my spirit or soul united to it. *So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live;* or, *and* or *for thou hast recovered me*, &c., to wit, by these things.

17 Behold, ‖ for peace I had great bitterness: but † thou hast in love to my soul *delivered it* from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

‖ Or, *on my peace came great bitterness.* † Heb. *thou hast loved my soul from the pit.*

For peace I had great bitterness; my health and prosperity was quickly changed into bitter sickness and affliction. Or, as others render it, *my great bitterness* was *unto peace;* was turned into prosperity, or became the occasion of my safety and further advantages; for that drove me to my prayers, and prayers prevailed with God for a gracious answer, and the prolonging of my life. *In love to my soul;* in kindness to me, the soul being oft put for the man. This is an emphatical circumstance; for sometimes God prolongs men's days in anger, and in order to their greater misery. *Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back;* thou hast forgiven those sins which brought this evil upon me, and upon that account hast removed the punishment of them; which showeth that thou didst this in love to me. The phrase is borrowed from the custom of men, who when they would accurately see and observe any thing, set it before their faces; and when they desire and resolve not to look upon any thing, turn their backs upon it, or cast it behind them.

18 For [k] the grave cannot praise thee, death can *not* celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

k Ps. 6. 5. & 30. 9. & 88. 11. & 115. 17. Eccles. 9. 10.

In this and the following verse, he declares God's design in delivering him, that he might praise him in his church, which if he had died he could not have done. *The grave cannot praise thee;* the dead are not capable of glorifying thy name among men upon earth; which I desire and determine to do. See the like expressions, Psal. vi. 5; xxx. 9; lxxxviii. 10, &c. *The grave* is put for the persons lodged in it by a metonymy. *Cannot hope for thy truth;* they cannot expect nor receive the accomplishment of thy promised goodness in the land of the living.

19 The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I *do* this day: [l] the father to the children shall make known thy truth.

l Deut. 4. 9. & 6. 7. Ps. 78. 3, 4.

He shall praise thee; they are especially obliged to it, and they only have this privilege. *The father to the children shall make known thy truth;* they shall not only praise thee whilst they live, but take care to propagate and perpetuate thy praise and glory to all succeeding generations.

20 The LORD *was ready* to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD.

Was ready to save me; was a present help to me, ready to hear and succour me upon my prayer in my great extremity. *We;* both I and my people, who are concerned in me, and for me will sing forth those songs of praise which are due especially from me, for God's great mercy to me. *Will sing my songs to the stringed instruments*, according to the custom of those times.

21 For [m] Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay *it* for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover.

m 2 Kings 20. 7.

This was rather a sign appointed by God, than a natural means of the cure; for if it had a natural faculty to ripen a sore, yet it could never cure such a dangerous and pestilential disease, at least in so little time.

22 [n] Hezekiah also had said, What *is* the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?

n 2 Kings 20. 8.

Hezekiah also had said; or, *For Hezekiah had said;* had asked a sign, which is here added as the reason why Isaiah said what is related in the foregoing *verse*, to wit, in answer to Hezekiah's question. *That I shall go up*, within three days, as is more fully related, 2 Kings xx. 5, 8, *to the house of the Lord;* for thither he designed in the first place to go, partly that he might pay his vow and thanksgiving to God, and partly that he might engage the people to praise God with him, and for him.

CHAP. XXXIX.

The king of Babel sendeth ambassadors with letters and a present to Hezekiah; who showeth them all his treasures, 1, 2. *Isaiah foretelleth him of the Babylonish captivity,* 3—7. *His resignation,* 8.

AT [a] that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. cir. 712.

a 2 Kings 20. 12, &c.

2 [b] And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his ‖ precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his ‖ † armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

b 2 Chron. 32. 31. ‖ Or, *spicery.* ‖ Or, *jewels.* † Heb. *vessels*, or, *instruments.*

3 ¶ Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, *even* from Babylon. 712.

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4 Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that *is* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

5 Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts:

e Jer. 20. 5. 6 Behold, the days come, [e]that all that *is* in thine house, and *that* which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

‖ Fulfilled, Dan. 1. 2, 3, 7. 7 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and ‖they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

d 1 Sam. 3. 18. 8 Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, [d]Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.

The history contained in this chapter is related in the same words, 2 Kings xx. 12, &c., only he who here is called *Merodach* is there called *Berodach*, merely by the change of one letter, which is very usual in the Hebrew language, especially in proper names, as *Dimon* is put for *Dibon*, Isa. xv. 9, and the same man is called *Nebuchadnezzar* and *Nebuchadrezzar*. This king is called *Merodach* from the idol so called, Jer. l. 2, and *Baladan* from his father's name. But whether this man was an Assyrian, or a Mede, or a Babylonian, it is not easy to determine, nor worth while to inquire. But this is certain, that about this time there were wars between the Assyrians and the Babylonians, the issue whereof was, that the latter subdued the former.

CHAP. XL.

The prophet having now foretold the Babylonish captivity, chap. xxxix. 6, 7, doth here arm his people against it by the consideration of their certain deliverance out of it, and their blessed condition after it, as in other things, so especially in the coming of the Messiah, and the great and glorious privileges conferred upon God's church and people in his days.

The preaching of the gospel by John Baptist and the apostles, 1—11. *The power and wisdom of God in governing the world*, 12—17. *The folly of idolatry*, 18—26. *God knoweth the state of his people, and both can and will protect them*, 27—31.

cir. 712. COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

Ye prophets and ministers of the Lord, which now are, or hereafter shall be, deliver this comfortable message from me to my people, that they may not sink under their burdens.

+ Heb. *to the heart.* ‖ Or, *appointed time.* a See Job 42. 10. ch. 61. 7. 2 Speak ye +comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her ‖warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: [a]for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

Cry unto her; proclaim it in my name. *Her warfare;* the time of her servitude, and captivity, and misery. *Her iniquity is pardoned;* I am reconciled to her; I will not impute sin to her, to punish her any longer for it. *Double for all her sins;* not twice as much as her sins deserved, for she herself confessed the contrary, Ezra ix. 13; Lam. iii. 22; but abundantly enough to answer God's design in this chastisement, which was to humble and reform them, and to warn others by their example. *Double* is oft put for abundantly, as Isa. lxi. 7; Jer. xvi. 18; xvii. 18. God here speaks of himself after the manner of men, and compareth himself to a tender-hearted father, who when he hath corrected his child for his misdemeanour, relenteth and repenteth of his severity, and casteth his rod away.

b Matt. 3. 3. Mark 1. 3. Luke 3. 4. John 1. 23. c Mal. 3. 1. 3 ¶ [b]The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, [c]Prepare ye the way of the LORD, [d]make straight in the desert a highway for our God. d Ps. 68. 4. ch. 49. 11.

The voice; an abrupt and imperfect speech, such as there are many in the Hebrew language. Methinks I hear a voice; or, a voice shall be heard. *Of him that crieth in the wilderness;* which words declare the place either, 1. Where the cry was made; or, 2. Where the way was to be prepared, as it is expressed in the following clause, which is added to explain this. And such places being commonly pathless, and many ways incommodious to passengers, it was the more necessary to prepare a way there. But both come to one thing, for the cry was to be in that place which was to be prepared. This place seems to be understood immediately of the deliverance of the Jews out of Babylon, and of smoothing their passage from thence to Judea, which lay through a great wilderness; but ultimately and principally concerning their redemption by the Messiah, whose coming is ushered in by the cry of John the Baptist, who did both cry and prepare the way in the wilderness, as we read, Matt. iii. 1, &c.; where this text is directly expounded of him. But withal the terms of *wilderness* and *desert* seem to be here chiefly used in a metaphorical sense, to express the desolate and forlorn condition of the Jewish nation, and especially of the Gentile world, when Christ came to redeem them; for so these words are frequently used in prophetical writings, as hath been noted in divers places. *Prepare ye the way;* you to whom this work belongs. He alludes to the custom of princes, who send pioneers before them to prepare the way through which they intend to pass. The meaning is only this, that God shall by his Spirit so dispose men's hearts, and by his providence so order the empires and affairs of the world, as to make way for the accomplishment of this promise. *Of the Lord; for the Lord,* as it is expounded in the next clause, that the Lord may walk in it; which though it may be understood of their coming out of Babylon, when God might in some sort be said to march in the head of them, conducting and preserving them, yet it was much more evidently and eminently fulfilled when Christ, who was and is God blessed for ever, came into the world in a visible manner. *Straight;* either *direct*, in opposition to crooked, or even and level, in opposition to the mountains and valleys mentioned in the next verse.

e ch. 45. 2. ‖ Or, *a straight place.* ‖ Or, *a plain place.* 4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: [e]and the crooked shall be made ‖straight, and the rough places ‖plain:

This is only a more particular explication of that which was generally expressed ver. 3. The sense is, All obstructions shall be removed, and the way made in all respects convenient and easy for the passenger.

5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see *it* together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed: so it was in some sort, when God brought them out of Babylon, which was a glorious work of God; but far more properly and eminently when Christ, who was the glorious God, was manifested in the flesh, and gave much clearer and fuller discoveries of God's glorious wisdom, and holiness, and goodness, and other Divine perfections, than ever yet had been imparted to mankind and to the church. *All flesh;* all nations, both Jews and Gentiles. *For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it;* though this may seem incredible, yet God is able to accomplish it.

f Job 14. 2. Ps. 90. 5. & 102. 11. & 103. 15. Jam. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 24. 6 The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? [f]All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodliness thereof *is* as the flower of the field:

The voice said: God speaks unto his prophets or ministers. *He said, What shall I cry:* the prophet desires to know God's mind, and his message. *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field:* the prophet having foretold glorious and wonderful things which God had declared and determined to do, and suspecting that men would hardly believe them, he confirmeth their faith and the certainty of the thing in this and the two next verses, by representing to their minds the vast difference

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between the nature, and word, and work of men and of God. All that men are or have, yea, their highest accomplishments, are but like the grass or flower of the field, weak and vanishing, soon nipped and brought to nothing; but God's word is like himself, immutable and irresistible; and therefore as *the mouth of the Lord*, and not of man, *hath spoken* these things, as was said, ver. 5, so doubt not but they shall be fulfilled.

7 The grass withereth, the flower
g Ps. 103.16. fadeth: because [g]the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass.

The Spirit of the Lord; or, *the breath*, &c., as this word is rendered, Psal. cxlvii. 18; the wind, as it frequently signifies, which hath this effect upon grass and flowers, Psal. ciii. 16; James i. 11. *The people;* the same which he called *flesh*, and said they were *grass*, ver. 6; which, that he might prove, in this verse he first declares the frail nature of grass and flowers, and then he applies this to the people. Or, *this people;* the Jews no less than the Gentiles; for here is an article in the Hebrew text, which is frequently emphatical and restrictive.

8 The grass withereth, the flower
h John 12. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 25. fadeth: but [h]the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Whatsoever God hath said shall infallibly come to pass.

‖ Or, *O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion.* ch. 41. 27. & 52. 7. † Or, *O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem.* 9 ¶ ‖O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; ‖O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift *it* up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

O Zion, that bringest good tidings; O Zion, to whom the glad tidings of the coming of Christ into the world, and of the salvation of mankind by him, were first published by Christ and his apostles, and by whom they were published to all nations. But the words are otherwise rendered in the margin, and by others, *O thou* (whosoever thou art, prophet or apostle) *that bringest good tidings to Zion.* So Zion is not the deliverer, but the receiver, of these good tidings, as she is in the parallel place, Isa. lii. 7. But our translation seems to agree better with the Hebrew text, in which the particle *unto* is not here expressed, as it is in the latter part of the verse; by comparing which part with the former, it seems most probable that Zion or Jerusalem is the speaker or publisher, and *the cities of Judah* the hearers. *Get thee up into the high mountain*, that thy voice may be better heard, as appears from the next branch of the verse: see Judg. ix. 7; 1 Sam. xxvi. 13, 14. *Be not afraid*, lest thou shouldst be found a false prophet; for it shall certainly be fulfilled. *Say unto the cities of Judah;* to all my people in the several places of their abode, whether cities or countries. Only he names *cities*, to intimate that they also, though they should be destroyed, yet should afterwards be rebuilt, and inhabited again. *Behold your God!* take notice of this wonderful work and glorious appearance of your God, who will be visibly present with you, so that men may point at him, and say, *Behold, here he is.*

Or, *against the strong.* i ch. 59. 16. k ch. 62. 11. Rev. 22. 12. ‖ Or, *recompence for his work.* ch. 49. 4. 10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come ‖with strong *hand*, and [i]his arm shall rule for him: behold, [k]his reward *is* with him, and ‖his work before him.

With strong hand; with invincible strength, conquering all his enemies. The word *hand* or *arm* may very well be understood out of the following clause. *His arm shall rule for him;* he shall need no succours, for his own power shall be sufficient to govern his people, and to destroy his adversaries. *His reward is with him;* he comes furnished with recompences, as well of mercy and blessings for his friends and followers, as of justice and vengeance for his enemies. *His work before him;* he carrieth on his work or design effectually, so as none can hinder him; for that is said in Scripture to *be before a man* which is in his power, as Gen. xx. 15; xxiv. 51, &c. Or *work* is here put for *the reward of the work*, as it is Isa. xlix. 4; lxv. 7, and elsewhere. And so the same thing is repeated in other words, as is very usual.

1 ch. 49. 10. Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 24. John 10. 11. Heb. 13. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 25. & 5. 4. Rev. 7. 17. ‖ Or, *that give suck.* 11 He shall [l]feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those ‖that are with young.

He shall perform all the offices of a tender and faithful shepherd towards his people, carrying himself with great wisdom, and condescension, and compassion to every one of them, according to their several capacities and infirmities.

m Prov. 30 4 12 ¶ [m]Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in †a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

† Heb. *a tierce.*

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? i. e. who can measure them? for indicative verbs in the Hebrew language are oft taken potentially. Who can do this and the following things but God? And this discourse of God's infinite power and wisdom is here conveniently added, to give them the greater assurance that God was able, as he had declared himself willing, to do these great and wonderful things which he had promised; and that neither men nor false gods were able to hinder him in it. God is here compared to a mighty giant, supposed to be so big that he can take up and hold all the waters of the sea and rivers of the whole world in one hand, and span the heavens, and then take up and weigh the whole earth with the other hand.

n Job 21. 22. & 36. 22, 23. Wisd. 9. 13. Rom. 11. 34. 1 Cor. 2. 16. † Heb. *man of his counsel.* 13 [n]Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or *being* †his counsellor hath taught him?

Who did God either need or take to advise him in any of his works, either of creation or the government of the world? were they not all the effects of his own sole wisdom? Therefore though all the nations of the world contrive and conspire against him, and against this work of his, as indeed they will do, yet his own counsel shall confound all their devices, and carry on his work in spite of them.

† Heb. *made him understand.* † Heb. *understandings?* 14 With whom took he counsel, and *who* †instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of †understanding?

Taught him in the path of judgment; how to walk and manage all his affairs with good judgment and discretion.

15 Behold, the nations *are* as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

The nations, all the nations of the world, *are as a drop of a bucket*, compared with all the water in the bucket, wherein are innumerable drops: such are they if compared with God. *And are counted* by him, and in comparison of him, *as the small dust of the balance;* which accidentally cleaves to the balance, but makes no alteration in the weight. *The isles;* those numerous and vast countries to which they went from Judea by sea, which are commonly called *isles*, as hath been oft observed.

16 And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.

And although he is pleased to accept of poor and small sacrifices from his people, yet if men were to offer a sacrifice agreeable to his infinite excellency, the whole forest of Lebanon could not afford either a sufficient number of beasts to be sacrificed, or a sufficient quantity of wood to consume the sacrifice.

o Dan. 4. 35. p Ps. 62. 9. 17 All nations before him *are* as [o]nothing; and [p]they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

Before him; either in his eyes, or being set against him, as this Hebrew word properly and most usually signifies. *Counted to him*, either in his judgment, or in comparison

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of him. *Less than nothing;* less than a thing of nought, or of no account or worth; or, as others render it, *for nothing.*

q ver. 25. ch. 46. 5. Acts 17. 29. 18 ¶ To whom then will ye [q]liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

This is a proper inference from the foregoing discourse of God's immense and infinite greatness; from whence he taketh occasion to show both the folly of those that make mean and visible representations of God, as not the Gentiles only, but even some of the Jews did; and the utter inability of men or idols to give any opposition to God in the doing of these great works. And this discourse of the madness of idolaters, prosecuted both here and in the following chapter, was designed by God, as a necessary antidote whereby the Jews might be preserved from the contagion of idolatry, to which God saw they now had strong inclinations, and would have many and great temptations when they were in captivity.

r ch. 41. 6. 7. & 44. 12, &c. Jer. 10. 3, &c. 19 [r]The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.

The workman melteth a graven image; he melteth some base metal into a mould, which giveth it the form of an image, which afterwards is graven or carved to make it more exact and amiable. Thus the image oweth all its excellency to the earth for the matter of it, and to the art of man for the form or fashion of it. *Spreadeth it over with gold,* beaten out into leaves or plates. *Casteth silver chains;* either for ornaments; or rather for use, to fasten it to a wall or pillar, lest it should fall down, and be broken in pieces; which is spoken in way of scorn and derision of such ridiculous deities as needed such supports.

† Heb. *is poor of oblation.* 20 He that †*is* so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree *that* will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cun-

s ch. 41. 7. Jer. 10. 4. ning workman [s]to prepare a graven image, *that* shall not be moved.

That he hath no oblation; that he can hardly procure money sufficient to buy the meanest sacrifice for his God. *He seeketh unto him a cunning workman;* he is so mad upon his idols, that he will one way or other find money to procure the choicest materials, and the help of the best artist, to make his idol. *That shall not be moved;* which after all this cost and art cannot stir one step out of its place to give you any help.

t Ps. 19. 1. Acts 14. 17. Rom. 1. 19, 20. 21 [t]Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

Have ye not known, to wit, God to be the only true God, the Maker and Governor of the world, and all its inhabitants? how can you be ignorant of so evident a truth? He addresseth his speech to the idolatrous Gentiles. *From the beginning,* to wit, of the world, as the next clause explains it. Were not these infinite perfections of God manifestly discovered to all mankind by the creation of the world?

‖ Or, *Him that sitteth, &c.* u Job 9. 8. Ps. 104. 2. ch. 42. 5. & 44. 24. & 51. 13. Jer. 10. 12. 22 ‖ *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that [u]stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

That sitteth, as a judge or governor upon his throne, *upon the circle of the earth;* or, *above the circle,* &c.; far above this round earth, even in the highest heavens; from whence he looketh down upon the earth, where men appear to him like grasshoppers. He alludes to one that looks down upon the earth below him from some high place. As here we have *the circle of the earth,* so elsewhere we read of *the circle of heaven,* Job xxii. 14, and of *the circle of the deep,* or *sea,* Prov. viii. 27, because the form of the heaven, and earth, and sea is circular and round, as is evident both from sense, and from the principles of philosophy. *As grasshoppers;* small and contemptible in his sight. Compare Numb. xiii. 33. *Stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in,* for the benefit of the earth and of mankind, that all parts might partake of its comfortable influences. See on Job ix. 8; Psal. civ. 2.

x Job 12. 21. Ps. 107. 40. 23 That bringeth the [x]princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.

That bringeth the princes to nothing; that can at his pleasure destroy all the great potentates of the world.

24 Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.

They, the princes and judges last mentioned, *shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown:* they shall take no root, as it follows; for *planting* and *sowing* are in order to taking root, and are necessary to it. They shall not continue and flourish, as they have vainly imagined; but shall be rooted up and perish, as is declared in the rest of the verse. *Blow upon them;* blast them, as a vehement east wind doth plants.

y ver. 18. Deut. 4. 15, &c. 25 [y]To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

He repeateth what he said ver. 18, that he might oblige them to the more serious and frequent consideration of the absurdity of the idolatry.

26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: [z]he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth.

z Ps. 147. 4

Lift up your eyes on high; to the high and starry heaven as appears from the following words. *These things* which you see on high, the host of heaven, as it follows. *That bringeth out;* that at first brought them out of nothing, and from day to day brings them forth, making them to rise and set in their appointed and fixed times. *Their host by number,* as a general brings forth his army into the field, and there musters them. *He calleth them all by names,* as a master calleth all the members of his family. *For that he is strong in power;* which work is a certain and evident proof of God's infinite power. *Not one faileth,* either to appear when he calleth them, or to do the work to which he sends them.

27 Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

Why sayest thou in thy heart? why dost thou give way to such jealousies concerning thy God, of whose infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness there are such evident demonstrations given to all mankind, and to thee in a singular manner? *My way;* the course and condition of my life. He takes no notice of my prayers and tears, and sufferings for his name, but suffers my enemies to abuse me at their pleasure, and doth not attempt to rescue me out of their hands. This complaint is uttered in the name of the people, being prophetically supposed to be in captivity. *My judgment;* either, 1. My punishment; or rather, 2. My cause, as this word is most commonly used. God hath neglected to plead my cause, and to give judgment for me against mine enemies, as he hath formerly done. *Is passed over from my God;* God hath dismissed it, and left it and me in the hands of mine enemies, and now our case is so desperate that God cannot help us; for which reason they compared themselves to dry bones lying in the grave, Ezek. xxxvii.

28 ¶ Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? [a]*there is* no searching of his understanding.

a Ps. 147. 5. Rom. 11. 33.

Of the ends of the earth; of all the earth, and the inhabitants thereof, from one end to another. He seems to mention the *ends* or utmost bounds, because they might

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seem to be more out of the reach and care of God's providence, as being most remote from Jerusalem, the only place of God's solemn and public worship in the world, and being then thought to be uninhabited. The argument is clear and strong: God, who made all, even the most desolate and barbarous parts of the earth, and consequently takes care of them, will not neglect his own land and people. *Fainteth not, neither is weary;* he is not by age or hard labour become weak and unable to help his people, as men are apt to be. *There is no searching of his understanding;* his counsels, by which he governeth all the world, and in a most particular manner thine affairs, are far above the reach of thy understanding; and therefore thou dost ignorantly and foolishly in passing so rash a censure upon the ways and works of the infinitely wise God.

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength.

He hath strength enough not only for himself, but for all, even the weakest of his creatures, whom he can easily strengthen to bear all their burdens, and to vanquish all their oppressors.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

The youngest and strongest men, left to themselves, or without God's help, or which do not wait upon God; which is easily understood from the opposition in the following verse.

31 But they that wait upon the LORD [b]shall †renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

[b] Ps. 103. 5. † Heb. change.

That wait upon the Lord; that rely upon him for strength to bear their burdens, and for deliverance from them in due time. *Shall renew their strength;* shall grow stronger and stronger in faith, and patience, and fortitude, whereby they shall be more than conquerors over all their enemies and adversities. *They shall mount up with wings as eagles;* which fly most strongly, and swiftly, and high, out of the reach of all danger. *They shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint;* they shall be enabled to run or walk in their way as they please, without any weariness.

CHAP. XLI.

God called Abraham, and was with him: the nations idolatrous, 1—8. *Israel encouraged by promises of safety and deliverance,* 9—20. *The vanity of idols,* 21—24. *Redemption by Christ,* 25—29.

[a] Zech. 2. 13. [a]KEEP silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew *their* strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.

Keep silence before me; attend diligently to my plea, and then answer it if you can. *O islands;* O you inhabitants of islands, as the next clause explains this. By islands he here means, as he doth chap. xl. 15, and elsewhere, countries remote from Judea, inhabited by the idolatrous Gentiles, with whom he here debateth his cause. *Let the people renew their strength;* strengthen themselves to maintain their cause against me; let them unite all their strength together. *Let them come near* unto me, that we may stand together, and plead our cause before any indifferent judge. *Let them speak;* I will give them free liberty to say what they can on their own behalf.

† Heb. *righteousness.* [b] ch. 45. 11. [c] See Gen. 14. 14, &c. ver. 25. ch. 45. 1.

2 Who raised up †the righteous *man* [b]from the east, called him to his foot, [c]gave the nations before him, and made *him* rule over kings? he gave *them* as the dust to his sword, *and* as driven stubble to his bow.

Who? what man or god? Was it not my alone work? The idols were so far from assisting me, that they did their utmost to oppose me in it. *Raised up* into being and power, stirring up his spirit, and strengthening him to the work. *The righteous man,* Heb. *righteousness,* which is put for a man of righteousness, as *pride* is put for a proud man, Psal. xxxvi. 11, and *deceit* for a deceitful man, Psal. cix. 2; for it is evident from the following words that he spake here of a person. But who this person is, is much disputed by interpreters. Some understand it of Christ. And doubtless the person here spoken of was an eminent type of Christ, and so in a mystical sense it may belong to him. But the things here said to be done by this righteous man, seem to agree much better unto a man of war than unto the Prince of peace. And therefore this place is immediately understood either, 1. Of Abraham, who was a person eminently righteous, and came out of Chaldea, which sometimes seems to be called the *east,* as Isa. ii. 6; Zech. viii. 7, who did the things here mentioned; partly in his own person, conquering five kings, and the nations with them, Gen. xiv., and following God he knew not whither; and partly by his posterity, whose exploits may well be ascribed to him, not only because they came out of his loins, but also and especially because all their successes and victories were given to them for Abraham's sake, and by the virtue of God's promise and covenant made with Abraham, for the giving of Canaan to him and to his seed for ever. And this interpretation may seem to receive some countenance from ver. 5, 6, which agrees well to the practice of the Canaanites and neighbouring nations; who upon Israel's march towards them were filled with great consternation, and used all possible diligence in seeking both to their idols and to men for help against them, as we read in that sacred history. And thus God's argument against idolatry is taken from an illustrious example of God's infinite power, put forth in saving his people, and destroying their enemies before them; and of the impotency of idols to hinder him in that work. Or, 2. Of Cyrus, who might be called *a righteous man;* or, as it is in the Hebrew, a man of *righteousness;* because he was *raised up in righteousness,* as it is said of him, Isa. xlv. 13, and was God's great instrument to manifest his righteousness; both his faithfulness, in fulfilling his promise of delivering his people out of Babylon after seventy years (*righteousness* being often put for faithfulness); and his justice, in punishing the enemies and oppressors of his people, the wicked Babylonians; upon which account the Medes, who served under Cyrus in his expedition against the Babylonians, are called God's *sanctified ones,* Isa. xiii. 3. And all the other expressions here used are very applicable to him, and were verified in him. He came *from the east;* from Persia, which was directly eastward, both from Judea and from Babylon, and which is called *the east* in this very case, Isa. xlvi. 11. He was *raised up* by God in an eminent and extraordinary manner, as is noted both by sacred and profane historians; and therefore this very word is used concerning him and his army, not only here, but elsewhere; as Isa. xiii. 17; Jer. l. 9; li. 1, 11. To him also all the following passages agree, as we shall see. And although this great person and action were yet to come, yet the prophet speaks of them as if they were already past, as the prophets most frequently do. And as in the clause of the former chapter he speaks of God's people as if they were actually in the captivity of Babylon, ver. 27, so here he speaks of them as if they were actually brought out of Babylon by Cyrus. And by this instance he pleads his cause against the Gentiles and their idols, because this was an evident proof of God's almighty power, and of the vanity and weakness of idols, which eminently appeared in the destruction of the Babylonians, who were a people mad *upon their idols,* as is said, Jer. l. 38, and yet were destroyed together with their idols, Jer. li. 47. *From the east;* from a country eastward from Judea, as Chaldea was in part, but Persia more directly. *Called him to his foot;* to march after him, and under God's banner, against Babylon. Thus Barak's army is said to be *at his feet,* Judg. iv. 10. Compare also Gen. xxx. 30. *Gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings;* subdued nations and their kings before him. *He gave them as the dust;* to be beaten by him as small as dust, as is said, Psal. xviii. 42. Or, to be put to flight as easily as the dust is scattered by the wind, as the following clause expounds this.

† Heb. in peace.

3 He pursued them, *and* passed †safely; *even* by the way *that* he had not gone with his feet.

He pursued them, and passed safely; went on in the pur-

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suit with great ease, and safety, and success. *Even by the way that he had not gone with his feet;* which is added as a further evidence of God's wonderful providence, in encouraging and enabling him to march by unknown paths; which hath oft proved dangerous and destructive to great armies. This also was verified both in Abraham and in Cyrus, as is well known.

d ver. 26. ch. 44. 7. & 46. 10. e ch. 43. 10. & 44. 6. & 48. 12. Rev. 1. 17. & 22. 13.

4 [d]Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the [e]first, and with the last; I *am* he.

Who hath wrought and done it? whose work was this but mine? *Calling;* either, 1. Calling them out of nothing, giving to them breath and being; or, 2. Calling them to his foot, as he said above, ver. 2, disposing and employing them as he sees fit, sending them upon his errands. *The generations from the beginning;* all persons and generations of mankind from the beginning of the world to the end of it. *The first, and with the last;* who was before all things, even from eternity, and shall be unto eternity; whereas the idols, to whom God herein opposeth himself, were but of yesterday, being made by men's hands, and shall within a little time vanish, and be destroyed.

5 The isles saw *it*, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came.

The isles, even remote countries, as ver. 1, *saw it;* discerned the mighty work of God in delivering his people, and overthrowing their enemies, in so wonderful a manner. *Feared,* lest they should be involved in the same calamity, as being conscious to themselves that they also were enemies to God's people. *Drew near, and came;* they gathered themselves together to consult for their common safety, and to maintain the cause of their idols, whom by this instance they perceived in great jeopardy.

f ch. 40. 19. & 44. 12. † Heb. *Be strong.*

6 [f]They helped every one his neighbour; and *every one* said to his brother, † Be of good courage.

They encouraged and assisted one another in their idolatrous practices.

g ch. 40. 19. ‡ Or, *founder.* ‖ Or, *the smiting.* ‖ Or, *saying of the solder, It is good.* h ch. 40. 20.

7 [g]So the carpenter encouraged the ‡goldsmith, *and* he that smoothetth *with* the hammer ‖him that smote the anvil, ‖saying, It *is* ready for the sodering: and he fastened it with nails, [h]*that* it should not be moved.

The carpenter, who brought wood to compose the body of the idol. *The goldsmith,* who was to prepare golden plates for covering and adorning of the image, which some of them beat out upon the anvil, and others smoothed or polished, as it follows. *It is ready for the sodering;* that we may put the several parts together, and set it up to be worshipped. *He fastened it* to the wall or pillar, lest it should fall down, or go, or be carried away from them. See Isa. xl. 19, 20.

i Deut. 7. 6. & 10. 15. & 14. 2. Ps. 135. 4. ch. 44. 1. & 44. 1. k 2 Chr. 20. 7. Jam. 2. 23.

8 But thou, Israel, *art* my servant, Jacob whom I have [i]chosen, the seed of Abraham my [k]friend.

But thou, Israel, art my servant: thus the Gentiles show themselves to be the servants of their idols, and own them for their god; but thou art my people, and I am and will be thy God. *Whom I have chosen,* out of the heap of the idolatrous nations, to be my peculiar people. *Abraham my friend;* with whom I made a strict league of perpetual friendship; of which see Gen. xii. 2, 3; xv. 1, 18.

9 *Thou* whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou *art* my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.

Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth; thou, Israel, whom I took to myself, and brought hither in the loins of thy father Abraham from a remote country, to wit, Chaldea; or, whom I brought back out of Babylon into thine own land, which though yet to come, he may speak of as of a thing past, as the prophets use to do, as was noted before. But the former interpretation seems to agree better with the foregoing verse. *From the chief men thereof;* from the midst of many great and noble persons, among whom he lived in Chaldea. So this notes God's singular mercy to Abraham, and consequently to the Israelites descended from him, that he passed by many of Abraham's betters, and called him into fellowship with himself. *I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away;* I have chosen thee not for a small moment, but for ever, by making an everlasting covenant with thee and thy seed through all generations. Or the sense is this; As I have chosen thee at first, so I have not since that time cast thee off, as thou hadst frequently given me sufficient occasion to do. Or, *and did not refuse thee,* as this word is elsewhere used. So the same thing is repeated in other words, not without some emphasis; for he intimates that he chose them when he had just cause of refusing them.

l ver. 13, 14. ch. 43. 5. m Deut. 31. 6, 8.

10 ¶ [l]Fear thou not; [m]for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Which I do and will manage with righteousness, whereby I will deliver thee, and destroy thine and mine enemies, as it follows.

n Ex. 23. 22. ch. 45. 24. & 60. 12. Zech. 12. 3. † Heb. *the men of thy strife.*

11 Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be [n]ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and † they that strive with thee shall perish.

Shall be ashamed and confounded, both because their hopes and designs shall be utterly disappointed, and because the mischief which they contrived against thee shall fall upon themselves. *Shall be as nothing;* shall come to nothing, or perish, as the next clause explains it.

† Heb. *the men of thy contention.* † Heb. *the men of thy war.*

12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, *even* †them that contended with thee: †they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them; they shall be so totally consumed, that although thou searchest for them, thou shalt not be able to find them any where in the world. *Shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought;* shall be utterly brought to nought. The thing is twice repeated, to show the certainty and greatness of their destruction.

o ver. 10.

13 For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, [o]Fear not; I will help thee.

Will hold thy right hand; or, *will strengthen,* &c., as this word properly signifieth; will assist and enable thee to vanquish all thine enemies.

‖ Or, *few men.*

14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, *and* ye ‖men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Thou worm Jacob, who art weak in thyself, and despised and trodden under foot by thy proud and potent enemies.

p Mic. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. † Heb. *mouths.*

15 Behold, [p]I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having † teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat *them* small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.

New; and therefore sharper and stronger than another which hath been much used. *Sharp threshing instrument having teeth;* such as were usual in those times and places; of which see on Isa. xxviii. 25, 28. *The mountains;* the great and lofty potentates of the world, which set themselves against thee; such persons being frequently expressed in Scripture under the notion of *hills* and *mountains.*

q Jer. 51. 2.

16 Thou shalt [q]fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, *and* [r]shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

r ch. 45. 25

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Thou shalt fan them, when thou hast beaten them as small as dust or chaff. *Shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel;* for to him, and not to thyself, thou shalt ascribe thy victory over thine enemies.

17 *When* the poor and needy seek water, and *there is* none, *and* their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, *I* the God of Israel will not forsake them.

When my poor people are come to the greatest extremity of danger and misery, then will I appear for their relief.

a ch. 35. 6, 7. & 43. 19. & 44. 3. t Ps. 107. 35.

18 I will open [a]rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the [t]wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

In high places; upon the mountains, where by the course of nature there are no rivers. *In the midst of the valleys;* or, *in the valleys*, to wit, in such of them as are not well watered. *I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water:* these people, who are like a dry and barren wilderness, I will abundantly water with my blessing, and make them fruitful and beautiful, as the next verse showeth; which may be understood, either of the Jews, who were in a wilderness condition, till God brought them out of it; or of the Gentiles converted to the true religion under the gospel.

19 I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, *and* the pine, and the box tree together:

Trees which are both useful and pleasant to the eye, and giving a good shadow to the traveller, which in those hot and parched countries was very comfortable. Thus much is evident and confessed. But what particular trees these Hebrew words signify seems to me improper to discourse here, because only the learned are capable of judging in this case, and they may consult my Latin Synopsis upon this and other places of Scripture where they are mentioned.

u Job 12. 9.

20 [u]That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

That they may see; or, *that* men *may see;* for it is an indefinite expression. The sense is, that all that see this wonderful change may consider it, and may know that this is the work of God alone.

* Heb. *Cause to come near.*

21 †Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong *reasons*, saith the King of Jacob.

Produce your cause: the prophet having pleaded God's cause against the idolatrous Gentiles, whom he challenged to a dispute, ver. 1, he now reneweth the challenge, and gives them liberty and invitation to speak whatsoever they can on the behalf of their idols. *Bring forth your strong reasons*, to prove the divinity of your idols.

x ch. 45. 21.

22 [x]Let them bring *them* forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they *be*, that we may †consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.

† Heb. *set our heart upon them.*

Let them; either the idols; or, which is all one, the idolaters in the name and by the help of their idols. *What shall happen;* all future events; which he divides into two sorts in the following clause, the former and the latter, as we shall see. *Let them show the former things;* which is not to be understood of such things as are past, for such things might easily be known by men from history, much more by the devils who possessed and acted in their idols; but of such things as should shortly come to pass, which may be better discerned than those things which are yet at a great distance. So he propounds the easiest part first. Let us try whether they can foretell those things which are even at the door, and if so we will try them further. Let them tell us what things shall happen, and in what order, which first, and which last. *That we may consider them,* Heb. *and we will set our heart* to it; we will allow the argument its due weight, and either fairly answer it, or give up our cause against idols. *And know;* that we may know, or let us know by their information. *The latter end of them;* the consequence of them, whether the events did answer to their predictions, or what things happened next after those former things. *Declare us things for to come*, to wit, *hereafter*, or after a long time; which limitation may be easily gathered, both from the opposition of this clause to the former, and from the next following clause, where it is so limited and explained.

y ch. 42. 9. & 44. 7, 8. & 45. 3. John 13. 19. z Jer. 10. 5.

23 [y]Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye *are* gods: yea, [z]do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold *it* together.

That we may know that ye are gods; that we may have, if not a certain proof, yet at least a probable argument, of your deity. It may be objected that the devil hath foretold future events by idols; but it may be answered, that such predictions were but rare, and oftentimes were false, and confuted by the event; and generally were dark and doubtful, as hath been noted; and when they were verified by the event, that was only done by Divine permission and revelation, for the trial or punishment of wicked men, of which we have an instance, Deut. xiii. 1—3, and therefore doth no more prove them to be gods than the predictions made known by God unto the prophets proved them to be gods. *Do good, or do evil;* protect and bless your worshippers whom I intend to destroy, and destroy my people whom I intend to save, and then you have some colour to assert your deity. But, alas! you can neither do good nor evil. *That we may be dismayed, and behold it together;* that I and my people may be astonished, and confounded, and forced to acknowledge your godhead.

a Ps. 115. 8. ch. 44. 9. ‖ Or. 8. 4. ‖ Or, worse *than*

24 Behold, [a]ye *are* ‖of nothing, and your work ‖of nought: an abomination *is he that* chooseth you.

nothing. ‖ Or, worse *than of a viper.*

Ye are of nothing; you lately were nothing, without any being at all, and now you have nothing at all of divinity or virtue in you. *Your work;* either, 1. Passively, your workmanship, all the cost and art which is laid out upon you. Or, 2. Actively, all that you can do. Your operations are like your beings; there is no reality in your beings, nor efficacy in your actions. *He that chooseth you;* he that chooseth you for his gods, is most abominable for his folly as well as his wickedness.

b Ezra 1. 2. c ver. 2.

25 I have raised up *one* from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun [b]shall he call upon my name: [c]and he shall come upon princes as *upon* morter, and as the potter treadeth clay.

I have raised up; you neither foreknow nor can do any thing; but I do now foretell, and will certainly effect, a great revolution and change in the world, which you shall not be able to hinder. *One;* which word, though not expressed in the Hebrew, must necessarily be understood, as being oft designed in the following words by the pronoun *he*. He understands one people; or rather one person, prince, or general, together with his people or forces, as appears from the latter part of the verse. Some conceive that the prophet in this place speaks of two several persons; in the first clause of Nebuchadnezzar, who in Scripture is commonly said to come *from the north*, as Jer. i. 13, 15; iv. 6; and the next clause of Cyrus, who came from the *east*, Isa. xlvi. 11. And then the words may be thus rendered, one *from the north, and he shall come;* and one *from the rising of the sun, he shall call*, &c. But it seems more natural and easy to understand the whole context of one and the same person, even of Cyrus, of whom he spake before, ver. 2, &c., who might well be said to come, both *from the north* and *from the east: from the north* rather, because he was a Mede by his mother, as he was a Persian by his father; or because a great part of his army was gathered out of Media, which was, and in Scripture is said to be, *northward* in reference to Judea, Jer. l. 9, 41; li. 48; and because Darius the Mede was joined with him in this expedition: and *from the east*, because Persia was directly eastward from Judea. And peradventure this

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work of *calling upon* or *proclaiming God's name* is here ascribed to him as he came from the east, rather than as he came from the north, because that work was not done by Darius the Mede, but by Cyrus the Persian. *Shall he call upon my name;* or rather, as others render it, *who shall call upon;* or rather, *proclaim my name*, which Cyrus did in express and emphatical terms, Ezra i. 1, 2. *He shall come upon princes as upon mortar;* treading them down as easily as a man treadeth down mortar.

d ch. 43. 9. 26 [d]Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, *He is* righteous? yea, *there is* none that sheweth, yea, *there is* none that declareth, yea, *there is* none that heareth your words.

Who hath declared from the beginning? which of all your idols did or could foretell such things as this from the beginning of the world unto this day? They never yet did nor can foretell any such things, further than I think fit to reveal it to them. *Beforetime;* either in time past, or before the things come to pass. *That we may say*, that we may be convinced and forced to acknowledge, *He is righteous;* his cause now pleaded is just and good; he is a God indeed as he pretends to be, he claims his Divinity by a good title. *Yea, there is none;* Heb. *surely* there is *none* of your gods that hath done or can do this, and therefore their claim to the Deity is false and foolish. *There is none that heareth your words;* none of your worshippers ever heard any such thing, either from you or of you; nor indeed doth any man hear your words, because you are dumb, and cannot speak.

e ver. 4. f ch. 40. 9. 27 [e]The first [f]*shall say* to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.

The first; I who am the first, as I said before, ver. 4, and therefore capable of declaring or foretelling things to come from the beginning, which your idols cannot do, ver. 26. *Shall say to Zion;* do and will foretell unto my people by my prophets things to come. *Behold, behold them;* I represent things future as if they were present, and to be beheld with your eyes. By *them* he means either, 1. These things which are to come: or, 2. These men; either Cyrus and his forces, who came to deliver the Jews out of Babylon; or, which is the same thing in effect, the Jews returning from their captivity in Babylon. *One that bringeth good tidings;* a messenger or messengers, the singular number being here put for the plural, as it is in many other places, to wit, my prophets, who shall foretell the good tidings of their deliverance from captivity.

g ch. 63. 5. 28 [g]For I beheld, and *there was* no man; even among them, and *there was* no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could †answer a word.

† Heb. *return.*

For I beheld, Heb. *And I beheld;* I looked about me to see if I could find any man of them that could certainly and of themselves foretell such future events. *No man;* not any, to wit, of the idols; for the word *man* is sometimes used by the Hebrews of brute creatures, and even of lifeless things, as Isa. xxxiv. 15; xl. 26, and elsewhere. *There was no counsellor;* though these idols were oft consulted, and by the help of the devil did sometimes deliver oracles, yet none of them were able to give any solid and certain advice concerning future things. *That, when I asked of them, could answer a word;* when I tried their divinity by this character, they had nothing to say for themselves.

h ver. 24. 29 [h]Behold, they *are* all vanity; their works *are* nothing: their molten images *are* wind and confusion.

They are all vanity: this is the conclusion of the whole dispute, and the just sentence which God passeth upon idols after a fair trial; they are vain things, and are falsely called *gods. Their works are nothing:* see ver. 24. *Their molten images;* which he mentions, because their materials were most precious, and more cost and art was commonly bestowed upon them; for after they had been molten, they used to be carved, or polished, and adorned: but under these he synecdochically comprehends all images whatsoever. *Are wind;* empty and unsatisfying things, which also, like the wind, do quickly pass away, and come to nothing. *And confusion;* confused, and deformed, and useless things, like that rude heap in the beginning of God's creation, of which this very word is used, Gen. i. 2.

CHAP. XLII.

The person and office of Christ appointed by the Father, 1—9. *A new song to God for his gospel among the Gentiles,* 10—16. *The idolatry of the heathen, and obstinacy of the Jews,* 17—25.

a ch. 43. 10. & 49. 3. & 52. 13. & 53. 11. Matt. 12. 18. 19. 20. Phil. 2. 7. b Matt. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Eph. 1. 6. c ch. 11. 2. John 3. 34. BEHOLD [a]my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul [b]delighteth; [c]I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

The prophet, having in the former chapter detected the vanity of idols, by their gross ignorance of future things, and having given one eminent instance of God's certain foreknowledge of things to come, in the prediction of the destruction of Babylon, and the deliverance of the Jews out of it by Cyrus, he now addeth another more eminent and remote example of it, and foretelleth the coming of the Messiah, and several great effects or consequences thereof; which he rather doth, because this was the person by whom the idols were to be utterly abolished, as was foretold, Isa. ii. 18, compared with ver. 2—4, and as it fell out in the event; this having been observed not only by Christians, but even by the learned heathens, not without astonishment, that at that time when Christ came into the world idols were generally struck dumb, and the oracles ceased. *My servant;* the person of whom he here speaketh is by some supposed to be Cyrus, and by others Isaiah himself, and by others the people of the Jews. But the most and best interpreters understand this place of Christ. And although I am sensible that some learned men have done wrong to the sacred text, and to the Christian cause, by expounding some places of Christ without sufficient evidence, yet this is one of the many places in this prophecy which cannot without manifest violence be applied to any other; which is so evident, that not only the generality of Christians, but divers of the most learned Jews, understand it of the Messiah, and of him alone; and pass a severe censure upon their brethren that expound it of any other person, and affirm that they are smitten with blindness in this matter. Moreover this place is expressly interpreted of Christ, Matt. xii. 18, &c.; and to him, and to him only, all the particulars here following do truly and evidently belong, as we shall see. *Whom I uphold;* whom I will assist and enable to do and suffer all those things which belong to his office to do. *Mine elect;* chosen by me to this great work of mediation and redemption, to which he is said to be *sealed* and *sent*, John vi. 27, 29, and *predestinated*, 1 Pet. i. 20, and *chosen of God*, 1 Pet. ii. 4. *Delighteth;* or, as this same word is oft rendered, *is well-pleased*, both for himself and for all his people, being fully satisfied with that sacrifice which he shall offer up to me. *I have put my Spirit upon him;* I have furnished him with that abundance and eminency of gifts and graces which are necessary for the discharge of his high and hard employment. *Shall bring forth;* shall publish or *show*, as this word is translated, Matt. xii. 18; shall bring to light what before was hid in his breast, or in his Father's bosom. *Judgment:* this word is very ambiguous, and elsewhere is put for punishment, which cannot be meant here, because the whole context speaks of his mercy and sweetness, and not of his severity; but here it is clearly put for God's *law*, as this very word is expounded here below, ver. 4, and as it is frequently used in the Holy Scriptures, as Psal. cxix., and elsewhere: which also best agrees with the *bringing forth* or *publishing* of it here mentioned, publication being necessarily required and constantly used about laws. And this interpretation is confirmed by the following words, *to the Gentiles.* For the great things which Christ published unto all the world, both Jews and Gentiles, was nothing else but the law, and will, and counsel of God concerning man's salvation, and the way and means of obtaining it. *To the Gentiles;* not only to the Jews, to whom the knowledge of God's laws had been hitherto appropriated, but to the heathen nations of the world.

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2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

He shall not cry; either, 1. In a way of contention, as *anger* is oft accompanied with *clamour*, Eph. iv. 31. Or, 2. In a way of ostentation. It seems to be meant both ways, by comparing this place with Matt. xii. 16, 17, 20. He shall neither erect nor manage his kingdom with violence and outward pomp and state, as worldly princes do, but with meekness and humility. *Nor lift up* his voice, which is easily understood out of the following clause, and from many other scriptures, where that word is added to this verb to complete the phrase. *Nor cause his voice to be heard in the street;* as contentious and vain-glorious persons frequently do.

‖ Or, *dimly burning.* † Heb. *quench it.*

3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the ‖ smoking flax shall he not †quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

A bruised reed shall he not break; he will not break it to pieces, but rather will strengthen and bind it up. It is a common figure, whereby more is understood than was expressed, and one contrary is left to be gathered from another, of which many instances have been given in former texts. The sense is plainly this, Christ will not deal roughly and rigorously with those that come to him, but he will use all gentleness and kindness to them, passing by their greatest sins, bearing with their present infirmities, cherishing and encouraging the smallest beginnings of grace, comforting and healing wounded consciences, and the like. *The smoking flax shall he not quench;* the same thing is repeated in other words, to give us the greater assurance of the truth of it. That wick of a candle (called *flax* metonymically, because it is made of flax) which is almost extinct, and doth only smoke and not flame, he will not utterly quench, but will revive and kindle it again. *He shall bring forth judgment unto truth: judgment* may be here taken either, 1. For the law or will of God, or the doctrine of the gospel, which he will *bring forth*, i. e. publish, which he will do *unto*, or *in*, or *with*, or *according to* (for this preposition is used all those ways) *truth*, i. e. truly and faithfully, not concealing nor corrupting it, as false teachers commonly do. So this is a character like that which is given to Christ, Matt. xxii. 16, *Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth;* and thus this phrase of *bringing forth judgment* is taken here, as it is ver. 1. Or, 2. For the cause which is debated, or for the sentence which is given in the cause, as this word is most frequently used, which he will *bring forth*, i. e. bring to light, or discover, or publish; and this he will do according to truth and equity, and not unjustly and partially, as corrupt judges use to give sentence against the poor and meek. In this sense this very phrase of *bringing forth judgment* is taken Psal. xxxvii. 6. And this sense seems to be favoured, both by the consideration of the quality of the persons, to whom this judgment is here implied to be brought forth, who are called *bruised reeds*, and *smoking flax*, whereby they are supposed to be persons discouraged and oppressed, and in a contest with themselves, or with their spiritual adversaries, about the state of their souls; as also by comparing this place with Matt. xii. 20, where these very words are quoted, and thus rendered, *till he send forth judgment unto victory*, i. e. till judgment or sentence be given for him, in which case a man is said to be victorious in judgment. If it be said for the former interpretation, that it seems most reasonable to understand *judgment* here as it is understood ver. 1 and 4, and *bringing forth judgment* here as it is taken, ver. 1, it may be truly and fairly answered, that it is a very common thing in Scripture for the same words or phrases to be used in several senses, not only in two neighbouring verses, but sometimes also in the very same verse, whereof I have formerly given divers instances.

† Heb. *broken.*

4 He shall not fail nor be †discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: [d] and the isles shall wait for his law.

[d] Gen. 49. 10.

He shall not fail, nor be discouraged; though he be thus meek, and gentle, yet he is also courageous and resolute against all the great and many difficulties and conflicts to which he will be exposed, and will not give over till he have finished his work; or, as others render the words, *He shall not be darkened* (this glorious light shall not be eclipsed or obscured; or, *He shall shine forth brightly* and gloriously, as the LXX. render this word) *nor broken* by all the attempts and vigorous endeavours of his enemies who design it. *Till he have set judgment in the earth;* till he have published and established his law or doctrine (as this *judgment* is expounded in the next clause) among the nations of the earth. And this word *till* respects only the time past, but not the time to come, as if he would then *fail*, or be *discouraged*, when once he had *set judgment on the earth;* which is contrary to reason, and to other evident scriptures. And so this word is used, Gen. xxviii. 15; Psal. lxxi. 18; Matt. i. 25. *The isles;* the countries remote from Judea, to which God's law was now confined, as this word is oft used. *Shall wait for his law;* shall gladly receive his doctrine and commands from time to time.

5 ¶ Thus saith God the LORD, [e] he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; [f] he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; [g] he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

[e] ch. 44. 24. Zech. 12. 1.
[f] Ps. 136. 6.
[g] Acts 17. 25.

This large description of God's infinite power is here seasonably added, to give them assurance of the certain accomplishment of these great and wonderful promises, which otherwise would seem incredible.

6 [h] I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, [i] and give thee for a covenant of the people, for [k] a light of the Gentiles;

[h] ch. 43. 1.
[i] ch. 49. 8.
[k] ch. 49. 6. Luke 2. 32. Acts 13. 47.

Have called thee in righteousness; to declare my righteousness, as is said, Rom. iii. 26, or my faithfulness, which is frequently called *righteousness* in Scripture; according to my promise long since made, and oft renewed. As the former verse asserted God's power, so this clause declares his will and firm purpose and obligation to effect this work, and both together evince the certainty and necessity of it. *Will hold thine hand;* will give thee counsel and strength for thy high and hard work. *Will keep thee*, that thou shalt not fail in, nor be hindered by, thine enemies from the accomplishment of thy work. *Give thee for a covenant;* to be the Angel of the covenant, as Christ is called, Mal. iii. 1; or the Mediator, in and by whom my covenant of grace is made and confirmed with mankind. *Of the people;* either of my people, the Jews; or, indefinitely or universally, of all people, not only Jews, but Gentiles also, as it follows. *For a light of the Gentiles;* to enlighten them with true and saving knowledge, and to direct them in the right way to true happiness, from which they had miserably wandered. He alludes to God's fiery pillar, which enlightened and directed the Israelites in the wilderness.

7 [l] To open the blind eyes, to [m] bring out the prisoners from the prison, *and* them that sit in [n] darkness out of the prison house.

[l] ch. 35. 5.
[m] ch. 61. 1. Luke 4. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 26. Heb. 2. 14, 15.
[n] ch. 9. 2.

The blind eyes; the eyes of their minds blinded with long ignorance, and deep prejudice, and inveterate error, and by the power and policy of the god of this world, 2 Cor. iv. 4, which nothing but the almighty power of God could cure. *The prisoners;* sinners, *who are taken captive by the devil at his will*, as we read, 2 Tim. ii. 26, and as daily experience showeth, and who are enslaved and chained by their own lusts, and made free-men only by Christ, John viii. 32, 36. Compare this portion of Scripture with Isa. lxi. 1, and both with Luke iv. 17—21, where it is said to be fulfilled in and by Christ.

8 I *am* the LORD: that *is* my name: and my [o] glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

[o] ch. 48. 11.

I am the Lord, Heb. *Jehovah;* who have all being in and of myself, and give being to all my creatures, and to all my promises, as this name signifies. The everlasting, and unchangeable, and omnipotent God, who therefore both can and will fulfil all my promises, and plead the cause and set up the kingdom of my Son in spite of all opposition, and destroy all those idols which are set up against him and me.

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That is my name, which I must own and justify to the world. He seems to allude to Exod. iii. 14, 15; vi. 3. *My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images;* I will not any longer suffer that honour and worship which is peculiar to me to be given to idols, as it hath been, but I will by Christ and the gospel abolish idolatry in the world.

9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

The former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: as all things which I have formerly promised or foretold have exactly come to pass in their proper seasons, and not one of them failed, as was noted, Josh. xxiii. 14; so you have great reason to believe that what I now promise, though it be new and strange to you, shall infallibly be accomplished. *Before they spring forth I tell you of them*, that when they come to pass, you may know that I am God, and that this is my work. Compare John xiii. 19.

p Ps. 33. 3. & 40. 3. & 98. 1.

10 [p]Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise from the end of the earth,

q Ps. 107. 23. + Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

[q]ye that go down to the sea, and †all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

Sing unto the Lord a new song, upon this new and great occasion, the calling and salvation of the world by Christ. *From the end of the earth;* all nations, from one end of the earth to another, who shall be sharers in this mercy. *Ye that go down to the sea, &c.;* you that go by sea, carry these glad tidings from Judea, where Christ was born, and lived, and died, and published the gospel, unto the remotest parts of the earth, that they may join with you in singing forth God's praises for his marvellous kindness and grace to them.

11 Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up *their voice*, the villages *that* Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.

The wilderness; those parts of the world which are now like a wilderness; not literally, for he speaks of their *cities* in the next clause, but spiritually, desolate and forsaken of God, dry and destitute of the waters of God's grace, and barren of all good fruits. *Kedar;* the Arabians; which were a heathenish and barbarous people, and well known to the Jews, and are synecdochically put for all nations in the same circumstances. *Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains:* having mentioned *cities* and *villages*, he now adds those who dwell upon *rocks* and *mountains*, which are commonly more savage and ignorant than others, and therefore harder to be taught and reformed.

12 Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.

In the remotest parts of the world, as well as in Arabia, which was near to them.

13 The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man

r ch. 31. 4. ‖ Or, *behave himself mightily.*

of war: he shall cry, [r]yea, roar; he shall ‖prevail against his enemies.

Shall go forth, to wit, to war, or battle, as this phrase is used, Numb. i. 3, 28; 2 Sam. xi. 1. *He shall stir up jealousy;* he shall stir up himself, and his strength, and anger, against the obstinate and implacable enemies of his Son and gospel. *He shall cry, yea, roar*, as a lion doth upon his prey, and as soldiers do when they begin the battle.

14 I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, *and* refrained myself:

+ Heb. *swallow, or, sup up.*

now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and †devour at once.

I have long time held my peace; I have for many ages suffered the devil and his servants, tyrants, and idolaters, and persecutors to prevail in the world, to afflict my people, and to hinder the entertainment of my doctrine and worship in the world. *Now will I cry like a travailing woman;* now I will bring forth and accomplish that glorious work which I have long conceived in my mind. *I will destroy and devour at once;* I will suddenly and utterly destroy the incorrigible enemies of my truth, and of my Son's kingdom. He alludes to those wild beasts which open their mouths wide, and devour all their prey at one morsel, or at one time.

15 I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

I will make waste mountains and hills; not dry and barren ones, for these were waste already, but such as are clothed with grass and herbs, as the following words imply; which is to be understood metaphorically, of God's destroying his most lofty and flourishing enemies, who are oft compared in Scripture unto *mountains* and *hills*. *I will dry up the pools;* I will remove all impediments out of the way; which is expressed in the prophetical dialect, by *drying up Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared*, Rev. xvi. 12. He seems to allude to that which God did in drying up first the Red Sea, and then Jordan, to give his people passage into Canaan. And this exposition is confirmed by the following verse.

16 And I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew not; I will lead them in paths *that* they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things †straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

+ Heb. *into straightness.*

The blind; the Gentiles, who were blind, and were called so, above, ver. 7, and in many other places of Scripture, and were so accounted by the Jews. *By a way that they know not;* by the way of truth, which hitherto hath been hidden from them, until by my word and Spirit I revealed it to them. *I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight;* I will take away all hinderances, and give them all advantages and conveniences for their journey. I will direct them in the right way. I will enlighten their dark minds, and rectify their perverse wills and affections. *And not forsake them*, until I have brought them with safety and comfort to the end of their journey.

17 ¶ They shall be [s]turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye *are* our gods.

s Ps. 97. 7. ch. 1. 29. & 44. 11. & 45. 16.

This may be understood either, 1. Of the converted Gentiles; who shall be *turned back* from their former sinful course, and shall sincerely grieve, and be ashamed *that* they *did trust*, &c., as the word may be rendered; that they should ever be guilty of such wickedness and madness to worship and trust in idols. Or rather, 2. Of those Gentiles who, when their brethren embraced the true God and Christ, persisted obstinately in their idolatrous courses, who shall be confounded and destroyed; for this phrase of *being turned back* is generally used in Scripture in a bad sense; or of them who are overthrown, or put to flight in battle, as Psal. ix. 3; xxxv. 4; lxx. 2, 3, &c. And the like I may say of *being ashamed*, or *confounded*, or *put to shame*, especially where this phrase is joined with the other, as it is in the two places of the Psalms last quoted.

18 Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.

O you, whosoever you are, whether Jews or Gentiles, which shall resist this clear light, and obstinately continue in your former errors, attend diligently to my words, and consider these mighty works of God.

19 [t]Who *is* blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger *that* I sent? who *is* blind as *he that is* perfect, and blind as the LORD's servant?

t ch. 43. 8. Ezek. 12. 2. See John 9. 39, 41.

Who is blind, but my servant? but no people under heaven are so blind as the Jews, who call themselves my servants and people, who will not receive their Messiah, though he be recommended to them with such evident and illustrious signs and miraculous works, as force belief from the most unbelieving and obstinate Gentiles. *My messenger;* my messengers, the singular number being put for the plural, as it is commonly in Scripture. *That I sent;* the priests and other teachers whom I appointed to instruct my people

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in the right way. *As he that is perfect;* as the most eminent teachers and rulers of the Jews, whom he calleth *perfect*, either because it was their duty to know and teach the way and truth of God perfectly; or rather sarcastically, because they pretended to greater perfection, and proudly called themselves *rabbies* and *masters*, as our Saviour observed, and despised the people as *cursed*, and *not knowing the law*, John vii. 49, and derided Christ for calling them *blind*, John ix. 40. *As the Lord's servant;* which title, as it was given to the Jewish people in the first clause of the verse, so here it seems to be given to the priests, because they were called and obliged to be the Lord's servants in a special and eminent manner.

u Rom. 2.21. 20 Seeing many things, [u]but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.

Thou dost not seriously and impartially consider the plain word and the wonderful works of God, of which thine ears and eyes have been witnesses, which are abundantly sufficient for the conviction of any considering man.

21 The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make ‖*it* honourable.

‖ Or, him.

Is well-pleased, to wit, with you; or, as this word is most commonly used, *hath a good-will* to you or to *this people;* which may be understood out of the following verse, as is very usual in sacred Scripture. The meaning seems to be this; Although thou art a wicked people, that rebellest against the clearest light, and therefore God might justly destroy thee suddenly; yet he is very unwilling to do it, and will patiently wait for thy repentance, that he may be gracious unto thee. *For his righteousness' sake;* not for thy sake, for thou deservest no such thing from him, but for the glory of his own faithfulness, in fulfilling that promise and covenant which he made with thy pious progenitors for themselves and for their seed. *He will magnify the law, and make it honourable;* he will maintain the honour of his law, and therefore is not forward to destroy you, who profess God's law, and the true religion, lest his law should upon that occasion be exposed to contempt.

22 But this *is* a people robbed and spoiled; ‖*they are* all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for †a spoil, and none saith, Restore.

‖ Or, in snaring all the young men of them.

† Heb. a treading.

But this is a people robbed and spoiled: but notwithstanding this great respect which God hath to his law, and to his people for the sake of his law, it is apparent that God hath severely scourged you for your sins; and therefore take heed that you do not provoke him by your obstinate infidelity, lest he cast you off for ever. *They are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison-houses;* they are, or have been, taken in snares made by their own hands, and by God's just judgment delivered into the hands of their enemies, and by them cast into pits, or dungeons, and prisons. *None delivereth; none saith, Restore;* none afford them either pity or help in their extremities.

23 Who among you will give ear to this? *who* will hearken and hear †for the time to come?

† Heb. for the after time?

Oh that you would learn from your former and dear-bought experiences to be wiser for the future, and not to provoke God to your own total and final ruin!

24 Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law.

Do not flatter yourselves with a conceit of impunity, because you are a people whom God hath favoured and endowed with many and great privileges, which the Jews were very prone to do, as we see, Jer. vii. 4, &c., and elsewhere; for as God hath punished you formerly, doubt not but if you continue to sin, he will proceed in punishing you more and more for your sins.

25 Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: [x]and it hath set him on fire round about, [y]yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid *it* not to heart.

x 2 Kings 25. 9.
y Hos. 7. 9.

The fury of his anger, and the strength of battle; most grievous judgments. *Yet he knew not;* they were secure and stupid under God's judgments, neither fearing them when threatened, nor truly sensible of God's hand in them, and of the causes of God's displeasure against them, and of the means of cure.

CHAP. XLIII.

Promises to protect and enlarge the church, 1—7. God appealeth to them as witnesses of his power and knowledge, 8—13. He foretelleth them the destruction of Babylon, and a new deliverance of his people, 14—21; whose sins, 22—24, against God's mercies, render them inexcusable, 25—28.

BUT now thus saith the LORD [a]that created thee, O Jacob, [b]and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: [c]for I have redeemed thee, [d]I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine.

a ver. 7.
b ver. 21. ch. 44. 2, 21, 24.
c ch. 44. 6.
d ch. 42. 6. & 45. 4.

But now thus saith the Lord; but notwithstanding thy gross insensibleness under former judgments, for which I might justly send far heavier ones upon thee, yet I will deal mercifully with thee. *That created thee;* that made thee his people, and that in so miraculous a manner, as if he had created thee a second time out of nothing; and therefore he will be gracious to his own workmanship. *I have redeemed thee* from the Egyptians, and divers other enemies; and therefore I will redeem thee again. *By thy name;* by the name of *God's people*, which was as proper and peculiar to them as the name of Israel.

2 [e]When thou passest through the waters, [f]I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou [g]walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

e Ps. 66. 12. & 91. 3, &c.
f Deut. 31. 6, 8.
g Dan. 3. 25, 27.

Though I will chastise thee for thy sins, yet I will not suffer thine enemies utterly to destroy thee: compare Jer. xxx. 11.

3 For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: [h]I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

h Prov. 11. 8. & 21. 18.

I gave Egypt for thy ransom: this was fulfilled either, 1. When God smote the Egyptians, both first-born and others, in Egypt, and drowned Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, for the safety and benefit of his people; or, 2. When the king of Assyria, either Sennacherib, as many think, or rather Esar-haddon, who designed to revenge his father's disgrace and loss before Jerusalem upon the Jews, but was diverted and directed by God to employ his forces against Egypt, and Ethiopia, and Seba, as it follows. See the notes upon Isa. xx. 1, &c. *Ethiopia and Seba;* the Sabæans, who were confederate with the Ethiopians or Cushites.

4 Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy ‖life.

‖ Or, person.

Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: so the sense is, From that time that I chose thee for my precious and peculiar treasure and people, I have had a great esteem and affection for thee. But the words may well be, and by some are, rendered thus, *Since that* (or, *For that;* or, Because) *thou wast precious in my sight, thou wast honourable,* (the same thing repeated in other words,) *and I love thee. Therefore will I give men for thee;* as I did give up the Egyptians, so I am ready to give up others to save thee, as occasion requires.

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5 [i]Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;

[i] ch. 41. 10, 14. & 44. 2. Jer. 30. 10, 11. & 46. 27, 28.

Although the Jews shall for their sins be carried captives out of their own land northward and eastward into Babylon and the adjacent countries, and others of them shall flee southward and westward, and shall there pine away in their iniquities, as I threatened; yet their posterity I will bring back into Canaan, from all the places where they are dispersed.

6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;

Give up; thou who hast so long had and held my people in bondage, resign them to me, and permit them to return to their own land. He speaks either to the countries themselves by a prosopopœia, or to the inhabitants of them. *Bring my sons;* do not only permit, but assist and further, their return.

7 *Even* every one that is [k]called by my name: for [l]I have created him for my glory, [m]I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

[k] ch. 63. 19. Jam. 2. 7. [l] Ps. 100. 3. ch. 29. 23. John 3. 3, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Eph. 2. 10. [m] ver. 1.

Even every one that is called by my name: They are called by my name; I own them for my people and children; and therefore what kindness or cruelty you exercise to them I take it as done to myself. So it is an argument to move those people to let their captives go; or it is an argument to confirm the faith of God's people, that God would deliver them, because they are his own. *I have created him for my glory;* and therefore I will glorify my power, and goodness, and faithfulness in delivering them. *I have made him;* I have not only *created* them out of nothing, as I did all other people, but I have also *formed* and *made* them my peculiar people.

8 ¶ [n]Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

[n] ch. 6. 9. & 42. 19. Ezek. 12. 2.

The sense is either, 1. Bring out of captivity my people who were blind and deaf, but now have their eyes and ears opened by my grace. So this verse relates to the foregoing passages. Or rather, 2. O ye idolatrous Gentiles, produce and bring forth your false gods, which have eyes, but see not; and ears, but hear not, as is said, Psal. cxv. 5, 6. So this verse belongs to the following context, in which God renewcth his contest with idols; which in this verse he calleth *blind*, and in the next verse proveth them so to be.

9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: [o]who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, *It is* truth.

[o] ch. 41. 21, 22, 26.

Let the people be assembled, to plead the cause of their idols with me. *Who among them can declare this?* this wonderful work of mine in bringing my people out of captivity, which I have already foretold, and shall further declare; and that so exactly, that I shall name the person by whom this work shall be begun, even Cyrus, who is yet unborn, and shall be so for above two hundred years: let any of your heathen gods do the like. *Former things,* not things already past, but such things as shall happen long before the return from the captivity, which yet your blind idols cannot foresee. See on Isa. xli. 22. *Their witnesses,* who can testify the truth and certainty of any such predictions of theirs. *That they may be justified;* that they may be owned for true gods, which in that case I allow them to expect. But of this argument see on Isa. xli. 22, 23. *Or let them hear and say, It is truth;* or if they can produce no evidence of any such thing, as I am well assured that they cannot, let them be silent, and hear me and my witnesses, as it follows in the next verse; and let them confess that what I say is truth, that I only am the true God, and that they are but vanity and falsehood.

10 [p]Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, [q]and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: [r]before me there was ‖no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

[p] ch. 44. 8. [q] ch. 42. 1. & 55. 4. [r] ch. 41. 4. & 44. 6. ‖ Or, *nothing formed of God.*

Ye are my witnesses; they can produce no witnesses for themselves, but you my people are able to witness for me, that I have given you many plain demonstrations of my certain foreknowledge of future events, by my predictions and promises delivered to you from time to time. *My servant whom I have chosen;* either, 1. Isaiah, and other prophets, the singular word being put collectively: or, 2. Cyrus, who is an eminent instance and proof of God's foreknowledge: or, 3. The Messiah, as not only Christians, but even the Chaldee paraphrast, understands it, who is called by this very title, Isa. xlii. 1, who also is the most eminent witness in this cause; and that both passively, as he, and the time, and place, and other circumstances of his birth, and life, and death were particularly foretold by God in Scripture; and actively, as many future things were foretold by Christ, of which we have many examples in the New Testament. *I am he;* he of whom the present dispute is, or *he whom* I have affirmed myself to be. That I only am that true God whom we are now seeking in this debate. *Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me;* the gods of the heathens neither had a being before me, nor shall continue after me: wherein more is understood than is expressed, that whereas the Lord is God from everlasting to everlasting, these false pretenders to the Deity are but of yesterday, and shall shortly be abolished. And withal he calleth them *formed gods,* in way of contempt, and to show the ridiculousness of their pretence to the Divinity, which are formed by the hands of men.

11 I, *even* I, [s]*am* the LORD; and beside me *there is* no saviour.

[s] ch. 45. 21. Hos. 13. 4.

That can and doth save his worshippers: whereby he implies that the false gods were not only weak, and unable to save their people, but also were the destroyers of their people, as being the great cause of their ruin.

12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when *there was* no [t]strange *god* among you: [u]therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God.

[t] Deu. 32. 16. Ps. 81. 9. [u] ch. 44. 8. ver. 10.

I have declared, and have saved; I first foretold your deliverance, and then effected it. *I have showed;* I foretold it. This branch he repeated, because this is the principal argument used here, and chap. xli., to determine this controversy between God and idols. *When there was no strange god among you;* and this I did when you did not worship any idols, and therefore it could not be pretended that you had this knowledge from them.

13 [x]Yea, before the day *was* I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall †[y]let it?

[x] Ps. 90. 2. John 8. 58. † Heb. *turn it back?* [y] Job 9. 12. ch. 14. 27.

Before the day was; before all time; or, which is all one, from all eternity: or, *since the day* was; since the beginning of time and things, in all ages since the creation of the world. *I am he;* I am God, and I have proved myself to be so. *There is none,* none of those which are called gods, *that can deliver out of my hand;* that can save them whom I will destroy. Therefore they are impotent, and consequently no gods. *I will work, and who shall let it?* nor can they hinder me in any other work which I resolve to do.

14 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their †nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry *is* in the ships.

† Heb. *bars.*

I have sent to Babylon; I have sent Cyrus, and the Medes and Persians with him, to war against Babylon, to this very end and purpose, that he might deliver you out of captivity, and restore you to your land according to promise. *Have brought down* from that height of power and glory to which they were advanced. *All their nobles;* their princes and great commanders, who as they are called *shields,* Psal

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xlvii. 9, so here they are called *bars*, for the same reason, because of that strength and defence which they give to their people. *The Chaldeans;* the common people of Chaldea, together with their great men who had palaces in Babylon. *Whose cry is in the ships;* who make fearful outcries, as they flee away from the Persians in ships; which they had opportunity to do, because of their two great and famous rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and the several branches of them.

15 I *am* the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King.

Your Holy One; the Holy One of Israel, as he frequently styleth himself, who sanctify and glorify myself in this and such other glorious works, with respect to you, or for your benefit.

16 Thus saith the LORD, which [a] maketh a way in the sea, and a [a] path in the mighty waters;

[a] Ex. 14. 16, 22. Ps. 77. 19. ch. 51. 10. [a] Josh. 3. 13, 16.

Who as he formerly made a pathway for his people through the Red Sea, so he will in no less wonderful manner remove all impediments or difficulties out of the way of his people, when they return from Babylon.

17 Which [b] bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow.

[b] Ex. 14. 4, —9, 25.

Which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; or rather, *Who brought forth the chariots*, &c., i. e. Pharaoh, and his chariots, and horses, and army; as may be gathered from the next verse, where the things here mentioned are called *former things*, and *things of old. They shall lie down together, they shall not rise;* or, *they did lie down together*, (to wit, in the bottom of the sea,) *they did not rise; they sank like lead*, as it is said. Exod. xv. 10, and they never rose again to molest the Israelites, as God promised, Exod. xiv. 13. These two Hebrew verbs are of the future tense, but that seems to be put for the preter tense, because the two following verbs, which treat of the same thing, and are added to explain these, are of the preter tense. *They are quenched as tow;* as the wick of a candle when it is put into the water is wholly extinguished, and not the least spark of fire left, so were they utterly destroyed, and not one of them remained.

18 ¶ [c] Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

[c] Jer. 16. 14. & 23. 7.

But although your former deliverance out of Egypt was in itself a most glorious work, which you ought always to remember and consider; yet this other work of your deliverance out of Babylon by Cyrus, and those blessings which shall follow upon it, and particularly that inestimable mercy of sending the Messiah, shall be so transcendent a favour, that, in comparison thereof, all your former deliverances are scarce worthy of your remembrance and consideration. Which exposition is confirmed by two parallel texts, Jer. xvi. 14, 15; xxiii. 7, 8. From all which texts laid together, it appears that this latter deliverance, compared with that out of Egypt, is not to be confined to their freedom from the Babylonish captivity, but to be extended to the consequences of it, and especially to the redemption by Christ, because otherwise that Egyptian deliverance was more glorious and wonderful in many respects than the Babylonian.

19 Behold, I will do a [d] new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? [e] I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert.

[d] 2 Cor. 5. 17. Rev. 21. 5. [e] Ex. 17. 6. Num. 20. 11. Deut. 8. 15. Ps. 78. 16. ch. 35. 6. & 41. 18.

A new thing; such a work as was never yet done in the world, even the redemption of the world by the Messiah. *Now;* shortly, although it was not to be done till after some hundreds of years. For so the Scripture oft speaketh of things at a great distance of time as if they were now at hand, as Hag. ii. 6; James v. 9; Rev. xxii. 20, and elsewhere; which it doth to correct our impatience, and to make us willing to wait till God's time come; and to assure us that the mercy shall come as soon as ever it is fit for us, and we for it; and to make us sensible of the inconsiderableness of time, and all temporal things, in comparison of God, and of the eternal things; upon which account it is said that *a thousand years are in God's sight but as one day*, Psal. xc. 4. *Shall ye not know it?* certainly you Jews shall know it by experience, and shall find that I do not deceive you with vain hopes. *I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert;* I will give you direction and provision in the wilderness, where there is commonly no path, and where all necessaries are wanting; which as it literally speaks of God's conducting them in the way from Babylon to Jerusalem, which lay through a great desert; so it is mystically meant of those spiritual blessings which God in and through Christ will confer upon all his people, not the Jews only, but also the Gentiles, who in prophetical language are oft compared to the wilderness, as Isa. xxxv. 1, and elsewhere.

20 The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the ‖† owls: because [f] I give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

‖ Or, *ostriches.* † Heb. *daughters of the owl.* [f] ch. 48. 21.

The beast of the field shall honour me; shall have cause, if they had abilities, to honour and praise me for their share in this mercy. Possibly *the beast of the field* may mystically signify the Gentiles, whom the Jews reputed as beasts, and who were as destitute of all saving knowledge as the beasts which perish, yet should become the Lord's *people*, as they seem to be called, ver. 21. *The dragons;* which live in dry and barren deserts, and are very thirsty, and therefore more sensible of this mercy. *To give drink to my people;* to whom these waters were principally designed, but the beasts fared better for their sakes. Thus Christ was primarily *sent to the lost sheep of Israel*, Matt. xv. 24; yet the Gentiles, there compared to dogs, fared better for the children, picking up some crumbs of their bread; and the Jews generally rejecting Christ, the Gentiles came in their stead.

21 [g] This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

[g] Ps. 102. 18. ver. 1, 7. Luke 1. 74, 75. Eph. 1. 5, 6.

This people; my people, as he now called them, ver. 20, consisting in part of the Jews, but especially of the Gentiles; *have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise;* I have created as it were out of nothing, I have called them into my church, that I might have glory and praise from them for so stupendous a mercy.

22 ¶ But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou [h] hast been weary of me, O Israel.

[h] Mal. 1. 13.

But; or, *for*, as this conjunction is oft used. So this may be added as a reason why God called the Gentiles to be his people, because the Jews forsook him. *Thou hast not called upon me;* thou hast grossly neglected or very slightly performed the duties of my worship. *Thou hast been weary of me;* thou hast not esteemed my service to be a privilege, as in truth it is, but as a burden and bondage. Compare Mal. i. 13.

23 [i] Thou hast not brought me the †small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense.

[i] Amos 5. 25. † Heb. *lambs*, or, *kids.*

Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt-offerings; either, 1. Because thou didst not offer thy sacrifices to me, but to idols. Or rather, 2. Because what thou didst offer was not done to me, not for my sake, not from a principle of love and obedience to me, not to please and honour me with it; but merely for thine own ends: which interpretation seems to be favoured by the following clause, and by comparing this with Zech. vii. 5, 6, *Did ye fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat—did ye not eat* for yourselves? *Neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices*, because thou didst either neglect this work of sacrificing to me; or didst perform it merely out of custom or ill design, and not with a purpose to please and glorify me; or didst dishonour me, and pollute thy sacrifices by thy wicked course of life. *I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor*

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wearied thee with incense: so the sense may be this, I did not require these wearisome services of thee, to wit, upon these terms, or to be offered in such a manner, as God speaks, Isa. i. 11—13. But the words may very well be rendered, although *I did not cause thee to serve with offerings, nor weary thee with incense;* the particle *although* being here understood, as it is in many other places, as hath been formerly noted. And so this is an aggravation of their former sin, of being weary of and negligent in his service; although God hath not laid such heavy burdens upon them, nor required such hard services or costly offerings from them, as might give them cause to be weary, nor such as idolaters did freely and greedily perform in the service of their idols.

24 Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou †filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast [k]wearied me with thine iniquities.

† Heb. *made me drunk, or, abundantly moistened.*
k ch. 1. 14. Mal. 2. 17.

Thou hast bought me no sweet cane; or, *calamus*, as this word is rendered, Exod. xxx. 23, which was used in the making of that precious ointment, Exod. xxx. 34, and as a perfume, or for the incense, Exod. xxx. 7: see Jer. vi. 20. The meaning of this clause seems to be this, Thou hast been niggardly in my service, when thou hast spared for no cost in the service of thine idols, as is elsewhere noted. *Neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices;* thou hast offered no more sacrifices than were simply necessary; thou hast not multiplied thy thank-offerings and freewill-offerings, though I have given thee sufficient occasion to do so. *Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins;* thou hast made me to bear the load and burden of thy sins, which are very grievous and oppressive to me, Amos ii. 13, and great exercises of my patience. Yea, thou hast made it necessary for me to take upon me the form of a servant, that I might bear and carry away thy sins. This clause and that which follows are opposed to and aggravated by what he said, ver. 23. I did not make thee to serve or weary thee with offerings, though that work was honourable and beneficial to thee, as well as conducing to my service; but thou hast made me to serve in the vilest manner, with such things as are not only offensive to me, but also pernicious to thee.

25 I, *even* I, *am* he that [l]blotteth out thy transgressions [m]for mine own sake, [n]and will not remember thy sins.

l ch. 44. 22. & 48. 9. Jer. 50. 20. Acts 3. 19.
m Ezek. 36. 22, &c.
n ch. 1. 18. Jer. 31. 34.

I, even I; I whom thou hast thus despised, and wearied, and provoked to destroy thee. *That blotteth out thy transgressions* out of my book, in which they were all written, and to be read unto thee and charged upon thee another day. See Jer. xvii. 1; Rev. xx. 12. Sins are oft compared to debts, Matt. vi. 12, 14, &c., which are written in the creditor's book, and crossed or blotted out when they are paid. *For mine own sake;* being moved thereunto not by thy merits, but by my own mere goodness and free mercy. *Will not remember thy sins;* so as to punish them, and destroy thee for them, as thou deservest.

26 Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

Put me in remembrance: I remember nothing by which thou hast deserved my favour and the pardon of thy sins; if thou knowest any such thing, bring it to my mind, I allow thee free liberty to plead with me, as it follows; and if thou hast right on thy side, I will justify thee. It is an ironical speech, whereby he insulteth over those who were puffed up with an opinion of their own innocency and merit; which was the case of many Jews, as this and other prophets have oft observed.

27 Thy first father hath sinned, and thy †teachers have transgressed against me.

† Heb. *interpreters.*
Mal. 2. 7, 8.

Thy first father; either, 1. Adam, from whom the guilt and filth of sin is propagated to thee; or rather, 2. Abraham, who might well be called *the first father* of the Israelites, because they all descended from him, had all their right and title to God's ordinances and promises, and other special privileges, from God's covenant made with Abraham and with his seed, and who is oft emphatically called their *father*, as Josh. xxiv 2; Isa. li. 2, &c; and the Jews gloried in and trusted to that relation which they had to Abraham, as we read, Matt. iii. 9; John viii. 33, and elsewhere. And this agrees well with the foregoing context. For having sufficiently intimated that they had no merits of their own, he now addeth, that even their father Abraham, to whose merits they trusted, had no merits of his own, nor any occasion of boasting; for he also was a sinful man, and hath left some instances of his failings. Or *the first father* may be put collectively for their *forefathers;* and so he tells them, that as they were sinners, so also were all their progenitors, yea, even the best of them, Abraham, and David, and others, for whose sakes they expected to be pardoned and rewarded. And this indeed is usual with God, to upbraid the Israelites with the sins of their fathers. *Thy teachers;* thy priests and prophets; who were their intercessors with God, and who were generally presumed to be the holiest part of that people; and therefore if these were transgressors, the people had no reason to fancy themselves to be innocent.

28 Therefore [o]I have profaned the ‖princes of the sanctuary, [p]and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

o ch. 47. 6. Lam. 2. 2, 6, 7.
‖ Or, *holy princes.*
p 1 Ps. 79. 4. Jer. 24. 9. Dan. 9. 11. Zech. 8. 13.

I have profaned; as they have made themselves profane, so I have dealt with them as such, without any regard to the sacredness and dignity of their functions. I have exposed them to contempt and destruction. *The princes of the sanctuary;* the highest and best of your priests, whose persons were most sacred, and therefore supposed by themselves and others to be the furthest from danger. *To the curse;* to utter destruction, to which persons or things accursed were devoted, of which this Hebrew word is constantly used. *To reproaches;* to be the objects of their enemies' scorn and reproaches.

CHAP. XLIV.

A further promise of spiritual blessings, 1—6. *The vanity of idols, and folly of idol-makers and worshippers,* 7—20. *An exhortation to praise God,* 21—23, *our Redeemer and Maker,* 24, *for his wisdom,* 25, *truth,* 26, *power,* 27, *and goodness,* 28.

YET now hear, [a]O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen:

a ver. 21. ch. 41. 8. & 43. 1. Jer. 30. 10. & 46. 27, 28.

Although I have chastised thee for thy sins, and had just cause utterly to destroy thee; yet in judgment I will remember mercy, and will still own thee for my servant and chosen people.

2 Thus saith the LORD that made thee, [b]and formed thee from the womb, *which* will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, [c]Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

b ch. 43. 1, 7.
c Deut. 32. 15.

From the womb; from the time of thy birth, or coming out of the womb. From that time that I first took thee to be my people, I have been forming and fashioning thee, by giving thee laws, and ordinances, and teachers, by threatenings and corrections, and many other ways. He seems to allude to the practice of midwives, who use to compose all the parts of the new-born infant into a right frame. *Jesurun;* another name of Jacob or Israel, given to him Deut. xxxii. 15; xxxiii. 5, 26.

3 For I will [d]pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

d ch. 35. 7. Joel 2. 28. John 7. 38. Acts 2. 18.

I will pour water; my Spirit and blessing, which is frequently compared to water; and so it is expounded in the latter part of the verse. *Upon him that is thirsty:* either, 1. Upon him that desires it. Or rather, 2. Upon him that is destitute of it; for what is here *thirsty*, in the next clause it is called *dry ground. My Spirit;* the gifts and graces of my Spirit; which expression he seems designedly to use, to lift up the minds and hearts of the Jews from carnal and

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worldly things, to which they were too much addicted, unto spiritual and heavenly blessings, and thereby to prepare them for the better entertainment of the gospel. *My blessing;* all the blessings of my covenant, both spiritual and temporal.

4 And they shall spring up *as* among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

They shall spring up as among the grass; they shall increase and flourish like grass, and those herbs and plants which grow up in the midst of it.

5 One shall say, I *am* the LORD's; and another shall call *himself* by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe *with* his hand unto the LORD, and surname *himself* by the name of Israel.

The blessing of God upon the Jews shall be so remarkable, that the Gentiles shall join themselves unto them, and accept the Lord for their God, and own themselves for his people.

e ver. 24. ch. 43. 1, 14. f ch. 41. 4. & 48. 12. Rev. 1. 8, 17. & 22. 13.

6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, [e]and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; [f]I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God.

Here God reneweth his contest with idols; which he insisteth upon so oft and so much, because his own people were exceeding prone to idolatry.

g ch. 41. 4, 22. & 45. 21.

7 And [g]who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.

Who, which of all the heathen gods, *as I, shall call, and shall declare?* shall by his powerful call or word cause it to be, and by his infinite foreknowledge declare that it shall be. Or, *shall publish and declare;* two words expressing the same thing, as is usual. *It;* that which shall come to pass, whatsoever it be; which is easily understood out of the following clause. *Set it in order;* orderly relate all future events in the same manner as they shall happen. *For me,* Heb. *to me,* so as I may hear it, and thereby be convinced of their Divinity. *Since I appointed the ancient people;* since the time that I appointed or called the Israelites to be my people, whom he calleth *the ancient people,* because they were his people long before this time; or, as the words may be rendered, *the everlasting people,* because he determined that he would never totally and finally cast them off and destroy them, as he would do other nations. But the words are and may well be otherwise rendered, *since I constituted* or *made* (as this word is elsewhere rendered) *the people of the world;* since I first made man upon earth, as the LXX. and others understand it. Let them give me an account of any of their predictions of future events from the beginning of the world to this day. *The things that are coming, and shall come;* such things as are near at hand, and such as are to come hereafter. *Unto them;* unto their worshippers, who consult their oracles about future events, as I have *told* them *unto thee,* O Jacob, as it follows in the next verse. So the pronoun relative is put for the antecedent, which is left to be understood out of the following clause. Or, *to* or *for themselves,* in their own defence. Although these words might have been omitted in the translation, as being insignificant; such pronouns being oft redundant in the Hebrew language, as Gen. xii. 1, and oft elsewhere, as also in the Greek and Latin.

h ch. 41. 22. i ch. 43. 10, 12. k Deut. 4. 35, 39. & 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 2. 2 Sam. 22. 32. ch. 45. 5. † Heb. *rock,* Deut. 32. 4.

8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: [h]have not I told thee from that time, and have declared *it?* [i]ye *are* even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, [k]*there is* no †God; I know not *any.*

Have not I told thee? thee, O Israel, whom he bids not to fear. The sense is, I call you Israelites to bear me witness, whether I have not, from time to time, acquainted you with things to come, such as your sojourning in a strange land for *four hundred* years, and your deliverance and happiness after that time, Gen. xv. 13, 14, and many things of the like nature? *From that time;* from the time when *I appointed the ancient people,* as I now said, ver. 7. These were pregnant instances of God's prediction of things to come, not only from the beginning of the Jewish commonwealth, but even from the first ages of the world, as unto Enoch, Jude 14, and unto Noah, Gen. vi. 13, to say nothing of what other authors relate concerning Adam and Seth. *Have declared it;* have published it to the world in my sacred records. *My witnesses,* both of my predictions, and of the exact agreeableness of events to them. *Is there a God besides me?* judge by this character whether I be not the only true God. *Yea, there is no God; I know not any;* if any of you be wiser than I am, I am willing to be informed. It is a sarcastical speech. But this clause may be, and is by others, taken interrogatively, *do not I know it?* Is it not a certain and undeniable truth, that there is no other God?

1 ch. 41. 24, 29. † Heb. *desirable.* m Ps. 115. 4, &c.

9 ¶ [l]They that make a graven image *are* all of them vanity; and their †delectable things shall not profit; and they *are* their own witnesses; [m]they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.

Are all of them vanity; hereby discover themselves to be vain, empty, or foolish men. Or thus, *They that make graven images, all of them* make (which word may fitly be repeated out of the foregoing clause, as is very usual in Scripture) *a vanity,* or *a thing of nought.* Which translation seems better to agree, 1. With the following clause, which is added to explain this, in which, not the idol-makers, but the idols themselves, are said to be vain or unprofitable. 2. With the use of the Hebrew word in Scripture, which is never applied to persons, but constantly to things, and sometimes to idols, as 1 Sam. xii. 21. *Their delectable things;* their idols, in the sight and worship of which they take so much pleasure. *They are their own witnesses;* they that make them are witnesses against themselves, and against their idols, because they very well know that they are not gods, but the work of their own hands, in which there is nothing but mean matter and man's art. *They see not, nor know;* or, that *they* (to wit, their *idols*) *do not see nor know,* have neither sense nor understanding. *That they may be ashamed;* therefore they have just cause to be ashamed of their folly and stupidity, in worshipping such senseless things.

n Jer. 10. 5. Hab. 2. 18.

10 Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image [n]*that* is profitable for nothing?

What man in his wits can esteem that a god which his own hands have formed, or melt a graven image (understand out of the former clause, *to be his god*) which is profitable for nothing? He speaks of *melting a graven image,* because the image was first molten and cast in a mould, and then polished and graven with a tool, as was observed before. Or thus, Who art thou, O man, that formest a god, or meltest a graven image to worship it, which is profitable for nothing? Come hither, and let me reason the case with thee; which he doth in the following verses. So this verse is a kind of summons to idolaters to come and plead their own cause.

o Ps. 97. 7. ch. 1. 29. & 42. 17. & 45. 16.

11 Behold, all his fellows shall be [o]ashamed: and the workmen, they *are* of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; *yet* they shall fear, *and* they shall be ashamed together.

All his fellows; either, 1. The workmen, as it follows, who in this work are companions or partners with him, by whose cost and command the work is done. Or, 2. Those who any way assist and encourage him in this work, and join with him in worshipping the image which he maketh. *They are of men;* they are of mankind, and therefore cannot possibly make a god. Or, *they are of the meanest sort of men;* for so the Hebrew word *adam* sometimes signifies. *They shall be ashamed together;* though all combine together, and stand up with all their might to maintain the cause of their false gods, they shall be filled with fear and confusion, when God shall plead his cause against them.

p ch. 40. 19. & 41. 6. Jer. 10. 3, &c. Wisd. 13. 11, &c. ‖ Or, *with an ax.*

12 [p]The smith ‖with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry,

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and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.

Both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers; first he makes the metal soft and pliable, by putting it among burning coals, and then he taketh it out, and beateth it into what form he pleaseth. It must be here noted, that some of these images were made of brass and iron, as others were of gold and silver, Dan. v. 4. *He is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint:* this is mentioned, either, 1. As an argument of the vanity of *idols*, which cannot relieve their poor workmen, when they are ready to faint away through hunger, and thirst, and weariness. Or, 2. As an evidence of great zeal and industry in carrying on this work, so that they forget or neglect to eat and drink when their necessities require it. This I prefer, 1. Because it suits best with the next foregoing clause, *he worketh with the strength of his arms*, i. e. fervently, and putting forth all his might in the work. 2. Because the prophet in this, and in the next following verses, is only describing the mechanical part, or the matter of images, and the art and labour of the workmen in making them; and afterwards proceeds to the theological consideration of the thing, and the confutation of these practices, as we shall see.

13 The carpenter stretcheth out *his* rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house.

He here speaks, either, 1. Of the same image, which is supposed to be made of wood, and then covered with some metal; or, 2. Of another sort of images made of wood, as the former might be made of iron. It is not material which way you understand it. *He marketh it with a line;* he measureth and marketh that portion of wood by his rule and line of which the idol is to be made. *According to the beauty of a man;* in the same comely shape and proportions which are in a living man, whom he designs to represent as exactly as is possible. *That it may remain*, or *sit*, or *dwell;* which implies either, 1. That it cannot stir out of its place; or, 2. That when the image is made, it is set up and fixed in its appointed place. *In the house;* either in the temple appointed for it; or in the dwelling-house of him that made it; that he and his family might more frequently give worship to it, and might receive protection from it, as idolaters vainly imagined.

14 He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he ‖strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish *it*.

‖ Or, *taketh courage.*

The cypress and the oak, which afford the best and most durable timber. *Which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest:* the sense of the words thus rendered is, that he planteth, and with care and diligence improveth, those trees among and above all the trees of the forest, that he or his posterity may thence have materials for their images, and those things which belong to them. And this sense seems to be favoured by the following clause, wherein it is said, *he planteth an ash*, for this very reason. Or the sense may be this, which he suffers to grow to greater strength and largeness than other trees of the forest, that they may be better and fitter for his use. Heb. *and he strengtheneth himself*, &c.; and he useth all his strength among the trees of the forest, in planting such as are proper for this end, in walking hither and thither to survey which is the best of them, in hewing them down, and in other things relating to them.

15 Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth *it*, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth *it;* he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto.

Having related the practices of idolaters, he now discovers the vanity and folly of them; that he maketh his fire and his god of the same materials, distinguished only by the art of man.

16 He burneth part thereof in the fire: with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth *himself*, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire:

He eateth flesh; he dresseth flesh for his eating. *I have seen the fire;* I have felt the warmth of it. *Seeing* is oft put for other senses, as *feeling, hearing*, &c., as hath been oft observed before.

17 And the residue thereof he maketh a god, *even* his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth *it*, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou *art* my god.

18 [q]They have not known nor understood: for [r]he hath †shut their eyes, that they cannot see; *and* their hearts, that they cannot understand.

[q] ch. 45. 20.
[r] 2 Thess. 2. 11.
† Heb. *daubed.*

They have not known nor understood: this showeth that they want common discretion, and have not the understanding of a man in them. *He*, to wit, God; who is easily understood, and is oft expressed by this pronoun *he;* and to whom this very act is frequently ascribed in other places of Scripture. And therefore men need not to be shy in ascribing it to God here. Which yet is to be soberly understood; not as if God did make men wicked, but only permits them so to be, and orders and overrules their wickedness to his own glorious ends. And such passages as these are added in such cases to give an account of the prodigious madness of sinners herein; because, as they wilfully shut their own eyes, and harden their own hearts, so God judicially blinds and hardens them, and sends strong delusions upon them, and gives them up to believe lies, and then it is no wonder if they fall into such dotages.

19 And none †[s]considereth in his heart, neither *is there* knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten *it:* and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to †the stock of a tree?

† Heb. *setteth to his heart.*
[s] ch. 46. 8.
† Heb. *that which comes of a tree?*

None considereth in his heart; whereby he implies that the true cause of this, as well as of other absurd and brutish practices of sinners, is the neglect of serious and impartial consideration of things.

20 He feedeth on ashes: [t]a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, *Is there* not a lie in my right hand?

[t] Hos. 4. 12. Rom. 1. 21. 2 Thess. 2. 11.

He feedeth on ashes, which is an unsavoury, unprofitable, and pernicious food, and no less unsatisfying, uncomfortable, and mischievous is the worship of idols. *A deceived heart;* a mind corrupted and deceived by long custom, deep prejudice, gross error, and especially by his own lusts. *Hath turned him aside* from the way of truth, from the knowledge and worship of the true God, unto this brutish idolatry. *Cannot deliver his soul* from the snares and dangers of idolatry. This *cannot* is to be understood morally, so as to note the great difficulty, but not the utter impossibility of it; for if idolaters would consider things, they might be convinced of and turned from that gross way of wickedness, as is implied from the foregoing verse. *Is there not a lie in my right hand?* what is this idol, which I have made with my right hand, i. e. with all my strength? as was said before; the right hand being the strongest and the chief instrument of this and other actions: which I set at my right hand, as the true God is said in Scripture to be *at the right hand* of his people, Psal. xvi. 8; cix. 31; cxxi. 5: which I highly honour; for the most honourable place was on the right hand, as is known: to which I look and trust for relief and assistance, which God in Scripture is said to afford to his people, by *being at* and *holding of their right hand*, Psal. lxxiii. 23; cx. 5. What, I say, is this idol? Is it not a lie, which though it seems and pretends to be

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something, and to be a god, yet in truth is nothing but vanity and falsehood, deceiving all that put their trust in it?

21 ¶ Remember these, O Jacob and
u ver. 1, 2. Israel; for u thou *art* my servant: I have formed thee; thou *art* my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

Remember these; either these men; or, which comes to one, these things, the deep ignorance and stupidity of idolaters; which may be a warning to thee. *Thou shalt not be forgotten of me;* I will not forget nor forsake thee; and therefore thou shalt have no need of *idols*. Or, as the ancient interpreters and divers others render it, *do not forget me;* what I am, and what I have done, and can and will do, for thee; the forgetting whereof is the ready way to *idolatry*.

x ch. 43. 25. 22 x I have blotted out, as a thick cloud,
y ch. 43. 1. & 48. 20. 1 Cor. 6. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for y I have redeemed thee.

I have blotted out, as a thick cloud; as the sun commonly dissolveth, or the wind scattereth, the thickest and blackest cloud, so as there is no remnant nor appearance of it left. *Return* from thine *idolatry*, and other wicked practices. *I have redeemed thee;* therefore thou art mine, and obliged to return and adhere to me.

z Ps. 69. 34. & 96. 11, 12. ch. 42. 10. & 49. 13. Jer. 51. 48. Rev. 18. 20. 23 z Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done *it:* shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

By such invitations to the senseless creatures to praise God with and for his people, he signifies the transcendent greatness of this mercy and deliverance, sufficient to make even the stones, if it were possible, to break forth into God's praises; and withal, that as the brute creatures were sufferers by man's fall, so they should receive benefit by man's redemption.

a ch. 43. 14. ver. 6. b ch. 43. 1. 24 Thus saith the LORD, a thy redeemer, and b he that formed thee from the womb, I *am* the LORD that maketh all *things;*
c Job 9. 8. Ps. 104. 2. ch. 40. 22. & 42. 5. & 45. 12. & 51. 13. c that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

That formed thee from the womb; of which phrase see above on ver. 2. *That maketh all things, &c.;* and therefore I can save thee without the help of any other gods or men.

d ch. 47. 13. e Jer. 50. 36. 25 That d frustrateth the tokens e of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that
f 1 Cor. 1. 20. turneth wise *men* backward, f and maketh their knowledge foolish;

That frustrateth the tokens of the liars; of the magicians, and astrologers, and sorcerers, who were numerous, and greatly employed and esteemed in Babylon, Isa. xlvii. 12, 13; Dan. ii. 2, 48, and who had foretold the long continuance and prosperity of the Chaldean empire. But, saith God, I will confute their tokens or predictions, and prove them to be liars. *And maketh diviners mad* with grief for the disappointment of their hopes and predictions, and their disgrace and loss which followed it. *That turneth wise men backward;* stopping their way, thwarting and blasting their designs, so as they can proceed no further, but are forced to retreat and take new counsels, and giving them up to such counsels and courses as are foolish and pernicious to themselves.

g Zech. 1. 6. 26 g That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will
† Heb. wastes. raise up the † decayed places thereof:

Of his servant; of his servants, the prophets, as appears from the next clause, which answers to this, where he useth the plural number, *his messengers;* Isaiah and other prophets, whom God sent upon this errand, to foretell the destruction of Babylon, and the redemption of his people.

27 h That saith to the deep, Be dry, and
h See Jer. 50. 38. & 51. 32, 36. I will dry up thy rivers:

That with a word can and will dry up the sea (which in Scripture is very frequently called *the deep*, as Psal. cvii. 24; Isa. lxiii. 13; Jonah ii. 3, &c.) and rivers, and remove all impediments, and make the way plain, that my people may return. Some think these words relate to that stratagem of Cyrus, whereby he diverted, and in a great measure dried up, the river Euphrates, and made it passable for his army. But he seems rather to allude to that great action of God's drying up the Red Sea and Jordan, to give passage to the Israelites.

28 That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure:
2 Chron. 36. 22, 23. Ezra i. 1, &c. ch. 45. 13. even saying to Jerusalem, i Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Cyrus, whom God here designeth by his proper name *two hundred* years before he was born, that this might be an undeniable evidence of the certainty and exactness of God's foreknowledge, and a convincing argument, and so most fit to conclude this dispute between God and idols. *He is my shepherd;* him will I set up to be the shepherd of my people, to rescue them from wolves or tyrants, to gather them together, to rule them gently, and to provide comfortably for them. *All my pleasure;* all that I command him to do, even to give leave and order for the rebuilding of the city and temple of Jerusalem, as it here follows.

CHAP. XLV.

Cyrus's work and strength foretold, 1—4. *God hath all power,* 5—12; *will assist Cyrus,* 13, 14. *The mystery of Providence,* 15. *Idols and their worshippers shall be destroyed, and God alone exalted,* 16—21. *The Gentiles come in to Christ,* 22—25.

THUS saith the LORD to his anointed, cir. 712.
a ch. 41. 13. ‖ Or, strengthened. b ch. 41. 2. Dan. 5. 30. to Cyrus, whose a right hand I ‖ have holden, b to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

His anointed, i. e. his king, whom God hath designed, and separated, and fitted, in all respects, for his work and service; in which and such-like respects divers persons are said to be anointed, who never had any material oil poured upon them, as the king of Tyrus, Ezek. xxviii. 14, and Christ, Isa. lxi. 1, and Zerubbabel, Zech. iv. 14, and Christians, 2 Cor. i. 21; 1 John ii. 27. And they are thus called by way of allusion to the practice of the Jews, whose kings were frequently anointed, 1 Sam. x. 1; xvi. 13, &c. *I have holden,* or *strengthened;* whom I will powerfully assist, teaching his hands to war, as the phrase is, Psal. xviii. 34, supporting and directing his right hand to strike home. *Nations;* the Babylonians, and those other nations which were confederate with them, and fought for them, as may be gathered from Jer. li. 9. *I will loose the loins of kings;* I will weaken them, for a man's strength consists much in his loins, and receiveth some advantage by the girding of his loins: or, I will take away their girdle, which was about their loins, to wit, their power and authority, whereof that was an ensign, of which see on Job xii. 18; Isa. xxii. 21. *To open before him the two-leaved gates;* the great and magnificent gates of their cities and palaces, which shall be opened to him as conqueror.

2 I will go before thee, c and make the
c ch. 40. 4. d Ps. 107. 16. crooked places straight: d I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

I will go before thee, to remove all obstructions, and to prepare the way for thee, as it follows. *I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron;* I will destroy all them that oppose thee, and carry thee through the greatest difficulties.

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3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret
e ch. 41. 23. places, [e]that thou mayest know that I,
f Ex. 33. 12, 17. ch. 43. 1. & 49. 1. the LORD, which [f]call *thee* by thy name, *am* the God of Israel.

The treasures of darkness; such as have been stored up and long kept in dark and secret places, as well in Babylon, Jer. l. 37; li. 13, as in other countries, which Cyrus conquered; and from which he took infinite treasures, as Pliny and others relate. *That thou mayest know,* by the accomplishment of these predictions.

g ch. 44. 1. 4 For [g]Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee,
h 1 Thess. 4. 5. though thou hast [h]not known me.

I have even called thee by thy name; I have called thee to this honour, and that by name; not for thy sake, but for Israel's sake; therefore do not despise them, thou wilt find them a poor and enslaved people, neither be puffed up into a great opinion of thyself. *I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me;* I knew and called thee by thy name, when thou didst neither know nor think of me; nay, when thou hadst no being.

i Deut. 4. 35, 39. & 32. 39. ch. 44. 8. & 46. 9. k ver. 14, 18, 21, 22. l Ps. 18. 32, 39. 5 ¶ I [i]*am* the LORD, and [k]*there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: [l]I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

I girded thee; I made thee strong and active, and fitted and disposed thee for these great and warlike enterprises. For these were the uses and significations of *girding* in Scripture: see 1 Kings xx. 11; Psal. xviii. 32; xlv. 3.

m Ps. 102. 15. ch. 37. 20. Mal. 1. 11. 6 [m]That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none beside me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else.

That they may know; that all nations may know it by my foretelling of these things so long beforehand, and by the wonderful success that I shall give thee, and by my overruling thine heart, and counsels, and victories, to the deliverance of my people according to my promise.

7 I form the light, and create darkness:
n Amos 3. 6. I make peace, and [n]create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

All men's comforts and calamities come from my hand.

o Ps. 72. 3. & 85. 11. 8 [o]Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.

Let the skies pour down righteousness; the righteous and gracious acts of God for his people shall be so many and illustrious, as if God rained down showers of righteousness out of heaven. *Let the earth open;* open itself, either to receive those showers of righteousness to be poured down from heaven, or to bring forth those fruits which might be expected from such showers. *Let them,* the heavens and the earth conspiring together, *bring forth salvation;* the redemption of God's people. *Let righteousness spring up together;* together with salvation. Whereas persons or people are sometimes delivered from their troubles by unjust courses, this shall be effected with righteousness, both on God's part, who will hereby assert his own justice and faithfulness to his people; and on Cyrus's part, who will do a most righteous and worthy action in rescuing a righteous and oppressed nation from cruel tyrants and oppressors. *I the Lord have created it;* this great work of salvation and righteousness; whereof, though Cyrus is the instrument, I am the chief author.

9 Woe unto him that striveth with
p ch. 64. 8. [p]his Maker! *Let* the potsherd *strive* with
q ch. 29. 16. Jer. 18. 6. Rom. 9. 20. the potsherds of the earth. [q]Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! This *woe* is denounced, either, 1. Against those Jews who, hearing this and many other prophecies and promises of their deliverance out of captivity, and yet continuing in captivity, were ever prone to distrust God, and to murmur at him for punishing them so grievously, and for not making more speed to deliver them. Or, 2. Against the Babylonians, the great opposers of Cyrus, and of the deliverance of God's people, whom they were resolved to keep in bondage, in spite of God and men. And therefore as God here makes many glorious promises to Cyrus, in order to this work; so he pronounceth a curse upon them who should endeavour to hinder it, and admonisheth the Babylonians, that they did not only fight against Cyrus, a man like themselves, but against God, the Maker and Governor of the world. For what Nebuchadnezzar spoke with respect to those three Jews, Dan. iii. 15, the Babylonians spoke in their hearts, in reference to the people of the Jews, *Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth;* contend, if you please, with your fellow creatures, but not with your Creator. *Thy work:* he turneth his speech to the potter, of whom he spake in the third person in the foregoing clause; such sudden changes of persons being usual in prophetical writings. *He hath no hands;* the potter that made me had no hands, i. e. no ability or skill to make good work.

10 Woe unto him that saith unto *his* father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?

As it were an absurd and impudent thing for a child to quarrel with his parents, either simply for begetting him, or for begetting him of this or that sex, contrary to his desire; no better is it for any persons to quarrel with God the Maker and *Father of all things,* as God is called, 1 Cor. viii. 6, for disposing of them and their affairs by his providence as he sees fit, and otherwise than they desire or expect; as the Jews quarrelled with God for bringing them into captivity, and the Babylonians for translating the empire from them to the Persians.

11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning [r]my sons, and con- r Jer. 31. 9.
cerning [s]the work of my hands command s Is. 29. 23.
ye me.

His Maker; Israel's Maker, who not only created him, as I did all others, but made him a new creature, and a peculiar people to myself. *Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me:* the words thus rendered contain a concession or permission; and the sense may be this, Although the potter doth not give an account to the clay, nor parents to their children; yet I will so far condescend to you, as to be at your command in this matter, to give you an account of these great actions of mine, for which you quarrel with me. As for the expression, *command ye me,* though it seem to be harsh, yet there are instances in Scripture of such wonderful condescensions, as when it is said, that *the Lord will make* his people in heaven *to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them,* Luke xii. 37. But the words seem to be better rendered interrogatively, as they are by some interpreters, *Do you, or will you, ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of mine hands will ye command me?* Will you not allow me that liberty which yourselves take, of disposing of my own children and works as I see fit? Must I give you an account of these matters? Will you set bounds to me by your commands, that I shall do this, and not that, according to your good pleasure? This is intolerable boldness in you; and yet I am able to give a good account of my actions. And the account is given in the following verse.

12 [t]I have made the earth, and [u]cre- t ch. 42. 5. Jer. 27. 5.
ated man upon it: I, *even* my hands, have u Gen. 1. 26, 27.
stretched out the heavens, and [x]all their x Gen. 2. 1.
host have I commanded.

I have made the earth, and created man upon it; they are wholly and solely my creatures, and therefore absolutely at my disposal. *All their host have I commanded;* I have

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commanded them to be, or made them by my command, or the word of my power: compare Psal. cxlviii. 5.

13 [y]I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will ‖direct all his ways: he shall [z]build my city, and he shall let go my captives, [a]not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.

[y] ch. 41. 2.
‖ Or, *make straight.*
[z] 2 Chron. 36. 22, 23. Ezra 1. 1, &c. etc. 44. 28.
[a] ch. 52. 3. See Rom. 3. 24.

I have raised him; Cyrus, who was named before, ver. 1. *In righteousness;* not in a way of absolute sovereignty, as I might have done, but most justly, to punish the wicked Babylonians, to plead the cause of the innocent oppressed ones, to manifest my own righteousness, and truth, and goodness. *Direct all his ways;* guide and assist him in all his travels and marches, in all his attempts, and battles, and sieges, crowning him with success in all his undertakings. *Not for price nor reward;* freely, without requiring any ransom for or from them, as is usual in such cases. Such an exact prediction of these things, which depended wholly upon the mind and will of Cyrus, is mentioned here, as an infallible evidence of the certainty of God's foreknowledge, and of his being the only true God, because idols could discover no such things at such a distance of time.

14 Thus saith the LORD, [b]The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; [c]in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, *saying*, [d]Surely God *is* in thee; and [e]*there is* none else, *there is* no God.

[b] Ps. 68. 31. & 72. 10, 11. ch. 49. 23. & 60. 9, 10, 14, 16. Zech. 8. 22, 23.
[c] Ps. 149. 8.
[d] 1 Cor. 14. 25.
[e] ver. 5.

The labour of Egypt; the wealth gotten by their labour. *Men of stature;* a tall and strong people, who yet shall use their strength not to oppose thee, but to serve thee, and to bring their labour to thee. *Shall come over unto thee;* either, 1. To thee, O Cyrus: because thou wast so generous as to dismiss my people freely, I will give thee another and a better recompence, even *the labour of Egypt*, &c. Or, 2. To thee, O my city, or my captivity or captive people. For it is not to be neglected, that there are no less than six pronouns in this verse, all which are of the feminine gender; which seems not to agree to Cyrus. It is true which is objected by the most learned author of this part of the English Annotations, that the Scripture oft speaks of states and kingdoms in the feminine gender; but when it speaks of any particular king or emperor, it constantly speaks of him in the masculine gender, as it doth of Cyrus in this very chapter, ver. 1, and elsewhere. And thus the sense of the place seems to be this, Jerusalem shall not only be rebuilt, but the wealth and glory of other countries shall be brought to it again, as it was in former times; which although it was in part verified in Jerusalem, yet it was much more fully accomplished in the church of the gospel, which is oft expressed in Scripture under the name of Jerusalem; and in the accession of the Gentiles to that church, which began in Jerusalem, and from thence spread itself into all the parts of the world. And this sense seems best to agree with the latter part of this and with the following verse, as we shall see. *In chains they shall come over;* they shall be taken captive by thee, and willingly submit themselves to thee; which was accomplished in the conversion of the Gentiles, whose subjection to God's church is oft expressed in Scripture under such metaphors as this; as Psal. xlv. 5; cxlix. 8, &c.; Psal. lxviii. 18, compared with Eph. iv. 8. *They shall make supplication unto thee;* to obtain thy favour and society. *Surely God is in thee*, or, *with thee.* We plainly discern that God is on thy side, or in the midst of thee; and therefore we desire to join ourselves with thee. *There is none else, there is no God;* we are now convinced that thou art the only true God, and that idols are vain and empty nothings; which was but very obscurely fulfilled in Cyrus's time, but was most evidently and eminently accomplished in the days of the Messiah, of whom Cyrus was a type; as also this deliverance of the Jews from Babylon by Cyrus was a type of the redemption of God's people by Christ.

15 Verily thou *art* a God [f]that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

[f] Ps. 44. 24. ch. 8. 17. & 57. 17.

These are the words of the prophet, drawn from him by the contemplation of the great and various works and dispensations of God towards his church, and in the world. *That hidest thyself*, to wit, from thy people for a season. Thy counsels are deep and incomprehensible, thy ways and carriages are past finding out, and full of beautiful variety. Sometimes thou hidest thy face, and withdrawest thy help from thy people, and sometimes thou dost show thyself to be their God and Saviour, as it follows. And therefore it is meet that we should patiently wait for the accomplishment of these glorious things here promised to us. And this admonition is most fitly inserted here, to prevent the mistakes of God's people, and to intimate that these promises were not to be speedily executed, but that they must expect and prepare for many and sharp afflictions before that time should come, which yet should end in their salvation.

16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together *that are* [g]makers of idols.

[g] ch. 44. 11.

They; the idolatrous Gentiles, as it is explained in the end of the verse, opposed to Israel in the beginning of the next verse. *Makers;* either the artificers, or the chief masters that set them on work, and consequently all their worshippers; although the makers being most guilty, and the cause of the sins of others, might justly expect a higher degree of confusion.

17 [h]*But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

[h] ch. 26. 4. ver. 25. Rom. 11. 26.

With an everlasting salvation; not for a short time, as it was in the days of the judges and of the kings, under whom their dangers and calamities did frequently return upon them; but unto all ages, as it follows; whence it appears that he speaks not only nor chiefly of their deliverance out of Babylon, which was far from being complete or perpetual, as appears both from Scripture, as Ezra ix. 8, and elsewhere, and from other authors; but of their redemption by Christ, by which this was truly and fully verified unto a great number of Israelites after the flesh, and especially unto the mystical, God's church and people, who are frequently called in Scripture by that name; as the ordinances and privileges of the gospel are commonly described in the Old Testament by expressions borrowed from the Levitical dispensation. And that this is the meaning of the place is evident from ver. 22, wherein *all the ends of the earth* are said to be sharers in this salvation.

18 For thus saith the LORD [i]that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: [k]I *am* the LORD; and *there is* none else.

[i] ch. 42. 5.
[k] ver. 5.

This description of God is here added, either, 1. To detect the vanity of idols, by asserting that none was to be owned as the true God besides that one God who made the heavens and the earth, and the inhabitants thereof. Or, 2. To demonstrate God's sufficiency to fulfil all these glorious promises made to his church, because he made the world of nothing, and upholds it by the word of his power; and withal to discover God's goodness to mankind, inasmuch as he did not create the earth in vain, but for the use and comfort of men, that it might be a fit habitation for them; whence it was easy to infer that God would much more be gracious to his own people.

19 I have not spoken in [l]secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: [m]I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

[l] Deu. 30. 11. ch. 48. 16.
[m] Ps. 19. 8. & 119. 137, 138.

I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: the heathen idols deliver their oracles darkly and doubtfully, in obscure cells and caverns of the earth, or out of the bel-

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lies of their priests; but I have delivered my oracles to Israel publicly and plainly, as one that was neither afraid nor ashamed to utter my mind, lest I should be convinced of folly and falsehood; which was the case of idols. *Seek ye me in vain;* serve and worship me for nought. As I appointed them work, so I promised, and from time to time have given, and shall give, them abundant recompence for their service; whereas the Gentiles seek to their idols in vain, for they can do them no good, as is observed in the next verse. *I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right;* I require nothing of my people which is not highly just and good; whereas the idols commanded their worshippers to do many sinful and shameful things, even in their worship, as is notoriously known.

20 ¶ Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: [n]they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save.

n ch. 44. 17, 18, 19. & 46. 7. & 48. 7. Rom. 1. 22, 23.

Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together; to debate the business with me concerning the divinity of your idols, and hear what I have said, and am now about to say again, in that matter. *Ye that are escaped of the nations;* the remnant of the Gentiles, which shall survive those great and many destructions which I am bringing upon the heathen nations for their abominable idolatries and other wickedness. Let these dreadful judgments upon others, and God's singular mercy in sparing you, awaken you to a more impartial and serious consideration of this point, and cast off those idols, which have now discovered their own vanity and inability to help those who serve them and trust in them. *They have no knowledge;* they hereby discover their deep ignorance and stupidity. *That set up* in a high place, where it may be seen and worshipped.

21 Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: [o]who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the Lord? [p]and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me.

o ch. 41. 22. & 43. 9. & 44. 7. & 46. 10. & 48. 14.

p ver. 5, 14, 18. ch. 44. 8. & 46. 9. & 49. 3, &c.

Let them take counsel together, to maintain the cause of their idols. *Who hath declared this?* this great work of which I have spoken, concerning Babylon's destruction, and the redemption of God's people. *A just God and a Saviour;* whereas the gods of the heathens are neither just nor saviours to their people, but wicked, and the authors and abettors of all sorts of wickedness; and so far from being either able or willing to save their worshippers, that they are the chief occasion of their utter destruction.

22 [q]Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.

q Ps. 22. 27. & 65. 5.

Upon these considerations, I advise all people upon earth, from one end to the other, to cast away their *idols,* and to turn their eyes and hearts to me, expecting salvation from me, and from me only; and their labour shall not be in vain; for they shall be saved: the imperative being put for the future, as Gen. xlii. 18, and oft elsewhere. And this is not only an exhortation to the Gentiles to turn from *idols* to God, but a prediction that they shall turn to him, and look upon Christ, who shall be the author of salvation to all that obey him, whether Jews or Gentiles, which is confirmed by the following verse.

23 [r]I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every [s]knee shall bow, [t]every tongue shall swear.

r Gen. 22. 16. Heb. 6. 13. s Rom. 14. 11. Phil. 2. 10. t Gen. 31. 53. Deut. 6. 13. Ps. 63. 11. ch. 65. 16.

I have sworn by myself, which is the highest and most solemn oath that is possible, Heb. vi. 13, and therefore signifies that the matter here sworn is of an extraordinary importance. *The word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness;* it is not a vain word rashly uttered, and afterwards never remembered nor observed, but what I sincerely speak, and will most faithfully and infallibly perform. *Shall not return,* to wit, *unto me void,* or without effect, as this phrase is more fully delivered, Isa. lv. 11. It is a metaphor from ambassadors, who sometimes return to their princes without any success in their business. *Unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear;* not only the Jews, but a people of all nations, shall worship me, and submit to my laws; which is signified by an outward act, the bowing of the knee, which is a posture of reverence and subjection; and by one eminent part of God's worship, which is swearing by his name.

24 ‖ Surely, shall *one* say, in the Lord have I [u]†righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and [x]all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

‖ Or, *Surely he shall say of me, In the Lord is all righteousness and strength.*
u Jer. 23. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 30. † Heb. *righteousnesses.*
x ch. 41. 11.

Shall one say; or, *shall* he *say;* each or every one of those whom he now said that they should bow their knees to God, and swear by him, ver. 23. Or, *it shall be said;* such active verbs being oft used impersonally. *In the Lord;* by or from God alone, or the Messiah, who is the true Jehovah as well as man. *Have I righteousness,* to *justify me from all things, from which I could not be justified by the law of Moses,* as is said, Acts xiii. 39. This plainly points us to the Messiah, whose very name is, *The Lord our Righteousness,* Jer. xxiii. 6, and whose great business it was to *bring in everlasting righteousness,* Dan. ix. 24, and who is *made unto us of God righteousness,* 1 Cor. i. 30. *Strength;* support and assistance to bear all my burdens, and overcome all my enemies, and perform all my duties. The sense is, the Gentiles shall expect and obtain from Christ both justification, or forgiveness of sins by his blood, and sanctification by his Spirit. *To him shall men come;* the Gentiles shall come to God and Christ, either, 1. By constraint or necessity, to be judged by him at the last day; or, 2. Willingly, by prayer to seek, and by faith to receive, righteousness and strength from him; which seems better to agree with the foregoing clause, which speaks of true believers only. *Coming* to Christ is put for *believing on him,* Matt. xi. 28; John v. 40; vi. 35—37, and elsewhere. *And all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed;* or, *but* (as this particle is oft rendered) *all that are,* &c. But all his implacable enemies shall be brought to shame and punishment.

25 [y]In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and [z]shall glory.

y ver. 17. z 1 Cor. 1. 31.

All the seed of Israel; all Israelites indeed, whether Jews or Gentiles; all believers, who are frequently called God's Israel in Scripture, as Psal. xxiv. 6; Rom. ix. 6; xi. 26; Gal. vi. 16. *Justified;* acquitted both from real guilt before God, and from all false aspersions before the world; for this justification of the true Israel is opposed to their enemies *being ashamed,* ver. 24, which seems to design their public shame and confusion before God and men. *Shall glory;* shall not only receive him, but shall rejoice and triumph in him as their God and portion.

CHAP. XLVI.

The ruin of Babylon and her idols, 1, 2. *God's love and faithfulness to the Jews,* 3, 4. *Idols not to be compared with God,* 5—8, *for power, knowledge, and sure salvation,* 9—13.

BEL [a]boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages *were* heavy loaden; [b]*they are* a burden to the weary *beast.*

cir. 712.
a ch. 21. 9. Jer. 50. 2. & 51. 44.
b Jer. 10. 5.

Bel; the chief *idol* of the Babylonians, Jer. l. 2; li. 44, called by profane historians Jupiter Belus. *Boweth down;* as the Babylonians used to *bow down* to him to worship him, so now he boweth down and submits himself to the victorious Persians. *Nebo;* another of the famous *idols,* which used to deliver oracles, as his name signifies. *Their idols were upon the beasts;* were taken and broken, and the materials of them, which were gold, and silver, and brass, as both Scripture and other authors witness, were carried upon beasts into Persia. *Your carriages,* O ye Persians; to

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whom he suddenly turneth his speech, as is usual; *were heavy laden;* they lie upon the backs of your cattle like dull, and unprofitable, and heavy burdens to the beasts, as they had been to men before.

2 They stoop, they bow down together;
c Jer. 48. 7. they could not deliver the burden, c but
† Heb. *their soul.* †themselves are gone into captivity.

They; either, 1. The idols, of whom these words are used, ver. 1. Or, 2. The Babylonians, who are sufficiently implied in that expression, *their idols*, ver. 1. *They bow down together;* either, 1. One as well as another; or, 2. The Babylonians and their *idols* together, neither could help the other. *They could not deliver the burden;* either, 1. The *idols* could not deliver themselves, who were now a burden to the beasts, and carried away by them; or, 2. The Babylonians could not deliver their *idols*, which he now had called *burdens*. And this sense seems most probable from the following clause, which clearly speaks of the same persons or things; *but themselves*, &c., Heb. *their souls;* for although *the soul* is here put for the person, as it commonly is, yet that title is never given to any *idol* or lifeless thing, but only to such creatures as have or had souls within their bodies. So the meaning of this and the foregoing verse is this, that neither the Babylonians nor their *idols* could either save themselves or one another, but both are bowed down and gone into captivity together.

3 ¶ Hearken unto me, O house of Ja-
d Ex. 19. 4. Deut. 1. 31. & 32. 11. Ps. 71. 6. ch. 63. 9. cob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, d which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb:

All the remnant of the house of Israel; fitly so called, with respect either, 1. To all the tribes of Israel, ten of which were now lost and gone; or, 2. To the state of the Jews at their return from Babylon, there being only a remnant of the two tribes which did return. *Which are carried from the womb;* whom I have nourished and cared for from time to time, ever since you were a people, and came out of Egypt, and that as affectionately and tenderly as parents bring up their own children.

e Ps. 102. 27. Mal. 3. 6. f Ps. 48. 14. & 73. 18. 4 And *even* to *your* old age e I *am* he;
and *even* to hoar hairs f will I carry *you:*
I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver *you.*

And that care and kindness which I have had for you from the beginning, I will continue to you to the end; never forsaking you, unless you wilfully and obstinately cast me off, as the Jews did when their Messiah came. You are my workmanship, both as you are men, and as you are my peculiar people; and therefore I will preserve and deliver you.

g ch. 40. 18, 25. 5 ¶ g To whom will ye liken me, and
make *me* equal, and compare me, that
we may be like?

If you are tempted or inclined at any time to exchange me for an *idol*, do me and yourselves this right, seriously to consider, whether you can find another God who will be more able and more ready to do you good than I have been; which if you can do, I am content you should prefer him before me; but if not, as will appear by what I am now saying, ver. 6, 7, then it is best for you to adhere to your ancient God and Friend.

h ch. 40. 19. & 41. 6, 7. & 44. 12, 19. Jer. 10. 3. 6 h They lavish gold out of the bag,
and weigh silver in the balance, *and* hire
a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god:
they fall down, yea, they worship.

Maketh it a god; let us suppose, a god made with the greatest cost and art.

i Jer. 10. 5. 7 i They bear him upon the shoulder,
they carry him, and set him in his place,
and he standeth; from his place shall he
k ch. 45. 20. not remove: yea, k *one* shall cry unto
him, yet can he not answer, nor save him
out of his trouble.

They carry him; either, 1. In pomp upon solemn occasions; or, 2. From that place where he is made, unto that place where they intend to set him up, as it is expressed in the following words. *Shall he not remove;* or rather, *he cannot remove.* He can stir neither hand nor foot to help his people.

8 Remember this, and shew yourselves
men: l bring *it* again to mind, O ye trans- l ch. 44. 19. & 47. 7.
gressors.

Remember this, consider these things which I now speak, O ye Israelites, *and show yourselves men;* act like reasonable creatures, and be not so brutish as to worship your own works; be so wise and courageous as to withstand all solicitation to *idolatry. Bring it again to mind;* think of this again and again. *O ye transgressors;* you who have been guilty of this foolish sin; and therefore are obliged to take the better heed that you do not relapse into it again.

9 m Remember the former things of old: m Deut. 32. 7.
for I *am* God, and n *there is* none else; n ch. 45. 5, 21.
I am God, and *there is* none like me,

Remember the former things of old; what I have done for you, and in the world, my evident predictions of future things justified by the event, and those other miraculous works whereby I have abundantly proved my Divinity.

10 o Declaring the end from the begin- o ch. 45. 21.
ning, and from ancient times *the things* p Ps. 33. 11. Prov. 19. 21. & 21. 30. Acts 5. 39. Heb. 6. 17.
that are not *yet* done, saying, p My counsel
shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Declaring the end from the beginning; foretelling from the beginning of the world, or from the beginning of your nation, those future events which should happen in succeeding ages, even to the end of the world, or to the end of your commonwealth; for such predictions we find delivered by Moses, the first founder of their commonwealth. *My counsel shall stand;* as I will not, so no other power can, disappoint my purposes and predictions.

11 Calling a ravenous bird q from the q ch. 41. 2, 25.
east, † the man r that executeth my counsel † Heb. *the man of my counsel.*
from a far country: yea, s I have spoken r ch. 44. 28. & 45. 13.
it, I will also bring it to pass; I have s Num. 23. 19.
purposed *it*, I will also do it.

Calling a ravenous bird; Cyrus, called *a bird* for his swiftness and great expedition, and *ravenous* for his fierceness and victoriousness over his enemies. *From the east;* from Persia, as Isa. xli. 2. *That executeth my counsel*, concerning the deliverance of my people, and the destruction of their cruel oppressors, the Babylonians. *From a far country;* from Persia, which was far from Babylon, but much farther from Judea.

12 ¶ Hearken unto me, ye t stout- t Ps. 76. 5.
hearted, u that *are* far from righteousness: u Rom. 10. 3.

Ye stout-hearted; or, *ye whose hearts are proud*, or *hard*, or *stubborn.* He speaks either, 1. To the Babylonians, You who are stout against God, and say or think that neither God nor any man can deliver my people out of your hands: or rather, 2. To *the house of Jacob*, expressed ver. 3, where he bespeaks them in the same words here used, *hearken to me;* and to whom alone he directeth his speech in this whole chapter; for though he speaketh of the Babylonians, yet he doth not speak to them; and to whom the prophet, for the most part, turneth his speech in all his prophecies, unless where there is something in the text or context which determineth it to some other person or people. And this very crime of stoutness or hardness of heart is most justly and most frequently charged upon the Jews by their own prophets every where, because of their gross contempt of and incorrigibleness under all God's words and works. And the prophet speaks this either to the Jews of his generation, or rather to that generation which was carried captive to Babylon, whose stout-heartedness is particularly noted and reproved, Zech. vii. 11, 12. Compare Mal. iii. 13—15. *That are far from righteousness;* that are not only void of, but enemies to righteousness and true holiness; that give up yourselves to wickedness, that despise my counsels, and promises, and threatenings.

13 x I bring near my righteousness; x ch. 51. 5. Rom. 1. 17. & 3. 21.
it shall not be far off, and my salvation
y shall not tarry: and I will place z salva- y Hab. 2. 3. z ch. 62. 11.
tion in Zion for Israel my glory.

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I bring near my righteousness: though you are most unrighteous persons, and have given me just cause to *make you to know my breach of promise*, as I threatened in the like case, Numb. xiv. 34; yet I will show myself to be a righteous and faithful God, making good my promise of delivering you out of Babylon after seventy years; and though you think the time long, and are apt to distrust the thing itself, yet it shall come, and that speedily, *I will bring it near*, or *cause it to approach* or *come unto you*, and, as it follows, *it shall not tarry* beyond the appointed time. *It shall not be far off;* my work of saving you from the Babylonish captivity. *I will place salvation in Zion;* I will bring my people from Babylon to Zion, and there I will save them from all their enemies. *For Israel my glory;* in whom I will once again glory as my people, and the illustrious monuments of my glorious wisdom, and power, and truth, and goodness; whom I will make a great and glorious people, though now they are mean and contemptible, and in whom I will once more settle my glorious presence and ordinances.

CHAP. XLVII.

God's judgments upon Babylon and Chaldea; for their cruelty towards God's people, 1—6; *their pride and other sins*, 7—10. *Their enchantments shall not deliver them*, 11—15.

cir. 712. COME [a]down, and [b]sit in the dust, O
[a] Jer. 48. 18. [b] ch. 3. 26. virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: *there is* no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

Come down from thy throne, as it follows, *and sit in the dust;* either necessarily, because thou shalt have no higher seat; or voluntarily, as mourners do, bewailing thine approaching calamities. *O virgin daughter of Babylon;* so called, either, 1. Because she had not yet been humbled and conquered; or rather, 2. Because she was *tender* and *delicate*, as the next clause informeth us. *There is no throne*, to wit, for thee. The empire is taken away from thee, and translated to the Persians. *Thou shalt no more be called;* either be reputed so, or rather be so; for *to be called* is frequently put for *to be*, as hath been divers times noted. Thou shalt be reduced to great hardships and miseries.

[c] Ex. 11. 5. Judg. 16. 21. Matt. 24. 41. 2 [c]Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

Take the millstones; betake thyself to the millstones; as we commonly say, *Take thy bed*, or, *Betake thyself to thy bed.* The meaning is, Thou shalt be brought down to the basest kind of slavery, which grinding at the mill was esteemed; of which see on Exod. xi. 5; Judg. xvi. 21; Job xxxi. 10; Lam. v. 13. For this work was not performed by horses, as now it is, but by the labour of slaves and captives. *Grind meal;* grind bread corn into meal for thy master's use. Such metonymical expressions we find Isa. xxviii. 28; Hos. viii. 7, and elsewhere. *Uncover thy locks;* or, *thine hair.* Take off the ornaments wherewith such women as were free and of good quality used to cover and dress their heads. This and the following passages, though delivered in the form of a command, are only predictions of what they should be forced to do or suffer, as appears from the next verse. *Make bare the leg, uncover the thigh;* gird up thy garments close and short about thee, that thou mayst be fit for service, and for travelling on foot, and, as it follows, for passing over those rivers, through which thou wilt be constrained to wade, in the way to the land of thy captivity.

[d] ch. 3. 17. & 20. 4. Jer. 13. 22, 26. Nah. 3. 5. [e] Rom. 12. 19. 3 [d]Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: [e]I will take vengeance, and I will not meet *thee as* a man.

Thy nakedness shall be uncovered; either, 1. For want of raiment to cover it; or rather, 2. By thine enemies in way of scorn and contumely, by comparing this place with Ezek. xvi. 37; xxiii. 29. *Thy shame shall be seen* upon thee for thy many and great injuries done to my people. *I will take vengeance*, as a man meets his enemy in the field, to contend with thee. *I will not meet thee as a man*, with moderation and gentleness, as those men who have not quite put off humanity use to do; but like a lion tearing thee to pieces, to which God in such case compareth himself, as Hos. v. 14; xiii. 7, 8: compare Hos. xi. 4.

4 *As for* [f]our redeemer, the LORD of hosts *is* his name, the Holy One of Israel. [f] ch. 43. 3. 14. Jer. 50. 34.

According to this version, the prophet inserteth this passage in the midst of this prophecy against Babylon, as Jacob inserteth a like passage in the midst of his blessings and prophecies concerning his children, Gen. xlix. 18. And this may be here interposed, either, 1. As the reason why the judgment here denounced should be certainly inflicted, because he who had undertaken it was the *Lord of hosts*, and therefore able to effect it, and *the Holy One*, and *the Redeemer of Israel*, whom the Babylonians had cruelly oppressed, whose quarrel God would avenge upon them, and whom he had determined and promised to deliver out of their hands. Or, 2. As a pathetical exclamation or acclamation of God's people for this wonderful work of breaking the staff of their oppressors, which they here ascribe to God, as he is their God and Redeemer, whom they here make their boast of, and whom they celebrate for this glorious deliverance. But because these words, *as for*, are not in the Hebrew text, and therefore another word may be as conveniently supplied, this verse may be, and is by some learned interpreters, otherwise rendered, and joined with the foregoing words thus, *I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man*, saith *our Redeemer, whose name is the Lord of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel.* For the word *saith* or *saying* is frequently understood, and therefore supplied by translators, as 1 Kings xx. 34; Psal. xxvii. 8; cv. 15, and in this very prophecy, as Isa. v. 9; xlv. 14, and elsewhere.

5 Sit thou [g]silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: [h]for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms. [g] 1 Sam. 2. 9. [h] ver. 7. ch. 13. 19. Dan. 2. 37.

Sit thou silent, through grief and shame, and as mourners use to do, Job ii. 13. Cease thy vaunting and insolent speeches; thou canst say nothing for thine own justification. *Get thee into darkness;* thou shalt go into an obscure, disconsolate, and calamitous condition. *Thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms;* the chief and glory of all kingdoms, as Isa. xiii. 19, the most large, and potent, and glorious empire of the world, as thou hast been.

6 ¶ [i]I was wroth with my people, [k]I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; [l]upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke. [i] See 2 Sam. 24. 14. 2 Chr. 28. 9. Zech. 1. 15. [k] ch. 43. 28. [l] Deut. 28. 50.

I have polluted mine inheritance; I cast them away as an unclean thing; I stained their glory; I removed them from the Holy Land, and from the place of my presence and worship, which alone made them a holy and peculiar people; I banished them into a polluted land, amongst uncircumcised and unclean persons, by whom they were many ways defiled; I rejected them from being my people, and so were in my sight no better than the rest of the heathen nations. *Given them into thine hand*, to punish them, and deal with them as thou sawest fit. *Thou didst show them no mercy;* thou hast exceeded the bounds of thy commission, and instead of that compassion which humanity teacheth men to show to such as are in misery, thou didst add to their afflictions. *Upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid the yoke;* who besides their common calamity were afflicted with the miseries of old age, and therefore did require both pity and reverence.

7 ¶ And thou saidst, I shall be [m]a lady for ever: *so* that thou didst not [n]lay these *things* to thy heart, [o]neither didst remember the latter end of it. [m] ver. 5. Rev. 18. 7. [n] ch. 46. 8. [o] Deut. 32. 29.

These things; thy cruel usages of my people, and the heavy judgments which thou hadst reason to expect for

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them. *The latter end of it;* of that lady, or of Babylon, and her glory and empire, or of thyself; here being a sudden change of the person, of which I have noted many examples in this prophet. The sense is, Thou wast besotted with the sense of thy present felicity, and didst not consider, as thy duty and common discretion obliged thee, what might and was likely to befall thee afterward; thou didst neither expect a change nor prepare for it.

8 Therefore hear now this, *thou that art* given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, [p]I *am*, and none else beside me; [q]I shall not sit *as* a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children:

p ver. 10. Zeph. 2. 15.
q Rev. 18. 7.

I am; I am independent, and self-sufficient, and unchangeable, as that phrase implies, which therefore is appropriated to God, Isa. xli. 4; xliii. 10, and elsewhere. The prophet doth not here use the very phrase which the Babylonians used, but expresseth their sense in a Scripture phrase. *None else beside me;* which is not either subject to me, or far inferior to me in power and glory; so that in comparison of me it may be said not to be, because it disappears like stars at the presence of the sun. *I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children;* I shall never want either a king or people to defend me from all dangers.

9 But [r]these two *things* shall come to thee [s]in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection [t]for the multitude of thy sorceries, *and* for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

r ch. 51. 19.
s 1 Thess. 5. 3.
t Nah. 3. 4.

In their perfection; in the highest degree. Thy king and kingdom shall be utterly and eternally destroyed. *For the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments;* for thy superstitious and magical practices, which were very frequent there, as we see below, ver. 12, 13, and as was observed before. Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *in the multitude of thy sorceries,* &c.; in the midst of and notwithstanding all thy diabolical artifices, whereby thou thinkest to foresee any dangers, and to secure thyself from them.

10 ¶ For thou [u]hast trusted in thy wickedness: [x]thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath ‖perverted thee; [y]and thou hast said in thine heart, I *am*, and none else beside me.

u Ps. 52. 7.
x ch. 29. 15. Ezek. 8. 12. & 9. 9.
‖ Or, *caused thee to turn away.*
y Ver. 8.

Thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; confidently expecting to preserve thyself by these and other wicked arts and policies. *Thou hast said, None seeth me;* my counsels are so deeply and cunningly laid, that God himself can neither discover nor prevent the execution of them. *Thy wisdom and thy knowledge* in state policy, and the arts mentioned above and below, *hath perverted thee;* hath misled thee into the way of transgression and perdition. *Thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me;* which was said ver. 8, and is here repeated, to note their intolerable arrogancy and self-confidence.

11 ¶ Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know †from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to †put it off: and [z]desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, *which* thou shalt not know.

† Heb. *the morning thereof.*
† Heb. *expiate.*
z 1 Thess. 5. 3.

Therefore shall evil come upon thee; or rather, *when it shall come:* Heb. *the morning of it,* the day or time of its approach. And they are justly upbraided and derided for this ignorance, because *the astrologers, the star-gazers,* and *the monthly prognosticators,* mentioned here, ver. 13, pretended punctually to foretell the particular time of all future events. And this explication agrees with the history, Babylon being surprised by Cyrus when they were in deep security, as is manifest, both from Scripture, Jer. li. 31; Dan. v., and from other histories. *Desolation shall come upon thee suddenly;* or, when *thou shalt not know* it. Thou shalt not apprehend thy danger till it be too late.

12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

Stand: this word notes either, 1. Continuance. Persist or go on in these practices. Or, 2. Their gesture. For those that inquired of their gods by any of these superstitious practices used to stand; this being a posture, both of reverence, and waiting for an answer. But this is not a command or concession, but a sacred irony or scoff at the folly of these men, who having so oft been disappointed by these impostures, yet were as forward to use them and trust to them as if they had never deceived them. *From thy youth;* from the beginning of thy commonwealth or kingdom. For the Chaldeans in all ages were famous, or rather infamous, for the study and practice of these arts.

13 [a]Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now [b]the †astrologers, the stargazers, †the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from *these things* that shall come upon thee.

a ch. 57. 10.
b ch. 44. 25. Dan. 2. 2.
† Heb. *viewers of the heavens.*
† Heb. *that give knowledge concerning the months.*

Thou art wearied; thou hast spent thy time and strength in going from one to another, in trying all manner of experiments, and all to no purpose. *Stand up, and save thee;* to succour thee, or to inquire for thee.

14 Behold, they shall be [c]as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver †themselves from the power of the flame: *there shall* not *be* a coal to warm at, *nor* fire to sit before it.

c Nah. 1. 10. Mal. 4. 1.
† Heb. *their souls.*

They shall not deliver themselves, and much less thee, *from the power of the flame;* they shall be totally consumed, and all the comfort which thou didst expect from them shall utterly vanish.

15 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, *even* [d]thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.

d Rev. 18. 11.

Thus, such comfortless and helpless creatures, *shall they be;* either, 1. Thy merchants, as it follows, with whom thou hast trafficked. Or, 2. Thy sorcerers, astrologers, &c., with whom they are said to *have laboured,* both here and ver. 12, who also may possibly be called their *merchants,* because they traded so much with them, and because of their deceitful practices; for which Ephraim is called a *merchant,* Hos. xii. 7. And so the following clause may be rendered, who have been *thy merchants from thy youth.* Or the last clause may be understood of merchants, properly so called, who came from several countries to trade with Babylon, as is noted in Scripture, and by other authors; and the verse may be thus rendered; *Thus* (vain and unprofitable) *shall they* (thy sorcerers, &c.) *with whom thou hast laboured be unto thee:* (so here is only a transposition of words, than which nothing is more usual in Scripture. Then follows another matter in the next clause:) also *thy merchants,* or *they with whom thou hast traded from thy youth, shall wander every one to his own quarter. None shall save thee;* they shall all leave thee, and flee away with all possible speed to their several countries and habitations.

CHAP. XLVIII.

God reproveth their hypocrisy and obstinacy by his prophecies, 1—8. *He spareth them for his name's sake, and that they may learn to know him aright,* 9—11. *God's powerful salvation a motive to obedience,* 12—15. *God lamenteth their backwardness,* 16—19. *Deliverance out of Babylon,* 20, 21. *No peace to the wicked,* 22.

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HEAR ye this, O house of Jacob, which
a Ps. 69. 26. are called by the name of Israel, and [a] are
come forth out of the waters of Judah,
b Deut. 6. 13. ch. 65. 16. Zeph. 1. 5. [b] which swear by the name of the LORD,
c Jer. 4. 2. & 5. 2. and make mention of the God of Israel,
[c] *but* not in truth, nor in righteousness.

Hear ye this, what I am now going to say against thee, that thou mayst be assured that that great deliverance which I have determined and declared to give thee is not for thy own sake, but for my name's sake. *Which are called by the name of Israel;* which are Israelites in name, but *not in truth*, as it follows. *Out of the waters of Judah;* from the lineage of your progenitor, Judah, as waters flow from a fountain, and as the Israelites are said to be *of the fountain of Israel*, Psal. lxviii. 26. Compare also Deut. xxxiii. 28; Prov. v. 15, &c. *Which swear;* which profess the true religion; one act of religion being put for all. *Make mention of the God of Israel;* either in oaths or otherwise; that own him and seem to glory in him as their God, and call themselves by his name. *But not in truth, nor in righteousness;* which are the two chief ingredients of a lawful oath, Jer. iv. 2. They are guilty of falsehood and injustice, both in oaths, and in their whole conversation.

d ch. 52. 1. 2 For they call themselves [d] of the holy
e Mic. 3. 11. Rom. 2. 17. city, and [e] stay themselves upon the God
of Israel; The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

For; or, as others render it, and this particle frequently signifies, *Though*. And so this is added as a great aggravation of their want and neglect of truth and righteousness. *They shall call themselves of the holy city:* they glory in this, that they are citizens of Jerusalem, a city sanctified by God himself to be the only place of his true worship and gracious presence; which as it is a great privilege, so it laid a great obligation upon them to walk more holily than they did. *Stay themselves;* not by a true and well-grounded faith, but by a vain and presumptive confidence, flattering themselves, as that people commonly did, that they should enjoy peace and safety, notwithstanding all their wickedness, because they were the Lord's people, and had his temple and ordinances among them; which disposition the prophets frequently observe and sharply censure in them. *The Lord of hosts is his name;* or, *whose name is the Lord of hosts.*

f ch. 41. 22. & 42. 9. & 43. 9. & 44. 7, 8. & 45. 21. & 46. 9, 10. g Josh. 21. 45. 3 [f] I have declared the former things
from the beginning; and they went forth
out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I
did *them* suddenly, [g] and they came to pass.

I have declared the former things from the beginning; those things which have formerly come to pass, which I punctually foretold from time to time before they came to pass; whereby I gave you full proof of my Godhead. *They came to pass;* what my mouth foretold my hand effected.

4 Because I knew that thou *art* †ob-
† Heb. *hard.* h Ex. 32. 9. Deut. 31. 27. stinate, and [h] thy neck *is* an iron sinew,
and thy brow brass;

Because I knew: therefore I gave thee the more and clearer demonstrations of my Divine nature and providence, because I knew thou wast an unbelieving and perverse nation, that would not easily nor willingly be convinced. *Thy neck is an iron sinew*, which will not bow down to receive my yoke, nor to obey my commands. It is a metaphor taken from untamed and stubborn cattle; of which see also Neh. ix. 29; Zech. vii. 11; Acts vii. 51. The sense is, I considered that thou wast unteachable and incorrigible. *Thy brow brass;* thou wast impudent, and therefore wouldst boldly pretend that thou didst forsake me, for want of full conviction of my Divine authority, and of thy duty; therefore I determined that I would leave thee without excuse.

i ver. 3. 5 [i] I have even from the beginning declared *it* to thee; before it came to pass
I shewed *it* thee: lest thou shouldest say,
Mine idol hath done them, and my graven
image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.

I foretold these things, that it might be evident that they were the effects of my counsel, and not of thine idols, as I knew thou wast very inclinable to believe.

6 Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not
ye declare *it?* I have shewed thee new things
from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst
not know them.

Thou hast heard, see all this; as thou hast heard all these things from my mouth, from time to time, so now I advise thee to see, i. e. seriously to consider them, and to lay them to heart. *Will not ye declare it?* I call you to witness; must you not be forced to acknowledge the truth of what I say? Deny it if you can. Or, *have ye not declared it* unto all people, as occasion required it? Have you not boasted unto the Gentiles of this as your honour and privilege? *I have showed thee new things from this time;* and I have now given thee new predictions of secret things, and such as till this time were wholly unknown to thee, as it follows, concerning thy deliverance out of Babylon by Cyrus.

7 They are created now, and not from the be-
ginning; even before the day when thou heardest
them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I
knew them.

They are created now, i. e. revealed unto thee by me; brought to light, as things are by creation. Things are frequently said to be made or done in Scripture, when they are declared or manifested. Job v. 3, *I cursed*, i. e. I pronounced it cursed. Psal. li. 4, *That thou mightest be justified*, i. e. declared and acknowledged to be just. Hos. v. 15, *Till they acknowledge their offence;* which in the Hebrew is, *till they be guilty. Not from the beginning*, Heb. *not from thence;* not from these ancient times, when other things were revealed unto thee. *Even before the day*, Heb. *and* (or, *or*, as this particle is frequently used) *before this day*. Such pronouns are oft understood, as we have seen; and *this day* answers to *nor* in the first clause; and this clause seems to be added as an exposition of the next foregoing clause, which is more general and ambiguous, *not from then or before this day. When thou heardest them not*, Heb. *and thou didst not hear them*, to wit, before this time, in which God hath revealed them to thee by my ministry. *Lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them;* either by thine own sagacity, or by the help of thine idols. The sense is, That it might appear that thou hadst the knowledge of these things only from me, who made known unto thee only what and when I pleased.

8 Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou
knewest not; yea, from that time *that*
thine ear was not opened: for I knew
that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called [k] a transgressor from
k Ps. 58. 3. the womb.

Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; the same thing is repeated again and again, because this was so illustrious a proof of the infinite power and providence of the God of Israel, and so clear and full a discovery of the vanity of idols. *Yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened;* Heb. *yea, from then* (of which phrase see the foregoing verse) *thine ear was not opened*, i. e. thou didst not hear, to wit, from me; I did not reveal these things unto thee; for so this phrase of *opening the ear* is understood, 1 Sam. ix. 15; 2 Sam. vii. 27. *I knew that thou wouldest deal treacherously;* I knew all these cautions were necessary to cure thine infidelity and apostacy. *Wast called*, to wit, justly and truly; or, thou wast indeed such a person; *to be called* put for *to be*, as we have oft noted.

l Ps. 79. 9. & 106. 8. ch. 43. 25. ver. 11. Ezek. 20. 9, 14, 22, 44. m Ps. 78. 38. 9 ¶ [l] For my name's sake [m] will I defer
mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

For my name's sake will I defer mine anger: and although thou dost justly deserve my hottest anger and most dreadful judgments, which also, if thou repentest not, I will in due time inflict; yet at present I will spare thee, and deliver thee out of captivity, not for thy sake, be it known to thee, but merely for my own sake, and for the vindication of my name and glory, as it follows, ver. 11. *For my praise;*

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that I may be praised and magnified for my power, faithfulness, and goodness, and other perfections. *Will I refrain*, to wit, *mine anger;* which is easily understood out of the foregoing clause.

n Ps. 66. 10. ‖ Or, *for silver.* See Ezek. 22. 20, 21, 22. o Eccles. 2. 5.

10 Behold, [n]I have refined thee, but not ‖with silver; I have chosen thee [o]in the furnace of affliction.

I have refined thee; or, *I will refine thee.* Although I will not cut thee off, or utterly destroy thee, as I now said; yet I will put thee into the furnace, not to consume thee, but to purify thee from that dross which cleaveth to thee, and needs such afflictions to purge it away. *Not with silver;* or, *not among silver;* or, *not as silver;* which is put into and kept in the furnace so long till all the dross be purged away from it. I will not deal so rigorously with thee, for then I should wholly consume thee; in judgment I will remember mercy. *I have chosen thee;* or, *I will choose thee;* or, *I will yet choose thee,* as it is expressed, Isa. xiv. 1; Zech. i. 17. Or, *I will choose thee* again, as Zech. ii. 12. For it must be considered that God had in a manner rejected Israel, when he sent them into captivity, and *given her a bill of divorce,* as he saith, Jer. iii. 8; see also Isa. l. 1; and therefore it was necessary that God should choose this people a second time, that they might be *betrothed to him* again, as is expressed and promised, Hos. ii. 19, 20. This seems to me the true sense; although it may be thus understood, *I will choose thee,* i. e. I will manifest by my carriage to thee that I have chosen thee; or, that thou art my chosen people. Things are oft said to be done when they are manifested, as was observed on ver. 7.

p ver. 9. q See Deut. 32. 26, 27. Ezek. 20. 9. r ch. 42. 8.

11 [p]For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it:* for [q]how should *my name* be polluted? and [r]I will not give my glory unto another.

Will I do it; this great work of delivering my people out of Babylon. *My name* is here fitly supplied, both out of ver. 9, where it is expressed, and out of the following clause of this verse, where he saith, *my glory,* which is equivalent to it. The sense is, If I should not spare and deliver my people, my name would be sadly profaned and blasphemed, as if I were either impotent or implacable to them. *I will not give my glory unto another;* I will not give any colour or occasion to idolaters to ascribe the Divine nature and properties, which are my peculiar, unto idols, as they would do if I did not rescue my people out of their hands in spite of their idols.

s Deut. 32. 39. t ch. 41. 4. & 44. 6. Rev. 1. 17. & 22. 13.

12 ¶ Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; [s]I *am* he; I *am* the [t]first, I also *am* the last.

Israel my called; whom I have called out of the world to be my peculiar people, to serve, and glorify, and enjoy me; and therefore you of all others have least cause to forsake me, or to follow after idols.

u Ps. 102. 25. ‖ Or, *the palm of my right hand hath spread out.* x ch. 40. 26.

13 [u]Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and ‖my right hand hath spanned the heavens: *when* [x]I call unto them, they stand up together.

Hath spanned; or, *doth span,* i. e. *mete out the heavens with a span,* as the phrase is, Isa. xl. 12, although that be expressed there in other Hebrew words. Or, *hath spread them out with its palm,* or *like a palm,* when the hand is stretched out. *When I call unto them, they stand up together;* either they stood up and arose out of nothing, when I commanded them to do so; or they are still continually in readiness to execute my commands.

y ch. 41. 22. & 43. 9. & 44. 7. & 45. 20, 21. z ch. 45. 1. a ch. 44. 28.

14 [y]All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these *things?* [z]The LORD hath loved him: [a]he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm *shall be on* the Chaldeans.

All ye; ye Jews, to whom he addressed his speech, ver. 12, and continueth his speech, ver. 16, 17, &c. *Assemble;* I challenge you all to answer what I have said before, and am now going to say again. *Which among them hath declared these things?* which of the gods whom any of you have served or do still hanker after? *The Lord hath loved him,* to wit, Cyrus, who might easily be understood out of the foregoing context, in which he is frequently mentioned. The pronoun is put for the noun, as is usual both in Scripture and in other authors. Now God loved Cyrus, not with a special, and everlasting, and complacential love, for he was a heathen, and had some great vices as well as virtues; but with that general love and kindness which God hath for all his creatures, as is observed, Psal. cxlv. 9; and moreover with that particular kind of love which God hath for such men as excel others in any virtues, as Cyrus did; in which sense Christ *loved* the young man, Mark x. 21; and with a love of good-will and beneficence. God had such a kindness for him, as to make him a most glorious and victorious general and king, and the great instrument for the deliverance of his own people; which was a singular honour and advantage to him, and might have been far greater, and extended to the eternal salvation of his soul, if he had not wanted a heart to use the price which God hereby put into his hand. And as *anger* being ascribed to God is not meant of the affection, for such passions are inconsistent with the perfection of God's nature, but of the effect; so the *love* of God, when it is applied in Scripture to such persons as Cyrus, is not so much to be understood of an inward affection, as of the outward effects of it; and so this *love* is explained in the following words, by that prosperous success which God gave him against the Chaldeans. *He will do his pleasure on Babylon;* Cyrus shall execute that I have appointed him to do for the destruction of Babylon, and for the redemption of my people; which was in itself a good work; and therefore this is added as the reason why God loved him. *His arm shall be on the Chaldeans;* he shall smite and subdue them.

b ch. 45. 1, 2, &c.

15 I, *even* I, have spoken; yea, [b]I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

I, even I; both the foreknowledge and the execution of this great achievement cannot be ascribed to *idols,* but to me only. *He shall make his way prosperous;* God will give him good success in this undertaking. Here is a sudden change of the person from *I* to *he,* which is very usual. Or, as others render it, *he shall prosper* in *his way;* the preposition *in* being most frequently understood.

c ch. 45. 19. d ch. 61. 1. Zech. 2. 8, 9, 11.

16 ¶ Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; [c]I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there *am* I: and now [d]the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

Come ye near unto me, that you may the better hear me, as it follows. A speech of God after the manner of men. *I have not spoken in secret;* I have not smothered the counsel and word of God, but have plainly and publicly declared it unto you; or, I have openly revealed my mind to you. See the note on Isa. xlv. 19, where these very words are spoken by God in his own name, as here by the prophet in God's name; and so all comes to one. *From the beginning;* either, 1. From the first time that I began to prophesy until this time. Or, 2. From the beginning of my taking you to be my people, and of revealing my mind to you. See on Isa. xli. 26. *From the time that it was:* these words also, as well as the former, are the words, either, 1. Of the prophet; and so the sense seems to be this, From the time that I was first called to be a prophet, I have been there, i. e. I have diligently pursued my prophetical function; I have hearkened from time to time, to hear what God would speak to me, that I might impart it to you. Or, 2. Of God; and then the sense may be this, From the time that I first spoke of it, or foretold it, I am or was there, to take care to effect what I had foretold; I minded it carefully from that time, as being then more especially obliged to do it, lest my truth or power should be questioned. Or the words may be thus rendered and explained, *from the time that this shall be,* when the time appointed for the doing of this work shall come, *there I* will be, to encourage and assist Cyrus in the work. *There am I:* this is opposed to those foregoing words, *from the beginning. God and his Spirit;* God by his Spirit; or, God, even the Spirit or the Holy Ghost, to whom the sending and inspiring of God's prophets is ascribed, 2 Pet. i. 21. *Hath*

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sent me, to wit, the prophet Isaiah; who yet was a type of Christ, and so this may have a respect to him also.

e ch. 43. 14. & 44. 6, 24. ver. 20.

17 Thus saith e the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I *am* the LORD thy God which teacheth thee

f Ps. 32. 8. to profit, f which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldest go.

Which teacheth thee to profit; which from time to time have made known unto thee, not vain and frivolous things, but all necessary and useful doctrines; which, if believed and observed by thee, would have been infinitely profitable to thee, both for this life and that to come. So that it is not my fault, but thine own, if thou dost not profit. *Which leadeth;* which acquainteth thee with thy duty and interest in all the parts and concerns of thy life; so that thou canst not pretend ignorance.

g Deut. 32. 29. Ps. 81. 13. h Ps. 119. 165.

18 g O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! h then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! the failure hath not been on my part, but on thine: I gave thee my counsels and commands, but thou hast neglected and disobeyed them, and that to thy own great disadvantage. Such wishes as these are not to be taken properly, as if God longed for something which he gladly would but could not effect, or as if he wished that to be undone which was irrevocably past and done; which is a vain and foolish wish even in a man; and much more are such wishes inconsistent with the infinite perfection and happiness of the Divine nature; but they are only significations of God's good and holy will, whereby he requires and loves obedience, and condemns and hates disobedience. *As a river.* which runs sweetly, strongly, plentifully, and constantly; and such had been thy prosperity. Then thou hadst never gone into this Babylonish captivity, nor needed such prodigies of my power and goodness to deliver thee out of it. *Thy righteousness;* not properly so called, (for he is not now speaking of their virtues, but of their privileges,) but thy peace and prosperity, as appears by the foregoing clause, to which this manifestly answers; which is called *righteousness* here, as it is also 1 Sam. xii. 7; Hos. x. 12. and elsewhere, by a metonymy, because it is the fruit of righteousness, both of God's righteousness and of man's righteousness; as by the very same figure *iniquity* is very frequently put for the fruit and punishment of iniquity. *As the waves of the sea;* infinite and continual.

i Gen. 22. 17. Hos. 1. 10.

19 i Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

Thy seed also had been as the sand, to wit, for multitude, according to my promise made to Abraham; whereas now I have, for thy sins, made thee to know my breach of promise, as is said. Numb. xiv. 34, and greatly diminished thy numbers. *The offspring of thy bowels;* which come out of thy bowels, or belly, or loins; for all these are but various expressions of the same thing. *His name;* which is continued in a man's posterity, and commonly dies with them; and so the *name* here is the same thing in effect with *the seed* and *offspring* in the former clauses, which, for the most part, are only the memorials of men, and of their names, when they are dead and gone. *Should not have been cut off,* as now it hath been in a great measure; and should have been totally and finally cut off, if I had not spared them for my own name's sake, as he said before. *From before me;* or, *out of my sight;* out of their own land, the place of my special presence and residence.

k ch. 52. 11. Jer. 50. 8. & 51. 6, 45. Zech. 2. 6, 7. Rev. 18. 4. l Ex. 19. 4. b. 6. ch. 44. 22, 23.

20 ¶ k Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it *even* to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath l redeemed his servant Jacob.

Go ye forth of Babylon: the imperative is here, as it is very frequently, put for the future, *Ye shall go forth,* &c.; for this is not so much a command as a promise; although this form of speech may be the rather used to intimate that it was their duty to *go forth,* as well as God's promise to carry them forth. *With a voice of singing;* with joy and songs of praise to the Lord. *Declare ye;* publish God's wonderful works on your behalf to all nations.

21 And they m thirsted not *when* he led them through the deserts: he n caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

m See ch. 41. 17, 18. n Ex. 17. 6. Num. 20. 11. Ps. 105. 41.

This is part of the matter which the Jews are obliged to declare to all people, as they have opportunity, to wit, that God took the same care of them in their return from Babylon to Canaan, which was through many dry and desolate places, as he did in their march from Egypt to Canaan. *They thirsted not,* &c., i. e. they shall not thirst. He speaks of things to come, as if they were already past or present, as the prophets commonly do.

22 o *There is* no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

o ch. 57. 21.

God having in the next foregoing verses foretold that peace and blessed deliverance which he would certainly give to *his servant Jacob,* ver. 20, he here adds an explication and limitation of this mercy, and declareth that wicked men should not enjoy the benefit of this mercy; where, by *the wicked,* he means either, 1. The Babylonians, who well deserved that title; who shall be destroyed, when God's Israel shall be delivered: or rather, 2. The unbelieving and ungodly Jews, of whom these very words are used again, Isa. lvii. 21, and to whom such a denunciation as this was far more proper and necessary, at least in this place, than to the Babylonians; for he had already said far more and worse things than this concerning them, having again and again declared that Babylon should be destroyed, in order to this deliverance of God's people out of it. But there was great need why he should say this to the ungodly Jews, because they were exceeding prone to cry, *Peace, peace* to themselves, when there was no solid ground of peace; and they confidently expected a share in this great deliverance. This therefore was a very seasonable caution to the Jews in Babylon to take heed to themselves, and to prepare for this mercy, and to purify themselves from all wickedness; because those of them who should either wickedly tarry in Babylon, when God invited and required them to go out of it, and when their godly brethren returned to their own land, and to the place of God's worship; or continue in wickedness, when they were restored to their own country; should not enjoy that tranquillity and comfort which they promised to themselves. And the necessity of this commination appears from the event; for the Jews that returned to Canaan did, for the most part, relapse to many of their former sins, and therefore fell short of that peace and prosperity which otherwise they might have enjoyed.

CHAP. XLIX.

Christ, being sent to the Jews, complaineth of them, 1—4. *He is sent to the Gentiles with gracious promises,* 5—12. *God's love to his church perpetual,* 13—17. *The ample restoration of the church, and its enlargement,* 18—23. *Powerful deliverance out of captivity,* 24—26.

a ch. 41. 1. b ver. 5. Jer. 1. 5. Matt. 1. 20, 21. Luke 1. 15, 31. John 10. 36. Gal. 1. 15.

LISTEN, a O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; b The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

Listen, O isles. God having in the last words secretly signified the wickedness of the Jewish nation, after so glorious a deliverance, and foreseeing that, for their wickedness, he should cast them off, he here turneth his speech to the nations of the Gentiles, who are frequently described in this prophecy and elsewhere under the title of *isles,* as hath been formerly noted, and inviteth them to hearken to those counsels and doctrines which the Jews would reject. *Unto me;* unto Christ; for it is apparent from ver. 6, and other pas-

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sages of this chapter, that Isaiah speaks these words in the name of Christ, by whose Spirit they were dictated to him, 1 Pet. i. 11, and unto whom alone they belong, as we shall see. So this chapter is a prophecy of Christ, which also is very proper and seasonable in this place. The prophet having at large prophesied of the deliverance of the Jews out of Babylon, he now proceeds further, and prophesieth of the redemption of the world by Christ, of which that deliverance out of Babylon was a type and forerunner. *Hearken, ye people, from far;* which live in countries far from Judea, now the only place of God's special presence and worship. It is evident from the foregoing clause, and many other passages following, that he speaks of distance of place, not of time. *The Lord hath called me from the womb:* this or the like expression is used of Jeremiah, chap. i. 5, and of Paul, Gal. i. 15; but it was far more eminently true of Christ, who, as he was chosen to this great office of redemption from eternity, so he was separated and called to it before he was born, being both conceived and sanctified by the Holy Ghost in his mother's womb, and sent into the world upon this errand; of which see Matt. i. 21; Luke i. 31, &c.; ii. 11, &c. *Made mention of my name;* called by my name, and by such a name as signified my office and work, in the places now mentioned.

c ch. 11. 4. & 51. 16. Hos. 6. 5. Heb. 4. 12. Rev. 1. 16. d ch. 51. 16. e Ps. 45. 5.

2 And he hath made [c]my mouth like a sharp sword; [d]in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me [e]a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; as he made me the great Teacher of his church and of the world, so he assisted me by his Spirit, and made my word or doctrine *quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,* &c., as it is said to be, Heb. iv. 12, killing men's lusts, convincing, humbling, and converting their souls; and *mighty to the pulling down of strong holds, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,* as we read, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. *In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me;* he will protect me by his power from all mine enemies, until I have finished the work for which he sent me. *Made me a polished shaft;* like an arrow, whose point is bright and polished; which therefore pierceth deeper. This metaphor signifies the same thing with the former, Christ's piercing of men's hearts by his word and Spirit. *Quiver;* where arrows are hid and kept. The *quiver* signifies the same thing with *the shadow* in the foregoing clause, even God's powerful and gracious protection of him from dangers and mischiefs.

f ch. 42. 1. Zech. 3. 8. & 6. 12. Gen. 41. 23. John 13. 31. & 15. 8. Eph. 1. 6.

3 And said unto me, [f]Thou *art* my servant, O Israel, [g]in whom I will be glorified.

As the name of David is sometimes given to his successors, 1 Kings xii. 16, and particularly to Christ, Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; Hos. iii. 5, and Jacob is called, as many think, by the name of his grandfather, Abraham, Acts vii. 16, and the name of Isaac is given to his posterity, Amos vii. 9; so here the name of Israel may not unfitly be given to Christ, not only because he descended from his loins, but also because he was the true and the great Israel, who, in a more eminent manner, prevailed with God, as that name signifies, of whom Jacob, who was first called Israel, was but a type. And as the name of Christ, the Head, is sometimes given to the body, the church, as 1 Cor. xii. 12; so it is not strange if, on the contrary, the name of Israel, which properly belongs to the church, be given to Christ the Head of it. But this word may be otherwise rendered, being joined either, 1. With the foregoing words, *Thou art my servant unto,* or *in,* or *for Israel,* i. e. to bring them back unto me, from whom they have revolted; or, 2. With the following words; it is Israel, *in whom I will glorify myself by thee.*

h Ezek. 3. 19.

4 [h]Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: *yet* surely my judgment *is* with the LORD, and ‖ my work with my God.

‖ Or, *my reward,* ch. 40. 10. & 62. 11.

Then I said, by way of objection. Lord, thou sayest thou wilt be glorified by my ministry; but I find it otherwise. *I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought,* without any considerable fruit of my word and works among the Israelites. *My judgment;* my right, the reward which by his promise and my purchase is my right. *Judgment* is oft put for *that which is just* or *right,* as Exod. xxiii. 6; Job viii. 3, and in many other places. And so this clause agrees with the next; and the sense of both is this; Though I see no fruit of my labour among the Jews, and meet with nothing but contempt, and reproach, and ill usage from them; yet God sees my fidelity and diligence in my work, and he will give judgment for me, and my reward is laid up with and by him, which he will give me in due time.

5 ¶ And now, saith the LORD [i]that formed me from the womb *to be* his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, ‖ Though Israel [k]be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.

i ver. 1.

‖ Or, *That Israel may be gathered to him, and I may, &c.*

k Matt. 23. 37.

To bring Jacob again to him; to convert the wicked and apostate Israelites unto God. *Though Israel be not gathered;* not brought home to God by my ministry. This word implies that the Israelites were divided and scattered from God, and divided among themselves, as they were in a high degree when Christ came into the world, and *turned every one to his own way,* as is said, Isa. liii. 6, and therefore needed to be gathered. Either it is a metaphor from wandering sheep, which the good shepherd diligently seeketh, and bringeth home to the fold; or it is an allusion to the state of the Israelites, who either now were, or shortly were to be, dispersed into several parts of the world, from whence God had promised to gather them, and bring them into their own land, and unto his temple, Isa. xliii. 5, 6, and elsewhere. The sense is, Though Israel, God's own and only people, reject me, which will be an occasion of great wonder and scandal. *Yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord;* God will not despise me for the unsuccessfulness of my labours, but will honour and glorify me, both with himself and in the face of the world, in crowning my endeavours with glorious success among other people. *My God shall be my strength,* to support and strengthen me under this and all other discouragements and difficulties in the discharge of mine office.

6 And he said, ‖ It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the ‖preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a [l]light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

‖ Or, *Art thou lighter than that thou should-est, &c.*

‖ Or, *desolations.*

l ch. 42. 6. & 60. 3. Luke 2. 32. Acts 13. 47. & 26. 18.

He; the Lord, expressed both in the foregoing and following verses. *It is a light thing;* this is but a small favour in comparison of what follows. *To raise up the tribes of Jacob;* that remnant of them which shall survive all their calamities and desolations. *I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation;* I will make thy labour effectual for the illumination, and conversion, and salvation of the Gentiles in all the parts of the world; which cannot be said of Isaiah with any truth or colour, and therefore must be understood of Christ, by whom this was literally and fully accomplished. By *my salvation* he means the great instrument and author of that eternal salvation which I will give to the Gentiles.

7 Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, *and* his Holy One, [m]‖ to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, [n]Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, *and* the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

m ch. 53. 3. Matt. 26. 67.

‖ Or, *to him that is despised in soul.*

n Ps. 72. 10, 11. ver. 23.

His Holy One; the Holy One of Israel, as he is frequently called. *To him whom man despiseth;* to Christ, to whom, as he was in the days of his flesh, this description doth most truly and fully agree, being the same in effect with that, Isa. liii. 3; for *men,* both Jews and Gentiles among whom he lived, did *despise him* from their very hearts and souls, as is here

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implied; and *the whole nation* of which he was a member, and among whom he conversed and preached, *abhorred* both his person and his doctrine; and he was so far from being a great temporal monarch, as the Jews vainly imagined, that he came in the form of a servant, and was a *servant of rulers*, professing subjection and paying tribute unto Cæsar, Matt. xvii. 24, 25; xxii. 21, and being treated by the rulers, both of the Jews and the Romans, like a servant, being despitefully used and crucified, which was the proper punishment of servants. *Kings shall see:* though for a time thou shalt be despised, yet after a while thou shalt be advanced to such royal majesty and glory, that kings shall look upon thee with admiration and reverence, *and arise* from their seats in token of reverence, as was usual, Lev. xix. 32; Judg. iii. 20; Job xxix. 8, or to worship thee, as the next clause explains it: *shall see and arise*, may be put for *when they see* thee *they shall arise* to thee; which is a common Hebraism. *Because of the Lord that is faithful;* because God shall make good his promises to thee concerning the raising thee from the dead, and concerning the effusion of his Spirit upon thy disciples, by whose assistance they shall preach most powerfully, and confirm their doctrine by evident and glorious miracles, and concerning the *giving unto thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*, as he promised, Psal. ii. 8. These and such-like considerations were the great motives which prevailed with the princes and people of the Gentiles to receive thee as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world. *He shall choose thee:* and although thou shalt be rejected by thine own people, and *refused by* their builders or rulers, as was prophesied, Psal. cxviii. 22, and for a time and in some respects forsaken by God himself, Matt. xxvii. 46; yet God will return to thee and choose thee again, and manifest unto the world, that thou, and thou only, art the person whom God hath chosen to be the Redeemer of mankind, and whom, in spite of all opposition, he will make *the Head*-stone *of the corner*. For the phrase, see on Isa. xlviii. 10. But these words are well rendered by others, *who will choose* or *hath chosen thee*, the conjunction *and* being put for the pronoun relative, as Isa. xliv. 14, and in many other places, as hath been observed before.

o See Ps. 69. 13. 2 Cor. 6. 2.

8 Thus saith the LORD, °In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I

p ch. 42. 6.

will preserve thee, ᵖand give thee for a

‖ Or, raise up.

covenant of the people, to ‖establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

Thus saith the Lord, God the Father, unto Christ. *In an acceptable time*, Heb. *In a time of good-will;* in that time when I shall have, and in a special manner manifest, my good-will unto the sons of men; in the day of my grace, and of man's salvation, as this phrase is explained in the next clause; in the time of the gospel, which is the time of God's *good-will towards men*, as the host of heaven declared at the birth of Christ, Luke ii. 14; *In the days of thy flesh*, when thou didst *offer up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save thee from death*, as we read, Heb. v. 7, which text is a good comment upon this place. *Heard thee;* though not so as to deliver thee from death and from the sense of my wrath, yet so as to keep thee from sinking under these burdens, and so as thou shouldst not be *holden under the pains* or power *of death*, Acts ii. 24, and so as to crown thee with glory and honour, and a blessed success of all thy labours and sufferings. *In a day of salvation;* in the time of grace and of the gospel, which I have appointed for the working out of man's salvation by thee. *I will preserve thee* upon earth till thy work be finished, and unto that eternal kingdom and glory which is prepared for thee. *Give thee for a covenant;* to be the *Mediator* and *Surety of* that *covenant*, which is made between me and them; as Christ is called, Heb. vii. 22; viii. 6; to renew and *confirm the covenant*, which the Messiah is said to do, Dan. ix. 27, by his own blood, by which God and men are reconciled and united one to the other. And therefore he may well be called the *covenant* by a known metonymy, which is very usual in such cases, as upon the same account circumcision, the sign of the covenant, is called God's *covenant*, Gen. xvii. 10, and the paschal lamb is called *the passover*, Exod. xii. 11, and the sacramental cup is called *the new testament*, Luke xxii. 20, and *the communion of the blood of Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 16. *Of the people;* indefinitely of all my people, not only Jews, but also the Gentiles, as may be gathered from the context, and by comparing this place with Isa. xlii. 6, where the same phrase is used; from both which places it is most manifest that the Messiah is designed, and not Isaiah, to whom this and divers other phrases here used cannot be ascribed without great force. *To establish the earth;* to compose and settle the earth, and the inhabitants thereof, by making peace between God and men, and between Jews and Gentiles, and by establishing truth, and righteousness, and holiness upon earth, and by subduing those lusts and passions which are the great disturbers of human society; which was the design of God in sending, and of Christ in coming into the world. *To cause to inherit the desolate heritages;* that desolate places may be repaired and repossessed. That Christ may possess the heathen, according to Psal. ii. 8, who were in a spiritual sense in a most desolate and forlorn condition.

9 That thou mayest say ᵠto the prisoners, Go forth; to them that *are* in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures *shall be* in all high places.

q ch. 42. 7. Zech. 9. 12.

That thou mayest say, to wit, with power and effect, as when God said, *Let there be light*, &c. *To the prisoners;* to the Gentiles, who are fast bound by the cords of their sins, and taken captive by the devil at his will, as this same phrase is understood, Isa. xlii. 7. *Go forth;* come forth to the light, receive Divine illumination and consolation. *They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places;* they shall have abundant provision in all places, yea, even in those which commonly are barren and unfruitful, and such are both common roads and high grounds.

10 They shall not ʳhunger nor thirst; ˢneither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them ᵗshall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

r Rev. 7. 16. s Ps. 121. 6. t Ps. 23. 2.

They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; they shall be supplied with all good and necessary things, and kept from all evil occurrents. *He that hath mercy on them shall lead them;* God who hath magnified his mercy to them will conduct them with safety and comfort.

11 ᵘAnd I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

u ch. 40. 4.

I will remove all hinderances, and prepare the way for them, by levelling high grounds, and raising low grounds; of which see on Isa. xl. 3, 4.

12 Behold, ˣthese shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

x ch. 43. 5, 6.

These shall come from far; my people shall be called and gathered even from the most remote parts of the earth. He speaks here, and in many other places, of the conversion of the Gentiles, with allusion to that work of gathering and bringing back the Jews from all parts where they were dispersed into their own land. *From the north and from the west;* from the several parts of the world; which are here synecdochically expressed, as they are in many other places. *From the land of Sinim;* either of the Sinites, as they are called, Gen. x. 17, who dwelt about the wilderness of Sin, which was southward from Judea; or of Sin, a famous city of Egypt, called *the strength of Egypt*, which may be synecdochically put for all Egypt, and that for all southern parts. And so he here mentions the several quarters of the world, where the generality of the Jews were dispersed; *the north*, which is every where named as the chief place of their banishment and dispersion, as Jer. xvi. 15; xxxi. 8, and elsewhere; *the west*, the western countries and islands; and the south.

13 ¶ ʸSing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O

y ch. 44. 23.

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mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

The Lord hath comforted his people; God hath now sent that long-desired consolation of Israel.

[s] See ch. 40. 27.

14 [s]But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.

This is an objection against all these glorious predictions and promises hitherto mentioned. How can these things be true, when the condition of God's church is now so sad and desperate? as it was when the Jews were captives in Babylon, in which the prophet here supposeth them to be.

[a] See Ps. 103. 13. Mal. 3. 17. Matt. 7. 11. + Heb. *from having compassion.* [b] Rom. 11. 29.

15 [a]Can a woman forget her sucking child, †that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, [b]yet will I not forget thee.

Earthly parents sometimes are so unnatural and monstrous; but do not entertain such unworthy thoughts of me. I will remember thee effectually, to bring thee out of Babylon, and, which is infinitely greater, to send my Son into the world to work out eternal redemption for thee.

[c] See Ex. 13. 9. Cant. 8. 6.

16 Behold, [c]I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me.

I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; mine eye and heart is constantly upon thee. He alludes to the common practice of men, who use to put signs and memorials upon their hands or fingers of such things as they dearly affect, and would remember. See Exod. xiii. 9; Deut. vi. 8; Prov. vi. 21; Cant. viii. 6; Jer. xxii. 24. *Thy walls are continually before me;* my thoughts run continually upon the walls of Jerusalem, which are now broken down, that I may repair them as soon as ever the set time cometh, and then proceed to do far greater things for thee.

17 Thy children shall make haste; [d]thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

[d] ver. 19.

Thy children; or, as others render it, *thy builders;* which is favoured by the next clause, where the *destroyers* are opposed to them. Howsoever, the sense is the same; for her children were her builders, as we read in Ezra and Nehemiah. *Shall go forth of thee;* shall be separated and driven from among thee, and so shall neither hinder nor annoy thee.

[e] ch. 60. 4.

18 ¶ [e]Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, *and* come to thee. *As* I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe

[f] Prov. 17. 6.

thee with them all, [f]as with an ornament, and bind them *on thee*, as a bride *doeth*.

All these, to wit, the Gentiles, as sufficiently appeareth from what hath been already said, and from that which followeth. The sense is, Thy church shall not only be restored and established in Jerusalem, but it shall be vastly enlarged and adorned by the accession of the Gentiles to it. *Come to thee*, to receive instruction from thee, and to be incorporated with thee into one and the same church. *As with an ornament;* they shall not be a burden, as the Gentiles formerly were when they mixed themselves with the Jews; but an ornament, in respect of those excellent gifts and graces wherewith they shall enrich and honour thy church.

19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, [g]shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

[g] See ch. 54. 1, 2. Zech. 2. 4. & 10. 10.

Thy waste and thy desolate places; thy own land, which is now waste and desolate, and whereof divers parts lay formerly waste and desolate for want of people to possess and manage them. *The land of thy destruction;* or rather, *thy land of destruction;* so called because it is devoted and shall be exposed to destruction. *Shall be far away*, to wit, *from thee.*

20 [h]The children which thou shalt have, [i]after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place *is* too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.

[h] ch. 60. 4. [i] Matt. 3. 9. Rom. 11. 11, 12, &c.

The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, Heb. *The children of thine orbity* or *barren and childless state.* Those children which thou shalt have when thou art grown past the ordinary age and state of childbearing, as Sarah was made the mother of a most numerous posterity; to which he seems here to allude. Those Gentiles which shall be begotten by thee, to wit, by the ministry of thy children, Christ and his apostles, when thou shalt be deprived of thine own natural children, when thou shalt become barren and unfruitful as to conversion of natural Jews, when the generality of the Jews shall cut themselves off from God, and from his true church, by their apostacy from God, and by their unbelief and obstinate refusal of their Messiah. *Shall say again*, or rather, *shall yet say*, though for the present it be otherwise.

21 Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where *had* they *been?*

Then shalt thou say, not without admiration, *Who hath begotten me these?* whence or by whom have I this numberless issue? *Seeing I have lost my children;* seeing it is not long since that I was in a manner left childless. *Am desolate;* without a husband, being forsaken by God, who formerly owned himself for my *Husband*, Isa. liv. 5; Jer. xxxi. 32, and elsewhere. *A captive, and removing to and fro;* which condition is in many respects a great impediment to the procreation of children. *Who hath brought up these?* the same thing repeated again to express the miraculousness of this work, and the great surprisal of the Jews at it; which showeth that he speaks of the conversion of the Gentiles.

22 [k]Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in *their* †arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon *their* shoulders.

[k] ch. 60. 4. & 66. 20. † Heb. *bosom.*

I will lift up mine hand; I will call them to me, and command them to do this work, as men commonly signify their calls and commands by this gesture. *Set up my standard*, as generals do to gather their forces together. See on Isa. xi. 12. *To the people;* unto thee, or to thy church and people. *Shall bring thy sons;* those which shall be thine, if not by natural generation, yet by adoption, that shall own God for their Father, and Jerusalem for their mother. *In their arms;* with great care and tenderness, as nurses carry young infants. The sense is, Even the heathen shall contribute to the increase and preservation of those children which shall be begotten to thee. *Thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders;* as sick or infirm persons used to be carried. See Mark ii. 3; Luke xv. 5.

23 [l]And kings shall be thy †nursing fathers, and their †queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with *their* face toward the earth, and [m]lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: for [n]they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

[l] Ps. 72. 11. ver. 7. ch. 52. 15. & 60. 16. + Heb. *nourishers.* † Heb. *princesses.* [m] Ps. 72. 9. Mic. 7. 17. [n] Ps. 34. 22. Rom. 5. 5. & 9. 33. & 10. 11.

Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; kings and queens shall have a sincere affection and tender regard unto thee and thy children, which was in some sort fulfilled by Cyrus, Ahasuerus, and some few others of the Persian kings or queens, but much more truly and fully by those many kings and emperors of the Gentile world, which after Christ's time did both themselves embrace the true religion, and also set it up in their several

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dominions. *They shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet;* they shall highly reverence and honour thee, and shall most humbly and readily submit themselves unto thee, which was not verified in any of the Persian kings, but only in these kings who were converted to the Christian faith and church. The expressions are borrowed from the practice of the Eastern people in their prostrations and adorations, when they bowed so low as to touch and kiss the ground, whereby they did or might seem to lick up the very dust of the ground which was about or under the feet of those whom they adored. *They shall not be ashamed that wait for me;* their hopes and expectations shall not be disappointed, but abundantly satisfied.

o Matt. 12. 29. Luke 11. 21, 22.

24 ¶ °Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or †the lawful captive delivered?

† Heb. *the captivity of the just.*

Shall the prey be taken from the mighty? here he starteth an objection against the forementioned promises: How can God's church be delivered, when she is become a prey to, and is in the hands of, her most potent enemies? *Or the lawful captive delivered?* he who was taken captive in a just war, as God's people might in some sort be said to be, because God himself had delivered them into their enemy's hands, and that justly for their sins. So here is a double impediment to their deliverance out of their corporal and spiritual bondage; the great power of the enemy which kept them in bondage, and the justice of God, which pleads against them and aginst their deliverance.

25 But thus saith the LORD, Even the †captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

† Heb. *captivity.*

The prey of the terrible; or, *of the violent;* which is opposed to *the lawful captive* in the foregoing verse; and it is hereby intimated, that although God was just in delivering them into captivity, yet their oppressors were guilty of injustice and violence, both in desiring and endeavouring to keep them in perpetual bondage beyond the seventy years which God had fixed, and in their cruel usage of them. *I will contend;* I the Almighty God will undertake thy quarrel and this work, and therefore it must necessarily be accomplished.

p ch. 9. 20.

26 And I will ᵖfeed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own ᵠblood, as with ‖sweet wine: and all flesh ʳshall know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

q Rev. 14. 20. & 16. 6.

‖ Or, *new wine.*

r Ps. 9. 16. ch. 60. 16.

I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; I will make them eat their own flesh, either through hunger, as Lev. xxvi. 29; Isa. ix. 20, or through rage and madness. Or, I will make thine enemies to destroy one another, and that greedily and with delight, as the next clause implies. All their enemies are here represented as one body; and so when one part of them devoured another, it was their *own flesh* that was destroyed.

CHAP. L.

The dereliction of the Jews is not of Christ; for he hath power to save, 1—4; *and was obedient in that work; and God is present with him,* 5—9. *An exhortation not to trust in ourselves, but in God,* 10, 11.

a Deut. 24. 1. Jer. 3. 8. Hos. 2. 2.

THUS saith the LORD, Where *is* ᵃthe bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my ᵇcreditors *is it* to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities ᶜhave ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

b See 2 Kin. 4. 1. Matt. 18. 25.

c ch. 52. 3.

Thus saith the Lord: this is another sermon begun here, and continued in the next chapter. The main scope of it is to vindicate God's justice, and to convince the Jews that they were the causes of all their calamities which they imputed to God. *Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?* God had formerly espoused the Israelites to himself in a kind of matrimonial covenant, but seemed to cast them off when he sent them to Babylon, and did wholly reject them afterward from being his people, and took the Gentiles into their stead; which great and wonderful change was foretold in the Old Testament, as hath been already observed, and we shall see again, and accomplished in the New. And because God foresaw that those strange dispensations would provoke the Jews to murmur and quarrel with God for casting them off without sufficient cause, as indeed they were always prone to accuse God, and to vindicate themselves, he bids them produce their bill of divorce; for those husbands which put away their wives merely out of levity or passion were obliged to give their wives a bill of divorce, which vindicated the wife's innocency, and declared that the husband's will and pleasure was the cause of the divorce; of which see the notes on Deut. xxiv. 1; Matt. xix. 3. *Which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you?* have I any creditors to whom I was obliged or willing to sell you for the payment of my debt? Produce then the bill of sale to witness against me. Parents might, and in some cases were forced to sell their children to their creditors; of which see on Exod. xxi. 7, and 2 Kings iv. 1. *For your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, &c.;* you can blame none but yourselves and your own sins for all your captivities and miseries.

2 Wherefore, when I came, *was there* no man? ᵈwhen I called, *was there* none to answer? ᵉIs my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, ᶠat my rebuke I ᵍdry up the sea, I make the ʰrivers a wilderness: ⁱtheir fish stinketh, because *there is* no water, and dieth for thirst.

d Prov. 1. 24. ch. 65. 12. & 66. 4. Jer. 7. 13. & 35. 15.

e Num. 11. 23. ch. 59. 1.

f Ps. 106. 9. Nah. 1. 4.

g Ex. 14. 21.

h Josh. 3. 16.

i Ex. 7. 18, 21.

The general accusation delivered in the last words he now proveth by particular instances. *When I came; when I,* first by my prophets, and at last by my Son, *came* unto them, to call them to repentance, and to redeem and deliver them, as it is explained in the following clauses of this verse. *No man* that regarded and received me, that complied with my call and offer of grace, as it follows; whereby he implies that the generality of the Jews were guilty of gross infidelity and obstinate disobedience, and therefore might justly be rejected. *When I called;* called them to repentance, or to come unto me, or to do my will, as masters call their servants. *None to answer;* to come at my call, to obey my commands. *Have I no power to deliver?* what is the reason of this horrible contempt and rebellion? Is it because you expect no good from me, but think that I am either unwilling or unable to save you? Because you see no miracles wrought for you to save you from the Babylonians; and because my Son, your Messiah, cometh not with pomp and power, as you expect, but in the form of a servant, poor, and exposed to contempt and death; do you therefore believe that my power to deliver you is less than it was? *At my rebuke:* this phrase is borrowed from Psal. cvi. 9, and it is used Matt. viii. 26. At my word or command, whereby I rebuke and check its proud waves. *I dry up,* Heb. *I will dry up;* or, *I can dry up;* the future verb being put potentially. As I did it once, so I can and will do it again, when occasion requires it. *I make the rivers a wilderness;* as dry and fit for travel as a wilderness.

3 ᵏI clothe the heavens with blackness, ˡand I make sackcloth their covering.

k Ex. 10. 21.

l Rev. 6. 12.

I clothe the heavens with blackness; or, *I will* or *can clothe,* &c. What I once did in Egypt, when I drew black curtains before all the heavenly lights, and caused an unparalleled and amazing darkness for three days together, to the great terror of mine enemies, so I can and will do still when it is necessary to save my people. And therefore you have no reason to distrust me. *I make sackcloth their covering;* I cover them with thick and dark clouds, *black as sackcloth,* as is said, Rev. vi. 12, or as that stuff of which the tents of

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Kedar were made, Cant. i. 5. From this and some other expressions it appears that they wore a black sackcloth, which also was most suitable to the state of mourners, by whom it was used.

m Ex. 4. 11. 4 m The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that* n Matt. 11. 28. *is* n weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

God having asserted his own power, to show the groundlessness of the infidelity of the Jews, he proceeds to show what excellent and effectual means he used to bring them to repentance and salvation: which he mentions as a great aggravation of their unbelief and rebellion, which by this means was without all excuse. This and the following passages may be in some sort understood of the prophet Isaiah, though but obscurely and imperfectly; but they are far more evidently and eminently verified in Christ, and indeed seem to be meant directly of him. For seeing there are many other passages in this prophecy which are directly meant of Christ, and of his ministry, and not at all of the prophet, why may not this be added to the number of them? especially considering that there is nothing here which forceth us to understand this place of Isaiah, and several of these passages are expounded of Christ in the New Testament, as is confessed. Besides, this seems to suit best with the coherence; for according to this exposition the same person speaketh here who hath spoken in all the foregoing verses of the chapter, even the Lord himself considered as man, because he was both God and man, as is abundantly evident from many scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, as hath been already proved, and will hereafter be more fully evinced. *The tongue of the learned;* an ability of speaking plainly, and convincingly, and persuadingly, and in all points so as becometh a person taught of God, and filled with all Divine and heavenly wisdom and knowledge, and with a singular skill of winning souls, and of working upon men's hearts and consciences. *Him that is weary;* burdened with the sense of his sad and deplorable condition, in which case a word of comfort is most seasonable and acceptable. This was the proper and principal design of Christ's ministry, to give rest and comfort to distressed souls, according to what is said with respect to this place, Matt. xi. 28; and all the doctrines, reproofs, and threatenings of Christ were directed to this end, to make men fit for comfort and salvation. *He wakeneth,* to wit, *me,* the pronoun being oft understood; or, as it follows, *mine ear. Morning by morning;* from time to time, and continually. *He wakeneth mine ear to hear;* because human nature is of itself weak and slothful, he by his Divine power assisteth and stirreth me up to the observation and practice of all his commands and my duties. *As the learned;* either, 1. As learned men or teachers use to awaken their scholars to hear and learn of them from time to time; or rather, 2. As those that are or desire and endeavour to be learned use to hear with all possible attention and diligence; for this title of *learned* is in the former part of the verse given not to the teacher, who is said to be God, but to the person taught by him.

o Ps. 40. 6, 7, 8. p Matt. 26. 39. John 14. 31. Phil. 2. 8. Heb. 10. 5, &c. 5 ¶ The Lord God o hath opened mine ear, and I was not p rebellious, neither turned away back.

Hath opened mine ear; hath revealed unto me; or rather, hath given me a power and will to hear and receive his commands, as this phrase is used, Psal. xl. 6; Isa. xxxv. 5, and elsewhere. *I was not rebellious;* I readily did and suffered what he required of me. *Neither turned away back:* the same thing repeated in other words. I did not turn away mine ear from hearing any of God's commands, nor my feet from going where God sent me, how difficult or dangerous soever my employment was. He seems to allude to the former prophets, who had, divers of them, shrunk back, and for a time refused such work as God called them to, as Moses, Exod. iii. 11, 13, Jonah, chap. i. 3, and others.

q Matt. 26. 67. & 27. 26. John 18. 22. 6 q I gave my back to the smiters, and r my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. r Lam. 3. 30.

I gave my back to the smiters; I patiently yielded up myself, and turned my back to those who smote me. I was willing not only to do, but to suffer, the will of God, and the injuries of men. This and the following passages were literally fulfilled in Christ, as is expressly affirmed, Matt. xxvi. 57, 67; xxvii. 26, 30, and elsewhere; but we read of no such thing concerning Isaiah. And therefore it is most safe and reasonable to understand it of Christ; the rather, because it is not usual with the prophets to commend themselves so highly as the prophet here commends the person of whom he speaketh. *Plucked off the hair;* which was a contumely or punishment inflicted upon malefactors, Neh. xiii. 25. *I hid not my face from shame,* from all manner of reproachful usages; but did knowingly and willingly submit myself thereunto. *And spitting:* spitting in a man's face was used in token of contempt and detestation, Numb. xii. 14; Job xxx. 10; and this was litterally fulfilled in Christ, Matt. xxvi. 67.

7 ¶ For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have s I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. s Ezek. 3. 8, 9.

For; or rather, *But,* as this particle is oft rendered. For God's favour is here opposed to the injuries of men. *The Lord God will help me;* though as a man I am weak and inconsiderable, yet God will strengthen me to go through my great and hard work. *Therefore shall I not be confounded;* therefore I assure myself of success in my employment, and of victory over all mine enemies. *Therefore have I set my face like a flint;* I have hardened myself with resolution and courage against all opposition. So this or the like phrase is used Ezek. iii. 8, 9, which elsewhere signifies obstinacy and impudence, as Jer. v. 3; Zech. vii. 12; so that it notes any settled and unmovable purpose, whether good or evil.

8 t *He is* near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who *is* † mine adversary? let him come near to me. t Rom. 8. 32, 33, 34. † Heb. *the master of my cause.*

He is near; God, though he seem to be at a distance, and to hide his face from me, yet he is in truth at my right hand, and ready to help me. *That justifieth me;* that will publicly acquit me from all the calumnies of mine adversaries, who say that I am a transgressor of the law, a false teacher and deceiver, a blasphemer, and a devil, and the like, in which opinion they are confirmed by my death and sufferings. But God will clear up my righteousness, and show by many and mighty signs and wonders that he is well pleased with me, and that I lived and died his faithful servant. *Let him come near to me;* I challenge all my accusers to stand and appear before the Judge face to face, and to produce all their charges against me; for I am conscious of mine own innocency, and I know that God will give sentence for me.

9 Behold, the Lord God will help me; who *is* he *that* shall condemn me? u lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; x the moth shall eat them up. u Job 13. 28. Ps. 102. 26. ch. 51. 6. x ch. 51. 8.

That shall condemn me; that dare attempt it, or can justly do it. *They all,* mine accusers and enemies, *shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up: shall pine away in their iniquity,* as God threatened, Lev. xxvi. 39; shall be cut off and consumed by a secret curse and judgment of God, which is compared to a *moth,* Hos. v. 12, whilst I shall survive and flourish, and *the pleasure of God shall prosper in my hands,* as is said, Isa. liii. 10.

10 ¶ Who *is* among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that y walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? z let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. y Ps. 23. 4. z 2 Chron. 20. 20. Ps. 20. 7.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord? he now turneth his speech from the unbelieving and rebellious Jews to

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those of them who were or should be pious. *Of his servant;* of the same person of whom he hath hitherto spoken; of Christ, who is called God's *servant*, Isa. lii. 13; liii. 11, partly by way of eminency, and partly to intimate that although he was God, yet he should *take upon himself the form of a servant*, as is said, Phil. ii. 7. He hereby signifies that the grace of God, and the comfort here following, belongeth to none but to those that hear and believe this great Prophet of the church; which also was declared by Moses, Deut. xviii. 15, compared with Acts iii. 22, 23. *In darkness;* not in sin, which is oft called *darkness;* as *walking in darkness* is put for living in wickedness, 1 John i. 6; but in misery, which also frequently cometh under the name of darkness: that liveth in a most disconsolate and calamitous condition, together with great despondency or dejection of spirit. *No light;* no comfort nor hope left. *Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God;* let him fix his faith and hope *in the name*, i. e. in the most excellent and amiable nature, and infinite perfections, and especially in the free grace, and mercy, and faithfulness, *of the Lord*, declared in his word; and in his propriety or interest in God, who by the mediation of this Servant is reconciled to him, and made *his God*.

11 Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass *yourselves* about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks *that* ye have kindled. [a] This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down [b] in sorrow.

a John 9. 39.
b Ps. 16. 4.

All ye that kindle a fire, that you may enjoy the light and comfort of it, as it is explained in the following words. You that reject the light which God hath set up, and refuse the counsel of his servant, and seek for comfort, and safety, and the knowledge of God's mind, and the enjoyment of his favour, by your own inventions; which was the common error of the Jews in all ages, and especially in the days of the Messiah, when they refused him, and that way of righteousness and salvation which he appointed, and rested upon their own traditions and devices, *going about to establish their own righteousness, and not submitting unto the righteousness of God*, as is expressed, Rom. x. 3. *That compass yourselves about;* endeavouring to warm and refresh yourselves on all sides. *With sparks;* or rather, *with firebrands*, as this very word is fitly rendered, Prov. xxvi. 18, which is better than *sparks* or *flames*, which is there put in the margin, because firebrands only, and not sparks or flames, are capable of being thrown by one man at another. And this word is no where else used in Scripture. He mentions *firebrands*, either to imply that these fires yielded more smoke than heat or light, or because these were the usual materials of a fire. *Walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled;* use your utmost endeavours to get comfort and satisfaction from these devices. *This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow;* this shall be the fruit of all, through my just judgment, that instead of that comfort and security which you expect by these means, you shall receive nothing but vexation and misery, which shall pursue you both living and dying; for this word, which is here rendered *lie down*, is frequently used for dying, as Gen. xlvii. 30; Job xxi. 26, and elsewhere. Or it is a metaphor from a man that lying down on his bed for rest and ease, meets with nothing but trouble and pain, as Job complained, chap. vii. 13, 14.

CHAP. LI.

Abraham our pattern to trust in Christ; in his promises, and righteous salvation: this is constant, but men are transitory, 1—8. *A prayer of the godly in affliction*, 9—11. *The Lord's answer*, 12—16. *He bewaileth Jerusalem*, 17—20. *The bitter cup taken from her, and given to her enemies*, 21—23.

[a] HEARKEN to me, [b] ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged.

a ver. 7.
b Rom. 9. 30, 31, 32.

Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness: now he turneth his speech again to the believing and godly Jews. *That seek the Lord;* that make it your chief care and business to seek favour and help from God. *Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged;* consider the state of Abraham and Sarah, when they procreated Isaac, from whom Jacob and all of you sprang; for so he explains the metaphor in the next verse. He compareth the bodies of Abraham and Sarah unto a *rock*, or *pit*, or quarry out of which stones are hewed or digged, thereby implying that God in some sort actually did that which Christ said he was *able to do*, Matt. iii. 9, even *of stones to raise up children unto Abraham;* it being then as impossible by the course of nature for Abraham and Sarah in that age to procreate a child, as it is to hew a living child out of a rock, or to dig one out of a pit of stone.

2 [c] Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that* bare you: [d] for I called him alone, and [e] blessed him, and increased him.

c Rom. 4. 1, 16. Heb. 11. 11, 12.
d Gen. 12. 1, 2.
e Gen. 24. 1, 35.

I called him from his own country and kindred to follow me to an unknown land, where I promised that I would multiply and bless him, as is particularly explained, Gen. xii. 1—3. *Alone*, Heb. *one;* either, 1. Him only of all his kindred; for though he carried some few of them with him, yet I called none but him. So this notes God's singular favour to their progenitors above all the rest of the world. Or, 2. Him when he was alone or solitary, to wit, as to any issue; when he neither had nor was likely to have any child by Sarah. And this word *alone* seems to belong not only to this word wherewith it is joined, but also unto the two following words, especially if we consider the order of the words in the Hebrew text, where they lie thus; for *one* (or *alone*, or when he was alone, or but one) *I called him, and blessed him, and increased him. Increased him* into a vast multitude, when his condition was desperate in the eye of reason. And therefore God can as easily raise and deliver his church when they are in the most forlorn condition, and seem to be dead, and buried, and consumed, so that nothing but dry bones remain of them, as it is declared at large, Ezek. xxxvii.

3 For the LORD [f] shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert [g] like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

f Ps. 102. 13. ch. 40. 1. & 52. 9. ver. 12.
g Gen. 13. 10. Joel 2. 3.

For: so this comes in as a reason why they should look unto or consider that famous example of Abraham and Sarah, because they should find the like wonder wrought on their behalf. Or, *Therefore*, or for the sake of Abraham, my friend, and of that covenant which I made with him, and by which I promised to bless him and his seed for ever. *Shall comfort Zion;* his church, which is frequently called by that name, both in the Old and New Testament. *He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord:* although she shall be waste and desolate like a wilderness or desert for a time, yet she shall be restored, and be made as pleasant and flourishing as the garden of Eden was.

4 ¶ Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: [h] for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest [i] for a light of the people.

h ch. 2. 3. & 42. 4.
i ch. 42. 6.

Hearken unto me, my people: seeing the Gentiles will hearken to me, as I have formerly told you, take heed that you Jews, whom I chose to be my peculiar people, do not reject my counsel, nor forsake your own mercies, as I fear you will do. *A law;* a new law, even the doctrine of the gospel, which ought to have the force of a law with you, and I expect your obedience to it, no less than to my law delivered by Moses. *I will make my judgment to rest: judgment* is here the same thing with *law* in the former clause, the word of God, which is frequently called *judgment*, as hath been observed again and again, or the evangelical

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doctrine, of which he saith that he *will make it to rest*, i. e. settle and establish it; whereby he may possibly intimate the stability and perpetuity of this light in the church, that it shall not be like the light of the Mosaical dispensation, which was only to shine for a season, even *until the time of reformation*, Heb. ix. 10, when all those dark shadows were to vanish and give place to the Sun of righteousness, and to that kingdom and state that should never be moved, as we read, Dan. ii. 44; Heb. xii. 26—28, and in many other places. *For a light of the people*, Heb. *of* or *to the peoples*; not only to you Jews, but unto people of all sorts and nations, who shall receive and walk in that light which you will reject, and use all possible endeavours to extinguish.

k ch. 46. 13. & 56. 1. Rom. 1. 16, 17.
5 [k]My righteousness *is* near; my salvation is gone forth, [l]and mine arms shall
l Ps. 67. 4. & 98. 9.
judge the people; [m]the isles shall wait
m ch. 60. 9.
upon me, and [n]on mine arm shall they
n Rom. 1. 16.
trust.

My righteousness; my salvation, as it is expounded in the next clause, the redemption of all my people, both Jews and Gentiles, which is the effect of his *righteousness*; either his justice, or his faithfulness, or his mercy and goodness; for all these are called by the name of righteousness in Scripture, and all these contributed to the work of man's redemption. *My salvation is gone forth*; shall shortly go forth; my secret and eternal purpose of saving my people shall speedily be fulfilled. *Mine arms shall judge the people*; either, 1. Shall destroy those people who obstruct or oppose this work. Or rather, 2. Shall subdue the Gentiles to mine authority, and rule them by my word and Spirit; which agrees best with the following clause. *The isles*; the remote countries of the Gentiles, as Isa. xli. 1; xlii. 4, and elsewhere. *Shall wait upon me*; shall confidently expect and hope for this promised righteousness and salvation from me, and from me only, and not from idols, as they have done, nor by any other way.

o ch. 40. 26.
6 [o]Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
p Ps. 102. 26. Matt. 24. 35. 2 Pet. 3. 10, 12.
and look upon the earth beneath: for [p]the
q ch. 50. 9.
heavens shall vanish away like smoke,
[q]and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

The heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; the heavens and earth shall pass away, either, 1. Simply, and by a substantial corruption or annihilation, which is yet to be understood comparatively or conditionally, that these should sooner vanish into nothing than God's promised salvation should not be accomplished; as when it is said, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*, Matt. xxiv. 35. It is thus expounded, *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than* (for) *one tittle of the law to fail*. Or, 2. In regard of their present state, and properties, and use, as *smoke* is here said to *vanish*, although the substance of it be not destroyed. *They that dwell therein shall die in like manner*; as they *shall be dissolved*, as we read, 2 Pet. iii. 11, and death is nothing else but a dissolution.

r ver. 1. s Ps. 37. 31. t Matt. 10. 28. Acts 5. 41.
7 [r]Hearken unto me, ye that know
righteousness, the people [s]in whose heart
is my law; [t]fear ye not the reproach of
men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

That know righteousness; that love and practise it, as *knowing* is commonly used. *In whose heart is my law*; who are tacitly opposed to the carnal Jews that had the law written only in tables. Compare 2 Cor. iii. 3; Heb. viii. 10. *The reproach of men*; the censures of the carnal Jews, who will load their believing and godly brethren with a world of reproaches: but let not these things discourage you.

u ch. 50. 9.
8 For [u]the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

The moth shall eat them up; your reproachers shall be easily destroyed, and so God will revenge your cause upon them, and deliver you from their reproaches. *Like wool*; like a woollen garment, which is sooner corrupted by moths or such creatures than linen.

x Ps. 44. 23. ch. 52. 1. y Ps. 93. 1. Rev. 11. 17. z Ps. 44. 1. a Job 26. 12. b Ps. 87. 4. & 89. 10. c Ps. 74. 13, 14. ch. 27. 1. Ezek. 29. 3.
9 ¶ [x]Awake, awake, [y]put on strength,
O arm of the LORD; awake, [z]as in the
ancient days, in the generations of old.
[a]*Art* thou not it that hath cut [b]Rahab,
and wounded the [c]dragon?

Awake, awake, thou who hast carried thyself like one asleep, and unconcerned for thy people, and unable to save them. The prophet having foretold what great things God would do for his church, and longing for the accomplishment of them, and knowing that prayer was one means by which God fulfils his promises, he poureth forth his prayer to God in his own name, and in the name of God's people. *Put on strength*; clothe and adorn thyself with mighty works; put forth thy strength. *That hath cut*, Heb. *hewed*, with thy sword, *Rahab*; Egypt, so called here, and Psal. lxxxvii. 4; lxxxix. 10, either from its pride or strength, or from the shape and figure of that land. *The dragon*; Pharaoh, so called Psal. lxxiv. 13; Ezek. xxix. 3; xxxii. 2.

d Ex. 14. 21. ch. 43. 16.
10 *Art* thou not it which hath [d]dried
the sea, the waters of the great deep;
that hath made the depths of the sea a
way for the ransomed to pass over?

Art thou not it which hath dried the sea? art not thou the same God, and as potent now as then thou wast? *For the ransomed*; for thy people, whom thou didst redeem and bring out of Egypt.

e ch. 35. 10.
11 Therefore [e]the redeemed of the
LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy *shall be* upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; *and* sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Therefore; or, *So*; Heb. *And*. This verse contains an answer to the prophet's prayer. It is true, I did these great things, and I will do the like again. *Everlasting joy shall be upon their head*, like a crown of glory. But for the accomplishment of this magnificent promise we must needs look beyond their return from Babylon into their own land, when they met with many discouragements, and troubles, and calamities, and extend it unto the coming of Christ, by whom these great things were procured and actually conferred upon his people.

f ver. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 3.
12 I, *even* I, *am* he [f]that comforteth
you: who *art* thou, that thou shouldest
be afraid [g]of a man *that* shall die, and of
g Ps. 118. 6.
the son of man *which* shall be made [h]*as*
h ch. 40. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 24.
grass;

Who art thou? how unreasonable and distrustful art thou, O my church! how unlike to thyself! how unsuitable in these despondencies unto thy own professions and obligations! *Of the son of man which shall be made as grass*; of a weak mortal and perishing creature.

i Job 9. 8. Ps. 104. 2. ch. 40. 22. & 42. 5. & 44. 24.
13 And forgettest the LORD thy maker,
[i]that hath stretched forth the heavens,
and laid the foundations of the earth;
and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if
he ‖were ready to destroy? [k]and where
is the fury of the oppressor?

‖ Or, *made himself ready*. k Job 20. 7.

And forgettest the Lord thy Maker; and dost not consider the infinite power of that God who made thee, and who will plead thy cause. *As if he were ready to destroy*; as if it were in his power to destroy thee in a moment. *Where is the fury of the oppressor?* what is become of the power and rage of the Babylonians? Is it not all gone? Are not they broken, and thou delivered? He speaks of the thing as if it were already done, because it should certainly and suddenly be done. Where is it? It is no where, it is quite

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lost and gone, as this phrase is frequently used, as Psal. xlii. 3; Zech. i. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 55.

14 The captive exile hasteneth that he
[l] Zech. 9. 11. may be loosed, [l]and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

God is not slack, as you think, but maketh haste to fulfil his promise, and to rescue his captive and oppressed people from all their oppressions and miseries.

15 But I *am* the LORD thy God, that
[m] Ps. 74. 13. Job 26. 12. Jer. 31. 35. [m]divided the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

[n] Deu. 18. 18. ch. 59. 21. John 3. 34. [o] ch. 49. 2. [p] ch. 65. 17. & 66. 22. 16 And [n]I have put my words in thy mouth, and [o]I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, [p]that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou *art* my people.

I have put my words in thy mouth; these great and glorious promises which are in thy mouth are not the vain words of man, a weak, and inconstant, and unfaithful creature, but the words of the almighty, unchangeable, and faithful God, and therefore they shall be infallibly accomplished. These words are manifestly spoken by God, either, 1. To Isaiah, by whom these promises were delivered. Or, 2. To Christ, of whom and to whom many things are said in this prophecy, as we have already seen, and will further appear. And such abrupt and sudden apostrophes to persons not mentioned in the foregoing words are not unusual in this prophecy, as hath been observed. Or rather, 3. To Israel, to God's church and people, to whom he speaks both in the foregoing and following verses. For God's word is frequently said to be *put into the mouths*, not only of the prophets, but of the people also, as Isa. lix. 21; as also Deut. xxx. 14; Josh. i. 8, &c. *Have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand;* have protected thee by my almighty power. See the same phrase Isa. xlix. 2. *That I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth;* I have given thee these promises and this protection in all thy calamities, to assure thee of my care and kindness to thee, and that I will reform thee in a most glorious manner, and bring thee unto that perfect and blessed estate which is reserved for the days of the Messiah, which in Scripture phrase is called a *making of new heavens and a new earth*, Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22; 2 Pet. iii. 13, and elsewhere. *And say unto Zion, Thou art my people;* that I may own thee for my people, in a more illustrious manner than ever I have done.

[q] ch. 52. 1. [r] Job 21. 20. Jer. 25. 15, 16. [s] See Deut. 28. 28, 34. Ps. 60. 3. & 75. 8. Ezek. 23. 32, 33, 34. Zech. 12. 2. Rev. 14. 10. 17 ¶ [q]Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which [r]hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; [s]thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, *and* wrung *them* out.

Awake; either, 1. Out of the sleep of security. Or, 2. Out of the sleep of death. Heb. *Rouse up thyself;* come out of that forlorn and disconsolate condition in which thou hast so long been. This sense suits best with the following words. *Stand up* upon thy feet, O thou who hast fallen, and been thrown down to the ground. *Which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury;* which hast been sorely afflicted; for so this metaphor is used. Psal. lxxv. 8; Jer. xxv. 15, &c.; xlix. 12. *The cup of trembling;* which striketh him that drinketh it with a deadly horror. *Wrung them out;* drunk every drop of it. See on Psal. lxxv. 8.

18 *There is* none to guide her among all the sons *whom* she hath brought forth; neither *is there any* that taketh her by the hand of all the sons *that* she hath brought up.

When thou wast drunk with this cup, and not able to go, neither thy princes, nor prophets, nor priests were able or willing to lead and support thee.

[t] ch. 47. 9. † Heb. *happened.* 19 [t]These two *things* †are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and †destruction, and the famine, and the sword: [u]by whom shall I comfort thee? † Heb. *breaking.* [u] Amos 7. 2.

These two things; either, 1. Those which were now mentioned: 1. That she was drunk with the cup of God's wrath, ver. 17. 2. That she had none to support or comfort her in that condition. Or, 2. Those which here follow, which although they be expressed in four words, yet they may fitly be reduced to two things, *the desolation* or *devastation* of the land, and *the destruction* of the people, by *famine* and *sword*. So *famine* and *sword* are not named as new evils, but only as the particular ways or means of bringing the *destruction* there mentioned; and the words may be thus rendered, *desolation and destruction, even* (this Hebrew particle being oft taken expositively, whereof many instances have been given) *famine* (or, by *famine*) *and sword*. Or *two* may be put indefinitely for *many*, as *double* is put for abundantly more, Job xi. 6; Isa. xl. 2; lxi. 7; Zech. ix. 12, and elsewhere. *By whom shall I comfort thee?* I cannot find any man who is able to comfort and relieve thee.

20 [x]Thy sons have fainted, they lie at
[x] Lam. 2. 11, 12. the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God.

Thy sons have fainted; they are so far from being able to comfort thee, as was said, ver. 18, that they themselves faint away for want of comfort, and through famine. *They lie* dead by famine, or the sword of the enemy, *at the head of all the streets;* where men enter in or go out of the streets, where the enemy found them either opposing their entrance, or running out of them to make an escape. *As a wild bull in a net:* those of them who are not slain are struggling for life; and although they murmur at God, and fight with men, yet they cannot prevail or escape.

21 ¶ Therefore hear now this, thou
[y] See ver. 17. Lam. 3. 15. afflicted, and drunken, [y]but not with wine:

But with the cup of God's fury, mentioned above, ver. 17.

22 Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and
[z] Jer. 50. 34. thy God [z]*that* pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, *even* the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

Thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people; who though he hath fought against thee, is now reconciled to thee, and will maintain thy cause against all thine adversaries.

23 But [a]I will put it into the hand of
[a] Jer. 25. 17. 26. 28. Zech. 12. 2. [b] Ps. 66. 11, 12. them that afflict thee; [b]which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

Bow down, that we may go over; lie down upon the ground, that we may trample upon thee, as conquerors used to do upon their conquered enemies. See Josh. x. 24; Psal. cx. 1.

CHAP. LII.

The church redeemed, and called upon to rejoice therein, 1—6. *The universal preaching of the gospel glorious,* 7—10. *A call to free ourselves from bondage,* 11, 12. *Christ's kingdom shall be exalted,* 13—15.

AWAKE, [a]awake; put on thy strength,
[a] ch. 51. 9, 17. [b] Neh. 11. 1. ch. 48. 2. Matt. 4. 5. Rev. 21. 2. [c] ch. 35. 8. & 60. 21. Nah. 1. 15. [d] Rev. 21. 27. O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, [b]the holy city: for [c]henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised [d]and the unclean.

Awake, awake; put on thy strength: God biddeth his church do that which she entreated him to do, chap. li. 9. And because God's word is operative, and effectual, and his sayings are doings, this is a prediction and promise what she should do, that she should *awake* or *arise* out of her

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low estate, and be strong and courageous. *Put on thy beautiful garments:* thy sorrows shall be ended, and thou shalt be advanced into a most glorious and blessed condition. *O Jerusalem, the holy city;* O my church, which is every where called by the name of Zion or Jerusalem. *For henceforth there shall no more come into thee,* either to molest thee, or to associate themselves with thee, or to defile or corrupt thee, *the uncircumcised,* heathens or infidels, who are commonly called *uncircumcised; and the unclean;* nor any others, who though they be circumcised, as the Jews generally were, are unclean in any thing: whereby he intimates that there should be a greater purity and reformation in the church than formerly there had been, which was eminently accomplished in the church and kingdom of Christ.

e See ch. 3. 26. & 51. 23.
f Zech. 2. 7.

2 eShake thyself from the dust; arise, *and* sit down, O Jerusalem: floose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

Shake thyself from the dust, in which thou hast lain as a prisoner, or sat as a mourner. *Sit down* upon thy throne. Or, *sit up,* as this word is rendered, Gen. xxvii. 19. *Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck;* the yoke of thy captivity shall be taken off from thee. It is a metaphor from beasts that have the yoke fastened by bands to their necks.

g Ps. 44. 12. ch. 45. 13. Jer. 15. 13.

3 For thus saith the LORD, gYe have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.

Ye have sold yourselves, by your sins, into the hands of the Chaldeans, *for nought;* without any price or valuable consideration paid by them, either to you or to me, your Lord and Owner. *Ye shall be redeemed without money;* without paying any ransom.

h Gen. 46. 6. Acts 7. 14.

4 For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into hEgypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; where they had protection and sustenance, and therefore owed subjection to the king of Egypt. And yet when he oppressed them I punished him severely, and delivered them out of his hands. Which is easily understood from the following words. *And;* or, *but;* for here is an opposition made between these two cases. *The Assyrian;* the king of Babylon, who is called *the king of Assyria,* 2 Kings xxiii. 29, compared with chap. xxiv. 7, as also the Persian emperor is called, Ezra vi. 22, because it was one and the same empire, which was possessed, first by the Assyrians, then by the Babylonians, and afterwards by the Persians. *Oppressed them without cause;* without any such ground or colour, by mere force invading their land, and carrying them away into captivity. For although it be said that God gave this land and people *into* his *hand,* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17, by his counsel and providence; yet that was neither known to nor regarded by the king of Babylon, nor was it a good and lawful title, God's word, and not his providence, being the rule by which men's rights are determined; otherwise a robber hath a right to my purse, which he cannot take from me upon the highway without God's providence.

5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day *is* iblasphemed.

i Ezek. 36. 20, 23. Rom. 2. 24.

What have I here? Heb. *What to me here?* the sense is either, 1. What do I here? Why do I sit still here, and not go to Babylon to punish the Babylonians, and to deliver my people? Or, 2. What honour have I by suffering this injury to be done to my people? *Is taken away,* were carried away captive by the Babylonians, *for nought;* without any provocation or pretence of right. See before on ver. 3. *They that rule over them,* who by their office are obliged to deal justly and tenderly with their subjects, *make them to howl,* by their tyrannical and unmerciful usage of them. *My name continually every day is blasphemed;* instead of that praise and service which the Babylonians owe me for all their successes and conquests, they blaspheme me, as if I wanted either power or good-will to save my people out of their hands.

6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that I *am* he that doth speak: behold, *it is* I.

My people shall know my name; they shall have sensible experience of my infinite power and goodness in fighting for them and against you; whereby they shall be able to put your blasphemous tongues to silence. *They shall know;* which word is understood from the foregoing clause, as is very frequent in Scripture. *In that day;* when I shall redeem my people: which work was begun by the return of the Jews from Babylon, and afterwards carried on, and at last perfected, by the coming of the Messiah. *That I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I:* that all these promises are not the words of a weak, or fickle, or deceitful man, but of him who is the omnipotent, and unchangeable, and covenant-keeping God. Or thus, That I who have formerly spoken to you by my servants the prophets, (for it was *the Spirit of Christ which was and spake in them,* 1 Pet. i. 11,) do now speak to you in my own person, being clothed with flesh; which agrees well, as with the analogy of faith, and with divers other scriptures, so particularly with the next verse, and with divers following passages, which so evidently speak of the person and kingdom of Christ, that they cannot without great force be understood of any other.

k Nah. 1. 15. Rom. 10. 15.

7 ¶ kHow beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, lThy God reigneth!

l Ps. 93. 1. & 96. 10. & 97. 1.

How beautiful! these are words of rejoicing and admiration. They are exceeding precious and acceptable. *Upon the mountains* of Zion and Moriah, which are sometimes mentioned as one mountain, and sometimes as two. Or in the mountainous country of Judea, to which these glad tidings were brought, and from which they were spread abroad into other countries. *Are the feet,* which carry this welcome messenger; or the messenger himself. *Of him;* or, of them; for the singular number is oft put for the plural: although it may be here emphatically used, to signify, that although there were many messengers, yet one was the chief and Lord of the embassy, whose coming was more acceptable than the rest; which suits excellently to the Messiah, who is called *the Messenger of the covenant,* Mal. iii. 1, and is oft said to be *sent* by God, as John vi. 38; viii. 16, 18, &c., to publish the glad tidings of salvation. *That bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation:* these emphatical and repeated expressions are a sufficient evidence that something further and better is here intended than their deliverance out of Babylon, which in itself was but a very imperfect work, and reached at first but to a few of that numerous people, and was attended with many fears, and sorrows, and remainders of their bondage, Ezra ix. 8, 9; Neh. i. 3; and that although that was the beginning of these glad tidings, yet they extended much further, even to the coming of Christ, by whom alone true peace and salvation were procured. *That saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth:* it is true, this might in some sort be said when God so overruled the affairs of the world, and the heart of Cyrus, that his people were freed from the Babylonish captivity, and restored into and settled in their own land. Although he that considers the state of God's people in their own land after their return, will find that the reign of God in and over the world was not then either very conspicuous or glorious. And therefore it seems far more reasonable to understand it of the days of the Messiah, when God did discover and exercise his dominion over the world far more eminently than ever he had done from the beginning of the world until that time.

8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall

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see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

Thy watchmen, thy ministers, who shall descry the approach and coming of this heavenly King and kingdom, *shall lift up the voice;* partly to give notice to all people of these glad tidings; and partly by way of exultation, to sing forth the praises of God for this glorious day and mercy, as it here follows. *They shall see;* they shall understand, and so be able to teach, Divine mysteries. *Eye to eye;* very distinctly, and clearly, and familiarly, their eyes beholding the eyes of this King of glory; as it is said of Zedekiah, Jer. xxxiv. 3, *Thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon;* and as it is said, *mouth to mouth*, Numb. xii. 8, and *face to face*, Gen. xxxii. 30; Exod. xxxiii. 11; Numb. xiv. 14. They shall see with their bodily eyes the King of the church, or the Word made flesh, as they are said to have done, John i. 14; 1 John i. 1. They shall be eye and ear witnesses of the words and works of Christ, and therefore their testimony of these things shall be more certain and valuable. *When the Lord shall bring again Zion;* when God shall complete the work of bringing his church out of captivity; which was begun at the return out of Babylon, and perfected by Christ's coming into the world.

9 ¶ Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem:

For you shall be restored unto your former and a far greater fertility.

m ch. 51. 3. —[m] for the LORD hath comforted his peo-
n ch. 48. 20. ple, [n] he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

o Ps. 98. 2, 3. 10 [o] The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations;
p Luke 3. 6. and [p] all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Hath made bare his holy arm; hath discovered and put forth his great power, which for a long time hath lain hid, and seemed to be idle. *All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God;* all nations of the world shall with astonishment behold the wonderful work of God, first in bringing his people out of Babylon, and afterwards in their redemption by Christ.

q ch. 48. 20. Jer. 50. 8. & 51. 6, 45. Zech. 2. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 6. 17. Rev. 18. 4.
r Lev. 22. 2, &c.

11 ¶ [q] Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean *thing;* go ye out of the midst of her; [r] be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.

Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence; make haste, O ye banished Jews, to depart out of Babylon into your own land, that there I may meet with you, and bless you, and perform those further and greater things which I have promised there to do for you. And this invitation was the more necessary, because God foresaw that a great number of the Jews would upon worldly considerations continue in those foreign countries in which they were settled, and be very backward to return to the Holy Land. *Touch no unclean thing;* and when you go thence, take heed that you carry not along with you any of their superstitions or idolatries; but purify and prepare yourselves, that so God may return to you in mercy, when you return into your own land. *Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord;* and especially you priests and Levites, whose office it is to minister in holy things, and to carry back the holy vessels of the temple, keep yourselves from all pollution.

s See Ex. 12. 33, 39.
t Mic. 2. 13.
u Num. 10. 25. ch. 58. 8. See Ex. 14. 19.
† Heb. *gather you up.*

12 For [s] ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: [t] for the LORD will go before you; [u] and the God of Israel *will* † *be* your rereward.

For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight; but securely, and in triumph, being conducted by your great Captain, the Lord of hosts. And therefore you will have both the greater obligation, and the more leisure and opportunity, to cleanse yourselves from all filthiness. *For the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward;* so that none shall be able either to oppose and stop you in your march, or to fall upon you in the rear, as enemies commonly do.

13 ¶ Behold, [x] my servant shall ‖ deal prudently, [y] he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

x ch. 42. 1.
‖ Or *prosper.* ch. 53. 10. Jer. 23. 5.
y Phil. 2. 9.

This is the beginning of a new prophecy, which is continued from hence to the end of the next chapter; and therefore it is well observed by divers, both ancient and modern interpreters, that the fifty-third chapter should have begun here. *My servant. Quest.* Of whom doth the prophet here speak? It is apparent that these three last verses of this chapter, and all the following chapter, speak of one and the same person. And that that person is Christ is so evident, that the Chaldee paraphrast, and other ancient, and some later Hebrew doctors, understand it directly of him, and that divers Jews have been convinced and converted to the Christian faith by the evidence of this prophecy. And there is not a verse in this whole context which doth not afford a clear and convincing proof of this truth, as we shall see. And there needs no other argument to confirm it, than the variety and vanity of the pretended expositions of the Jews, who use all possible wit and art to wrest all these passages to other persons. Those who would seem wiser than the rest, and confute the other expositions of their brethren, understand it either of the Jewish people in general, or of the prophet Jeremiah in particular. But both these conceits are so groundless and absurd, that there is scarce a verse but confutes them, as we shall clearly discern in the exposition of them. And therefore other Jews reject them both, and understand it of Abraham, or Moses, or Josiah, or Ezra, or Zorobabel; and they might as well have named twenty persons more, to whom this place might be applied upon as good grounds as to any of these. But there is not one clause in all this context which is not most truly and fitly applied to Christ, as I shall make apparent, step by step. And first this title of God's *servant* is in an eminent and peculiar manner given to Christ in this very prophecy, as Isa. xlii. 1; xlix. 6; liii. 11; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; Zech. iii. 8. *Shall deal prudently;* shall manage his kingdom with admirable wisdom. Or, *shall prosper*, as it is in the margin, and as this word is frequently rendered, and particularly in this very case, and of this same person, Jer. xxiii. 5; which also seems best to agree with the following clause, and with chap. liii. 10, 11. And this intimation concerning the future prosperity and advancement of the Messiah is fitly put in the first place to prevent those scandals which otherwise might arise from the succeeding passages, which largely describe his state of humiliation and deep affliction. *He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high:* here are three words signifying the same thing, to express the height and glory of his exaltation; which agrees most fitly to Christ, but cannot without great force be applied to Jeremiah, who had no greater honour or favour done him by the Chaldeans at the taking of Jerusalem, than to be left at liberty to go where he pleased, Jer. xl. 4, and who after that time met with great contempt and hardship from his own countrymen, Jer. xlii., xliii., xliv.

14 As many were astonished at thee; his [z] visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

z Ps. 22. 6, 7. ch. 53. 2, 3.

Were astonished; were struck with wonder, either, 1. At his glorious endowments, and the excellency and power of his doctrine, and his miraculous works. Or rather, 2. At his great deformity, and stupendous humiliation and calamity, as may be gathered both from the following words, and from the use of this word in Scripture, which is generally used in a bad sense, or of wondering at some extraordinary evil, as Jer. xviii. 16; xix. 8, and oft elsewhere; and never in a good sense, or of wondering at any thing which is extraordinarily good. *At thee;* at thee, O my servant, to whom he now turneth his speech, and then turneth his speech from him, and speaks of him in the next words; such sudden changes of persons, and speaking of one and the same man sometimes in one person, and then presently in another, being very frequent in the writings of the prophets, as we have already seen in divers instances. *His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men;* he was more deformed or uncomely than any other man; which was un-

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doubtedly verified in Christ, who, in respect of his birth, and breeding, and manner of life, was most obscure and contemptible, and therefore said to be *a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people*, Psal. xxii. 6; who was more hated and vilified by the generality of the Jews than any man upon earth, and was accounted and called by them a *deceiver, a Samaritan, a blasphemer*, and *a devil*, &c.; whose countenance also was so marred with frequent watchings, and fastings, and troubles, that he was thought to be near fifty years old when he was but about thirty, John viii. 57; and was further spoiled with buffetings, and crowning with thorns, and other cruel and despiteful usages from men, and with the deep and continual sense of the burden of men's sins, and of God's displeasure due unto them; all which did not only oppress his spirit, but had a great influence upon the very constitution of his body.

a Ezek 36.25. Acts 2. 33. Heb. 9 13,14. b ch.49.7,23. c ch. 65. 1. Rom. 15. 21. & 16. 25, 26. Eph. 3. 5, 9.

15 [a]So shall he sprinkle many nations; [b]the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* [c]which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

So; his exaltation shall be answerable to his humiliation. *Shall he sprinkle;* either, 1. With his blood, which is called *the blood of sprinkling*, Heb. xii. 24; or, shall justify them, as it follows, Isa. liii. 11, which is frequently expressed by *washing*, as Psal. li. 2, 7; Ezek. xvi. 9, and by *sprinkling clean water*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Or, 2. With his word or doctrine; which being oft compared to rain or waters, as Deut. xxxii. 2; Isa. lv. 10, 11; Hab. ii. 14, &c., may be said to be *sprinkled*, as it is said to be *dropped*, Deut. xxxii. 2; Ezek. xx. 46; xxi. 2. And this sense seems to be most favoured by the following words. *The kings shall shut their mouths at him;* shall be silent before him, out of a profound humility, and reverence, and admiration of his wisdom, and an eager desire to hear and receive counsels and oracles from his mouth. Compare Job xxix. 9—11, 21. They shall no more contend with him, nor blaspheme the true God and religion, as they formerly used to do. *For that which had not been told them shall they see;* for they shall hear from his mouth many excellent doctrines, which also will be new and strange to them, such as men are very desirous to hear. And particularly they shall hear from him that comfortable doctrine concerning the conversion and salvation of the Gentiles, which was not only new to them, but was strange and incredible to the most of the Jews themselves. *Shall they consider;* or, *they shall understand;* which is added to show that the *seeing* in the former clause was meant of discerning these things with the eyes of their minds.

CHAP. LIII.

The incredulity of the Jews: the death of Christ, and the blessed effects thereof, 1—11; *his exaltation and glory,* 13—15.

a John 12.38. Rom. 10. 16. ‖ Or, *doctrine.* + Heb. *hearing.* b ch. 51. 9. Rom. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 18.

WHO [a]hath believed our ‖ †report? and to whom is [b]the arm of the LORD revealed?

Who hath believed our report? the prophet having in the three last verses of the former chapter made a general report concerning the great and wonderful humiliation and exaltation of Christ, of which he intended more largely to discourse in this chapter, before he descended to particulars he thought fit to use this preface. *Who,* not only of the Gentiles, but even of the Jews, *will believe* the truth of what I have said and must say? Few or none. The generality of them will never receive nor believe in such a Messias as this. Thus this place is expounded by Christ himself, John xii. 38, and by Paul, Rom. x. 16. And this premonition was highly necessary, both to caution the Jews that they should not stumble at this stone, and to instruct the Gentiles that they should not be surprised, nor scandalized, nor seduced with their example. *The arm of the Lord;* either, 1. The word of God, called the *report* in the former clause; the doctrine of the gospel, which is expressly called *the power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 18, because of that admirable virtue and success which accompanied the preaching of it. Or, 2. The Messiah, who also is called the arm or *power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24; and that most fitly, because the almighty power of God was both seated in him, and declared and exercised by him in his powerful words and mighty deeds, as Simon for some great works wrought by him was called by the Samaritans *the power of God*, Acts viii. 10. *Revealed;* not outwardly, for so Christ was revealed and preached to vast numbers, both of Jews and Gentiles, as is evident from this context, and from divers other places of Scripture; but inwardly and with power to their minds and hearts, of which kind of revelation see Eph. i. 17—19, and compare it with 2 Cor. iv. 4. Thus even Moses, though sufficiently revealed to the eyes and ears of the Jews, yet is said to be unrevealed or hid from their minds and hearts, 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15. The sense of the place is, few or none of the Jews will believe the gospel, or receive their Messiah when he comes among them.

c ch. 11. 1. d ch. 52. 14. Mark 9. 12.

2 For [c]he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: [d]he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; and the reason or occasion why the Jews will so generally reject their Messiah, is because he shall not come into the world with secular pomp and power, like an earthly monarch, as they carnally and groundlessly imagined; but *he shall grow up* (or, *spring up*, Heb. *ascend*, to wit, out of the ground, as it follows, brought forth, and brought up) *before him* (before the unbelieving Jews, of whom he spake ver. 1, and that in the singular number, as here, who were witnesses of his mean original; and therefore despised him, according to Christ's observation, John iv. 44; or, as others, *according to his face*, or outward appearance, as he was man; whereby he sufficiently implies that he had another, a far higher, and a Divine nature in him) *as a tender plant,* (or, as this very word is translated, Ezek. xvii. 4, *a young twig*, which is a small and inconsiderable thing,) *and as a root* (as Christ is called, Rom. xv. 12, and elsewhere; or, *as a branch;* the *root* being put metonymically for the *branch* growing out of the root, as it is apparently used, where Christ is called *the root of Jesse*, and *of David*, Isa. xi. 10; Rev. v. 5, and in other places, as 2 Chron. xxii. 10) *out of a dry ground;* out of a mean and barren soil, whose productions are generally poor and contemptible: either, 1. Out of the womb of a virgin; but that was no ground of contempt; or, 2. Of the Jewish nation, which was then poor, and despised, and enslaved; or, 3. Out of the poor, and decayed, and contemptible family, such as the royal family of David was at that time. *He hath no form nor comeliness;* his bodily presence and condition in the world shall be mean and contemptible. *When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him;* when we shall look upon him, expecting to find incomparable beauty and majesty in his countenance, and carriage, and condition, we shall be altogether disappointed, and shall meet with nothing amiable or desirable in him. This the prophet speaketh in the person of the carnal and unbelieving Jews, *we*, i. e. our people, the Jewish nation.

e Ps. 22. 6. ch. 49. 7. f Heb. 4. 15. ‖ Or, *he hid as it were* his *face from us.* + Heb. *as an hiding of faces from him,* or, *from us.* g John 1. 10, 11.

3 [e]He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and [f]acquainted with grief: and ‖ †we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and [g]we esteemed him not.

He is despised and rejected of men; accounted as the scum of mankind, as one unworthy of the company and conversation of all men. *A man of sorrows;* whose whole life was filled with, and in a manner made up of, an uninterrupted succession of sorrows and sufferings. *Acquainted with grief;* who had constant experience of and familiar converse with grievous afflictions; for knowledge is oft taken practically, or for experience, as Gen. iii. 5; 2 Cor. v. 21, and elsewhere. *We hid as it were our faces from him;* we scorned and loathed to look upon him. Or, as others, *he hid as it were* his *face from us*, as one ashamed

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to show his face, or to be seen by any men, as persons conscious to themselves of any great deformity do commonly shun the sight of men, as lepers did, Lev. xiii. 45. *He was despised, and we esteemed him not:* here are divers words expressing the same thing, to signify both the utmost degree of contempt, and how strange and wonderful a thing it was, that so excellent a person should be so despised.

h Matt. 8. 17. Heb. 9. 28. 1 Pet. 2. 24.

4 ¶ Surely [h]he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: and whereas it may seem an unreasonable and incredible thing, that so excellent and glorious, and so innocent and just, a person should meet with this usage, it must be known that his griefs and miseries were not laid upon him for his own sake, but wholly and solely for the sake of sinful men, in whose stead he stood, and for whose sins he suffered, as it here follows. *Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;* yet our people, the Jews, were so far from giving him the glory and praise of such a prodigious condescension and compassion, that they made a most perverse construction of it; and so great was their prejudice against him, that they believed that he was thus disgraced and punished, and at last put to death, by the just judgment of God, for his blasphemy and other manifold wickednesses.

‖ Or, *tormented.* i Rom. 4. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 3. 1 Pet. 3. 18.

5 But he *was* ‖[i]wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his [k]† stripes we are healed.

k 1 Pet. 2. 24. † Heb. *bruise.*

But; but this was a most false and unrighteous sentence. *He was wounded;* which word comprehends all his pains and punishments, and his death among and above the rest. *For our transgressions;* not *by* them, which is expressed by another particle, not by the wickedness of the Jews; but *for* or *because of* them, as this particle commonly signifies, for the guilt of their sins, which he had voluntarily taken upon himself, and for the expiation of their sins, which was hereby purchased and procured of God for men. Which interpretation is confirmed, 1. By the opposition of this truth to the false opinion mentioned in the foregoing clause, that he was *smitten of God* for the guilt of his own sins. 2. By the following clause, as we shall see. 3. By the nature of the thing; this being evident from scriptures both from the Old and New Testament, that Christ was not to suffer for his own, but for other men's sins. See Dan. ix. 24, 26. *The chastisement of our peace;* those punishments by which our *peace*, i. e. our reconciliation to God, and salvation, or happiness, was to be purchased. *Was upon him;* was laid upon him by God's justice with his own consent. *With his stripes we are healed;* by his sufferings we are saved from our sins, and from the dreadful effects thereof.

1 Ps. 119. 176. 1 Pet. 2. 25. † Heb. *hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on him.*

6 [l]All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD † hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

All we, all mankind, the Jews no less than the Gentiles, *like sheep,* which are simple and foolish creatures, and exceeding apt to straggle and lose themselves, *have gone astray* from God, and from the way of his precepts, in which he put our first parents, and in which he commanded us to walk. *To his own way;* in general, to the way and course of sin, which may well be called a man's *own way,* as sins are called men's *own lusts,* James i. 14; 2 Pet. iii. 3, and elsewhere, because sin is natural to us, inherent in us, born with us, and very dear to us; and in particular, to those several paths of divers lusts which several men choose and follow, according to their differing opinions, inclinations, occasions, and circumstances. *Hath laid,* Heb. *hath made to meet,* as all the rivers meet in the sea. *The iniquity;* not properly, for so he knew no sin, 2 Cor. v. 21; but the punishment of iniquity, as that word is most frequently used, as Gen. iv. 13; Lev. xx. 17, &c.; that which was due for all the sins of all his people, whether Jews or Gentiles, which must needs be so great and heavy a load, that if he had not been God as well as man, he must have sunk under the burden of them. This was actually verified in Christ. And both this and divers other passages here do as manifestly and fully point at Christ, as if they were not a prophetical representation of things to come, but an historical relation of them after they were done. Nor do I see how they can be excused from the fearful *wresting of the Scripture* that expound these places of the prophet Jeremiah, of any other person but Christ.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet [m]he opened not his mouth: [n]he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

m Matt. 26. 63. & 27. 12, 14. Mark 14. 61. & 15. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 23. n Acts 8. 32.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; he was sorely punished for our sins. But there is another translation, which seems to be more emphatical, and more agreeable to the Hebrew text; *It* (to wit, our iniquity last mentioned, or the punishment of all our sins) *was exacted* or *required,* (as this word most properly and frequently signifies, of which see my Latin Synopsis. God's justice expected and required satisfaction from us for our sins; which, alas! we could not make to him,) *and he was afflicted* or *punished;* he bore the guilt and punishment of our sins in his body upon the tree, as is said, 1 Pet. ii. 24; or, as others render this last word, *and he answered,* i. e. became our surety, or undertook to pay the debt, and to suffer the law in our stead, and for our sake. *Yet he opened not his mouth;* he neither murmured against God for causing him to suffer for other men's sins, nor reviled men for punishing him without cause, nor used apologies or endeavours to save his own life; but willingly and patiently accepted of the punishment of our iniquity. *Is dumb;* bears the loss of its fleece or life without any such clamour or resistance as other creatures use in such cases.

‖ Or, *He was taken away by distress and judgment; but, &c.* o Dan. 9. 26. † Heb. *was the stroke upon him.*

8 ‖He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for [o]he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people † was he stricken.

He was taken from prison and from judgment: these words are understood either, 1. Of Christ's humiliation or suffering; and then the words are to be thus rendered, *He was taken away* (to wit, out of this life, as this word is used, Psal. xxxi. 13; Prov. i. 19, and elsewhere; he was put to death) *by distress* (or *violence,* or *tyranny,* as this word is used with this preposition before it, Psal. cvii. 39) *and judgment;* by oppression and violence, under a form and pretence of justice. Or rather, 2. Of Christ's exaltation, because of the following clause; which is not unseasonably mentioned in the midst of his sufferings, to take off the scandal which might have arisen from Christ's sufferings, if there had not been a prospect and assurance of his victoriousness over them, and his glory after them; and so the words may be rendered, *He was taken up* (or, *taken away,* freed or delivered) *from prison* (i. e. from the grave, which being called a *house,* Job xxx. 23, and a *pit,* in which men are *shut* up, Psal. lxix. 15, may fitly be called a *prison;* or, *from distress,* or *affliction,* or *oppression,* from the power and malice of his enemies, and from the torments of his own soul, arising from the sense of men's sins and God's displeasure) *and from judgment,* i. e. from all the sufferings and punishments inflicted upon him, either by the unrighteous judgment of men, or by the just judgment of God, punishing him for those sins which he had voluntarily taken upon himself; or, which is the same thing, from the sentence of condemnation, and all the effects of it; for in this sense *judgment* is very commonly taken both in Scripture and other authors. *Who shall declare?* who can declare it? the future being taken potentially, as it is frequently; no words can sufficiently express it. *His generation;* either, 1. His age, or the continuance of his life. So the sense is, that he shall not only be delivered from death, and all his punishments, but also shall be restored to an inexpressible or endless life, and to an everlasting kingdom. Thus great interpreters understand it; with whom I cannot comply, because I do not find this Hebrew word to be ever used in Scripture of the continuance of one man's life. Or rather,

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2. His posterity; and so this word is unquestionably used, Gen. xv. 16; Exod. xx. 5; Deut. xxiii. 2, 3, 8, and in many other places. And so the sense of the place is this, that Christ's death shall not be unfruitful, and that when he is raised from the dead, he shall have a spiritual seed, as is promised, ver. 10; a numberless multitude of those who shall believe in him, and be regenerated and adopted by him into the number of his children, and of the children of God, John i. 12; Heb. ii. 10, 13, 14. *He was cut off*, to wit, by a violent death. And this may be added as a reason, both of his exaltation, and of the blessing of a numerous posterity conferred upon him, because he was willing to be cut off for the transgression of his people; and, as it followeth, ver. 10, *made his soul an offering for sin*; Christ's death being elsewhere declared to be the only way and necessary means of obtaining both these ends, Luke xxiv. 26, 46; John xii. 24, 32, 33; Phil. ii. 8, 9. But these words may be rendered, *although he was cut off*, to signify that his death should not hinder these glorious effects. *For the transgression of my people was he stricken*: this is repeated again, as it was fit it should be, to prevent men's mistakes about and stumbling at the death of Christ, and to assure them that Christ did not die for his own sins, but only for the sins and salvation of his people.

9 [p] And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his †death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* [q] deceit in his mouth.

p Matt. 27. 57, 58, 60.
† Heb. *deaths.*
q 1 Pet. 2. 22. 1 John 3. 5.

He made his grave with the wicked; and although he did not die for his own, but only for his people's sins, yet he was willing to die like a malefactor, or like a sinner, as all other men are, and to be put into the grave, as they used to be; which was a further degree of his humiliation. He saith, *he made his grave*, because this was Christ's own act, and he willingly yielded up himself to death and burial. And that which follows, *with the wicked*, doth not note the sameness of place, as if he should be buried in the same grave with other malefactors, but the sameness of condition; as when David prayeth, Psal. xxvi. 9, *Gather not my soul* (to wit, by death) *with sinners*, he doth not mean it of the same grave, but of the same state of the dead. *With the rich in his death*: this passage is thought by many to signify that Christ should be buried in the sepulchre of Joseph, who is said to be both *rich*, Matt. xxvii. 57, and *honourable*, Mark xv. 43, which they conceive to be intimated as a token of favour and honour showed to him; which to me seems not probable, partly because this disagrees with the former clause, which confessedly speaks of the dishonour which was done to him; and partly because the burial of Christ, whatsoever circumstances it was attended with, is ever mentioned in Scripture as a part of his humiliation, Acts ii. 24, 27. And it seems more reasonable, and more agreeable to the usage of the Holy Scripture, that this clause should design the same thing with the former, and that by *rich* he means the same persons whom he now called *wicked*, not as if all rich men were or must needs be wicked, but because for the most part they are so; upon which ground *riches* and *rich* men do commonly pass under an ill name in Scripture; of which see Psal. xxxvii. 10; xlix. 6; Luke vi. 24; xviii. 24; James i. 11; v. 1. *In his death*, Heb. *in* or *at* (or *after*, as this particle is frequently taken, as hath been already noted) *his deaths*; for Christ's death might well be called deaths, in the plural number, because he underwent many kinds of death, and many deadly dangers and pains, which are frequently called by the name of *death* in Scripture, of which instances have been formerly given; and he might say, with no less truth than Paul did, 1 Cor. xv. 31, *I die daily*, and 2 Cor. xi. 23. I was *in deaths oft*. *Because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth*: this some suppose to be added as a reason of the last branch of the foregoing clause, why God so overruled matters by his providence, that Christ should not be buried in the same grave, or in the same ignominious manner, as malefactors were, but in a more honourable manner, in Joseph's own tomb. But the last part of the foregoing clause cannot, without violence, be pulled asunder from the former, wherewith it is so closely joined, not only by a conjunction copulative, *and*, but also by being under the government of the same verb; and therefore this latter clause of the verse, if thus rendered, must be added as the reason of what is said to be done in the former. And so the sense of the place may be thus conceived, This was all the reward of the unspotted innocency of all his words and actions, to be thus ignominiously used. But these words may well be and are otherwise rendered, both by Jewish and Christian interpreters, either thus, *although he had done*, &c., or rather thus, *not for* (as these two same particles placed in the very same order are rendered by our translator, and others, Job xvi. 17) *any violence* (or *injury*, or *iniquity*) which *he had done, nor* for any *deceit* which *was in his mouth*; not for his own sins, but, as hath been said before, for his people's sins; in which translation there is nothing supplied but what is most frequent in Scripture also.

10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: ‖ when thou shalt make his soul [r] an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, [s] he shall prolong *his* days, and [t] the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

‖ Or, *when his soul shall make an offering.*
r 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 24.
s Rom. 6. 9.
t 1 Pet. 1. 25. 2 Thess. 1. 11.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; but although he was perfectly innocent, it pleased God for other just and wise reasons to punish him. *He hath put him to grief*; God was the principal cause of all his sorrows and sufferings, although men's sins were the deserving cause. *When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin*; when thou, O God, shalt make, or have made, thy Son a sacrifice, by giving him up to death for the atonement of men's sins. His *soul* is here put for his life, or for himself, or his whole human nature, which was sacrificed; his soul being tormented with the sense of God's wrath, and his body crucified, and soul and body separated by death. Or the words may be rendered, *when his soul shall make*, or *have made*, itself *an offering for sin*; whereby it may be implied that he did not lay down his life by force, but willingly. *He shall see his seed*; his death shall be glorious to himself, and highly beneficial to others; for he shall have a numerous issue of believers reconciled to God, and saved by his death. *He shall prolong his days*; he shall be raised to immortal life, and shall live and reign with God for ever; *he shall die no more*, Rom. vi. 9, and *of his kingdom there shall be no end*, Luke i. 33. *The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand*; God's gracious decree for the redemption and salvation of mankind shall be effectually carried on by his ministry and mediation.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: [u] by his knowledge shall [x] my righteous [y] servant [z] justify many; [a] for he shall bear their iniquities.

u John 17. 3. 2 Pet. 1. 3.
x 1 John 2. 1.
y ch. 42. 1. & 49. 3.
z Rom. 5. 18, 19.
a ver. 4, 5.

He shall see, he shall receive or enjoy, as this word commonly signifies, *of the travail of his soul*, the comfortable and blessed fruit of all his hard labours and grievous sufferings, *and shall be satisfied*; he shall esteem his own and his Father's glory, and the salvation of his people, an abundant recompence for all his sufferings. *By his knowledge*; either, 1. Actively, by that knowledge of God's will, and of the way of salvation, which is in him in its highest perfection, and which by him is revealed unto men, and by his Spirit is imprinted in the minds and hearts of his people, so as to produce faith and obedience in them. Or, 2. Passively, by the knowledge of him, as *my fear* and *thy fear* are put for *the fear of me* and *of thee*, Psal. v. 7; Jer. xxxii. 40; *knowledge* being here, as it is most frequently in Scripture, taken practically, for that kind of knowledge which worketh faith, and love, and obedience to him. So the sense is the same in both cases. *My righteous servant*; which title is here given to Christ, partly to vindicate him from those false imputations of wickedness which were fastened upon him by his adversaries, and which found the more belief because of his most grievous and unexampled sufferings both from God and men; and partly to show his fitness for this great work of justifying sinners, because he was exactly *holy, and harmless, and undefiled*, Heb. vii. 26, and *fulfilled all righteousness*, according to his duty, Matt. iii. 15; and therefore his person and performance must needs be acceptable to God, and effectual for the justification of his people, which was the great design of his coming into the world. *Justify*; acquit them from the guilt of their

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sins, and all the dreadful consequences thereof; for *justification* is here opposed to condemnation, as appears from the following clause, and from many other passages in this chapter, and as it is used in all places of Scripture, one, or two at most, excepted, where it is mentioned. And Christ is said to *justify* sinners meritoriously, because he purchaseth and procureth it for us; as God the Father is commonly said to do it authoritatively, because he accepted the price paid by Christ for it, and the pronunciation of the sentence of absolution is referred to him in the gospel dispensation. *Many;* which word is seasonably added, partly by way of restriction, to show that Christ will not justify all, but only such as believe in him and obey him; and partly by way of amplification, to declare that this blessed privilege shall not now be, as hitherto it had in a manner been, confined to Judea, and the Jews, but shall be conferred upon an innumerable company of all the nations of the world. *For he shall bear their iniquities;* for he shall satisfy the justice and law of God for them, by bearing the punishment due to their sins, and therefore by the principles of reason and justice they must be justified or acquitted, otherwise the same debt should be twice required and paid.

b Ps. 2. 8. Phil. 2. 9.
c Col. 2. 15.
d Mark 15. 28. Luke 22. 37.
e Luke 23.34. Rom. 8. 34. Heb. 7. 25. & 9. 24. 1 John 2. 1.

12 [b]Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, [c]and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was [d]numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and [e]made intercession for the transgressors.

Therefore will I, God the Father, the Spectator and Judge of the action or combat, *divide him;* give him his share; or, *impart* or *give to him;* for this word is oft used without respect to any distribution or division, as Deut. iv. 19; xxix. 26, and elsewhere. *A portion;* which is very commodiously supplied out of the next clause, where a word which answers to it, *the spoil*, is expressed. *With the great;* or, *among the great;* such as the great and mighty potentates of the world use to have after a sharp combat and a glorious victory. Though he be a very mean and obscure person, as to his extraction and outward condition in the world, yet he shall attain to as great a pitch of glory as the greatest monarchs enjoy. *He shall divide the spoil with the strong:* the same thing is repeated in other words, after the manner of prophetical writers. The sense of both clauses is, that God will give him, and he shall receive, great and happy success in his glorious undertaking; he shall conquer all his enemies, and lead captivity captive, as is said, Eph. iv. 8, and set up his universal and everlasting kingdom in the world. *Because he hath poured out his soul unto death;* because he willingly laid down his life in obedience to God's command, John x. 17, 18, and in order to the redemption of mankind. Death is here called a *pouring out of the soul*, or *life*, either because the soul or life, which in living men is contained in the body, is turned out of the body by death; or to signify the manner of Christ's death, that it should be with the shedding of his blood, in which the life of man consists, Lev. xvii. 11, 14. *He was numbered with the transgressors;* he was willing for God's glory and for man's good to be reproached and punished like a malefactor, in the same manner and place, and betwixt two of them, as is noted with reference to this place, Mark xv. 27, 28. *He bare the sin of many;* which was said ver. 11, and is here repeated to prevent a mistake, and to intimate, that although Christ was numbered with transgressors, and was used accordingly, yet he was no transgressor, nor did submit to and suffer this usage for his own sins, but for the sins of others, the punishment whereof was by his own consent laid upon him. *Made intercession for the transgressors;* either, 1. By way of satisfaction; he interposed himself between an angry God and sinners, and received those blows in his own body which otherwise must have fallen upon them. Or, 2. In way of petition, as this word is constantly used. He prayed upon earth for all sinners, and particularly for those that crucified him, Luke xxiii. 34; and in heaven he still intercedeth for them, not by a humble petition, but by a legal demand of those good things which he purchased for his own people by the sacrifice of himself, which, though past, he continually represents to his Father, as if it were present.

CHAP. LIV.

The blessings and fulness of the gospel church, 1—3; the Gentiles becoming Christ's spouse; to whom his love is everlasting, 4—10. Her glories, 11, 12. The gifts of the Holy Ghost, 13. Her sure preservation, 14—17.

SING [a], O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for [b]more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

a Zeph. 3. 14. Gal. 4. 27.
b 1 Sam 2. 5.

Sing, O barren. The prophet having largely discoursed of the sufferings of Christ, and of the blessed fruits or effects thereof, among which one is, that he should have a numerous seed that should believe on him, and that when the Jews rejected him, the Gentiles should gladly receive him, and here foreseeing by the Spirit of God that glorious state of the church, he rejoiced in it, as Abraham did upon the like occasion, John viii. 56, and breaks forth into this song of triumph. He turneth his speech to the church and spouse of God, or of Christ, as is manifest from the following words, and especially from ver. 5, and from Gal. iv. 27, where it is so expounded. And although this chapter is by some understood of the flourishing condition of the Jewish church and state after their return from Babylon, yet the magnificent and glorious promises here following do so vastly exceed their condition at that time, which was full of uncertainties, and distractions, and troubles, as all the histories of those times assure us, and far from that glory and lasting tranquillity which is here assured to her, that it must necessarily be referred to the times of the gospel, in which all that is here said was or will be remarkably fulfilled. And therefore as the foregoing chapter doth directly and literally speak of Christ, so doth this literally speak of the church of Christ, or of the kingdom of the Messiah, of whom the ancient Hebrew doctors understood it. And this church, consisting at first of the Jews, and afterwards of the Gentiles, who were incorporated with them into the same body, he calleth *barren*, not because it now was so, but because before and until the coming of Christ it had been so; as Simon is called *the leper*, Matt. xxvi. 6, after he was cured. Now this church of the Jews might well be called, and had been, barren, because the sincere converts brought forth to God by her ministry had been but few among the Jews comparatively, and simply few among the Gentiles. *More are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife:* the church or congregation of the Gentiles, which in the times of the Old Testament was desolate, having neither husband nor children, doth now under the gospel bring forth unto God a far more numerous posterity than the church of the Jews, which had been married to God for many ages, until by her apostacy from God, and from her Messiah, she provoked God to put her away. He alludeth here either to the history of Sarah, who was long and naturally barren, but by the supernatural power of God was enabled to bring forth a numberless issue; or to that remarkable passage of God's providence concerning Hannah and Peninnah, 1 Sam. ii. 5, *The barren hath born seven, and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.*

2 [c]Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

c ch. 49. 19, 20.

Enlarge the place of thy tent, that it may be capable of the Gentiles, which shall flock to thee in great numbers, and desire to associate themselves with thee. *Let them*, those to whom that work belongs, *stretch forth.* The meaning is, they must and shall be stretched out. *Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes*, that they may be able to support that great weight which the tents thus enlarged shall be upon them.

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3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; [d] and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

[d] ch. 55. 5. & 61. 9.

Thou shalt break forth; thou shalt bring forth a multitude of children; for this word is commonly used of any great and extraordinary propagation of living creatures, whether beasts or men, Gen. xxx. 30; Exod. i. 12. *On the right hand and on the left;* on every side, in all the parts of the world. *Thy seed;* either, 1. Thy spiritual seed, the church of the new testament, which is accounted Abraham's seed, or children, Gal. iii. 7—9, 29. Or, 2. Thy natural seed, Christ and his apostles, and other ministers, who were Jews, by whom this work was first and most eminently done. *Shall inherit the Gentiles;* shall subdue the Gentile world to the church, and to the obedience of the faith. *The desolate cities;* those cities and countries which in a spiritual sense were desolate and forsaken by God.

4 Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

Thou shalt not be ashamed for that barrenness and widowhood, which once was the matter of thy grief and shame, because now thou shalt be delivered from it, and God will own thee for his wife, and beget children of thee; as it is explained in the following words. *Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth;* it shall be forgotten both by thee and others: thou shalt not be upbraided with thy former barrenness in thy youthful state, nor confounded and tormented with the remembrance of it; both *remembering* and *forgetting* in Scripture use connote or comprehend those affections which naturally and usually follow upon them; so great shall be thy fertility and felicity, that it shall cause thee to forget thy former unfruitfulness and misery, as men commonly do in like cases, as Gen. xli. 51; Job xi. 16; Isa. lxv. 16; John xvi. 21. *The reproach of thy widowhood;* that time and state when thou wert like a widow, disconsolate and desolate, forsaken by her husband, and having in a manner no children; which was a great reproach, especially among the Jews.

[e] Jer. 3. 14. [f] Luke 1. 32. [g] Zech. 14. 9. Rom. 3. 29.

5 [e] For thy Maker *is* thine husband; the [f] LORD of hosts *is* his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; [g] The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Thy Maker; he who made thee out of nothing, and therefore can easily fulfil all these promises, how unlikely soever they seem to be; and he who made thee a people, and, which is far more and better, his people, and therefore will not easily nor utterly forsake thee. *Is thine husband;* he will own thee for his spouse, and will do the part of a husband to thee. *The Lord of hosts;* who hath the sovereign command of all men and creatures, and therefore can subdue the Gentiles to thee, and can make thee to increase and multiply in so prodigious a measure, even in thine old age, notwithstanding thy barrenness in the days of thy youth, of which he speaketh in the foregoing verse. *The God of the whole earth;* the God and Father of all nations; whereas formerly he was called only *the God of Israel*, and the Gentiles had no special relation to him, nor interest in his covenant and favour, as was observed, Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20, and elsewhere.

[h] ch. 62. 4.

6 For the LORD [h] hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

The Lord hath called thee, to return and come again to him. *As a woman forsaken;* when thou wast like a woman forsaken. Or, as a husband recalleth his wife. *Forsaken* by her husband, who hath given her a bill of divorce. *Grieved in spirit,* for the loss of her husband's favour and society, and for the reproach attending upon it. *And a wife of youth;* or, *and as* (which note of similitude is supplied here by the LXX. and Chaldee interpreters, and is easily understood out of the foregoing clause, in which it is expressed) *a wife of youth,* i. e. as readily and affectionately as a husband recalleth his wife which he married in her and his own youth, of whom see on Prov. v. 18, whom though he might through a sudden and violent passion put away, yet he soon repents of it, and his affections work towards her, and he invites her to return to him. *When thou wast refused;* when thou wast in a desolate estate, and hadst been for some time rejected by me, then I recalled thee. Or, *although thou wast refused,* or *dismissed,* or *despised* by me, and that justly; yet I had mercy upon thee, and freely offered reconciliation to thee. *Saith thy God;* who will again be, and still show himself to be, thy God, and will renew his covenant with thee.

7 [i] For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

[i] Ps. 30. 5. ch. 26. 20. & 60. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

For a small moment; for the space of some few years, as seventy years in Babylon, and some such intervals, which may well be called a *small moment* in comparison of God's *everlasting kindness* mentioned in the next verse. *Forsaken thee;* withdrawn my favour and help from thee, and left thee in thine enemies' hands. *With great mercies,* such as are most precious and sweet for quality, as is here said, and such as are of long continuance, as is said in the following verse, *will I gather thee* from all the places where thou art dispersed, from all the parts of the world.

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; [k] but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

[k] ch. 55. 3. Jer. 31. 3.

I hid my face; I removed the means and pledges of my presence and kindness. *With everlasting kindness;* with kindness to thee and thy seed through all succeeding generations, here and unto all eternity.

9 For this *is as* the waters of [l] Noah unto me: for *as* I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

[l] Gen. 8. 21. & 9. 11. ch. 55. 11. See Jer. 31. 35, 36.

This is as the waters of Noah unto me; this covenant of grace and peace made with thee shall be as certain and perpetual as that which I made with Noah, that there should never be another flood of waters to drown the world; of which see Gen. ix. 11. *Would not be wroth with thee,* to wit, so as I have been, or so as to forsake thee utterly.

10 For [m] the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; [n] but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

[m] Ps. 46. 2. ch. 51. 6. Matt. 5. 18. [n] Ps. 89. 33, 34.

The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; which hath been verified in some mountains and hills, that by earthquakes, or otherwise, have been removed from their places. But these kind of absolute expressions are ofttimes comparatively understood, of which see on Isa. li. 6; and so the sense is, The mountains shall sooner depart from their places, than my kindness shall depart from thee. As when it is said absolutely, *I desired mercy, and not sacrifice,* it is meant comparatively, I desired mercy more than sacrifice, as it is explained in the following clause. *The covenant of my peace;* that covenant whereby I have made peace and friendship with thee, and have promised unto thee all manner of happiness, which frequently comes under the name of *peace* in Scripture. The sense of the place is, that God will not cast off his Christian church, as he did cast off the church of the Jews; and that the new covenant is established upon better and surer promises than the old, as is observed, Heb. viii. 6, 7, &c., and elsewhere. *That hath mercy on thee;* who doth thus with thee not for thine own merits, but merely for his own grace and mercy.

11 ¶ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, *and* not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with [o] fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

[o] 1 Chron. 29. 2. Rev. 21. 18, &c.

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O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted; O thou my poor church, who hast frequently been, and wilt again and again be, in a most afflicted and comfortless condition for a time, be not discouraged thereby. *I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires;* I will make thee exceeding beautiful and glorious. Which yet is not to be understood of outward pomp and worldly glory, as is evident from many places of Scripture, which assure us that Christ's kingdom is of another nature, and that the external condition of God's church is, and for the most part will be, mean and calamitous in this world; but of a spiritual beauty and glory, consisting in the plentiful effusion of excellent gifts, and graces, and comforts; although these shall be followed with eternal glory in heaven. See the like description of the church's glory, Rev. xxi. 11, &c.

12 And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

Agates; one kind of which stones was transparent like glass, as Pliny writes in his Natural History, b. 37. ch. 10. But some render this word *crystal*, and the LXX., and some other of the ancients, translate it *jasper*. But the proper signification of the Hebrew names of precious stones is unknown to the Jews themselves, as hath been noted before. It may suffice us to know that this was some very clear, and transparent, and precious stone. *Thy borders;* the utmost parts or walls. The church is here evidently compared to a building, whose *foundation, pavement, gates,* and *windows* were named before.

p ch. 11. 9. Jer. 31. 34. John 6. 45. 1 Cor. 2. 10. 1 Thess. 4. 9. 1 John 2. 20. q Ps. 119. 165.

13 And all thy children *shall be* [p]taught of the LORD; and [q]great *shall be* the peace of thy children.

Shall be taught of the Lord; not only outwardly by his word, which was made known to all the Jews under the Old Testament, but inwardly by his Spirit, which is poured forth under the New Testament, both upon a far greater number of persons, and in a far higher measure, and with much more efficacy and success, than it was under the Old. *The peace:* 1. Inward peace of mind or conscience arising from the clear discoveries of God's love and reconciliation to us, and wrought by the Spirit of adoption, which is more abundantly given to believers under the gospel, whereas the spirit of bondage was more common and prevalent under the law. 2. Outward peace, safety, and happiness, which is more fully promised in the following verses, and which God, when he sees fit, will confer upon his church.

14 In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.

In righteousness; either, 1. As the means of thy establishment. This kingdom shall not be set up and settled by fraud or tyranny, as other kingdoms frequently are, but by justice. Or rather, 2. As the effect of the establishment. Thine affairs shall be managed with righteousness, which is the glory and felicity of any society, and not with oppression, as it follows. Justice shall be freely and impartially executed. *Thou shalt be far from oppression;* either by thine own governors, or by foreign powers. *Thou shalt not fear;* thou shalt neither have any just cause of fear, nor be given up to the torment of fear without cause.

15 Behold, they shall surely gather together, *but* not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

They shall surely gather together; it is true, there will not want some that shall combine and make an attempt against thee. *But not by me;* as they do this without any such commission from me, as Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar had, Isa. x. 6, 7; Jer. xxv. 9; so they shall not have my help in it, without which all their endeavours will be vain and unsuccessful. *Whosoever shall gather together* to battle, as is manifest from the following words, of which kind of gathering this word is used, Psal. cxl. 2, and elsewhere. *Against thee,* Heb. *with thee.* But *to fight with a man* is all one with *fighting against him. Shall fall for thy sake;* for that respect and love which I bear to thee. Or, *before thee,* as this particle is sometimes used, so as thine eyes shall behold it.

16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

Both the smith that maketh all warlike instruments, and the soldier that useth them, are my creatures, and totally at my command, and therefore they cannot hurt you without my leave. *To destroy;* to destroy only whom and when I please.

17 ¶ No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, [r]and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.

r ch. 45. 24, 25.

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and as they cannot do any thing against thee without my leave, so I assure thee I will not suffer them to do it; and if any smith shall make any weapons to be employed against thee, he shall not succeed in it. *And every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn;* and I will deliver thee not only from the fury of the war, but also from the strife of tongues, from all the threatenings, and boasts, and reproaches of thine enemies, and from all the claims and pretences which they have of any right and power over thee. So thine enemies shall neither prevail against thee by violence, nor by pretences of justice. *This is the heritage;* this blessed condition described in this chapter is the portion allotted to them by me. *Their righteousness;* either, 1. The reward or fruit of their righteousness, as *righteousness* is used, Psal. cxii. 3, 9. Or, 2. Their right or the righteous administration of all their concerns, whereby they are preserved from all manner of oppressions, as *righteousness* was used, ver. 14. *Is of me;* I give it, and I will continue it to them; and who then can take it away from them?

CHAP. LV.

An invitation to seek for spiritual blessings from Christ, whom the Father sendeth, 1—5; *to come to him speedily, and by repentance,* 6, 7. *His grace infinite,* 8, 9. *His word powerful,* 10, 11. *The joy of believers,* 12, 13.

HO, [a]every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; [b]come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

a John 4. 14. & 7. 37. Rev. 21. 6. & 22. 17. b Eccles. 51. 25. Matt. 13. 44, 46. Rev. 3. 18.

Ho, every one; not only Jews, but Gentiles. The prophet having largely discoursed of Christ, chap. liii., and of the church of Christ, chap. liv., doth here invite all persons to come to Christ, and to his church. *That thirsteth* for the grace of God, and the blessings of the gospel. This *thirst* implies a vehement, and active, and restless desire after it, not to be satisfied with any thing short of it. *Come ye to the waters;* which are mentioned, either, 1. As the place where they were to buy the following commodities, it being usual to convey provisions to cities by rivers. Or rather, 2. As the commodity to be bought, the graces and comforts of God's Spirit, which are frequently compared to *waters,* as Isa. xii. 3; xxxv. 6, 7; John vii. 37, 38, and elsewhere, and which are designed by all these metaphorical expressions of *waters, wine, milk,* and *bread. He that hath no money;* even those who are most poor in the world, and those who are most worthless and wicked, if they do but thirst, may be welcome. *Buy,* i. e. procure or receive that which is freely offered to you, if you do but come for it, and are willing to take it. Thus *buying* is used Prov. xxiii. 23; Rev. iii. 18. Nor can this be understood of *buying* properly, because here is no price paid. *Buy wine and milk;* which are synecdochically put for all sorts of provisions; which also are to be understood of spiritual and gospel blessings, as is evident from the following words.

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† Heb. weigh.

2 Wherefore do ye †spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Money; all your time, and strength, and cost in seeking it. *For that which is not bread;* for those vain or foolish things which can never nourish or satisfy you, such as worldly goods, or your own inventions, superstitions, and idolatries. *Hearken diligently unto me;* unto my doctrine and counsel. *Eat ye that which is good;* that which is truly, and solidly, and everlastingly good, and not such things which though they be called and seem to be good, yet really are evil, and most pernicious to men. *In fatness;* in this fat and most pleasant food of gospel enjoyments.

c Mat. 11. 28. d ch. 54. 8. & 61. 8. Jer. 32. 40. e 2 Sam. 7. 8, &c. Ps. 89. 28. Acts 13. 34.

3 Incline your ear, and [c]come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; [d]and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the [e]sure mercies of David.

Hear; hearken attentively and obediently to my counsel; *hearing* being oft put for *obeying*, as Deut. xviii. 15; 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23; Psal. xcv. 7, &c. *Your soul shall live*, to wit, comfortably and happily; which only is worthy of the name of *life*. *I will make an everlasting covenant with you;* that everlasting covenant of grace and peace which I made with Abraham, and his seed the Israelites, I am ready to make it with every one of you thirsting Gentiles. *Even the sure mercies of David;* even that covenant which was made first with Abraham, and then with David, concerning the exhibition of those glorious and sure mercies or blessings which God hath promised to his people, one and the chief of which mercies was the giving of Christ to die for their sins, and to rise again for their justification. This exposition may receive light and strength by comparing this place with Acts xiii. 33, 34. He mentions David rather than Abraham, either, 1. Because these promises, and especially that great promise, which is the foundation of the rest, concerning Christ and his eternal kingdom, were far more frequently, and expressly, and fully made and revealed to David than they were to Abraham. Or, 2. Because David was a more evident and illustrious type of Christ than Abraham was, as being raised from a mean condition to the highest honour, being made a great and most victorious and righteous king, and the first king of that throne upon which the Messiah was to sit. Or, 3. Because the name of David is not here put personally for the king of that name, but patronymically for the Messiah, who was to be David's Son and successor, and who is therefore called *David* in the prophetical scriptures, as Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24; xxxvii. 24, 25; Hos. iii. 5; as Rehoboam upon the same account is called *David*, 1 Kings xii. 16. And this is the more probable, beause the next verse, which hath a manifest relation to this verse, is confessedly understood of Christ.

f John 18. 37. Rev. 1. 5. g Jer. 30. 9. Ezek. 34. 23. Hos. 3. 5. Dan. 9. 25.

4 Behold, I have given him *for* [f]a witness to the people, [g]a leader and commander to the people.

I have given, I have already appointed, and will in due time actually give, *him;* the David last mentioned, even Christ, the Son and successor of David, as is plain and certain from the titles and works ascribed to him in this and the following verse. But of this see the last note upon the former verse. *For a witness;* to be a Prophet or Teacher, to declare the counsel and will of God concerning the duty and salvation of men; *to bear witness unto the truth*, as Christ himself affirmeth, John xviii. 37; *to confirm God's promises*, Rom. xv. 8, and, amongst others, those which respect the calling and reconciliation of the Gentiles; to be a witness for both parties of that covenant made between God and men. *To the people;* not only to my people of Israel, but to all people, Gentiles no less than Jews, as is evident from the following verse, and from Isa. xlix. 6, and divers other places. *A Leader and Commander;* a sovereign Prince to give them laws, and exact their obedience, and in case of their obedience to give them protection and rewards.

h ch. 52. 15. Eph. 2. 11, 12. i ch. 60. 5.

5 [h]Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, [i]and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; [k]for he hath glorified thee.

k ch. 60. 9. Acts 3. 13.

Thou; thou, O Messiah, of whom he now spake, ver. 4, and to whom he suddenly turneth his speech, as is very common in the prophets; *shalt call a nation*, to wit, unto thyself, and to the knowledge of thyself, as appears from the following words, and by thee unto acquaintance and fellowship with God. *That thou knowest not;* or rather, *didst not know*, to wit, with that special knowledge which implies approbation, and tender care and affection, as words of knowledge are most frequently used in Scripture; the Gentiles, to whom in former times thou didst not make known thy law and covenant, and the way of salvation, Acts xiv. 16; xvii. 30. *Nations that knew not thee*, that had but little knowledge of God, and no knowledge of the Messiah, *shall run unto thee;* upon thy call shall speedily and readily come to thee, to receive instructions from thee, and to follow thee whithersoever thou shalt lead them. *Because of the Lord thy God;* because the Lord shall by many evident and unquestionable tokens manifest himself to be thy God, and thee to be his Son and faithful Servant. *For he hath glorified thee;* because the God of Israel, who is the only true God, will highly honour thee, by his singular presence with thee, by his almighty power accompanying thy word, and making it wonderfully effectual for the conversion of an innumerable company, both of Jews and Gentiles, and by confirming thy word with illustrious signs and miracles, and particularly by thy resurrection and glorious ascension. These and other like considerations were the motives which convinced the Gentiles that Christ was the true Messiah, and the religion which he taught was the true religion.

6 ¶ [l]Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

l Ps. 32. 6. Matt. 5. 25. & 25. 11. John 7. 34. & 8. 21. 2 Cor. 6. 1, 2. Heb. 3. 13.

Seek ye the Lord: having discoursed of the office and work of Christ, and showed that he should call people and nations to himself, and to God, he now endeavours to persuade the people to hearken to his call, and to *seek the Lord*, i. e. to labour to get the knowledge of God's will, and to obtain his grace and favour; neither of which things were to be done but in and through Christ. And this invitation or exhortation is general, like that ver. 1, reaching to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, implying that both of them had lost him and his favour, and were gone astray from him. Seek him, ye Gentiles, whom he now inviteth so to do, and will assist in finding him. And seeing the Gentiles seek him earnestly, let their example provoke you Jews to imitate them therein, and take heed that you do not reject him, whom they will receive and own. *While he may be found;* in this day of grace, whilst he offereth mercy and reconciliation to you; which he will not always do. Compare Prov. i. 24, &c.; Luke xix. 44; 2 Cor. vi. 2. *While he is near;* near to you by his gracious presence and offers in his ordinances, ready and desirous to receive you to mercy upon the following conditions.

7 [m]Let the wicked forsake his way, and †the unrighteous man [n]his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, [o]and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for †he will abundantly pardon.

m ch. 1. 16. † Heb. *the man of iniquity.* n Zech. 8. 17. o Ps. 130. 7. Jer. 3. 12. † Heb. *he will multiply to pardon.*

Let the wicked man, any wicked man, either Jew or Gentile, *forsake his way;* his evil or wicked way, as is evident from the foregoing word, and as it is more fully expressed, Jer. xviii. 11; xxv. 5; which is called *his way*, because it is natural, and customary, and dear to him, and in opposition to God's good way; his sinful course or manner of life. Let him *cease to do evil*, as it is Isa. i. 16. This he adds, to intimate that men's seeking and calling upon God will do them no good without reformation of their lives. *His thoughts;* the sinful devices and purposes of his mind. Thus he strikes at the root of sinful actions, and showeth that the heart must be purged and changed as well as the outward actions. *Let him return unto the Lord;* as he hath departed from God by sin, let him turn to him by sincere repentance, and the practice of all God's precepts; whereby he intimates that a mere abstinence from wicked courses

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is not sufficient, without the exercise of the contrary graces; that we must not only *cease to do evil*, but also *learn to do well*, as it is prescribed, Isa. i. 16, 17. *To our God;* to the God of Israel, who is and hath showed himself to be a most merciful and gracious God. *For he will abundantly pardon:* he useth so many words and arguments to encourage them to repentance, because the persons here invited were guilty of idolatry, apostacy, and many other gross wickednesses; which he knew, when they came to themselves, and to a serious sense of their sins, and of the just and holy nature and law of God, would be an insupportable burden to their awakened consciences, and make them very prone to conclude that God either could not or would not pardon such horrid delinquencies, and therefore would rather drive them from God, than draw them to him.

p 2 Sam. 7. 19. 8 ¶ [p]For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

My disposition and carriage is vastly differing from yours. If any man provoke or injure you, especially if he do it greatly, and frequently, and maliciously, you are very slow and backward to forgive him; and if you do or seem to forgive, and promise to forget, and pass it by, yet you retain a secret grudge in your hearts, and upon the least occasion and slight offence you forget your promise, and you are soon weary with forgiving, and prone to revenge yourselves upon him: but it is not so with me; for I am slow to anger, and ready to forgive all true penitents, how many, and great, and numberless soever their sins be; and my promises of mercy and pardon shall be infallibly made good to them. And therefore you need not fear to come to me, or to find mercy and acceptance with me.

q Ps. 103. 11. 9 [q]For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Higher than the earth; inexpressibly and infinitely; for the distance between the earth and the highest heavens is unmeasurable by any man upon earth.

r Deut. 32. 2. 10 For [r]as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

And the snow, which in its season contributes to the fruitfulness of the earth as well as the rain. *Returneth not thither*, to wit, void, or without effect, as it is expressed in the next verse; or immediately; it is not drawn up again as soon as it is come down, but abides for a convenient time upon the earth, until it do that work for which it was sent. *That it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater;* that it may bring forth store of bread corn, both for men's present supplies, and for seed for the next year.

s ch. 54. 9. 11 [s]So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

So shall my word; my promises before recited concerning the sending of the Messiah, and the blessing of his labours with such wonderful success, and concerning the reconciliation and pardon of the greatest sinners, and concerning the redemption and salvation of his people. *It shall not return unto me void;* without success. It is an allusion to an ambassador who returns without despatching that business for which he was sent. *It shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it;* it shall have that effect which I intended; it shall certainly be fulfilled in manner before expressed.

t ch. 35. 10. & 65. 13, 14. u Ps. 96. 12. & 98. 8. ch. 14. 8. & 35. 1, 2. & 42. 11. x 1 Chro. 16. 33. 12 [t]For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall [u]break forth before you into singing, and [x]all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

For; or, *Therefore;* because God hath promised it, and therefore will effect it. *Ye shall go out;* ye shall be released from the place and state of your bondage. He alludes to their going out of Egypt, which was a type of their succeeding deliverances, and especially of their redemption by Christ from the power of sin and of the devil. *Be led forth;* or, *be led along;* be conducted by the gracious and powerful presence of God, as you were in the wilderness. *With peace;* safely and triumphantly, without fear of being retaken and brought back into slavery by your enemies. *And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands;* there shall be a great and general rejoicing at your deliverance, so that even the senseless creatures shall seem to rejoice with you and for you.

y ch. 41. 19. z Mic. 7. 4. 13 [y]Instead of [z]the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD [a]for a name, for an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off.

a Jer. 13. 11.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; whereas your land was filled *with thorns and briers*, as was foretold, Isa. vii. 24, they shall be rooted out, and it shall be planted with fir trees and myrtle trees, and such other trees which are useful either for fruit or for delight. Or this promise may be answerable to that Ezek. xxviii. 24, *There shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn*, &c., but instead of them shall be such trees as shall yield shade and refreshment. The meaning is, The church shall be delivered from pernicious men and things, and replenished with sincere and serious believers, and with all sorts of Divine graces and blessings. *It shall be to the Lord for a name;* this wonderful change shall bring much honour to that God by whom it is wrought. *For an everlasting sign;* for a monument or evident and glorious token of God's infinite power, and faithfulness, and love to his people unto all succeeding generations. *That shall not be cut off;* which shall never be abolished, but shall always live and flourish in the minds and mouths of men.

CHAP. LVI.

Blessedness of the godly, without any respect of persons, 1—8. *Blind watchmen shall be destroyed,* 9—12.

‖ Or, *equity.* a ch. 46. 13. Matt. 3. 2. & 4. 17. Rom. 13. 11, 12. THUS saith the LORD, Keep ye ‖judgment, and do justice: [a]for my salvation *is* near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

This verse and the rest of this chapter, until ver. 9, seems to belong to the foregoing prophecy. From the consideration of God's promises made to them he moveth them to perform their duty to him. *Keep ye judgment, and do justice:* this phrase elsewhere signifies the duties which one man oweth to another, but here it seems to signify the duties which men owe to God, as it is explained in the following verses. *My salvation;* that eminent salvation by the Messiah, so largely promised and insisted upon in the foregoing chapters; for which it behoves you to prepare yourselves, and in which, without this condition, you shall have no share nor benefit. *Is near to come:* so the Scripture useth to speak of things which are at a great distance, as if they were present or at hand: see Hab. ii. 3; James v. 8, 9; Rev. xxii. 20. *My righteousness:* the same thing which he now called *salvation*, and here calleth his *righteousness*, because it is an evident demonstration of God's righteousness, as in the fulfilling of his promises, so in the punishment of sin, and in the salvation of sinners upon just and honourable terms.

b ch. 58. 13. 2 Blessed *is* the man *that* doeth this, and the son of man *that* layeth hold on it; [b]that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

Blessed is the man; every man, not only Jews, but Gentiles, or strangers, as it is explained in the following verses.

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That doeth this; judgment and justice, mentioned ver. 1. *That layeth hold on it;* or, *that holdeth it fast;* that is resolute and constant in so doing; that not only begins well, but perseveres in it. *That keepeth the sabbath from polluting it;* that guardeth the sabbath from profanation, and doth not defile it, either by forbidden practices, or by the neglect of commanded duties. And the sabbath seems to be put here, as sacrifice is elsewhere, synecdochically for the whole worship of God, whereof this is an eminent part, and the bond of all the rest. *Keepeth his hand;* which being the great instrument of action, is put for all the kinds and means of action. *From doing any evil,* to wit, to one's neighbour, as it is more fully expressed, Psal. xv. 3.

c See Deut. 23. 1, 2, 3. Acts 8. 27. & 10. 1, 2, 34. & 17. 4. & 18. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 1.

3 ¶ Neither let [c] the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I *am* a dry tree.

The son of the stranger; the stranger, as *the son of man* is the same with *the man,* ver. 2; the Gentile, who by by birth is a stranger to God, and to the commonwealth of Israel. *That hath joined himself to the Lord;* that hath turned from dumb idols to the living God, and to the true religion; for such shall be as acceptable to me as the Israelites themselves, and the partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles shall be taken down, and repentance and remission of sins shall be preached and offered to men of all nations. *The eunuch;* who is here joined with the stranger, because he was forbidden to *enter into the congregation of the Lord,* Deut. xxiii. 1, as the stranger was, and by his barrenness might seem no less than the stranger to be cast out of God's covenant, and cut off from his people, to whom the blessing of a numerous posterity was promised. And under these two instances he understands all those persons who either by birth, or by any ceremonial pollution, were excluded from the participation of church privileges; and so he throws open the door to all true believers, without any restriction whatsoever. *A dry tree;* a sapless and fruitless tree, accursed by God with the curse of barrenness, which being oft threatened as a curse, and being a matter of reproach among the Jews, might easily occasion such discouraging thoughts as are here expressed.

4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose *the things* that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

Choose the things that please me; that observe my commands, not by custom, or force, or fear, but by free choice, and full consent, with love to them and delight in them. *Take hold of my covenant;* that resolvedly and stedfastly keep the conditions of my covenant.

d 1 Tim. 3. 15. e John 1. 12. 1 John 3. 1.

5 Even unto them will I give in [d] mine house and within my walls a place [e] and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

In mine house; in my temple, to serve me there as priests, which eunuchs were not allowed to do, Lev. xxi. 17, &c.; Deut. xxiii. 1. *Within my walls;* in the courts of my temple, which were encompassed with walls. This seems to be added with respect to the people, who were admitted into the court, but not into the house itself. *A place and a name better than of sons and of daughters;* a far greater blessing and honour than that of having posterity, which was but a temporal mercy, and that common to the worst of men; even my favour, and my Spirit, and eternal felicity.

6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

That join themselves to the Lord; that with purpose of heart cleave unto him, as is said, Acts xi. 23. *To serve him, and to love the name of the Lord;* to serve him out of love to him, and to his worship.

7 Even them will I [f] bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: [g] their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *shall be* accepted upon mine altar; for [h] mine house shall be called an house of prayer [i] for all people.

f ch. 2. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 1, 2. g Rom. 12. 1. Heb. 13. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 5. h Matt. 21. 13. Mark 11. 17. Luke 19. 46. i Mal. 1. 11.

To my holy mountain; to my house, as it is explained in the following clause, which stood upon Mount Zion, largely so called, including Mount Moriah. Formerly the Gentiles neither had any desire to come thither, nor were admitted there; but now I will incline their hearts to come, and I will give them admission and free liberty to come into my church. *Make them joyful,* by accepting their services, and comforting their hearts with the sense of my love, and pouring down all sorts of blessings upon them. *In my house of prayer;* in my temple, in and towards which prayers are daily made and directed unto me, 1 Kings viii. 28, 29. *Their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar;* they shall have as free access to my house and altar as the Jews themselves, and their services shall be as acceptable to me as theirs. Evangelical worship is here described under such expressions as agreed to the worship of God which then was in use, as it is Mal. i. 11, and elsewhere. See also Rom. xii. 1; Heb. xiii. 15. *Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people;* Jews and Gentiles shall have equal freedom of access to my house, and shall there call upon my name. Possibly he may call it *a house of prayer,* either to imply that prayer to God, whereof thanksgiving is a part, is a more considerable part of God's worship than sacrifice, which being considered in itself is little valued by him, as he frequently declareth; or to signify that in the New Testament, when the Gentiles should be called, all other sacrifices should cease, except that of prayer, and such-like spiritual services; which also is confirmed from the nature of the thing. For seeing sacrifices were confined to the temple at Jerusalem, and it was impossible that all nations should resort thither to offer up Levitical sacrifices in such time and manner as God appointed, it was necessary upon supposition of the general conversion of the Gentiles, that that way of worship should be abolished, and such a way prescribed as they were capable of practising.

8 The LORD God [k] which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, [l] Yet will I gather *others* to him, †beside those that are gathered unto him.

k Ps. 147. 2. ch. 11. 12. l John 10. 16. Eph. 1. 10. & 2. 14, 15, 16. † Heb. *to his gathered.*

Which gathereth the outcasts of Israel; which will gather to himself, and bring into their own land, those poor Israelites which are, or shall be, cast out of their own land, and from God's presence, and dispersed in divers parts of the world. *Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him;* as there are some few Gentiles whom I have made proselytes, and added to the Jewish church, so I shall make another and a far more comprehensive gathering of the Gentiles, whom I shall bring into the same church with the Jews, making both Jews and Gentiles one fold under one Shepherd, as it is promised, John x. 16.

9 ¶ [m] All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, *yea,* all ye beasts in the forest.

m Jer. 12. 9.

This invitation or proclamation is a prediction of Israel's destruction by their cruel enemies, which are oft expressed in Scripture under the names of ravenous beasts. But the great question is, What connexion this part of the chapter hath with the former? Which may be thus conceived: The prophet having largely discoursed concerning the Messiah, and his church and kingdom, and particularly of the great accession and conversion of the Gentiles to it, and of the infidelity, apostacy, and manifold wickednesses of the Jewish nation, and having comforted and encouraged the Gentiles with God's gracious promises made to them, he now proceeds to terrify the unbelieving and ungodly Jews, and to show that as the Gentiles should believe, and be saved, so they should reject their Messiah, and be utterly destroyed; although we need not labour much about the coherence; for this may be a new sermon, and therefore many learned interpreters make this the beginning of the 57th chapter.

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n Matt. 15. 14. & 23. 16. o Phil. 3. 2. ‖ Or, *dreaming, or, talking in their sleep.*

10 His watchmen *are* [n]blind: they are all ignorant, [o]they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; ‖sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

His; Israel's, as is evident from the following verses; the pronoun relative being put without and instead of the antecedent; of which I have given divers instances before. *Watchmen;* priests and prophets, or other teachers, who are commonly called *watchmen*, as Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 2; Hos. ix. 8. He mentions only the teachers, because ignorance was most shameful in them; but hereby he supposeth the gross ignorance of the people, who neither pretended nor desired to be wiser than their teachers. *They are all ignorant* of God's will and word, and of their own and the people's duty, and of the true Messiah. *They are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark;* they are also slothful and negligent in instructing the people, and do not faithfully reprove them for their sins, nor warn them of their dangers, nor keep them from errors and corruptions in doctrine, and worship, and conversation, as they ought to do. *Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber;* minding their own ease and safety more than the people's benefit.

+ Heb. *strong of appetite.* p Mic. 3. 11. + Heb. *know not to be satisfied.* q Ezek. 34. 2, 3.

11 Yea, *they are* †[p]greedy dogs *which* †[q]can never have enough, and they *are* shepherds *that* cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

Greedy dogs which can never have enough; insatiably covetous. *That cannot understand,* Heb. *that know not to understand;* that do not care, or love, or desire (as *knowing* is frequently taken) either to understand the law or word of God themselves, or to make the people to understand it. *They all look to their own way;* they regard neither God's command and glory, nor the people's good, but only the satisfaction of their own base lusts. See on Isa. liii. 6. *Every one for his gain, from his quarter;* in their several places and stations, as they have opportunity. Heb. *from his* or *their end* or *extremity*, i. e. universally, or all from one end of that body or society of men unto the other; as the same word signifies, Gen. xix. 4; from one end of the city to the other; or, as we there render it, *from every quarter;* and as the same word is by divers learned men rendered, 1 Kings xii. 31, not of the meanest of the people, but *out of all* the people, or indifferently out of every tribe; of which see my note there. But if that phrase be rightly rendered there, *out of the meanest of the people*, as divers also expound the same phrase, Gen. xlvii. 2, *of the meanest* of his brethren, why may it not as well be rendered here, even *from the meanest* or *poorest of his* flock? which is a great aggravation of their covetousness and cruelty, to extort gains from such as needed their charity.

12 Come ye, *say they*, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; [r]and to morrow shall be as this day, *and* much more abundant.

r Ps. 10. 6. Prov. 23. 35. ch. 22. 13. Luke 12. 19. 1 Cor. 15. 32.

Say they, unto their brethren, by office and in iniquity; unto their fellow priests, or other jolly companions. *We will fill ourselves;* we will drink not only to delight, but even to drunkenness, as the word signifies, Nah. i. 10, and elsewhere. *To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant;* which showeth their dreadful security and contempt of God, and of his judgments, and their total and resolved abandoning of all care of their own or people's souls.

CHAP. LVII.

The blessed death of the righteous not duly lamented by the Jews; who also commit idolatry, and trusted in man: they are threatened, 1—12. *Evangelical promises to the penitent,* 13—19. *No peace to the wicked,* 20, 21.

cir. 698. + Heb. *men of kindness, or, godliness.* a 1 s. 12. 1. Mic. 7. 2. b 1 Kings 14. 13. See 2 Kings 22. 20. Wisd. 4. 20), &c. ‖ Or, *from that which is evil.*

THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth *it* to heart: and †[a]merciful men *are* taken away, [b]none considering that the righteous is taken away ‖from the evil *to come*.

The righteous; just and holy men, who are the pillars of the place and state in which they live; yea, as the Jews call them, the pillars of the world. *No man;* few or none of the people. So he showeth that the corruption was general, in the people no less than in the priests. *Layeth it to heart;* is duly affected with this severe stroke and sad sign of God's displeasure. *Merciful;* or, *godly;* the same whom he now called *righteous*, whose duty and practice it is to exercise both mercy or kindness, and justice. *From the evil to come;* from those dreadful calamities which are coming upon the nation.

‖ Or, *go in peace.* Luke 2. 29. c 2 Chron. 16. 14. ‖ Or, *before him.*

2 He shall ‖enter into peace: they shall rest in [c]their beds, *each one* walking ‖*in* his uprightness.

He shall enter into peace; this just and merciful man shall enter into a state of peace and rest, where he shall be out of the reach of the approaching miseries. Or, *He shall go* (to wit, *to his fathers*, as it is fully expressed, Gen. xv. 15; or, *he shall die; going* being put for *dying*, as 1 Chron. xvii. 11, compared with 2 Sam. vii. 12; Job x. 21; xiv. 20; Luke xxii. 22, and elsewhere) in *peace. They;* just men. Here is a sudden change of the number, which is very frequent in the prophets. *In their beds;* in their graves, which are not unfitly called their *beds*, or sleeping houses, as their death is commonly called *sleep* in Scripture. *Walking;* or, that *walketh* or *did walk*, i. e. live. *In his uprightness;* in a sincere and faithful discharge of his duties to God and men. Or, *before him*, i. e before God, according to the usual phrase of Scripture, as Gen. xvii. 1; 1 Kings ii. 4; viii. 25. For God is oft understood where he is not expressed, but only designed by this or the like pronoun, as Gen. xv. 13, and elsewhere.

3 ¶ But draw near hither, [d]ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore. d Mat. 16. 4.

Draw near hither, to God's tribunal, to answer for yourselves, and to hear what I have to say against you, and to receive your sentence. *Sons of the sorceress;* not by propagation, but by imitation; such being frequently called a man or woman's sons that learn their art, and follow their example: you sorcerers, either properly or metaphorically so called; for the Jews were guilty of it both ways. *The seed of the adulterer and the whore;* not the genuine children of Abraham, as you pretend and boast, but begotten in fornication upon a common whore; which is not to be understood properly, but figuratively, because their dispositions and carriages were far more suitable to a bastardly brood than to Abraham's seed.

4 Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, *and* draw out the tongue? *are* ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood,

Against whom do ye sport yourselves? consider whom it is that you mock and scoff when you deride God's prophets, as they did, Isa. xxviii. 14, 22, and know that it is not so much men that you abuse as God, whose cause they plead, and in whose name they speak. *Make a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue:* these are the known and common gestures of mockers, of which see Job xvi. 10; Psal. xxii. 7; xxxv. 21. *Are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood?* either an adulterous brood, as was said before; or a generation of liars, whose practices grossly contradict your principles and professions, who deal deceitfully and perfidiously both with God and with men.

‖ Or, *among the oaks.* ch. 1. 29. e 2 Kin. 16. 4. & 17. 10. Jer. 2. 20. f Lev. 18. 21. & 20. 2. 2 Kings 16. 3. & 23. 10. Jer. 7. 31. Ezek. 16. 20. & 20. 26.

5 Enflaming yourselves ‖with idols [e]under every green tree, [f]slaying the children in the valleys under the clifts of the rocks?

Inflaming yourselves with idols, Heb. *Being inflamed*, &c.; lusting after them, and mad upon them, as the phrase is, Jer. l. 38; fervent both in making and in worshipping of them, as was observed, Isa. xliv. 12, &c. It is a metaphor borrowed from whoredom, to which idolatry is oft compared. *Under every green tree;* wheresoever you see an idol erected, which was commonly done in groves, or under great and shady trees, which both defended the worshippers from the heat of the sun, and were supposed to strike them with a

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kind of sacred horror and reverence. See on Deut. xii. 2; 2 Kings xvi. 4; xvii. 10. *Slaying the children*, in way of sacrifice to their idols, after the manner of the barbarous heathens; of which see on Lev. xviii. 21; Deut. xii. 31; 2 Kings xxi. 6; xxiii. 10. *In the valleys;* or, *beside the brooks*, which run in the valleys; which was most commodious for such bloody work. He seems to allude to the valley of Hinnom, in which these cruelties were practised, Jer. vii. 31, through which also the brook Kidron is supposed to have run. *Under the clifts of the rocks;* which they chose either for shade, or for those dark vaults and hollow places which were either by nature or art made in rocks, and which were convenient for and frequently appointed to idolatrous uses.

6 Among the smooth *stones* of the stream *is* thy portion; they, they *are* thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering. Should I receive comfort in these?

Among the smooth stones of the stream is thy portion; thou hast chosen for thy portion those idols which were either made of those smooth stones which were cast up by rivers, or which were worshipped upon altars made of such stones, or which were worshipped by the sides of brooks or rivers, where such smooth stones commonly lie. *They are thy lot;* thou hast forsaken me, and chosen idols for the great object of thy worship and trust. *To them hast thou poured a drink-offering, thou hast offered a meat-offering;* for the devil is God's ape, and idolaters used the same rites and offerings in the worship of idols which God had prescribed in his own, Numb. xv. 4, &c. *Should I receive comfort in these?* should I be pleased with such a people and such actions? must I not needs be highly provoked, and show my displeasure by an exemplary punishment of such wicked and foolish actions? This is a usual figure, called *meiosis*, or *litotes*, when less is said, and more is understood.

g Ezek. 16. 16, 25.
h Ezek. 23. 41.

7 [g] Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set [h] thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.

Upon a lofty and high mountain, in high places, which were much used for religious worship, both by Israelites and by heathens, *hast thou set thy bed;* thine altar, as appears from the *sacrifice* here following, in which thou didst commit spiritual whoredom with idols. Compare Ezek. xxiii. 17, 41.

‖ Or, *hewed it for thyself larger than theirs.*
i Ezek. 16. 26, 28, & 23. 2,—20.
‖ Or, *thou providest room.*

8 Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance: for thou hast discovered *thyself to another* than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and ‖ made thee *a covenant* with them; [i] thou lovedst their bed ‖ where thou sawest *it*.

Behind the doors also and the posts; which by a figure called *hendiaduo* may be put for *the door-posts*, as it is expressed, Deut. xi. 20. Behind the posts of the doors of thine house; where the heathens are said to have placed their tutelar gods, to whose protection they committed themselves and their houses, that so they might have their eyes and minds upon them, whensoever they went out or came in. Here also the Israelites might put them in some close corner, that they might keep them secret, it being opprobrious, and oftimes dangerous, for them to worship idols. *Thy remembrance;* those images or monuments and tokens which thou didst make and set up there as remembrances of those idol-gods whom they represented, or to whom they belonged. He saith, *thy remembrance*, in opposition to God's remembrances, or to that writing of God's law upon their door-posts, which God prescribed to keep him and his law in their remembrance, Deut. vi. 9; xi. 20. *Thou hast discovered thyself to another than me;* thou hast uncovered thy nakedness, i. e. prostituted thy body, (as the phrase commonly signifies,) to others besides me, thine Husband. Heb. *from with me* (departing from me, or as it were rising out of my bed) *thou hast uncovered* or prostituted thyself to others, like an impudent and insatiable strumpet. *Art gone up* into the adulterous bed, as this very word is used, Gen. xlix. 4. *Thou hast enlarged thy bed*, that it might receive many adulterers together. Thou hast multiplied thine idols and altars. *Made a covenant with them;* thou hast covenanted to serve them, and to expect help from them. But because the verb here used being thus put by itself never signifies *to make a covenant*, it seems to be better rendered in the margin of our Bible, and by others, *hast hewed it* (to wit, thy bed, which is expressed both in the next foregoing and in the next following words) *for thyself* (for thine idolatrous uses) larger *than theirs;* than their bed, as it follows: or thus, *didst hew down* (to wit, trees, which is easily understood, both from the verb, and from the nature of the thing) *to* or *for thyself* (to make images or other things relating to thy false gods) *more than they;* more than the heathens, of whom thou hast learned these practices, as God complains, 2 Kings xxi. 9; Ezek. xvi. 46, 47, 52. *Thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest it;* no sooner didst thou see their idols but thou wast enamoured with them, and didst fall down and worship them, like an unchaste and lewd woman, who upon all occasions, and at the very first view of any man, is inflamed with lust towards them. Heb. *thou lovedst their bed* (i. e. their filthy conversation) in *the place* (for so this Hebrew word frequently signifies, as Deut. xxiii. 12; Isa. xxii. 18, and elsewhere) where *thou sawest* it. Or thus, *thou lovedst their bed, thou didst provide* (as this word signifies, Exod. xviii. 21, and so doth a word of the very same signification, Gen. xxii. 8) *a place* for it, to receive their bed, to set up their idols in thine own house.

‖ Or, *thou repentedst the king.*
k ch. 30. 6. Ezek. 16. 33. & 23. 16. Hos. 7. 11. & 12. 1.

9 And ‖ [k] thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase *thyself even* unto hell.

Thou wentest, either by thyself, or by thy messengers, as it follows. Or, *thou didst look*, to wit, earnestly, with expectation and vehement affection. *To the king;* either to Moloch, which was as it were the king or chief of their idols, and which signifies a king. Or to the great king of Assyria, called *the king* by way of eminency, to whom the Israelites in the days of Isaiah were very prone to seek, and trust, and send presents. Although the word *king* may be here taken collectively for the kings of Assyria or Egypt, or any other king, from whom they desired or expected help in their straits. And so the prophet passeth here from their idolatry to another sin, even to their carnal confidence in heathen princes, for which they are oft severely reproved; although these two sins were commonly joined together, and they easily received idolatry from those kings whose help they desired. *With ointment;* with precious ointments, and particularly with balm, which was of great price, and was a commodity peculiar to those parts, and was sometimes sent as a present: see Gen. xliii. 11; Jer. viii. 22; xlvi. 11. *Didst increase thy perfumes;* didst send great quantities thereof to them to procure their aid. *Didst send thy messengers far off;* into Assyria, which was far from Judea. *Didst debase thyself even unto hell;* thou wast willing to submit to the basest terms to procure their aid.

10 Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; [l] *yet* saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the ‖ life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved.

l Jer. 2. 25.
‖ Or, *living.*

Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; thou hast not eased or relieved, but only tired thyself with all thy tedious journeys and laborious endeavours. *Yet saidst thou not, There is no hope;* and yet thou wast so stupid under all thy discouragements and disappointments, that thou didst not perceive that thy labour was lost, and that thy case was not mended, but made worse and desperate by these practices. *Thou hast found the life of thine hand; thou hast found* (i. e. thou falsely imaginest that thou hast found, or shalt assuredly find by these courses) *the life* (i. e. the strength and vigour) *of thine hand*, that thine hand is strengthened by these practices; or, *life* by *thine hand*, i. e. by these endeavours and applications of thyself to others for help. Or, thou hast sometimes found success in these ways. *Therefore thou wast not grieved;* therefore

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thou didst not repent of thy sin and folly herein, but didst persist and applaud thyself in such courses.

m ch. 51. 12, 13. 11 And [m] of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid *it* to n Ps. 50. 21. thy heart? [n] have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?

And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared? and what or who are they the fear of whom drives thee to these wicked and desperate courses? Are they not men, weak and mortal creatures, such as wholly depend upon me, and can do nothing to thee either against me or without me? *That thou hast lied;* that thou hast dealt thus disloyally and perfidiously with me, and sought for such foreign assistances, contrary to my command, and thy solemn covenant, *and hast not remembered me:* hast thou forgotten all those great things which I have done for thee, and all those promises which I have made to thee, and constantly performed, when thou hast not grossly violated the conditions upon which they were made? *Nor laid it to thy heart;* or thus, *nor set* me *upon thine heart*, as these very words are rendered, Cant. viii. 6. And so this is a repetition of what is said in the foregoing clause in other words. The sense is, Thou hast not seriously and affectionately considered what I am, how all-sufficient, and faithful, and gracious, for then thou wouldst not have distrusted or disobeyed me. *Have not I held my peace even of old?* have not I forborne to reprove and punish thee for this and for other sins, from time to time, ever since thou wast my people, that by this goodness I might oblige thee to love me, and to cleave unto me? *And thou fearest me not;* or, *therefore thou dost not fear* or *regard me.* Thus thou abusest mine indulgence and long-suffering, taking occasion from thence to despise me.

12 I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

I will declare; I will no longer be silent and patient towards thee. *Thy righteousness and thy works;* which may be put for *the righteousness of thy works*, by that known figure, of which see the first note on ver. 8, whereby he means their wickedness, which he calleth their *righteousness*, either ironically, or because it was covered with a pretence of righteousness, and they alleged that this was a just and lawful thing, when they were distressed to seek for help from their neighbours or allies. The sense is, I will discover whether thy works be righteous, as thou pretendest they are; my punishments shall manifest the wickedness of thy actions. *They shall not profit thee;* these actions shall do thee no good, but much hurt.

13 ¶ When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take *them:* but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;

When thou criest, to wit, unto me for deliverance, *let thy companies deliver thee;* expect it not from me, whom thou hast forsaken and despised, but from those foreign troops to whom thou hast sought and trusted for succour. *But the wind shall carry them all away;* but they shall be so far from saving thee, that they shall not be able to deliver themselves, but shall be carried away suddenly and violently by the blast of mine anger. *Vanity;* a vapour or puff of breath which quickly vanisheth away. It is the same thing in effect with the *wind*. *Shall take them;* or, *take* them *away*, as this verb signifies, Hos. iv. 11, and elsewhere. *Shall inherit my holy mountain;* shall enjoy my favour and presence in my temple.

o ch. 40. 3. & 62. 10. 14 And shall say, [o] Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.

And shall say, Heb. *And he shall say;* or, *And* one *shall say*. God will raise up a man who shall say these words, and that with authority and efficacy, so as the thing shall be done. *Cast ye up;* make causeways, where it is needful, for their safe and easy passage. *Take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people;* remove all things which may hinder them in their return.

15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, [p] whose name *is* Holy; [q] I dwell in the high and holy *place*, [r] with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, [s] to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

p Job 6. 10. Luke 1. 49.
q Ps. 68. 4. Zech. 2. 13.
r Ps. 34. 18. & 51. 17. & 138. 6. ch. 66. 2.
s Ps. 147. 3. ch. 61. 1.

Whose name is Holy; who is omnipotent, everlasting, and unchangeable, holy in all his words and ways, and therefore both can and will deliver his people, as he hath promised to do. *With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit;* with such also whose spirits are broken and humbled by afflictions, and by a sense of their sins for which they were afflicted; which doubtless was the case of many of the Jews in the Babylonish captivity; whom therefore he here implies that God would pity and deliver out of their distresses.

16 [t] For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls [u] *which* I have made.

t Ps. 85. 5. & 103. 9. Mic. 7. 18.
u Num. 16. 22. Job 34. 14. Heb. 12. 9.

I will not contend for ever; I will not constantly proceed to the utmost severity with sinful men in this life, and therefore I will put an end to the miseries of the Jews, and turn their captivity. *For the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made;* for then their spirits would sink and die under my stroke, and I should do nothing else but destroy the works of mine own hands. Therefore I consider their infirmity, and spare them. Compare Psal. lxxviii. 38, 39; ciii. 13, 14.

17 For the iniquity of [x] his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: [y] I hid me, and was wroth, [z] and he went on † frowardly in the way of his heart.

x Jer. 6. 13.
y ch. 8. 17. & 45. 15.
z ch. 9. 13.
† Heb. *turning away.*

Covetousness; of which sin the Jews were eminently guilty, as is expressly affirmed, Jer. vi. 13; viii. 10. But this is not mentioned exclusively as to other sins, but synecdochically, so as to comprehend all those sins for which God contended with them. *I hid me;* I withdrew my favour and help from him, and left him in great calamities. *And he went on frowardly in the way of his heart;* yet he was not reformed by corrections, but in his distresses trespassed more and more, as was said of Ahaz, and obstinately persisted in those sinful courses which were chosen by and were most pleasing to the lusts of his own corrupt heart.

18 I have seen his ways, and [a] will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to [b] his mourners.

a Jer. 3. 22.
b ch. 61. 2.

I have seen his ways; I have taken notice of these evil ways in which he seems resolved to walk, and that he is neither bettered by mercies nor judgments. *And will heal him;* or, *yet I will heal him.* Although I might justly destroy him, and leave him to perish in his own ways, yet of my mere mercy, and for my own name's sake, I will pity him, and turn him from his sins, and bring him out of his troubles. *And*, or, *to wit*, the copulative conjunction being put expositively, as it is frequently, *to his mourners;* to those who are humbled under God's hand, *that mourn in Zion*, Isa. lxi. 2, 3, for their own and others' sins, Ezek. ix. 4, and for the calamities of God's church and people, Isa. lxvi. 10.

19 I create [c] the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace [d] to *him that is* far off, and to *him that is* near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

c Heb. 13. 15.
d Acts 2. 39. Eph. 2. 17.

I create, I will by my almighty power and in a wonderful manner produce, *the fruit of the lips; Peace:* either, 1. Praise or thanksgiving, which is called *the fruit of our lips*, Hos. xiv. 2; Heb. xiii. 15, and peace: or rather, 2. That peace which is not wrought by men's hands, but only by God's lips or word; peace with God, and in a man's own conscience, which God hath promised to his people, and which he hath published and offered to all sorts of men by the preaching of the prophets, and especially of the apostles; as may be gathered both from the object of this

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peace in the following words, and by the exclusion of all wicked men from this peace, ver. 20, 21. *Peace:* the doubling of the word signifies the certainty and abundance of this peace. *To him that is far off, and to him that is near;* to the Gentiles, who are far from God and from salvation, Acts ii. 38, 39; Eph. ii. 12, &c., as well as to the Jews, who are called *a people near unto God*, Psal. cxlviii. 14.

e Job 15. 20, &c. Prov. 4. 16.

20 [e]But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

Their minds are restless, being perpetually hurried and tormented with their own lusts and passions, and with the horror of their guilt, and the dread of the Divine vengeance due unto them, and ready to come upon them.

f ch. 48. 22.

21 [f]*There is* no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

Though they may have as great a share of prosperity as the best of men have, as appears from Psal. xxxvii. 35; lxxiii. 3, &c.; Eccles. viii. 14; ix. 2; yet they have no share in this inward, and spiritual, and everlasting peace.

CHAP. LVIII.

The Jews' hypocrisy in their fasts, 1—5. *A true fast described*, 6, 7. *Promises to godliness*, 8—12; *to the keeping of the sabbath*, 13, 14.

† Heb. with the throat.

CRY †aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

The prophet having in the foregoing chapter noted and censured divers gross miscarriages of the Jews, proceeds upon the same subject in this chapter. and in God's name expostulates with them for other misdemeanours. *Spare not;* forbear not to speak whatsoever I command thee for the conviction of this people.

2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

They seek me daily; they cover all their wickedness with a profession of religion, from time to time resorting to my house, pretending to ask counsel of me, and to desire and seek my favour and blessing. *Delight to know my ways:* either, 1. They seem to delight in it; for men are oft said in Scripture to be or do that which they seem or profess to be or do; as Matt. xiii. 12, *that which he hath*, is thus explained in Luke viii. 18, *that which he seemeth to have;* and Rom. vii. 9, *I was alive*, i. e. I falsely thought myself to be alive. See also Phil. iii. 9. Or, 2. They really delight; for this is evident, that there are many men who take some pleasure in the knowing of God's will and word, and yet do not conform their lives to it. *As a nation that did righteousness;* as if they were a righteous and godly people. *And forsook not the ordinance of their God;* as if they were not guilty of any apostacy from God, or neglect of or disobedience to God's precepts. *They ask of me the ordinances of justice;* as if they desired and resolved to observe them. *They take delight*, of which see the second note upon this verse, *in approaching to God;* in coming to my temple to hear my word, and to offer sacrifices.

a Mal. 3. 14.

3 ¶ [a]Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we [b]afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your ‖ †labours.

b Lev. 16. 29, 31. & 23. 27. ‖ Or, *things wherewith ye grieve others.* † Heb. *griefs.*

Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? They complain of hard usage from God, that although they prayed, and fasted, and kept the rest of God's ordinances, all which are synecdochically comprehended under the title of *fasting*, all their labour was lost, and God neither regarded nor delivered them. *Afflicted our soul;* defrauded and pinched our appetites with fasting, of which this phrase is used, Lev. xvi. 29; xxiii. 27, 29. *In the day of your fast;* in those solemn days of fasting which I have appointed; or, in those times when I have called you by the course of my providence, and counsels of my prophets, unto fasting, and *weeping, and mourning*, &c., Isa. xxii. 12. *Ye find pleasure;* either, 1. You indulge yourselves in sensuality, as they did, Isa. xxii. 13. But this doth not agree with that *afflicting* of *their souls* which they now professed, and which God acknowledgeth, ver. 5. Or rather, 2. You pursue and satisfy your own lusts; though you abstain from bodily food, you do not mortify your own sinful concupiscences; and when you are restrained from outwards acts, yet even then your thoughts and affections are set upon and working toward those things which gratify your fleshly inclinations and worldly interests. *Your labours;* your money got by your labour, and lent to others, either for their need, or your own advantage; for *labour* is oft put for wealth, as Deut. xxviii. 33; Isa. xlv. 14, &c. Heb. *your griefs;* not passively, those things which are grievous to you; but actively, such as are very grievous and burdensome to others; either hard service, above the strength of your servants, or beyond the time limited by God for their service, of which see an instance, Jer. xxxiv. 13—16; or debts, which you require either with usury, or at least with rigour and cruelty. when either the general law of charity, or God's particular and positive law, commanded the release, or at least the forbearance, of them; of which see an instance, Neh. v. 1, 2, &c.

c 1 Kings 21. 9, 12, 13.

4 [c]Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ‖ye shall not fast as *ye do this* day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

‖ Or, *ye fast not as this day.*

Ye fast for strife and debate; your fasting days, wherein you ought in a special manner to implore the mercy of God, and to show compassion to men, you employ in a great measure in injuring or quarrelling with your brethren, your servants, or debtors, or in contriving mischief against them, as if the design of your fasting and praying to God were only to obtain a licence to oppress men. Compare Matt. xxiii. 14. *With the fist of wickedness;* or, *with a wicked fist;* a genitive of the adjunct. To deal rigorously and injuriously with your servants or debtors; which servants, it may be, had sold themselves to the year of redemption, Exod. xxi. 2; Lev. xxv. 39, 40, 50. You handle them with a hard hand; the word is used for *fist*, Exod. xxi. 18; the LXX. add the *humble, poor*, or *inferior* person; and that not only their debtors, with a *summum jus*, exact rigour, which seems elsewhere to be expressed by *grinding* the face, chap. iii. 15, and in that parable by taking by the throat, Matt. xviii. 28; but also their servants out of mere will and pleasure, and in contempt of them, treating them opprobriously, as Christ was handled in contempt and scorn, Matt. xxvi. 67, 68; John xviii. 22. *Your voice;* either, 1. In strife and debate, in which men's passions show themselves by loud clamours. Or, 2. So as to cause the cry of the oppressed, by reason of your injuries, of what kind soever, to enter into the ears of God; which is a *crying* sin, whether it proceed from *unmercifulness*, Exod. xxii. 25—27, which sometimes increaseth to *rage*, 2 Chron. xxviii. 9; or from *injustice*, chap. v. 7; or from *fraud* and *deceit*, James v. 4. The Scripture doth frequently express whatever sin is against charity in special, as also general complex sins, by *crying*, Gen. xviii. 20, 21; Jonah i. 2. Or, 3. By way of ostentation, to note their *hypocrisy;* they love to be taken notice of by others, Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16; or their *folly*, supposing that they shall be heard for their much speaking, upon which account Baal's priests are mocked by Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. 27, 28. 4. *Voice* here relates principally to their *prayer;* it is a synecdoche of the kind: so the sense is, This is not the way to have your prayers heard; if you desire that, you must fast in another manner, and abstain from all kind of oppression. And this seems best to suit the context, which is to show what kind of fast the Lord reproves, and what he approves in the following verses.

5 Is it [d]such a fast that I have chosen? [e]‖a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and

d Zech. 7. 5. e Lev. 16. 29. ‖ Or, *to afflict his soul for a day.*

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f Esth. 4. 3. Job 2. 8. Dan. 9. 3. Jonah 3. 6.

f to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him?* wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

That I have chosen; approve of, accept, or *delight in,* by a metonymy, because we delight in what we freely choose. *A day for a man to afflict his soul;* or, to afflict his soul for a day. It is an *hypallage,* and so it may be understood either for a man to take a certain time to afflict his soul in, and that either from even to even, Lev. xxiii. 32, or from morning to evening, Judg. xx. 26; 2 Sam. iii. 35; or else to afflict his soul for a little time. *To afflict,* or keep himself low, or chastise the body for want of food, viz. outwardly, without any inward sorrow, or compunction for sin, working a true humiliation in the sight of God. *His soul,* put here synecdochically for the body or person, as is usual in Scripture, Gen. xlvi. 18, 22, 25; Lev. v. 2, 4; vii. 20, 21, 27; xxii. 11. *To bow down his head as a bulrush:* here the prophet sets down those external gestures and postures in particular which they did join with their hypocritical fasts, as he had mentioned it before in general. To *bow down;* bowing is the posture of mourners, Psal. xxxv. 14; and here it is either, as if through weakness of body their heads did hang down; or counterfeitly, to represent the posture of true penitents, moving sometimes their heads this way, and that way, as the word signifieth, not unlike the balance of a clock, as the bulrush moved by the wind boweth itself down, waving to and fro, in a kind of circular or semicircular motion; the contrary motion of lifting up the head being an indication of pride, chap. iii. 16. It is the guise of hypocrites to put on affected countenances, Matt. vi. 16. *To spread sackcloth and ashes under him.* The Jews, to express their sorrow, made use of sackcloth and ashes two ways. 1. Sometimes by putting on sackcloth upon their bodies, as 1 Kings xxi. 27; Psal. lxix. 11, and casting ashes upon their heads, 2 Sam. xiii. 19. And, 2. Sometimes by spreading sackcloth under them, and lying down upon ashes, Esth. iv. 3; Job ii. 8. The intent of *sackcloth* was to afflict the body by its unpleasing harshness, and of *ashes* to represent their own vileness, as being but dust and ashes; their putting of them on might note their uneasiness under sin, and laying on them their self-abhorrency, shaming themselves for it. *Quest.* Are such rites now convenient on a day of humiliation to help us in our afflicting of ourselves? *Answ.* Gospel services neither require them nor need them, respecting more the inward afflicting of the soul with godly sorrow and deep contrition; yet may they carry this instruction along with them, that our ornaments, our best and gaudy apparel, ought to be laid aside, as not suiting either the ground and cause, or the end and design, of days of humiliation. *Wilt thou call this a fast?* i. e. canst thou upon a rational account as a mere man call it so? canst thou think, suppose, or believe it to be so? it being such a one as has nothing in it but the lifeless skeleton and dumb signs of a *fast,* nothing of deep *humiliation* appearing in it, or real *reformation* proceeding from it. Not that the prophet blames them for these external rites in this outward way of afflicting themselves; for this he commands, Lev. xxiii. 27, 31, 32, and appoints certain rites to be used, Lev. xvi. 19, 21. And these particular rites were frequent in their solemn humiliations, 1 Kings xxi. 27; Esth. iv. 3; Dan. ix. 3; used also by the heathen, Jonah iii. 5, 6. See Matt. xi. 21. But that which he condemns is their hypocrisy in separating true humiliation from them, for bodily exercise profiteth little, 1 Tim. iv. 8. *An acceptable day to the Lord;* a day that God will approve of, as before. Heb. *a day of acceptance,* or that will turn to a good account on your behalf.

g Neh. 5. 10, 11, 12. † Heb. *the bundles of the yoke.* h Jer. 34. 9. † Heb. *broken.*

6 *Is* not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, g to undo † the heavy burdens, and h to let the † oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? or, *approve,* as before, ver. 5: or, Ought not such a fast to be accompanied with such things as these? where he is now about to show the concomitants of a true fast, with reference to the thing in hand, namely, to exercise works of charity, consisting partly in acts of self-denial, in this verse, and partly in doing good to those in distress, in the next. In this verse he instanceth in some particulars, and closeth with a general. *The bands of wickedness,* viz. the cruel obligations of usury and oppression. *The heavy burdens,* Heb. *bundles;* a metaphor possibly pointing at those many *bundles* of writings, as *bills, bonds, mortgages,* and *acknowledgments,* which the usurers had lying by them. The former may relate to unjust and unlawful obligations extorted by force or fear, which he would have cancelled; this latter to just debts contracted through poverty and necessity, the rigour whereof he would have abated, whether by reason of loans upon too hard conditions, called a *drawing them into a net,* Psal. x. 9, and so much is implied, Prov. vi. 5; or under too hard circumstances, whether they were loans of food or money, of which the people so bitterly complained, Neh. v. 1—4, and is expressly forbid, Exod. xxii. 25. For debts may be called *burdens,* 1. Because they lie as a great load upon the debtor's spirits, under which whoever can walk up and down easily doth not so much excel in fortitude as in folly. 2. Because they usually introduce poverty, slavery, imprisonment, &c. *The oppressed,* either in a large sense, viz. any ways grieved or vexed, whether by the gripings of usury, or the bondage of slavery accompanied with cruel usage; or more peculiarly (according to some) relating to their being confined and shut up in prisons, which latter sense the word *free* may possibly seem to favour, the former being comprised in that general expression that follows of *breaking every yoke.* Heb. *broken,* i. e. like a bruised reed, so crushed and weakened, that they have no consistency or ability, either to satisfy their creditors, or support themselves; and we usually call such insolvent persons *broken* that cannot look upon themselves to be *sui juris,* but wholly at another's mercy: you have the same kind of oppression, and the same words used, Amos iv. 1. *That ye break every yoke,* namely, that is grievous, a metaphor; i. e. free them from all sorts of vexation, whatever it is that held them under any bondage. The LXX. refer it to bonds and writings; but it seems more general: the word properly signifies that *stick* or *cord* that holds both ends of the yoke, that it spring not out, or fall off from the neck on which it is laid, Exod. xxv. 14, where the same word is used for staves; and called the bands of the yoke, Lev. xxvi. 13, *I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright;* the same thing that God would have them do here.

i Ezek. 18. 7, 16. Matt. 25. 35. ‖ Or, *afflicted.* k Job 31. 19. l Gen. 29. 14. Neh. 5. 5.

7 *Is it* not i to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are ‖ cast out to thy house? k when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from l thine own flesh?

Is it, viz. the fast that pleaseth me, supplied from the former verse. Having showed the evil they are to abstain from in order to an acceptable fast, viz. *cruelty,* he here speaks of the duty that is required, viz. *mercy,* as a manifestation of repentance, Dan. iv. 27; Luke xix. 8. For there are two parts of justice, one to do no man wrong, the other to do good to all; which two ought always to accompany each other, and cannot be parted, especially in acts of humiliation: and as by those evils mentioned he understands all other evil whatsoever, that they are to be abstained from as the consequence of a day of humiliation, so under these duties mentioned are comprised all the duties that we are to set upon as the effect of true repentance; and he instanceth rather in those of the second table than those of the first, not that they are to be neglected, but because cheerful performance of external duties to our neighbour is the clearest discovery and indication of our inward piety towards God, 1 John iv. 20. *To deal:* the word properly signifies to divide, or break into parts, for the more equal and expeditious doing whereof they were wont of old to bake their loaves with cuts or clefts in them, more or fewer according to the bigness of the loaf, not much unlike that which we ordinarily call buns. It implies, that as none is obliged to give away *all,* so none is exempted from giving *some,* but a distribution to be made according to the abilities of rich and poor: or the meaning is, What thou sparest on thy fasting day from thine own belly, thou give it to re-

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fresh the bowels of the hungry; what thou takest from thyself give to another, that thy poor neighbour's body may be refreshed by that from the abstinence whereof thine own is afflicted. *Thy bread:* bread is taken for all necessaries for the support of human life, and here for all kind of food; and it is here limited by a term of propriety, *thy*, which may seem to have some emphasis in it: see my note on Eccles. xi. 1. Speaking of their grinding and oppressing the poor, he would have them be sure to give of their *own*, not that which of right is another's, and thou hast, it may be, unjustly gotten. For to refresh some poor with that which thou hast gotten by the oppressing of others, and thereby possibly made them poor, will turn but to a bad account; it will bring a curse upon thy house, or family, Prov. xv. 27, or will transfer thy estate over to such strangers that will manage it as thou shouldst have done, Prov. xxviii. 8. *That thou bring*, i. e. voluntarily, without pressing. Invite, encourage, freely accommodate. *The poor*, viz. that are not only needy and necessitous as to their present condition, but helpless and shiftless as to the means of getting out of it. *That are cast out;* and thereby become wanderers, having no abiding place; or rather, suffered to abide no where, such are mentioned Heb. xi. 37, 38. Or, this word coming from a root that signifies to *rebel*, it may be applied to such as have been adjudged, whether wrongfully or no, *rebels*, and therefore cast out, viz. of favour and protection, and so become as banished ones, or pilgrims in another country; or *afflicted*, as in the margin, viz. grievously oppressed by the cruelty of great men, whereby they are cast out of their possessions, and so become wanderers, seeking relief abroad. *To thy house;* that thou be hospitable, and make thy house a shelter to them that have none of their own left, but, as we usually say, *cast out of house and home:* see Acts xvi. 34. *The naked*, i. e. either that have no clothes, or that are so meanly clothed that they have scarce enough to cover their nakedness, 1 Cor. iv. 11, where *naked* is to be taken as *hunger* and thirst is, not absolutely starved, so neither quite stripped; but either in a ragged and undecent condition, as to others' sight, or so thinly and insufficiently clothed as not to defend him from the injury of weather, as to his own sense of feeling. *That thou cover him*, i. e. that thou give him raiment suited to these wants, or that wherewith he may procure it, James ii. 15, 16: most of these circumstances we find were the cases of the apostles, 1 Cor. iv. 11. *That thou hide not thyself;* that thou not only seek no occasion to excuse thyself, either by absence, or discountenancing and disowning of him; but that out of compassion thou apply thyself heartily to his speedy relief; that thou be not like that priest and Levite, Luke x. 31, 32, but like the good Samaritan, ver. 33—35, not giving him occasion to complain as David, Psal. cxlii. 4. *From thine own flesh:* some confine this to our own kindred, and relations, and family; and this the LXX. seem to favour, who render it, *those of thine own house, of thine own seed, overlook not;* agreeable to that of 1 Tim. v. 8, where the apostle useth the same word that the LXX. doth for *kindred:* but this would confine our charity within too narrow a compass, inasmuch as often, nay, most commonly, the necessities of others are greater than our own; neither is it congruous that the other words should be taken in the greatest latitude, and this alone confined within so narrow a compass. It is true the Hebrews by their *own flesh* do mostly understand those who are of the same stock, or lineage, and tribe, as Gen. xxxvii. 27; 2 Sam. xix. 12, 13; and thus many understand Paul's meaning, Rom. xi. 14. But here it is to be taken more generally, for *every man*, he being thine own nature; and in this latitude our Saviour interprets the relation of neighbour to that lawyer, Luke x. 29, 30, &c. We can look on no man but there we contemplate our *own flesh;* and therefore it is barbarous, not only to tear, but not to love and succour, our own flesh, Neh. v. 5. In which soever of these two senses you take it, there is a note of similitude to be understood; so that the sense is this, *break thy bread*, &c. to them *as* unto thine *own flesh;* be not more severe to them than thou wouldst be to thyself; and thus it agrees with that of our Saviour, Matt. xxii. 39, and with that of the apostle, Eph. v. 29. In short, feed him as thou wouldst feed thyself, or have it fed; shelter him as thou wouldst shelter thyself, or have it sheltered; clothe him as thou wouldst clothe thyself, or be clothed; if in any of these respects thou wert in his circumstances.

8 ¶ [m]Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; [n]the glory of the LORD †shall be thy rereward.

[m] Job 11. 17.

[n] Ex. 14. 19. ch. 52. 12. † Heb. *shall gather thee up.*

Thy light: it is put in general for all *happiness* and prosperity; as all kind of adversity and calamity is set forth and resembled by *darkness:* but here more particularly for a comfortable and free estate after their dark and calamitous condition in the Babylonish captivity; for the like reason Josephus tells us, lib. 12. cap. 11., that the Jews instituted a feast to be observed by their posterity, upon the account of the service of the temple being re-established, which they called *the feast of lights*, because, saith he, so great a happiness broke forth upon them beyond their hope. *Break forth as the morning:* here is a metaphorical allusion in a metonymical expression, viz. of the *efficient*, describing the comfortable effect of humbling themselves in a right manner, which like the daylight shall break forth from the blackness of their night of affliction, and bring with it the joy and comfort of all good things; and he doth not only say this light shall appear, but *break forth*, dart itself forth, notwithstanding all difficulties, as the sun breaks and pierceth through a cloud, noting how ready God is to help his people when they are rightly humbled, how quickly and how clearly salvation shall break forth upon them. *Thine health shall spring forth speedily:* another metaphor to express the same thing, unless there may be this difference, the *light* with reference to their outward state, and *health* with reference to the inward delight of their minds, in both to describe the complete satisfaction they should have. Deliverances out of great pressures are often in Scripture represented by the recovery of health, as chap. lvii. 18; Jer. viii. 22; and this prophet especially delights in this metaphor, because all affliction is as it were a sickness to the soul, altering the heart and countenance; see Neh. ii. 2, 3; and a recovery out of this estate maketh the heart glad, and the countenance cheerful, Esth. viii. 16, 17; Jer. xxxiii. 6: compare ver. 10, 11. Hence the LXX. render it *medicines. Thy righteousness;* either, 1. Thy uprightness and sincerity, Gen. xxx. 33. Or, 2. The reward of thy righteousness, by a metonymy, chap. xlviii. 18; Psal. xxiv. 5; and here perhaps it may particularly relate to their works of mercy and charity, it being the thing in hand, and often so called, Psal. cxii. 9, and applied by the apostle to this purpose, 2 Cor. ix. 9. It brings temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings, and all this not of desert, but free grace, as a reward that naturally springs forth from the faithfulness of his promises, as the harvest from the earth, when the seed is sown; see Hos. x. 12; so the fruit and reward of our righteousness springs not from our deserts, but from God's righteousness, Heb. vi. 10. Or, 3. The witness of thy righteousness; by what thou doest thou wilt appear to be righteous, Psal. xxxvii. 6. For such a notion as this was vulgarly sucked in, that adversity did never befall a person or people but for their sins, and was strongly urged by way of argument against Job's integrity by his friends; therefore they being delivered shall be as a testimony of thy righteousness. Or, 4. The fruit and effect of thy righteousness, viz. the due, just, and right order of thy government, which, as Calvin saith, is a sign of God's fatherly kindness; things that are now in a confusion he will bring into right order again, i. e. justice shall be duly administered, and men shall carry themselves justly all the land over: see Isa. xxxii. 16—18. Or, 5. Christ's righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6, compared with xxxiii. 16. Then the meaning is, He shall go in and out before thee. *Shall go before thee;* as it were making way for thy better state, as the break of day or the morning star goes before the sun. *The glory of the Lord*, i. e. the glory of his power and providence, or his glorious power, shall be seen in bringing thee up from captivity, and defending thee free from their pursuit; or, as some, a glorious state shall succeed this thy calamitous condition, and called the glory of the Lord to express the greatness of this glory, as very great mountains are called the mountains of God, and tall cedars the cedars of God. The glorious Lord, by a metonymy of the adjunct. *Shall be thy rereward*, Heb. *shall gather thee:* thus the word is used concerning Dan, who was appointed to bring up the rear, or to close up the march of the Israel-

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ites, when they marched from the wilderness of Sinai, Numb. x. 25. This office God takes upon himself; for it argues great skill and courage, and makes much for the honour and glory of a commander, both to gather up all the stragglers, that none be picked up by the enemy, which relates to the Hebrew word of *gathering*, and to secure and cover the rear of his army; thus the angel of his presence secured the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt, Exod. xiv. 19.

9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I *am*. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting
o Ps. 12. 2. forth of the finger, and °speaking vanity;

They make great complaint, ver. 3, that God took no notice of their services, which complaint God seems now to satisfy: q. d. These conditions observed, call upon me, and thou shalt see I will regard, Psal. xxxiv. 15. See Isa. i. 18. *The Lord shall answer;* he will give an effectual demonstration, that he hears thee, by the real answer that he will give to thy request, Psal. xxxiv. 17; xcix. 6; cxviii. 5. *Here I am;* a phrase that notes a person to be ready at hand for work, as Isa. vi. 8; or for help, as God here, and Psal. xlvi. 1; or both, Psal. cxlv. 18, 19. *From the midst;* not a geometrical middle or centre, but having a place among others; the meaning is, from among you. *The yoke*, i. e. all those pressures and grievances before mentioned, ver. 6; all that barbarous slavery they brought their brethren into; the particulars expressed by that one Hebrew word *motah*, three times used in this chapter. *The putting forth of the finger:* there being often an indication of a man's mind by the postures of several parts of the body, as of lust, malice, scorn, revenge, &c., Prov. vi. 12—14, this putting forth of the finger may point at divers things all springing from two roots; either the secret malice of the heart, or just and open violence. It is used, 1. Sometimes by way of scoff, reproof, or disdainful insulting, as the Pharisee seems to point at the publican, Luke xviii. 11; pointing with the finger, like winking with the eye, seeming to indicate something that may cause shame in another; and this is reckoned among great afflictions, Heb. xi. 36. See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; Jer. xx. 7. 2. Sometimes for beating, or other injurious treating men, seizing either their persons or estates: such a putting forth of the hand you have mentioned 1 Sam. xxii. 17; and this agrees well to the *fist of wickedness*, ver. 4; and so the finger may be put by a synecdoche for the hand, and that which before was called the *fist* may be here called the *finger*. 3. Sometimes as a token of putting suitors by, and refusing to hear their petitions and requests, seeking to them for mercy and pity. 4. Sometimes to express an angry mind, stirring up itself, either to the imperious commanding of a thing, or to revenge, whether by the gesture alone, or accompanied with menacing expressions, signifying thereby a purpose to put our power in execution. *Speaking vanity*, Heb. *aven;* it signifies a lie, or iniquity, as Psal. v. 5; vi. 8; and so the sense may be, If thou dost not proceed to indecent expressions in thy strifes, brawls, and threatenings with thy finger, which seldom is done without sin; and thus the counsel here may suit with our Saviour's, Matt. v. 21, 22, viz. not only not stretch out thine hand against thy brother, but not so much as be lavish with thy tongue: so speaking vanity may be a *meiosis*, for not railing; the LXX. render it *muttering*, which is an incomplete kind of speaking, whereby we reproach another in low, unformed, undigested expressions. But it seems here rather to signify *affliction*, not only because the word used in this place doth properly so signify, but because it is most agreeable to the matter discoursed of, and the Chaldee render it *violence;* and then the sense is, speaking *words of affliction*, or that will vex and grieve, like those words of Nabal to David's servants, 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11; Prov. xviii. 23. And thus it relates to their harsh and unjust commands, wherewith they were wont to burden their servants; a synecdoche of the kind.

10 And *if* thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noon day:

Draw out; or, *open;* as when we break open a store or magazine to satisfy the wants of the needy: it implies bounty and liberality. A phrase contrary to that of *shutting up of the bowels*, 1 John iii. 17. *Thy soul;* thy affection, i. e. thy pity and compassion; a metonymy of the subject, as one that condoles with them in their misery; affectionately, and with delight, Rom. xii. 8; 2 Cor. ix. 7. God loves a cheerful giver as well as a liberal giver. Not grudgingly, not of constraint, not because thou must, but because thou wilt; not out of necessity, but of choice. Compassion and mercy in a work is more than the work of mercy itself; for this is something only without a man, but the other is something from within, and of himself. This argues a sympathy, which the other doth not; all without this being as nothing, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. *And satisfy:* here the prophet notes the work that is to be done, as in the former expression the affection wherewith it is to be done, otherwise it would be no more than what the apostle James reproves, James ii. 15, 16; and the psalmist joins them both together, Psal. xxxvii. 21. And then further it implies a complete and proportionable answering of his wants, that the supply answer the necessity; that is, be such as may satisfy, not barely keep him from starving. *The afflicted soul*, i. e. the person afflicted with wants. *Then shall thy light rise:* this is the same promise, and expressed in the same figure, as in ver. 8. See the same phrase opened there. The Hebrews delight to express the same things often by a little altering of the phrase; only here it seems to be carried to a higher degree: there the light shall break forth, but here *light* shall be in *obscurity*. *And thy darkness be as the noon-day;* in the very darkness of the affliction itself thou shalt have comfort, Psal. cxii. 4. There it shall be as the morning, still increasing, here as the noonday, in its zenith and height of perfection, which shall be without so much as any shadow of affliction.

11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in †drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters †fail not.

† Heb. *droughts.*

† Heb. *lie*, or, *deceive.*

Shall guide thee, viz. like a shepherd, Psal. xxiii. 1—3; or, as the Vulgate, shall give thee rest; and so it may relate to the rest that God would give them in Judea, upon their return from captivity, as answering to their complaints in Babylon, Lam. v. 5. And he adds *continually*, to show that his conduct and blessing shall not be momentary, or of a short continuance, but all along, as he did to Israel in the wilderness, not leaving them till he brought them into Canaan. *Drought*, Heb. *droughts;* or, drought of droughts; which being in the plural number, notes extremity of drought; Psal. lxxviii. 72, *skilfulnesses*, that is, great skill; and Prov. i. 20, *wisdoms*, i. e. excellent wisdom; and consequently great scarcity and famine. The meaning is, that when thy lot shall fall in the extremity of such a condition, either as to time or place, he will abundantly satisfy thy soul, i. e. thee, by a synecdoche; thou shalt have plenty, when others are in scarcity. *Make fat thy bones;* or, *make nimble;* and so the expression relates to bones full of marrow, which causeth agility and nimbleness, a state of health and strength: see Prov. xv. 30. Or it notes cheerfulness, which is often the cause of bones well covered with fat; therefore a broken or a sorrowful spirit is said to dry up the bones, Prov. xvii. 22. This may be spoken in opposition to the sad effects of famine, whereby the *flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen, and the bones that were not seen stick out*, Job xxxiii. 21; they cleave to the skin, Psal. cii. 5. And thus it may have respect to their afflicted estate in Babylon, where they complain that their bones were broken, Lam. iii. 4; but now in their return their bones should not only be made whole, but strong, and in good condition: see Psal. li. 8. Our English Annotations, after divers senses given, choose to close with the vulgar translation, *he will deliver, or set free thy bones*, and so the word doth signify, Prov. xi. 8, 9. Some make each expression of these promises to answer as suitable and conditional rewards of their several duties: e. g. If thou conduct the cast-outs and harbourless to thy house, ver. 7, God will guide and conduct thee continually. If thou draw forth thy soul to the hungry, so as to satisfy them, ver. 10, God will satisfy thee in a time of drought, and in famine

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thou shalt have sufficient, Psal. xxxiii. 19. If thou let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke, ver. 6. 9, then God will make thy bones to rejoice, by delivering them from their burdens; i. e. if thou wilt free them, he will free thee. And if thou continue thus to draw forth thy soul, that it be ever running to the refreshing of the needy, thou shalt be as a spring of waters that shall never fail thee, but like the widow's oil, ever flowing. If thou relieve the poor, thou shalt never be poor, but as a well-watered garden, always flourishing: see Prov. iii. 9, 10. *Like a watered garden;* like a *garden* for the pleasure and beauty of it, a paradise; like a garden *watered* for the continual flourishing of thy estate; there shall be no withering or decay upon thy prosperous condition, Psal. i. 3, contrary to what is said of the wicked, Psal. xxxvii. 2, 10, 20, 35, 36. And thus Jeremiah speaks of the return of this same people, Jer. xxxi. 12. *Like a spring of water, whose waters fail not*, Heb. *deceive not;* a metaphor which further notes also the continuance of this flourishing state, which will not be like a land flood, or brooks, that will soon be dried up with drought; see Job vi. 15; but will be fed with a spring of blessing that will never fail: a very significant metaphor; it being the nature of springs, spontaneously and freely, as it were, to pour out their bowels to all that upon their wants come to receive it; neither is ever scanty, but flows still like fresh milk to the breast the more it is drawn; hence God is called a Fountain of goodness.

p ch. 61. 4. 12 And *they that shall be* of thee [p] shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

They that shall be of thee, i. e. either, 1. A remnant of thee among the captivity, that shall be as persons raised from the dead; or, 2. Thy posterity, expressed thus, because they sprang or proceeded from them. *The old waste places*, Heb. *wastes of eternity*, i. e. which have lain long waste; for *holam* doth not always signify what is bounded by no time, but what respects a long time, looking either *forward*, as Gen. xiii. 15; Exod. xxi. 6, or *backward*, as here, viz. the space of seventy years, and so may truly be rendered *the wastes of an age*. By *waste places* he means the city and temple, with cities and places adjacent, turned as it were all into a waste, or wilderness, void and untilled, and which was done not only by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, but by Sennacherib also, and the other kings of Assyria. They had lain so long desolate, that the foxes inhabited them instead of men, Lam. v. 18. And it was turned so much into a desert, that they were forced to fight with the beasts that possessed it to get their food, Lam. v. 9. *The foundations of many generations;* either the foundations that were laid many generations ago, as those of Jerusalem, which was not only built, but was the head of a kingdom, in the days of Melchizedek, who was king thereof in the days of Abraham, as appears, Gen. xiv. 18; if that Salem were Jerusalem, as is generally agreed, and Josephus writes, lib. 1. Antiquit. cap. 10; who was born about the three hundredth year after the flood: the superstructures were now destroyed, viz. of Jerusalem, and divers other cities. Or, that shall continue for many generations yet to come. *Thou shalt be called;* thou shalt be honoured with this title, as we use to say the *father of our country*, i. e. deservedly so called, because thou art so; the like phrase chap. xlviii. 8. *The repairer of the breach: breach* is put here collectively for *breaches*, which were made by God's judgment breaking in upon them in suffering the walls of their towns and cities to be demolished, and their state broken, chap. v. 5. *The restorer of paths;* such a one was Moses, Psal. cvi. 23. And this tends to the same sense with the former expression, because men were wont to make paths over those breaches, to go the nearest way. Or it may more particularly point at the recovering of the ancient paths, and bringing them into their wonted course, which were either those chief streets through the gates of the cities, or other lanes out of those streets, which were now forgotten and lost, partly by being covered with rubbish, and partly by those shorter paths that were trod and made over the breaches; such a restorer of paths was Nehemiah, Neh. vi. 1. And we read of the several repairers he made use of, Neh. iii. Or those paths that led from city to city, which being now laid desolate, and uninhabited, were grown over with grass and weeds, for want of travellers, or safety of travelling, (of something a like case we read in the time of the judges, Judg. v. 6, 7,) and so lost as in a wilderness, wherein there is no way; and by building up those cities again the several paths leading to them would be restored. *To dwell in;* these accommodations being all recovered, their ancient cities might be fit to be reinhabited.

13 ¶ If [q] thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words: q ch. 56. 2.

If thou turn away thy foot: this is taken either properly, i. e. If thou take no unnecessary journeys, or do any servile works, either of hand or foot, that are forbidden on the sabbath day, the instrument being here put for the work; or metaphorically, i. e. If thou keep thy mind and affections clear, and restrain thyself from whatever may profane it, as David did concerning the word, Psal. cxix. 101. *Feet* are often put for the *affections*, Eccles. v. 1, because the mind is moved by the affections, as the body is by the feet; If we do not let our thoughts be extravagant either upon impertinencies or unlawful things. The sum is, If thou be careful not to break the sabbath. *From the sabbath;* or for the sabbath's sake, whether we understand it more largely, of the occasional sabbath in solemn humiliations or otherwise set apart for sacred services, which is called a sabbath, Lev. xvi. 31; xxiii. 32. Days of this nature were set apart before the captivity, chap. xxii. 12; Jer. xxxvi. 9, and also in the captivity, Zech. vii. 5. And thus it may be pertinent to the occasion of this discourse, ver. 3. And further, though sabbath be here only mentioned, yet it may take in every institution of God that they were in a capacity of observing during their captivity; thus I conceive it is understood chap. lvi. 1, 2. Or whether we take it more particularly, for the weekly sabbath, such a carriage doth God expect as doth become it. *From doing thy pleasure*, satisfying thy lusts, and the corruption of thy will, *on my holy day*, i. e. on my sabbath, which is a holy day. *A delight; full of delights* in thy judgment, not looking on it as a burden; and practice, performing the duties of it with cheerfulness, delighting in the ordinances of it: and so the sabbath by a metonymy is put for the works of the sabbath, the time being put for the things that ought to be done in that time; therefore *calling* here is not only a *verbal*, but *affectionate* calling, the *understanding* assenting, the *will* consenting, and the *actions* conforming thereto: this delight appears in the saints of God, in their breathings after it, as it did frequently in David, Psal. xxvii. 4; xxxvi. 8; xlii. 1, with many more. *The holy of the Lord;* or *to* the Lord, i. e. dedicated to him, consecrated to his service. The Jews had a law that no man might take from the sabbath to add to the profane days, but he might on the contrary. *Honourable*, viz. the chief of days; worthy of all honour, and therefore honourable, because holy; and so shall honour, either *it*, i. e. the day; or *him*, i. e. the Lord, whose day it is. For to sanctify God and to sanctify his day is all one; compare chap. viii. 13, with Exod. xx. 8; thus esteem it an *honour* as well as a pleasure. *Not doing thine own ways*, or works, or course of life; a man's whole course being described by a way or walk, Gen. xvii. 1; Eph. v. 8. *Nor speaking thine own words*, viz. that are properly thine own, i. e. thine own in opposition to what God commands, proceeding from the corruption of nature, and vanity of the mind; or not speaking words, i. e. vainly, impertinently, and not suitable to the work of the day, tending neither to thy profit nor pleasure; or rather injurious, revengeful, or reproachful words, contrary to rest, quiet, and sedate composedness of the sabbath. And thus it refers to what was their usual practice upon their solemn assemblies or sabbaths towards their poor brethren, which they are charged with, ver. 3, and is called speaking vanity, ver. 9; see there; and ac-

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cordingly the LXX. render it, *if thou speak not a word in anger.*

r Job 22. 26.

a Deut. 32. 13. & 33. 29.

t ch. 1. 20. & 40. 5. Mic. 4. 4.

14 [r]Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to [a]ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: [t]for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord: this hath reference to the foregoing verse. If thou wilt delight thyself in the sabbath, then thou shalt delight in the God of the sabbath; or thou shalt have cause to delight in the Lord, viz. in his goodness and faithfulness to thee, and so shalt live by faith in him as the Fountain of all good, as Psal. xxxvii. 4, in the assurance of his love and favour, Psal. xxxiii. 21, and that in great abundance, Psal. xxxvi. 8; such delights as no wicked man can have, Prov. xiv. 10. *I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth;* thou shalt be above the reach of danger, chap. xxxiii. 16. Or it may have respect to their being brought out of Babylon, which lay very low in respect of Judea, called the *earth*, as it is elsewhere, Luke xxiii. 44; and *high*, both in respect of the situation of it, as also its mountainousness. Or the expression may import the subduing of their enemies, as it is Deut. xxxiii. 29. *Riding* is oft used for conquering, Psal. xlv. 4; see the note there; Rev. vi. 2. The sense is, they shall come out of Babylon, not sneakingly, as on foot, but triumphantly and gloriously, *riding*, as God brought Israel out of Egypt harnessed, in good order, and with a high hand; or, they shall ride to and fro in their chariots at their pleasure. *And feed thee with the heritage of Jacob*, i. e. thou shalt enjoy the good of the land of Canaan, which God had promised as a heritage of Jacob and his seed, Gen. xxxv. 12, and feed on the fruits of it. *Quest.* Why doth he say of the *heritage of Jacob*, and not of Abraham or Isaac. *Answ.* Because the whole posterity of Jacob was within the covenant, but Ishmael and Esau, one the seed of Isaac, the other the seed of Abraham, were both excluded. *For the mouth of the Lord:* this is to express the certainty and indubitableness of it, being from the mouth of him who cannot lie: see of the same expression of assurance, chap. i. 20; xl. 5. And this Calvin refers both to what was spoken in the beginning of the chapter, that it was in vain for those hypocrites to contend with God; and also as the confirmation of his promise, if they would rightly observe those promises. *The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it:* he speaks of himself, as of a man, by a prosopopœia; or it may relate to the prophet, the Lord, whose mouth and instrument I am.

CHAP. LIX.

Sin separates between God and us, 1, 2. *Murder, theft, falsehood, injustice, cruelty*, 3—8. *Calamity for sin*, 9—15. *Salvation only of God*, 16—19. *The covenant of the Redeemer*, 20, 21.

a Num. 11. 23. ch. 50. 2.

BEHOLD, the LORD's hand is not [a]shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

The Lord's hand is not shortened; he is not grown weaker than in former times, as omnipotent as ever he was: *hand* is here by a synecdoche put for *arm*, and so for *strength*, because the strength of a man doth generally put forth itself in his arm; and thus it is applied to God in his bringing Israel out of Egypt, Psal. cxxxvi. 12. *Neither his ear heavy;* or thick of hearing; he is not like your idol gods, that have hands, and cannot help, and ears, and cannot hear. The phrases are much to the same purpose, save only that they seem to be appropriated to the double cavil, or quarrel, that the Jews might have with God; as, 1. Surely if God were not heavy or hard of hearing, he could not but hear those strong cries that we put up in the days of our fast; or, 2. If he did hear, certainly he could not help us; and thus it may have respect to the beginning of the 58th chapter. Or the words may be by way of confirmation and establishment, and so may relate to the close of it, to let them know that if they sought him as they ought, and was before prescribed, he was not inexorable, but willing to hear, and able to make good all those promises that he had made from ver. 8 to the end. The sum is, to show that the fault was not in God, that their fasts and cries were not regarded, for his *ear* was as quick to hear as ever; nor their services rewarded, for his *hand* was as able to help as ever; but the obstruction lay in their sins, which is positively asserted, ver. 2, and a more particular account given of them in the sequel.

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins ‖ have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

‖ Or, *have made him hide.*

Have separated; have been as a thick wall between God and you; have set him at a great distance, Prov. xv. 29. *Have hid his face:* this may be put synecdochically for the whole person; and the prophet speaking of God by an anthropopathy, may understand his *presence;* and then it is, hath made him hide or withdraw his presence, as one that turns away his face from some noisome thing; or rather his *favour*, that though you cry to be delivered out of Babylon, yet you shall not find that favour. *He will not hear*, i. e. he will not grant it; thus it is used Psal. xlv. 12; Hos. v. 15: see on chap. i. 15: see Judg. x. 13.

3 For [b]your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

b ch. 1. 15.

Your hands are defiled with blood: here the prophet comes from a more general to a more particular charge against them; by *blood* we are to understand either murders and bloodshed properly so called; or ways of injustice, extortion, oppression, and cruelties, whereby men are deprived of a livelihood; hence hating our brother is called murder, 1 John iii. 15, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem called murderers. See how the prophet phraseth their oppression, Micah iii. 1—3. *Your fingers:* this is not added to protract the discourse, but to aggravate their sin: q. d. Not only your hands, but your fingers; you are not free from the least part of injustice. *Your lips have spoken lies;* not only properly so called, but perjuries, and wronging your neighbours by slanders and false accusations; wherein he shows they did not only offer violence by the hand, but they had ways of circumventing with their lips. *Your tongue hath uttered:* the verb doth properly signify to *muse*, or *meditate;* then the meaning is, that what they mutter, or utter with the tongue, they do it out of premeditated malice, from a perverse spirit; you may have a larger comment upon this Jer. ix. 3—6. *Perverseness:* perverse words are such as are contrary to God's word, and it is put here in the *abstract*, to intimate that their words were every way contrary to God's will.

4 None calleth for justice, nor *any* pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; [c]they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

c Job 15. 35. Ps. 7. 14.

None calleth for justice, i. e. none seek to redress these wrongs and violences; they commit all rapines and frauds under impunity; either, 1. Because the judges are corrupt. Or, 2. Because none will warn the judges of their duty. Or, 3. Because none seek to bring offenders to justice. Or, 4. Because none will plead a righteous cause, or plead it righteously, or countenance goodness; and this the next expression favours; and so justice suffers, which the Hebrew word *mispat*, being in the passive voice, seems to intimate: the sense is the same, and whereas it is said *none*, it is as much as to say very few, as we say few or none; the like Psal. xiv. 3. *Quest.* How could this be charged upon them, when in the time of their captivity they had no courts? *Answ.* It is probable they had courts among themselves, to judge between one another, by leave of the Babylonish kings. *They trust in vanity;* either, 1. Relating to their lies, which are words empty and void of all consistency; and so it is the same with the next expression, *and speak lies.* Or, 2. In their idols, which are stocks and stones, and so oft called *vanity* and nothing, 1 Cor. viii. 4. For even in Babylon they worshipped idols, as appears by Jer. xvi. 11, 12, 18. Or rather, 3. In their power, and craft,

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and policy, whereby, laying aside justice, they can oppress others; and so he calls it vanity by a metonymy of the adjunct, because it would prove all vain in the end, and either, 1. Frustrate their ends. Or, 2. Not justify them against God's proceedings with them. Or, 3. Bring all into emptiness and confusion: the word is *tohu*, whereby the confusion and mingling of all things is expressed, before the world was brought into order and form, Gen. i. 2. *Speak lies:* it may refer both to the judges, and to the lawyers and false prophets, that tell them they shall not go into captivity; they speak that which they know to be false. *They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity:* these two words of *conceiving* and *bringing forth* note their whole contrivance, and perfecting their wickedness; the former notes their plotting, the latter their execution of mischief; whatever is in the mind, only out of sight, warmed and formed there by cogitating and meditation, is called *conception*, which being ripe, and produced to view, is called a *birth;* intimating that the wicked sin not occasionally and accidentally, but premeditatingly and professedly; they grow big with it. The expression is allegorical, and in the two next verses compared to the *cockatrice' eggs* for the wickedness of it, and to a *spider's web* for the vanity of it.

‖ Or, *adders'.* ‖ Or, *that which is sprinkled* is as if there brake out a viper.

5 They hatch ‖ cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and ‖ that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

They hatch cockatrice' eggs; or *adder*, or *basilisk;* one kind put for any venomous creature; a proverbial speech, signifying by these *eggs* mischievous designs, and by *hatching* them their putting them in practice: this is to show that mischief is natural to them, and they can do no otherwise, as poison is natural to these eggs. *Weave the spider's web;* another proverbial speech, whereby is taught, both how by their plots they weave nets, lay snares industriously, with great pains and artifice, whereby they may entangle and involve their poor neighbours in intricacies and perplexities, and so devour them, as the spider weaves her web to catch flies, and then to feed on them; and also how that they contrive nothing but what will tend to their own ruin, as the issue of the viper is the death of the mother, and they and their designs will come to nothing, and not answer their end, as the spider's web is soon swept away, and is seen no more, which doth well agree with what follows. *He that eateth of their eggs dieth:* here is a catachrestical allusion, noting that he who hath commerce with them, and approves their counsels, which are the *eggs* which they hatch, will be poisoned with them. *And that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper:* if *and* be *copulative* here, then the sense is either, If any seek to crush and disappoint their plots, or if they be sprinkled or dispersed abroad, (as the margin seems to favour,) they will seek his ruin, will be as a viper to him. But if *and* be *causal*, as it often is, and may be here, then the sense is, q. d. He *dieth*, because the eggs being crushed, a poisonous viper proceeds from it; the more you partake of their counsels, the more you are infected, there lies such a dreadful poison embodied in them.

d Job 8. 14, 15.

6 d Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works *are* works of iniquity, and the act of violence *is* in their hands.

Their webs shall not become garments, i. e. their contrivances and deep designs shall not advantage them, they being like a thin and raw garment, either through which all their wretchedness and malice will appear, as the next words intimate; or, for want of solidity and substance, shall not be able to defend them from their impending evils. *Works of iniquity*, i. e. works of *injustice*, whereby they grieve and vex their brethren, which the next words do clear. *The act of violence is in their hands*, i. e. they exercise themselves in all acts of violence and oppression.

e Prov. 1. 16. Rom. 3. 15.

† Heb. *breaking.*

7 e Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity; wasting and †destruction *are* in their paths.

Their feet run to evil: this seems to be taken from Prov. i. 16. See the note there. He had spoken of their hands, lips, and heart, &c. before, and now of their *feet*, to show that they were wholly set upon mischief. *Their thoughts*, i. e. their heart and mind, is set upon doing wrong and injury; they not only do evil, but do it deliberately. You have the wicked described by this kind of working of their thoughts, Psal. lxiv. 6; they meditate on little or nothing else. *Wasting and destruction are in their paths;* a metaphor put for the behaviours and carriages of men; in what way or work soever they are engaged, it all tends to ruin and destruction. A metaphor taken from an overspreading torrent, or sweeping plague, or beasts of prey, that tear and devour whatsoever comes in their way.

‖ Or, *right.* f Ps. 125. 5. Prov. 2. 15.

8 The way of peace they know not; and *there is* no ‖ judgment in their goings: f they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

The way of peace they know not; they are of such turbulent spirits, living in such continual contentions and discords, that, breaking in pieces the very bonds of society, they neither know, 1. How to make and keep peace; neither, 2. Do they feel or enjoy the sweet fruits of it; and therefore by consequence, 3. They take not the course that leads to prosperity and happiness. They are not friends to peace. *There is no judgment*, i. e. no justice, equity, faith, or integrity, which are the foundation of judgment, *in their goings;* as *paths* did note their habitual way or manner of living, so *goings* do signify their actual progress in that way, or their works; thus Job xiv. 16. *They have made them crooked paths;* they walk by no rule, which should discover the crooked from the straight; they are full of unevenesses and uncertainties, contrary to what David speaks, Psal. xxvi. 12. The LXX. render it *perverse*. Moses joins them both together, Deut. xxxii. 5; and so doth Solomon, speaking what wisdom shall deliver from, Prov. ii. 15; and it stands in opposition to them that walk uprightly, Prov. xxviii. 18. It may note, 1. Their hypocrisy, that pretend one thing and do another, that oppress under a pretence of justice. Or, 2. Their professed and owned irregularities and deviations from the rule of justice. *Shall not know peace*, i. e. shall not experience it; whosoever do as they do will be turbulent and perverse, as they are, and have as little peace within, or happiness without, as they have, chap. lvii. 21. They shall be poisoned by having converse with them, as in ver. 5, which the next words do intimate.

g Jer. 8. 15.

9 ¶ Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: g we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, *but* we walk in darkness.

Therefore is judgment far from us: this seems to be spoken in the person of those Jews that did partake of these sins, giving the reason by way of complaint of those evils that they groaned under. *Justice: judgment*, and so justice, is here taken for deliverance, Isa. i. 27: q. d. God doth not defend our right, nor revenge our wrong, nor deliver us, because of these outrages and acts of violence, injustice, and oppression that are committed among us; so that deliverance is called here *judgment* and *justice* by a metonymy of the efficient: q. d. If we had executed judgment and equity among one another, they would not now have been far from us. As works are sometimes put for the reward of works, Job vii. 2; Psal. cix. 20, so judgment and justice is put for the reward of judgment and justice. Or wicked men are in power and seats of judicature, that execute no judgment or justice in the behalf of the oppressed. *We wait for light:* how the Hebrews use *light* and *darkness*, see before on chap. lviii. 8, 10. *But we walk in darkness;* or, *mist;* we are in such a thick mist, that which way soever we look, we see no way out, no hope of deliverance; we are still in captivity, and like so to be, till we see judgment and justice executed, and then we may expect good days.

h Deut. 28. 29. Job 5. 14. Amos 8. 9.

10 h We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if *we had* no eyes: we stumble at noon day as in the night; *we are* in desolate places as dead *men*.

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We grope: as a blind man that hath no other eyes than his hands feels for the wall, from whence he expects either direction or a resting place to lean on; so they expect salvation as it were blindfold, not taking direction from the prophets, but hoping to obtain it by their cries and fasts, though they continued in their sins, and therefore may well be said to grope after it. See Deut. xxviii. 28, 29; Job xii. 25. *And we grope as if we had no eyes;* as if we were stark blind; *and* being here put for *yea*, thereby aggravating the misery in repeating the expression. *We stumble at noon-day:* this notes their exceeding blindness, as it must needs be with one that can discern no more at noon-day than if it were midnight, Job v. 14. *We are as dead men:* he compares their captivity to men dead without hope of recovery; their bonds render them as free among the dead, Psal. lxxxviii. 5. They can see the way, or get out of their captivity, no more than dead men can get out of their graves; thus a calamitous estate is set forth, Psal. xliv. 19, great calamity and despair oft going together: they are as men cast out, no more to be looked after. Compare Lam. iii. 6. All darkness is uncomfortable, but that of the grave terrible.

i Ch. 38. 14. Ezek. 7. 16.

11 We roar all like bears, and [i]mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but *there is* none; for salvation, *but* it is far off from us.

We roar: this signifies the greatness of their anguish, that forced from them these loud outcries. *And mourn:* this notes some sense of their condition, that wrought in them these sorrowful lamentations; or it may relate to the condition that both sorts of people were in under their oppressing governors. It made the *wicked* roar like bears, and the *godly* mourn like doves. It is thus expressed because these properties are peculiar to these creatures. The *bear*, when robbed, goes into his den and roars; the *dove*, when absent from her mate, sits solitary and mourns. *For salvation, but it is far off from us:* see the exposition of this last part of the verse ver. 9.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions *are* with us; and *as for* our iniquities, we know them;

Our transgressions: the word here signifies sins of a high nature, such as wherein there is much of man's will against light; rebellious sins. *Are multiplied before thee:* q. d. They admit of no excuse; for they are acted before thee, and multiplied against thee, whereby thou art justly provoked to deny us all help. *Our sins testify;* every sin that is charged upon is like so many witnesses produced to prove the guilt of our consciences; or, as the Hebrew word, *do answer;* and so some make it an elegant metaphorical allusion to the *echo*, which, as it returns the voice again, so those judgments they cry out of are but the meritorious repercussion of their sins. They had been cruel to others, neither had they executed judgment and justice, and here they suffer all kind of cruelties and indignities from the Chaldeans, as the true and just representation or echo of their own works: see a personal instance in Adoni-bezek, Judg. i. 6, 7. *Our transgressions are with us*, i. e. we lie under the guilt of them, they are a burden to us; God hath not yet forgiven them. *As for our iniquities, we know them;* we are convinced of them; our guilty consciences must own and acknowledge them, Psal. li. 3. It notes either their conviction or sorrow, or both. See Jer. xiv. 7. Or, we know what are those sins thou art so angry with us for; and this is favoured by the sequel, where they seem to particularize those sins in the following verses.

13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering [k]from the heart words of falsehood.

k Matt. 12. 34.

He now enumerates some of those particular sins they profess themselves to be convinced of, whereby he doth not mean the sins of some particular persons, or some slight sins, but a general defection and corruption of the whole body.

In transgressing: properly, we rebel against God, so the word is chap. i. 2, and have persisted in our rebellion. *Lying;* being true to none of their engagements, vows, and promises. Some make *transgressing* here and *lying* to be one and the same thing, inasmuch as in their transgressing of the law of God they did break their solemn engagement to God upon Mount Sinai, Exod. xix. 8; xxiv. 3, and elsewhere frequently, which is a downright lying against God; for wherein do we more lie to God than in a perfidious withdrawing from him? So that by *transgressing* here he doth mean not a breach of one or another of the laws of God, but their being as it were fugitives, that would be under no yoke. *Departing*, i. e. turning from God to idols. *Speaking;* as it were talking of little else one among another but how to oppress their neighbours, and apostatize from God. *Conceiving and uttering*, i. e. first contriving and forging in their heart false accusations to the ruin of their neighbour, and false worship to the dishonour of God, laying the contrivance so that it might be effectual; and then *uttering* it, or venting themselves one to another in their discourses, thereby encouraging each other in their perverse ways; see ver. 3; and whereas it is said *from the heart*, it notes a resoluteness in their wickedness, being a great deal worse than now and then to deal falsely upon some occasion or temptation. *From the heart words of falsehood:* they are called words of *falsehood*, both with reference to men, and so signify slanders and false accusations; as also to God, and so signify their dealing falsely with God, as an adulteress doth with her husband: hence idolaters are called the *seed of falsehood*, chap. lvii. 3—5; and it is said *from the heart*, to show that when they dealt with men in ways of fraud, it was *from the heart*, but when they spake with God, it was but from the lip.

14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

Judgment is turned away backward: he speaks here of the sentences and decrees in courts of judicature, which are carried quite contrary to right and justice. God denies you justice, as you have denied help to others. *Justice standeth afar off:* it notes the same thing with the former, to show that justice and judges are far asunder. *Truth is fallen;* a metaphor taken from a feeble person that wants support, without which he falls; thus truth hath none to support or patronize it: the same, only otherwise expressed, with ver. 16. Truth is cast upon the ground, and justice trampled under foot. *In the street*, i. e. in public. *Equity cannot enter;* no such thing will be admitted in their courts; all corrupt, so that all equity and justice is violently kept off by the authority of the great ones.

15 Yea, truth faileth; and he *that* departeth from evil ‖maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw *it*, and †it displeased him that *there was* no judgment.

‖ Or, *is accounted mad.* † Heb. *it was evil in his eyes.*

Truth faileth: q. d. Truth is more than *fallen*, which he had said in the former verse; it *faileth*. For being only *fallen* it may recover itself again, but *failing* notes the loss of its very vitals; as being every where neglected, in court, in city, in country, in inferior as well as superior ranks, in the streets, in the gates, in the markets, in the fairs, in all public places of commerce, the condition much like that under the beast coming out of the earth, Rev. xiii. 11, &c. See Psal. x. 7, 8, &c. All things are amiss, neither judgment, nor justice, nor truth is to be found among us, but fraud and deceit; yet none troubled at it. *He that departeth from evil*, that separateth himself from evil things and persons, will not be as vile as others, *maketh himself a prey;* or, *is accounted mad;* is laughed at that talks of justice, so some. Josephus tells us that immediately before the destruction of Jerusalem, it was matter of scorn to be religious. Though there be no solid ground for nor need of that marginal reading, yet is it a truth. The translators reach the meaning by *prey;* the wicked, like wild beasts, endeavouring to devour such as are not as bad as themselves: where wickedness rules, innocency is oppressed: in bargaining, as buying and selling, they that are simple and innocent are outwitted by the crafty and fraudulent, as not willing, or rather daring, to oppose fraud with fraud, but to do all things in sincerity. *The Lord saw it*, i. e. took notice of it: it is spoken of God after the manner of men, as Gen. xi. 5; xviii. 21, and many other places. *It dis-*

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pleased him: q. d. If you would know why God is so angry with you, it is for such things as these; the Lord takes notice of it, and it is a great *evil in his eye.*

l Ezek. 22. 30. m Mark 6. 6. n Ps. 98. 1. ch. 63. 5.

16 ¶ [l]And he saw that *there was* no man, and [m]wondered that *there was* no intercessor: [n]therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

No man, viz. to *intercede*, which is supplied from the following words; or no man to help in such a case, to show himself and appear in such a corrupt state in the behalf of equity, as ver. 4; the like circumstances we have Ezek. xxii. 29, 30; or none fit to intercede. *Wondered*, Heb. *iistomen*, was *amazed*, astonished, as it were, not knowing what to do. This notes both God's solicitousness about their condition, and their hypocrisy, as if God took no notice of them, together with their dulness and blockishness, in not concerning themselves about it, especially considering they had been a people so well instructed, and yet under the guilt of such gross sins should be no more solicitous about pardon, which God would readily have granted, if any such could have been found, Jer. v. 1. *Therefore;* or, *yet*, as it is used, chap. vii. 14; li. 21. *His arm brought salvation unto him:* this may relate, 1. To the parties thus oppressed. Or, 2. To God, as that either, 1. He would do his work without help from any other, chap. li. 5. Or, 2. He would avenge himself, his own honour; thus the word is used 1 Sam. xxv. 26; and this may and seems to be the meaning of the next clause. Or, 3. He had made provision for the maintaining his own righteous cause and people's interest: this sense, that phrase, so like this, favours, chap. lxiii. 5, *Salvation unto me. His righteousness*, viz. his justice: q. d. Seeing there could be no justice found among them, he would avenge the innocent himself, which agrees with ver. 8, and is justified by chap. lxiii. 5, where speaking of the destruction of the Idumeans, you have the same words, only the word *fury* changed for *righteousness*. The literal meaning is, God's taking vengeance on the Chaldeans for the people's sake; the mystical is, Christ's making use of his own righteousness for the redemption of lost man, being destitute of all other.

o Wisd. 5. 18, 19. Eph. 6. 14, 17. 1 Thess. 5. 8.

17 [o]For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance *for* clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.

He put on righteousness as a breastplate; God, resolving to appear as a man of war against Babylon, that did now oppress his people, puts on his arms, Heb. *wrapped himself*, and particularly his *breastplate*, which he calls *righteousness*, to show the justness of his cause, as also his faithfulness in making good his promises to his people. *An helmet:* as the *breastplate* is to defend the heart and vital parts, whereby God doth signify the innocency and justness of his cause, as well as his faithfulness; so the *helmet* is to defend the brain, the fountain of the animal spirits, and therefore by this piece of armour would have us know that he is invincible: as by the other, that he defends a just cause in his truth and faithfulness; so by this, that he cannot be disappointed in it by reason of his power and invincibleness. *The garments of vengeance*, or garments made of vengeance; as God is said to put on the former for their sakes whom he would preserve, so he puts on these for their sakes whom he will destroy, viz. his people's enemies, the Chaldeans, and other enemies of the Jews. *Was clad with zeal;* either, 1. Zeal to his own honour, which had been given to idols; or, 2. Zeal for his own people, who were now in distress; or, 3. Zeal and indignation against the Babylonians, who were such great oppressors of his people, which are the materials that his *garment* of vengeance and his *cloak* of zeal is made of. It may be trifling to follow the metaphor of garments too close: see of the phrase Judg. vi. 34, margin. The sum of all these expressions is this, to describe both the cause and effect together; the cause was *righteousness* and *zeal* in God, the effect *salvation* to his people, *and vengeance* on his enemies, as is evident from the next verse.

p ch. 63. 6. † Heb. recompences.

18 [p]According to *their* †deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence.

Deeds, Heb. *recompences* or *deserts*, i. e. he will recompense his adversaries with those effects of his fury that they have deserved. *Fury;* a metonymy of the efficient, for the effects of his fury. *Islands;* or, *islanders;* a metonymy of the containing for the contained; either Mesopotamia, and other adjacent islands, encompassed by Tigris and Euphrates; or those remoter nations (for the Hebrews call nations remote from Judea *islands*, Gen. x. 5; chap. xli. 1. See on chap. xx. 6, and the reason of it) under the king of Babylon, that thought themselves secure.

q Ps. 113. 3. Mal. 1. 11. r Rev. 12. 15. ‖ Or, *put him to flight.*

19 [q]So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in [r]like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall ‖lift up a standard against him.

Fear the name of the Lord, i. e. either worship the Lord; for the *name* of God is put for God himself, as hath been often showed, and *fear* is put for his worship; or make his name renowned. *From the west*, viz. the western part of the world. *His glory*, or the glorious God. *From the rising of the sun*, viz. the eastern parts of the world. The sum is, the whole world, either a synecdoche of the part for the whole, or if you divide the world through the poles, the one half will be east, and the other west, and so compriseth the whole world. It shall fear and worship God, and make his name renowned, laying aside their idolatries; whether you refer it to the deliverance of his people out of Babylon, when they shall hear how God hath executed vengeance on his enemies; or to the redemption by Christ, and his calling of the Gentiles, Mal. i. 11. *When the enemy shall come in like a flood;* either against the Babylonians, as some understand it, and so it is probably meant of Cyrus, who shall come like a violent flood, against whom there is no head to be made; him God would stir up against the Babylonians for the deliverance of the Jews. Or against his own people; and so it may have either, 1. A more particular respect to Jerusalem, when Sennacherib came up against it; which suits well with what God saith of him, chap. viii. 7, 8. Or, 2. More general, at what time soever the *devil* or his instruments shall make violent irruptions upon the church, Rev. xii. 15; for powerful enemies invading a country are oft compared to a river. See on chap. xviii. 2. It is an allusion to the overflowing of Euphrates, which by its violent inundations was wont to do much hurt and damage to the Babylonians. *The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him:* and here again, if it be taken in the first sense, viz. against the Babylonians, then the meaning is, God himself shall as it were carry the standard in the midst of Cyrus's army, the Medes and Persians, and that with a great deal of fury, intimated here by the *Spirit* of the Lord; for *spirit* is often used among the Hebrews for the passions of the soul, as anger, wrath, fury, &c. Or, as a violent blast or gale of wind, shall help forward the violence of the torrent; and if so, then *him*, by an *enallage* of the number, which is frequent, is put for *them*. But if in either of the other two senses, viz. with particular respect to Sennacherib, then the Spirit of the Lord, as with a blast, only shall puff him away, which was made good, Isa. xxxvii. 7, 36, 37. Or with more general reference to the violence of enemies against the church; then the meaning is, God shall make known himself to take their part and defend them, Psal. xlviii. 3—5, and cause the enemies to give back, *or put them to flight*, as in the margin, Isa. xvii. 12—14. and that without power, but by his *Spirit* alone, as easy as by a puff of wind, Zech. iv. 6. Again, if you take this (as some learned men do) in a spiritual sense, then it notes the suddenness of the gospel's spreading itself by the Spirit in the ministry of the apostles and evangelists, bearing down like a flood all that opposes it, the Lord Jesus Christ being lifted up in it as a banner or ensign: but this sense, though true, seems to be more forced, and as it relates to temporal deliverances, more genuine and natural: however, the prophet being about to speak of the spiritual deliverances and state of the church by Christ, he seems to slide, as it were, into it by such plain allusions and types, being to speak of it more directly in the following chapters.

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[s] Rom. 11. 26.

20 ¶ And [s]the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

And, moreover, or *to wit; and* being here not so much copulative as expositive. *The Redeemer:* the word notes a redemption with power, viz. 1. Cyrus, the instrument for the efficient, viz. God the Redeemer, chap. xliii. 14; xlv. 13. Or, 2. Christ, of whom the apostle expounds it, Rom. xi. 26; the prophets usually concluding their promises of temporal deliverances with the promises of spiritual, especially such of which the temporal were evident types. *To Zion*, viz. Jerusalem, to which though Cyrus came not in person, yet his favours, and the good effects of his conquest over Babylon, reached it, setting free the citizens of Zion, as Christ also his church, which is often called by the name of Zion, and Jacob, and Israel, &c. *In Jacob*, viz. among the Jews, who were the children of Jacob; and he describes to whom of these, namely, to them, and none else, that *turn from transgression;* such only whose hearts God touched, and turned to righteousness; and so to come *to Zion* here by the prophet, and *out of Zion* by the apostle, is one and the same thing; see on Deut. xxxiii. 2; for the Hebrew *lamed* is not only an article of the dative case, but put often for *mim*, *of* or *from*, so that *letsion* is *out of Zion;* and for Christ to be given a *Redeemer to Zion* is the same thing as his coming to *take iniquity from Jacob*. And so the apostle doth by this expound that, taking an apostolical liberty not only to quote, but to expound this text; and so by laying them together, and making them one, would teach us that God must do for us what he requireth of us, Acts iii. 26: or else, which is the opinion of some, he takes the last clause from some other text, or texts, as Isa. iv. 4. I incline to the former, partly because there is no need of searching for any other text, and partly because, as the apostle quoteth it, it is agreeable to the LXX., which he frequently makes use of; and this the apostle improves as an allegory to prove that the Jews toward the end of the world shall be converted and saved, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in: q. d. As this people of old were delivered out of a dark and dolesome estate, when they seemed as it were extinct; so toward the end of the world the remnant of the Jews, that seem to be rejected, God will again bring home unto himself. *Saith the Lord;* or, thus it is decreed and determined by the Lord: the prophets are wont to set down these words as a sacred seal of certainty, security, or confirmation of such signal promises as this is of the Redeemer, like to that of the apostle, 1 Tim. i. 15.

[t] Heb. 8. 10. & 10. 16.

21 [t]As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

This is my covenant, or what I have promised, and so am engaged to see fulfilled, viz. to them that turn from their iniquity; or rather, the promise of his word and Spirit to abide in his church, upon which account it is also that the *Spirit* is promised in the next words, by which is understood either the gift of prophecy, or the prophecy itself, given here to Isaiah, and so to the church: *and* being here, as in the foregoing verse, explicative, not copulative; unless it note that in an ordinary way the Spirit and the word go together wherever either of them are effectual, the Spirit impressing what the word expresses. John xiv. 16—18; and it is the spirit of Satan that is different from the word. *My Spirit that is upon thee.* See on Numb. xi. 17, 25, &c.; 2 Kings ii. 15. *Which I have put in thy mouth;* which thou hast uttered by virtue of my Spirit, it being the church's great treasure and happiness to have God present with his word. *Shall not depart out of thy mouth, &c.:* the sense is either, these words, and the fulfilling of them, shall be always talked of, wherever the mention of this deliverance shall come, as is said of Mary's ointment, Matt. xxvi. 13. Or rather, he seems to promise the perpetual presence of his word and Spirit with the prophets, apostles, and ministers, and teachers of the church to all succeeding ages thereof, and may have a special reference to the gospel, or new covenant in Christ. *For ever*, i. e. for a long, though yet a definitive, space of time, as it is often used.

CHAP. LX.

The glory and blessings of the new church after a short affliction.

ARISE, [a]‖ shine; for thy light is come, and [b]the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

[a] Eph. 5. 14. ‖ Or, *be enlightened; for thy light cometh.*
[b] Mal. 4. 2.

Arise; a word of encouragement accommodated to the Jewish or Hebrew style, wherein, as by *lying down* is described a servile and calamitous condition, chap. xlvii. 1; so by *rising*, and standing up, a recovery out of it into a free and prosperous one, as may be seen frequently. *Rouse up;* intimating her deliverance to be at hand. And here under a type, or hieroglyphical description of Jerusalem's restoration, is displayed the flourishing state of the Gentile church under the Messiah, and that in the greatness, for quality, and also the number of her proselytes; in the description whereof the evangelical prophet, whatever he doth in other parts of his prophecy, doth here most briskly sparkle forth in Divine eloquence. *Shine;* discover thyself as one breaking forth from a dark night; or, look out, as men do at sea, who use to look out sharp, to see what they can discover after a dark and stormy season; or, be enlightened with more knowledge; or, be thou filled with joy; a metaphorical metonymy of the efficient; as thou art about to change thy condition, change thy countenance; be cheerful in that light or salvation that is approaching. *Thy light;* either, 1. Thy flourishing and prosperous estate; an allusion to people's rising, when after a dark night the light breaks forth, they begin to rise. Or, 2. The causer of thy light, the *effect* for the *efficient*, viz. thy God, or Christ, because the fountain of all happiness, as the sun and moon are called lights, because they give light, Gen. i. 16. Thus Christ is called the *true Light*, John i. 9; and compare John viii. 12, with Eph. v. 14, and you will find these words quoted to that purpose. *The glory of the Lord*, i. e. the greatest glory, as the *cedars* of God, the *mountains* of God, &c.: compare Rev. xxi. 11: or, the *glorious Lord*, or the *Lord of glory*, or *Christ*, who is the glory of the Father, is come unto thee; he is at hand to make himself glorious in some wonderful work for thy salvation, either in his doctrine, or miracles, or work of redemption, that his glory may rest upon thee, suitable to the psalmist's prayer, Psal. lxxxv. 6, 7, 9. *Is risen;* like as when the sun spreads itself into every place, leaving none dark: thus it refers to the glorious gospel, called such a glorious light, 2 Cor. iv. 4.

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

The darkness; either affliction and misery, a known metaphor; or ignorance and idolatry; as also all kinds of errors and immoralities, with which all that are out of the church are smutted and polluted: compare Eph. iv. 18, 19. *Shall cover the earth;* either, 1. General, all the inhabitants of the earth, such as through ignorance reject the gospel. Or rather, 2. More particular, the Babylonians, by a synecdoche of the *whole* for a *part*, in that dismal condition being harassed by Cyrus, whereby the Jews were delivered; this being also a type of the deliverance of God's people by the Messiah, which this text principally intends. *Gross darkness;* an allusion to that Egyptian darkness, Exod. x. 21, &c.; palpable ignorance, the inlet and nursery to gross idolatry and all profaneness. *The Lord*, i. e. Christ, Mal. iv. 2; Luke i. 77—79. *His glory shall be seen;* shall be wonderfully conspicuous: as the Lord's arising answers to the *darkness covering the earth*, so the *glory being seen* answers to that *gross* darkness. The sense is, that whereas the time was, that the people of God were under great calamities, while their enemies were in ease and prosperity, now it shall be quite contrary; now these shall be in adversity, and those in prosperity, a great

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turn of providence; and withal implies that this light of grace is a *peculiar* to his people, in respect of which all other prosperity is but darkness and misery; as light was peculiar to Goshen, when darkness was in all the Egyptian houses, Exod. x. 23.

c ch. 49. 6, 23. Rev. 21. 24.

3 And the [c] Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

The Gentiles shall come; either to congratulate thy deliverance, or to note the respect that should be shown them by other nations upon their deliverance; or rather, shall be allured by thy light to come to thee: as travellers in a dark night, and out of their way, when a light discovers itself, do make to it; so the doctrine of the gospel shall shine so bright, and be made so conspicuous by preaching and miracles, that they shall not only congratulate them, and wish them much joy, but rejoice and participate with them in their happiness, Rev. xxi. 24. A plain prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, which promise was made to Christ, chap. xlix. 6. *And*, or *yea*, or *even*, *kings*, which was fulfilled under Cyrus, Darius, Alexander, and the Egyptian kings. *Kings:* to add to thy lustre, thou shalt not be honoured only by the conversion of mean persons, but even of honourable personages, embracing the Christian faith, and submitting themselves to Christ's sceptre and government; see chap. xlix. 23; to observe thy progress, and how thou shalt increase by degrees, as the sun in its ascending. In Christ's time there were twelve apostles, afterwards one hundred and twenty disciples, in a short time many thousands, then the church grew into congregations, and then spread to nations.

d ch. 49. 18.

4 [d] Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together,

e ch. 49. 20, 21, 22. & 66. 12.

[e] they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at *thy* side.

Lift up thine eyes round about; or in a circle; into all parts of the earth: it seems to relate to the apostles and disciples, with their successors, carrying the gospel into all parts of the world. And in regard it would be as it were a thing incredible, he bids them *lift up their eyes*, as if they were to behold it in some vision, or upon some watch tower in Jerusalem: there is the like expression chap. xlix. 18. *All they gather themselves together:* he speaks more particularly, either of the Jews flocking from all parts to Jerusalem, when they shall hear of their return from Babylon, which may be true in the type; or especially, of the coming in of some of all nations to the gospel. *Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side;* the same thing, only for elegancy' sake expressed in its parts; the sense respects both persons and place; as to persons, Thy *sons* and thy *daughters* also shall be brought unto thee tenderly, as it were in arms, Isa. xlix. 22, where *by thy side*, by equivalent expressions of *arms*, *bosoms*, and *shoulders*, is supplied with reference to them both, and may import they shall be brought unto the church of Christ as unto their mother; and it may be further observed, that where the masculine gender is joined with the feminine of the same *species*, it notes multitude and variety, as Eccles. ii. 8, *men singers* and *women singers*, i. e. all sorts and variety of vocal music: and as to *place*, Both thy *sons* and thy *daughters* that are not only near, but also afar off, shall come to thee, as we say, *far and near*, Acts ii. 39; or it is the same with what was said before, *round about* in all quarters of the world; *from far* noting the longitude, and *ad latus*, *at* or *on* thy side, the latitude, and even those that perhaps were before at enmity one with another.

f Rom. 11. 25.
‖ Or, *noise of the sea shall be turned toward thee.*
‖ Or, *wealth.* ver. 11. ch. 61. 6.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because [f] the ‖ abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the ‖ forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

Then shalt thou see, viz. with a great deal of delight, the multitudes of thy children running to thee. *Flow together;* as when one river meeting with another and joining waters, run sweetly together, as one and the same river: this notes the abundance of their united joys and delights; or they shall flock together to behold such an amazing sight. *Thine heart shall fear;* as standing amazed to see such multitudes come in to the Lord Christ; see on chap. liv. 1, 2, &c.; as it were surprised with it, as those Acts ii. 7, or overwhelmed with the joyful sight, as Jacob was with the tidings of Joseph, Gen. xlv. 26, and those of the circumcision that were with Peter, Acts x. 45: such a mixture of fear and joy you have expressed Jer. xxxiii. 9; the sense is much the same with chap. xlix. 18. *Be enlarged*, both with joy and love; joy within at the coming in of the Gentiles, and this outwardly expressed in the enlargedness of love and charity towards them. *Fear* doth properly contract the heart, therefore this expression intimates it to be a *fear* mixed with such an affection as will dilate it. *The abundance of the sea;* either the islands of the sea, viz. the nations, as before, a metonymy of the subject, shall turn to thee, in religion or affection; they that formerly so much hated thee (they that live by the sea-coasts being usually noted for the worst of men) shall now love thee: or the wealth and traffic of those that trade by sea, the riches of the merchant; and so possibly the prophet may allude to Psal. lxxii. 10, for Tarshish is sometimes taken for the sea, as hath been before showed: see on 1 Kings x. 22. *Shall be converted unto thee;* thy traders shall not so much convert their riches to their own use as to thine. *The forces;* or, *wealth;* thou shalt not have only the *wealth*, but the strength of the nations, to stand by thee, which hath also an eye, as in the type, to that readiness and willingness that would be in the nations to help them out of Babylon.

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and [g] Ephah; all they from [h] Sheba shall come: they shall bring [i] gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

g Gen. 25. 4.
h Ps. 72. 10.
i ch. 61. 6. Matt. 2. 11.

The multitude of camels, i. e. the abundance of wealth and treasure that is brought upon camels; this being the creature the Eastern people used for carriage of their gold and spice, and other rich treasure, which are said to *cover* them; the like phrase with that Judg. vi. 5: or whereby is understood those people that did use to ride on camels, as the Arabians and the bordering countries; for by these and such-like figurative and borrowed expressions in several verses of this chapter is particularized several nations, and by them is implied the coming in of all nations unto Christ; and therefore they are brought in as presenting the chiefest commodities of their respective countries, so that we may be the better excused from speaking particularly to them in their respective places. *The dromedaries;* or, *also* or *even* the dromedaries, which are a lesser sort of camel, so called from their swiftness in running, to which they are the better enabled, because, as Pliny observes, they can endure thirst four days together: q. d. They shall make all the haste imaginable in bringing their riches to thee. *Of Midian and Ephah:* both these Midianites and Ephaites descended from Abraham by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 2, 4; they dwelt beyond Arabia; and camels are mentioned coming from hence, because of all places they were the most numerous here, Judg. vii. 12. *Sheba:* this Sheba descended from Cush, the son of cursed Ham, the son of Noah, Gen. x. 6, 7, from whom a certain country in Arabia Felix took its name, whose queen it was that came to visit Solomon, 1 Kings x. 1; and her bringing gifts might be a type of this, Solomon being a type of Christ, of which the wise men might be the first-fruits, Matt. ii. *Shall bring gold and incense;* the principal commodities with which this country abounded, and by which we are to understand whatever is precious; and frankincense is only peculiar to Arabia. *They shall show forth the praises of the Lord;* the motive drawing them thither being more for religion than trade.

7 All the flocks of [k] Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine

k Gen. 25. 13.

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1 Hag. 2. 7, 9. altar, and [l]I will glorify the house of my glory.

All the flocks of Kedar; the people whereof descended from Ishmael, and lived in Arabia Petrea, who were principally shepherds. *The rams;* q. d. nay, the chief of the flock, viz. for sacrifice; this Nebaioth being put for the people thereof, and sprang from Ishmael also. Gen. xxv. 13; rich as the other were in *flocks*, and inhabiting the same country. As the Sabeans offered the proper commodities of their country, as gold and spice; so these of theirs, viz. cattle, showing that each country, and so each person, should bring that wherewith they did most excel. *Of Nebaioth:* this shows that Abraham's children according to the flesh should also be brought in to the gospel: compare Mal. i. 11. *They shall come up with acceptance;* being offered, they shall not now, as heretofore, be rejected; and hereby they shall be distinguished from the profane oblations of the Gentiles, i. e. in the name of Christ, who is the true and only gospel Altar. *The house of my glory*, i. e. the temple, or my house; *glory* being put here by a metonymy of the adjunct for God himself, who is glorious. God shall become glorious by the multitude of sacrifices that shall be offered and accepted here, Psal. xxix. 9. And it is a type how glorious his New Testament spiritual worship shall be; this altar pointing at Christ, out of whom nothing is accepted, and that his church should be glorious, being built of living stones, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

8 Who *are* these *that* fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

In the 4th verse he spake to them as upon some high watch tower, whereby they might behold as in a circle all the parts of the world. Now espying from all parts, he brings them in calling out with admiration, *Who are these?* partly with reference to the number, or partly with reference to the persons; so the Heb. *What are these?* they being not Jews, but strangers, and so directly intimating the Gentiles flocking into the church, that come so swiftly, and in so great flocks: the same thing still. The former metaphor of clouds imports their number as well as their speed, Ezek. xxxviii. 9: thus abundance of witnesses is called *a cloud of witnesses*, Heb. xii. 1: the scope is to note the great confluence of people that should come into the church, that should be begotten by the apostles' doctrine; which the LXX. translation seems to point at, who render it as *doves with their young ones unto me;* and by *flying* may be noted their spiritual state, being elevated above the world, as the clouds above the earth, and doves when upon the wing.

m Ps. 72. 10. Is. 42. 4. & 51. 5. n Gal. 4. 26. o Ps. 68. 30. Zech. 14. 14. p Jer. 3. 17. q ch. 55. 5.

9 [m]Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, [n]to bring thy sons from far, [o]their silver and their gold with them, [p]unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, [q]because he hath glorified thee.

The isles: see chap. xli. 1; lix. 18. *The ships*, viz. to convey them to me. *Of Tarshish*, i. e. those that traffic by sea, as before; see chap. ii. 16; these lying most convenient for that employment. In naming this he implies by a synecdoche all that had commerce with other nations. *First;* preferring this before any other business they take in hand. This hath undergone the various senses of divers interpreters; such as are not futilous and vain, I conceive, may run into one of these two: either, 1. By reading it with a supplement of the note of similitude, which is frequent, *as at first*, or *formerly*, viz. as in the days of Solomon, who was a type of Christ, the matter here spoken of seeming to suit with it, 1 Kings x. 12: see 2 Chron. ix. 21, &c. Or rather, 2. By taking the word *first*, as the Hebrews mostly do, not so much with reference to time or order as to dignity; namely, they shall have the precedency and honour of bringing themselves and conducting others; this may be true also as to time, and so verified in the wise men coming the first to Christ when he was born, and as the first-fruits of the rest of the Gentiles. *To bring thy sons*, begotten by the word, *from far*, from the remotest parts: this may be understood with reference either to place or state; at how great a distance soever either in place or state, they shall come to Christ, who hath sons abroad in God's decree, not yet called, *other sheep that he will bring into his fold*, John x. 16. *Their: their* may refer either to the merchants bringing traffic with them, as ver. 6; or the Jews, as Israel came out of Egypt with all their treasure with them, and what others gave them, Ezra i. 4, as also the vessels that were sent back with them, Ezra i. 7. *Unto the name*, i. e. to the Lord himself, by a periphrasis; or to his temple, where his name was placed, the type of the church; compare 2 Sam. vii. 13, with 1 Chron. xvii. 12; or in the name of the Lord; or for his sake, who is the Holy One; the like metonymies having been formerly and frequently pointed at. *He hath glorified thee;* he will spread thy fame, and make thee honourable in the eyes of the world, and that especially in setting up the ministry of the gospel in the midst of thee. The name of God, and so also of Israel, were contemptible among the Gentiles before the coming of Christ and spreading of the gospel, but (as a consolation to his people) it is promised they shall both be honourable; and here God by an *enallage* of the person speaks of himself in the third person.

r Zech. 6. 15. s ch. 49. 23. Rev. 21. 24. t ch. 57. 17. u ch. 54. 7, 8.

10 And [r]the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, [s]and their kings shall minister unto thee: for [t]in my wrath I smote thee, [u]but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

The sons of strangers, viz. such as were not Israelites; and he puts *sons* of strangers by a usual Hebraism for *strangers*, properly termed *alienigenæ*: see chap. lvi. 3. This was literally fulfilled in repairing the walls of Jerusalem; he spake before of the temple, now of the city; and spiritually in the ministers of the gospel, who are the walls and bulwarks of the church by preaching and writing for her; and ecclesiastical history affords us many instances of kings and princes that were great benefactors to her, among whom Constantine did greatly excel, not caring what he bestowed on her, Valentinian and Theodosius, &c. *Shall minister;* shall administer all necessaries to thee: as they had been demolished by the Babylonians, so they were repaired by the favour of Cyrus, Darius Hystaspes, Artaxerxes, &c., all strangers, Ezra vi. 7, &c., or strangers becoming proselytes: see chap. lvi. 6. *In my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee;* as I afflicted thee in my anger, so out of my compassions I will abundantly bless thee.

x Rev. 21. 25.

11 Therefore thy gates [x]shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that *men* may bring unto thee the ‖ forces of the Gentiles, and *that* their kings *may be* brought.

‖ Or, *wealth.* ver. 5.

Therefore; for that end and purpose; or by reason of the conflux of people that shall be continually flocking thither, arguing abundance of peace and security, and great enlargement of the church, and that the Christian church shall be always open to the godly, to receive all comers freely. *The forces;* or, wealth; either all wherein they excel, or all the prey taken in fight. *May be brought*, as it were, captives in chains, such as they took in war, being made victorious, so say some; but rather, such as were led and conducted in state.

y Zech. 14. 17, 19. Matt. 21. 44.

12 [y]For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, *those* nations shall be utterly wasted.

That will not serve thee; do offices of kindness; so is the word used, chap. xix. 23; or rather, that will not submit to Christ's sceptre. *Shall perish;* shall be no more *sui juris*, but subdued to thee; and as refusing subjection to Christ, shall perish everlastingly; as they all perished in the deluge that were not in the ark: they that should be saved were added to the church, Acts ii. 47; Rev. xxi. 24. *Utterly wasted*, Heb. *wasting be wasted*, viz. by the sword: accordingly we read of many victories in Josephus that the Jews obtained, and in the Book of the Maccabees, as a fulfilling of this prophecy; but this doth principally relate to the spiritual Jerusalem, and this seems to anticipate an objection, If the gates stand continually open, we shall be in danger of enemies. Not so, saith he, for they shall either serve thee or perish.

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13 [g] The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make [a] the place of my feet glorious.

[g] ch. 35. 2. & 41. 19.

[a] See 1 Chr. 28. 2. Ps. 132. 7.

The glory of Lebanon; the *box*, the *fir*, the *pine*, and the *cedar*, on account whereof Lebanon grew so famous; a metonymy of the efficient: kings and great ones, the glory of the world, and also persons of a lower rank, the *pines*, *firs*, and *box* trees, as also the choicest persons, endued with the special gifts of the Holy Ghost, shall be the materials and members of Christ's church, as those also of a lower size and measure. We find the godly called trees, chap. lxi. 3. They shall have sweet communion together; the *box* shall not envy the *pine*, nor the *pine* despise the *box*, they shall worship the Lord together. *To beautify:* this is the reason and end why the *glory of Lebanon* is to be brought hither: by these trees understand the beauty and nobility of the church; trees being both for building and for beautifying. *The place of my sanctuary;* the temple, wherein was the sanctuary; this being a type of the church, both actively, as that which his presence sanctifieth; and passively, as that wherein he is worshipped and sanctified. *The place of my feet*, viz. the ark, 1 Chron. xxviii. 2, described here by a periphrasis; so called, because, supposing God after the manner of man to sit as on a seat between the wings of the cherubims, his feet would rest upon the ark, and therefore called the mercy-seat, Exod. xxv. 17—20. The temple and Zion is called his rest, Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14, and all this is made good in the gospel church, 2 Cor. vi. 16.

14 The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall [b] bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, [c] The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

[b] ch. 49. 23. Rev. 3. 9.

[c] Heb. 12. 22. Rev. 14. 1.

The sons; either their posterity, acknowledging their fathers' sins in afflicting thee; or themselves; for it is the manner of the Hebrews to put the sons of a thing for the thing itself. *Bending;* humbling themselves, as penitents; this being the sign of reverence and respect; and that either for love or fear submit to the yoke of Christ; they shall be like Christ, of a humble and meek spirit, and the degree of this is mentioned in the next clause. *Bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet:* this notes that great degree of submission, that even despisers and enemies shall yield to the church, prostrating themselves as humble suppliants; see chap. xlix. 23; or rather to Christ, the Head, King, and Husband of the church. *They shall call thee, The city;* they shall give her that honourable title, or acknowledge her to be so, and so called, both from the love that God had for her, and from the temple of God that was in her.

15 Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through *thee*, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

Forsaken, both of God, i. e. as to outward appearance; and of her inhabitants, being upon the matter depopulated. *Hated;* either slighted and neglected, or suffering actual miseries and slaughters: thus was she dealt with, Lam. i. 2. *No man went through thee;* thy streets were left desolate. *An eternal excellency:* the abstract is put here for the concrete, whereby the Hebrews were wont to express the superlative degree; and in this happy estate we find the church, Zech. ii. *per tot.;* ix. 9, &c.; which refers to the coming of Christ; and it is said to be *eternal*, i. e. for a great while; it being an hyperbolical expression, frequent with the Hebrews, who express a long time by eternity. *A joy of many generations;* the church's happiness should be the rejoicing and comfort of succeeding generations; she would be the matter of their great rejoicing; a metonymy of the object.

16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, [d] and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that [e] I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob.

[d] ch. 49. 23. & 61. 6. & 66. 11, 12.

[e] ch. 43. 3.

Thou shalt also suck, &c.; a metaphor taken from children sucking nourishment from the breast. The sense is, that the church should draw or drain the wealth of nations, and the riches and power of kings, and whatever is most excellent, and that it should come freely and affectionately, as milk flows from the breast of the mother; the same thing intended chap. xlix. 23, and in the foregoing verses. *Thou shalt know*, i. e. experience it; knowing is often put for an experimental knowing. *The mighty one of Jacob;* styled so either with reference to Jacob's person, he being the first that gave God this title, Gen. xlix. 24; or with reference to Jacob's posterity, viz. the Jews. These things will certainly be accomplished; for he is the *mighty God*, and so able; and the *God of Jacob*, so obliged by covenant and relation.

17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

For brass I will bring gold: here is the effect of the former promise, Thy poverty shall be turned to riches, all things shall be altered for the best; an allusion to the days of Solomon, when gold was as brass: thus, on the contrary, when they change for the worse in the state, it useth to be expressed by the like metaphors, chap. i. 21—23. *I will also make thy officers peace*, i. e. *loving*, *meek*, and *peaceable;* the abstract put for the concrete, as is usual, whether you understand it of under officers, they shall be officers of peace, or of governors, thou shalt have a peaceable government, as it was made good to them under Ezra, Nehemiah, Zorobabel, and such like. *And thine exactors righteousness;* most righteous, as before peace for peaceable. The church is not freed from taxes and payments, that is given by Christ and Peter unto Cæsar, but it shall be without oppression and grinding; no more than is necessary, and not exacted rigorously. Though all these were made good in their return out of Babylon, yet doth it more properly relate to the meliorating of the church under the gospel, wherein instead of carnal ceremonies, she had spiritual ordinances, which is the scope of the apostle, Heb. ix., and larger measures of the Holy Spirit, and should have such officers as would speak peace to the consciences, by discovering the complete and perfect righteousness of him who fulfilled all righteousness.

18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call [f] thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

[f] ch. 26. 1.

That this and what follows must necessarily be understood of the church triumphant (though there only it will be complete) I see no necessity, neither will obtrude my judgment, but leave it to the judicious, as being more proper in a comment: none to offer violence to this quiet state thou shalt attain to, either within thee, to oppress by *injustice*, *rapine*, or *fraud*, or without thee by *hostile invasions;* and this the prophet mentions as the effect of good officers in the former verse. *Wasting nor destruction within thy borders;* no havoc made among thy people. *Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation;* they shall be safe, and able to defend thee; thou shalt be as safe as salvation itself can make thee. When a thing is said in Scripture to be *called so*, it often signifies as much as to *be so*, chap. xxvi. 1; xlvii. 1; lxv. 7, and it intimates as much as that God will be salvation to his church: when they shall be without gates and walls, he will be their safety, and the matter of their praise; see Isa. xxvi. 1; and God's care of his church is the matter of that exhortation to praise him, Psal. cxlvii. *And thy gates Praise;* a double metonymy, viz. of the effect, as salvation will cause praise; and of the adjunct, as it is worthy of praise; so that *within* or *upon* thy gates and walls thou shalt sing praises.

19 The [g] sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the

[g] Rev. 21. 23. & 22. 5.

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LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting
h Zech. 2. 5. light, and [h] thy God thy glory.

The sun shall be no more thy light, &c.; these shall not be at all esteemed in comparison of the spiritual light of the church; and this is laid down as the assurance of the church's *comfort*, as the former was for her safety, so that God will not only be a shield, but a sun to her, Psal. lxxxiv. 11; not that they shall not have the sun and moon among them, but that the light of the godly, as such, should principally consist in what is spiritual. *The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light;* Christ shall scatter all darkness and ignorance, enlightening thee with the doctrines of the gospel, and graces of his Spirit; and this shall be *everlasting*, not *wax* and *wane*, and suffer *eclipses* and settings, as the sun and moon do, but it shall be constant, without shadow of change; no night; which will be undoubtedly true of the church in heaven, whatever it will be, or how near soever it will come to it, here, which I presume will bear its analogy. *Thy God thy glory;* always ministering matter of thy glorying in him; or, thy interest in this God shall be great honour to thee; or else it is the same thing with the sentence immediately before in other words, that will make thee glorious, a metonymy of the efficient; thus he is said to *give glory*, Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

i See Amos 8. 9. 20 [i] Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

Literally he means the Jews' mourning in Babylon, but especially the uninterrupted happiness of the church: the Hebrew here for *ended* signifies *recompensed;* their days of rejoicing shall abundantly recompense all their days of mourning.

k ch. 52. 1. Rev. 21. 27. l Ps. 37. 11, 22. Matt. 5. 5. m ch. 61. 3. Matt. 15. 13. John 15. 2. n ch. 29. 23. & 45. 11. Eph. 2. 10. 21 [k] Thy people also *shall be* all right-eous: [l] they shall inherit the land for ever, [m] the branch of my planting, [n] the work of my hands, that I may be glori-fied.

Thy people also shall be all righteous, i. e. the greater part; the word in this use hath been shown frequently; or, *altogether* righteous, completely righteous. As this respects the Jews, the sense may be, they went into captivity wicked, but most of them being dead, and many of the survivors tarrying behind, they that are returned are said to be righteous, chap. i. 25—27; iv. 4: but principally as it respects the church, they shall be all saints, either by profession, as Paul calls them frequently saints by calling; or rather by an inherent righteousness, or perfectly by the imputed righteousness of Christ: see on chap. xxxv. 8. *They shall inherit the land for ever*, i. e. for a long time, as you have many instances; and this is spoken, lest that poor remnant should be afraid of being driven out again; but with reference to the church, that they should for ever be continued as God's peculiar people. *The branch of my planting;* put by apposition, viz. *Thy people* being *of my planting*, and so also the next clause, the *work of my hands*, and therefore cannot miscarry, being what I shall take delight in; and thus the children of God are said to be his *workmanship, created in Christ Jesus*, Eph. ii. 10. *That I may be glorified;* either that I may make them glorious in being thus planted, or myself glorious in thus planting them.

o Matt. 13. 31, 32. 22 [o] A little one shall become a thou-sand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time.

A little one shall become a thousand; though of very small beginning, and contemptible, yet shall greatly multiply. Though the church at first will be but a very few, yet will it increase into many thousands; this plant or seed will spring up to many. Some understand it, that many shall be converted, and brought into the church, by men of very few, low, and mean parts; however, these things seem to agree better to some state of the church here, than to the state of the church triumphant. *A small one a strong nation:* if this signify not the same with the other, as probably it may, the word *strong* signifying numerous, Joel i. 6, then we may understand it, that as the former respected their *number*, so this their *strength*. *Will hasten it in his time*, viz. in due time, the time that I have appointed: q. d. Let not this be doubted, because I have undertaken it, to whom nothing is difficult. When the time of the promise comes, he will make haste, it will be done speedily; or as soon as it begins it shall hasten apace, as it did in Peter's sermon, three thousand in one day, Acts ii., and five thousand in another, Acts iv., and so soon filled the whole world, and one Paul planted whole churches, as the people in Egypt increased from seventy persons to a vast multitude.

CHAP. LXI.

Christ and his blessed office, 1—3. *The church's repair and increase*, 4—6; *and joy*, 7—11.

THE [a] Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD [b] hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me [c] to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim [d] liberty to the cap-tives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound;

a ch. 11. 2. Luke 4. 18. John 1. 32. & 3. 34. b Ps. 45. 7. c Ps. 147. 3. ch. 57. 15. d ch. 42. 7. See Jer. 34. 8.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, as it were, to accomplish that which is foretold and promised in the foregoing chapter, whereby this appears to be either the Holy Ghost; see on 1 Kings xviii. 12; or the Spirit of prophecy, i. e. the gift of prophecy; so we are often to understand by the Spirit, viz. the *gifts;* as the Spirit upon Samson, viz. the gift of valour, and courage, and strength: see 1 Cor. xii. 4, &c. Though the prophet may speak this of himself in person, yet that it is principally understood of Christ is evident, because he applieth this text unto himself, Luke iv. 18, being the first text he preached upon after his baptism, at which time the Holy Ghost did descend upon him in a visible shape, of which that John, who baptized him, was an ocular witness, John i. 32, 33, and so making good the truth of this prophecy; and it is said to rest upon and dwell in him, according as it is prophesied, chap. xi. 2; xlii. 1. *Hath anointed me;* set me apart, i. e. both capacitating him with gifts, and commissioning him with authority; and yet more, as it is applied to Christ, a power to make all effectual, from whence he hath also the name of Messiah among the Hebrews, and of Christ among the Greeks; nay, Christ alone among the prophets hath obtained this name, Psal. xlv. 7: and the prophet seems here to describe first who Christ is, and then what are his offices; this being the usual ceremony for the designing persons to the offices of prophets, priests, and kings, as hath been divers times shown, in all which respects it doth most eminently belong to Christ; so that the prophet doth hereby intimate both the final cause of his unction, viz. that he should execute these offices to which he was anointed; and the effect of it; that unction being upon him as the Head, it would flow from thence to his members, and so is an unction more peculiar to them; and in a more general way it hath respect unto all the faithful, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; 1 John ii. 20, 27. *To preach good tidings unto the meek:* being meant of Christ, this relates to his prophetical office. Literally this points at the good news that Isaiah brought of Cyrus's being raised up to bring them out of Babylon, now they are become meek and humble; but if it be thus taken, it must be understood of his prophecies left behind him, for he died many years before the captivity. But they chiefly signify the good tidings of the gospel, that discovers Christ come in the flesh to redeem poor sinners from the captivity of sin and Satan, such as are *meek*, and humble, or *afflicted*, as the word signifies, because ordinary *afflictions* make men *meek* and *humble;* called also the *poor*, and our Saviour expresseth it by that word, Luke iv. 18. To these the gospel, these *good tidings*, are brought, Matt. xi. 5. Whether by *poor* you understand, 1. The Gentiles, void of all grace and salvation, or tenders of it, till now. Or, 2. Properly so called, *indigent* and *needy* persons, of which sort were the greatest number that followed Christ, of which the reason might be, because Christ preached the contempt of the world and riches, which the poor

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would therefore sooner embrace, and the rich be more likely to oppose. Or, 3. The poor in spirit. *To bind up:* now follow several particular expressions to describe the same thing that he mentioned before more generally: a metaphor taken from chirurgeons, that carefully and tenderly roll up a broken bone, Hos. vi. 1; and this relates to Christ's priestly office. *The broken-hearted;* the heart dejected and broken with sorrow. I am sent to ease their pains, whose consciences are wounded with a sense of God's wrath. *To proclaim liberty to the captives;* those captives in Babylon, but principally to Satan, that they shall be delivered; and this appertains to Christ's kingly office, whereby he proclaims liberty from the dominion and bondage of sin, and from the fear and terror of hell. See chap. xlii. 7. *The opening of the prison to them that are bound,* i. e. supposing them to be in chains and fetters, yet they should be delivered, though in the greatest bondage. The further explication of these things will be found upon Luke iv. 18, because there are some passages expressly mentioned here.

e See Lev. 25. 9. f ch. 34. 8. & 63. 4. & 66. 14. Mal. 4. 1, 3. 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9. g ch. 57. 18. Matt. 5. 4.

2 [e]To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and [f]the day of vengeance of our God; [g]to comfort all that mourn;

To proclaim; to declare, as it respects the Jews, that their liberty is at hand. *The acceptable year,* viz. the happy age of God's grace, either which will be grateful and welcome news to them, or acceptable to God, a time wherein it pleaseth him to favour them; but this must be understood of a further extent than to Babylon, and rather unto mankind in Jesus Christ, Gal. iv. 4; Tit. iii. 4. called a time of God's good-will in that angelical song, Luke ii. 14, on the account of those good tidings which the angel brought, ver. 10, 11; called so possibly from the arbitrariness and good pleasure of God, having no respect to any satisfaction from man. *Year;* not precisely, as if Christ preached but one year, the mistake of some ancients, mentioned and refuted by Irenæus, lib. 2. ch. 38; but for time indefinitely, and may include the whole time of preaching the gospel; see Rom. x. 15; which I take to be the meaning of that *now,* 2 Cor. vi. 2, and probably hath a pertinent allusion to the year of *jubilee,* which was a general release proclaimed by sound of trumpet, which relates also here to the word *proclaiming,* Lev. xxv. 10. *The day of vengeance,* viz. on Babylon, it being necessary, that where God will deliver his people, he should take vengeance on their enemies; but mystically and principally on the enemies of his church, and the spiritual ones chiefly, viz. Satan, sin, and death. *That mourn;* either by reason of their sufferings, or of their sins, Matt. xi. 28; or the miseries of Zion. See on chap. lvii. 18.

h Ps. 30. 11. i ch. 60. 21. k John 15. 8.

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, [h]to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, [i]the planting of the LORD, [k]that he might be glorified.

To appoint; supply *it,* viz. comfort or joy; or else it may refer to those accusative cases following, *beauty, oil, garments. In Zion;* put by a metonymy for the Jews; q. d. among the Jews; and they for the church of God, or, according to the Hebrew, *for Zion. Beauty for ashes:* by *ashes* understand whatever is most proper for days of mourning, as sackcloth sprinkled with ashes; and these ashes, which were sprinkled on their heads, mixing themselves with their tears, would render them of a woeful aspect, which was wont to be the habit of mourners; as by *beauty* whatever may be beautiful or become times of rejoicing. *The oil of joy for mourning:* the sense is the same with the former; he calls it *oil of joy,* in allusion to those anointings they were wont to use in times of joy, Psal. civ. 15; and also the same with what follows, viz. gladness for heaviness; gladness brings forth praise to God: and it is called a *garment* in allusion to their festival ornaments, for they had garments appropriated to their conditions, some suitable to times of rejoicing, and some to times of mourning; or else an allusion to comely garments; and the *spirit of heaviness,* because heaviness doth oppress and debase the spirits. It is all but an elegant description of the same thing by a threefold antithesis. *That they might be called;* that is, that they may be so, as it is usually expressed, chap. lviii. 12; lx. 18; they shall be acknowledged so, ver. 9. *Trees of righteousness:* he ascribes righteousness to trees, understanding thereby persons by a metaphor, by which he means that they shall be firm, solid, and well-rooted, being by faith ingrafted into Christ, and bringing forth fruit suitable to the soil wherein they are planted, that had been as dry trees; see on Isa. lvi. 3; viz. the church, the vineyard of God, and the hand by which they are planted, as in the next words. *The planting of the Lord;* planted by the holy Lord, who being himself holy and righteous, would plant none but such; which notes also their soundness and stability, an allusion to that passage in Moses's song, Exod. xv. 17. *That he might be glorified;* either in that glory which he should confer upon them, or that glory he may expect and receive from them, that so it may be evident whose handiwork it was. See chap. lx. 21.

1 ch. 49. 8. & 58. 12. Ezek. 36. 33,—36.

4 ¶ And they shall [l]build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

See chap. lviii. 12. As it is applied to gospel times, the meaning may be, that Gentilism, which was as a wilderness overgrown with briers and thorns, shall be cultivated; and those cities and provinces of the Gentiles that lay as it were waste, void of all true religion, shall now by the ministry of the word be edified in the true worship of God.

m Eph. 2. 12.

5 And [m]strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien *shall be* your plowmen and your vinedressers.

Strangers, viz. Gentiles, such as are not of the natural race of the Jews, but Gentile converts. Or such as shall have no more than an outward profession, strangers to the true work of grace. *Shall stand;* ready to be at thy service; a like expression chap. xlviii. 13. *Feed your flocks,* the churches, with the word of God. *The sons of the alien;* the same with *strangers,* or their successors. *Shall be your ploughmen and your vine-dressers:* as the words describe the prosperous estate of the Jews, the meaning of them is, that they should be in such a flourishing and prosperous condition, that without their own labour they should have all inferior offices executed, either by slaves taken in war, or by persons hired for reward, which they should have riches and wealth enough to accomplish; but as they principally relate to the spiritual state of the church, so probably by strangers we may understand converted Gentiles, with their successors, meant by the *sons of aliens,* which should be ready to discharge all offices for the advantage of the church, feeding the flocks, viz. the churches of Christ, with the word of God, and should manage the whole work of God's spiritual husbandry therein: see 1 Cor. iii. 6—9. Or by strangers may be meant members of the church only by an outward profession, even *they* shall be some way serviceable to her in ordinary and inferior matters: *The earth shall help the woman,* Rev. xii. 16.

n Ex. 19. 6. ch. 60. 17. & 66. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 10. o ch. 60. 5, 11, 16.

6 [n]But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God: [o]ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

But ye shall be named the Priests; for your part, *ye* emphatically shall be as priests; either, 1. For *maintenance;* as the priests of old were plentifully provided for without their labour, so shall you by the labour of strangers. Or, 2. For *countenance;* you shall be every where as greatly valued as the priests were wont to be; you shall be esteemed as princes; for so the word is often used, the word *priest* being applied not only to the sacred function, but to one that was of great note among the people, and was supplied with all necessaries from others, without any labour of his own. Thus David's sons were called *priests,* or *princes.* Or rather, 3. For *privilege;* the whole body of them shall now be as peculiar and as near to God as the priests were formerly, and shall be a royal priesthood, 1 Pet. ii. 9. This is most certainly true of all the faithful under the gospel; hence

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they have also their spiritual sacrifices, Rom. xii. 1; Heb. xiii. 15, 16; 1 Pet. ii. 5. *Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles:* it relates to the riches of the Gentiles, which did consist most in flocks and herds: or, what you eat shall be purchased by the riches of the Gentiles. *Shall ye boast yourselves;* you shall exalt yourselves, or be renowned by others. The LXX. render it, you shall be *wonderful*, or to *admiration;* or grow high by the access of that glory which they shall bring unto you, viz. in *riches, parts, learning*, chap. lx. 5, 11.

p ch. 40. 2. Zech. 9. 12.

7 ¶ [p]For your shame *ye shall have* double; and *for* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

For your shame ye shall have double: see on chap. xl. 2. Supply *honour*. Though you have been little accounted of among your enemies, yet now you shall be greatly in their esteem, Zech. ix. 12; you shall have double damages. *In their portion*, viz. of honour that God will give them; the same thing with the former: or, in their inheritance which God shall restore to them; and that either, 1. For *worth* and value through God's blessing upon it. Or, 2. For *room* and space, and that possibly by reason of the few that will return to inhabit there, viz. only a tenth part, chap. vi. 13; or that which he shall give them out of their enemy's land. *Therefore;* or rather, *because;* being rendered as a reason of their rejoicing, because of the doubling of their portion, in which sense it is taken chap. xvi. 14. *Everlasting joy;* of long continuance here, and everlasting hereafter; or to be perpetually remembered on their anniversary festivals: though this had its accomplishment in their return from Babylon, yet was it most signally made good in that great change for the better which they should find in the gospel state, in the enlargement of Christ's kingdom and increase of his people, with whom they should ever rejoice together.

q Ps. 11. 7. r ch. l. 11, 13. s ch. 55. 3.

8 For [q]I the LORD love judgment, [r]I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, [s]and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

For I the Lord love judgment: q. d. They have suffered a great deal of hardship under their enemies, and I will do them right; for I love justice in myself, and in them that practise it. Or he gives a reason why he will recompense those strangers that did so freely minister to his people. *I hate robbery;* all things gotten by injustice, though it be for sacrifice. As God will not accept of that which cost nothing, so much less of that which is the effect of rapine and oppression; a foundation whereon most of our abbeys and monasteries were built, viz. to expiate some great crimes. And thus by making God a *receiver*, they did interpretatively make him a *confederate*. *I will direct their work in truth;* either, I will lead and guide them so that they shall do all things in sincerity; they shall do good works, and to good ends; they shall now love truth, and walk in truth, and serve him in spirit and truth: or, I will reward them: or, I will make their work stable and firm. *Truth* notes stability; see the notes on chap. xvi. 5; *work* being here put metonymically for the reward of work, proportionably to their work. *I will make an everlasting covenant:* q. d. Though you have broken covenant with me, and I have seemed to forsake you in giving you up to captivity; yet I will renew my ancient covenant made with your fathers, confirmed with the blood of Christ, and it shall be everlasting, never to be abrogated, viz. it shall be continued in the Gentiles that shall come in your rooms, that for breach of covenant were broken off.

t ch. 65. 23.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, [t]that they *are* the seed *which* the LORD hath blessed.

Their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, i. e. eminently; a promise of the increase of the church; such shall be their prosperity and multiplying, that they shall be known abroad by their great increase. Or else the meaning is, The church shall have a seed of the Gentiles, the borders of the church shall be enlarged; whereas it hath been confined as it were to one corner of the world, now it shall remain in one nation alone no more, but shall fill all the nations of the earth. *They are the seed which the Lord hath blessed;* they shall be known to be the seed of Abraham, partly by their holy conversation, and partly by their exceeding blessings, it being the seed that the Lord had so often promised to bless. There shall be such visible characters of God's love to them, and of God's grace in them.

u Hab. 3. 18. x Ps. 132. 9, 16. y ch. 49. 18. Rev. 21. 2. † Heb. *decketh as a priest.*

10 [u]I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for [x]he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, [y]as a bridegroom †decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

I will greatly rejoice: this by a prosopopœia is spoken in the person of the church, wherein she doth thankfully acknowledge God's kindness to her in the forementioned promise, expressed here in the greatness of her affection, with reference both to her present deliverance from Babylon, and to the happiness of her gospel state. *In the Lord;* or, because of the Lord, or of the goodness of the Lord towards me; a usual form of gratulation, 1 Sam. ii. 1; Hab. iii. 18; Luke i. 47: or thus, I will not rejoice so much in my deliverance as in the Lord. *My soul shall be joyful in my God:* this clause is to the same purpose, save only she varies the expression: q. d. Yea, I do it with my whole soul. *With the garments of salvation;* with salvation as with a garment; so in the next with righteousness as with a robe. The meaning is, The salvation that God will work for me will render me as beautiful and considerable as they are that are clothed with the richest garments, as bridegrooms usually are, and brides with their jewels, or as venerable as kings in their princely robes; my sackcloth will now be turned into robes; or, I shall be compassed about with glory, as garments do compass the body. *With the robe of righteousness*, i. e. either with the fruits and effects of his love and many favours to the church, in which sense *righteousness* is taken, Psal. cxii. 3, 4, 9, compared with 2 Cor. ix. 9; chap. li. 6, 8; she should see the *righteousness* of God in fulfilling all these promises. Or that *righteousness* of Christ imputed to us, which we are said to put on, Rom. xiii. 14; or those graces imparted to us, and acted in a holy life.

z Ps. 72. 3. & 85. 11. a ch. 60. 18. & 62. 7.

11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause [z]righteousness and [a]praise to spring forth before all the nations.

As the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth: by this and the other metaphor he shows not only the reviving of the blessings of the church after they had been as it were dead in the winter of affliction, but the great plenty and abundance of blessings that should break forth; that which had been as a wilderness shall be as a paradise, pointing at the effects of his grace and bounty. *So the Lord God will cause righteousness to spring forth*, i. e. his great work of salvation shall break out and appear. *And praise*, as the natural product and fruit of it; his own glory being the principal end of making his righteousness to appear and manifest itself. *Before all nations:* these things will not be done in a corner, but will be eminently conspicuous in the sight of all the world, for which purpose those hymns penned by the godly will ever be famous in the churches of Christ to all ages, as of Moses, Hannah, Mary, Zacharias, Simeon, &c.

CHAP. LXII.

A prayer of the watchmen for the church in confidence of God's gracious designs and promises to it.

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FOR Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp *that* burneth.

For Zion's sake, viz. the church's sake; Zion and Jerusalem being both put for the church, Heb. xii. 22. *Will I not hold my peace:* these seem to be the words of the prophet, strongly resolving, notwithstanding all difficulties, to solicit God for the church's happiness, and constantly excite to the belief of it by his preaching, though it were long ere it came. for Isaiah lived near two hundred years before this was accomplished; but his prophecy lived, and the tenor of it was continued by other prophets, whom the Lord stirred up to be still establishing his people till this salvation was wrought: his meaning might be, as long as he lived he would never hold his peace; or he might include himself among those who should be then alive, as Paul doth among the other saints, 1 Thess. iv. 17, *we which are alive*. Thus may we also include God speaking these words, as some would have it, viz. by the mouth of Isaiah, and other of his holy prophets, that never held their peace, till they saw this blessed state of the church appear. *Until the righteousness:* with reference to the Babylonians, understand it of the righteousness of God, who hath promised his people deliverance, and he must be righteous, and so understand *salvation* before; or rather the vindicating of his people's cause in the eyes of the nations by the ruin of the Babylonians; he will show that his people have a righteous cause: or with reference to the church, till Christ, who is her righteousness, shall appear and be manifested in the gospel. *Go forth as brightness;* clearing up their miserable and dark estate, which the church might be supposed to be in before Christ's coming, with much joy and happiness. *As a lamp that burneth;* and to that purpose is set up where it may be seen continually, to signify how eminently conspicuous this prosperous estate of the church should be among the nations, and as it may particularly relate to revealing of Christ unto the world.

2 [a]And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: [b]and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

[a] ch. 60. 3.
[b] See ver. 4, 12. ch. 65. 15.

Thy righteousness: see what is said in the foregoing verse: some read, thy *Just One*, viz. Jesus Christ. *Kings*, those that were wont to scorn thee, shall now be taken with the admiration of thy glory. *Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name;* not the seed of Abraham, or the *children of Israel*, but of God; that whereas they were by nature the children of wrath, now by grace they shall be the children of God. Or, another name, as it is said of tongues. Compare Mark xvi. 17, with Acts ii. 4. Or, a name, the honour whereof shall make them famous, as Gen. xi. 4; they shall be called Christians. Or, the church shall be more renowned than ever, both in respect of her *condition*, and so called *Hephzi-bah;* and of her *relation*, and so called *Beulah;* and this new name the Lord gives them accordingly, ver. 4.

3 Thou shalt also be [c]a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

[c] Zech. 9. 16.

A crown of glory; an expression to set forth the dignity of her state. *In the hand of the Lord*, i. e. either as placed upon thee by God's hand, that he will dispose of or dispense to thee; a usual form of speech in Scripture, as Hag. i. 1, *by the hand of Haggai:* so Mal. i. 1. Or, *in the hand of God;* he shall so manage thine honourable estate, that thou shalt be a *crown*, a credit, and honour to him; and so the word *crown* may be used for any kind of ornament, or matter of honour. Or, preserved and defended by God's hand; a phrase that expresseth it to be out of all danger, as to put a man's *life in his hands* is to expose it to dangers, Judg. xii. 3; 1 Sam. xix. 5; xxviii. 21. *A royal diadem;* the same thing with the former for substance. Or, the royal priesthood, whereof the apostle speaks, 1 Pet. ii. 9.

4 [d]Thou shalt no more be termed [e]Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed [f]Desolate: but thou shalt be called ‖Hephzi-bah, and thy land ‖Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

[d] Hos. 1. 10. 1 1 et 2. 10.
[e] ch. 49. 14. & 54. 6, 7.
[f] ch. 54. 1.
‖ That is, *My delight is in her.*
‖ That is, *Married.*

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; as a woman forsaken by her husband, contemptible, and of low esteem. *Neither shall thy land*, i. e. the inhabitants of the land, a metonymy of the subject, *any more be termed Desolate;* though it be now almost void of inhabitants, it shall be impeopled again. *Thou shalt be called*, i. e. *be*, as you have frequently had such instances. *Hephzi-bah; My delight is in her;* a new name, agreeing with her new condition. *Beulah; Married*, agreeing to her new relation; she shall be as one well married, to the great improvement of her state, Jer. iii. 14; Hos. ii. 18—20. *Thy land shall be married;* thou shalt see the increase of thy children again in thy land, as the fruit of thy married condition, which by reason of thy being forsaken of thy husband were in a manner wasted and decayed; and this refers to the great enlargement of the church in the gospel days. Or rather, shall be *possessed*, as the word *baal* properly signifies; and so it answers to *desolate*, Thou shalt be no more *desolate*, but *possessed;* and this helps to solve a difficulty in the next verse, which otherwise may seem an impropriety, that the sons would marry the mother.

5 ¶ For *as* a young man marrieth a virgin, *so* shall thy sons marry thee: and †*as* the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, *so* [g]shall thy God rejoice over thee.

† Heb. *with the joy of the bridegroom.*
[g] ch. 65. 19.

As a young man marrieth a virgin: this is delivered as a demonstration of what was said in the close of the 4th verse; and it is said *young* and *virgin* to note their suitableness; not *old* and *young*, but such as may delight each in other, signifying that mutual content that would be in all parties; thus it was at the first preaching of the gospel, Acts ii. 41—47. *So shall thy sons marry thee.* Whereas it is improbable that the Spirit of God should carry on so sacred a prophecy by a similitude so abhorrent to nature, the *son should marry the mother*, the scruple is easily satisfied by taking the word in its right signification, to *possess*, as in the foregoing verse, reading it thus, As a young man marrieth or *possesseth* a virgin, so shall thy land be inhabited or *possessed* by thy sons; they shall dwell with thee as a man dwells with his wife; and thus the LXX. And it is said *sons*, to distinguish them from *strangers*, by whom she should not any longer be inhabited, but by her own natives; and expressed by *marrying*, to signify not only their unity of affection in the evenness of their living, but of faith in their common profession, called the *common faith*, Tit. i. 4, according to which Paul calls Titus his son. *As the bridegroom rejoiceth*, taketh delight in her; so shall thy God, viz. Christ, God and man, in thee: see ver. 4. Christ is often called a *bridegroom*, and his church a bride, 2 Cor. xi. 2; Rev. xxi. 2, 9.

6 [h]I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day nor night: ‖ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,

[h] Ezek. 3. 17. & 33. 7.
‖ Or, *ye that are the LORD's remembrancers.*

Watchmen; understand by these, either, 1. *Angels*, as they are called, Dan. iv. 13, 23. Or, 2. *Magistrates:* see chap. lvi. 10. Or rather, 3. *Ministers.* When once the church shall be restored again, God will undertake for its safety and protection, partly by magistracy, and partly by ministry, whom he here by a metaphorical allegory calls *watchmen;* but the next words seem principally to intimate spiritual watchmen, thy spiritual safety, Heb. xiii. 17, and said to be upon the walls, as being thence able to espy dangers at the greater distance, Cant. i. 7. *Which shall never hold their peace day nor night;* there shall be a most vigilant and industrious ministry, their constancy being intimated by *day* and *night*, either in praying, or teaching, or warning, this being their office. *That make mention*, i. e. are his servants. To make mention of one is, according to the Hebrew phrase, to be servant to him of whom we make mention, chap. xxvi. 13. And here especially are meant his servants in ordinary, his *remembrancers;* either such as put God in mind of his promise, like such officers that great men have about them on purpose to mind them of the pub-

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lic affairs; or such as make the Lord to be remembered, putting his people in mind of him. *Keep not silence:* this seems to be the charge that he gives to his watchmen, that they never prove remiss or negligent.

† Heb. *silence.*
Isa. 61. 11. Zeph. 3. 20.

7 And give him no †rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem [t]a praise in the earth.

Give him no rest; the same with the foregoing verse, and very acceptable to God, Luke xi. 8—10. *Till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth,* by sending the Messiah and those labourers into his vineyard, whereby the church may be established and settled on sure foundations, and so become matter of praise to God. All the nations may praise him for her, Psal. lxvii. 3, 4. Or, that she may be praised, and become renowned and famous in the eyes of the world: see chap. lx. 9; lxi. 9, 11.

8 The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, †Surely I will no more [k]give thy corn *to be* meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

† Heb. *If I give, &c.*
[k] Deut. 28. 31, &c. Jer. 5. 17.

This and the next verse are much to the same purpose, wherein the prophet, to encourage them to their industrious endeavours, tells them that the Lord had *sworn* to see to the prosperity of Jerusalem; and he names the *hand,* to signify his faithfulness, as the giving of our hand notes our fidelity; and *arm,* to signify his power, *the arm of his strength,* i. e. his strong arm: these being eminently to be engaged and put forth for his people, he swears by them. *Surely I will no more give;* or, *If I give;* a usual aposiopesis; an abrupt form of swearing, implying something of an imprecation, as great as can be expressed: q. d. Never account me faithful or almighty, if I accomplish not this. *The sons of the stranger:* see chap. lxi. 5. *Shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:* the meaning is, That meat, and drink, and all necessaries that thou hast laboured for, the Babylonians took away from thee; but now it shall be so no more, he will not give thee up to the will of thine enemies.

9 But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it [l]in the courts of my holiness.

[l] See Deut. 12. 12. & 14. 23. 26. & 16. 11, 14.

They that have gathered it, i. e. the wine mentioned in the former verse, that have brought it from their several vineyards, and laid it in their cellars, every one shall eat the fruit of his own labours; thou shalt not sow, and another reap, as formerly. *And praise the Lord;* they themselves shall praise him, viz. for his bounty and goodness; and others also that shall be partakers with them; God will be bountiful, and they shall be thankful. *In the courts of my holiness;* as I have commanded, Deut. xiv. 23; in my courts; holiness being put for God himself by a metonymy of the adjunct; alluding to those anniversary feasts and thank-offerings that were to be eaten in those places about the temple, and perhaps in special to that part which was appropriated to the priests, implying herein that they should be all priests; and, for aught I know, here may be an allusion to the great gospel feast, or thank-offering in the Lord's supper, these promises being not only applicable *to,* but do point *at,* the soul protections and the soul provisions of the church of Christ.

10 ¶ Go through, go through the gates; [m]prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; [n]lift up a standard for the people.

m ch. 40. 3. & 57. 14.
n ch. 11. 12.

Go through, go through the gates; it is doubled by way of emphasis: q. d. Make haste to your own land; as if Cyrus should say, Get you out of captivity as soon as you will, chap. xlviii. 20. Or it may intimate an invitation issued out from them at Jerusalem to those that were scattered about in the captivity; therein possibly typifying the going of Christ's disciples into the various parts of the world, to bring those that were scattered up and down into the church. Or, Go meet the Gentiles, whom God purposeth to bring into the church, that by pure doctrine and your holy lives they may be the sooner won. *Prepare ye the way;* let them not have any obstructions in their way: he seems to call upon others to prepare the way for them; thus John was sent to prepare the way for Christ, as was prophesied, chap. xl. 3; accordingly it is ordered to be *cast up:* see chap. lvii. 14. *Gather out the stones,* that there be no stumbling-stone or offence in their way; or, q. d. Go to and fro, and remove every scandal that they may boggle at, Rom. xiv. 13. The former notes the *certainty* of their deliverance, harbingers sent before; this the *speed* of it, no impediment. *Lift up a standard;* an allusion to soldiers, that usually set up their *standard,* that the army may know whither to repair from all quarters; see chap. xlix. 22; and *lifting of it up* is, that it may be more visible; see chap. xi. 10—12; and this is Christ held forth in the preaching of the gospel. *For the people;* or, over the people.

11 Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, °Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his [p]reward *is* with him, and his ‖work before him.

o Zech. 9. 9. Matt. 21. 5. John 12. 15.
p ch. 40. 10. Rev. 22. 12.
‖ Or, recompence.

The Lord hath proclaimed: this may be understood of Cyrus's proclamation, being thereunto directed by God: see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, &c. *To the daughter of Zion,* i. e. to Jerusalem, or the church; the sum of which proclamation is in the following words. *Thy salvation cometh;* either, 1. The time of it is come, chap. lvi. 1; lx. 1. Or rather, 2. The person that effects it, thy Saviour, by a metonymy of the efficient, Luke ii. 30. *His work,* i. e. the reward due to the work, the same thing with the former: see of this on chap. xl. 10. Or, his work is ready cut out for him which he is to do. Or, he will industriously set himself about the work that is before him, John iv. 34; and he is said to bring it *with him,* viz. the reward that he will give to his true worshippers; or, he brings eternal salvation with him, or the reward of redemption, which is the subject of the next chapter.

12 And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city [q]not forsaken.

q ver. 4.

They shall call them, The holy people; or, they shall be called, or they shall be, a peculiar, separate people, chap. iv. 3. *Sought out;* or, one found that was lost: see Ezek. xxxiv. 16. Or, sought *out,* or *for,* or one in great esteem, one that the Gentiles should seek to join themselves withal, so as to be one church with her. That reproach should be wiped off from her, that *this is Zion whom no man seeketh after,* Jer. xxx. 17. Or, cared for, viz. by God, whom he hath out of infinite love gathered to himself. *A city not forsaken:* see ver. 4. The meaning is, that thus they shall esteem the gospel church; she shall be accosted with such salutations as these are, the *holy people,* the *redeemed of the Lord,* &c.

CHAP. LXIII.

Christ's victory over his enemies, 1—6, *and mercy towards his church; in judgment remembering mercy,* 7—14. *The church's prayer and complaint in faith,* 15—19.

WHO *is* this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* †glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

† Heb. *decked.*

In these two verses either the prophet, as in some vision or ecstasy, is put probably upon inquiry by God himself, rather than by Christ, or Michael, or Judas Maccabæus, as some have thought; and the rather, because this place doth thus suit best with chap. lix. 16, 17. Or the church makes inquiry, and that with admiration, who it is that appears in such a habit or posture, ver. 1. and why, ver. 2. *Edom;* that is, the country of Idumea, where Esau dwelt, and Esau himself was sometimes called by this name, Gen. xxv. 30; and it is put synecdochically for all the enemies of the church, as Moab is, Isa. xxv. 10: see the notes. *With*

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dyed garments; or, *stained:* thus Christ is described, Rev. xix. 13, and so also ver. 3: LXX., the redness of garments. *Bozrah;* the capital city of Idumea; see further chap. xxxiv. 6, a parallel text; and Edom and Bozrah here are mentioned, either, 1. Not as relating to the places so called, but by way of allusion to the garments of this conqueror, *Edom* signifying *red*, and *Bozrah* a *vintage;* the one relating to his treading the winepress, and the other to the blood sprinkled upon his garments, ver. 3: the like manner of speaking you have Psal. cxx. 5. Or rather, 2. Put synecdochically for all the enemies of the church, among whom, though antichrist be not particularly designed, yet may be reckoned, being one of the chief of them; thus typifying Christ's victories over all the enemies of the church, Rev. xix. 19—21; and this is usual. *Babylon* is put for any detestable city, and *Moab* for all that are vile and abominable, Isa. xxv. 10; so *Edom* here for all God's enemies. And he mentions these Idumeans rather than the Chaldeans, who were the Jews' chief and particular enemies, 1. Partly to set forth the greatness of the enmity, being of old standing, and an inbred malignity, Gen. xxv. 22, 23, and irreconcilable, and perpetual, Amos i. 11, and particularly put forth when the Babylonians took Jerusalem, Psal. cxxxvii. 7. 2. Partly to comfort the Jews, both because God would take particular revenge upon Edom, as he had threatened, and prophesied by Obadiah, which is the substance of that whole prophecy; and also these being their near neighbours, God doth give them security, that they shall not only be delivered from the Chaldeans, those remoter enemies, but from the Idumeans also, whose vicinity and neighbourhood might have been troublesome to them. *Glorious in his apparel;* such as generals are wont to march before their armies in, or great conquerors, that walk in state and gallantry from their conquests. *In the greatness of his strength; in* or *according to* the majesty of his gait, being an indication of the greatness of his strength, and intimating that he hath thoroughly done his work, and fears no pursuing enemy, as the lion that keepeth his majestic gait without the fear of any other beast, Prov. xxx. 30: this notes the invincibleness of his power, and that it is his own strength, he needeth not the help of armies or other instruments, and thus he will travel through all the countries of his enemies. *I that speak in righteousness:* here the Lord Christ gives an answer, wherein he both asserts his fidelity, that he will faithfully perform what he hath promised, and that he will truly execute justice, Rev. xix. 11; and hereby also he distinguisheth himself from all idol gods, Isa. xlv. 19, 20. *Mighty to save;* I have power to accomplish salvation, as powerful as faithful, Isa. xix. 20.

2 Wherefore [a]*art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

a Rev. 19. 13.

Having inquired of the person, now he inquires the reason of his habit being thus sprinkled.

3 I have [b]trodden the winepress alone; and of the people *there was* none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

b Lam. 1. 15. Rev. 14. 19, 20. & 19. 15.

I have trodden the winepress, i. e. I have destroyed the enemies of my people, I have crushed them as grapes are crushed; this being a usual metaphor to describe the utter destruction of a people, Psal. xliv. 5; Isa. xxv. 10; Rev. xiv. 19, 20; and the easiness of doing it, no more than to crush a bunch of grapes. *Alone*, to note his good-will and great power. The masters of vineyards are not willing to do this drudgery themselves; neither, if they would, could they be able to manage a whole vintage by themselves: but Christ was willing to undertake it, and able to go through it, without calling in the help of any other. *Of the people there was none with me:* 1. Not that he excludes the Jews, but the other nations that dwelt about them; therefore he saith *of the people there was none with him;* but God and his own people may be reckoned as one, Judg. v. 23. And though this be true of his passion, in which sense some would carry it, yet doth it not so well suit with the design; for Christ is described here not as a priest sacrificing, or shedding of his own blood, but as a king, conquering and shedding the blood of his and his church's enemies; hence it is said *their blood*, not *his own*, to show that it cannot fairly relate to his passion: besides Christ could expect no help in that, for he knew none could; but here he looked, and wondered that there was none, ver. 5. And though it may be said that he makes use of instruments both in his conquering of temporal enemies, and also spiritual, consider, 1. That here he speaks as a general, and therefore the whole victory is ascribed to him alone. 2. They do it not only by commission and authority derived from him, but by strength conveyed to them from him, without which they could do no more than a watch without a spring, or tool without the workman's strength and skill: and that Christ may make it appear they are no coadjutors that he needs, he makes them bring about such things as they never designed, as he speaks of the Assyrian; see on chap. x. 6, 7; and this is to be understood in like manner of Christ's conquest over spiritual enemies, 2 Cor. iv. 7. See Acts iii. 12, 13. *And trample them in my fury:* this latter expression is but an aggravating of the former; it implies a kind of insulting, an allusion to conquerors, who were wont to make the conquered to lie down, that others might trample on them, chap. li. 23. *Shall be sprinkled;* or, *was sprinkled;* as in treading of grapes the juice sparkles upon the clothes: q. d. in his answer, Thus came my garments to be sprinkled. *I will stain;* it shall not be, or it *was not*, only sprinkled, but perfectly stained, as it were rolled in blood, chap. ix. 5.

4 For the [c]day of vengeance *is* in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

c ch. 34. 8. & 61. 2.

The day of vengeance, designed and purposed by me to take vengeance on the enemies of my church; or particularly the posterity of Esau. *Day* and *year* is all one, save the latter may have some respect to the length of their captivity. *Is in mine heart;* or, *was* in my heart; a desire of execution, Psal. xl. 8. I have meditated or studied revenge; being long forborne, hath wrought in me resolutions of revenge; therefore wonder not that I am so bloody: noting the severity of his proceedings against his enemies. *My redeemed:* the Jews have this title, because he redeemed them out of Egypt, and would also out of Babylon. *Is come; is at hand:* see Psal. cii. 13; chap. xxxiv. 8. The former part of the verse shows that Christ is still about his work, though he defer the execution till the fit time come; he may allude to the year of jubilee.

5 [d]And I looked, and [e]*there was* none to help; and I wondered that *there was* none to uphold: therefore mine own [f]arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

d ch. 41. 28. & 59. 16. e John 16. 32. f Ps. 98. 1. ch. 59. 16.

There was none to help; not that he needed it, for help implies a defect of power, or wisdom, or wealth, or opportunity, &c.; but to see what men would do, in regard his people needed it; therefore the standing or not standing by his people is the same thing with standing or not standing by him, Judg. v. 23; Matt. xxv. 35, 40, 42, 45. *None to uphold;* a metaphor taken from a staff, that is a help to one that leans on it. *My fury*, or *zeal*, viz. against the adversaries of the church. God's *arm* notes his strength and power, and his *zeal* sets this power on work, chap. ix. 7; but see on chap. lix. 16, 17.

6 And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and [g]make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

g Rev. 16. 6.

Make them drunk: the Hebrew often expresseth calamities by a cup of wine, or strong drink, by which the distressed persons are made drunk, Psal. lxxv. 8; chap. li. 21, 22; they go as it were to and fro, not knowing what to do with themselves; and in special drunk with their own blood, chap. xlix. 26; Rev. xvi. 6. *I will bring down their strength to the earth;* whatever it is wherein their strength lies, their strong ones, or their strong places, or deep counsels, &c., he will bring to the very dust, to nothing; like drunken men, they shall fall to the ground, not being able to stand; the most miserable condition that men can fall into, Psal. xxxvi. 12.

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7 ¶ I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, *and* the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.

Whether this ought to be the beginning of a new chapter, or no, is not material; but certainly here begins a new matter, which contains the prophet's prayer, either in his own name or the church's, to the end of chap. lxiv.; wherein he begins with mentioning the great kindnesses that God had shown the Jews, and that emphatically, setting it forth with the greatest advantages; and the more, either to aggravate their great unkindness, or to give them some hope of finding him the like again in their distresses, or by way of argument with God to show them mercy, because he had been so good to them.

8 For he said, Surely they *are* my people, children *that* will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

For he said, viz. within himself of old, when he made a covenant with our fathers, and brought them out of Egypt, *Surely they are my people*, in covenant; though they are unworthy of me, yet I cannot but look upon them as my people. Their enemies would persuade themselves, O they are not God's people, but cast-outs, that none cared for or looked after; but God will own them. *Children that will not lie;* that will keep my covenant; they will not deal falsely with me, that are under such obligations: or, I presume they will not; though they did go after their idols, and prove unfaithful to me in serving Baal and Ashteroth, &c., now I presume they will do so no more. Thus parents are apt tenderly to think of those children that they have been indulgent to, that they will not offer to abuse their kindness; thus God thinks the best of them. Or, he intimates here what they are obliged to do, though he knew they would do otherwise. Or, they will not degenerate after I have renewed them. *So he was their Saviour*, viz. on these hopes and on these conditions he undertook the charge of them, Exod. xix. 5, 6; Psal. lxxxi. 8—10; or, *he;* so *he* alone was their Saviour; when none to save, none to uphold, then *he* saved them; not Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, &c., but Christ himself.

9 [h] In all their affliction he was afflicted, [i] and the angel of his presence saved them: [k] in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and [l] he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

h Judg. 10. 16. Zech. 2. 8. Acts 9. 4.
i Ex. 14. 19. & 23. 20, 21. & 33. 14.
k Mal. 3. 1. Acts 12. 11.
k Deut. 7. 7, 8.
l Ex. 19. 4. Deut. 1. 31. & 32. 11, 12. ch. 46. 3, 4.

In all their affliction he was afflicted; because of all the afflictions they endured in Egypt: this notes the sympathy that is in Christ, he having the same Spirit in him that the church hath, and her Head and Father. Or, *In all their afflictions no affliction;* so the words may be read; their afflictions were rather *favours* than *afflictions;* all that befell them from the Red Sea through the wilderness; and then *tzar* is taken actively, he afflicted not: this may note his clemency, their sting was taken out; either way it may be read according to the different spelling of *lo*, whether by *aleph* or *vau*. The first seems the more genuine; they that list to drive this notion further may consult the Latin Synopsis, and the English Annotations. *The angel of his presence;* the same that conducted them through the wilderness, called an *angel*, Exod. xxxiii. 2, and his *presence*, ver. 14, and *Jehovah*, Exod. xiii. 21; so that it must be the Lord Jesus Christ, who appeared to Moses in the bush, as Stephen doth interpret it, Acts vii. 35, &c. Other angels are in his presence, but they were not always; he was ever so, therefore so called by way of eminency; hence the LXX. express it not a *legate*, or *angel*, but *himself*. *Saved them* from the house of bondage; brought them through the Red Sea, the wilderness, &c. Their *Rock was Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 4. *In his love and in his pity:* this shows the ground of his kindness; they were a stubborn, superstitious, idolatrous people, yet Christ's love and pity saved them for all that; it was because he loved them. *He bare them, and carried them;* he left them not to shift for themselves, but bare them as a father his child, or an eagle her young ones; he carried them in the arms of his power; see chap. xlvi. 4; and on the wings of his providence: see Deut. xxxii. 10—12; and the notes on Deut. i. 31. And he is said to do it *of old*, to remember his ancient kindness for many generations past; *olam* signifies an eternity, or a long time past, as well as to come; from the days of Abraham or Moses, from their bondage in Egypt, to the time of Isaiah; and it is used as an argument to move him to do so still; he will carry her till he bring her unto his Father.

10 ¶ But they [m] rebelled, and [n] vexed his holy Spirit: [o] therefore he was turned to be their enemy, *and* he fought against them.

m Ex. 15. 24. Num. 14. 11. Ps. 78. 56. & 95. 9.
n Ps. 78. 40. Acts 7. 51. Eph. 4. 30.
o Ex. 23. 21.

They rebelled: many of their rebellions we read of in Exodus and Numbers in their travels. The Lord tells Moses that they had tempted him ten times, and therefore severely threatens them, Numb. xiv. 22, 23. There were three principal times of their rebellion: 1. In the *wilderness*, where they murmured for want of bread and water. 2. In *Canaan*, in not destroying, but only making tributary, such nations as God commanded them to destroy. 3. Before the *Babylonian captivity*, when they set themselves against the prophets, which Stephen chargeth upon them, Acts vii. 51, 52. Among which also we may reckon all their behaviours under their judges and their kings. Or we may understand it of their not answering God's end and expectation. *Vexed his holy Spirit; Spirit of his holiness;* they vexed him by their obstinacy against his will and mind, and walking contrary unto him: not that there are such passions in God, but it is spoken after the manner of men, as they are vexed when their will is crossed. *He was turned to be their enemy;* overthrew them not only in the wilderness, Psal. lxxviii. 31, 33, 59, 60, &c., sending among them fiery serpents, Numb. xxi. 6; but even in Canaan, stirring up against them adversaries, sometimes the Philistines, anon the Midianites, and then the Moabites, &c.

11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, *and* his people, *saying*, Where *is* he that [p] brought them up out of the sea with the ‖ shepherd of his flock? [q] where *is* he that put his holy Spirit within him?

p Ex. 14. 30. & 32. 11, 12. Num. 14. 13, 14, &c. Jer. 2. 6.
‖ Or, *shepherds*.
q Num. 11. 17, 25. Neh. 9. 20. Dan. 4. 8. Hag. 2. 5.

Then, or yet, *he remembered:* this relates either, 1. To the people, and then *he* is collectively taken; and so it looks like the language of the people in Babylon, and must be read, he *shall remember*. Or, 2. It may look back to their condition in the wilderness; and thus they may properly say, Where is he? or that God that delivered his people of old, to do the like for us now? there is a like phrase used by Elisha, 2 Kings ii. 14. Or rather, 3. To God, as it were recollecting himself in a pathetical prosopopœia: q. d. *Where is he?* Where am I with my former bowels, that moved me to help them of old, that I would now turn to be their enemy? Or. Is my hand shortened that I cannot do it? And so in the following verses he gives a particular description how kind he had been to them formerly, the times mentioned ver. 9; and thus God seems to work upon himself. *Moses and his people;* or what great things he had done for them by Moses. *Where is he that brought them up out of the sea?* here God speaks of himself, as in the former clause, viz. that divided the sea for them, being one of the greatest miracles that ever God wrought for his people; it is therefore frequently mentioned by way of encouragement to them, when they are in sore troubles. *The shepherd;* or, *shepherds;* viz. Moses, that brought out his people as a shepherd doth his flock; *he* and *Aaron* are both joined, Psal. lxxvii. 20. *His holy Spirit*, i. e. those abilities and gifts wherewith God furnished Moses, as properly proceeding from the Spirit, he can do the like again, and qualify instruments for his work.

12 That led *them* by the right hand of Moses [r] with his glorious arm, [s] dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

r Ex. 15. 6.
s Ex. 14. 21. Josh. 3. 16.

The right hand, viz. the strength and power that God gave to Moses, expressed by the *right hand*, that being usually esteemed the stronger, Psal. xvi. 8; xx. 6. Or,

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the *rod* in his right hand; by which understand also all the wonders that he did for them in Egypt. *With his glorious arm;* or that *arm* wherewith God gained to himself so much glory, being always present at the assistance of Moses, Deut. iv. 34; or Moses's right hand, led by God's glorious arm, as parents lead their children, that God may have all the glory in the using of his instruments. *Dividing the water;* the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. 21, and also Jordan, Josh. iii. 15, 16. *To make himself an everlasting name;* with reference both to his power and providence, as respecting either his aim and end in doing what he did, or the effect of it when it was done, it got him renown.

t Ps. 106. 9.

13 t That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, *that* they should not stumble?

That led them through the deep; showing that God did not dry up shallow places, but the very depth of the sea, the very channel, which is the deepest part. Or, between those heaps of waters that stood up as a wall on each side of them, which might make it seem terrible, and therefore it is ascribed to their faith, Heb. xi. 29. *As an horse in the wilderness;* or, *plain;* for so wilderness is sometimes taken, and may be here meant, by comparing it to a valley in the next verse, viz. with as much safety as the horse runs up and down in the plain ground; or, with as much ease and tenderness as a horse led by the bridle; not as men affrighted, but soberly and orderly. *That they should not stumble:* this may be taken metaphorically, they came to no harm; or properly, that though the sea were but newly divided, yet it was so dried, that the mud, as also the unevenness of the ground, was not any occasion of their stumbling, or their sticking in it; probably so dried and smoothed by the wind that God sent as it were to prepare the way before them. See chap. xl. 3—5.

14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, u to make thyself a glorious name.

u 2 Sam. 7. 23.

As a beast goeth down into the valley; a laden beast goeth warily and gently down the hill: or, as a beast goeth down to the valley for grass, that being a mountainous country: or *going down* for *going along;* so the word is used Isa. xxxviii. 8; noting the evenness of their passage; or alluding to their going down from the shore into that great channel (as the coming out of it is called a going up, ver. 11) now made through the sea, orderly, and composedly, not like the Gadarenes' swine, through consternation, ready to break their necks for haste. *The Spirit of the Lord,* i. e. the Lord himself, *caused him to rest;* led them easily, that they should not be over-travelled, or fall down, or come to any injury through weariness; thus Jeremiah expresseth it, chap. xxxi. 2, and thus God gave them rest from their enemies, drowning of them in the sea, and in their safe conduct, that they could not annoy or disturb them, leading them till he found them a place for resting; the word for *leading* and *resting* being much of a like notion, Zech. x. 6; pointing at their several rests by the way, Numb. x. 33: or it may be read by way of interrogation, as all the foregoing words, and be the close of that inquiry, And where is the Spirit that caused them to rest? or he led them to Canaan, the place of their rest; so called Deut. xii. 9; Psal. xcv. 11. *So didst thou lead:* the prophet here by an apostrophe doth only repeat the words in the name of the Jews that he had spake before, ver. 12: q. d. As thou didst then, so mayst thou do again if thou pleasest.

x Deut. 26. 15. Ps. 80. 14.
y Ps. 33. 14.
‖ Or, *the multitude.*
z Jer. 31. 20. Hos. 11. 8.

15 ¶ x Look down from heaven, and behold y from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where *is* thy zeal and thy strength, ‖ the sounding z of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

Look down from heaven: now they, or the prophet, begin to pray, and expostulate with God, and to argue both from the goodness of his nature, and from the greatness of his works that he had done. God sees every where and every thing, but he is said to *look* down from *heaven,* because there is his throne, whereon he sits in great majesty and splendour. *Behold* is added to note that he would not only barely see and look on, but that he would behold with regard, and respect his poor people in captivity. *The habitation of thy holiness;* a description of heaven by a periphrasis, frequently used and explained, Deut. xxvi. 15. *Where is thy zeal?* what is become of that love which of old would not let thee suffer thy people to be wronged? chap. xxxvii. 32. *Thy strength;* that power of thine manifested in those valiant acts which thou didst put forth for thy people, Psal. cxlv. 11, 12; cl. 2: see Jer. xiv. 9. *The sounding of thy bowels:* by the sounding thereof may be understood those sympathizing sighs and compassionate groans that proceed from the bowels when they are affected, which being thought the subject of pity are often by a metonymy put for compassion, and hence proceed those rumblings of the bowels occasioned by strong passions called *yearnings:* it is spoken of God after the manner of men. Is all this shut up from me? Thou art naturally so compassionate, dost thou lay a restraint upon thyself, that thy bowels shall not move towards me? *Are they restrained?* or canst thou be thus straitened? Psal. lxxvii. 7—9; Isa. lxiv. 12; an expostulation, that agrees very well with the next verse, *Doubtless,* &c. How can this come to pass?

a Deut. 32. 6. 1 Chron. 29. 10. ch. 64. 8.
b Job 14. 21. Eccles. 9. 5.
‖ Or, *our redeemer from everlasting is thy name.*

16 a Doubtless thou *art* our father, though Abraham b be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, *art* our father, ‖ our redeemer; thy name *is* from everlasting.

Doubtless thou art our Father: thus they urge God with that relation he stands in unto them, Mal. ii. 10; therefore we as thy children expect the bowels and compassions of a father. *Though Abraham,* he who was our father after the flesh, though he be dead, and so ignorant of our condition. *And Israel;* or, Jacob; who was also our father; and therefore a vain thing to call upon them; or if they were not dead, they could not help us out of our straits; or if they were alive, we are so much degenerate that they would not own us. Some say Abraham and Israel are here mentioned, and not Isaac, 1. Because the covenant was made more solemnly, and the promises more frequently renewed, with them, than with Isaac. 2. Because with Abraham the covenant was first made, and the whole seed of Israel was taken into it; but not so of Isaac. Or else, 3. Abraham and Israel being named Isaac is included. *Thou art our Father, our Redeemer:* this is urged as another argument for pity, and the more because their Father was their Redeemer, Deut. xxxii. 6. *Thy name is from everlasting;* or, *Redeemer is thy name from everlasting;* thou hast been our Redeemer of old.

c Ps. 119. 10.
d See ch. 6. 10, with John 12. 40. Rom. 9. 18.
e Num. 10. 36. Ps. 90. 13.

17 ¶ O LORD, why hast thou c made us to err from thy ways, *and* d hardened our heart from thy fear? e Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

Made us to err from thy ways, commandments. It is the language of the godly among them being troubled, and therefore complaining that so gracious a Father should leave them to such exigences. *Made us to sin* by withdrawing thy Spirit, and leaving us to ourselves, Psal. lxxxi. 12. It is not to be understood as if God did force them to it, but either letting loose their hearts, or by giving occasion to their hearts, being naturally too apt to apostatize by their severe afflictions: see this more cleared in the Latin Synopsis. Or, make us desperate, by leaving us so long under the oppression of the adversary, thereby casting off thy worship. *From thy fear,* or fear of thee, viz. as the object, Psal. v. 7; or, that we *may* not fear thee; as *seeing,* that *they may not see,* Psal. lxix. 23; or, thy service, chap. xxix. 13, so as to go after other gods. *Return for thy servants' sake;* either our godly forefathers, or particularly to Abraham, Isaac, &c., viz. for the sake of thy promises made to them; or rather, our sakes, that little remnant that are thy servants, be reconciled to us, Psal. xc. 13; for the next words seem to be put by apposition to the former. *The tribes of thine inheritance;* either, 1. The people themselves, which were divided into tribes; or rather, 2. The land of Canaan, which God gave them as an inheritance, as appears by the next verse: q. d. What will thine enemies say if thou

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suffer us to perish, or thine *inheritance* to be destroyed. Or, *rods*, meaning their *rulers*, see chap. xliii. 28, or heads of their tribes.

f Deut. 7. 6. & 26. 19. ch. 62. 12. Dan. 8. 24. g Ps. 74. 7.

18 f The people of thy holiness have possessed *it* but a little while: g our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

The people of thy holiness; or, thy holy people, as being set apart for his servants; *holiness* being to be understood for a covenant separation from other people. *But a little while*, i. e. 1. Comparatively to the promise, which was for ever, though they had possessed it about one thousand four hundred years. Or, 2. It seeming to them so, as things, especially such as are desirable, seem when they are past, Job ix. 25, 26; Psal. xc. 4. Or, 3. They enjoyed but small spaces of time in quietness, so they had small enjoyment of it. Or, 4. It may respect the temple, which stood but four hundred years. *Have trodden down thy sanctuary;* the temple, called the *sanctuary* from the holiness of it; this our adversaries the Babylonians have trodden down, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19; and this also implies their ruining of their whole ecclesiastical policy.

‖ Or, *thy name was not called upon them.* ch. 65. 1.

19 We are *thine:* thou never barest rule over them; ‖ they were not called by thy name.

We are thine; we continue so; we are in covenant, which they never were; and thus it is an argument they use with God to look upon them. Or, the word *thine*, being not in the text, some do otherwise interpret it; We are even in the same condition we were in at first, either in Egypt, or Ur of the Chaldees, before thou broughtest us into covenant, and are accordingly dealt with; we are become even as they, whom thou didst not bear rule over. Or, we are as if thou hadst never ruled over us of old. *Thou never barest rule over them;* not in that manner, or in that relation to them, that thou didst over us. *They were not called by thy name;* neither owned thee, nor owned by thee: this phrase implies a near relation in some circumstance or other, as wife, or servant, or child, &c., chap. iv. 1.

CHAP. LXIV.

The church's prayer continued, for the illustration of God's glory, 1—5: with a confession of their sins, and complaint of their afflictions, 6—12.

a Ps. 144. 5.

OH that thou wouldest a rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down,

b Judg. 5. 5. Mic. 1. 4.

that b the mountains might flow down at thy presence,

Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens: either the earnest desire of the prophet, or the Jews' strong wish, for the coming of the Messias: or rather, their cry to God for vengeance upon their adversaries, on consideration of the enemy's unmerciful dealing with them, and their insolent and opprobrious usage of God in his temple; partly expressing their haste and earnestness, and partly intimating that God would do it with *violence* and *fury*, implied in the word *rending* them, Psal. xviii. 6, 7, &c., spoken after the manner of man, who, if he were shut up, must have room made for his coming forth. This God is said to do, when he puts forth some signal manifestation of his power, Psal. cxliv. 5; a metaphor taken from men, that when they would resolutely and effectually help one in distress, break and fling open doors, and whatever may hinder coming to their relief. *That the mountains might flow down;* or *melt*, Psal. lxviii. 1, 2; xcvii. 5; Micah i. 3, 4; that all impediments might be removed out of the way: possibly an allusion to God's coming down upon Mount Sinai in those terrible flames of fire, Judg. v. 4, 5.

† Heb. *the fire of meltings.*

2 As *when* † the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, *that* the nations may tremble at thy presence!

As when the melting fire burneth; come with such zeal for thy people, that the solid mountains may be no more before thy breath than metal that runs, or water that boils by the force of a vehement fire; and thus, for the most part, when God will take vengeance of his enemies, the Scripture expresseth him coming with fire. *Thy name known;* thy power known, that thine enemies and persecutors of thy church may know thy power, and that thy name may be dreaded among them; his *name* put for his *power*, Psal. cvi. 8. *The nations;* not the Babylonians only, but the nations round about.

c Ex. 34. 10. Judg. 5. 4, 5. Ps. 68. 8. Hab. 3. 3, 6.

3 When c thou didst terrible things *which* we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

When thou didst terrible things: this may relate to what he did among the Egyptians, though it be not recorded, and afterward in the wilderness. *Which we looked not for*, viz. our forefathers, of whose race we are; before we expected them; or such things as we could never expect. *The mountains flowed down:* q. d. Seeing thou hast made the mountains thus to melt, thou canst do the same again. This may allude either, 1. To those showers of rain that fell with that terrible thunder and lightning, and so ran violently down those mountains, and the adjacent, as is usual in such tempests. Or rather, 2. The running along of the fire upon the ground, Exod. ix. 23, 24. It is possible it may allude to those mountains that do cast forth sulphureous matter, running down into the valleys and sea, like melted streams of fire. And kings, princes, and potentates may also metaphorically be understood by these mountains.

d Ps. 31. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 9. ‖ Or, *seen a God beside thee, which doeth so for him, &c.*

4 For since the beginning of the world d *men* have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye ‖ seen, O God, beside thee, *what* he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

Whereas there are but three ways whereby men ordinarily come to the knowledge of a thing, viz. by the ear, either our own hearing, or by hearsay; and by the eye; and by reason, which the apostle adds, where he makes use of this text, 1 Cor. ii. 9; two of them are mentioned here. *Besides thee;* with reference either to the gods that do them, never any other god could do like thee; or to things done, never any *besides thee* could do such things as were never seen or heard of. He refers to those terrible things mentioned in the former verse. It seems to be clear by comparing this with Deut. iv. 31—35. Not to be restrained to these, but to be applied to all the wonderful works that God at all times wrought for his people. And thus they are a plea with God, that they might well expect such things from him now, that had done such wonderful things for their fathers of old. *That waiteth for him;* the apostle hath it, that *love* him, 1 Cor. ii. 9, to show that none can *wait* on him that *love* him not; so all that *love* him will *wait* on him. This may be taken with reference both to the state of grace and glory, those incomprehensible things that are exhibited through Christ in the mysteries of the gospel, as well as the good things of this present life, which the prophet may here literally aim at; it being not unusual for the prophets in mentioning these temporal things to point at spiritual, especially being things that do so well suit with each other.

e Acts 10 35. f ch. 26. 8. g Mal. 3. 6.

5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth e and worketh righteousness, f *those that* remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: g in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

Thou meetest him; or, *wast wont* to meet him; or, thou preventest him, chap. lxv. 24; Psal. xxi. 2, 3, as the father the prodigal. *That rejoiceth and worketh righteousness*, viz. that rejoice to work righteousness; the same thing expressed by two words, by a figure called *hendiadis*. *That remember thee in thy ways;* an amplification of the former words: q. d. To walk in thy ways, whether of providence, precept, or counsel, by virtue of the covenant they

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have with thee. *Thou art wroth; for we have sinned:* or, greatly angry; for or because we have sinned, and provoked thee to wrath thereby, 1 Kings viii. 46. *In those is continuance*, i. e. to those that work righteousness; *in* for *to*. *We shall be saved*, viz. in so doing, in working righteousness. Or, as some, by way of interrogation; in *those*, i. e. in our sins, is continuance, and shall we be saved? Or, in *those*, viz. works of righteousness, in keeping in them, is our continuance and means to be saved. Or, thou continuest to show mercy, *and* or *therefore* we shall be saved. The meaning of the place is to comfort the godly, that though they may have provoked God by their sins, yet, looking upon the ways of God's former proceedings, (in which he still continues, being unchangeable,) they may find hopes of salvation; and this is that which is amplified in the three following verses.

6 But we are all as an unclean *thing*,
and all [h]our righteousnesses *are* as filthy
[i] Ps. 90. 5, 6. rags; and we all do [i]fade as a leaf; and
our iniquities, like the wind, have taken
us away.

[h] Phil. 3. 9.

We are all as an unclean thing: he alludes either to things unclean under the ceremonial law, wherein the leprosy was found, and was to be burnt, Lev. xiii. 55; or rather to persons unclean. They compare their present state with the former: q. d. Formerly there were some that feared thee, and walked uprightly before thee, and were in thy favour; but now we are all as one polluted mass, nothing of good left in us, by reason of a universal degeneracy, Isa. i. 4, 6. *Our righteousnesses:* this, according to the most commentators, refers either to the observances of the rites and ceremonies of the law, wherein they thought their righteousnesses did much consist; or to the best work and actions that can be performed by us; or to our natural, universal depravities: but the best interpreters, and such as aim at the peculiar sense of the place, refer it to the gross provocations that this people were guilty of, causing God to cast them out of their habitations; or else to their persons, i. e. the most righteous among us; and being plural, it raiseth it up to the highest degree, the Scripture frequently putting the abstract for the concrete, as *wisdoms* for the *greatest wisdom*, Prov. ix. 1, and many the like instances formerly given; so that the meaning is, the very best of us all are no better than the uncleanest things or persons; see Micah vii. 2—4; and the rather, because he lived about the time of Isaiah. *As filthy rags;* a cloth made up of patches, or such as come from a putrid sore, or defiled with the menstruous blood of a woman; the LXX., as a rag of one that *sits down*, possibly alluding to Rachel, Gen. xxxi. 34, 35, or whatever may be most filthy. *As a leaf* blown off the tree, and so withers. *Taken us away;* carried us away to Babylon from our habitations, as leaves hurried away by a boisterous wind; our iniquities have been the procuring cause.

[k] Hos. 7. 7.

7 And [k]*there is* none that calleth upon
thy name, that stirreth up himself to take
hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face
from us, and hast †consumed us, †be-
cause of our iniquities.

† Heb. *melted.*
† Heb. *by the hand:* [m] Job 8. 4.

And there is none; or, *yet* there is *none*, i. e. *few*, Psal. xiv. 3; they are not to be discerned among the multitude. *That calleth;* such as call upon thee as they ought, as Jacob, and Moses, and David, &c. did, which often prevents the ruin of a state or kingdom: it points out the universal apostacy of the last times of the Jewish state, for which they were cut off. *To take hold of thee;* either to stay thee from departing from us; see Luke xxiv. 28, 29; or to fetch thee back, when departed, Jer. xii. 7; or it is an allegorical allusion to one struck down and still smitten, but never stirs to lay hold on the arm that smites him, chap. xxvii. 5; it notes their great slothfulness and carelessness, and some refer it to their lukewarmness and dead-heartedness, relying upon their privileges before they went into captivity, and so a great presage of their approaching judgments. *For*, or *when;* so the particle is used Job v. 21; Psal. lxxv. 2. *Consumed us;* or, *melted us;* our sins have kindled such a fire of thy wrath, that we are melted with it. *Because of our iniquities*, Heb. *in the hands of our iniquities*, i. e. either, in the *place* of our iniquities, the land wherein they were committed; or, *into the hands* of our iniquities, to be punished by them, and as it were consumed, or melted down, or our strength exhausted by them, as wax before the fire, Lev. xxvi. 39; Ezek. xxxiii. 10; or, as we translate it, our iniquities being the procuring cause of it.

8 [l]But now, O LORD, thou *art* our fa-
ther; we *are* the clay, [m]and thou our
potter; and we all *are* [n]the work of thy
hand.

[l] 1 ch. 63. 16.
[m] ch. 29. 16. & 45. 9. Jer. 18. 6. Rom. 9. 20, 21.
[n] Eph. 2. 10.

But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; an argument or pathetical plea for pity; or, Notwithstanding all this, thou art our Father, both by creation and by adoption, therefore pity us thy children. *We are the clay;* a metonymy of the matter, *clay* for the vessels made of clay; or, we are *clay*, pointing at our original matter; or it may relate to their state, that God framed them in a body civil and ecclesiastical, out of a confused multitude; they plead at the same time their own frailty, why they would be pitied; and God's covenant interest in them, why he should pity them. *We all are the work of thy hand;* another argument of the same nature with the former, Psal. cxxxviii. 8; not only as men, but as a body of men made thy peculiar people.

9 ¶ Be not [o]wroth very sore, O LORD,
neither remember iniquity for ever: be-
hold, see, we beseech thee, [p]we *are* all
thy people.

[o] Ps. 74. 1, 2. & 79. 8
[p] Ps. 79. 13.

Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever, viz. Thou hast been angry with us a long time, be not so for ever; but deal with us as may best consist with a father's bowels. It hath reference both to *quantity* and *time*, that it might not be very great, nor of long durance. See on Psal. lxxix. 8. *We are all thy people;* thy *peculiar* people, chap. lxiii. 19. Another argument to back the former petition, Psal. xxviii. 9. Though we are very bad in ourselves, and very badly handled by our enemies, thou sufferest in our sufferings, for thou hast no people in covenant but us, and wilt thou not leave thyself a people in the world?

10 Thy holy cities are a wilderness,
Zion is a wilderness, [q]Jerusalem a desola-
tion.

[q] Ps. 79. 1.

Thy holy cities; either Zion and Jerusalem, being the cities they instance in: q. d. Thy holy cities, viz. Zion and Jerusalem: or rather, other cities also in the land of Judea besides those two; called *holy*, either, 1. Because they were built upon God's inheritance, chap. lxiii. 17. Or, 2. Because they were inhabited by the Jews, who were a holy people, Deut. vii. 6; Dan. xii. 7. Or, 3. Because God had his *synagogues* in them, Psal. lxxiv. 8. For all which reasons also they are called *thy* cities. *A desolation;* utterly waste; not only the ordinary cities, but even Jerusalem and Zion themselves; the one called the *upper Jerusalem*, or the *city of David*, because it was built upon Mount Zion; the other the *lower city*, because it lay under the hill of Zion in the valley: he particularizeth Zion and Jerusalem, though he had mentioned the *other cities* before, because the chiefest of the cities; it being usual, notwithstanding the mentioning of generals, in which all the particulars or individuals are included, to name the particular again; as, *and from the hand of Saul*, Psal. xviii., title.

11 [r]Our holy and our beautiful house,
where our fathers praised thee, is burned
up with fire: and all [s]our pleasant things
are laid waste.

[r] 2 Kings 25. 9. Ps. 74. 7. 2 Chron. 36. 19.
[s] Ezek. 24. 21, 25.

Our holy and our beautiful house; the *temple*, chap. lx. 7: q. d. Not only our cities, and our principal cities, but even our *temple*, which we thought sacred and inviolable, in which we have gloried, because it was *thine*, and our *fathers'*, and *ours*, the place where thy holy service was performed, and thy glory and presence was manifested. *Our fathers;* not presuming to mention themselves, they had been so every way abominable, but their *fathers*. *All our pleasant things;* the king's palace, and the houses of the nobles, and other places of state and magnificence, 2 Kings xxv. 9; Lam. i. 7, 10; or, their *synagogues;* or, those stately pieces about the temple.

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t ch. 42. 14.
u Ps. 83. 1.

12 tWilt thou refrain thyself for these *things*, O LORD? uwilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, viz. that are done by the Babylonians? do none of these things move thee to take vengeance on them? *Wilt thou hold thy peace;* wilt thou be as one that regards not? Wilt thou be still, and suffer them? *And afflict us very sore:* see ver. 9: for these our sins, or for these our sufferings; shall we feel the smart of it, that have done no such things, but have been sufferers under the Babylonians? to which God answers in the next chapter.

CHAP. LXV.

The calling of the Gentiles, 1. *The Jews, for their incredulity, idolatry, and hypocrisy, rejected*, 2—7. *A remnant shall be saved*, 8—10. *Judgments on the wicked, and blessings on the godly*, 11—16. *The flourishing and peaceable state of the new Jerusalem*, 17—26.

a Rom. 9. 24, 25, 26, 30. & 10. 20. Eph. 2. 12, 13.
b ch. 63. 19.

I aAM sought of *them that* asked not *for me;* I am found of *them that* sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that* bwas not called by my name.

That in the primary sense of this text it is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles, upon the rejection of the Jews, for their contempt and crucifying of Christ, cannot be doubted by any who will not arrogate to themselves a greater ability to interpret the prophecies of the Old Testament than Paul had, who, Rom. x. 20, expressly so interpreteth it, and applieth it, which showeth the vanity of the Jews in their other interpretations of it.

I am sought: the word signifies properly a diligent inquiry in things relating to God, 2 Chron. xiv. 4; Psal. xxxiv. 4; Jer. xxxvii. 7. *I am diligently inquired of* by them *that asked not for me;* that in times before made no inquiry after me (as the Gentiles, who are said to be *without God in the world*, Eph. ii. 12). As *seeking* may more strictly relate to *prayer*, as the word is used, Isa. lv. 6, so this word translated *asked* may also be so taken, and is so, 1 Sam. i. 20; xxii. 13, but (possibly) it is better interpreted more generally. *I am found of them that sought me not;* yea, *I was found* of them before they sought me; those who formerly did not seek me now seek me; but they were *found* of me before they *sought me;* I prevented them by my grace, sending my Son *to preach peace to those that were afar off*, Eph. ii. 17, and my apostles to entreat them to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. v. 20, and *my Spirit to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment*, John xvi. 8. *I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name;* I invited whole nations by the preaching of my gospel *to behold me;* and I invited them with importunity, doubling my words upon them; and this I did unto a *nation not called by my name*, with whom I was not in covenant, and which did not profess any relation to me, which none of the Gentiles could pretend unto. The prophet speaks of a thing to come many years after as if it were a thing then done, to signify the certainty of it. God doth the same thing yet in every soul that is converted. But the text is manifestly to be interpreted of the conversion of the Gentiles.

c Rom. 10. 21.

2 cI have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way *that was* not good, after their own thoughts;

I have spread out my hands; applied to the Jews, Rom. x. 21, *I have stretched out my hands;* that is, I have used all probable means to reduce them, I have stretched out the *hands* of a passionate *orator* to persuade them, of a *tender mother* to protect and defend them, of a *liberal benefactor* to load them with my benefits; this I have done continually in the whole course of my providence with them, yet they are a *rebellious people;* Paul expounded it by, ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ ἀντιλέγοντα, a people not persuaded, not believing, but contradicting the will of God. *Which walketh in a way that was not good;* that term, *is not good*, often signifies what is very bad: see 1 Sam. ii. 24; Prov. xxiv. 23; xxviii. 21; Psal. xxxvi. 4. Though all sins be not equal, yet what is *not good* is bad. *After their own thoughts:* what is here called *after their own thoughts*, is elsewhere called a *walking after the imaginations of their hearts;* an ordinary phrase, by which sins (especially sins in the matter of the worship of God) are expressed. Eight times in the prophet Jeremiah sinning is thus expressed, Jer. iii. 17; vii. 24; ix. 14; xi. 8; xiii. 10; xvi. 12; xviii. 12; xxiii. 17; so also Deut. xxix. 19. Errors in matter of worship are ordinarily thus expressed, certainly to let us know that *all worship must be according to God's revealed will*, and of such errors this text seemeth, by what followeth, to speak; though indeed the reason of all sin is men's fondness of their own imaginations in opposition to God's revealed will, whence it is that *self-denial* is made the law of a discipleship to Christ.

d Deut. 32. 21.
e ch. 1. 29. & 66. 17. See Lev. 17. 5.
† Heb. upon bricks.

3 A people dthat provoketh me to anger continually to my face; ethat sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense †upon altars of brick;

A people that provoketh me to anger: that the Jews are the people here intended is without question; the prophet, speaking of the calling of the Gentiles upon their rejection, reckons up their sins which were the causes. For though their rejecting and crucifying of Christ was that sin which was the proximate cause; yet God did but *visit* on that generation *their iniquities*, and the *iniquities of their fathers together*, they having by that act *filled up their measure*. They had provoked God continually to anger to his *face*. *To my face;* either in *his temple*, the place where he used to manifest himself; or (considering what followeth) more probably the phrase signifieth their impudence, not taking notice of God's omnipresence and omniscience.

The particular provocations instanced in are deviations in the matter of Divine worship. *Sacrificing in gardens* is one thing instanced in; and *burning incense on brick, or altars of brick*, is another, Deut. xii. 13: there was a particular *altar of gold* appointed for *incense*, Exod. xl. 5. God commanded, Exod. xx. 24, 25, that his altars should be made of *earth*, or *rough stone*. This people transgressed both these laws; sacrificing *in gardens*, for which the prophet reflected on them, chap. i. 29, and again chap. lxvi. 17; whether in gardens consecrated to idols, or in such gardens as the heathens worshipped idols in, is not much material for us to know; and *burning incense* upon *altars of brick*, directly contrary to the Divine rule. Their worship was doubtless idolatrous, and these phrases signify committing idolatry; but the expressing that sin by these phrases lets us know that the doing contrary to the direction of the Divine rule in God's worship is a great part of the sinfulness of *idolatry*.

f Deut. 18. 11.
g ch. 66. 17. See Lev. 11. 7.
‖ Or, pieces.

4 fWhich remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, gwhich eat swine's flesh, and ‖broth of abominable *things is in* their vessels;

They *remained among the graves*, either there expecting revelations by dreams, or there *consulting with devils*, who were thought to delight in such places; or to practise *necromancy*, all which were forbidden, Deut. xviii. 11; chap. viii. 19. And they *lodged in the monuments;* the Hebrew word here used gives advantage to interpreters to vary in their senses. The word signifies only *places kept* or *observed;* some interpret it of idol temples; some of caves and dens, in which the heathens used to worship their idols; some of tombs or monuments for dead persons: besides the idolatry of the thing, there was in it a sinful imitation of the heathens, and a swerving from the rule which God had given them. They also *ate swine's flesh*, contrary to the Divine law, Lev. xi. 7; Deut. xiv. 8; and they endured in their vessels *broth of abominable things;* so the word is used, Judg. vi. 19, 20: others read it, *parts* or *pieces* of *abominable things;* that is, broth, or pieces of such flesh as was to the Jews unclean by the law, Lev. xi. Every creature of God is good, but God's *prohibition* had made the flesh of divers creatures an abominable thing to the Jews, they might not touch their flesh, Lev. xi. 28; but they, taking the measures of their duty from their appetite, or from their reason, concluding from natural principles,

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made no conscience of the positive law of God. This was their iniquity, which is further aggravated in the next verse.

h See Matt. 9. 11. Luke 5. 30. & 18. 11. Jude 19.
‖ Or, *anger.*

5 [h]Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These *are* a smoke in my ‖ nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

Though they were so exceedingly guilty, yet they pretended to a singular sanctity, so as they would not suffer others to come near or touch them. The Samaritans are usually charged with this uncharitableness, and the use of this form of words; but as some do more excuse the Samaritans than the other Jews as to this rigour, so it may be questioned whether they were not at this time carried into captivity; and certain it is, that among the Jews there was such a generation from whom the Pharisees in our Saviour's time were derived, and this was the reason of their *not eating, except they washed, when they came from the market,* Mark vii. 4, lest peradventure they should there have touched some heathen, or some person who was legally unclean. Thus they esteemed themselves *holier* than others, though all their *holiness* lay in these rituals, and those too such as God never commanded. And indeed those who most exceed in such ritual holiness (lying merely in a separation from others, by the usage of some unwritten traditions) come most short in moral and true holiness; for of these God saith, *These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burneth all the day;* that is, a continual provocation to me; as *smoke* is an *offence* to our *noses,* Prov. x. 26; which seemeth to be the sense rather than what some make, who make it a threatening of God's wrath smoking against them, which is sufficiently expressed in the following verses.

i Deut. 32. 34. Mal. 3. 16.
k Ps. 50. 3. 1 Is. 79. 12. Jer. 16. 18. Ezek. 11. 21.

6 Behold, [i]*it is* written before me: [k]I will not keep silence, [l]but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom,

They may think that I take no notice of these things, or if I take any notice, I will forget them, or at least not enter into judgment with them for them; but I as certainly know and will remember them, as princes or great men that record things in writing which they would not forget. And they shall know that I know and take notice of and will remember them; for *I will not keep silence;* I will not long neglect the punishment of them, though for a while I have delayed it, like a man who bites in his wrath, for some wise reasons which are known unto himself best, Psal. l. 21. *Will recompense into their bosom;* my punishment of them shall be severe and certain, but yet it shall be just, but a giving them what is their own, as they are obnoxious to my justice, Deut. vii. 10; Jer. xxxii. 18; like the payment of an *ox* for *an ox,* Exod. xxi. 36 (where the same word is used); they have been *froward against me,* and I will show *myself froward against them,* Psal. xviii. 26.

m Ex. 20 5.
n Ezek. 18.6.
o Ezek. 20. 27, 28.

7 Your iniquities, and [m]the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, [n]which have burned incense upon the mountains, [o]and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

Yea, and when I reckon with them, I will punish them, not only for their personal sins, but for the sins of their parents, which they have testified their approbation of by continuing in them, and so made them their own, by an apish, sinful imitation. *Which have burnt incense upon the mountains:* their fathers burnt incense upon the mountains, there performing to idols that homage which I obliged them to pay unto me; or if any of them pretend it was to me, though before an image, yet it was in a way which I directed them not, who had appointed them the place where I would be worshipped. *And blasphemed me upon the hills;* so as that, instead of blessing, they indeed *blasphemed* me upon *the hills;* instead of speaking well, they spake ill of my name, worshipping me in a way which I had not appointed, and for which they only took their copy from *idolaters. Therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom;* therefore I will punish them, and that justly, as he that rendereth another his due by *measure,* giving *measure* for *measure,* and *weight* for *weight;* only they must expect that I should not only punish the late sins that they have committed of this nature, but the former sins of this kind which those in this nation, that went before this present generation, did commit, and the present age hath continued in the guilt of.

p Joel 2. 14.

8 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and *one* saith, Destroy it not; for [p]a blessing *is* in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

These words must be conceived as a gracious answer from God to the prophet, saying as Abraham, Gen. xviii. 23, 25, or as Moses, Exod. xxxii. 11—13, pleading God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. To this God replieth that he intended no such severity, the unfaithfulness of men should not make his promise of no effect, Rom. iii. 3. His threatening should be made good upon the generality of this people, whose *vine* was of *Sodom,* and *of the fields of Gomorrah,* Deut. xxxii. 32. But yet, as in a vineyard which is generally unfruitful, there may be some particular *vine* that brings forth fruit; or, as in a *vine* which is full of *luxuriant branches* that bring forth no fruit, there may be here and there a branch that bringeth forth fruit, and hath the hopes of *new wine in the cluster;* and as to such, the gardener bids his servant *Destroy it not, or them not,* for they are fruitful; there is in them what speaketh God's *blessing,* or what may be of use, and do us good. *So* (saith God) *will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all;* either for the sake of my servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom I anciently made a covenant; or for my servant David's sake; or for the sake of such as are my *elect* at this time amongst them: see Jer. xxx. 11; Amos ix. 1.

q ver. 15, 22. Matt. 24. 22. Rom. 11. 5, 7.

9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine [q]elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob; no seed beareth a proportion to the tree or plant that it produceth, but in comparison with that is very little; yet it is enough, through the virtue which the God of nature hath put into it, to preserve and uphold the species to which it doth relate. They are but a remnant (saith God) that shall be saved; see Rom. xi. 5; but a small number that shall come out of the captivity of Babylon: or, (which I rather choose,) they will be but a few that shall believe in my Son, yet they shall be enough for my promise to live in: this Paul argueth, Rom. xi. As the plant yet lives in the seed, when the root is plucked up, the leaves dropped off, and the stalk is burnt up; so the *promise of God* lives in a few, when the generality of the people for their sins are cast off and destroyed. The favour of God to men, and the promise of God to good men, lived in one family of Lot, when the five cities were burned, and in the one family of Noah, when the world was drowned; the favour and promise of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David lived in the few that returned out of Babylon, and in those few who under the gospel received Christ, and believed in him, though the generality of them rejected the counsel of God against themselves. God further promiseth to bring out of *Judah an inheritor of his mountains,* which the most and best interpreters do interpret of the Jews' return out of the captivity of Babylon to Jerusalem, and into their own country, and particularly to worship God in his temple upon Mount Zion. *My mountains:* the country of Judea was a mountainous country, Ezek. xxxvi. 1, 8. The mountains were *round about Jerusalem,* Psal. cxxv. 2. See also Ezek. xxxviii. 8. God calls these mountains his *mountains,* because he had chosen that country before all others, and was once truly worshipped there. *Mine elect* signifieth here God's chosen ones, as in Psal. cvi. 23; chap. xlviii. 10. The term doth not always signify such as belong to the *election of grace,* but such as are dignified with some special favour. The whole nation of the Jews are called *a chosen people.* But possibly this promise is to be interpreted with relation to the sincerer part of that people, after that the others should be wasted by the captivity.

r ch. 33. 9. & 35. 2.
s Josh. 7. 24, 26. Hos. 2. 15.

10 And [r]Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and [s]the valley of Achor a place

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for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

Sharon was a place of great fruitfulness for pastures. David's herds were kept there, 1 Chron. xxvii. 29. It was become like a wilderness, Isa. xxxiii. 9; God here promiseth that it should again be a *place for the flocks*. So Jer. xxxi. 27, God promiseth to sow again the house of Judah *with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast*. The *valley of Achor* had its name from the stoning of *Achan* there, Josh. vii. 26. It is thought to have been the first place the Jews set foot in when they had passed Jordan; hence, Hos. ii. 15, God promised to make it a *door of hope;* and here the text saith, *the flocks shall lie down*. But lest the wicked, idolatrous Jews should apply this promise to themselves, God limiteth it in the last words to the people that *had sought him;* that is, that had truly worshipped him, according to his own institution; and that the words have the force of such a limitation appeareth from what followeth.

t ch. 56. 7. & 57. 13. ver. 25.
u Ezek. 23. 41. 1 Cor. 10. 21.
‖ Or, *Gad.*
‖ Or, *Meni.*

11 ¶ But ye *are* they that forsake the LORD, that forget t*my* holy mountain, that prepare u*a table* for that ‖troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that ‖number.

Do not you that are idolaters think that these promises belong to you, *ye are they that forsake the Lord*, that is, the way of the Lord; it is a phrase opposed to *a walking with God*. Our walking with God is in the way of his statutes, *forsaking of him* signifieth a declining or turning aside from that way. To *forget God's holy mountain*, signifies not to regard the *true worship of God*, or not to mind it. God calleth Zion his *holy mountain*, Joel iii. 17, and Jerusalem is called God's *holy mountain*. The hill of Zion is called the *mountain of God's holiness*, Psal. xlviii. 1; as the temple is called the *beauty of holiness*, Psal. xxix. 2; xcvi. 9: their not regarding the worship of God there, but worshipping *God* or *idols* in *gardens*, amongst the *graves* and *monuments*, is what is here called a *forgetting his holy mountain*. Isaiah prophesied in the time of Ahaz, chap. i. 1; of whom it is said, 2 Chron. xxviii. 23—25, that he *sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, that he cut in pieces the vessels of the Lord's house, shut up the doors of the house of the Lord, and made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem; and in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods*. See also more of his practices ver. 2—4 of that chap., and 2 Kings xvi. 3, 10—12. And there were certainly many of his people that joined with him in his worship, who are all here said to *forget God's holy mountain*, and to *prepare a table for that troop;* the *idols of the ten tribes*, 2 Kings xvi. 3, and of the Assyrians, 2 Chron. xxviii. 23, which were a *troop*, whereas the *God of Israel was one God*. And as God had *altars*, which are sometimes called a *table*, as in Ezek. xli. 22; so they prepared *altars* for the *idols*, as may be read in the aforementioned story of Ahaz; though by *preparing a table* here seems rather to be meant the *feasts* they made upon their sacrifices in their *festival days*, which was in imitation of what the true God had commanded his people, Deut. xvi. 14, 15. Idolaters also made feasts in honour to their idols, as appears from Judg. ix. 27; Ezek. xviii. 6, 11; Amos ii. 8; 1 Cor. viii. 10. Nor did they only *feast* in honour to the idols, but *they furnished drink-offerings unto their number*. God had appointed *drink-offerings* for his honour, and as a piece of homage to him, Exod. xxix. 40, 41; Lev. xxiii. 18, 37; these people had paid this homage to idols. See Jer. vii. 18; xix. 13; xxxii. 29. What we translate *number* in the Hebrew is *la Meni*, to *Meni*. Avenarius translates it *Mercury*, an idol whom merchants worshipped for good success in trading; others understand it of the *host of heaven;* others of the multitude of their idols; our translation reads it *their number*. The word coming from a Hebrew root, which signifieth to *number*, is no where else found in Scripture, which makes it hard too positively to assert the true meaning of it.

x 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. Prov. 1. 24, &c. ch. 66. 4. Jer. 7. 13. Zech. 7. 7. Matt. 21. 34,—43.

12 Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: x*because* when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose *that* wherein I delighted not.

You have offended in number, worshipping a multitude, a troop of idols; there shall be a great number of you perish by the sword; or possibly the term *number* may refer to *all* in the next phrase, to let them know that none of them should escape. God saith he will *number them*, tell them out one by one to the sword. *You shall all bow down to the slaughter;* as you have bowed down to idols, Isa. xliv. 17, (which are mine enemies,) I will make you bow down to your enemy's swords. I *called* you by my prophets, Zech. vii. 7, 11, 12: you did not answer by doing the things which I by them spoke to you for; but not considering that I *saw you*, or if considering it, yet not regarding it, you impudently did evil; yea, you sinned deliberately, choosing sinful courses, the things which I *hated*, which are (here as often) expressed by a meiosis, and called the things in which God delighteth not. In matters of worship we ought to choose nothing wherein God delighteth not; and reason as well as Scripture will assure us he can delight in nothing of that nature which himself hath not directed. It is observable, that ruin is here threatened to this people, not for their immoralities or lewd lives, but for their errors and superstitions in Divine worship. Other sins provoke God to wrath, but those of this nature alone are enough to ruin souls and nations.

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

As there are a party amongst you who, instead of serving God, are the servants of men, in complying with idolatry and superstition; so I have some servants amongst you who have distinguished themselves by keeping close to my institutions from the rest of you, I will distinguish them from you in the dispensations of my providence: those that have *eat* bread at their idol feasts shall be hungry; my people, that would not do so, they shall have enough: those who have furnished a *drink-offering* to *Meni*, or that *number of idols*, shall want that *drink* by which they have so profaned my name; but *my servants*, from whose mouths you pulled the drink, because they would only furnish a *drink-offering to me*, they shall *drink*. My servants, whom now you make to mourn, and upon whom you pour shame and contempt, shall *rejoice*, and you shall be *ashamed;* you that now rejoice and shout, while my servants that cannot comply with you are afflicted, and by you made to mourn, you shall cry for sorrow, and howl through vexation, whilst my servants who keep close to my institutions shall sing for joy of heart. Those who in an hour of persecution for religion can have patience under the enemy's triumphs and rage, will find that the *rod of the wicked shall not always rest upon the lot of the righteous*.

14 Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and yshall howl for †vexation of spirit.

y Matt. 8. 12. Luke 13. 28.
† Heb. *breaking.*

15 And ye shall leave your name zfor a curse unto amy chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and bcall his servants by another name:

z See Jer. 29. 22.
a Zech. 8. 13.
b ver. 9, 22. ch. 62. 2. Acts 11. 26.

Your name *shall rot*, as Prov. x. 7, or only be used when men would curse others, saying, Let them be made like such persons. As the names of Leah and Rachel, Ruth iv. 11, and others of God's servants, were used in blessing; so your names shall only be used in *cursing;* or when men will curse themselves, they shall use your names as examples of the eminent wrath of God upon sinners. For you shall not perish by an ordinary hand, but by the hand of the *Lord God;* and as is the God, so is his justice, so is his strength; yea, God himself shall look upon your name as accursed, and not suffer his people to be called by it; they shall not be called Jews, but Christians, Acts xi. 26, the children of God, John i. 12. So detestable a sin is idolatry, that God will not suffer himself to be called by a name given to idols, how proper soever it be to express his perfection,

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Hos. ii. 16, 17; nor yet suffer *his own people* to be called by a name by which idolaters are known.

c Ps. 72. 17. Jer. 4. 2.
d Deut. 6. 13. Ps. 63. 11. ch. 19. 18. & 45. 23. Zeph. 1. 5.

16 c That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and d he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

I will bring it to pass, that over all the world, if any man *bless himself*, or bless another, it shall be in God *Amen*. So the Hebrew (we translate it *the God of truth*). *Amen* is a name given to Christ, Rev. iii. 14, *These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness;* being here applied to God, many think it makes a great proof of the Godhead of Christ, and judge the sense of this text to be, that under the times of the gospel men should not bless themselves (as before) in the names of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, but in the name of Christ, in the God *Amen;* nor is this an improbable sense. Others taking it more appellatively, by *Elohim Amen*, here understand that God who shows himself *true and faithful in his promises*. In like manner it is prophesied, that those that *swear* (by which some understand worship God, others, calling God to be a witness) should swear by the *God of truth*, or in the God of truth; either worshipping God in Christ the *Amen*, or calling the faithful God to attest their sincerity, or swearing by that God who hath approved his truth and faithfulness by saving and delivering his people. *Because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes;* because they shall see what God promised is fulfilled, the troubles of his people are at an end, and they are hid from God's eyes, that is, they are at an end.

e ch. 51. 16. & 66. 22. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Rev. 21. 1. † Heb. *come upon the heart.*

17 ¶ For, behold, I create e new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor † come into mind.

For, behold, I will tell you yet a more admirable thing, I am about wholly to alter and change the state not only of *my people*, who are now afflicted, restoring them to a more lightsome state, more free from trouble and afflictions; but *I create new heavens and a new earth*, bringing a new face upon the world, sending my Son to raise up a new church, and to institute a new worship, John iv. 21, 24, and giving out my Spirit in a more plentiful manner, Acts ii. 17, which new state shall abide until a *new heaven and earth appear, in which shall dwell nothing but righteousness*, 2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1. And that state of things shall be such, and so glorious, as *the former* state of my people *shall not be remembered, nor come into mind*. Whether this *new heavens and new earth* here promised signifies such a state of the church wherein Christ shall personally reign upon earth over his saints, the wicked being destroyed, (as some have thought he shall for a thousand years,) I very much doubt, and do not see how from this and the parallel texts any such thing can be concluded.

18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

You that are my people, though you cannot rejoice with that degree of joy that attendeth a present fruition of good; yet be glad, and rejoice with the *rejoicing of hope*, for the thing is certain what I am already doing. Nor let your present state, or the discouragements you have from seeming improbabilities, spoil your joy; for it is not a work to be produced in an ordinary course, or by an ordinary power, but by the power of me, who bring something out of nothing, or out of what hath no fittedness to such a production; and I will create *Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy:* by *Jerusalem* here must be meant the church, as well under the gospel as under the law (because the gospel church is grafted into that olive); or else this prophecy must be understood as fulfilled in the coming of Christ, Luke ii. 10; or else it referreth to a more full calling of the Jews than we have yet seen or heard of.

f ch. 62. 5. g ch. 35. 10. & 51. 11. Dev. 7. 17. & 21. 4.

19 And f I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the g voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

The nature of joy lying in the satisfaction and well-pleasedness of the soul in the obtaining of the thing it hath willed, agreeth unto God, and joy and rejoicing are applied to him, chap. lxii. 5, and in this text; so also Jer. xxxii. 41; Zeph. iii. 17. *The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying:* such kind of promises are to be found chap. xxxv. 10; li. 11; Jer. xxxi. 12; Rev. xxi. 4, which must be understood either comparatively, they shall endure no *such misery* as formerly; or (if interpreted to a state in this life) as signifying only *some long* or *eminent state of happiness;* if as to another life, they may be taken strictly, as signifying *perpetuity* and *perfection* of *joy and happiness*.

20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; h but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.

h Eccles. 8. 12.

Whereas God hath made many promises of long life to the Jews, they should all be fulfilled to God's people among them, so as there should be rare abortions among them, Exod. xxiii. 26; few infants should be carried out to burial, nor but few that should not have filled up their years; those that were now children should die at a great age; yet none of these things should be of any advantage to wicked men, but if any of them should live to be a hundred years old, yet they should die accursed. This seemeth to be the plain sense. If any desire to read more opinions of these words, he may find enough in the English Annotations.

21 And i they shall build houses, and inhabit *them;* and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

i See Lev. 26. 16. Deut. 28. 30. ch. 62. 8. Amos 9. 14.

The quite contrary to what is said of the slothful man, Prov. xii. 27: see Job xxvii. 13—17.

22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for k as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and l mine elect † shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

k Ps. 92. 12. l ver. 9, 15. † Heb. *shall make them continue long, or, shall wear out.*

Duration and perpetuity are promised to them in their happy estate.

23 They shall not labour in vain, m nor bring forth for trouble; for n they *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

m Deut. 28. 41. Hos. 9. 12. n ch. 61. 9.

And not only a blessing to them, but also to their offspring. But what is here promised which wicked men do not ofttimes enjoy, and God's people ofttimes want? *Answ.* 1. Wicked men may have them for their good parents' sake, and good men may sometimes want them for evil parents' sake. 2. Bad men may have some of these things, but they cannot expect them; good men may at present want them, but they may expect them from the hand of God if they be good for them. 3. Bad men may have them in wrath; the blessing of God gives them to good men, and adds no sorrow therewith.

24 And it shall come to pass, that o before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

o Ps. 32. 5. Dan. 9. 21.

God promised, chap. lviii. 9, to answer them *when they called;* here he promiseth to be so ready to answer, as to answer the words as soon as they should be formed in their hearts, before they should get them out of their lips, Psal. xxxii. 5; Dan. x. 12; yea, while they were speaking, Dan. ix. 20, 23; Acts x. 44. Nor doth God say only they shall have the things they would have, (for so wicked men may sometimes have from the bountiful hand of Divine Providence,) but they shall have them as an *answer* or return unto their prayers.

25 The p wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like

p ch. 11. 6, 7, 9.

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[q] Gen. 3. 14. the bullock: [q] and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

This verse containeth a promise much like that chap. xi. 6, 9, and relates to the ceasing of persecution. The people of God for their whiteness and innocency are often compared to *lambs* and *sheep*, wicked men to *wolves* and *lions*, for their antipathy to the seed of the woman: God here promiseth to take off the fierceness of the spirits of his people's enemies, so that they shall live quietly and peaceably together. Wicked men are compared to *serpents*, Micah vii. 17, compared with Psal. lxxii. 9; God promiseth a time of tranquillity to his church under the metaphor of *serpents eating the dust*, their proper meat, Gen. iii. 14, instead of flying upon men: it signifies such a time when wicked men should mind their proper business, and not make it their work to eat up the people of God like bread. For the last phrase, see chap. xi. 9, what is there noted. But will some say, When shall these things be? The Scripture gives us no record of any such period of time yet past. And it is very probable that this is a promise yet to be fulfilled, and it is not for us *to know the times and seasons*, but in the mean time to let our faith and patience be seen. In the mean time, we may learn that it is God's work to restrain the *wolves* and *serpents* of the world, who would else be always doing what they are sometimes doing; and it is a sad sign that God is not yet at peace with that people, where we see wolves devouring lambs, and serpents destroying men instead of licking up dust, nor well-pleased with that part of his holy mountain where there is nothing but *hurting* and *destroying*, biting and devouring one another. When God shall be at peace with a people, these things shall not be found amongst them.

CHAP. LXVI.

God is served with the Spirit, and not by ceremonies, 1—4. *The wonderful birth and benefits of the gospel church*, 5—14. *Severe judgments against the wicked*, 15—18. *The Gentiles shall be a holy church*, 19—23. *The eternal punishment of the wicked*, 24.

[a] 1 Kings 8. 27. 2 Chron. 6. 18. Matt. 5. 34, 35. Acts 7. 48, 49. & 17. 24. THUS saith the LORD, [a] The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest?

The heaven is my throne; the heaven, that is, the highest heavens, are the place where I most manifest my power and glory, and show myself in my majesty. So Psal. xi. 4; ciii. 19; Matt. v. 34. Hence we are taught to pray, *Our Father which art in heaven.* And *the earth is my footstool*, or a place wherein I set my feet, Matt. v. 35. *Where is the house that ye build unto me?* can there be a house builded that will contain me, who can encompass the heavens and the earth with a house? *Where is the place of my rest?* or, where is the place wherein I can be said to rest in a proper sense? The ark is indeed *God's footstool*, and the *place* of his *rest*, in a figurative sense, because there God manifested himself, though in degrees much beneath the manifestations of himself in heaven; but properly, God hath no certain place of rest.

[b] ch. 57. 15. & 61. 1. [c] Ps. 34. 18. & 51. 17. [d] Ezra 9. 4. & 10. 3. Prov. 28. 14. ver. 5. 2 For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: [b] but to this *man* will I look, [c] *even* to *him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and [d] trembleth at my word.

For all those things hath my hand made; the heavens and the earth are the work of my hands, Gen. i. 1; John i. 3. (Some expound it of the temple and the sacrifices.) *All those things have been;* they were not only made by God, but subsisted and were kept in being by him. These things were not therefore valued by him, nor could he have any need of or respect to any house, which is but a very little part of the earth; he having made the heavens and the earth, had all them at his command; and how could he need a temple, or wherein could he be advantaged from it? But God will look with a respect, and with a favourable eye, to him that hath a *broken and contrite spirit*, whose heart is subdued to the will of God, and who is poor and low in his own eyes, Matt. v. 3; Luke vi. 20, and who *trembleth* when he heareth God's threatening words, nor ever heareth any revelation of the Divine will without a just reverence.

[e] ch. 1. 11. ‖ Or, *his.* [f] Deut. 23. 18. 3 [e] He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a ‖ lamb, *as if* he [f] cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, *as if he offered* swine's blood; he that † burneth incense, *as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

† Heb. *maketh a memorial of,* Lev. 2. 2.

Solomon, Prov. xv. 8, gives us a short but full commentary on the whole verse, *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. He that killeth an ox*, that is, for sacrifice, as it is expounded by the next words, *he that sacrificeth a lamb.* The comparisons show God's detestation of *ceremonial performances* from men of wicked hearts and lives. *He that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol:* from hence it is plain that the prophet is not here reflecting upon *idolatrous worship*, but *formal worship;* for to say, *he that burneth incense to an idol is as he that blesseth an idol*, is but to say, he that blesseth an idol blesseth an idol; but upon those who in a formality worshipped the true God, and by acts which he had appointed, such were offering sacrifices, oblation, incense. God by the prophet declares that these men's services were no more acceptable to him than *murder*, *idolatry*, or the most *horrid profanation of his name.* Such would cutting off *a dog's neck* for sacrifice have been, or offering *swine's blood;* so little do ritual performances, though instituted by God himself, please God, when they are but mere *formalities*, as they always are when those that perform them live as they list, lewd and loose lives, and think to save themselves by their prayers, like the whore, Prov. vii. 14, 15; not only sinning by human frailty, but taking pleasure in their sins, Prov. xv. 26. To offer a sacrifice with a heart resolved (when it is offered) to go on in sinful courses, is to offer it *with an evil mind.* This is a dreadful text to those persons who will *murder*, and *steal*, and *swear*, and *curse*, and *lie*, and *commit adultery*, and then come and stand before God in his house, which is called by his name, that is, come to serve him in acts of worship, Lev. x. 3; see Psal. l. 16—18; Isa. i. 11—14; Jer. vii. 9, 10; Matt. vii. 21—23; John iv. 24; 1 Tim. iv. 8.

‖ Or, *devices.* [g] Prov. 1. 24. ch. 65. 12. Jer. 7. 13. 4 I also will choose their ‖ delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; [g] because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* in which I delighted not.

They had made their choice, they chose not the ways of God, but *their own ways*, that which God delighted not in, as in the latter part of this verse; therefore (saith God) *I will also choose their delusions*, or *illusions*, or *devices.* Montanus translates it, *ad inventionibus;* it is a noun derived from a word which signifies to *speak childishly* or *corruptly;* the word in this form is only used in this text, and in 1 Sam. xxv. 3; it signifies *studies*, or *works*, Psal. xii. 4; Isa. iii. 4; Hos. iv. 9. It is an ordinary thing for God thus generally to declare his justice against men, that he will deal with sinners as they deal with him; so Psal. xviii. 25, 26; Lev. xxvi. 27, 28; Jer. xxxiv. 17; Prov. i. 24, 28. The meaning is, I will be no kinder to them than they have been to me; they have chosen to *mock and delude me*, I will choose to suffer them to *delude themselves;* or they have chosen to work wickedness, I will choose the effect. *Their fears;* that is, (say some,) the things which they *feared*, and did these things to avoid, as Jer. xlii. 16; Ezek. xi. 8. Others by *their fears* choose rather to understand such *terrors* and *affrightments* as are natural to men upon the prospect of great evils, as Jer. xx. 4: as God

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in mercy delivereth his people *from their fears*, Psal. xxxiv. 4; so in judgment he causeth *fears* as a great judgment to possess sinners, Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 66. *Because when I called, none did answer;* because when by my prophets I exhorted you to your duty, very few yielded obedience: see Prov. i. 24; chap. lxv. 12; Jer. vii. 13. *When I spake, they did not hear:* hearing here signifieth hearkening or obeying; *not hearing* is expounded by *doing evil*, and choosing that *wherein God delighted not.* God accounts that those do not hear who do not obey his will.

h ver. 2.

5 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, [h] ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my

i ch. 5. 19.

name's sake, said, [i] Let the LORD be glo-

k 2 Thess. 1. 10. 1 Tit. 2. 13.

rified: but [k] he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

The prophet turneth his discourse from denouncing judgment against the idolaters and formalists amongst the Jews to such as feared God, whose religion is described by *a trembling at his word*, as ver. 2; such a turning of the prophet's discourse was chap. l. 10; li. 1, 7. The same words belong not to saints and presumptuous sinners. *Your brethren*, by nation, or by external profession in religion, though false brethren, Gal. ii. 4. Thus Paul calls all the rejected Jews *brethren*, Rom. ix. 3. *That cast you out;* that either shut you out of their intimate society, or (which is more probable) excommunicate and cast you out of their synagogues, or cast you out of their city, and some of you out of the world, John ix. 22, 35; xvi. 2. *For my name's sake*, i. e. *for my sake*, for your owning me and adherence to my law. *Said, Let the Lord be glorified;* either mocking you, as the Jews did Christ, when hanging upon the cross, Matt. xxvii. 43; Luke xxiii. 35; thus they mocked at David, Psal. xlii. 3. Or, *Let the Lord be glorified*, thinking they did God good service, John xvi. 2. *But he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed;* there will come a day when God shall appear and let them know his judgment concerning their violence and rage, then you shall have joy, and they shall be ashamed, 1 Thess. iv. 16—18.

6 A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompence to his enemies.

A voice of noise from the city; the expression of a prophetical ecstasy, as much as, Methinks I already hear a *voice of noise*, rather a sad and affrighting noise, than the noise of triumphers (as some think); yea, it comes not from the city only, but from the temple, wherein these formalists have so much gloried, and reposed so much confidence. There is a noise of soldiers slaying, and of the priests or poor people fled thither shrieking or crying out. *A voice of the Lord;* not in thunder, which is sometimes called so, Psal. xxix. 3—5, &c., but *that rendereth recompence to his enemies.* Thus the noise of soldiers, the roaring of guns, the sound of drums and trumpets, are the *voice of the Lord.* Thus the prophet seemeth to express the destruction of the Jews by the Roman armies, as if a thing at that time doing.

7 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

The whole verse is expressive of a great and sudden salvation, which God would work for his church, like the delivery of a woman, and that of a *man child, before her travail*, and *without pain.* The only doubt is, whether it referreth to the deliverance of the people out of Babylon, or the world's surprisal with the Messiah, and the sudden and strange propagation of the gospel, and it is a question not easily determined. The delivery of the Jews out of Babylon, indeed, was without *strugglings* or any *pain;* not like their deliverance from Egypt, after the wasting of their enemies by ten successive plagues, but by the *kind proclamation* of Cyrus. But it seems not to have been sudden, only as to the day, and hour, and manner; for Daniel understood by books that the time was come, Dan. ix. 2, and the people had a prospect of it seventy years before, Jer. xxv. 12; xxix. 10. The prophecy therefore seems rather to refer to the coming of Christ, and the sudden propagation of the gospel. The popish interpreters applying it to the Virgin Mary bringing forth Christ, is like other of their fond dreams.

8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

The prophet calls either to the whole world, or to such as feared God amongst the Jews, to admire God in his stupendous works of providence, either in the easy manner of the deliverance of the Jews out of the captivity of Babylon, without any pain, without so much as one throe; or else in the erecting of his gospel church, into which all the Jews that received Christ were gathered as well as Gentiles, *making both one*, Eph. ii. 14; which seems to be meant by the *earth's bringing forth in one day;* as great a work of Providence as if all the women in the world should have brought forth in a day, or as if all the plants of the earth had brought forth their flowers and fruit in one day. *As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth children;* as soon as the church of the Jews began to move out of the captivity of Babylon, God put it into the hearts of multitudes to go up, Exod. i. 5; chap. ii. 1, 2, &c. Or, as soon as the voice of the gospel put the church of the Jews into her *travail*, in John the Baptist's, Christ's, and the apostles' times, it presently brought forth. In John Baptist's time, *the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent took it by force*, Matt. xi. 12; and it continued so, as three thousand were converted at Peter's sermon, Acts ii. The Gentiles were the children of Zion, being planted into their stock, the law of the gospel first going out of Zion.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not ‖ cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut *the womb?* saith thy God.

‖ Or, beget.

The work before spoken of seemeth not after the manner of men, who do things that are great gradually, nor in an ordinary course of nature, whose motions also bring things by degrees to their perfection; but you must consider who it is that speaketh, *saith the Lord;* now as is the God, so is his strength. Again, men may undertake things, and for want of power not bring them to perfection; but shall I do such a thing? I have by many prophecies and promises secured you in the expectation of such a thing, and shall I not by my providence effect it? I, that in the ordinary course of my providence use to give a birth to women, to whom I have given a power to conceive, shall I not give a birth to Zion, to my people, whom by my prophecies and promises I have made to conceive such hopes and expectations? Nor shall Zion once only bring forth, but she shall go on teeming; her womb shall not be shut, she shall every day bring forth more and more children; my presence shall be with my church to that end, to the end of the world.

10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:

There is nothing more ordinary amongst men, than for friends and neighbours to meet together with their friends recovered from affliction, or brought into a better state, to rejoice with them, especially such friends as in their afflictions have mourned with them. Thus Mary, Luke i. 40, went to rejoice with Elisabeth, and Job's friends came to *rejoice with him*, Job xlii. 11. The prophet in like manner calls to all the friends of Jerusalem, especially such as in the days of her affliction had mourned for her, to come and *rejoice* and *be glad with her*, upon the prospect of her better state after the Babylonish captivity; or at least in the time of the Messiah; for though joy and gladness be the affection of the soul that works upon its union with its desirable object, and the deliverance of the people out of Babylon was not to be for many years after this, nor the Messiah to come for many years after that; yet *faith being the evidence of things not seen*, there is a *rejoicing of hope*, *hope* giving the soul a union with its object hoped for; and these things were now *present to believers*, who by faith called the things that were not as if they were, because they had the secu-

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rity of a Divine revelation for them, and they were already existent in their necessary causes.

11 That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the ‖abundance of her glory.

‖ Or, *brightness.*

Jerusalem is here set out as the mother of us all, as indeed she was; for *out of Zion* went *forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*, Isa. ii. 3. Christ was of the *seed of Abraham*, he was sent *to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, and is called. Rom. xv. 8, *the minister of the circumcision*: they were the *olive*, the *branches*; the Gentiles but a *wild olive, grafted in amongst them*, Rom. xi. 17; we sucked at their breasts; Christ was first preached to them; the twelve, the seventy, were all of them. *The breasts of her consolations*: the gospel doctrine was their breasts of consolation. Christ was in the first place. *Her glory*; the *glory of the people Israel*, though he was also *a light to lighten the Gentiles*, Luke ii. 32; we are required to rejoice with Jerusalem. *That ye may suck, and be satisfied, &c.*; intimating that our joy should not be a mere act of charity to them, but a proper expression of our sense of God's goodness to ourselves, who should suck and be satisfied from the glad tidings of the gospel first published unto them, and ourselves be enlightened from what was at first the *glory of Israel*.

12 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, [l] I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye [m] suck, ye shall be [n] borne upon *her* sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees.

l ch. 48. 18. & 60. 5.
m ch. 60. 16.
n ch. 49. 22. & 60. 4.

That this promise respects the times of the Messias seems plain, not only from the consideration that no history giveth us any account of any great or long peace or prosperity the Jews had before that time, nor indeed then, if we understand it not of a spiritual gospel *peace*, which Christ preached to them *that were nigh* as well as to *those afar off*, Eph. ii. 17. It also appears from the mention of *the glory of the Gentiles as a flowing stream*, which can hardly be understood of any thing but Christ, and the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. But I leave it to the issues of Providence to expound and determine whether the prophecy of this text doth not relate to a further conversion and calling of the Jews than hath yet been seen. When Christ was revealed to the Jews, not those only of the Gentiles, but those of the Jews who belonged to God's election sucked gospel doctrine; the Gentiles were borne upon the sides of Jerusalem, and dandled upon her knees, as first hearing from the apostles, who were some of the daughters of Jerusalem, members of the Jewish church, the glad tidings of salvation.

13 As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

That is, in the most tender and compassionating way imaginable; the husband doth not comfort his wife with that tenderness and those bowels that the mother comforteth the child after it hath received some fall or mischief. Jerusalem now mourneth, and you mourn with her; but she shall recover from her affliction and from her sorrows, and shall be comforted; and you that mourn for her shall partake of her joys, as you now share with her in her afflictions; God, in the day that he wipeth tears from her eyes, shall also wipe them from yours; and you shall have as great an occasion of joy from the happy, as now you have of sorrow from the afflicted, state of Jerusalem.

14 And when ye see *this*, your heart shall rejoice, and [o] your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and *his* indignation toward his enemies.

o See Ezek. 37. 1, &c.

The peace and tranquillity of the church, and the propagation of the kingdom of Christ, is always the cause of a heart-rejoicing to such as fear God, Psal. cv. 3; the reason is, because it is the greatest object of their desires, which are then satisfied, and their thoughts are then at rest; and besides they are members of the same body, so as their own bones, which before are dry and withered, Ezek. xxxvii. 1, 2, and *the sinews, and the flesh, come again upon them, and the skin covers them above*, so as they *flourish like an herb* in the spring, all whose verdure and beauty in the winter was concealed in the root hid in the earth. *And the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants*; and in this the power, protection, and influence of God for, of, and upon such as truly serve and obey him shall be made manifest and known. *And his indignation toward his enemies*; but the wicked shall be under a quite contrary dispensation, Psal. i. 4. As they have had a day which hath been to you *the power of darkness*, so you shall have a day which shall be to them the *power of darkness*; as God's hand shall be upon and towards such as fear me, to cover, and bless, and influence them, so his indignation shall in that day be showed towards those of your nation who have declared themselves the enemies of the Lord.

15 [p] For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

p ch. 9. 5. 2 Thess. i. 8.

Here the prophet comes more particularly to expound what indignation should be showed towards his enemies. *The Lord will come with fire*; that is, with terrible judgments, nothing being more terrible and wasting than fire; or with fire in a proper sense, understanding it of the fire with which enemies use to consume places brought under their power. *With a whirlwind*; with a sudden sweeping judgment that like a whirlwind shall destroy this people. *With fury*; that is, with fervour; for fury properly so taken is not in God, chap. xxvii. 4, but God sometimes executes justice and judgment more smartly and severely. *His rebukes*: by *rebukes* he means punishments, for it is said God will execute them *with flames of fire*. They had contemned the rebukes of his law, now God will rebuke them with fire and sword.

16 For by fire and by [q] his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

q ch. 27. 1.

This kind of *rebuking* is also called a *pleading with them*; so he threatens to plead against *Gog with pestilence and blood*, Ezek. xxxviii. 22. God at first *pleads* with sinners by *words*; but if he cannot so prevail, he will *plead* with them in a way by which he will overcome by fire, pestilence, and blood. *With all flesh*; thus he threatens to do with all sinners, or with all the wicked Jews. *The slain of the Lord shall be many*; to the fire he threatens to add the sword, so as the *slain of the Lord*, that is, those whom God should cause to be slain, should be many.

17 [r] They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens ‖behind one *tree* in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD.

r ch. 65. 3, 4.
‖ Or, *one after another.*

That the Jews might not think that the judgments threatened concerned only the heathen, he tells them they concerned them, the idol worshippers amongst them; and not idolaters only, but such as broke his laws about meats, which he had prohibited them to eat. Those that *sanctified and purified themselves in gardens, gardens* in which they worshipped idols, chap. i. 29; lxv. 3, 4; 1 Kings xiv. 23; xv. 13: the word translated *gardens* signifieth such as were thick planted with trees, *and had groves* in them, where they set their idols, 1 Kings xv. 13; hence the idol is called the *grove*, 2 Kings xxiii. 6; they had also in these gardens pools, where they washed themselves in a way of preparation for their idol worship, as the priest by God's ordinance was to bathe himself, Numb. xix. 7. *Behind one tree in the midst; behind one of the trees*, or one by one behind the trees. Some think that *Achar* is here a proper name of an idol, behind which or behind whose temple these idolaters were wont to purify themselves. These gardens were places too as well for brutish lusts as idol

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worship, as may be learned from 1 Kings xiv. 24; 2 Kings xxiii. 7, and they by these washings thought to make themselves clean. *Eating swine's flesh*, forbidden Lev. xi. 7; Deut. xiv. 8. *And the abomination;* either any abominable things, or all those beasts forbidden the Jews for meat, Lev. xi. 9, 10, &c. Some think a particular abominable thing is here meant, and think it is the *weasel*, which, Lev. xi. 29, is joined with the *mouse*, which is here next mentioned. The word which we translate *mouse* being no where found but there, and here, and 1 Sam. vi. 4, 5, 11, 18, some think it is not that creature we call a *mouse*, (because a mouse is properly no creeping thing; but the word, Lev. xi. 29, signifieth a creeping thing,) they therefore think it rather signifieth some serpent. It is a matter of no great consequence. The sense is, that God would not only destroy the open and gross idolaters and superstitious persons, but all those also who had made no conscience of yielding obedience to the law of God in such things as seemed to them of a minute nature, and such as they easily might have yielded obedience to; he saith that they shall all perish together. In the day of judgment, the idolatrous pagan and papist, and the lewd and disobedient protestant, shall fare alike. It will be a hard thing for a thinking soul to see how baptism, and a membership in the Christian church, should save men from God's wrath, without holiness, more than circumcision and membership in the Jewish church.

18 For I *know* their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.

The Hebrew is thus word for word. *And I their works, and their thoughts, coming together all nations and languages, and they shall come and see my glory.* So that it is necessary for interpreters to supply some words to make out the sense. And the sense will differ according to the nature and sense of those supplied words. We supply the verb *know*, as Amos v. 12; others supply, *I have noted.* Others make it a question; And I, *should I endure* their thoughts *and their works?* Others, But as for me, *oh their works and their thoughts!* Some make these words, *for I know their works and their thoughts it shall come*, one sentence, and to relate to the judgments before threatened, ver. 15, 16, and the latter words a new sentence, and a promise of the call of the Gentiles. If we thus divide the words into two sentences, the former part doth but assert the certainty of the judgment that should come upon this people, and the confirmation or reason of it from the omniscience and justice of God. They have done these things, and I know it, and am of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. I know I have marked their thoughts and works (before mentioned). Oh the vileness of them! Should I suffer, should I endure them? No. *It shall come;* either the judgments before threatened shall come; or it shall come to pass, that I will cast them off, and then *I will gather all nations*, &c. So *it shall come* may either refer to the threatening of judgments in the former part, or the promise of calling the Gentiles in the latter part of the verse. Others make the verse one entire sentence, and the sense thus, *Seeing I know their works*, &c., or when the time shall come that I shall let them by my vengeance know that I know their works, *I will gather all nations and languages. I will gather all nations*, I will call the Gentiles into my church. *and they shall see my glory;* my oracles, my holy institutions and ordinances, which hitherto have been locked up in the church of the Jews, Rom. iii. 2, and been their glory, shall be published to the Gentiles, Psal. xcvii. 6; Isa. xl. 5.

s Luke 2. 34.

19 sAnd I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, *to* Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, *to* Tubal, and Javan, *to* the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my

t Mal. 1. 11.

glory; tand they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

It is on all hands agreed that this verse is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles. *I will set a sign:* by sign here some understand an *ensign*, as the word signifies, Psal. lxxiv. 4, which is a military sign to gather people together; by this may be understood Christ, Luke ii. 34. See Isa. xi. 10. Or, as others, the ministry of the word attended with miracles (often called signs); these were set up among the Jews first, then among the Gentiles. Others (but less probably) understand by *sign* a mark of distinction, like that mentioned Ezek. ix. 4; so as, saith he, some shall escape and not be destroyed; and for those that shall escape, I will send them to Tarshish, Pul, Lud, Tubal, Javan, to Europe, Asia, and Africa, to all the quarters of the world, (see the Latin Synopsis, and the English Annotations, large discourses of these particular places,) to all nations that had never before heard of God or his true worship. *And they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles;* and they shall every where preach the gospel, and set up my gospel ordinances and institutions. This was eminently made good upon the apostles leaving the Jews, and turning to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 46, and more fully after the destruction of Jerusalem, when the believers among the Jews, as well as the apostles, went about publishing the gospel to all people, which was the declaring of the Lord's glory.

20 And they shall bring all your brethren u*for* an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in ‖litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.

u Rom. 15. 16.

‖ Or, *coaches.*

Those who are the children of Abraham (not considered as the father of the Jewish nation only, but considered as *the father of many nations*, and as the *father of the faithful*, or who are the *children of God*, being believers, and *receiving Christ*, and so are your brethren, how contemptible soever you judge them) shall be brought out of all nations for an *offering* to the Lord. God will have no more offerings of bullocks, and rams, or lambs, but of men and women, reasonable services, Rom. xii. 1; he will have an *offering up of the Gentiles*, Rom. xv. 16. And because the Gentiles are many of them far off from Jerusalem, and as yet farther off from God, Eph. ii. 17, God will find out fit means for this end, as horses, and litters, and mules, and swift beasts are, to bring men and women long journeys. And they shall be brought into the church, which began at Jerusalem; and this you may be assured of, for the Lord hath said it, who cannot lie nor repent. And they shall come with as much joy and gladness, with as much sincerity and holiness, as the godly Jews use and exercise when they bring their offerings in *clean vessels.*

21 And I will also take of them for xpriests *and* for Levites, saith the LORD.

x Ex. 19. 6. ch. 61. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Rev. 1. 6.

Lest the Jews, being assured that the tribe of Levi, which God anciently chose to minister before him, was among them, should say, Alas, if the Gentiles should be brought in, where would they have priests or Levites? God here by his prophet tells them he would provide priests, he would take *of them*, of these converted heathens, for priests and Levites, that is, for gospel ministers, to teach and to instruct people, which was the priest's work of old, Deut. xxxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xvii. 7, 9; Mal. ii. 6; for they are mightily mistaken that think the priests among the Jews had nothing to do but to sacrifice and burn incense, which work is ceased. Saith the prophet, God will find amongst the converted Gentiles those who, though they be not of the tribe of Levi, or house of Aaron, yet they shall do the true work of priests and Levites.

22 For as y*the* new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

y ch. 65. 17. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Rev. 21. 1.

This whole verse is only a promise of the perpetuity of the gospel church, and the not failing of the additions to it of such as shall be saved till the world shall have an end.

The new heavens and the new earth; the new state of the church to be raised up under the Messias. As I intend that shall abide, so there shall be a daily succession of true believers for the upholding of it; for if believers could fail from the earth, the church, made up of them only, as the true members of it, must fail also.

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z Zech. 14. 16.
† Heb. *from new moon to his new moon, and from sabbath to his sabbath.*
a Ps. 65. 2.

23 And [z]it shall come to pass, *that* †from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, [a]shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.

In the gospel church there shall be as constant and settled a course of worship (though of another nature) as ever was in the Jewish church. Christians are not bound to keep the Jewish sabbath or new moons, Gal. iv. 10, 11; Col. ii. 16; but New Testament worship is often expressed by Old Testament phrases. The Jews were only obliged to appear three times in a year at Jerusalem, but (saith the prophet) the gospel church shall worship God from one *sabbath to another*.

b ver. 16.

24 And they shall go forth, and look upon [b]the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their [c]worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

c Mark 9. 44, 46, 48.

Either the Gentiles, or the sincerer part of the Jews, shall go forth from their places, or from Jerusalem, or *go out of their graves*, at the last day, and look upon the vengeance I have taken upon these vile idolaters and formalists, for their satisfaction, Psal. lviii. 10; they shall see none of them alive, but they shall see their carcasses. For the worms that feed on their slain carcasses shall not suddenly die, and the enemy's fire burning upon their habitations shall not go out till they be wholly consumed; and after this life, and at the day of judgment, they shall go into eternal torments; see Mark ix. 44, 46, 48; where they will feel a worm of conscience that shall never die, and a fiery wrath of God upon their souls and bodies that shall never go out

THE BOOK

OF

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

IT was the great unhappiness of this prophet to be a physician to, but that could not save, a dying state, their disease still prevailing against the remedy; and indeed no wonder that all things were so much out of order, when the book of the law had been wanting above sixty years. He was called to be a teacher in his youth, in the days of good Josiah, being sanctified and ordained by God to his prophetical office from his mother's womb, chap. i. 5, in a very evil time, though the people afterward proved much worse upon the death of that good king. He setting himself against the torrent of the corruptions of the times, was always opposed and unkindly treated by his ungrateful countrymen, as also by false prophets, and the priests, princes, and people, who encouraged all their impieties and unrighteousness. At length he threatened their destruction and captivity by the Chaldeans, which he lived to see, but foretells their return after seventy years; all which accordingly came to pass. He doth also, notwithstanding his dreadful threatenings, intermix divers comfortable promises of the Messiah, and the days of the gospel; he denounceth also heavy judgments against the heathens nations that had afflicted God's people, both such as were near, and also more remote, as Egypt, the Philistines, Moab, Edomites, Ammonites, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor, Elam, but especially Babylon herself, that is made so great a type of the antichristian Babylon in the New Testament. Upon the murder of Gedaliah, whom the Chaldeans had made governor of Judea, he was forcibly against his will carried into Egypt, where (after he had prophesied from first to last between forty and fifty years) probably he died; some say he was stoned.

Whatever else we hear mentioned of his writings, they are either counterfeit, as the Prophecies of Baruch, &c., or it is likely we have the sum of them in this book, though possibly some of his sermons might have had some enlargements in that roll which, by his appointment, was written by Baruch, chap. xxxvi. 2, &c.

CHAP. I.

The pedigree, time, and calling of Jeremiah; confirmed against his excuses, 1—10. *His visions of an almond rod and a seething pot*, 11—14. *His heavy message against Judah*, 15, 16. *God promiseth him his assistance*, 17—19.

B. C. cir. 629.
a Josh. 21. 18. 1 Chro. 6. 60. ch. 32. 7, 8, 9.

THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that *were* [a]in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin:

The words, i. e. sermons or prophecies, which he received from God, (as being his mouth to declare them unto the people,) and comprised all in the volume of this book going under his name, as the matter and substance of them. See on Isa. ii. 1. *The son of Hilkiah:* as this serves to distinguish him from other priests, so his being of Anathoth ranks him among the common priests; not that high priest mentioned 2 Kings xxii. 8, under whose progeny Jeremiah is not named, 1 Chron. vi. 13; who, it is probable, would have been named, being one of so much note, and who always lived at Jerusalem, not at Anathoth, which was a city three miles from Jerusalem, lotted out of the tribe of Benjamin for the priests, Josh. xxi. 18. Of an ordinary teacher he was made a prophet, not so the rest. *In the land of Benjamin*, i. e. that part of Canaan that fell to Benjamin's share.

cir. 629.
b ch. 25. 3.

2 To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, [b]in the thirteenth year of his reign.

The word of the Lord; either that commission from God that did authorize him to his prophetical work, as it may probably be taken, John x. 35, was actually given unto him, ver. 10; or, command of God, as it is used, 1 Kings xii. 24; or rather, the materials of which his prophecies were to consist, for the space of forty-one years successively, in Judea, viz. from the thirteenth year of Josiah to the eleventh year of Zedekiah, besides the time that he prophesied in Egypt. See chap. xliii., xliv., as Isa. ii. 1. *In the days of Josiah*, i. e. during his reign and reformed state of religion. *Amon;* who corrupted again that religion by those idolatries that his father Manasseh had in the latter part of his reign so well reformed by rooting of them out, 2 Chron.

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xxxiii. 21—23. *In the thirteenth year;* by which it appears that Jeremiah prophesied the last eighteen years of Josiah's reign; for he reigned thirty-one years, 2 Kings xxii. 1.

3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim
c ch. 39. 2. the son of Josiah king of Judah, [c] unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah
d ch. 52. 12, 15. the son of Josiah king of Judah, [d] unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive
e 2 Kings 25. 8. [e] in the fifth month.

It, viz. the word of the Lord, as ver. 2, *came also in the days of Jehoiakim;* called at first by Josiah, Eliakim, 2 Kings xxiii. 34. Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, whereof the former reigned before him, 2 Kings xxiii. 31, the latter succeeded, 2 Kings xxiv. 8, are conceived not to be mentioned, because they reigned but each of them three months, and therefore not considerable, the Scripture often taking little notice of a small time, as of six months: compare 2 Sam. v. 5, with 1 Kings ii. 11: see ver. 2. *Zedekiah;* of whom read 1 Chron. iii. 15, 16. *Unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive,* i. e. the inhabitants of Jerusalem, namely, under Zedekiah, 2 Kings xxv. 11, during all which time, things standing in that state and condition, Jeremiah prophesied. This doth not terminate the time of his prophecies, for he prophesied also both in Judea, and in Egypt afterwards; but only relates to what he prophesied while the city and temple were standing, the rest seeming rather to be added as a supplement, than to be reduced unto this general title of his prophecies. *In the fifth month,* viz. of that present year; for though the year end not at the fifth month, yet it might end the year of Zedekiah's reign, because he might begin his reign at the fifth month of the year.

4 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Then, i. e. when he was first called to his office; or, The Lord then began to speak unto me. *Me;* a change of the person, a thing very usual with the prophets.

f Is. 49. 1, 5. Eccles. 49. 7.
g Isa. 33. 12, 17.
h Luke 1. 15, 41. Gal. 1. 15, 16.
† Heb. *gave.*

5 Before I [f] formed thee in the belly [g] I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I [h] sanctified thee, *and* I † ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Before I formed thee in the belly, i. e. womb, Isa. xlvi. 3. Having spoken before of the time of his call, ver. 4, he now speaks of the manner of it. *I knew thee,* i. e. approved and appointed thee, as a fit minister for this work. Words of knowledge among the Hebrews note affection, as hath been formerly noted. *I sanctified thee,* viz. not with saving grace, though that need not to be excluded; but accordingly I prepared and ordained thee for this public service; and thus with Paul, Gal. i. 15, where both are expressed. See the like use of the word Isa. xiii. 3. He speaks thus to Jeremiah, not to the other prophets, because he stood in need of greater and more direct encouragement than they, both in respect of the tenderness of his years, and also of those insuperable difficulties which in those most degenerate and corrupt times he must unavoidably encounter with, which might cause him to decline the work, ver. 6. *Unto the nations;* either with reference to place, to other nations besides the Jews, as appears, chap. xliii., xlvi., xlvii., &c., taking the Jews in among them, as chap. xxv. 17, 18, and so *unto* may be taken for *against,* as it is often expressed in those places and elsewhere; or with reference to time, to people of all times, who may be instructed by this book, or whose words are made use of, both by several prophets of the Old Testament, as Daniel, Ezekiel, Nehemiah, &c., and by our Saviour in the New; by Matthew, chap. ii. 17, 18; by Paul, 2 Cor. vi. 18; and by St. John, Rev. ii. 23.

i Ex. 4. 10. & 6. 12, 30. Is. 6. 5.

6 Then said I, [i] Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child.

Ah! an introductory interjection, making way for his excuse in a way of grief and complaint, endeavouring with all reverence to clear himself of undertaking such a work rashly, it being properly the sigh of one that hath too great a weight upon his shoulders. *I cannot speak;* not dumb, as Zacharias, Luke i. 20, 22, nor stammering, as Moses, Exod. iv. 10, 14; but not with that becoming gravity and commanding majesty as is suitable to a prophet; he modestly excuseth himself, from a consideration of the weight of the work, and the tenderness of his age, as in the next expression. *I am a child;* either, 1. In years, and so not ripe or apt for the declaring of great things, and that to princes and nobles. Or, 2. In experience, being altogether unskilful in such affairs, not having been used to prophesy, and therefore in neither respect likely to be much regarded.

7 ¶ But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and [k] whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.
k Num. 22. 20, 38. Matt. 28. 20.

Say not, I am a child; do not plead excuses. *Thou shalt go:* this is God's answer to Jeremiah, in respect of his sense of his own inability. This may be by way of command, and then it is a check to his timorousness; Thou shalt go, therefore draw not back. Or by way of promise, and then it is a satisfactory answer to his excuse, as both proceeded from a sense of his own insufficiency: q. d. Fear not, I will make thee eloquent and courageous. *To all:* this relates either to persons or things. *To all,* i. e. to all persons to whom I shall send thee; thou shalt balk none: see Rev. x. 11. Or, *upon all,* so is the Hebrew; and then it is, Thou shalt go upon all errands and messages that I shall send thee. See Isa. lv. 11; Acts xxvi. 16.

8 [l] Be not afraid of their faces: for [m] I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.
l Ezek. 2. 6. & 3. 9. ver. 17.
m Ex. 3. 12. Deut. 31. 6, 8. Josh. 1. 5. ch. 15. 20. Acts 26. 17. Heb. 13. 6.

Be not afraid of their faces; their fierce looks, Ezek. iii. 9, the indication of their enraged minds, Dan. iii. 19; neither when thou deliverest my message to them, nor when thou mayst be cited before them, Matt. x. 18, 19. This is God's answer to Jeremiah's fears in respect of the persons he was to deal with, as the other was in respect of his own consciousness of insufficiency; and he mentions their faces, because the majestic countenance of princes and magistrates is apt to strike a great awe and terror upon children. *I am with thee;* I will not only send thee as other kings do their ambassadors, but I will go with thee. This God promises to Moses, Exod. iii. 12; Deut. xxxi. 6, 8. *To deliver thee:* here God promises his protection for encouragement.

9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and [n] touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have [o] put my words in thy mouth.
n Is. 6. 7.
o Is. 51. 16. ch. 5. 14.

Then the Lord put forth his hand: God having before excited the prophet to his work by command and promise, doth now in a vision establish and confirm him, either by the hand of an angel, Isa. vi. 6, 7, or rather, by himself in some visible shape. *Touched,* Heb. *came upon,* as the word is used, Judg. xx. 41, hereby enabling him to speak; or, Thou shalt be my mouth to deliver my words; partly, to let Jeremiah understand that they were God's words; and partly, to intimate that they should be effectual; and partly, that he should never be without them, but continually supplied. See the like kind of phrase chap. v. 14. And he adds, *Behold;* q. d. Attend to what I am about to say; or, Look upon this outward sign, and let it assure thee of the thing signified.

10 [p] See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to [q] root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.
p 1 Kings 19. 17.
q ch. 18. 7. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms: having now received his commission, he is directed to whom he is to go, viz. to the greatest, not only single persons, but whole nations, as the Babylonians, Persians, and Egyptians, and exhorted to greatness of mind, as being sent as an ambassador from God, to deliver his messages without flattery or cowardice; and that he might make that proud people sensible of their folly, that looked upon themselves as above reproof, he gives unto his prophet this large authority. *To pull down,* i. e. to prophesy that I will pull down; which I will as certainly effect as if thou hadst done it thyself; for, according to Scripture

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usage, the prophets are said to do that which they foretell shall come to pass, Gen. xlix. 7; Ezek. xliii. 3, i. e. to pronounce destruction; hence God is said to slay them by the words of his mouth, Hos. vi. 5; and so are all the following expressions to be understood. *To build and to plant;* metaphors taken from architects and gardeners. Either the former words relate to the enemies of God, and the latter to his friends; or rather, to both conditionally. If they repent, he will build them up, i. e. he will increase their families, and plant them, viz. settle them in the land, chap. xxiv. 6. If they do not, he will root them up, and pull them down, &c. He will do the contrary. Compare this with chap. xlii. 10, and xlv. 4. The reason why God useth so many words to the same purpose seems to be, partly to show how deeply all kind of wickedness and contempt of God had taken root; which possibly may be one reason why he placeth pulling down and rooting up before building and planting, to show what a deal of rubbish there was to be removed before he could reform and repair his church and state; or rather, because the prophet was to begin with these in his prophecy, as appears by his second visions, ver. 11, 13; and partly to quicken the prophet's zeal against them.

11 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.

This and the boiling caldron, ver. 13, is thought to be at the same time, and in the same vision, when he was first appointed to his work. *A rod of an almond tree*, viz. that had leaves, and possibly blossoms, on it, like Aaron's, Numb. xvii. 8; for without leaves at least it is possible he had not so readily guessed of what kind it had been. This is a tree that blossoms early and speedily, and hence hath its name in Hebrew *shaked*, signifying watchful, forward, nimble, or quick; and so it may point at either God's readiness to smite, ver. 12, which is described elsewhere by summer fruit, Amos viii. 1, 2; or Israel's ripeness to be smitten, as we have the like Ezek. vii. 10, 11; or both; this rod being like a portentous comet, showing to Jeremiah the miseries that were at hand, as the death of Josiah, which soon followed this vision, 2 Kings xxiii. 29, and the taxing them by Pharaoh-nechoh, 2 Kings xxiii. 35, and presently after the breaking in of the Chaldees, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, 2 Kings xxiv. 2, and then the Babylonian captivity, 2 Kings xxiv. 10, which happened in the eighth year of Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiv. 12, when Nebuchadnezzar took him with others, and carried them away, about twenty-three years from hence; and about the fortieth year Jerusalem was taken, and the temple burnt.

12 Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.

Thou hast well seen; or, Thou hast seen and judged right; or, as the Hebrew, *Thou hast done well to see*, i. e. in seeing so. *I will hasten;* word for word, *I will almond-tree it*, i. e. I will be upon them speedily, in a short time, and suddenly, ere they are aware; or, I will watch, and be ready to accomplish this in due time. *My word*, i. e. my word of threatening against Judah and its inhabitants.

13 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see [r] a seething pot; and the face thereof *is* † toward the north.

[r] Ezek. 11. 3, 7. & 24. 3.
† Heb. *from the face of the north.*

After the smaller punishment from the Lord follows this of the boiling pot, by which understand Judea and Jerusalem, as may appear by the application that they themselves make of it in a way of scorn and derision, Ezek. xi. 3, 7. Some put the *face of the pot* for the pot itself; as *the face of the cold*, the *face of his anger*, for cold and anger itself: q. d. I see a *pot* coming, meaning the Babylonian army flowing in upon them, like boiling or scalding water, as some interpret it: but this seems not to be so congruous to the vision; but rather thus, the Babylonians should besiege; as a fire plays round the furnace when it is to be made boil, so should these Chaldeans begirt it, as ver. 15, and reduce the inhabitants to most miserable extremities, with unspeakable cruelty, as if they were like flesh roasting by the fire, or boiling in a pot, as their sufferings are described, Micah iii. 3. *The face*, or front of the pot, or furnace, the place where the fire was put in or blowed up to make it boil; as a pot, hanged in the form of a furnace, seems to be all but one and the same pot or vessel, the face of which may be easily conceived to stand toward the north, not the mouth of the pot, for that looks directly upward, unless we conceive it to be represented in the vision leaning, of which conceit there is no need. *Is toward the north;* indicating from whence their misery should come, ver. 14, viz. from Chaldea, which lay north from Jerusalem.

14 Then the LORD said unto me, Out of the [s] north an evil † shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

[s] ch. 4. 6. & 6. 1.
† Heb. *shall be opened.*

The Lord said; explained this vision. *Out of the north*, i. e. from Babylon, a metonymy of the subject; for though it lie eastward, yet it is north from Jerusalem, as lying four degrees more from the equinoctial. See ver. 13. *Shall break forth;* it shall be withheld or restrained no longer in my treasure; I will let it out, viz. *that* evil of punishment represented by the fire. *Of the land:* though God gave almost all the then known world to the king of Babylon, yet here he understands the land of Judea, chap. xxv. 9.

15 For, lo, I will [t] call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall [u] set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.

[t] ch. 5. 15. & 6. 22. & 10. 22. & 25. 9.
[u] ch. 39. 3. & 43. 10.

I will call; or, I am upon calling, it is at hand, I am about to incline the northern countries to join together in this work, chap. vi. 22; x. 22; xxv. 9, 26. *The families*, or kindreds, viz. those divers countries and nations that were under one lord, as a chief ruler is called the father of his country. *The kingdoms*, viz. the Babylonians and their assistants, the Medes also being in confederacy with them, whose king's daughter Nebuchadnezzar married. *They shall set every one his throne;* their seats, pavilions, or tents shall be pitched, which shall be as so many thrones, where I will see my judgments executed by the Chaldeans, chap. lii. 4. *At the entering of the gates;* at the entering to the gates, or way leading to the gates, Judg. ix. 35; 2 Kings vii. 3; chap. xliii. 9, which besiegers have always a special regard to, that there be no going in or coming out, Isa. xxii. 7. *Against all the walls thereof round about;* they shall begirt it round, noting the great multitude, power, and courage of the Chaldeans. *Against all the cities;* there were none of them should fare any better than Jerusalem.

16 And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, [x] who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

[x] Deut. 28. 20. ch. 17. 13.

I will utter my judgments; cause sentence to be passed according to my threatening. See chap. xxxix. 5. Or, I will place my bounty and their unworthiness before them. Or, I will upbraid them with their ingratitude, rebellion, and breach of covenant, &c. I will speak with them by thee, Jeremiah, and others of my prophets. *Who have forsaken me;* either noting the persons against whom, or rather the cause for which, because they have forsaken me; the same particle being so used chap. xiii. 25, and elsewhere; or their sins whereby, as it is also expressed, chap. xvi. 11; xxii. 9. *Burnt incense unto other gods*, i. e. worshipped strange gods; a synecdoche of the part for the whole. *The works of their own hands*, i. e. their idolatrous images, expressed here by a periphrasis, Isa. ii. 8.

17 ¶ Thou therefore [y] gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: [z] be not dismayed at their faces, lest I ‖ confound thee before them.

[y] 1 Kings 18. 46. 2 Kings 4. 29. & 9. 1. Job 38. 3. Luke 12. 35. 1 Pet. 1. 13.
[z] Ex. 3. 12. ver. 8. Ezek. 2. 6.
‖ Or, *break to pieces.*

Gird up thy loins: by this expression God quickens and hastens him upon his work, not to stand hesitating, but to be doing; prepare thyself: for it is a speech taken from

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the custom of the countries where they did wear long garments; and therefore they did gird them up about them, that they might not hinder them in any work that required expedition. See the phrase and practice Exod. xii. 11; 2 Kings iv. 29, and in many other texts. It implies two things: 1. Speed and despatch. 2. Courage and resolution, Job xxxviii. 3. *Arise;* another expression to the same purpose, to speed him about his work; the like chap. xiii. 4. *Command thee,* Heb. *shall command thee. Be not dismayed at their faces;* discover no fear, and conceal no message. See ver. 8. *Confound thee,* Heb. *break thee in pieces;* either lest thou prove confused and shattered in thy notions, and unable to deliver thy message, lest I leave thee and forsake thee; or lest I terrify thee worse than they are able to do, even to ruin thee. See Matt. x. 28. *Before them:* it seems to be spoken by way of aggravation; God would shame him, or destroy him, even in their sight, to become their reproach. Or, Think not to escape any more than Urijah, chap. xxvi. 23.

18 For, behold, I have made thee this day [a]a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

[a] Is. 50. 7. ch. 6. 27. & 15. 20.

For, behold; Heb. *For I,* lo: q. d. For my part, I will not fail to do what I have promised, to stand by thee. *A defenced city,* Heb. *city of defence,* impregnable, which the two following expressions do import; it should be supported with pillars, not of wood, but of iron, and encompassed with walls, not of stone, but of brass, noting hereby both great uprightness and also strength. *Against the whole land,* i. e. all its inhabitants in general, none to be spared, as he doth particularly rank them in their several degrees in the following words, intimating hereby, that though men of all degrees should set themselves against him, yet God would support him against them all, and that he would carry him through his work, though his troubles and trials would be not only great, but long, viz. passing through several kings' reigns, therefore possibly said *kings* here, in the plural.

19 And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; [b]for I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

[b] ver. 8.

They shall fight against thee; make united attempts upon thee. See Judg. xx. 11. *They shall not prevail;* they shall not be able, by all their devices, to shorten thy days, chap. xv. 20; xx. 10, 11. *For I am with thee:* here is the reason given of his safety, God will be his guard. See ver. 8; 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.

CHAP. II.

God's numerous and continued mercies render the Jews in their idolatry inexcusable, and unparallelled in any nation; and themselves the causes of their calamities, 1—19. *Their gross idolatry,* 20—28; *incorrigibleness, blood-shedding, and hypocrisy,* 29—37.

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Now God begins by Jeremiah to deal with the Jews, and to put him upon his work, having fitted him for it: this seeming to be his first sermon, it notes speed, and quick despatch about his business.

2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember ‖thee, the kindness of thy [a]youth, the love of thine espousals, [b]when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land *that was* not sown.

‖ Or, *for thy sake.*
[a] Ezek. 16. 8, 22, 60. & 23. 3, 8, 19. Hos. 2. 15.
[b] Deut. 2. 7.

Go, viz. from Anathoth to Jerusalem. *Cry in the ears;* proclaim it so that they may hear it. *Of Jerusalem;* declare God's will to the inhabitants thereof; a metonymy of the subject. *Thus saith the Lord;* the prophet's usual form of words in this book, whereby he frequently intimates that he came with God's message, not his own; and therefore directs his sermon here, as in God's name and person, to the whole body of the people. *I remember thee;* I record, or I mind thee of the kindness that was between us: though this be sometimes taken in a way of favour, Neh. xiii. 31, yet not always so, as Neh. xiii. 29; Psal. cxxxvii. 7. *The kindness of thy youth;* either those forward and early affections of thine to me in thy youth; or rather, the kindness that I showed thee in thy youth, Isa. xlvi. 3; for this relates to the time of God's bringing them out of Egypt, which is sometimes called the birth of this people, Isa. xliv. 2; Hos. ii. 3, and their youth, Isa. liv. 6; Hos. ii. 15. The story seems to favour most this latter sense, Deut. ix. 6, 24. *The love of thine espousals,* viz. when I entered into a covenant relation with thee at the giving of the law, Exod. xxiv. 7, 8; Deut. iv. 20, 23, 34; Ezek. xvi. 8, &c. *When thou wentest after me in the wilderness;* either out of that love and affection that thou didst show to me in following my conduct; or rather, when thou wert led by me in the wilderness, and I took such care of thee, both for protection and provision, in that howling wilderness, though thou didst ill deserve it, where nothing necessary to thy subsistence could have been expected; and therefore it is expressed in the next words by a periphrasis, a land that was not sown; and more enlarged upon ver. 6; for it plainly appears by the story that they did not follow him with entire affection, but went a whoring from him, Amos v. 25, 26, and which we have a large account of Psal. cvi. 7, &c.

3 [c]Israel *was* holiness unto the LORD, *and* [d]the firstfruits of his increase: [e]all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.

[c] Ex. 19. 5, 6.
[d] Jam. i. 18. Rev. 14. 4.
[e] ch. 12. 14. See ch. 50. 7.

Israel was holiness, or *holy,* the abstract for the concrete, i. e. a people dedicated to God; thus the word is used Lev. xxi. 7; xxvii. 14; set apart from other people for myself by peculiar laws and rites. *And the first-fruits of his increase:* this supplement *and* is better left out, it being not in the text, and rendering the sense more obscure; therefore better read, either, being the first-fruits, by apposition; or, *as the first-fruits,* i. e. as the first-fruits were holy to God, so was Israel. *All that devour;* or rather, devoured; for it refers to the time past, not to the future, and so the following words; all that were injurious to him *shall offend;* or, did offend, were obnoxious, and liable to punishment, as he that devoured that which is holy, Prov. xx. 25. *Shall come upon them; came* upon them: some evil was inflicted on them from the Lord, that was always wont to stand up for the vindication of his people, as upon the Egyptians, Amalekites, Sihon, Og, the Midianites, Canaanites, and others, as the four last books of Moses do abundantly testify; and by these expressions is insinuated that now they are like to find it otherwise, chap. l. 7; this minding of them what God had done for them making way for the closer setting home the following reproofs.

4 Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel:

Hear ye the word of the Lord: he bespeaks their attention to what he is about to speak, as unto the word of the Lord, telling them that he delivers God's message, and vents not his own passions: the like Isa. i. 10, and elsewhere frequently, both in the Old and New Testament, as 1 Cor. xi. 23; 1 Thess. iv. 15. *Jacob,* i. e. his posterity; Jacob and Israel here being the same, as it is Isa. xliii. 1. *The families,* viz. tribes, chap. xxxi. 1.

5 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, [f]What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, [g]and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?

[f] Is. 5. 4. Mic. 6. 3.
[g] 2 Kings 17. 15. Jonah 2. 8.

God having, as it were on his own behalf, shown how kind he had been, calls upon them to speak now, if they knew any thing of injury, either in breach of covenant or severity, that they can charge him with, that they have thus apostatized. See on Isa. i. 18; v. 3: compare Micah vi. 2—4. By this manner of speech his proceeding appears the more justifiable; he both makes their conviction the clearer, and the reproof the sharper. *Walked after vanity,*

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viz. idols, showing their folly in going from God to such vain things as idols are, Deut. xxxii. 21; 1 Sam. xii. 20, 21; and see on Isa. xli. 29; the abstract for the concrete, Eccles. i. 2. *Become vain*, viz. in following their imaginations; fools, Rom. i. 21, 22, as senseless as the stocks and stones that they made their idols of, Psal. cxv. 8; and herein they are said to go far from God, and choose their delusions, Jonah ii. 8.

6 Neither said they, Where *is* the LORD that [h]brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through [i]the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt?

h Is. 63. 9, 11, 13. Hos. 13. 4.
i Deut. 8. 15. & 32. 10.

Neither said, i. e. with themselves, thought not. *Brought us up:* the expression may have some respect to the situation of the place, as lying lower than Canaan; but the design is to reprove their sloth and stupidity, charging herein their apostacy, not upon their ignorance, but wilfulness; their deliverance from Egypt, and therefore is it here mentioned, being such a deliverance as never greater was wrought for any people, wherein there was so much of his power and love seen; they never regarded the operations of his hands, never concerned themselves about what God had done for them, ver. 8, which should have engaged them to a more close cleaving to him. *Through a land of deserts;* desolate places, chap. l. 13; and then what follows is to amplify the greatness of their dangers in the wilderness, and therein the greatness of their deliverance. *And of pits;* either those natural dangerous pits that were there; or put for the grave, where passengers are so often buried quick in the heaps of sand suddenly blown up by the wind; or threatening in every respect nothing but death, which may be implied in that expression of the *shadow of death* in this verse, which may allude to several kinds or fears of death in passing through a wilderness. See in the Synopsis. *A land of drought*, where they had no water but by miracle; the LXX. render it a *land without water. The shadow of death:* see on the word *pits:* the LXX. render it a *land without fruit*, bringing forth nothing that might have a tendency to the support of life, therefore nothing but death could be expected; and besides, it yielding so many venomous creatures, as scorpions, and serpents, &c., as also the many enemies that they went in continual danger of; all which could not but look formidable, and as the *shadow of death. That no man passed through, and where no man dwelt;* as having in it no accommodation for travel, much less for habitation. In these respects may it well be called a waste howling wilderness, Deut. xxxii. 10.

7 And I brought you into ‖[k]a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye [l]defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination.

‖ Or, *the land of Carmel.*
k Num. 13. 27. & 14. 7, 8. Deu. 8. 7, 8, 9.
l Lev. 18. 25, 27, 28. Num. 35. 33, 34. Psa. 78. 58, 59. & 106. 38. ch. 3. 1. & 16. 18.

Plentiful country, Heb. *land of Carmel*, Isa. xxix. 17; understand Canaan, Numb. xiii. 27: see on Isa. xxxv. 2. *To eat the fruit thereof and the goodness;* to enjoy all the blessing of it. *My land*, i. e. consecrated to my name, Lev. xxv. 23; and this you have defiled by going a whoring after your idols, chap. iii. 1, and many other abominations, Psal. cvi. 29, 35, 37—39. *Mine heritage;* in the same sense that it is said in the foregoing clause *my land*, and which you received from me as your heritage, the place that I chose for my church's present habitation, and earnest of their future heavenly one.

8 The priests said not, Where *is* the LORD? and they that handle the [m]law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, [n]and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after *things that* [o]do not profit.

m Mal. 2. 6, 7. Rom. 2. 20.
n ch. 23. 13.
o ver. 11. Hab. 2. 18.

They that handle the law knew me not: q. d. They that should have taught others knew as little as they, or regarded as little to know, Hos. iv. 6, who are said here to handle or teach the law, viz. the priests and Levites, who were the ordinary teachers of the law; not that they did so, but that either they ought to do so, or pretended to do so. This was their office, Deut. xxxiii. 10, and their practice, Neh. viii. 8. The phrase is a metaphor taken from warriors, that are said *tractare bellum*, to handle their arms. *The pastors;* either teachers, as instructors; or kings and princes, as conductors. See 1 Kings xxii. 17. *The prophets prophesied by Baal;* they that should have taught the people the true worship of God were themselves worshippers of Baal, 1 Kings xviii. 22. Or, instead of fetching their oracles from me, saying, *Thus saith the Lord*, they would say, *Thus saith Baal;* or they did make use of lesser deities (for so doth Baal or Baalim signify) in conjunction with God, persuading themselves they could honour God together with them, as the calves, 1 Kings xii. 28. *Things that do not profit*, viz. idols, a periphrasis, that were never able to do them any service, as ver. 5, 11. See on Isa. xliv. 10. Sure the state must be very bad, when priests, prophets, and people were thus corrupt.

9 ¶ Wherefore [p]I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and [q]with your children's children will I plead.

p Ezek. 20. 35, 36. Mic. c. 2.
q Lev. 26. 5.

I will yet plead with you: this is to be understood either really, by his judgments, Psal. lxxiv. 22, and that with great severities; or verbally, he will go on to deal with them, to convince them by his prophets, as he did with their fathers, that they may be left without excuse, chap. vii. 25, 26. *With your children's children;* either for the heinousness of their fathers' sins; for God doth often visit the iniquities of the parents upon their children, Exod. xx. 5; or because they do imitate their parents.

10 For pass ‖over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing.

‖ Or, *over to.*

The isles of Chittim; a synecdochical expression, extending to all isles in the Mediterranean Sea, or any other the neighbouring coasts; for the Hebrews call all people that are separated from them by the Mediterranean Sea islanders, because they come to them by shipping. See of Chittim, Isa. xxiii. 1. *Send unto Kedar;* understand Arabia, that lay east-south-east of Judea, as Chittim did more north or north-west: q. d. Go from north to south, east to west, and make the experiment; look to Chittim, the most civilized, or Kedar, the most barbarous, yet neither have changed their gods. *See if there be such a thing;* not that they were to pass over locally, or send messengers thither actually; but, q. d. Cast your eyes thither, and make your observations; by what you have ever seen or heard, did you ever hear of such a prodigious thing? If you should either go or send, you will find it so.

11 [r]Hath a nation changed *their* gods, which *are* [s]yet no gods? [t]but my people have changed their glory for [u]*that which* doth not profit.

r Mic. 4. 5.
s Is. 37. 19. ch. 16. 20.
t Psa. 106. 20. Rom. 1. 23.
u ver. 8.

Hath a nation changed their gods? q. d. No, they are unmovable and fixed to their idols, although they are false gods; what they receive from their fathers they tenaciously hold. *Their glory*, viz. the true God, who was their glory; a metonymy of the adjunct, Psal. cvi. 20; and who always did them good, giving them cause to glory in him, and to make their boast of him. *For that which doth not profit;* for those which never did or can do them good, that have no essence or power; but of whom they must necessarily be ashamed, as ver. 26.

12 [x]Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD.

x Is. 1. 2. ch. 6. 19.

Be astonished, O ye heavens; angels, say some, but rather the visible heavenly bodies; a pathetical expression in a poetical prosopopœia, as Deut. iv. 26; xxxii. 1, intimating that it is such a thing that the very inanimate creatures, could they be sensible of it, would be astonished. *Be horribly afraid;* the Hebrew imports as much as, *let your hair be lifted up;* such a fright, as we usually say, makes our hair stand on end; such a trembling as some dreadful tempest

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doth sometimes cause in a man. *Be ye very desolate;* lose your brightness, lustre, and shining, as the sun, that heavenly body, seemed to do when Christ suffered, Matt. xxvii. 45; or melting, the heinousness of such a thing, as it were, dissolving them.

13 For my people have committed two
y Ps. 36. 9. ch. 17. 13. & 18. 14. John 4. 14. evils; they have forsaken me the [y]fountain of living waters, *and* hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Committed two evils, viz. remarkable ones, and with a witness. *Living waters;* a metaphor taken from springs, called *living* here, and Gen. xxvi. 19, and elsewhere, because they never cease or intermit; such had God's care and kindness been over and to them; see on Isa. lviii. 11; his Spirit continually proceeding from the Father and the Son to refresh their consciences. Compare John iv. 10; vii. 38, 39. *Cisterns:* it is doubled, to show the multitude of their shifts; and *broken* is added, to show the helplessness of them, as being able to hold no water; but when a man hath made many hard shifts to get water, he cannot keep it, but it dries away; or if it abide, proves unwholesome: by which understand either their *idols,* which are empty, vain things, that never answer expectation; or the Assyrians and Egyptians, as ver. 18, which proved but broken reeds, and as all other supports or props, friends, traditions, merits, &c. are that are trusted to besides God; they are but cisterns at the best, whose water will putrify, or broken, riven vessels, through which they will soak, and leave nothing but mud and dirt behind them.

z See Ex. 4. 22. † Heb. become a spoil?
14 ¶ *Is* Israel [z]a servant? *is* he a homeborn *slave?* why is he †spoiled?

Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? did I ever account him so? or did I not rather always reckon him my first-born? so some, as ver. 31. But it may better relate to his sad condition and abuses from others, as chap. xlix. 1, which God or the prophet doth here inquire into; and *slave* is here rightly added to *home-born,* (though not in the text,) to express the baseness of his service, because the master had power to make those slaves who were born of slaves in his house; which argues his condition very low, whether he were thus born, or had been forced to sell himself to be a slave. *Why is he spoiled?* He speaks either of the thing that is to be as if it were already done, because of the certainty of it, as of that devastation made by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, who afflicted the remnant of the Jews; or of that havoc that was made of them formerly by Sennacherib, the Assyrians, and Egyptians. Why is he thus tyrannized over, Isa. xlii. 24, as if strangers had the same right over him as owners over their slaves? He removes here the false causes of Israel's misery, that he may the more aggravate and set home the true, as ver. 17, 19. He was my son; if he now become a slave, he may thank himself.

a Is. 1. 7. ch. 4. 7. † Heb. gave out their voice.
15 [a]The young lions roared upon him, *and* †yelled, and they made his land waste: his cities are burned without inhabitant.

The young lions; understand the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians, &c., called *lions* from their fierceness, and *young* from their strength. See this chap. iv. 7; l. 17. *Roared upon him, and yelled;* noting the terrible voice that the lion puts forth, either in the seizing the prey, some say in sport, Lam. ii. 7; or the devouring it, Isa. v. 29. A metaphor, noting the cruelty of the enemy, Psal. lxxiv. 4. *Burned without inhabitant,* i. e. so consumed and wasted that they are uninhabitable, or shortly shall so consume and waste them. See ver. 14.

b ch. 43. 7, 8, 9. ‖ Or, feed on thy crown, Deut. 33. 20. Is. 9. 8.
16 Also the children of Noph and [b]Tahapanes ‖have broken the crown of thy head.

Noph and Tahapanes; two of the king of Egypt's principal seats. Concerning *Noph,* sometimes called Memphis, now Cairo, see on Isa. xix. 13. Concerning *Tahapanes,* see Ezek. xxx. 18, probably taking its name from Tahpenes, queen of Egypt, 1 Kings xi. 19; called also *Hanes:* see on Isa. xxx. 4. And the inhabitants and natives of these cities are called here their *children,* Isa. xxxvii. 12. *Broken the crown of thy head:* they that take the Hebrew word in the notion of *breaking* understand this of destroying whatever is chief or principal among them, either of persons or things; wounds in the head being most dangerous. Or, defiling the chief of the land, either by their corporal adulteries, and so take the word under the notion of *knowing,* as Gen. xix. 5; or spiritual, namely, idolatries, chap. xliv. 17, or their cruel, tyrannical oppressions, trampling upon all their glory, expressed by riding over their heads, and that universally, in a most insulting manner. But the word may be better taken in the notion of *feeding,* as the word is used chap. iii. 15, i. e. they have fed upon her most fruitful and pleasant, the top and head of all her pastures, that lay in the southern borders towards Egypt; see chap. xiii. 18—20; thus depriving them of all way of subsistence, chap. xii. 10. In short, they shall make havoc of all that is excellent in thee, Isa. xxviii. 4. The sum is, Thy league, O Judea, with Egypt against the Chaldeans will be the cause of thy total ruin. For the kings of Judah had not rebelled against the Babylonians, but to gratify the Egyptians, in expectation of help from them.

17 [c]Hast thou not procured this unto
c ch. 4. 18. thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, when [d]he led thee by the
d Deut. 32. 10. way?

Hast thou not procured this unto thyself? here God by his prophet shows that they may thank themselves for all that is hastening upon them. See Numb. xxxii. 23. *In that thou hast forsaken the Lord:* here he shows wherein, viz. in forsaking God: not that he left them, but they him, and that without any temptation or provocation; and therefore were the more inexcusable. *When he led thee by the way,* viz. by the conduct of his providence in the wilderness, keeping thee in safety from all dangers, Exod. xiii. 21, 22; Isa. lxiii. 12, 13; or in the way of his counsels, which the ways of their own carnal wisdom were so opposite unto.

18 And now what hast thou to do [e]in
e Is. 30. 1, 2. the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of [f]Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the
f Josh. 13. 3. way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?

What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt? what business hast thou there? or what dost thou expect from thence? or what need hast thou to go or send messengers thither, if thou wouldst but keep close to me? *Sihor,* viz. Nilus; it signifies black, from whence called Melas by the Greeks, either from the blackness of the land it passed through, or of the soil it casteth up. See on Isa. xxiii. 3. *To drink the waters:* here, and by the same words before, is meant, to seek help from either place, noting their strength, Isa. viii. 6. A metaphorical allegory, wherein God minds them of two of their broken cisterns, and shows them their folly to go so far when they might have been better supplied nearer home; as if God were not able to help them. Compare ver. 36. *The river,* i. e. Euphrates, often called so by way of eminency; the chief river of Assyria, Isa. vii. 20.

19 Thine own [g]wickedness shall cor-
g Is. 3. 9. Hos. 5. 5. rect thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that *it is* an evil *thing* and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear *is* not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

Thine own wickedness shall correct thee: the meaning is either, 1. There need no further evidence against thee than thine own evil courses, Hos. v. 5. Or rather, *might* correct thee, i. e. one would think should be sufficient to reclaim thee: see Hos. ii. 7. Or, 2. Thy own wickedness is the cause of thy correction. Or, 3. Thy wickedness will be an evidence that whatever thou sufferest is just. *Thy backslidings shall reprove thee;* the same with the former, but in other words, after the manner of the Hebrews, or a metonymy of the effect for the cause; Thou wilt not be persuaded till thou come to suffer, thou wilt not be instructed until corrected: or rather, as before, Thy many

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backslidings might teach thee more wisdom, and convince thee of thy folly: so doth the word reprove signify, Job vi. 25. *Know*, i. e. call to mind thy experiences, and consider well with thyself, and thou canst not but be convinced of those things, what forsaking of God hath cost thee. *An evil thing and bitter*, viz. of punishment principally; so Isa. xlv. 7; though it be true also of sin: therefore he calls it bitter, because the effect of it will be so; it will be unpleasing and bitterness in the latter end. *The Lord thy God*, i. e. *me*. *My fear is not in thee;* or, the fear of me; or, thou hast not my fear in thee; this being the ground of all thy sin and suffering, Psal. xxxvi. 1; Rom. iii. 16, 18.

h Ex. 19. 8. Josh. 24. 18. Judg. 10. 16. 1 Sam. 12. 10.
‖ Or, *serve*.
i Deut. 12. 2. Is. 57. 5, 7. ch. 3. 6.
k Ex. 34. 15, 16.

20 ¶ For of old time I have broken thy yoke, *and* burst thy bands; and h thou saidst, I will not ‖ transgress; when i upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, k playing the harlot.

Of old time I have broken thy yoke, i. e. the bondage and tyranny that thou wert under in old time in Egypt, as also divers times besides, as appears through the Book of Judges. The Hebrew *olam*, that signifies everlasting, is sometimes used for a long time to come, and also for a long time past; so here, and Gen. vi. 4; Isa. lvii. 11. *And burst thy bands;* a double allusion, either to the bands and fetters with which prisoners are wont to be bound, chap. xl. 4, or those bands wherewith the ends of the yoke of beasts were wont to be bound. See on Isa. lviii. 6. *Thou saidst, I will not transgress;* when the deliverance was fresh, thou didst put on good resolutions. Heb. *serve*, i. e. serve or worship idols: the word is of the feminine gender, because God speaks of his people as of a woman promising faithfulness, but breaking covenant. Some understand *thee;* I will not serve thee, q. d. which thou madest appear, *when upon every hill*, &c. And thus he accuseth them of their ingratitude, who owed themselves to their Redeemer. But this doth not so well agree with their engagement, Exod. xix. 8. *When;* or, notwithstanding all thy promises. *Upon every high hill:* idolaters were wont to sacrifice upon the tops of high hills, because there they thought themselves nearer heaven; nay, some have esteemed high hills to be gods, as the Indians of Peru at this day. *Under every green tree:* under these shades idolaters thought there lay some hidden deity, with which they conversed. *Thou wanderest*, viz. changing thy way to gad after idols, as one that hast broken covenant. See on Isa. lvii. 8. The word properly signifies to go from one's place, as harlots use to do, instigated either by unbridled lust, or covetousness; i. e. making great haste from one tree to another, or from one idol to another. See ver. 23, 24. Others, thou liest down, or, thou settest thyself. *Playing the harlot;* committing idolatry, which is a spiritual harlotry, chap. iii. 1, 2. This is frequent. Some read the former part of the text otherwise, making it the daring boast of the people, *Thou hast said, I have broken*, &c. and saidst, *I will not serve*, i. e. I will not obey. But this will not suit well with the rest of the text.

l Ex. 15. 17. Ps. 44. 2. & 80. 8. Is. 5. 1, &c. & 60. 21. Matt. 21. 33. Mark 12. 1. Luke 20. 9.
m Deut. 32. 32. Is. 1. 21. & 5. 4.

21 Yet I had l planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into m the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?

A noble vine; a usual metaphor for the church, Psal. lxxx. 8, 9, &c. See on Isa. v. 1. The Hebrew is *Sorek*, and may refer to the place or to the plant. With reference to the place, it may be taken either for a proper name, as Carmel for any fruitful place; so here noting either the place whence, viz. a vine of the same kind with those that come from Sorek; possibly that country where Samson saw Delilah, Judg. xvi. 4: or, the place where planted, viz. in a fruitful land, Exod. xv. 17. See on Isa. i. 2. If it be referred to the plant, then it points at the excellency of its kind; and this the next clause seems to favour: and thus it notes both God's care; he had as great a care of it as of the choicest plant; see on Isa. xxvii. 2, 3; and also his expectation, that it should prove so, Isa. v. 4. And the sense is, I planted thee, that thou shouldst bring forth choice fruit to me. *A right seed;* a right seed of true believers, as in the days of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Or supposing *with* to be understood before *right seed*, (as it often is in the Hebrew,) we may understand it of the ordinances of his church, which are said to be the plants or seed that God furnisheth it withal, Matt. xiii. 24; and these are called *right*, Neh. ix. 13, not false or counterfeit. *The degenerate plant:* though there be only degenerate or declining in the Hebrew text, yet the supplement is necessary in regard of the metaphor. *Strange:* this must here be taken in a bad sense, as the word *degenerate* going before intimates, though it be sometimes for what is rare and excellent: here it notes their apostacy and infidelity, and other wickednesses, where God speaks after the manner of man, both in a way of wonder and reproof.

n Job 9. 30.
o Deu. 32. 34. Job 14. 17. Hos. 13. 12.

22 For though thou n wash thee with nitre, and take thee much sope, *yet* o thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD.

Though interpreters do greatly vary in describing what is particularly meant here by *nitre* and *soap*, and it would be superfluous to mention here; yet all agree they are some materials that artists make use of for the cleansing away spots from the skin, clothes, or other things; and the sense is plain, that the blot of his people is by no art to be taken out: it cannot be covered by excuses; Though thou wouldst dissemble thy idolatries, thou canst not deceive me: nor expiated by sacrifices; it is beyond the power of all superstitious or religious washings to cleanse away, which may be understood by these natural and artificial ways of cleansing. *Thine iniquity is marked:* the meaning seems to be either, Thy filthiness is so foul that it leaves a brand behind it that cannot be hid or washed out, but will abide: see Jer. xvii. 1. Or, according to another acceptation of the word, *it is laid up with God.* See the like Deut. xxxii. 34; Hos. xiii. 12. Purge thee, wash thee, do what thou wilt, thou canst by no means conceal thy wickedness from me, Job ix. 20. They that would see greater variety of interpretations, let them consult the Synopsis.

p Prov. 30. 12.
q ch. 7. 31.
r Or, *O swift dromedary.*

23 p How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? see thy way q in the valley, know what thou hast done: ‖ *thou art* a swift dromedary traversing her ways;

How canst thou say? with what face canst thou go about to excuse thyself, or deny what is so evident, and so truly charged upon thee? ver. 20. *I have not gone after Baalim:* the word is plural, as comprehensive of all their idols, Hos. xi. 2, and is a name usually given to several of them, as Baal-zebub, 2 Kings i. 16, and Baal-peor, Numb. xxv. 3, and therefore their worshipping of many. Because they had the temple and sacrifices, &c., they still persuaded themselves that they worshipped the true God, though they joined their idolatries with it; as the papists, though they make use of idols in worship, yet would not be accounted idolaters. *Thy way;* the filthiness thou hast left behind thee, whereby thou mayst be traced, where thou leftest, as it were, thy footsteps, and monuments of thy frequent idolatries. *Thy way in the valley;* thy frequent course in the valleys, whether of Hinnom, where they burnt their children's bones in sacrifice, chap. vii. 31, or in any valleys where thou hast been frequent in thy idolatries; it seems to be thus largely taken. *Know what thou hast done;* look on and consider thy ways, as ver. 19. *Thou art a swift dromedary;* or, *thou art as*, &c.; or, O *dromedary*, a beast much used by carriers in Arabia, being rife there. See on Isa. lx. 6. *Traversing;* a metaphor taken from creatures that are hunted, that keep no direct path; alluding to the nature of the she dromedary, which in gendering time runs capering this way, and crossing that way, making many vagaries to find out sometimes one male, sometimes another, without any rule or order; setting forth hereby the disposition of this people, that were so mad upon their idols, that they ran sometimes after this, and sometimes after that, called *wandering*, ver. 20, and that with great eagerness, fitly termed *traversing*, much like the description of a whore, Prov. vii. 11, 12; the word being no where found but here, and being derived from a word that signifies a *shoe-latchet*. If any be curious, let the learned

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consult Synop. Critic., and the English reader the English Annotations on the place.

r Job 39. 5, &c. ch. 14. 6. ‖ Or, *O wild ass, &c.* † Heb. *taught.* † Heb. *the desire of her heart.* ‖ Or, *reverse it.*

24 r ‖ A wild ass † used to the wilderness, *that* snuffeth up the wind at † her pleasure; in her occasion who can ‖ turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her.

A wild ass; or, *O wild ass;* another similitude for the more lively description of the same thing; neither need we be solicitous about the variety or extravagancies of conjectures about this beast; or you may consult as before. It is said to be wild and untamed, as being *used to the wilderness* doth also imply; and as to satisfying its lust, much of the nature of the other. *That snuffeth up the wind:* this *snuffing* properly appertains to the sense of smelling, by which certain creatures, by a natural sagacity, find out what they miss, which huntsmen express by a proper term of *winding*, or having in the wind; and thus it is understood here; for this creature, by the wind, smells afar off which way her male is; for there is another sense of *snuffing up the wind*, viz. for the service of health, as allaying inward heat and drought, &c., chap. xiv. 6. *At her pleasure;* as her desire or lust serves when it runs out after the male; implying also that no choice, or judgment, or measure is observed in these beasts, when carried out after their lusts. *In her occasion who can turn her away?* i. e. when she is set upon it, and hath an occasion and opportunity to run impetuously to her male for the satisfying her pleasure, she bears down all opposition before her; there is none can stop or put a bridle upon her raging lust. *Will not weary themselves*, i. e. either they need not weary themselves; (speaking of Jerusalem, to which all the rest also is to be applied as in an allegory;) they that have a mind to be filthy with her may easily trace her, ver. 23, she refuses none: or rather, they will not bestow their labour in vain, when she is hot upon her lust, but let her take her course until she be satisfied, and wait their time and opportunity; and this agrees with the next words. *In her month they shall find her:* if this relate to the former sense of not wearying themselves, it notes her impudence and unsatiableness; you may have her at any time, even in her months or new moons, a season wherein such acts are abhorrent even to nature itself. Some understand this of the idolatry they committed every new moon; but it more properly points at the month of her breeding, or growing big and weighty; *month* put collectively for *months*, such as Job speaks of, Job xxxix. 1, 2. Or, in her last month, because they grow then unwieldy. That this creature sleeps one month in the year, and that is the month she may be taken, is generally deemed but a fancy. The sense of the verse is, that though Jerusalem be now madly bent upon going after her idols, and other unclean courses, that there is no stopping or controlling of her, as in the next verse, and ver. 31; chap. xxii. 21; yet the time may come, in their afflictions, that they may grow more tame, and willing to receive counsel, as ver. 27, and Hos. v. 15.

25 Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but s thou saidst, ‖ There is no hope: no; for I have loved t strangers, and after them will I go.

s ch. 18. 12. ‖ Or, *Is the case desperate?* t Deut. 32. 16. ch. 3. 13.

Withhold thy foot from being unshod; good counsel given them by the prophet to tarry at home; either that they do not go a gadding after their spiritual or corporal adulteries, or seek foreign aids, thereby to wear out their shoes; a metonymy of the effect, Josh. ix. 13: or, that thou put not off thy shoes to go into the bed of lust, or uncover thy feet; a modest Hebrew expression, as also of other languages, for *exposing thy nakedness*, Ezek. xvi. 25: or, take not those courses that will reduce thee to poverty, to go bare-foot, and bare-legged, and to want wherewith to quench thy thirst, as in the next clause, Prov. vi. 26; Isa. xx. 2, 4. See Isa. v. 13. *There is no hope:* she seems to return a cross answer, the word pointing at somewhat that is desperate, Eccles. ii. 20. It either expresseth the desperateness of their condition: q. d. We are as bad as we can be, and there is no hope that God should receive us into favour. Or else by way of interrogation, Is there no hope? May we not hold on still, and prosper? Must we desist from our ways? No, we will not; but we will go after other gods, and they shall defend us, Isa. lvii. 10; chap. xviii. 12. Or the desperateness of their resolution upon it: q. d. We care not since there is no remedy; you lose your labour to go about to reclaim us; which agrees with the next clause. *Strangers*, viz. idols, or strange gods. *After them will I go*, come what will of it.

26 As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets,

Ashamed when he is found; not ashamed of his sin of theft, but that he is found, that his shifts and blinds would serve him no longer, especially if he have had the reputation of an honest man. *The house of Israel;* or families, the twelve tribes; a metonymy of the subject. *Ashamed;* or, confounded, in the passive voice; viz. when they shall be taken by Nebuchadnezzar, then their idols, which they went a whoring after, shall be discovered, and so put them to shame: in the active voice, their inability to help them, ver. 28; Isa. i. 29; Hos. iv. 19; and their shame will be the more, because they had the repute of being my people. *Their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets;* rulers and teachers, such as should have given better examples, and better instruction.

27 Saying to a stock, Thou *art* my father; and to a stone, Thou hast ‖ brought me forth: for they have turned † *their* back unto me, and not *their* face: but in the time of their u trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.

‖ Or, *begotten me.* † Heb. *the hinder part of the neck.* u Judg. 10. 10. Ps. 78. 34. Is. 26. 16.

A stone; idol; a metonymy of the matter, because idols are made of these materials, Dan. v. 4. *Brought me forth;* or, *begotten me;* so is the word used, Gen. iv. 18. This notes the sottish stupidity of this people, to take a lifeless stock or stone to be their maker, and to give the honour of God unto them, Isa. xliv. 17. They that make them are like unto them, as senseless as they, Psal. cxv. 8. *They have turned their back unto me, and not their face;* they turn their faces wholly towards their idols: it notes the openness of their apostacy, chap. vii. 24. *Arise, and save us;* the usual language of God's children in distress, Psal. iii. 7, and often elsewhere; when they found the vanity of their idols, and their own folly in relying on them, that cannot help or save, and rejecting me, ver. 31, then they will come to me, Judg. x. 10; Hos. v. 15; the same thing with finding her in her month, ver. 24; herein abusing God's gentleness, making him their necessity, not their choice.

28 But x where *are* thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they y can save thee in the time of thy † trouble: for z *according to* the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.

x Deut. 32. 37. Judg. 10. 14. y Is. 45. 20. † Heb. *evil.* z ch. 11. 13.

Thy gods; thy idols, viz. gods of thy own making; what do they do for thee? Isa. xxxi. 3. *Let them arise:* either by way of challenge, let them produce their idols now, to help them, if they can, whom they call their fathers and their makers; or by way of scoff, as Elijah to Baal's priests: see Judg. x. 14. Besides, in this word *arise* there is an insinuation of their lifelessness and deadness, Isa. xlvi. 7; chap. x. 15. And further, there may be a secret reply couched in it: q. d. In your trouble you will say to me, *Arise*, save us; now say so to them, and see if they can arise, and save you. *According to the number of thy cities are thy gods:* q. d. Thou hast them near to thee, and enough of them, imitating the heathens, who had according to Varro above thirty thousand deities; no marvel if I, who am but one, be slighted, when thou hast in every city at least one, 2 Kings xvii. 29—31, and in Jerusalem one in every street, chap. xi. 13. It is a hard case if none nor all these thy tutelar gods can help thee: see Deut. xxxii. 37—39. Make trial if any, or all of them together, can help thee.

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a ver. 23, 35. 29 [a]Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have transgressed against me, saith the LORD.

Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all: q. d. You are all at my mercy, why will you contend? all this that I charge you with is clear and evident, and all makes against you, ver. 23, 34. Wherefore do you expostulate, and put me to my proofs? This they were good at, chap. xvi. 10. There is nothing that you can justly reply, ver. 19. *Ye all have transgressed against me,* i. e. some of all sorts; there is not any one sort of you innocent.

b Is. 1. 5. & 9. 13. ch. 5. 3. c 2 Chro. 36. 16. Neh. 9. 26. Matt. 23. 29, &c. Acts 7. 52. 1 Thes. 2. 15. 30 In vain have I [b]smitten your children; they received no correction: your own sword hath [c]devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion.

Your children; either your posterity, that you breed up like yourselves; or rather, your inhabitants in every city, they being frequently called the *children* of such a city, or such a place: *children of Seir,* 2 Chron. xxv. 14, *children of the province,* Ezra ii. 1, and *children of thy people,* Lev. xix. 18, and abundance more the like; and thus it is comprehensive both of parents and children. *Correction,* i. e. The fruit of correction, viz. instruction. The same word is rendered *correction,* Prov. xxiii. 13, which signifies *instruction,* Prov. v. 12, and in other places; and so to be taken here: it notes their refractoriness, that though they were corrected, yet they would not be instructed; though God did smite them, yet the rod prevailed as little with them as the word. *Your own sword hath devoured your prophets;* either the sword that I have sent to destroy you hath destroyed your false prophets together with you, Hos. iv. 5, and so it is both a prophecy and a threatening; or rather, you have been so far from receiving counsel and instruction, that you have, by the sword, and other ways of destruction, (which is to be understood by the sword,) murdered those that I sent to reprove your follies in the days of Asa, Joash, Manasseh, &c., Neh. ix. 26. See Matt. xxiii. 34, 35. *Devoured;* or, eaten up; a metaphor. Hence we read of the *edge of the sword,* which both in Hebrew and Greek is called the *mouth of the sword,* chap. xxi. 7; Luke xxi. 24. *Like a destroying lion;* without respect or pity; with all manner of savage usage; see Psal. vii. 2; laying aside all humanity.

31 ¶ O generation, see ye the word of the LORD. [d]Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness? wherefore say my people, †[e]We are lords; [f]we will come no more unto thee?

d ver. 6. † Heb. *We have dominion.* e Psa. 12. 4. f Deu. 32. 15.

O generation; or, O ye men of this generation, a note of admiration; or rather, O generation, a note of compellation: it is to you I speak, *see ye the word of the Lord,* i. e. look well to it, consider it; as the rod is to teach, and therefore ought to be heard, Micah vi. 9, so the word is to be considered of, and therefore ought to be looked into, chap. ii. 19. He speaketh here not so much of the doctrine of the word as of the thing itself: q. d. You shall see the thing with your eyes, because you give the doctrine the hearing only, as we use to say, i. e. your ears are shut against it. *Have I been a wilderness?* here God challengeth them again to tell him what unkindness he had showed them, as before, ver. 5. Have I been like the wilderness of Arabia? have not I accommodated you with all necessaries at all times? Deut. xxxii. 13, 14; Ezek. xxxiv. 13—15; nay, in the wilderness itself I was not a wilderness unto you: an account whereof Nehemiah gives, Neh. ix. 15—23. And you have the story of it Psal. lxxviii. *A land of darkness:* divers interpreters derive this word from a different root, and accordingly render the sense variously. Some from a root that signifies to *fade* or *fall,* as a land where fruits fall off before they be ripe, bringing nothing to perfection; and so Tremelius and Junius translate it, Isa. xxviii. 1, 4: q. d. Have you found me to fail your expectations in any thing that I have promised you? Josh. xxi. 45; xxiii. 14. Others derive it from a word that signifies *late,* as a land that brings forth its fruit late in the year, which either ripeneth not, or ripeneth unkindly: q. d. Have you found me backward in any thing to do you good? have I not fed you to the full? Others from *darkness,* properly thick darkness, Exod. x. 22; Joel ii. 2. And it is the more significant, because *Jah,* the name of God, is added to it; q. d. the *darkness of God;* as a sleep of God, for a *deep sleep,* 1 Sam. xxvi. 12; flame of God, for a *vehement flame,* Cant. viii. 6; as if it were a land uninhabitable, because of the total want of light: q. d. Have I been a God of no use or comfort to them, that they thus leave me? have they had nothing from me but misery and affliction? as this notion of *darkness* may import, Isa. viii. 22; Lam. iii. 2. Hence the LXX. express it by a *land bringing forth thorns.* Or this expression, *a land of darkness,* may be put by apposition to the former. *Say,* i. e. in their heart. *We are lords;* words of pride and boasting: God had endeavoured to make them sensible that all their happiness they owed to him, and now, q. d. you rule as lords without us; see 1 Cor. iv. 8; now you cast me off: or rather, We are well enough established in our government by foreign aids, and compacts with the Egyptians, and Assyrians, &c., and have rulers of our own; we have no such great need of thee. Hence the LXX. render it in the passive voice, We will not be ruled; which agrees with the next words of the verse, Deut. xxxii. 15, 16. Something of this appeared in Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 15, 16, and Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 25; neither was David wholly clear, Psal. xxx. 6.

32 Can a maid forget her ornaments, *or* a bride her attire? yet my people [g]have forgotten me days without number.

g Psa. 106. 21. ch. 13. 25. Hos. 8. 14.

Can a maid forget her ornaments? how seldom is it, and how unlikely, that a maid should forget her ornaments! *Or a bride her attire?* whether it belongs to the head, or the breast, or arms, whether bracelets or jewels, wherever worn, is not worth the disputing; but understand those rich jewels which the bridegroom was wont to present his bride with, partly for a general obligation, and partly of particular signification, and all of them ornamental, whatever may render her amiable in the eyes of her bridegroom; virgins, and especially brides, will not usually neglect any thing that may make them comely. *Have forgotten me,* viz. in the neglect of my worship; me, who was not only their defence, but their glory, ver. 11, &c., that for which other nations honoured them, Psal. cxlviii. 14; Ezek. xvi. 10—14. *Days without number,* i. e. for a long time past, time out of mind, or, as the Hebrew, *days* of which there is no number.

33 Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways.

Why trimmest, or *deckest,* Ezek. xxiii. 40, thinking thereby to entice others to thy help? thus is the word used, chap. iv. 30. Or, Why dost thou use so much art and skill, and take so much pains, to go and send here and there to contract a friendship with foreign people, and to bring them to thy embraces, Isa. lvii. 9, 10, or thinking to set a good face or gloss upon the matter, and excuse thyself, as if thou couldst delude God, Psal. lxxv. 36, 37, whereas all thou dost is to get acquaintance with other idolaters? *To seek love,* i. e. to commit filthiness with thy idols; a synecdoche of the kind. *Therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones,* i. e. thou art become so vile, that even strumpets themselves may come to learn of thee. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 9. Or by thy example; nations that have been vile enough of themselves, by thy example are become more vile. *Thy ways,* i. e. thy actions; a metaphor.

34 Also in thy skirts is found [h]the blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by †secret search, but upon all these.

h Psa. 106. 38. ch. 19. 4. † Heb. *digging.*

In thy skirts, viz. of thy garments; a synecdoche of the kind; the tokens of thy cruelty may be seen openly there: or, in *thy hands,* as the LXX.: or a metaphor from birds of rapine, whose wings are bloody with their prey; but not so well. *Is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents,* i. e. in thee is found the murders expressed here by *blood* of innocent persons, meant here by *souls,* comprising both their sacrificing of their little children to their idols, Psal. cvi. 37, 38; Ezek. xvi. 20, 21, 36, murdering souls as well as bodies; and also all those cruelties, oppressions, and murders that they executed upon poor innocent per-

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sons, which were not a few in what Manasseh did, 2 Kings xxi. 16; Ezek. vii. 23; ix. 9, and in special the prophets, ver. 30, that came in God's name to reclaim them; which notes their desperate malice as well as cruelty, to slay their physicians. *By secret search*, Heb. by *digging*; as if the earth had covered the blood, or as if they had committed their wickedness in some obscure places. *But upon all these*; upon thy garments openly enough, as exposed to public view. There needs no such strict scrutiny to be made.

i ver. 23, 29. 35 [i]Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, [k]I will plead with thee, [l]because thou sayest, I have not sinned.

k ver. 9. l Prov. 28. 13. 1 John 1. 8, 10.

Yet thou sayest; or interrogatively, Darest thou say? hast thou the impudence to affirm it? *Innocent*; clear of this whole charge. *Shall turn*; shall not break out against me, Isa. v. 25. *I will plead with thee*; I will proceed in my judgment against thee, ver. 9; chap. xxv. 31. Or it is a soft expression, wherein he shows that he will not act like a tyrant, carried on rashly and furiously; but as a judge, regularly and righteously, Ezek. xx. 35; and it shows that he will convince her. *Because thou sayest, I have not sinned*; because thou dost justify thyself, as if I had no cause to be angry with thee. God is not angry with her so much because she hath sinned, as because she will not acknowledge her sin.

m ver. 18. ch. 31. 22. Hos. 5. 13. & 12. 1. n Is. 30. 3. ch. 37. 7. o 2 Chron. 28. 16, 20, 21. 36 [m]Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? [n]thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, [o]as thou wast ashamed of Assyria.

Thy way, i. e. thy actions; a metaphor. See on ver. 33. Why dost thou shuffle thus with me, to seek auxiliaries any where, rather than to cleave to me, ver. 18; see on Isa. lvii. 9, 10. Or, like strumpets, whose love is never fixed, but sometimes set on one, sometimes on another. *Thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt*: thou hast run to Assyria, and then to Egypt, and they shall both make thee ashamed by their disappointing of thee; thou shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as others have been, Isa. xxxvi. 6. Or rather, Egypt shall stand thee in no more stead than Assyria hath done, Isa. xxx. 3, 5. And how Tilgath-pilneser served them, see 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. Before Hezekiah's time the Jews made a league with the Assyrians against the Syrians and the Israelites, and then against the Egyptians; neither prospered. He tells them they must expect no better success from Egypt.

p 2 Sam. 13. 19. 37 Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and [p]thine hands upon thine head: for the LORD hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

Thou shalt go forth from him: some apply it to the sad and ineffectual return of the ambassadors, being disappointed in their expectation from the king of Egypt; but rather, All the help thou canst procure from abroad shall not prevent thy captivity, but from hence thou shalt go. *Thine hands upon thine head*; a usual posture of sadness and mourning, 2 Sam. xiii. 19, suited here to her going into captivity. *Rejected thy confidences*; refused to give success unto them, 2 Chron. xvi. 7. Or, rejected thee for thy confidences; or, he disapproves thy confidences, viz. all thy refuges which thou seekest out of God. *Thou shalt not prosper in them*, viz. in thy refuges and dependencies.

CHAP. III.

God's forbearance with the idolatry of Judah, who is worse than Israel, 1—11. *Both called to repent, with gospel promises*, 12—19. *Misery by sin; salvation only of God*, 20—25.

† Heb. *Saying.* a Deu. 24. 4. b ch. 2. 7. c ch. 2. 20. Ezek. 16. 26, 28, 29. THEY †say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, [a]shall he return unto her again? shall not that [b]land be greatly polluted? but thou hast [c]played the harlot with many lovers; [d]yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

d ch. 4. 1. Zech. 1. 3.

They say; or, *Men use to say*. If this, with the four following verses, belong to the former chapter, then it seems to express God's condescension to them: q. d. Though if a woman forsake her husband, and be married to another man, the law will not permit him to receive her again; yet God would receive thee again upon thy returning to him; but thou choosest rather obstinately to adhere to thy other confidences, wherein thou shalt not prosper. But if we look upon them as beginning a new argument, then here God declares his readiness to receive them again upon their repentance, though it be very unusual for husbands so to do, when their wives have proved treacherous unto them, in betaking themselves to other husbands; and so this chapter may very well begin with such a proverbial speech, *They say*, or, *Men use to say*, or, *It is commonly said. Put away his wife*; or give her a bill of divorce, Deut. xxiv. 1. *Shall he return unto her again?* q. d. He cannot take her again, according to the law, Deut. xxiv. 1—4. Or rather, will a man do such a thing? If the law were not against it, would any man be so easily wrought upon as to take her again? No, certainly. It is an argument from the less to the greater, to set forth God's great lenity towards them: q. d. If a husband should turn away his wife merely because he pleased her not, though she gave him no just cause, and she should bestow herself on another, he would not be reconciled to her, neither might he take her again; but you have gone a whoring from me, and sufficiently provoked me to reject and turn you off. I will dispense with my own law for your sakes, and will act by my prerogative; I am ready to be reconciled, to follow them that fly from me, as in the close of the verse, and Zech. i. 3; Mal. iii. 7. God will pardon sins of apostacy, and falls after repentance. *Shall not that land be greatly polluted?* Heb. *in being profane be profaned*. Would not so great a sin greatly pollute a state or nation? Lev. xviii. 27, 28. It must needs be polluted by such marriages to and fro, and promiscuous couplings, Deut. xxiv. 4. *With many lovers*; not with one only, as being sufficient to make thee an adulteress, but a common strumpet, joining in fellowship with divers associates and companions, or many idols.

e See Deut. 12. 2. ch. 2. 20. f Gen. 38. 14. Prov. 23. 28. Ezek. 16. 24, 25. g ch. 2. 7. ver. 9. 2 Lift up thine eyes unto [e]the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. [f]In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; [g]and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.

Lift up thine eyes; do but look, and consider whether I do charge thee wrongfully or no. *Unto the high places*: he directs her to the places of her whoredoms and idolatries, called *high places*, being principally upon hills, 2 Kings xxi. 3, and divers other places, though sometimes in valleys, chap. ii. 23; which notes also her impudence, that whereas other whores affected privacy, she should be filthy in the open view. *And see where thou hast not been lien with*; thy filthiness has been every where so frequent, that thou canst scarce show a place that hath been free from thy pollutions, ver. 6, 13, where there are not the footsteps of thy fornications and idolatries. *In the ways*, viz. to allure passengers, (see Ezek. xvi. 24, 25,) and waiting for them, viz. thy associates; not being drawn by others' allurements, but thine own lasciviousness. *As the Arabian*; an allusion to the manner and custom of that people, either lying in wait by the way for passengers, as robbers use to do, Hos. vi. 9, they being noted for robbers. Or rather, in way of traffic, that were wont to pitch their tents by the way-sides, that they might meet with their customers to trade, as they passed along; very properly pointing out the practice of harlots. See Prov. vii. 11, 12. *Thy wickedness*; not only thy idolatries, but all other thy wicked courses.

h Lev. 26. 19. Deu. 28. 23, 24. ch. 9. 12. & 14. 4. i ch. 5. 3. & 6. 15. & 8. 12. Ezek. 3. 7. Zeph. 3. 5. 3 Therefore the [h]showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a [i]whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.

Therefore the showers have been withholden, viz. by me, according to my threatening, Lev. xxvi. 19; Deut. xxviii.

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23, 24, i. e. a drought sent upon thee, either as a punishment of thy wickedness; thus public sins bring public judgments; or as an aggravation of it; and then it must be read *though*, as it often is; q. d. notwithstanding the great drought; and this the last words of the verse seem to favour. *There hath been no latter rain:* this, added to *showers* before mentioned, seems to imply there had been no former nor latter rain, the former for the springing of the corn, the latter for the plumping and ripening it; this coming a little before harvest. *Thou hadst a whore's forehead:* for all this, thou didst still remain impudent and obstinate, as ashamed of nothing, chap. vi. 15; thus proverbially expressed, because shame doth first and mostly appear in the forehead. Thus antichrist's impudence is expressed, Rev. xvii. 5. And some ancient heretics were called *effrontes*.

4 Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou *art* [k] the guide of [l] my youth?

k Prov. 2. 17. l ch. 2. 2. Hos. 2. 15.

Wilt thou not from this time, viz. that I have withholden showers? Some refer this, 1. To the time to come; Wilt thou not yet be wise, and for the future seek to me, having found all thy other ways successless? Isa. ix. 13; chap. viii. 14. 2. To the time present; How canst thou challenge me for my present severity, and continuing it towards thee, when thou still retainest thy filthiness, thy whore's forehead, ver. 3. Thou still continuest worshipping idols, and yet fanciest thyself faithful to me. 3. To the time past, i. e. Hast thou not all along pretended kindness to me, and as if thou hadst walked close with me? 2 Kings xvii. 32, 33; Ezek. xxiii. 39. *Cry unto me, My father;* wilt thou not as a child call upon me, whom thou hast thus greatly provoked, and own me as a father? ver. 19; for such have I been to thee, Psal. ciii. 13; Mal. i. 6; iii. 17. *The guide of my youth;* either on whom I have depended, as being brought up by thee; or the submissive expression of a wife seeking to be reconciled to her husband, that God would be to her as he had been in the days of her youth; such a case as is expressed 1 Cor. vii. 11; words of flattery usual with hypocrites: or rather, being married to thee in thy youth; a periphrasis for husband, Prov. ii. 17; which argues great tenderness towards her, ver. 2. Thus the tenderness of this relation is expressed Mal. ii. 14, and so God is said to espouse them to himself Ezek. xvi. 8.

5 [m] Will he reserve *his anger* for ever? will he keep *it* to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.

m Ps. 77. 7, &c. & 103. 9. Is. 57. 16. ver. 12.

Will he reserve his anger for ever? here being a defect of the noun, the Jews supply it with *thy sin*, Isa. xliii. 25, but the most and best, as we do, *his anger*. Compare it with ver. 12; Psal. ciii. 9; Nah. i. 2, in which texts there is a defect of the same word. This may seem to be the words of the prophet, and so the connexion is easy with the foregoing words: q. d. If thou wouldst do so, try me now, &c.: would he reserve his anger? would he not be reconciled? but thou hast taken quite another course. Or they may be the words of God, as it were, teaching his people how they should accost him: God is more forward and earnest for reconciliation than sinners themselves. *The end;* the same with the former *for ever*. *Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest:* God's challenge of the people, charging them, either with their resolved wickedness, that they had made good all their evil words by their evil actions, they had even done as they said; or rather, with their hypocrisy: q. d. Notwithstanding all thy former promises, yet thou persistest still in thy lewdness and obstinacy, Isa. lviii. 2; Hos. vii. 14.

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6 ¶ The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen *that* which [n] backsliding Israel hath done? she is [o] gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

n ver. 11, 14. ch. 7. 24. o ch. 2. 20.

The Lord said also, or *again;* showing that here begins a new sermon, in which the prophet from God, 1. Declares Israel's apostacy, and how it fared with them for it. 2. Aggravates Judah's sin for not taking warning. 3. Issues forth an invitation of them both to repentance, with a promise of acceptation, and reuniting them under the Messiah. 4. Relates the compliance of the faithful among them with this invitation. *Unto me*, viz. by revelation; for he speaks of things that Israel had done when they were carried away by the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii. 5—13, long before Jeremiah was born; therefore he saith, Hast thou not seen, i. e. considered, wherefore God gave her a bill of divorce? *In the days of Josiah the king;* when he would have purged the land, and restored the pure worship of God. *Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done*, viz. the ten tribes, who fell off from Judah, and set up a distinct kingdom of their own under Jeroboam? what they did, viz. in their idolatries? expressed in the next words, and chap. ii. 20; see there; when they openly apostatized from God, and that with one common consent, insomuch that all their kings proved wicked and idolatrous; and possibly it may look as far back as Solomon's defection, 1 Kings xi. 4, &c., which may now come in remembrance.

7 [p] And I said after she had done all these *things*, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous [q] sister Judah saw *it*.

p 2 Kings 17. 13. q Ezek. 16. 46. & 23. 2, 4.

Turn thou unto me, viz. by repentance, Acts iii. 19. Although she had been so vile and abominable, yet the Lord waited in expectation of her return. *Her treacherous sister Judah:* Benjamin is also here comprised, but Judah being the chief is only named, these two abiding together after the other ten revolted to Jeroboam; called Israel's *sister*, because they were all descended from the patriarch Jacob, Ezek. xvi. 46; compare Ezek. xxiii. 2, 4; and *treacherous*, or the *treacherous one*, because of her frequent revolts, 2 Chron. xxi. 6, &c.; xxiv. 17, 18, and many other times, and after as frequent renewed covenants and promises, both in conjunction with the rest of the tribes, Deut. v. 2, 3, 23, &c.; xxix. 10—12, &c., and afterwards, 2 Chron. xiii. 9, 10, &c.; xv. 12, &c.; xxiii. 16; xxix. 10. *Saw it*, i. e. they were not strangers to it, but knew it, as the word is, Psal. xl. 3. They could not but know how I had dealt with Israel.

8 And I saw, when [r] for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had [s] put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; [t] yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

r Ezek. 23. 9. s 2 Kings 17. 6, 18. t Ezek. 23. 11, &c.

I saw: q. d. That which others discern not I saw well enough, viz. both her hypocrisy and dissimulation, and her incorrigibleness notwithstanding what had befallen Israel, whose correction should have been her instruction; thus God speaks of the notice he took of both, chap. xxiii. 13, 14. Israel is said to be backsliding, but Judah *treacherous*, because she retained the worship of God, though she did often privately and closely embrace idols, and sometimes publicly, under Manasseh, and Ahaz, and other wicked kings. *When for all the causes;* or notwithstanding all the ground and reason I had to deal so with Israel in regard of her adulteries, as to put her away. *Given her a bill of divorce;* delivered her up into the hands of the Assyrian, where God took from her the title of being his church, 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6, &c., which he calls here a bill of divorce; not such a one as the Jews were allowed to give upon every slight ground, (for such a one God denies that ever he gave them, and challengeth them to produce it, Isa. l. 1,) but upon just and great occasion, viz. her playing the adulteress against him in her idolatries. *Feared not*, i. e. was neither afraid of giving me offence, nor of the like punishment. *But went and played the harlot also;* although she had seen the judgment of God executed upon Israel before her eyes, which made it the more stupendous, that she would take no warning by her sister's sufferings, Prov. xxviii. 14, yet she went on still, Ezek. xxiii. 11, 12, &c.

9 And it came to pass through the ‖ lightness of her whoredom, that she [u] defiled the land, and committed adultery with [x] stones and with stocks.

‖ Or, *fame.* u ch. 2. 7. ver. 2. x ch. 2. 27.

The lightness of her whoredom; whether of Judah's or

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of Israel's is not agreed upon, but the right applying of it doth depend much upon the right acceptation of the word *lightness*, which comes from a Hebrew word that signifies *voice;* and so it may refer either to the noise or fame of it, that would fly abroad, and thus it is applied to Israel, i. e. though Israel's whoredoms were never so much blazed abroad, yet Judah regarded it not. Or it may be taken for the heinousness of it, a crying voice, as Gen. iv. 10, and so by an hypallage, her *whoredoms of fame*, or notorious whoredoms; and is not ill expressed here by *lightness of her whoredom*, noting her impudence in it, as we use to term a common harlot a light woman; and thus it is applied to Judah, both the foregoing and following words seeming to be an aggravation of Judah's refractoriness. *Defiled the land;* brought the whole land under the imputation of filthiness. *With stones and with stocks*, i. e. with idols made of stone and wood, a metonymy of the matter, to note the baseness of the fact.

10 And yet for all this her treacherous
[y] 2 Chron. 34. 33. Hos. 7. 14. [+] Heb. *in falsehood.*
sister Judah hath not turned unto me [y] with her whole heart, but [+] feignedly, saith the LORD.

Though God saw what she did, and though she saw the shameful idolatry of Israel, and what she had suffered, yet she was not warned; see ver. 8; but fell to idolatry under Manasseh, who undid what Hezekiah had done, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3, though under fair pretences she dissembled with God in the days of Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 32, 33, as appeared by her sudden revolt, viz. in less than three months after Josiah's death, 2 Kings xxiii. 31, 32.

[z] Ezek. 16. 51. & 23. 11.
11 And the LORD said unto me, [z] The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

Was less vile, hath more to say for herself; Judah's sin being greatly aggravated compared with Israel, Ezek. xvi. 51; xxiii. 11. See Luke xviii. 14. For though Israel's sins were more, and their idolatry continued, yet in Judah it was more heinous, 1. Because of their unruly headstrongness, that broke the reins and restraint which their external worship ought to have had upon them. 2. Because of their stupid security in not being warned by the judgments that they had seen befall Israel for the very same things. 3. Because of their intolerable pride, boasting that their state was still unshaken. 4. Because of their gross perfidiousness in making promises, and breaking them, which Israel did not, because she brought not herself under such solemn and frequent obligations: see ver. 7. Lastly, Because they were a great deal more zealous in their idolatries than Israel was, viz. under Manasseh, when they slew all the prophets of the Lord.

12 ¶ Go and proclaim these words toward [a] the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; *and* I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I *am* [b] merciful, saith the LORD, *and* I will not keep *anger* for ever.
[a] 2 Kings 17. 6.
[b] Ps. 86. 15. & 103. 8, 9. ver. 5.

Go: it may possibly be used here as an adverb of exciting, namely, to go, as is usual; or it notes speed, Go quickly, out of hand; not locally, but set thy face, chap. ii. 2, or feet, that way, or by thy office address thyself to them, viz. by way of proclamation, crying aloud; possibly implying the distance of place: this voice may in time reach them, though a great way off. Or rather the deafness of Israel, or the obdurateness of Judah, that they might hear what God saith to Israel, conceive hope, and be reclaimed by their example, and be excited to emulation. *Toward the north*, i. e. to Assyria and Media, and the regions thereabouts, that lay northward from Judea, whither the ten tribes were carried by Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser, 2 Kings xv. 29; xvii. 6. *And I will not cause mine anger;* upon condition of returning to their former true worship of God, that thereby Judah might be awakened, he promiseth that he will not let his anger, or his *face*, as in the Hebrew, (because anger principally appears in the face,) his *angry face*, or countenance, to be upon them; so it is used Lev. xvii. 10; Psal. xxxiv. 16; and not be inexorable, viz. *for ever*, which is to be supplied from the next words; for otherwise his anger lay heavy upon them at this time. *To fall;* a metaphor from things on high that drop down to the hurt of whatever is under them, and so chap. xxiii. 34: compare Gen. xix. 24. *For I am merciful:* here is the ground of this conditional promise, taken from the nature of God, that sinners may not despair, Psal. lxxxvi. 15; ciii. 8, 9, &c.

13 [c] Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast [d] scattered thy ways to the [e] strangers [f] under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.
[c] Lev. 26. 40, &c. Deut. 30. 1, 2, &c. Prov. 28. 13.
[d] ver. 2. Ezek. 16. 15, 24, 25.
[e] ch. 2. 25.
[f] Deu. 12. 2.

Only acknowledge thine iniquity; which will be the evidence of thy repentance, without which thou canst not lay claim to any pardon, Prov. xxviii. 13; Isa. lv. 7. This is spoken by way of limitation, lest the Israelites should fancy a too easy pardon from God's merciful nature. Exhortations to repentance should always accompany the exhibition of promises. *Hast scattered thy ways to the strangers*, viz. to other nations, or rather to other gods, or to idols, running here and there, up and down, like a light, impudent harlot, sometimes to one, sometimes to another, thus sucking in divers superstitions, called *scattering thy ways*, ver. 6; 2 Kings xvii. 4, 9, 10; chap. ii. 23, 25. *Feet*, whereby we go on in ways; a metaphorical metonymy. *Ye have not obeyed my voice;* so that your sin is not a sin of ignorance, but of obstinacy, shutting your ears against my counsels, which I sent you by my prophets for your reclaiming, 2 Kings xvii. 13, &c.

14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; [g] for I am married unto you: and I will take you [h] one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:
[g] ch. 31. 32. Hos. 2. 19, 20.
[h] Rom. 11. 5.

Turn, O backsliding children; for I am married unto you; I am in covenant with you, Deut. xxix. 1, 10—12, &c.; and this covenant, notwithstanding all your unfaithfulness, I am ready to renew with you, Hos. ii. 19, 20. *One of a city, and two of a family:* this word *family* is not always to be taken strictly for a household; for then the expression would seem to imply more in a family than in a city; but frequently for a *country* or *nation;* compare Gen. xii. 3, with xxii. 18; see chap. i. 15; or for a *tribe;* and this may partly respect the fewness of those that will be found penitents and return. God will have a sprinkling in every city, and in every family, or tribe, or country. But chiefly it respects God's exact care of them, that being now married to them, there shall not be one in a city, or two in a country or tribe, but he will find them out; if there be but one or two, he will not overlook them: this seems to be intimated Isa. xxvii. 12, a text that points at the same thing. *I will bring you to Zion*, i. e. to Jerusalem, a type of the church; a double metonymy of the subject. It is the manner of the prophets, when they are treating of temporal deliverances, especially from Babylon, frequently to break out abruptly into the spiritual deliverance by Christ, and so probably he doth here; and therefore *bringing them to Zion* must be understood, either of joining them to his church under the Messiah, or bringing them again to worship with Judah at Jerusalem; as may seem to be intimated, chap. xxxi. 6; but the ten tribes did never return into their own land, and therefore that text must be understood of a spiritual going up to Zion, viz. when all Israel shall be saved, Rom. xi. 26. See Isa. lvi. 7, 8; lxvi. 20; and this chapter, ver. 18. Thus we may look upon this part of the prophecy to have respect, partly to what God was at that time about to do, in this verse; and partly what he would hereafter do, when they should be again settled in their own land, under the Messiah, ver. 16—19.

15 And I will give you [i] pastors according to mine heart, which shall [k] feed you with knowledge and understanding.
[i] ch. 23. 4. Ezek. 34. 23. Eph. 4. 11.
[k] Acts 20. 28.

Pastors; either civil magistrates, which are sometimes so called, Micah v. 5; or rather ecclesiastical, as appears both from the reason of God's judgments upon Israel, viz. their pastors being generally either thieves or dumb dogs; and also from the nature of their office, in the close of the verse,

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and thus they are called Eph. iv. 11. *According to mine heart;* such as I will both choose for you and approve of, and that shall faithfully and skilfully declare unto you my mind; which intimates not only a single act of deliverance, but his constant preservation of them. *Which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding:* this notes either the nature of their food: see Neh. viii. 8; Mal. ii. 7. Or rather the manner of their feeding: see Psal. lxxviii. 72; 1 Pet. v. 2. See more of this promise chap. xxiii. 4.

16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: [1]neither shall it †come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit *it;* neither shall ‖*that* be done any more.

[1] Is. 65. 17. † Heb. *come upon the heart.* ‖ Or, *It be magnified.*

When ye be multiplied; after the growth of the church under the Messiah. *In those days;* pointing at the great work of conversion that should be among them, especially in the days of the Messias, and how greatly the church should be increased by the accession of the Gentiles, a beginning whereof we read Acts ii. 41; iv. 4. *The ark;* a synecdochical expression for all the legal ceremonies, whereof the ark was a chief part: the sense is, that whole worship, with all the rites and ceremonies belonging to it, should wholly cease, Christ being come, who was the substance of what the ark and all other rites did but shadow out for a time, he being now our propitiatory, instead of the covering of the ark or mercy-seat, Rom. iii. 25; he answers all the uses and purposes thereof. In the ark was laid up the *manna, Aaron's rod,* and the *tables of the law,* Heb. ix. 4. He is now the *bread of life,* John vi. 35, he is our rod *of government,* Psal. xxiii. 4, in him is the whole *law fulfilled,* Rom. x. 4; and now God shall reign gloriously in his church by his word and Spirit, and shall be so worshipped without ceremony, John iv. 21, 23. For if this so eminent and comprehensive a token of God's presence must cease in the days of the gospel, much more the temple service, with all the rites belonging to it, John i. 17; Col. ii. 17; Heb. x. 8, 9. *The ark of the covenant;* called also the *ark of the testimony,* Exod. xxv. 22; xxx. 26; xxxi. 7; and the reason is, because the two tables of the law, which were the testimony or witness of the covenant, were closed up in it, Exod. xxv. 16, 21; xl. 20. *Neither shall it come to mind, &c.,* i. e. it shall be no more in use, neither shall there be any miss of it, or any thing like it, there shall be no such thing; men shall not trouble their thoughts about it, or mention it; compare Isa. lxv. 17; or repair to it as an oracle to receive the answers of God; nor for God's worship; compare Jer. xvi. 14, 15; or the place of its residence, as if no where else to be had; in a word, it shall not at all be had in honour or respect, or made much of. The word עשה *hhasah, done* or *made,* signifies to *magnify,* as it seems to be used, Deut. xxxii. 6; 1 Sam. xii. 6. The whole church shall now be the throne of God, ver. 17, to which purpose the ark formerly served; now God foreseeing, partly how hard a thing it would be to be believed, and partly the pleas that the corrupt wit and invention of man would find out for the retaining of these rites, and by consequence their lothness to forego them, he useth such a heap and variety of expressions to the same thing, that he may leave no room for doubting in a thing so plainly and fully prohibited in gospel times.

17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, [m]to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they [n]walk any more after the ‖imagination of their evil heart.

[m] Is. 60. 9. [n] ch. 11. 8. ‖ Or, *stubbornness.*

They shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; instead of the ark, whereon was the mercy-seat, now the church, typified by Jerusalem, Gal. iv. 26; Rev. xxi. 2, shall be the place of God's residence, where by his Spirit he will rule and act in his word and ordinances, and in special the Messias. See chap. xiv. 21, and ver. 16. *All the nations shall be gathered unto it;* intimating both their readiness to come in, and their number, according to that prophecy of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10. See Isa. ii. 2. By *nations* here understand either the ten tribes, who are called many people, both Israel and Judah united, their distance being taken away; see ver. 18; or rather some of all nations, that shall flock into the gospel church; for when the prophets foretell this state, they generally usher it in with the return of this people, at which time the church shall be greatly enlarged. *To the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem,* i. e. dwelling in Jerusalem, or where the Lord placed his name, viz. of old in Jerusalem, Psal. cxxii. 2, 3, &c., but now in the church, Rev. xxi. 2, 3, without ark or temple, Rev. xxi. 22, where he will be known as it were by his proper name, Isa. lx. 9, or as manifest in the flesh. *Neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart;* both Jew and Gentile shall now conform themselves to the will of God, Isa. ii. 3. The word *imagination* here comes from a root that signifies to *see,* and thus it is sometimes applied to the judgment, Psal. xvii. 2, and sometimes to the affection, Psal. lxvi. 18; here it may comprehend both, they will follow neither their own judgment nor affection, but wholly the word of God. The word is thus phrased Numb. xv. 39; Eccles. xi. 9; some read it *after the hardness,* Deut xxix. 19.

18 In those days [o]the house of Judah shall walk ‖with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of [p]the north to [q]the land that I have ‖given for an inheritance unto your fathers.

[o] See Is. 11. 13. Ezek. 37. 16,—22. Hos. 1. 11. ‖ Or, *to.* [p] ver. 12. ch. 31. 8. [q] Amos 9. 15. ‖ Or, *caused your fathers to possess.*

The house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel; these two kingdoms shall become one, that had been so long divided; the enmity that was between them shall be taken away, and they shall walk hand in hand in a friendly manner one with another, which is implied in this phrase of walking together, Psal. lv. 14; Amos iii. 3; and this points at their incorporating into one body united by the same Spirit, as members of the same body under Christ their Head, and that without distinction of nations. See Isa. xi. 12, 13; Ezek. xxxvii. 16, 17; Eph. ii. 14—16; iii. 6. *Of the north,* viz. of their captivity: see the place, ver. 12. *To the land,* viz. Canaan; both a promise of their enjoying again their ancient possession at their last conversion, and typifying the church of Christ, which they shall be of, when brought out of their spiritual captivity.

19 But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee [r]a †pleasant land, † a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, [s]My father; and shalt not turn away †from me.

[r] Ps. 106. 24. Ezek. 20. 6. Dan. 8. 9. & 11. 16, 41, 45. † Heb. *land of desire.* ‖ Heb. *an heritage of glory,* or, *beauty.* [s] Is. 63. 16. † Heb. *from after me.*

How shall I? words that speak either, first, God's putting them to their own thoughts, how they could think he should bring such a perfidious people as they were into the land which he had promised; else, secondly, his considering within himself how or what course he should take to bring such a thing about, and accomplish it, they had so greatly degenerated from him and disobliged him; see Hos. vi. 4; both implying that such a thing could not be brought about without repentance and true conversion to him, wrought by his free grace, Eph. i. 5, 6. *Put thee among the children;* esteem thee as my child, till thou give some clearer proof and demonstration of thy repentance. *And give thee a pleasant land;* how shall I put thee into possession of that pleasant land of desire that I have promised thee? Canaan is so called, Psal. cvi. 24; Dan. viii. 9; xi. 16, 41. *A goodly heritage,* Heb. *heritage of glory,* or *beauty:* see Isa. iv. 2. *Of the hosts of nations;* so called, either because possessed by several potent nations, Numb. xiii. 28; Deut. iv. 38; or rather, it may note the great hosts and multitudes of nations, or Gentiles, that should be joined to them in the gospel church, viz. of God's elect, and so a heritage of the greatest delights, or the desire of nations; a people to whom all the nations would desire to flock; see Ezek. xx. 6; and may be spoken also of the heavenly Canaan: the LXX. render it, the *heritage of God, the omnipotent Governor of the nations. And I said, Thou shalt call me, My father:* God comes now to a resolution how he would

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do it. Either it is a direction: q. d. On this condition, that thou wilt own me, and not return any more to idols, this shall be done; or a promise, I will cause thee to own me, and give thee perseverance, that thou shalt not depart from me; and this is very applicable to the work of Christ; see John i. 12; see also 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18; and the condition is indeed no more than God promiseth to effect in them.

20 ¶ Surely *as* a wife treacherously departeth from her †husband, so [t]have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.

† Heb. *friend.*
[t] Is. 48. 8. ch. 5. 11.

God hereby telling her what she had formerly been, endeavours to engage her to what she ought to be, namely, considering her former unfaithfulness in time past, how she ought to carry it for the future. See 1 Pet. iv. 3.

21 A voice was heard upon [u]the high places, weeping *and* supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, *and* they have forgotten the LORD their God.

[u] Is. 15. 2.

A voice was heard: here the prophet seems to express Israel's repentance and turning to God; and that which they were at present engaging themselves in; (the word being participial, and in the present tense;) delivered in a prophetical style, as that in chap. xxxi. 15; and that not only out of a sense of their judgments that they were under, but chiefly of their sins they were guilty of, and the pardon of which they were now begging, which is intimated by weeping and supplication. *Upon the high places*, viz. that their cry might be the more public, both open and loud, chap. xxii. 20; Matt. x. 27; possibly alluding to the usual practice of praying on the tops of houses in great calamities, Isa. xv. 3; xxii. 1; Jer. vii. 29. *Weeping and supplications;* or rather, *weeping supplications;* showing the intenseness of it; *praying in weeping, and weeping in prayer*, Zech. xii. 10, like Peter's weeping, Matt. xxvi. 75. *Of the children of Israel;* the end of which might be to provoke Judah also to repentance, or otherwise to charge upon them their stupidity, and threaten them with the like judgments, if they would not return upon Israel's example. *They have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the Lord their God:* this expresseth rather the matter of their prayer than the cause of it, Lam. v. 16, drawn chiefly from their sins, as also from their calamities.

22 [x]Return, ye backsliding children, *and* [y]I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou *art* the LORD our God.

[x] ver. 14. Hos. 14. 1.
[y] Hos. 6. 1. & 14. 4.

Return, viz. repent for sin and from sin. Here God calls upon them, and invites them to consider whither they are going, and to hearken unto the voice of his ministers, Hos. xiv. 1; Acts iii. 19. See ver. 12. God doth as it were bid them hearken to his messengers, and then he will heal their backsliding. *I will heal your backslidings*, i. e. *idolatries*, whereby you turned from me, and rebelled against me; I will take you into that state, as if you had never turned from me; I will make all whole again among you, and reconcile you to myself, Isa. lvii. 18; chap. xxxii. 40. See Zech. x. 6; xiii. 9. I will not only remove your judgments, but your sins also shall be forgiven. *Behold, we come unto thee.* This is either God's framing their answer for them, prescribing the manner and form of their repentance, by a figure called *mimesis*, Hos. xiv. 2, 3; or it is their reply to God by way of promise, which they performed under Josiah, 2 Kings xxii., xxiii., which with their confession reacheth to the end of the chapter. *For thou art the Lord our God;* words expressing the strongest inducements to it imaginable, because God hath right to them, is willing to accept them, and able to save them, Isa. lv. 7; chap. xiv. 22.

23 [z]Truly in vain *is* *salvation hoped for* from the hills, *and from* the multitude of mountains: [a]truly in the LORD our God *is* the salvation of Israel.

[z] Ps. 121. 1, 2.
[a] Ps. 3. 8.

From the hills, i. e. either from their *idols*, which were worshipped upon hills, a metonymy of the subject, chap. ii. 20, *idols of the hills;* or from any other external power whatsoever, either of persons or things, as the strength of hills, or forts, high places, and strong places, and assistance from kings, Hos. xiv. 3. *The multitude of mountains*, viz. the abundance of them that they have in their mountains, or the multitude of sacrifices which they offer in the mountains, or to multiply sacrifices. *Quest.* But doth not the psalmist hope for salvation from the hills? Psal. cxxi. 1. *Answ.* Yes, the hills of the Land of Promise, which were a pledge of God's favour to his people, especially those two of Zion and Moriah, where God did peculiarly manifest his presence, Psal. lxxxvii. *In the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel;* or, our salvation which we do now acknowledge is only in our God, and not in idols, of which we have had ample experience, Psal. xliv. 7; cxxx. 7, 8. See Isa. xliii. 10, 11; Hos. xiii. 4, 9.

24 [b]For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.

[b] ch. 11. 13. Hos. 9. 10.

Shame; either in general put for sin, which causeth shame, a metonymy of the effect; for that brought shame first into the world, Gen. ii. 25. Or in particular the idol Baal, called the *shameful thing*, Jer. xi. 13; Hos. ix. 10. *Hath devoured the labour of our fathers:* q. d. This hath been the fruit of our idolatry, to have all things go to ruin, both in respect of expense; that which our fathers having got for themselves and us by their industry, they have expended upon Baal, and other idols, Ezek. xvi. 16—21; and also of the heavy judgments that God brought upon us for it, chap. v. 17. *From our youth;* either with reference to the nation, ever since they began first to be a people unto God, and followed him in the wilderness, chap. ii. 2; or rather, ever since we were born, or took notice of any thing, thus it was from time to time; we find from our childhood that our fathers have laboured in vain, and all things have succeeded ill with us, because of their departure from God. *Their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters:* all these things are mentioned to show that they did thrive in nothing; but either a blast upon all from God, Hos. ix. 11, to the end; Mal. ii. 2, 3; or idolatrous sacrifices, consumed all, Amos iv. 4, 5, the idols not sparing even their very children, Psal. cvi. 37; or the enemy spoiled them of all, chap. v. 17; and all this as the sad effect of their idolatries.

25 We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: [c]for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and [d]have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.

[c] Ezra 9. 7.
[d] ch. 22. 21.

We lie down in our shame; we are perplexed and confounded within ourselves; we are such a reproach, both to God and man, that we cannot but lift up our hands for shame, even we, that had once a whore's forehead, ver. 3, but must lie down in our shame; an expression to set forth the greatness of their repentance and sorrow; as one in great perplexity, not knowing what to do, throws himself down upon his couch or bed, 1 Kings xxi. 4. *Our confusion covereth us;* a metaphor from persons muffled up in the bed-clothes, as ashamed to be seen: the like expression Psal. xliv. 15. *We and our fathers:* this notes the universality of their sins, the whole generation of us, like fathers, like children. True confession wraps up our own and others' sins, Ezra ix. 7; Neh. ix. 33, 34; Psal. cvi. 6, 7; chap. xiv. 20, and keeps us from all excuse by others' examples, 2 Kings xvii. 41, which gross guilt of theirs in this kind is described chap. xliv. 17. *From our youth even unto this day:* as the former sets forth the universality of their sins, so this the continuance of them, Deut. ix. 7; 2 Kings xvii. 34, 41.

CHAP. IV.

An invitation to true repentance, by promises, 1—4; and judgments coming on them by the Babylonians, contrary to the predictions of their false prophets, for their sins, 5—18. A grievous lamentation for the miseries of Judah, 19—31.

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IF thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the
a ch. 3. 1, 22. Joel 2. 12. LORD, a return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove.

Return unto me: this seems to be a continuation of the former sermon; so that Israel having promised repentance, they are here directed how it must be qualified, viz. it must not be hypocritical and feigned, but real and hearty, chap. xxiv. 7, as Josiah's was, 2 Kings xxiii. 25; and it must be unto the Lord; not to this idol and that idol, hither and thither, shifting their way; but unto *me;* see chap. ii. 36; or to my worship, and as thou hast promised, chap. iii. 22. And this sense agrees best with the coherence. Or it may be an emphatical, short, peremptory expression; If thou wilt return, return; make no longer demur or delay about it; like that Isa. xxi. 12. The Hebrew read the words in the future tense, *If thou wilt return, thou shalt return;* and so they may be taken partly as a promise, and that with reference either to their returning into their own land; and so they concern Israel; thus Deut. xxx. 2—5: see chap. iii. 14. But if the word be taken in the notion of *resting*, not *returning*, as some do, and as it is taken Isa. xxx. 15, then it rather concerns Judah: q. d. Thou shalt abide quietly where thou art, and shalt not wander into captivity; and this may agree with the last expression in the verse, *not remove.* Or else with reference to the assistance that God would give them to return unto him; partly, and that rather, as a direction (for in the Hebrew, though the word *return* be in the future tense, yet it is often used imperatively). *Abominations*, viz. idols, a metonymy of the adjunct, which are so abominable in God's sight, Deut. xxvii. 15; Ezek. xx. 7, 8; called *dungy gods*, Deut. xxix. 17. See 2 Chron. xv. 8. *Out of my sight;* though God's eye be every where; and hence implieth that idols are no where to be admitted, either in private or public; yet it doth particularly relate to the place of his more immediate presence, as their land and temple, 1 Kings ix. 3, and spiritually to our hearts, hypocrites thinking it enough if they conceal their wickedness from man's eye. *Then shalt thou not remove:* if this be read imperatively, then it is, *remove not*, as it may be read; and so it agrees with Israel, Depart not away from me to thy idols upon the mountains and hills: if read in the future tense, then it agrees with Judah, Thou shalt not go out of thine own land into exile. See the first clause of the verse.

b Deut. 10. 20. Is. 45. 23. & 65. 16. See ch. 5. 2. Zech. 8. 8. c Is. 48. 1. d Gen. 22. 18. Ps. 72. 17. Gal. 3. 8. e Is. 45. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 31.

2 b And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, c in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; d and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they e glory.

And thou shalt swear: this is to be understood, partly by way of command, as Deut. x. 20; and partly by way of direction, if thou swear, or when thou swearest: it is put here synecdochically for the whole worship of God, hereby acknowledging and owning God as the only God. *The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness:* here he prescribes, 1. The form of the oath, viz. *The Lord liveth*, or, *By the life of God*, which was that form which they did use in swearing, 1 Sam. xiv. 39, 45, and many other places; so Joseph sware *by the life of Pharaoh*, Gen. xlii. 15, 16; and Elisha very frequently useth this form, 2 Kings ii. 2, 4, 6; iii. 14; v. 16; which is also to be understood exclusively; q. d. not by any idol, as Baal, &c., or any creature, chap. v. 7; Matt. v. 34—36; James v. 12, but by God alone, Isa. lxv. 16; see Hos. ii. 17; for by this indeed we declare the Godhead of him whom we worship, Isa. xix. 18. 2. The qualification of it, in which indeed are comprised all the requisites to a religious oath and worship of God, both in our general and particular calling, with respect to God, ourselves, our neighbours. 1. In *truth*, that the matter and substance of it be really true in itself, Rom. ix. 1, that which agrees with the intent of the mind, Psal. xxiv. 4, and with the intent of him that administers it; not doubtful, feigned, or deceitful, as they did, Isa. xlviii. 1; chap. v. 2, but as true as the Lord lives. 2. In *judgment*, i. e. either in matter or places of judicature, for the decision of controversies, deliberately, advisedly, and reverently, well considering both of the form and matter of the oath, Lev. v. 4, that God's name be neither taken in vain customarily, or in matters trivial, Deut. v. 11, nor abused by oaths that are rash and precipitant, such as Saul's was, 1 Sam. xiv. 39, and as Herod's, Matt. xiv. 7, and without necessity. 3. In *righteousness*, that none be injured by it, that the things we engage be, 1. Both lawful and possible; see 1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22; xxviii. 10; 1 Kings xix. 2; and, 2. That we look to the performance, Psal. xv. 4; Matt. v. 33; the want of either of which circumstances makes it a bond of iniquity, Eccles. v. 4, 5. *The nations shall bless themselves in him;* this shall be a means to work upon the heathen nations, and prevail with them to come into the same way of worship, that now scorn both you and me, because I am forced to make them the rod of my anger against you, in regard of your provocations, Psal. xlvii. 8, 9; chap. iii. 17. They shall think themselves happy to be incorporated with thee, that it may be with them according to that promise, Gen. xii. 3; xxii. 17, 18. They shall, as it were, bless themselves in such like form; *The Lord make me and mine as Israel; blessed be Israel, and the God of Israel.* Or rather, *in him shall they glory;* whereas before they gloried in their idols, now, being taken into the true church, among God's Israel, they shall glory in God alone, Psal. cvi. 5, who indeed alone is the glory of his people, Psal. lxxxix. 17; cxlviii. 14.

f Hos. 10. 12. g Matt. 13. 7, 22.

3 ¶ For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, f Break up your fallow ground, and g sow not among thorns.

To the men, Heb. *man*, i. e. to each man; I speak to every individual among you, Ezek. xx. 7, 8. *Of Judah and Jerusalem:* the Lord having spoke what he had to say at present to Israel, turns now his speech from Israel to Judah, and so continues it; which consists of several subjects, and first begins with repentance. *Break up your fallow ground*, i. e. prepare your hearts by making them soft, tender, and pliable, fit to embrace my word; a metaphor taken from ploughmen, that do either prepare the ground that hath lain some time waste and untilled, by tearing up the surface of the earth, making it mellow and soft to receive the seed; (for the Hebrew word *nir* seems to be of larger extent than bare preparation; God useth the same word when he speaks to the same purpose to Israel, Hos. x. 13; and so it is used Prov. xiii. 23;) or it may relate to both, that every thing that may be injurious to the seed may be stubbed up. Or rather, from such as plough the ground. *Sow not among thorns;* rid you hearts and hands of what may hinder you of embracing my word; grub up all those briers, and thorns, and mischievous weeds that will not suffer my counsels to take, or my graces to thrive, with you; such as use to overrun the sluggard's field, Prov. xxiv. 30, 31. Here the Lord begins to call upon them to repent. The phrase seems to intimate that the Jews had been wont to mix the truths of God among their own inventions, as seed among thorns, and so corrupted it; as also, that they retained many secret and hidden sins, like hypocrites, which he exhorts them to eradicate.

h Deut. 10. 16. & 30. 6. ch. 9. 26. Col. 2. 11. Rom. 2. 28, 29.

4 h Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings.

Circumcise yourselves; put away your natural corruptions; which was signified by the sacrament of circumcision, Col. ii. 11; see 1 Pet. iii. 21; the same thing with the other, but expressed in other words. *To the Lord;* or, *to me*, viz. so as I will approve. *Take away the fore-skins of your heart;* let it be inward, not outward, viz. in the flesh only, (in which you so much glory in the sight of men,) but take away that brawniness and obstinacy that (having to do with God, who hath respect unto the heart) is upon your hearts, Deut. x. 16; Ezek. xliv. 9; Acts vii. 51; Rom. ii. 29. *Lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it;* not only fierce and consuming, like fire, Deut. iv. 24; but unquenchable, especially when it gets among your thorns, ver. 3, which are very apt to kindle,

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Isa. x. 17; lest you proceed so far in your obstinacy that I will not be appeased, chap. xxi. 12; Amos v. 6; there being nothing that stirs up God to anger but sin, as in the next clause, which is an explication of those metaphors of *thorns* and *foreskins*.

5 Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and
i ch. 8. 14. say, [i] Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities.

The Lord being now about to bring enemies upon them, he bespeaks them in martial language, by stirring them to a speedy provision, and warning of them of the nature of their approaching judgment; not famine or plague within them, but a foreign enemy from without, chap. vi. 1, viz. the coming of Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans. *Cry*, that your voice may be heard afar off, that all may hear. *Gather together;* either to unite your forces, or to take counsel what to do, that you may be in safety; the same thing with *Assemble yourselves;* implying that the calamity was general. *Let us go into the defenced cities*, to secure from these invasions that are coming upon us.

‖ Or, *strengthen.* k ch. 1. 13, 14. 15. & 6. 1. 22. † Heb. *breaking.*

6 Set up the standard toward Zion: ‖ retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the [k] north, and a great † destruction.

Set up the standard, i. e. for them to resort to, as is usual in war; and it is therefore said to be towards Zion or Jerusalem, as being a signal to show them whither they should repair; see chap. l. 5; Jerusalem being their principal place of strength, and Zion the strongest part of it, 2 Sam. v. 6, 7. *Retire;* or, *strengthen;* fortify or strengthen yourselves for the fight. Or rather, make haste away, as men use to do in a great fright, viz. for your security: such a use there is of the word Isa. x. 31; chap. vi. 1, which sense is confirmed by the next words, *stay not*, or, as some, *stay not yourselves in sin*, where you promise yourselves security. *I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction*, i. e. I am about to bring a great destruction upon you from Chaldea, chap. i. 13—15. Some take this and the former verse to be spoken ironically.

l 2 Kin. 24. 1. ch. 5. 6. Dan. 7. 4. m ch. 25. 9. n Is. 1. 7. ch. 2. 15.

7 [l] The lion is come up from his thicket, and [m] the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place [n] to make thy land desolate; *and* thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant.

The lion is come up from his thicket, i. e. Nebuchadnezzar, called here a *lion* from his fierceness and strength, Prov. xxx. 30; a metaphor; especially in this expedition (see Isa. v. 27—29); shall come up from Babylon, where his chief seat is, Dan. iv. 30; as lions are principally among the thickets of the forest, in coverts; this place being so remote and hid from them, that they least expected trouble to arise from thence. *The destroyer of the Gentiles;* another description of the same person, of whose destroying armies the nations have had woeful experience, Isa. xiv. 16, 17, called *the hammer of the whole earth*, chap. l. 23: q. d. And how shall you think to escape him? *Is on his way*, i. e. as it is expressed in the next clause, he is gone forth from his place, he is already upon his march. *To make thy land desolate*, i. e. with a resolution so to do. *Shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant*, i. e. as places uninhabited soon lie waste, and are overgrown with grass, as the notation of the word seems to import.

o Is. 22. 12. ch. 6. 26.

8 For this [o] gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl: for the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned back from us.

Gird you with sackcloth; the usual habit of mourners, especially in those days, Isa. xxii. 12; chap. vi. 26: it is a calling upon them to repent. *Lament and howl:* probably these expressions do import the several ways that men have to set forth their bitter complaints and sorrows of the mind, both by the gestures of the body, chap. ii. 37; Luke xviii. 13, and expressions of the tongue, Psal. xxxii. 3; Isa. lix. 11. *Is not turned back from us;* neither will it, until it have accomplished its ends, chap. xxx. 24.

9 And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the LORD, *that* the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder.

The heart of the king shall perish; the king, viz. of Judah, and the great men, that should have encouraged the people in such a calamitous day, and been their great support, shall not only be afraid, but their own hearts shall melt within them, they shall be even at their wits' end; see Josh. v. 1; they shall have no heart at all to do any thing; they shall not be able to help their people, either by their counsel or arms; their courage will utterly fail, and their counsel perish. See Psal. lxxiii. 26. This was fulfilled in Zedekiah. Jer. xxxix.; lii., whose flight would not advantage him. *Shall be astonished;* shall be in such a consternation, that they shall not know what course to take. *The prophets*, viz. false prophets, that had nothing but visions of peace for them, Ezek. xiii. 16; Zech. xiii. 3, 4; chap. viii. 11. See next verse. *Shall wonder*, not so much at the disappointment of their prophecies, for they knew well enough they were false, chap. xxiii. 26, 27, as that they should be possessed with the same horror and frights with the rest, not knowing where to show, or rather to hide, their heads for the shame that would fall upon them; when their lies should be discovered, they would be put to shame, and perish with the rest, and whither shall they cause their shame to go.

10 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! [p] surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, [q] saying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul.

p Ezek. 14. 9. 2 Thess. 2. 11. q ch. 5. 12. & 14. 13.

Ah, Lord God: the Hebrew *aha* is a word both of admiration and lamentation together; they are Jeremiah's words and complaint breathed out in the great sorrow and sighing of soul, which he expresseth more emphatically chap. xxiii. 9. *Surely thou hast greatly deceived this people;* either hast suffered them to be thus deluded by these false prophets, Isa. lxiii. 17; Ezek. xiv. 9; compare 1 Kings xxii. 21—23; 2 Thess. ii. 11; or possibly it may be read better by way of interrogation: q. d. How can it possibly be that thou shouldst suffer thy people to be thus deluded by their false prophets, Numb. xxiii. 19, thou being a God that canst not lie? Tit. i. 2. *Ye shall have peace:* under the word *peace* is comprised and intended all good, intimating all things should go on prosperously with them. Gen. xxxvii. 14; and seems the rather to be thus expressed, because it was the common language and phrase of the false prophets, chap. viii. 11; xxiii. 17. *Whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul:* to persuade them it should be well with them, when the sword is at the door, not only ready to take away the comforts of life, but even life itself, *soul* being put for *life*, ver. 30; Psal. lxix. 1; Matt. xvi. 25, 26. It may intimate also a great cutting off and slaughter among them, especially their great ones; they being, as it were, the soul of the people.

11 At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, [r] A dry wind of the high places in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to fan, nor to cleanse,

r ch. 51. 1. Ezek. 17. 10. Hos. 13. 15.

At that time, viz. when Nebuchadnezzar is upon this expedition, ver. 7, *shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem;* there shall be tidings brought both to the country and city, ver. 5. *A dry wind:* the meaning is, a drying wind, such as shall blast and scorch where it comes, without any rain or moisture, or any other way for use or refreshment, as the last word in the verse intimates; and it may also allude unto the coast from whence this wind comes, viz. from Babylon, or the north, which drives away rain, Prov. xxv. 23; for it points at the stormy and furious irruption of the Babylonian army, destroying all before them, a metaphorical allegory, chap. xxiii. 19; xxx. 23, 24. *In the wilderness;* or, in the plain, where there is no stop or obstacle in the way to hinder the wind, or to break its fury, Isa. xxi. 1; chap. xiii. 24. See on Isa. lxiii. 13. *Toward*, i. e. directly and designedly, coming along in the way leading to my people; for so we are to understand

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this expression, the *daughter of my people*, as the *daughter of Zion*, Isa. i. 8, or rather, the *daughter Zion*, which is as comely and beautiful in my eyes and tender to me as a daughter, chap. ix. 1. *Not to fan, nor to cleanse;* not such a gentle wind which is made choice of to separate the chaff from the wheat, the bad from the good; but so boisterous and violent, that it shall depopulate, sweep away, and lay waste all together, chap. li. 1; Ezek. xxi. 3.

‖ Or, *a fuller wind than those.* s ch. 1. 16. † Heb. *utter judgments.*

12 *Even* ‖ a full wind from those *places* shall come unto me: now also s will I †give sentence against them.

A full wind from those places, Heb. *fuller than they.* A wind too strong for them. This is a further description of the former wind; it shall be full, even a fuller wind, that shall do its work thoroughly. *Shall come unto me:* these are either God's words: q. d. It shall presently come to me, to receive my commission, and be at my beck, and do my will, Psal. cxlviii. 8. Or they relate, as it were, what will be the language of the people at that time *unto me*, for *against me*. *Now also will I give sentence:* q. d. The coming of this terrible wind shall in effect speak the execution of my judgment upon them, which is pointed at by this word *now*, viz. at the time of the coming of this terrible storm from Chaldea. Heb. *utter judgment*, viz. not by word, but by deed; my judgments shall speak as well as my prophets.

t Is. 5. 28. u Deut. 28. 49. Lam. 4. 19. Hos. 8. 1. Hab. 1. 8.

13 Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and t his chariots *shall be* as a whirlwind: u his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled.

He shall come up as clouds; either noting the vast number of them, Isa. lx. 8; Heb. xii. 1; or the suddenness of them, when not expected, clouds often rising on a sudden, and overspreading the whole face of the heavens; or rather, the great speed and swiftness with which Nebuchadnezzar shall march against them, Isa. xix. 1, hyperbolically described by the swiftness of eagles in this verse, chap. xlviii. 8. *His chariots shall be as a whirlwind;* which beside the swiftness, notes also the confusion and amazement that they will cause, Isa. lxvi. 15. *Woe unto us! for we are spoiled:* the dreadful apprehensions that the people have of their woeful condition, or possibly the words of the prophet lamenting their misery.

x Is. 1. 16. Jam. 4. 8.

14 O Jerusalem, x wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?

O Jerusalem, wash thine heart; cleanse your inward parts, O ye men of Jerusalem; not your hands only, as hypocrites do, but your hearts, James iv. 8. The same exhortation with ver. 3, 4, only in another metaphor of *washing*, which seems to be taken from such potions that physicians give to clear away the inward parts from noxious humours. See Isa. i. 16, 17. *From wickedness;* viz. from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, 2 Cor. vii. 1; James i. 21. *That thou mayest be saved:* this hath reference in this place to temporal salvation; it is prescribed as a means to prevent the judgments that are impending on them, as is plainly expressed, ver. 4, yet not exclusive of spiritual salvation, 2 Thess. ii. 13; Tit. iii. 5. *Vain thoughts;* wicked thoughts, or rather hopes or expectation from any helps, chap. ii. 5, 37; pleasing thyself with vain fancies of safety and security, which thoughts of thine will assuredly bring ruin and misery upon thee, which is inevitably coming, as in the next verse.

y ch. 8. 16.

15 For a voice declareth y from Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim.

A voice, i. e. either the voice of the prophets, that is still sounding it in your ears, and declaring it unto you; or rather, the rumour and noise of this army is already come through your land; you have the heavy tidings of this great affliction, chap. viii. 16, to note the near approach of it. *Declareth from Dan:* this is said to come from Dan and Ephraim, because Dan was the first place these Chaldeans must come to, it being the utmost boundary of Canaan northward, and Ephraim the innermost border of Israel in the north of Judea, intimating the march of the Babylonians through all Israel toward Jerusalem.

16 Make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, *that* watchers come s from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah.

s ch. 5. 15.

Make ye mention to the nations: these are either the nations in Judea; or these words are a proclamation, summoning in the nations by the Chaldeans, as it were, in pursuance of a commission from God, to bring great armies together against Jerusalem; or they are the prophets turning away from Judah, as despairing of doing any good upon them, and calling for the nations to execute God's sentence. *Publish;* let her be acquainted with what is coming upon her, let her have public notice beforehand, that she may be warned. *Watchers;* military watchers, i. e. the Chaldean soldiers, that shall so carefully and watchfully encompass Jerusalem, that none shall escape; possibly a metaphor from hunters, that in hunting their prey lay wait at every passage, that the game may not escape. See 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5. Or possibly there may be an allusion to Nebuchadnezzar's name; the Hebrew word for watchers being *notserim*, which comes from *natser*, the end of his name, as if they were termed Nebuchadnezzarians, as the keepers or guards of his person; as they were called Cæsareans from Cæsar. *Come;* they are now at hand, you may as it were see them. *From a far country;* from Chaldea. *Give out their voice;* they will proclaim war against them; or a shout, either encouraging soldiers to the battle, or triumphing after the victory; or the outcries that they will make, such as the Turks now make in their onsets, chap. ii. 15.

a 2 Kings 25. 1, 4.

17 a As keepers of a field, are they against her round about; because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the LORD.

They will strictly besiege her, as keepers of a field will be careful who go in and who go out, Zech. xii. 2; they will watch that none go in to relieve them, and also that none get out to escape: see 2 Chron. xvi. 1. *Because she hath been rebellious:* God doth not threaten his judgments only, but he labours to convince them that there is a sufficient reason for it, both here and in the next verse.

b Ps. 107. 17. Is. 50. 1. ch. 2. 17, 19.

18 b Thy way and thy doings have procured these *things* unto thee; this *is* thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.

Thy way; thy manner of life, and particularly thy idolatries. *Have procured these things unto thee:* q. d. Thou canst not lay any blame upon me. *This is thy wickedness, because it is bitter;* thy wickedness hath been the cause of this thy grievous affliction, Isa. l. 1; chap. ii. 17, 19, of this thy bitterness of bringing such a bitter enemy against thee, a metonymy of the efficient, which hath reached unto thy very heart, as the sword is said to reach unto the soul, ver. 10.

c Is. 15. 5. & 16. 11. & 21. 3. & 22. 4. ch. 9. 1, 10. See Luke 19. 42. † Heb. *the walls of my heart.*

19 ¶ My c bowels, my bowels! I am pained at † my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.

My bowels, my bowels! here begins the woeful complaint of, and the great trouble the prophet was in, upon the consideration of these things, crying out as one even under great pain and torment, doubling his words for want of vent, thereby expressing the excess of his sorrow, which in words was inexpressible; the like 2 Sam. xviii. 33; which sorrow of his he expresseth chap. ix. 1, 10. *I am pained at my very heart*, Heb. *the walls of my heart;* or, my heart-strings, that surrounded and encompassed my heart, are ready to break. He may possibly allude to their encompassing the walls of Jerusalem. Or the proper meaning is, my heart is ready to break; the LXX. rendereth it doth *beat* or *pant*. *Maketh a noise;* is disturbed within me, I can have no rest nor quiet within, Job xxx. 27; Lam. i.

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20. *I cannot hold my peace;* I cannot forbear my complaints, I am so troubled and grieved, Job vii. 11; Isa. xxii. 4. *Because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet,* i. e. I have heard in the spirit of prophecy; it is as certain as if I now heard the trumpet sounding, and the alarm of war beating up.

d Ps. 42. 7. Ezek. 7. 26. 20 dDestruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled:
e ch. 10. 20. suddenly are emy tents spoiled, *and* my curtains in a moment.

Destruction upon destruction; a further expression of his bitter lamentation, redoubling his complaint; the end of one, but the beginning of another; q. d. worse and worse, Deut. xxxii. 23; Ezek. vii. 26; good Josiah slain, and four of his successors carried away or slain, or both, 2 Chron. xxxvi. *The whole land is spoiled:* this is more particularly described ver. 23—26. *Suddenly are my tents spoiled;* the enemy makes no more of overthrowing my stately cities and magnificent palaces, sometimes described by tents, Isa. liv. 2, than if he were plundering of a camp, or overturning of tents made of curtains, chap. xlix. 29; either alluding to their ancient way of living, Numb. xxiv. 2, 5, or their wilderness condition, when they abode in tents: q. d. We are reduced to as mean a condition as then, and that suddenly, ere we are aware, and it is done with as much ease as overturning a poor shepherd's cottage, Lam. ii. 5, 6. Jeremiah possibly personating a shepherd, speaks in the shepherd's style, and may here signify the destruction of their whole country, even all those places and fields where shepherds were wont to pitch their tents.

21 How long shall I see the standard, *and* hear the sound of the trumpet?

He seems to have these concomitants of war, both of Judea preparing for defence, and especially these of the enemy preparing for ruin and destruction, always in his eye and ear, ver. 19, and bewailing the continuance of it in taking city after city, with the several sackings of Jerusalem under her three last kings. The LXX. read, *How long shall I see them flying?* reading *nas*, a *refuge*, for *nes*, a *banner*, differing only in the points.

22 For my people *is* foolish, they have not known me; they *are* sottish children,
f Rom. 16. 19. and they have none understanding: fthey *are* wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.

For my people is foolish: though God show them here that the cause of all these calamities is their folly, chap. ii. 17, 19; Psal. xxxviii. 3, 5, yet he owns them for his people, chap. ii. 11, 31, 32. *They have not known me;* which is indeed the only true wisdom; they have not studied my disposition or mildness toward them; they are so sottish, that they have neither regarded my counsels nor threats, but utterly stupid; they know not what is for their own good, have no understanding. *They have no knowledge,* i. e. their knowledge is as bad or worse than none, it is very ill employed in doing evil, only witty here, crafty and subtle. See 2 Sam. xiii. 3. But how to do any good they know not, chap. ix. 3; Luke xvi. 8: this the apostle dehorts from, 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

g Is. 24. 19. h Gen. 1. 2. 23 gI beheld the earth, and, lo, *it was* hwithout form and void; and the heavens, and they *had* no light.

I beheld; either I Jeremiah saw all this in a vision, or I fancied and framed such an *idea* of it in my mind; it seems to be impressed upon my thoughts *graphically,* as in a map, in such a rueful manner; for in this and the three following verses he doth, as one transported with sorrow, elegantly and hyperbolically describe the *phænomenon,* face or appearance of it. *It was without form and void;* the land was so squalid and so ruined, that he fancieth it to be like the first chaos, for which reason possibly he calls Judea the earth, in allusion to Gen. i. 2; and herein implying that Judah's sins were such, that they had even overturned the course of nature, being laid waste and desolate, not of inhabitants only, but of all things that might tend either to ornament or use, without men, without houses, without fruits, without beasts or birds for food or service, ver. 25, 26. *They had no light;* some say being obnubilated and darkened by the abundance of smoke that would ascend from the desolating fires of towns and cities, Isa. ix. 18, 19, of which you may read in the history of this breaking in of the Chaldeans. But he seems to proceed rather in his metaphor of the chaos, it being an expression whereby the Scripture doth set forth the saddest desolations, Isa. xiii. 9, &c.; Ezek. xxxii. 7, &c.; Joel ii. 10, 30, 31; every thing above and below seemed to be in a mournful posture, wrapt up in dismal blackness.

24 iI beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. i Is. 5. 25. Ezek. 38. 20.

He proceeds in his figurative elegancies: q. d. Behold how the mountains of Judea tremble! a like expression Psal. xviii. 7, 8; Isa. v. 25; as if the very senseless creatures were astonished at the greatness of God's anger; and he mentions these as being the most stable part of the earth, yet shake before him. *All the hills moved lightly;* as easily as if they were some very light matter, or as dust or feathers in a whirlwind. See Psal. cxiv. 4, 6. Or these may be said hyperbolically to tremble and move by reason of the multitudes of trampling and prancing horses and chariots furiously passing over them.

25 I beheld, and, lo, *there was* no man, and kall the birds of the heavens were fled. k Zeph. 1. 3.

There was no man; quite depopulated and laid waste, all either slain, or carried captive, or fled; for after the flight of men, women, and children into Egypt, upon the death of Gedaliah, scarce a Jew was left in Judea. *All the birds of the heavens were fled;* such birds as are used to inhabited places, that live, feed, and build among men; (others indeed, both birds and beasts, would continue, which implies but the greater desolation and waste of the land, as is threatened against Babylon, Isa. xiii. 19—22;) *fled,* either to seek provisions, here being no food left for them, or frighted with the hideous noises and clatterings that do attend armies; as we have read, that such hath been the concussion of the air by the loud clamours and noises of armies, that birds have fallen down to the earth, chap. ix. 10; Zeph. i. 2, 3.

26 I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place *was* a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, *and* by his fierce anger.

The fruitful place, Heb. *Carmel,* either properly, for that part of the land so called for its fruitfulness; or rather appellatively, for not only their most pleasant, but most fruitful lands, that were kept dressed and occupied for food, both for necessity and delight, ver. 27; Isa. xxix. 17; xxxiii. 9. *All the cities thereof were broken down;* no place left for men to inhabit, Isa. i. 7. *By his fierce anger;* that which the enemy could not have done with all his fury and fierceness, had it not been for the anger of the Lord, which by their great provocation they had brought upon themselves, 2 Kings xxiv. 3; Jer. ix. 12, 13.

27 For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; lyet will I not make a full end. l ch. 5. 10, 18. & 30. 11. & 46. 28.

Some expound it, Neither shall this punishment suffice, nor my fury stop here; I will not thus have done with them; and so look to what they were further to endure in their long captivity. See Lev. xxvi. 36, 39. But it seems rather to be a word of comfort, that they shall not be utterly extinct, he will preserve a remnant, chap. v. 10; Isa. i. 9; xxiv. 13: q. d. Though I am greatly moved with anger, yet I will not be inexorable, I will remember my covenant, chap. xxx. 11: in the midst of judgment he will remember mercy; after seventy years' captivity he brought them back again.

28 For this mshall the earth mourn, and nthe heavens above be black: because I have spoken *it,* I have purposed *it,* and owill not repent, neither will I turn back from it. m Hos. 4. 3. n Is. 5. 30. & 50. 3. o Num. 23. 19. ch. 7. 16.

For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black; expressions to set forth the dreadfulness of the

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judgment; he makes the elements to personate mourners, a sad face of things above and below, a metaphor, and therein to shame the stupidity of his people. *Because I have spoken it:* q. d. You would not believe either that my prophets spake, or what they said; now I tell you I speak myself, and what I have resolved upon I will not revoke; see Ezek. xxiv. 13, 14, and chap. xv. 6; for I have purposed it; I have not spoken in my heat or fury, but upon mature deliberation; an anthropopathy; or, what the prophets have denounced I will ratify.

29 The whole city shall flee for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; they shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every city *shall be* forsaken, and not a man dwell therein.

The whole city shall flee; the inhabitants of all ranks and qualities shall seek to escape the fury of this Chaldean army, chap. xxxix. 4. *For the noise;* either upon the report of their coming, hereby as it were deriding their confidence; or rather at the approach of their vast armies, for they were close besieged before they fled, as appears, 2 Kings xxv. 4. *They shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks;* such a consternation there shall be upon them, that they shall run into every hole to hide themselves: thus Manasseh was taken among the thorns, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11. The Hebrew is *abim*, the *clouds*, possibly alluding to dark places on the tops of hills, reaching as it were to the clouds, or among the cloudy shades of trees and groves that usually grew there. The LXX. render it *caves*, and so the rocks for shelter, or the clefts, caves, and hiding-places in the rocks. See Isa. ii. 21. *Every city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein;* there shall be an utter desolation, their cities quite forsaken, not any to inhabit them, ver. 25, 26.

30 And *when* thou *art* spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, [p] though thou rentest thy †face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; [q] *thy* lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.

p 2 Kings 9. 30. Ezek. 23. 40. † Heb. *eyes.* q ch. 22. 20, 22. Lam. 1. 2, 19.

When thou art spoiled; which will certainly come upon thee; or when this destruction shall come upon thee, which is very near thee. *What wilt thou do?* viz. when thou, O daughter of Zion, as ver. 31, art besieged by the Babylonians, what course wilt thou take? It is not to be avoided. A kind of an insulting way of speech, as it were upbraiding them with their pride and confidence: q. d. Your condition is desperate. *Crimson*, or scarlet, 2 Sam. i. 24: see on Isa. i. 18. *Though thou deckest thee with ornaments;* though thou dost superinduce those ornaments, or jewels of gold, that may render thy attire the most rich and splendid, 2 Sam. i. 24. *Though thou rentest thy face with painting:* it is observed that they that paint much make their skins withered. *Face*, Heb. *eyes*, the wantonness thereof being possibly set out more by painting; see Isa. iii. 16; or rather, face and eyes, being sometimes put one for the other: see 1 Sam. xvi. 12; Isa. xxv. 8, compared with Rev. xxi. 4. *In vain shalt thou make thyself fair;* all thy tricking up thyself, thinking thereby to ingratiate thyself with the Chaldeans, will be to no purpose, for they will work thy ruin, as in the close of the verse, and chap. xix. 7. *Thy lovers will despise thee;* they will slight thee more than ever; they that have doted on thee, thy unchaste paramours, their lust being satisfied, shall abhor thee; see 2 Sam. xiii. 15; and the pronoun, being not in the original, it may signify that no lovers at all will look after thee; thou shalt be cast off by all. See thus of Tyre, Isa. xxiii. 15, 16. Those that were in confederacy with thee, and thy professed friends, Hos. ii. 5, shall not only forsake thee, but join with thine enemies to destroy thee, Lam. i. 2. And thus is Babylon to be dealt withal, Rev. xvii. 16, 17. The sense is, That notwithstanding all thy allurings and enticements, either to obtain the help of thy friends and allies, the Egyptians, whom thou takest to be thy lovers, and didst forsake me to cleave to them, or to stop the fury of thine enemies, the Chaldeans; (possibly alluding to Jezebel's practice, in painting herself to stop the fury of Jehu, 2 Kings ix. 30;) yet shall it advantage thee nothing; thou shalt be no more regarded than a forsaken strumpet, Ezek. xvi. 36, 37; xxiii.

31 For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, *and* the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, *that* bewaileth herself, *that* [r] spreadeth her hands, *saying*, Woe *is* me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers.

r Isa. 1. 15. Lam. 1. 17.

A voice as of a woman in travail: when the Scripture would express any exquisite sorrow, exceeding all other pains, it doth it by a woman in travail, Isa. xiii. 8, 9; chap. vi. 24; xxx. 6, 7. *The anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child*, which of all seems to be the most painful, both from natural causes, and because they have less patience to bear, having not had former experience of the like. *The daughter of Zion*, viz. Jerusalem, Isa. i. 8. *That spreadeth her hands;* in her great distress she either reacheth them out to God for some help, Isa. i. 15; or rather, according to the use of persons in great anguish, clapping or wringing their hands together, as both the former expression of *bewailing herself*, fetching of deep sighs and lamentations, and the following *woe is me*, intimates. See chap. ii. 37. *Woe is me now!* or, the time of my woe is at hand; it draws near. *My soul is wearied because of murderers;* there is no more spirit left within me, I am ready to sink under my distress, considering not only that my destruction is so near, but that those of whom I have been so fond, and whose idols I have so zealously served, should become my murderers, ver. 30, and that I should fall into the hands of such as will have no compassion, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17.

CHAP. V.

None godly in Judah, 1. *They swear falsely, though God be a God of truth; they are incorrigible and senseless, and know not the law, or else wilfully violate it*, 2—6. *Their idolatry, adultery*, 7—9; *contempt of God's word and prophets, which should be sadly verified*, 10—18. *They forsake, forget, and fear not God, whose power is so great*, 19—24. *They are rich through deceit and violence; their false prophets*, 25—31.

RUN ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, [a] if ye can find a man, [b] if there be *any* that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; [c] and I will pardon it.

a Ezek. 22. 30. b Gen. 18. 23, &c. Psa. 12. 1. c Gen. 18. 26.

Whether this begins a new sermon, or be part of the former, is neither certain nor material; but here the prophet is called upon to go up and down, and search here and there, in every part of the city, and to make a diligent inquiry in every street and place of concourse; a phrase frequently used for searching and inquiring after a thing, Dan. xii. 4; Amos viii. 12; and it is spoken in the plural number, not restrained to Jeremiah in particular: q. d. Let who will search, they will find it even so. It implies the great scarcity of good men, that must be thus searched for. God gives leave to all the earth to look into the state of Jerusalem, by which he vindicates himself in the face of the whole world from all severity towards his people, whatever he brings upon them, and so stops the mouths of the Jews. *Seek in the broad places;* even there, where usually is the greatest resort for merchants and merchandises, where men meet from all quarters. *If ye can find a man:* it seems worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, for God condescends to pardon Jerusalem if there be but one righteous man found in it; there he came no lower than ten. But it will be *objected*, if it be understood thus individually, What must we think of Jeremiah himself, and Baruch, and Ebed-melech, and other few, who were then, no doubt, in Jerusalem? *Answ.* Either he speaks of the corrupt body of the people, courtiers, priests, false prophets, not one, or

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scarce one among them to be found, or if any, so few as not to be discerned. A man might walk the streets of Jerusalem long enough before he could meet with any one truly religious; which universality of corruption is thus expressed in divers places, Psal. xii. 1, 2; xiv. 2, 3; Ezek. xxii. 30; Micah vii. 1, 2. Or it may be understood hyperbolically for a few. *Any that executeth judgment*, i. e. among the magistracy that rightly administer justice. *That seeketh the truth*, i. e. among the commonalty that deal faithfully and uprightly; it signifies, that, among them all, there are none given to it; so far from endeavouring and seeking it sincerely with their whole heart, that they are not inclined to it, but are given to oppressions, falsehoods, and deceits; they do not seek the truth. *I will pardon it;* or, *him;* I will not destroy it for the sake of those few: the like he promiseth with reference to those five cities, Gen. xviii. 24, &c.

d Tit. 1. 16. e ch. 4. 2. f ch. 7. 9.

2 And [d]though they say, [e]The LORD liveth; surely they [f]swear falsely.

Though they say, The Lord liveth; though when they swear, they use the form of an oath, and say, The *Lord liveth*, chap. v. 2, or, By the *living God*. By swearing here we may understand all their service of God, by a synecdoche, swearing being a part of God's worship. *Surely they swear falsely; yet*, or *therefore*, they swear falsely; either they swear to that which is false; or if to that which is true, they are so perfidious to me, that they do it deceitfully, not in sincerity, and in reverence to that holy name by which they swear: possibly they may often speak of God, and not swear by false gods, ver. 7, but it is all but hypocrisy and deceit, Isa. xlviii. 1; chap. xii. 2; xlii. 5, 20; 2 Tim. iii. 5. It is neither in truth nor righteousness, two of the principal qualifications of a lawful oath. Thus they prostitute the name of God, making themselves guilty, not of hypocrisy only, but sacrilege.

g 2 Chron. 16. 9. h Is. 1. 5. & 9. 13. ch. 2. 30. i ch. 7. 28. Zeph. 3. 2.

3 O LORD, *are* not [g]thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast [h]stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, *but* [i]they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

Are not thine eyes upon the truth? The prophet, observing the obstinacy of this people, abruptly turns himself to God, yet emphatically insinuates their incorrigibleness. This may refer either to God's discerning and knowing truth from falsehood, as being impossible that any thing should be hid from him, Psal. xi. 4; or rather, (more agreeably to the phrase,) to God's approving; and this some again refer to *persons*, as *men of truth* for *true men*, so *man of wisdom* for a *wise man*, Micah vi. 9; but others, better, to truth and faithfulness, as that which God hath a great respect for, and delight in, Psal. li. 6, and was not to be found among these people. Though none of these senses be improper, this seems the most genuine. *They have not grieved;* they have been under sore grievances that God hath laid them under, yet they seem unconcerned, Prov. xxiii. 35; Isa. xlii. 25; or it is probable they were grieved at their sufferings, but they have not repented, thereby to turn away the causes of his just displeasure: see 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10. *Thou hast consumed them;* God had not only lightly chastised them, but wasted them by several enemies, as the Assyrian, Isa. x. 5, 6; xxxvi. 1, and Pharaoh-nechoh, 2 Kings xxiii. 33, and the Chaldees, Syrians, Moabites, and the Ammonites, 2 Kings xxiv. 2, and Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxiv. 13, &c. All these he made use of as the rod of his indignation, yet they refused to receive correction; see chap. ii. 30; a metonymy of the effect; they have profited nothing by it, not at all reformed, Isa. i. 5, 16; Amos. iv. 6, 8—11. *They have made their faces harder than a rock;* noting their obstinacy and impudence, laying aside all sense of judgments, as past feeling, Prov. xxi. 29; Zech. vii. 12. *They have refused to return;* wilfully rejected counsel, and slighted correction, resolving to persist in their obstinacy.

k ch. 7. 8.

4 Therefore I said, Surely these *are* poor; they are foolish: for [k]they know not the way of the LORD, *nor* the judgment of their God.

Therefore I said; or, perhaps, I said with myself; not, possibly, that he thought so, but that he might thus express himself, as men use to speak. *Surely these are poor;* poor, low-spirited, or of the meanest rank among the vulgar, understand but little; either men of greater ignorance, John vii. 49. and therefore said not to know the way of the Lord; see chap. viii. 7; being better skilled in fields and vineyards than in the law; or of less conscience than the better sort may be, and therefore said to be foolish, or infatuated, or put upon greater temptation by reason of their poverty, Prov. xxx. 9. *The judgment of their God;* the methods or ways of his providence, the usual manner of his dealing; so *judgment* is to be taken here for the same with *ways*, 1 Sam. ii. 13, as it is also chap. viii. 7.

l Mic. 3. 1. m Ps. 2. 3.

5 I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for [l]they have known the way of the LORD, *and* the judgment of their God: but these have altogether [m]broken the yoke, *and* burst the bonds.

I will get me unto the great men, i. e. to the nobles, both prince and priest, that have more time to consider these things, have been better taught and educated, Prov. iv. 4. Not that Jeremiah had any better thoughts of these, but as carrying a great probability with it. *For they have known:* had it been only among those in the former verse, it might have been more excusable; but it is in the very nobles themselves; the state is wholly corrupt, from head to foot, who cannot plead ignorance, therefore the more inexcusable. *These have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds;* these are more refractory than the other, more heady and obstinate; no law of God is able to hold them, Psal. ii. 2, 3: see Luke xix. 14, 27. There is not one better than another among them, whether poor or rich.

n ch. 4. 7. o Ps. 104. 20. Hab. 1. 8. Zeph. 3. 3. ‖ Or, *deserts.* p Hos. 13. 7.

6 Wherefore [n]a lion out of the forest shall slay them, [o]*and* a wolf of the ‖evenings shall spoil them, [p]a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, *and* their backslidings † are increased.

† Heb. *are strong.*

Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army from Syria and Libanus, woody places, are here pointed at under the metaphor of beasts of prey of three kinds; the malignity that is proper to each of these creatures shall be put forth in this Babylonian army, compared, for instance, to a *lion*, chap. iv. 7, which notes his great power, courage, pride, and insulting over his prey. *A wolf*, for their greediness and unsatiableness; one wolf will destroy abundance of sheep; and said to be the *wolf of the evenings*, or deserts, or plains, they being the usual haunts of the wolf; or *evenings*, because then they are observed to be most ravenous, Hab. i. 8, possibly because lying most part of the day in their dens for fear of the huntsmen, want of prey enrageth their hunger at night; and because of this greediness to devour, the judges among themselves are said to be *evening wolves*, described Zeph. iii. 3, *They gnaw not the bones till the morrow*, either through hunger or rage. *A leopard;* the Chaldean army compared to a leopard, not for its speed only, but especially for its vigilancy and subtlety; they will be so vigilant, that scarce any shall escape, according to ver. 16. *Increased*, Heb. *strong:* here is the reason why God would bring such a devastation upon them, because they did, as it were, strengthen themselves in the multitude of their rebellions against him.

q Josh. 23 7. Zeph. 1. 5. r Deut. 32. 21. Gal. 4. 8. s Deut. 32. 15.

7 ¶ How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and [q]sworn by *them* [r]*that are* no gods: [s]when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses.

How shall I pardon? how canst thou expect that I shall bear such affronts? I shall expose myself, and seem to lay aside my power; I shall be looked upon as one that either regard not such injuries, or cannot avenge them, as ver. 9. *Thy children;* thy inhabitants, both in city and country.

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Sworn by them that are no gods, but by idols: swearing is here put, not for one part of worship, as sometimes it is, but for a religious worship and service of them, chap. iv. 2. *When I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery:* here is noted the abuse of God's bounty, or the natural effect of our unsanctified prosperity, Deut. xxxii. 15; chap. ii. 7; Jude 4. That which in good men doth oft breed forgetfulness, in bad men generally breeds filthiness: rising up to play the wanton was the effect of Israel's eating and drinking, Exod. xxxii. 6, and of Sodom's sin, Ezek. xvi. 49. *Adultery;* either, 1. Metaphorically to be understood of their going a whoring after their idols; or, 2. Properly, for corporal uncleanness, they usually going both together, Numb. xxv. 1, 2; Hos. iv. 12, 14. *Assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses;* it may be read in the nominative case, the *house of the harlot assembled themselves:* q. d. The whole house of Israel, Jerusalem and Judea, are but one stew. If it refers to their idolatry, then it alludes to their making the temple a common house of spiritual harlotry; but rather, as it refers to their corporal uncleanness, it seems to intimate that they did not act their adulteries clandestinely or by stealth, but laying aside all modesty, they went to harlots' houses, like brute beasts, in company, as ashamed of nothing.

t Ezek. 22. 11. u ch. 13. 27.

8 [t]They were *as* fed horses in the morning: every one [u]neighed after his neighbour's wife.

Fed horses, to note the greatness and unruliness of their lust, pampered horses being most wanton, like that Deut. xxxii. 15. *In the morning:* it is questioned whether *morning* relates to horses or to men; if to *horses*, then they are compared to stallions, that having been fed to the full over-night, and lain at ease, in the morning they are most lusty; but rather it seems to relate to *men*, showing that they were very early in going about their filthinesses, Zeph. iii. 7, following their uncleanness with as great eagerness as it is said that drunkards follow strong drink, Isa. v. 11. *Every one neighed after his neighbour's wife*, i. e. with an impetuous earnestness and unwearied *hunting*, they sought after the adulteresses to satisfy their beastly lusts. It notes, 1. The strength of their lust, a thing in horses much taken notice of by authors. 2. The unbridledness and uncontrollableness of it, as is seen in the pampered horses hunting after the mare, of which *neighing* is a sign, thus expressed chap. xiii. 27. Thus the Grecians would express men extremely libidinous by the word ἱππόβινοι, and ἱπποπόρνοι, and that they do ἱππομανεῖν, so the LXX., and thus described Ezek. xxii. 11.

x ver. 29. ch. 9. 9. y ch. 44. 22.

9 [x]Shall I not visit for these *things?* saith the LORD: [y]and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

Visit, i. e. punish, Psal. lxxxix. 32. Should I connive at such things, the wicked would say, I did not see them, or take notice of them, Psal. l. 21, much to the same purpose with ver. 7, beginning; and *punishment* may be termed *visiting*, as implying the equity of God's procedures, that he first sees and considers the case, before he inflicts punishment; as in the case of Sodom, Gen. xviii. 21; spoke after the manner of man. *My soul*, for *I;* it speaks the greatness of God's displeasure, Shall not my very soul be in this work of vengeance? Psal. xi. 5.

z ch. 39. 8. a ch. 4. 27. ver. 18.

10 ¶ [z]Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; [a]but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they *are* not the LORD's.

Go ye up upon her walls; ye Babylonians, go now execute my vengeance on them. I give them into your hands; behold, I give you a commission. *And destroy;* I permit and order you not only to take the city, but make havoc of her inhabitants, Isa. x. 6. *But make not a full end:* though God give them a large commission to destroy, yet he puts in a limitation, that he will reserve a remnant from destruction; he sets bounds to the most raging adversary, beyond which he must not pass. See on chap. iv. 27. *Take away her battlements;* lay her and all her fortifications level with the ground; take away her counterscarp, or high towers, or whatsoever may tend to the defence of a city; to let Jerusalem know that she did but in vain trust to her high walls and strong towers; and *battlements* may as well be taken for the foundation of her walls, which spread wider than the wall itself. The word the prophet useth signifies things that spread; and thus it agrees with the scope, that is describing the utter overthrow and eradicating of it: so LXX., *take away her supports. For they are not the Lord's;* I undertake their defence no longer; I disown them, take my protection from them, and give them up into your hands, O ye Chaldeans, though they make their boast that they are sheltered under my wing and protection, because there was the temple and altar; but they will find themselves deceived, for I disown them.

b ch. 3. 20.

11 For [b]the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD.

Whether *Israel* be put here for the ten tribes, and *Judah* for the two, as often they are, chap. ii. 4, and sundry other places; or rather, whether Judah here be only explicative, and the word meant of the two tribes only, read thus, the *house of Israel, even the house of Judah*, is not much material. *Have dealt very treacherously;* have apostatized and dealt perfidiously beyond measure, not only as to the grossness, but as to the universality of it.

c 2 Chron. 36. 16. ch. 4. 10. d Is. 28. 15. e ch. 14. 13.

12 [c]They have belied the LORD, and said, [d]*It is* not he; neither shall evil come upon us; [e]neither shall we see sword nor famine:

They have belied the Lord: this may signify either a denying, viz. a renouncing, making little or nothing of him, as some; or a denying, i. e. not believing, that these words of the prophet were God's words, or God did not say so; he gave not the prophet, nor any other, any such commission; and possibly their atheism might grow to so high a degree as to deny his providence, power, and justice, &c.: so it agrees with the following words, *It is not he*, or, God did not speak as he meant; but he would only fright us, it shall not be thus. *Neither shall we see sword nor famine;* this siege or famine, or any other such dreadful judgments, as Jeremiah speaks of, shall not befall us. *Seeing* is used here for *feeling*, as it is in Job vii. 7.

13 And the prophets shall become wind, and the word *is* not in them: thus shall it be done unto them.

Shall become wind; a proverbial speech, very frequent, not in common language only, but Scripture also, Job vi. 26; Eccles. v. 16, and elsewhere; i. e. all the prophet's threats shall come to nothing: and thus they scoffed at them, Tush, what do they signify? they are but *bruta fulmina:* see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16. *The word is not in them:* this, possibly, they give as the reason that they apprehend the prophets' words to be but as wind, because they are not from God, they speak but dreams of their own fancying. *Thus shall it be done unto them;* it shall fall upon their own heads that have thus threatened us, not upon us; or, we will kill them with the sword for thus vainly threatening us; we will use them like false prophets, as they are; and we shall see in the sequel of this prophecy how they used Jeremiah: or it may be an imprecation: q. d. May it fall upon their own heads: thus the Hebrew, *So be it unto them.*

f ch. 1. 9.

14 Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, [f]behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

Wherefore thus saith the Lord: these vile wretches having now done speaking, God begins to speak; and because they had thus slighted the prophet, and God speaking by him, (as in the next words, *Because ye speak this word,*) here tells them what he will do; or rather, turns himself abruptly to the prophet, as men usually do in a passion. *The Lord God of hosts;* he makes his majesty and power known, to clothe his words with the greater terror. *Because ye speak this word*, viz. at the rate they discoursed in the former verse. *It shall devour them*, i. e. it shall take place suddenly, and irresistibly, and fiercely, as fire is wont to take in dry wood, to their utter ruin and overthrow, Psal. lxxxiii. 14, 15; Isa. ix. 18, 19. They shall be but fuel to my wrath, which shall

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be executed by the Chaldean army, that shall consume and eat them up like fire; they shall find my words to be more than wind.

g Deut. 28. 49. Is. 5. 26. ch. 1. 15. & 6. 22. h Is. 39. 3. ch. 4. 16.

15 Lo, I will bring a [g]nation upon you [h]from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it *is* a mighty nation, it *is* an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.

From far, viz. from Chaldea. *House of Israel:* by these are meant Judah; for Israel, properly so called, viz. the ten tribes, were in captivity before; see on chap. iv. 1; called the house of Israel, not only because they descended from Jacob, but because they were the chief of that stock. *It is a mighty nation;* it is both potent, or, as the word is, *rough* and *harsh*, and of great antiquity, ever since the laying the first foundation of Babylon by Nimrod, about one hundred and seventy years after the flood; and hence it is called the land of Nimrod, Micah v. 6. And this doth much add to their cruelty, that they have had dominion and rule in their hands so long, and whereby they have not only grown more proud and haughty, but having been brought up so long in ways of blood and slaughter, they must needs by this time become skilful to destroy. *Neither understandest what they say;* which makes thy case much more desperate. It is a great disadvantage when persons understand not one another. They will neither understand thy entreaties, nor thou their offers, being both unintelligible and inexorable, which will render thy condition much more sad and perplexed; speech being that by which the affection is readily communicated, and is the bond of human society: hence this was part of the judgment threatened, Deut. xxviii. 36, 49, 50, the Jews not well understanding the Syrian tongue, which the Chaldeans spake, having had no converse with them before the captivity. It was this put a stop to all converse at the building of Babel.

16 Their quiver *is* as an open sepulchre, they *are* all mighty men.

Quiver; collectively expressed for *quivers;* a synecdoche for the whole military preparations, and a metonymy of the containing for the contained, viz. the arrows that will be shot out of them, called the *sons of the quiver*, Lam. iii. 13; bow and arrow being the chief weapons for war in those countries, and in those days. *Is an open sepulchre;* a proverbial speech, Psal. v. 9, relating to the dreadful havoc and destruction that will be made, devouring the living as the grave doth the dead, or making work for the greedy, devouring grave, that never saith it hath enough, Prov. i. 12. Or, they shall destroy many with one quiver, as one grave will swallow many dead, which may note their skill, and the success they shall have, few of their arrows shall fail of doing execution. *They are all mighty men;* these Chaldeans are all men of valour, fit for warriors.

i Lev. 26. 16. Deut. 28. 31, 33.

17 And they shall eat up thine [i]harvest, and thy bread, *which* thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword.

They shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread; they shall make clean riddance, leave thee no supports of life, but bring an utter famine upon thee; it is thus threatened Deut. xxviii. 30, 48, 51. *Which thy sons and thy daughters should eat;* or, they shall eat up thy sons and thy daughters; but this is only a metonymy of the effect: but properly, this aggravates the dreadfulness of the judgment; parents, out of the tenderness of their affection, choosing rather to die themselves, than to live to see their children starved before their eyes, and they no ways able to relieve them, Lam. ii. 10, 11. *They shall eat up thy flocks, &c.;* a particular enumeration of the desolation that would be made, all tending to the greatness of the former. *They shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword*, i. e. beside the waste that the famine would make among persons, their cities also should be depopulated by the sword of the enemy; or rather, possibly the siege should be so strait and strict, as may be implied in the word *impoverish*, that they should be forced to eat one another, till they were quite wasted, they should be reduced to such poverty and exigences; or the sword may relate to the mentioned mischiefs, as the cause of them all, the sword shall do all this: in all which he doth not so much tell them that the Chaldeans shall conquer them, for that is taken as it were for granted, as what cruelties they shall use when they have conquered.

18 Nevertheless in those days, saith the LORD, I [k]will not make a full end with you.

k ch. 4. 27.

See this verse explained chap. iv. 27, save only that I think here it is taken in the first sense there mentioned; for it is not said only, as in that verse, *I will not make a full end*, or a full end *of* you, but a full end *with* you: q. d. I have not done with you yet. See Lev. xxvi. 14—40.

19 ¶ And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, [l]Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these *things* unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have [m]forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so [n]shall ye serve strangers in a land *that is* not your's.

l Deut. 29. 24, &c. 1 Kings 9. 8, 9. ch. 13. 22. & 16. 10. m ch. 2. 13. n Deut. 28. 48.

Wherefore doeth the Lord our God all these things unto us? this speaks either their unparalleled insolency, in a manner challenging God, as if they had not deserved such dealing at his hands, they might have expected better usage from him; the Jews were good at these kinds of challenging of God, Isa. lviii. 3. Or gross stupidity, as being such sots as not to be sensible of what they had done to provoke him; like to that chap. xvi. 10. *Served strange gods*, Heb. *gods of the stranger;* he doth not say *strange gods*, but *gods of the stranger*, which aggravated their crime, that while they lived in their own land, and the true God among them, they would precariously go fetch in gods from the heathens. *Serve strangers in a land that is not yours:* here the prophet, 1. Opposeth *strange lords* to rule over them to those strange gods that they had served, which God calls a forsaking of him. 2. He opposes a land *not theirs* to *their own land;* so that by this the prophet shows what resentments God had of their sin; for it implies that their sin was much greater, that they served strange gods in their own land, than if they had done it in another, under the tyrannical imposition of a stranger; and therefore he would accordingly suit their punishment, that they should serve in a strange land, which should be worse than to be servants in their own. This is a dreadful but a just retaliation.

20 Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying,

See of this chap. iv. 5. By *Judah* and *Jacob* we are to understand the two tribes only, as ver. 11, which see.

21 Hear now this, O [o]foolish people, and without †understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not:

o Is. 6. 9. Ezek. 12. 2. Matt. 13. 14. John 12. 40. Acts 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8. † Heb. *heart.* Hos. 7. 11.

Without understanding, Heb. *heart.* They have no heart to return, or to any thing of instruction or reformation, but are stupid and sottish, regardless of all counsel, wisdom, and common prudence. The heart is said to be the symbol, and according to Galen the seat, of wisdom; so the poet placeth it, *Cor sapit, et pulmo loquitur, fel commovet iram, &c. Which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not:* see chap. vi. 10. They are wilfully blind, and obstinately deaf; will neither see nor hear the word, will, or works of God, of which he giveth two instances in two following verses, ver. 22, 24, viz. in *governing the sea*, and *appointing* the *seasons of the year*. It may be he alludes herein to their idols, to which they were so much addicted.

22 [p]Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand *for* the [q]bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not pre-

p Rev. 15. 4. q Job 26. 10 & 38. 10, 11 Ps. 104. 9. Prov. 8. 29.

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vail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?

Fear ye not me: either a convincing argument to persuade them to submit unto him; Will ye not submit to me, that can rule the sea? which, as unruly a thing as it is, yet quietly yields to my will: or rather, a very angry challenge and expostulation; Do you think that I, that can tame the boisterous sea, cannot tame you? *Which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea;* that stand not in need to make rocks for walls and bounds unto it, but can give a check to it by so small a matter as the sand, that of itself is not only yielding and penetrable, but subject to be blown away with every wind. *By a perpetual decree;* either looking backward, that it never could, or forward, that it never shall. Whether this decree have respect to the creation, or to the deluge, it is not much material; the former of which times it could not have been contained within its bounds, neither in the latter could it have exceeded them, without God's special order, as no time since. *Though the waves thereof toss themselves;* though they swell, rage, roar, and threaten never so much, as if they would swallow up all before them; though they foam against the rocks that stand in their way; yet, when they come to their bounds appointed, shall tamely yield unto the sand, and retire back. *Yet can they not prevail;* not get any ground upon or against God's decree and appointment; either the *decree* or the *sand;* which in regard of their form, situation, unruliness, and fluxibility would overflow the whole earth, were it not for the limits and restraints that are laid upon it, Job xxxviii. 11. By this instance, God may show what he could do with reference to that enraged and raging army that is about to come upon them like a torrent, if his people would repent. Or rather be hereby upbraids the Jews with their unreasonable sottishness, that they are more mad in their rebellions against God, than the raging waters of the sea, that, as boisterous as they are, yet obey his will.

23 But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.

They are not only revolted from me, and gone back, but they continue obstinate, and will not return, Psal. lxxviii. 8, as the next clause intimates, where God shows their obstinacy by the effect of it. *Gone,* viz. from me, they persist in their courses, no reclaiming of them; for they are not only revolted, but they are gone quite away, and are irreclaimable.

24 Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, [r] that giveth rain, both the [s] former and the latter, in his season: [t] he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

r Ps. 147. 8. ch. 14. 22. Matt. 5. 45. Acts 14. 17.
s Deut. 11. 14. Joel 2. 23.
t Gen. 8. 22.

Neither say they in their heart; they are so careless that they never trouble themselves about it; or so obdurate and stiff that they never lay it to heart, or consider that it is God that disposeth of all things according to his own pleasure, both in the earth and in the great deep. *Fear;* or, *serve* and *obey;* all service to God being both performed in it, and proceeding from it. *That giveth rain,* without which nothing could subsist. By this the true God is distinguished from all false idol gods, chap. xiv. 22; and in this appears not only his power in decreeing, Job xxviii. 26, and preparing it, Psal. cxlvii. 8, his sovereignty in withholding it, Amos iv. 7; but his general goodness in bestowing it, Deut. xxviii. 12; Matt. v. 45, and his special providence in the seasonable disposal of it, according as there is need, and which he gives as a witness of it, Acts xiv. 17. As in the former instance God sets forth his people's insensibleness of the works of his greatness and power in so easily taming such an unruly element; so here he doth also further manifest the same by instances of his providence and goodness, implying, that so stupid, resolute, and obstinate they are grown, that they are neither afraid of him for his greatness, which possibly may be understood by the former *fear,* nor fear him for his goodness, which possibly may be the sense of the word in this latter place. *The former and the latter;* he means not the former and latter part of the year, but according to their seasons of sowing and reaping; the former to prepare the ground for sowing, and the latter to prepare the corn for plumping and ripening: see chap. iii. 3. *He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest;* he gives seasonable harvests according to his appointment: the sum is, God would let them know by this what an impudent and foolish, as well as wicked thing it is for them to set themselves against that God that keeps the whole order of nature at his own disposal, which he can govern and order as he sees men behave themselves towards him.

25 ¶ [u] Your iniquities have turned away these *things*, and your sins have withholden good *things* from you.

u ch. 3. 3.

Your iniquities have turned away these things: q. d. Do not say your ground is parched up with drought, or your fruits are corrupted and rotted by too much or unseasonable rain; we have nothing now in so due a course as we were wont to have it. Would you know the reason of it? You have inverted the ordinances and order of nature, have put heaven and earth out of their regular courses, by your iniquities. *Your sins have withholden good things from you;* that either you have been cut short of these good things, or denied a blessing upon them: by this God would not have profane men think that unusual seasons either for better or worse do come by chance, but as he sees convenient, either for the encouragement of the obedient, or punishing the obstinate.

26 For among my people are found wicked *men:* ‖ they [x] lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men.

‖ Or, *they pry as fowlers lie in wait.*
x Prov. 1. 11, 17, 18. Hab. 1. 15.

Among my people are found wicked men; I need not search for such among the heathen nations, for they are found even among them that are called by my name, whereas all my people ought to have been holy. *They lay wait,* or contemplate mischievous designs, under deceits, as fowlers do hide themselves, when they watch the birds coming to the snare or net, Prov. i. 11; Micah vii. 2; and therefore the next expression, *he that setteth snares,* is but a periphrasis for a *fowler,* the Hebrew word being always so taken, Psal. xci. 3; Prov. vi. 5, and elsewhere; or they pry, i. e. they narrowly look where they may get an advantage; hence enemies are called priers, or observers, as you may frequently find in the Psalms, Psal. v. 8; xxvii. 11; lvi. 2; lix. 10; xcii. 11. *They set a trap, they catch men;* intimating the success of their wicked policies in bringing their wicked decrees to pass, Psal. xxxvii. 7, as false witnesses and trepanners use to do, when they go about to insnare men that are innocent; such a trap did Jezebel lay for Naboth, 1 Kings xxi. 9, 10. Such a one was that conspiracy of more than forty men against Paul, Acts xxiii. 13—15.

27 As a ‖ cage is full of birds, so *are* their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

‖ Or, *coop.*

As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit, i. e. they fill up their houses with the goods and wealth of those that they deceive and overreach; ill-gotten goods; a metonymy of the efficient; as the fowler carries his cage along with him, wherein he puts the birds which he catcheth, to keep safe that they get not away, when once they are caught, as also by their appearance and singing to entice others. *Therefore they are become great, and waxen rich;* showing how and in what manner they got their riches, *therefore,* or *by this means;* such as are gotten by a lying tongue, Prov. xxi. 6, called the *treasures of wickedness,* Micah vi. 10.

28 They are waxen [y] fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not [z] the cause, the cause of the fatherless, [a] yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

y Deut. 32. 15.
z Is. 1. 23. Zech. 7. 10.
a Job 12. 6. Ps. 73. 12. ch. 12. 1.

They are waxen fat, they shine; or, so fat that they shine; by reason of their wealth and riches they pamper themselves till their *eyes stand out with fatness,* Psal. lxxiii. 7; their wrinkles are filled up with fat, which makes their faces shine. *They overpass the deeds of the wicked;* either, they go beyond the very heathen themselves in wickedness, Ezek. v. 6, 7; or rather, they escape the hardships and sufferings that others undergo, Psal. lxxiii. 5—8, they escape

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better than others; or they slightly pass over judgments threatened. *They judge not the cause of the fatherless;* such whom even the law of nature commits to their patronage, they either disregard them, or wrong and injure them, either by refusing them a fair hearing, Isa. i. 23, or giving wrong sentence against them in courts of judicature, Zech. vii. 10, expressly forbidden, Exod. xxii. 22. *Yet they prosper;* things go well with them, they live happily, according to their desire, *prosperum scelus,* Job xxi. 7, &c.; or, that they *might* prosper, viz. that God might bless them.

b ver. 9. Mal. 3. 5. 29 [b]Shall I not visit for these *things?* saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

It is expressed as a thing taken for granted, he certainly will. Can I be a God, and wink at such things? It cannot be. See this explained ver. 9.

‖ Or, *Astonishment and filthiness.* c ch. 23. 14. Hos. 6. 10. 30 ¶ ‖ A wonderful and [c]horrible thing is committed in the land;

So prodigious or stupendous a crime, that it is beyond the thought or apprehension of man to conceive, much more to express; and so abominable, that a man would even loathe the thoughts of. What this is we have in the next verse. *The land,* Heb. *this land,* aggravating the greatness of the wonder, that such a thing should be in such a land: see Isa. xxvi. 10.

d ch. 14. 14. & 23. 25, 26. Ezek. 13. 6. ‖ Or, *take into their hands.* e Mic. 2. 11. 31 The prophets prophesy [d]falsely, and the priests ‖ bear rule by their means; and my people [e]love *to have it* so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

The prophets prophesy falsely; either spreading and dispersing abroad the lies of their idols, particularly Baal, chap. ii. 8, or venting their lies in the name of the true God, chap. iv. 10. *The priests bear rule by their means;* by this means it comes to pass that the princes and priests are encouraged to do all their mischiefs, whether it were in corrupting judgment by bribes, or countenancing fraud and oppression, and hardening themselves against God's threatenings, or whatever else; they were encouraged by the lies of the false prophets, they, and the priests, and the princes combining, and setting themselves against the true prophets of God, chap. xxvi. 8; and thus the priests in effect take the management of all the affairs into their *own hands;* so the Heb. *take into their hands,* which intimates the authority they used in their ministry. *My people love to have it so;* they are very well pleased with the flatteries and lies of the false prophets, not being able to bear the truths that were delivered them from God, Micah ii. 11. *What will ye do in the end thereof?* q. d. Whither do you think these things will tend? You must look for nothing but utter ruin as the fruit and effect of such doings, Micah iii. 11, 12: when this city, which you look upon to be perpetuated, shall be overthrown, and you utterly perish in its ruin, how miserably will you find yourselves to be deluded by your false prophets, and disappointed in your hopes! A sad aposiopesis, concerning the exterminating of the people by the Chaldeans.

CHAP. VI.

God sendeth and strengtheneth the Babylonians against Judah, 1—5; *for her oppression and spoils,* 6—8, *and obstinacy; which provoke God's wrath and their destruction,* 9—12. *Their covetousness, false confidence, and impudence; people and priests refuse to obey God,* 13—17. *Their hypocritical worship shall not prevent their sure destruction,* 18—25. *The people called to mourn,* 26. *The prophet encouraged under their wickedness and the fruitlessness of his ministry among them,* 27—30.

cir. 612. O YE children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and

a Neh. 3. 14. set up a sign of fire in [a]Beth-haccerem:

b ch. 1. 14. & 4. 6. [b]for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction.

Children of Benjamin: he means either the inhabitants of Jerusalem, because part of it stood in the lot of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 28; or else he means all Judah, because when the ten tribes fell off, the tribe of Benjamin adhered to Judah, and was incorporated into them. If it be asked why the prophet rather speaks here to Benjamin than to Judah, the reason probably may be, because he being of Anathoth was of that tribe, and therefore mentions them as his own countrymen. *Gather yourselves to flee;* spoken either ironically, that they should set themselves in array, and make head against the enemy, that is now at hand; or rather, that they should flee away together at once, make haste out of Jerusalem in troops, as the next expressions intimate; not counselling them what they should do, viz. for succour, chap. iv. 5, 6, but rather telling them what they must expect, viz. to be forced to flee out of it, if they may escape. *Blow the trumpet in Tekoa:* q. d. Gather yourselves together by the sound of the trumpet at Tekoa, possibly alluding to the name, which signifies *trumpeting;* or rather, it being one of those fenced cities twelve miles from Jerusalem that Rehoboam built, and made exceeding strong for and with his warlike provisions, 2 Chron. xi. 6, 11, 12, and being built upon the advantage of a hill toward the north of Judea in the way that the Babylonians were to come, q. d. There furnish yourselves out of that armoury, and see if you can make head against them: an irony. A place noted in Scripture, where dwelt that Tekoitish woman that interceded with David for Absalom by the subornation of Joab, 2 Sam. xiv. 2; and also for the herdsmen of whom Amos was, Amos i. 1, and (it is probable) a place where in time of danger they were wont, by the sound of the trumpet, to summon the people together. *Set up a sign of fire:* the word used is of very large extent; *maset* is used for any thing that is lifted up, neither is there any more in the text. The LXX. also render it only a sign, and the sign *of fire* possibly is mentioned rather than any other, by a metonymy of the subject, because, partly in time of danger of invasion it is the most usual and commodious sign, being seen, in regard of its lifting or raising up of itself, at once afar off; q. d. *fire a beacon;* and a sign whereby the Benjamites themselves once found they were surprised, Judg. xx. 38, 40. 2. It is a sign soonest given of any. 3. Possibly as being a more proper sign than any other would be to the vine-dressers, that they should secure themselves in some safe place, which seems to be pointed at by the next word, *Beth-haccerem.* It signifies the house of the vineyard, probably some high tower built among the vineyards for the keeper or keepers of them to watch them, that no damage came to them, this seeming to be usual, Isa. v. 2. Or it may be the name of a town, such a one as some report to lie between Jerusalem and Tekoa, the same mentioned Neh. iii. 14, though that seems to be adjoining to Jerusalem. Whichsoever it be, it is probable it relates to some place noted for vineyards, which were wont to be planted upon hills, and lying in the way that the Chaldeans were to come; and by these two we are to understand all other places that lie in that coast. *Evil appeareth out of the north;* that they may know whence their misery will come, he doth as it were point it out with the finger: see chap. i. 14; iv. 6.

‖ Or, *dwelling at home.* 2 I have likened the daughter of Zion to a ‖ comely and delicate *woman.*

Woman: this supplement is not in the text; they that approve it render the epithet *comely* variously, for one *dwelling at home,* as the Hebrew *nava* doth also signify, Hab. ii. 5; and so the word *delicate* serves to explain it, as showing the reason of her tarrying at home; not as a good housewife, discreetly guiding and governing her affairs at home, as she is described, Prov. xxxi. 10, &c.; Tit. ii. 5; but through her delicacy exposing herself to all wantonness and voluptuousness, tarrying at home to give entertainment to her paramours: or she, through her state and pride, is so delicate and nice that she will not set her foot out of door, Deut. xxviii. 56; possibly occasioned by the great wealth and riches that God had blessed Jerusalem with. This may also point at Judah's effeminacy, that will be so dispirited as not to have courage to oppose the adversary, but easily taken in her dwelling and habitation. Others, as a *beautiful shepherdess.* Some there are that rather choose to supply the defect by the word *land* or *pasture,* as being that which is greatly desirable by shepherds, as if she were some comely shepherdess, solacing herself in her delightful

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pastures; see Ezek. xxxiv. 14; and so it may not be without some allusion to the next verse, where her enemies are called by the names of *shepherds*, as being enticed by the pleasantness of her land.

3 The shepherds with their flocks shall
c 2 Kings 25. 1, 4. ch. 4. 17. come unto her; c they shall pitch *their* tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place.

The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her: the prophet here proceeds in his metaphor, and possibly the rather, because he chooseth to speak in the style of his own education, which may also give some countenance to the supplement of *pasture* or *land* in the former verse instead of *woman:* the meaning is, the Chaldean princes, with their armies, as so many flocks, shall come into this pleasant land; see chap. xii. 10; in which expression there is something of a scoff, as chap. iv. 16, 17. *They shall pitch their tents against her round about;* they shall so place their warlike tents, as to form a siege to begirt her round, chap. i. 15; Ezek. iv. 2. *Every one in his place*, Heb. *hand*, i. e. near hand, or *beside* or *near one another;* thus 2 Chron. xxi. 16; Job i. 14; thus *hand* is taken for *place;* i. e. each one in his quarter or station, not a man but shall do his part, and shall be skilful and powerful to destroy wherever he comes: it intimates also that every thing shall be so much at the enemy's own disposal, that they shall be able to choose their own quarters; they shall place their army in wings, and troops, and regiments, as they see good, to their best advantage, to be helpful one unto another, as *shepherds* are wont to do their flocks; or, they shall fight in several parties, and each destroy his part assigned him through the whole country, and they shall join as it were in one body against Jerusalem.

4 d Prepare ye war against her; arise,
d ch. 51. 27. Joel 3. 9. e ch. 15. 8. and let us go up e at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out.

Prepare ye war against her: the prophet now passeth from his metaphor to tell them plainly what he means by the *shepherds*, viz. warriors: some make these the words of the Chaldeans, making preparations for their invasion, and it may be by some of their accustomed rites that they used before war; but they seem more probably to be the words of God inviting them, and calling them into this work, therefore in the Hebrew it is, *Sanctify* war against her, chap. xxii. 7; he speaks unto such as he had sanctified or set apart for this work, his *sanctified ones*, Isa. xiii. 3. *Arise, and let us go up at noon:* this shows how ready they will be to obey God's call; the like we read Isa. xxi. 5; and therefore they are said to *go* or *march* up at *noon*, not only to note their daringness, as needing no stratagems, or strength, or needing to stay for help, but rather to show their forwardness to march on without stop or stay; they would not burn daylight, but be speedy in their work, and they would take the first opportunity, whether morning or noon, day or night, as the next verse. The next words seem to strengthen this sense; *Woe unto us! for the day goeth away*, &c.: q. d. We delay, and tarry too long, and the day spends apace, we lose time, let us make haste about our work; expressing their greediness after their prey, as soldiers use to do: or this *Woe unto us* may be some form of imprecation, either against God or men, which kind of speeches are usual with soldiers when they are chafed, and going upon some sudden onset or exploit; though not a few make it the complaint of the prophet in the name of the people, foreseeing how their night of affliction hasted on, their joyful days being as it were gone, Amos viii. 9, 10. But the former seems best to agree with the scope. *The shadows of the evening are stretched out;* they were so eagerly set upon it, that they watched the very lengthening of the shadow, which shows the approach of the evening, Psal. cix. 23. See Hab. i. 8.

5 Arise, and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces.

Let us go by night, or, *this night.* They were set upon it, they would lose neither day nor night; which shows that they were extraordinarily stirred up by God in this expedition. *Let us destroy her palaces:* this was the bait or motive that they propounded to themselves, viz. to have the spoil of all the stately palaces and rich houses of the nobles and great ones.

6 ¶ For thus hath the Lord of hosts
‖ Or, pour out the engine of shot. said, Hew ye down trees, and ‖ cast a mount against Jerusalem: this *is* the city to be visited; she *is* wholly oppression in the midst of her.

Said, viz. to the Chaldeans. Here God declares whence they have their commission: q. d. They come not up on their own heads: see chap. v. 14, 15. God would have the Jews to know that they have not so much to do with the Chaldeans as with him; that they are his rod to scourge them for their sins, chap. i. 15, 16. See 2 Kings xviii. 25. And thus God is said to hiss for such whom he will employ in such work, Isa. v. 26; vii. 18. And he styles himself the *Lord of hosts*, to show that it is in vain to contend in battle with them, whom he sends forth, and will be, as it were, the captain of their hosts. *Hew ye down trees*, Heb. *a tree*, collectively taken: q. d. Cut them down all, as one tree, not sparing their very fruit trees, which indeed were to be spared in such a case, Deut. xx. 19; either such as lie in the way of your march, or all round about Jerusalem; or such as you may have need of there or elsewhere for your use, either to raise up works against the strong places, Deut. xx. 20, or to make other instruments of war. *Cast a mount;* throw up one continued trench, as a mount round about it. See on Isa. xxxvii. 33. Heb. *pour out the engine;* of that see 2 Sam. xx. 15. *To be visited;* God is said to visit sometimes in mercy, Gen. l. 24; Zeph. ii. 7, and sometimes in judgment, as here, and chap. v. 9; xxiii. 2. They are ripe for it, Ezek. vii. 10—12; see 1 Thess. ii. 16; and it is decreed against them, and ready to come upon them, chap. xxiii. 12; Hos. ix. 7. All attempts have failed, and now there is no remedy. *She is wholly oppression;* in the abstract, she doth nothing but oppress; there are found in her all kinds of oppression and injustice; a synecdoche for all other cruelties, 2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4; Ezek. vii. 23; even in that city which was once full of judgment, and righteousness lodged in it, Isa. i. 21, swallowed up with oppression.

7 f As a fountain casteth out her waters,
f Is. 57. 20. g Ps. 55. 9, 10, 11. ch. 20. 8. Ezek. 7. 11, 23. so she casteth out her wickedness: g violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually *is* grief and wounds.

In this verse God aggravates their sin of oppression, mentioned in the former. *As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness;* a metaphor, to express how natural all manner of wickedness is to her, how full she is of it, and how uncessant in it, noting her impudence, a fountain being not able to retain its water; and the expression of *casting it out* seems to imply her violence in her filthiness, as it is said of the sea, that it *casteth out* mire and dirt, Isa. lvii. 20, and favoured by the next clause. *Violence and spoil is heard in her:* q. d. This is all she busieth herself about, chap. xx. 8. It is the general complaint of her inhabitants. *Before me continually is grief and wounds*, viz. that the poor sustain: wherever I go or look, I can hear and see nothing but the sad complaints and grievances of the poor, lamenting over oppression and cruelties that are used against them, Psal. lxix. 26, this being so expressly against God's command, Exod. xxii. 22—24, &c.; Isa. iii. 14, 15; James v. 4; for this refers rather to their sin than to their sufferings from the enemy, as some would carry it.

8 Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem,
h Ezek. 23. 18. Hos. 9. 12. † Heb. *be loosed, or disjointed.* lest h my soul †depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

Be thou instructed, Heb. *corrected:* q. d. By the correction thou hast felt, and what is threatened, be persuaded to repentance before it be too late, Prov. xxix. 15. God doth here *in the midst of judgment remember mercy*, as it were suddenly putting a stop to his fury, seeking if by any means it may yet be prevented by their repentance: q. d. I would yet willingly spare them, if it might be. *Lest my soul depart from thee*, Heb. *be disjointed;* a most emphatical metaphor, whereby God would express how great grief it is to him to withdraw himself from them, could it possibly be avoided, (his great affection to them being here expressed by *soul*, which is the seat of it, Psal. xlii. 1, 2,) even

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like the separating one limb from another: hereby is intimated the near communion that God hath with the faithful, and how ready he is to return, if they will return. *Lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited;* lest he make them not a people.

9 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall throughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets.

Though gleaning be a term proper for all kind of harvest, yet the word used here is appropriated to the vintage, and implies the thorough riddance that the Chaldeans shall make, contrary to the law for gathering the vintage, though it may seem to allude to it, Lev. xix. 10. Judah shall be gleaned over and over, till there be a full end, none left; as the Israelites gleaned the Benjamites, Judg. xx. 45; for thus they *picked them up* at several times, both before, 2 Kings xxiv. 2, and also at the time of Zedekiah's reign, 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7, 11, 18, 19; and this seems to be intimated in the next words. See Hab. i. 9. *Turn back thine hand;* as much as to say, they should not be content with one spoiling, but they should go back a second and a third time, again and again, to carry away both persons and spoil, leaving nothing behind them worth carrying away, chap. lii. 28—30; the first carrying away being as the vintage, the second the gleaning; carrying away first the principal, and afterwards the more inferior sort. *As a grape-gatherer into the baskets;* as the grapegatherers do, filling one basket after another. Whether these be the words of the Babylonians calling upon and stirring up one another to do it, as some; or the words of God to the Babylonians, as most; it comes much to the same thing; for what they did was by God's commission.

10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their [i]ear *is* uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, [k]the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

i ch. 7. 26. Acts 7. 51. See Exod. 6. 12.
k ch. 20. 8.

Give warning, Heb. *make protestation;* noting with what earnestness the prophet would bespeak them in his warning of them: see chap. xi. 7. The prophet taking notice of their obstinacy, speaks as one astonished, and highly makes complaint, being greatly grieved that he can find none that will take warning; the like chap. vii. 23, 24; he labours to persuade, but all is in vain; they turn a deaf ear to him, as the next expression intimates. *Their ear is uncircumcised;* a figurative kind of speech frequent with the prophets: an *uncircumcised ear* signifying the rejecting of instruction; an *uncircumcised heart,* an obstinate and rebellious will: hence circumcision was for a testimony of obedience; and therefore the prophet doth tacitly insinuate their falseness to God, to whom they had promised to be obedient, 2 Kings xi. 17; xxiii. 3. And the Scripture calls those that are void of the fear of God, and carried out to all manner of lusts, *uncircumcised,* Ezek. xliv. 7, 9; for uncircumcision was abominable among the Jews; so that it notes both their sin and their shame, their ear being stopped, unfit for hearing, as if it were with a foreskin or film over it, Acts vii. 51. *They cannot hearken:* the prophet doth not here lessen their crimes by their inability and want of power, but rather aggravates it, inasmuch as they had brought themselves under that incapacity by their obstinacy and wilfulness; as a drunken man that hath deprived himself of his reason by excess, renders the want of his understanding the more inexcusable. *A reproach;* either they reproach it in the messenger's mouth, Luke xi. 45, or rather they laugh at it and scorn it, they cannot bear counsel, they look upon reproving them to be reproaching them; they take no delight in hearing such things: a further reason of their impotency and obstinacy; all their admonitions and instructions seemed insipid, and therefore were they so stupid, according to the next words, Prov. xv. 12. See chap. v. 31; 2 Tim. iv. 3.

11 Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; [l]I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out [m]upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with *him that is* full of days.

l ch. 20. 9.
m ch. 9. 21.

Therefore, Heb. *And;* which seems to be a better connexion; for that which putteth him upon this work seems rather to be that Spirit of prophecy that is in him than any consideration drawn from them. *I am full of the fury of the Lord;* I am, as it were, filled with the fire of God's wrath and curses against this people, which I am forced to discharge myself of; a metonymy of the subject. See Ezek. iii. 3; chap. iv. 19. He doth not only complain of their stupidity, as in the former verse, but stirs up his indignation against them. *I am weary with holding in;* but he can contain himself no longer, which implies his great unwillingness to denounce these curses: q. d. The wrath of God, by the impulse of his Spirit, acting so violently with mine, that it will break out: see the like Job xxxii. 18, 19. Whereby it appears the prophet is not carried on by his own private spirit, but by the Spirit of God; he hath no delight in it, but is forced to be the messenger himself of his wrath; therefore if he be sharp against them, they must not impute it to him, but to the Spirit of God, that constrains him thus to speak. *I will pour it out,* viz. in prophesying, noting the great plenty of it; a metaphor from violent rains, that we say do pour down upon the earth, chap. vii. 20; Rev. xvi. 1. *Upon the children abroad;* the streets being the places where usually little children are wont to sport themselves, Zech. viii. 5. The same word used Psal. viii. 2. *Upon the assembly of young men together;* their secret meetings, whether in harlots' houses, chap. v. 7, or for mirth and jollity, or to join either their strength or counsel together, which children are not capable of; for the Hebrews do not only call them youths that are past their childhood, possibly at fifteen or sixteen years of age, but men of twenty or thirty, grown to their full strength and maturity, in the flower of their years; yet it shall advantage them nothing. *The husband with the wife,* Heb. *man with woman;* the wife shall be taken as well as the husband, one sex as well as the other shall be a prey to the enemy. *The aged with him that is full of days;* not only men that may be termed old, as they may be from fifty to eighty, which are then said to be waxing old; but such as had upon the point filled up the number of their days, at the edge of the grave, Isa. lxv. 20, called very aged, as Barzillai, 2 Sam. xix. 32, 34, 35. The sense is, that all sorts, from the children to the decrepit old man, had so corrupted their ways, see ver. 13, that their condition was desperate, and God would bring an enemy upon them should spare or pity none, of what sex or age soever.

12 And [n]their houses shall be turned unto others, *with their* fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD.

n Deut. 28. 30. ch. 8. 10.

Their houses shall be turned unto others, i. e. their houses and their lands shall be devolved or turned over to strangers, chap. viii. 10, even that land which they thought had been entailed upon them, and they so firmly fixed in for ever, Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14. *Their wives;* their most desirable things; howbeit it need not be restrained precisely to wives, the Hebrew signifying *women* largely, chap. vii. 18, comprising *maids, wives,* or *concubines,* and this according to the threatening, Deut. xxviii. 30; chap. viii. 10. *I will stretch out my hand,* viz. to smite, to give you a sorer blow, Isa. v. 25; a synecdoche of the kind, spoken after the manner of men. Here the prophet gives them the reason of this their unexpected calamity, that they might not think it an impossibility; namely, because God was become their enemy.

13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one *is* given to [o]covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

o Is. 56. 11. ch. 8. 10. & 14. 18. & 23. 11. Mic. 3. 5, 11.

From the least of them; not respecting so much their age as degree and quality, poor and rich; the prophet notes the generality of their corruption as the reason of God's severity against them, as ver. 6; observing also that it was

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even among the greatest, who ought to have given better examples, no soundness from head to foot. *Covetousness;* in which possibly all their wickednesses, as cruelty, oppression, injustice, &c., may be comprised, it being the root of all evil, 1 Tim. vi. 10, and may also speak the justice of God, in the Chaldeans taking them and all their substance away, that had by violence and fraud wrested it from others, Micah ii. 2. *Dealeth falsely,* Heb. *doing falsehood,* as if that were their whole work, the proper and peculiar sin of the priests and prophets, to deceive the people, and to flatter them by false visions, as in the next verse; not that they were not also guilty of the other sins, Isa. lvi. 11, and the princes and people of this, Micah iii. 9; chap. v. 31, for they were all involved in the same wickedness; but the prophet mentions those sins that were most peculiar to each party. See the same chap. viii. 10.

[p] ch. 8. 11. Ezek. 13. 10. † Heb. *breaker,* or, *breach.* [q] ch. 4. 10. & 14. 13. & 23. 17.

14 They have [p] healed also the † hurt *of the daughter* of my people slightly, [q] saying, Peace, peace; when *there is* no peace.

They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly: this refers peculiarly to the prophets; either slighting or making light of these threatenings, tending to the reproach either, 1. Of the prophets of God, bringing their message into contempt; or, 2. The people, deceiving of them, and rendering their hopes vain, chap. viii. 11. Or here the prophet shows wherein their false dealing consists, viz. in daubing over their misery and danger that was coming on them, by persuading them that it should not come, or if it did, it would be easily cured; as some physicians do with their patients, that make light of a wound, and so neglect the true method of cure; but either by lenitives give some ease for the present, by a superficial skinning over a sore while the corruption is in it; or stupefactives, making them senseless, not feeling their pain, chap. xxiii. 14; Ezek. xiii. 10; xvi. 22; and so the prophet makes this the cause of their last destruction. *Saying, Peace, peace;* the Chaldeans shall not come, all things shall be prosperous with you; all kind of prosperity being included in the word *peace.* They promise you peace, but you shall come short of it, as in the next words.

[r] ch. 3. 3. & 8. 12.

15 Were they [r] ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time *that* I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

Were they, viz. the false prophets, *ashamed?* Some read it actively, as sometimes it is taken, Did they put the people to shame? but that is not so proper here; it rather notes how bold and confident, or rather impudent, they were in their flatteries, and deceiving the people, a great aggravation of their sin. The form of the interrogation chargeth them home with the guilt, as do also the next words, *neither could they blush;* q. d. they had not the least show of shame, usually discovered by blushing. *Committed abomination;* or, the thing to be abominated, (a metonymy of the effect,) both by encouraging the people, and joining with them in their idolatries. See chap. iii. 3. *Therefore they shall fall among them that fall;* therefore they shall perish with those whom they have deceived, as in the following expressions. *To fall* signifies to *be slain,* Psal. lxiii. 10; Luke xxi. 24. *Visit them,* viz. punish them, inflict punishment on them: see ver. 6.

[s] Is. 8. 20. ch. 18. 15. Mal. 4. 4. Luke 16. 29. [t] Matt. 11. 29.

16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the [s] old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find [t] rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein.*

Having told the false prophets their doom, he now turns his speech to the people, and gives them counsel; for he rather propounds than commands, by a metaphor taken from travellers, that being in doubt of their way, do stand still, pause, and consider, whether the direction they have received from some ignorant person or false guide be right or not. *The old paths,* Heb. *paths of antiquity,* such as their godly forefathers of old were wont to walk in, the *ancient paths,* chap. xviii. 15. Or, *the oracles of God,* what directions his word gives, Isa. viii. 20. Or, *the providence of God.* Observe what hath been God's ways and method in times past, with reference to sin and punishment, Deut. iv. 3, 4; Judg. v. 6, 8; chap. xxii. 15, 16, and what have been wont to be the best courses, called here the *good way,* or the best way to continue mercies and prevent judgments, Deut. xxxii. 7, &c.: see 1 Thess. v. 21. *Walk therein;* when you have found what was best and most prosperous, keep it, stick to it. *Ye shall find rest;* you will find God to stand by you, and be a sanctuary to you, Deut. xxxiii. 12, 29. See Matt. xi. 29. You will find things mend with you; it will be well with you, as it hath been with others; you will be satisfied and quiet; you will not doubt any longer which way to follow: see 1 Kings xviii. 21. *We will not walk therein;* it notes their great wilfulness and obstinacy, that though the prophets had directed them in the right way, and though they knew others had experimented it to be so, yet they would not be persuaded to walk in it, but deliberately refused those favours offered, Isa. viii. 11—13; chap. xviii. 11, 12.

[u] Is. 21. 11. & 56. 1. ch. 25. 4. Ezek. 3. 17. Hab. 2. 1.

17 Also I set [u] watchmen over you, *saying,* Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.

Watchmen, viz. prophets and messengers, that sought their good, and endeavoured to prevent their miseries by foretelling what was coming upon them, Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 7. A metaphor from watchmen, that are usually set upon high places to espy out dangers afar off. *The sound of the trumpet;* either the voice of his prophets, which is compared to a trumpet, Isa. lviii. 1, intimating his loud crying upon the account of imminent danger; for men do not use to sound the trumpet till danger be approaching; or the trumpet of the enemy, chap. iv. 19, 21. *We will not hearken;* more of their obstinacy suitable to their carriage, ver. 16.

18 ¶ Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what *is* among them.

Hear, ye nations: he calls upon the nations round about to be as so many spectators of his severity against Judah, though they were his own people. 1. Partly to vindicate the justice of his proceedings, that they may not think him too severe. 2. Partly to shame them, if thereby he may bring them to repentance; and therefore he makes them witnesses as well of their sin as of their punishment, ver. 19. Besides, 3. It is a secret upbraiding them, as if the nations were more ready to understand than they. *Know, O congregation;* either of Israel, and then the next words must be *which* are among them; or rather, of all nations, as supposing them gathered all together, Psal. vii. 7. God is willing that all the world should be witness of the equity of his proceedings. *What is among them;* or, *that which is among* them; the relative put for the antecedent; either the height of their wickedness, or the severity of their judgments; understand it either way, or both ways, and then it is the greatness of their punishment, as the effect of the greatness of their sins.

[x] Is. 1. 2. [y] Prov. 1. 31.

19 [x] Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even* [y] the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

Hear, O earth; the *inhabitants of the earth;* or else God having spoken to the rational, he now speaks to the very senseless creatures to observe his proceedings, Ezek. xxxvi. 4. *I will bring evil;* the Chaldean army, with all the direful effects of it. *The fruit of their thoughts:* q. d. They may thank themselves for what is come upon them, being the fruit of all these contrivances and wicked imaginations that their hearts were full of, Prov. i. 29—31; see Isa. lix. 7; chap. iv. 14; by which phrase is also intimated that their sins were not some slight oversights, but meditated and digested wickedness; and therefore God will bring upon them the just punishment for their doings. *My words;* those messages that I so frequently and earnestly

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sent unto them by my prophets, Prov. i. 24, 25. *But rejected it;* as it were bidding open defiance to me, scorning to be ruled by me.

20 [z]To what purpose cometh there to me incense [a]from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? [b]your burnt offerings *are* not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.

[z] Ps. 40. 6. & 50. 7, 8, 9. Is. 1. 11. & 66. 3. Amos 5. 21. Mic. 6. 6, &c.
[a] Is. 60. 6.
[b] ch. 7. 21.

To what purpose? an interrogation of expostulation and contempt, wherein God by the prophet meets with their hypocrisy, who pleased themselves with their outward oblations and sacrifices, and thought God would be pleased with them too; but he tells them plainly they are to no purpose; as he speaks particularly in the close of the verse, chap. vii. 21, 22; Ezek. xx. 39. *Incense from Sheba:* that this was the product of Sheba, a country in Arabia Felix, to which country frankincense was peculiar, see on Isa. lx. 6. *The sweet cane,* or, *cane,* i. e. good, or the best, cane; the article ה hath the force of a superlative, for *cane* that is good; the Hebrews have no degrees of comparison; the same that is mentioned as an ingredient in the holy oil, Exod. xxx. 23. See Isa. xliii. 24. *From a far country;* not that it was brought from the remotest parts of the world, as from India, as some; for it was known to the Jews in Moses's time, Exod. xxx. 23; but because it grew not in their own land, but was fetched or brought to them from Sheba, Isa. lx. 6, where it did grow, as Diodorus testifies, lib. 3. p. 125, and Strabo, lib. 16; 1 Kings x. 2, compared with Joel iii. 8; who is called the *queen of the south,* and to *come from the uttermost parts of the earth,* Matt. xii. 42, because the South Sea did bound the country. To what purpose art thou at this trouble and charge to fetch these ingredients for thy incense? *Are not acceptable;* not likely to atone me; they will not be for acceptance; I cannot take delight in them, Hos. ix. 4, as the next expression: q. d. Away with these childish trifles, whereby you think to pacify me. By these species he understands the whole legal worship.

21 Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will lay stumblingblocks before this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish.

I will lay stumbling-blocks; God gives this name to all the occasions of the Jews' ruin; he exposeth them, or suffereth such things to be laid in their way, as shall be the occasion of their destruction; such things which they shall not get over. Or an hypallage, I will bring destruction upon them; as the Hebrews use to speak, They have sent a *city into the fire,* i. e. They have sent *fire into the city.* Or God doth here compare his judgments to traps, wherein they shall be taken, which they thought easily to have evaded. What these stumbling-blocks are seem to be expressed in the following verses. *The fathers and the sons together;* as well the fathers, that have more prudence and policy, as the children, that are more inadvertent, or possibly may count themselves less guilty, shall perish by these stumbling-blocks; no recovering for themselves, Isa. viii. 14, 15. *The neighbour and his friend;* men of all sorts and conditions, the greatest intimates and associates, though all lay their heads together for counsel, yet shall they not be able to help one another, but a promiscuous destruction there shall be, ver. 11; chap. xiii. 14.

22 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, a people cometh from the [c]north country, and a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the earth.

[c] ch. 1. 15. & 5. 15. & 10. 22. & 50. 41, 42, 43.

Now the prophet is showing what these destructive stumbling-blocks shall be, of which he had prophesied forty years already, and yet they would not be warned. *The north country:* see ver. 1. *A great nation shall be raised;* God shall stir up the Chaldeans like a great storm or tempest, chap. i. 15; xxv. 32. See Ezek. xxiii. 22. *From the sides of the earth;* the remote and uttermost parts of the Babylonian territories, though at the greatest distance, yet God will bring them: which may note the greatness of God's displeasure against Judah, this circumstance being noted among the curses, Deut. xxviii. 49. See Isa. v. 25, 26, &c.; chap. v. 15.

23 They shall lay hold on bow and spear; they *are* cruel, and have no mercy; their voice [d]roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses, set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion.

[d] Is. 5. 30.

They shall lay hold on bow and spear; or, They shall *carry;* they shall not want military ammunition of all sorts for the despatch of this great work; synecdochically expressed for all sorts of weapons. So Psal. xxxv. 2, 3. *Have no mercy;* see chap. l. 42; not be entreated, or have any pity to sex or age, poor or rich, chap. xxi. 7. See the like Isa. xiii. 17, 18. And this was as duly executed as here prophesied, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17. *Their voice roareth like the sea;* which, as it is very violent, so it causeth great consternation by its noise, compared to the roaring of the devils, James ii. 19. Possibly it may intimate, they would not hearken to the voice of his prophets, now they shall hear the terrifying noise of armies, like the roaring of the sea. *They ride upon horses;* which is a creature in especial manner adapted by God for war, as he is described, Job xxxix. 19, 20, &c.; implying their speed, strength, and fierceness, chap. l. 42. *Set in array;* the whole nation set as it were in *battalia* against them, that they may perceive they have to do with soldiers. The LXX. reading אש *esh, fire,* for איש *ish, man,* render it, as fire to the war. *O daughter of Zion,* or Jerusalem; for these two titles are promiscuously used for the same place; and the term *daughter* is often given to cities and countries, as Psal. xlv. 12; cxxxvii. 8; Isa. xxiii. 12; xlvii. 1.

24 We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble: [e]anguish hath taken hold of us, *and* pain, as of a woman in travail.

[e] ch. 4. 31. & 13. 21. & 49. 24. & 50. 43.

We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble. The prophet personates the people's affections: q. d. At the very report of the approach and fierceness of this people we are dismayed and discouraged, our hearts melt within us; all warlike courage is taken from us, 2 Sam. iv. 1; or he modestly reckons himself among the rest. *Anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in travail;* a description of the exquisiteness of their sufferings, chap. xiii. 21.

25 Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy *and* fear *is* on every side.

Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; expressing the great danger that there would be every where, there would be no stirring out of their fenced cities or houses, chap. viii. 14, but great danger to them that go out, and to those that come in, they would find death every where; now seek out some by-ways, venture not in common roads, Judg. v. 6. *The sword of the enemy and fear is on every side:* the language of one speaking to another: it seems to be a proverbial speech, frequently used to express unavoidble dangers, Psal. xxxi. 13; chap. xx. 3, 10; xlix. 29. All places will be full of soldiers, so that all attempts will be very difficult, Lam. v. 9.

26 ¶ O daughter of my people, [f]gird *thee* with sackcloth, [g]and wallow thyself in ashes: [h]make thee mourning, *as for* an only son, most bitter lamentation: for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us.

[f] ch. 4. 8.
[g] ch. 25. 34. Mic. 1. 10.
[h] Zech. 12. 10.

O daughter of my people, i. e. O my people, that art beloved as a *daughter. Gird thee with sackcloth, and wallow thyself in ashes:* he calls upon them to mourning in the deepest manner wherein they can express it, girding with sackcloth, close mourning, chap. iv. 8, wallowing in ashes, chap. xxv. 34; Micah i. 10, lying low in humiliation, and prostrating themselves before him: he further describes the nature of it in the following expression, such as is for the death of a child, a son, an only son, Amos viii. 10; and then seems to sum it up in this bitter, *most bitter lamentation,* Heb. *wailing of bitternesses,* noting the highest degrees of lamentation; he seems to want words to express it. See chap. ix. 17, 18. And it is likely the prophet doth not so designedly exhort them to repent, as rather describe the state of persons in a lost and despairing condition. For here the prophet takes upon himself the person of one de-

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nouncing war; and sackcloth and ashes is often mentioned where there is no hope of conversion or repentance. *The spoiler;* the king of Babylon and his army, chap. iv. 8.

[l] ch. 1. 18. & 15. 20.

27 I have set thee *for* a tower *and* [l]a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way.

Here God speaks by way of encouragement to the prophet, and tells him he had made him a fortified tower, that he might both discover the carriages of his people, which is one use of a high tower, Isa. xxi. 5, 8; Hab. ii. 1; and also to assure him, though they shall make several attempts against him, yet he shall be kept safe, as in a castle or fortress, chap. xv. 20. *That thou mayest know and try their way;* their courses, actions, and manners, and which way they stand affected; thou mayest bring all to thy strict observation and scrutiny, as goldsmiths or refiners do metals; for so is the word *try* used, Psal. lxvi. 10, and elsewhere. Hereby he shall be encouraged to reprove them more freely, and with authority, because God doth promise to defend him, that they shall not hurt him; God will give him prudence to see what is amiss, and undauntedness to oppose it.

[k] ch. 5. 23.

[l] ch. 9. 4.

[m] Ezek. 22. 18.

28 [k]They *are* all grievous revolters, [l]walking with slanders: *they are* [m]brass and iron; they *are* all corrupters.

Grievous revolters; obstinate and refractory, Isa. xxxi. 6; chap. v. 3, 23. *Walking with slanders;* being their main business to detract from thee and the other prophets, chap. xviii. 18; xx. 10; a sin expressly forbidden, Lev. xix. 16. *They are brass and iron:* this to the end of the chapter is all metaphorical; either they are impudent, as brass doth sometimes signify, or they are obstinate and inflexible, as iron notes: see both Isa. xlviii. 4: or it signifies their corrupt estate; they are not pure metal, as silver or gold, but base and mean, as brass and iron mixed together, Ezek. xxii. 18. *They are all corrupters:* this relates to their manners; they propagate their corruption, Isa. i. 4; they strengthen one another in wickedness.

29 The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away.

The bellows are burned: the prophet prosecutes his metaphor taken from *refining of metals*, intimating herein that the prophets had spent their lungs to no purpose; see the like Psal. xxii. 15; lxix. 3; and their strength was consumed by their so much labour and pains: q. d. The terror of the Lord is as a fire in my throat. *The lead is consumed;* some read it, the *lead* was entire, viz. their dross did still remain in them, the lead put for their dross; but I see no reason for nor need of this reading, but rather hereby is understood either that means which was used to prevail with them, his words compared to *lead* for the weight of them, and the use of them; or the judgments, which were heavy as *lead*, that God mixed among them, the more easily to prevail with them; it was all upon them; as lead is used in melting silver, that it may melt the easier; it is all wasted, and doth no good. *The founder melteth in vain;* let the artist use his greatest skill and industry, yet is it all in vain; he can make nothing of it: the prophets did but lose their labour in all the pains they took, Psal. lviii. 5, after they had wearied themselves. *The wicked are not plucked away,* or drawn away, as the word is, Josh. viii. 16; Judg. xx. 32. Their dross and corruption, their wickedness and filthiness, is not removed, Isa. xxxii. 6: for wicked may be read wickedness.

[n] Is. 1. 22. ‖ Or, *Refuse silver.*

30 [n]‖Reprobate silver shall *men* call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.

Reprobate silver; or, *Refuse silver;* such as will be rejected in payments; they are not to be purged or reformed. *Shall men call them;* or, *be called*, i. e. they shall be esteemed such as will not pass for current before God or good men, Lam. iii. 45. *Because the Lord hath rejected them;* the prophet gives the reason of their being accounted such refuse stuff, viz. because God, who knew their hypocrisy in boasting of themselves, had rejected them, Lam. v. 22; therefore every one else would.

CHAP. VII.

A call to true repentance, 1—7; and not, living in theft, murder, adultery, perjury, &c., to trust in the outward worship and temple of God, by the example of Shiloh, 8—15. The prophet is forbid to pray for them, 16. Their idolatry, and its judgment, 17—20. Their sacrifices rejected, and obedience required, 21—28. They are called to mourn for their abominations in Tophet, and their judgments, 29—34.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, cir. 600.

See chap. i. 2. This is the title of a new sermon, much of the nature of the former, which reacheth to chap. x.

[a] ch. 26. 2.

2 [a]Stand in the gate of the LORD'S house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all *ye of* Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.

Stand in the gate, viz. the east gate, which was chiefly frequented; this being the public place of going out and coming in, and where the people were then wont to assemble, Jer. xxvi. 2, 10; and he is said to *stand,* because he was to execute the office of a preacher, chap. xxvi. 2, not of a *judge,* where the posture would rather have been *sitting. The Lord's house;* the temple, ver. 4, 10. *Proclaim there:* the place notes the vanity of their confidence, who, notwithstanding all their provocations, yet placed their safety much in the privileges of the temple, glorying much in that; and the manner, *proclaiming,* signifies both the authority by which he spake, and the divulging of what he spake plainly and boldly, which as it was in a public place, viz. the court of the people, not the court of the priests, (from which it is distinguished, 2 Chron. iv. 9,) and therefore said at these gates, viz. the several gates that were in the wall of the court, of which there were six, three on the south side and three on the north; so, possibly, it might be at some public time of the people's resorting thither from all quarters, Psal. cxxii. 4, 5, when all the males were to meet, Exod. xxiii. 17; see John vii. 37; and therefore said, *all ye of Judah. This word;* the message that I send thee with. *The word of the Lord:* see chap. ii. 4.

[b] ch. 18. 11. & 26. 13.

3 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, [b]Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

Amend your ways and your doings, i. e. mend your manners. *Amending* signifies both to turn from our evil works, and make our good better. *I will cause you to dwell in this place;* you shall not go into captivity, implying that otherwise they should; he will continue their habitations to them from age to age, as ver. 7. The doing of a thing in Scripture often implies the continuance of it: Lev. xxvi. 11, *I will set my tabernacle,* i. e. I will continue it.

[c] Mic. 3. 11.

4 [c]Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, *are* these.

Because this was God's house, wherein he had promised to dwell, and that for ever, Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14, they flattered themselves that he could dwell no where else, and would not depart, and certainly would not suffer the Chaldeans to destroy this, and therefore that no evil could befall them, as they promised themselves, Micah iii. 11; therefore the prophet cautions them not to deceive themselves in trusting to the temple and its buildings, as the two courts, and house, and holy of holies, implied in the word *these,* which he doth as it were point to with his finger; (for where the prophets speak distinctly of the form of the temple, they reckon the court, where the people did sacrifice, and the holy place, or house, whereinto the priests only did enter, and the oracle, or holy of holies, wherein was the ark of the covenant, and into which only the high priest entered, and that but once a year;) which these hypocrites looked upon themselves secured by, as it were, by a treble wall, fort, or bulwark, that they could not miscarry; but

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he would have them to know that neither these, nor the services belonging to them, will be able to secure them, ver. 8; chap. iv. 14; and it is likely their false prophets did thus persuade them, whose prophecies he calls here these *lying words*; but God will have them know that he doth not choose a nation for the place's sake, but the place for the nation's sake; the like caution the apostle gives them, 1 Cor. x. 2, &c. The emphasis that may be in this threefold repetition seems rather to relate to the confident and often reiterated brags and boasts of the *temple* that were in their mouths, than the worth and excellency of it, in regard of God's owning it. *These;* the prophet, standing in the gate at which the people entered, doth as it were point at the several buildings appertaining to the *temple*, viz. the *courts*, *house*, *oracle*, &c.

5 For if ye throughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye throughly
[d] ch. 22. 3. [d]execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;

He tells them, it is not their vain confidence in their privileges, and boasting of the temple, but only their serious and thorough repentance in turning to God, both in point of piety and equity, that can secure them. *Between a man and his neighbour*, i. e. impartially among one another, between man and man, without favour or hatred.

6 *If* ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not
[e] Deut. 6. 14, 15. & 8. 19. & 11. 28. ch. 13. 10. innocent blood in this place, [e]neither walk after other gods to your hurt:

Here they are cautioned against three sins that this people were generally addicted to, oppression, blood, and idolatry; and he instanceth in the worst of oppressions, viz. of such as God hath more especially taken into his immediate protection, because these are most void of help, and most obnoxious to injuries; the *stranger*, Exod. xxii. 21, the *fatherless*, and *widow*, ver. 22—24; see them all three together, Deut. x. 18; xxvii. 19: see on Isa. x. 1, 2: and where God speaks of right administering of justice, he usually makes mention of these three, to prove the integrity and impartiality of justice; and though this may more properly respect the princes and great ones, yet I conceive here the prophet doth not so restrain it. *Shed not innocent blood*, either by murder or unrighteous sentence; being one of those sins in special mentioned for which God expresseth his high displeasure, and will send the Chaldeans upon them, 2 Kings xxiv. 4. *In this place;* either in this city in special, or the whole land in general; see ver. 3; and there he would show what a foolish thing it is that they should boast of their security in this place, and yet shed blood, which pollutes every place, Numb. xxxv. 31, &c. *Neither walk after other gods;* abstain from your idolatrous courses, and depart not from my pure and uncorrupted worship, unto your superstitious and hypocritical service; and he adds *to your hurt*, or your *own* hurt, to show that they will be the only sufferers by it, not God, ver. 19. God is neither benefited nor damaged by any thing that we can do, Job xxxv. 6—8.

[f] Deut. 4. 40. [g] ch. 3. 18. 7 [f]Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in [g]the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

Then, i. e. upon this condition, that you will return unto me, then either I will establish and fix you in the land; or, as anciently read, *sachanti* in *kal*, I will dwell, viz. amongst you in this place, otherwise not. *In this place*, viz. Judea, both in Jerusalem and the whole country, as the next words manifest. *For ever and ever*, i. e. from age to age, as your fathers did before you from the days of Joshua until now.

[h] ver. 4. [i] ch. 5. 31. & 14. 13, 14. 8 ¶ Behold, [h]ye trust in [i]lying words, that cannot profit.

Behold; take notice of it, and think of it seriously. *Ye trust in lying words;* either flattering yourselves with your own conceits, whereby, in your discourses, you strengthen one another; or depending upon the delusions of your false prophets, chap. v. 31; xxiii. 26, 27; or rather, bolstering yourselves up upon your privileges or bare ceremonies, which you so much boast of, as ver. 4; all which he tells them will profit them nothing.

[k] 1 Kings 18. 21. Hos. 4. 1, 2. Zeph. 1. 5. 1 Ex. 20. 3. ver. 6. 9 [k]Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and [l]walk after other gods whom ye know not;

Here the prophet mentions divers of those sins in which they were notorious, they were *thieves*, *murderers*, *adulterers*, perjured *idolaters*, &c.: q. d. Can you think that this can be grateful unto me, or any whit advantageous to yourselves, to frequent my house, and yet retain these odious sins, as if I were a companion for thieves, murderers, &c.? *Gods whom ye know not;* such as they had set up new, and never had any experience of, and therefore could have no reason to serve them; therefore called new gods, Deut. xxxii. 17; Judg. v. 8: but of his power and goodness they had had ample proof, in their deliverance from Egypt, and the wonderful miracles and signs that God had shown them in the wilderness, and his victorious arm for them in Canaan; of which things these Jews could not be ignorant, and therefore the more inexcusable. Four of these sins respect the second table, these two last the first. The name of *Baal* is here put for all idols.

[m] Ezek. 23. 39. † Heb. *whereupon my name is called.* [n] ver. 11, 14, 30. ch. 32. 34. & 34. 15. 10 [m]And come and stand before me in this house, †[n]which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?

And come and stand before me in this house; in the temple; either as if they had done no such thing, like the whore, that wipes her mouth, and saith she hath done no wickedness, Prov. xxx. 20, noting their deep hypocrisy; or else that barely this would expiate for all their abominations, as if they could make God amends for their sins by their duties; and their posture of standing notes their service, 1 Kings x. 8; Prov. xxii. 29. *Which is called by my name;* that is acknowledged to be my house, and bears my name, dedicated to me. *We are delivered to do all these abominations;* that is, after they had appeared before God with their sacrifices, either they thought themselves safe from all danger, and freed from God's judgments, Mal. iii. 15; or rather privileged to return to all those wickednesses again, hereby noting their impudence. See Isa. i. 12, &c. LXX. read it, *we have abstained from all these abominations*, as if these were the lying words in which they trusted.

[o] Is. 56. 7. [p] Matt. 21. 13. Mark 11. 17. Luke 19. 46. 11 Is [o]this house, which is called by my name, become a [p]den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the LORD.

Robbers, Heb. *breakers through*. The word is taken in a large notion for all sorts of plunderers, whether in house, Ezek. vii. 22, or field, highway-men, Dan. xi. 14. Do you look upon this house as a sanctuary and refuge for *robbers* and *murderers?* do you esteem it so, and is it so in your eyes? so the phrase is used Numb. xiii. 33, &c.; hereby making me an abettor of all your lewdness, Matt. xxi. 13; a metaphor taken from wild beasts and mischievous persons, that do both secure themselves and hide their prey in holes and caves of the earth, Psal. x. 8, 9. *I have seen it:* q. d. As crafty as you are, you cannot hide these things from me, nor all those workings of your thoughts about them, Psal. x. 11, 13, 14; Ezek. xviii. 12. He checks their foolish vain confidences, whereby they deceive themselves, Isa. xxix. 15. God will not be blinded by all their vain oblations.

[q] Josh. 18. 1. Judg. 18. 31. [r] Deut. 12. 11. [s] 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11. Ps. 78. 60. ch. 26. 6. 12 But go ye now unto [q]my place which *was* in Shiloh, [r]where I set my name at the first, and see [s]what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.

Shiloh; a place that did belong to the tribe of Ephraim, Psal. lxxviii. 60, compare 67; the situation whereof see Judg. xxi. 19; and called *God's house*, as the temple is, 1 Sam. i. 3, 7: he sends them hither for an example, which had the same privileges and holiness with the temple; not to go thither locally, but to cast their thoughts back, and consider of it, that they might know that God's presence is not tied to places, Acts vii. 48. *Where I set my name at the first;* where I did at first give you the token and pledges of my presence among you, when you first entered into the pleasant land, noting the antiquity of Shiloh before the

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temple. *What I did to it*, i. e. he utterly forsook it; he did not only deliver up his people into the Philistines' hands, but the ark also, the token of his presence, which never returned to Shiloh more; and afterwards delivered the ten tribes, wherein Shiloh was situate, into captivity to the Assyrian; see ver. 14, 15; wherein he upbraids them for their folly in thinking that the ark or altar in the temple should any more privilege them than it did Shiloh. *For the wickedness of my people;* he gives them the reason of it in these words, *the wickedness of his people*, and chiefly the priests, Hophni and Phineas, Eli's sons, 1 Sam. ii. 12, &c.; and why should they think to escape, who did equal, if not exceed them?

13 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, [t]rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I [u]called you, but ye answered not;

t 2 Chro. 36. 15. ver. 25. ch. 11. 7. u 1 Pro. 1. 24. Is. 65. 12. & 66. 4.

These works; either the same, or as bad, or worse than they did at Shiloh; or particularly those mentioned ver. 9. *Rising up early;* a metaphor taken from persons that are diligent in their business, they use to rise up early: q. d. I did not only speak by my prophets, but they in my name used all diligence to reclaim you, chap. xi. 7, 8; xxv. 3, 4, calling earnestly unto you; by which he means his exhortations and menaces, which ought to have had some efficacy upon them; but you slighted, and disregarded, and would not come at my call, Prov. i. 24. See on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16, and on Isa. l. 2.

14 Therefore will I do unto *this* house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to [x]Shiloh.

x 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11. Ps. 78. 60. ch. 26. 6.

Therefore, because they have added this their obstinate refusing of all admonitions to the rest of their provocations, *will I do unto this house*, viz. cause the consecrated things of the temple to be taken away by the hand of the Babylonians. *The place*, see ver. 7, *which I gave to you*, viz. upon condition of your obedience, Psal. cv. 44, 45, and therefore may justly, upon the breach of the condition, take from you again, nay, by virtue of my sovereignty, Job i. 21. *Shiloh:* see ver. 12.

15 And I will cast you out of my sight, [y]as I have cast out all your brethren, [z]*even* the whole seed of Ephraim.

y 2 Kings 17. 23. z Ps. 78. 67, 68.

You shall have my presence with and watchful eye over you no more, but I will send you into captivity to Babylon, as I did your brethren into Assyria. See on 2 Kings xvii. 6, 18. And he terms them here *brethren*, to let them know that they and Israel proceeded from the same stock, and therefore had no reason to expect but it should fare alike with them, seeing their sins were alike, 2 Kings xxi. 13, 14, &c. *Ephraim*, viz. the ten tribes, Isa. vii. 1, 2, compared; called by this name often, because that was the most numerous and potent of all of them; Jeroboam their first king was of that tribe.

a Ex. 32. 10. ch. 11. 14. & 14. 11.

16 Therefore [a]pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: [b]for I will not hear thee.

b ch. 15. 1.

God forbids his prophets to pray for them in any kind, by any cry or intercession; or, *running upon me*, which shows that God is resolved to root them out, seeing he will admit of no intercession; according as he charged Moses, Exod. xxxii. 10, and the like chap. xi. 14. For God had been wont to suffer himself to be prevailed with by the mediation of his servants, as of Moses, Exod. xxxii. 11, 14; Numb. xiv. 19, 20; but now he would admit of no intercession. See Ezek. xiv. 14, 20, and chap. xv. 1, and the next words. This charge seems to be laid upon the prophet, partly to take off the envy of the people from him, when they knew he was commanded to do no otherwise; partly to imbolden him in this unpleasing work, laying aside all compassion. But certainly the prophet did pray that God would mind his covenant in saving a remnant, though not that God would revoke his decree, and to save the body of them.

17 ¶ Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

q. d. How canst thou pass along the streets but thou must needs be an eye-witness of their abominations, to thy no small trouble and sorrow? as Sodom was to Lot, 2 Pet. ii. 8; therefore how canst thou plead with me on their behalf? How canst thou either pray for them, or I pity them? *In the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem;* in city and country. See chap. ii. 28; xi. 13.

18 [c]The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead *their* dough, to make cakes to the ‖queen of heaven, and to [d]pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.

c ch. 44. 17, 19. ‖ Or, *frame*, or, *workmanship of heaven*. d ch. 19. 13.

Here God shows how busily they are employed from the youngest to the oldest, and how industrious for their idolatry, chap. xliv. 17; see Matt. xxiv. 38; every one in the family doth somewhat towards it. *The children gather wood*, or *sticks;* for the word is plural, and so used Numb. xv. 32, 33; an employment, if we understand small sticks, proper for children; if greater wood, suitable to youth, who excel in strength, and may be understood by *children* and *young ones*. *The fathers kindle the fire;* they heat the oven, hearth, or stone on which they were baked. *The women knead their dough, to make cakes;* prepare all the materials of which to make cakes; probably they were of some particular shape, or had some peculiar impression of some of their gods stamped upon them, like the popish wafers, some say *stamped with stars*, as being offered up to the host of heaven, or with with some peculiar *star*, Amos v. 26; Acts vii. 43. *To the queen of heaven;* or, *frame* or *workmanship of heaven:* this is diversly interpreted; some take it for the sun, which is signified by a word of the feminine gender, Isa. xxiv. 23, and of a feminine use, Nah. iii. 17; some for the moon; as the sun was looked upon as king, so the moon as the queen of heaven, because of the largeness of her body in which she appears, and of the light she gives, but especially by reason of the government she exerciseth over inferior bodies; others, more probably, for the whole host of heaven, Jer. viii. 2; xix. 13, and so the LXX., according to which probably for their sakes they received divers stamps and impressions: they that would see more may consult the English Annotations and the Synopsis. *To pour out drink-offerings*, viz. wine and other strong drinks, Exod. xxix. 40, 41; Numb. xxviii. 7. The devil is God's ape, and taught idolaters to use the same rites and ceremonies that were used in God's worship; therefore here these idolaters, in pouring their drink-offerings, which might seem to be blood, or at least blood mixed with them, see on Psal. xvi. 4, imitated God's drink-offerings, as they did his meat-offerings in their cakes, as in Lev. ii.; by these they did furnish the table mentioned Isa. lxv. 11, see there. *That they may provoke me to anger;* noting rather the proper effects and consequences of their idolatries, than that they did propound to themselves such an end in doing it; but it seemed to be a kind of bidding open defiance to God, by which it appears they were all mad upon their idolatries; they were set upon it, as David's heart was set upon the worship of God, Psal. xvi. 8.

19 [e]Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: *do they* not *provoke* themselves to the confusion of their own faces?

e Deut. 32. 16, 21.

Do they think to grieve me, and trouble my mind? They are deceived, I am without passion, and can be without their offerings. Will not they themselves feel the smart of it? ver. 6. Will they not procure anger to themselves, as an arrow falls on the head of him that shoots? 1 Cor. x. 22: of the phrase see chap. iii. 25.

20 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit

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of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

Mine anger; put for his *revenge*, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect. *My fury:* this expresseth his anger boiled up to the height, chap. iv. 4. *Poured out;* a metaphor taken from violent rains; see chap. vi. 11; and may in particular allude to those showers of fire that were poured out upon Sodom, Gen. xix. 24. *Upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground:* these particulars are enumerated to express an utter desolation and ruin; see chap. iv. 25; and it is threatened against those creatures which are innocent, because they were made for the use of man, partly that it might show how greatly God is offended, and that it should work upon them not only a greater fear of his judgments, but a greater shame for their sin, that they should occasion such sufferings upon the innocent creature, Rom. viii. 20, 22. *Shall not be quenched:* he follows the threatening with showing the irresistibleness of it; his resolution is not to be revoked, chap. iv. 4; and this is suitable to the charge he gave the prophet, ver. 16.

f Is. 1. 11. ch. 6. 20. Amos 5. 21. See Hos. 8. 13.

21 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; [f]Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.

The ironical words of one that seems to be in a great rage: Take those that are peculiar, and to be all burnt to me, Lev. i. 9, and put them to your own of what kind soever; eat them, and do what you will with them, I will have none of them; take it all and fill your own bellies, for you sacrifice not to me, but to yourselves. See Hos. ix. 4, where their meat-offerings are called in scorn *meat for their life* to nourish their bodies. *Unto your sacrifices;* that part of your sacrifices which you are allowed to eat; they are but as profane food; do not you think to be sanctified by them, because I accept them not.

g 1 Sam. 15. 22. Ps. 51. 16, 17. Hos. 6. 6. + Heb. *concerning the matter of.*

22 [g]For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, †concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices:

Some would argue from hence that sacrifices were at first an invention of men, as papists and Socinians; and because they should not be used to idols, God gave way for the introducing them into his worship; but it is evident in Scripture that they have been of Divine institution ever since Adam, Gen. iv. 3, 4. As to the meaning of the words, God doth not condemn them, or deny them, save only comparatively in respect of obedience, not so much these as obeying his commands, 1 Sam. xv. 22; Hos. vi. 6, i. e. mercy rather than sacrifice. Negatives are often put for comparatives, Gen. xlv. 8; Exod. xvi. 8; John v. 45. Hence the Hebrew is, *the matter of burnt-offerings;* for sacrifices were not instituted for themselves, but for other uses, and to be signs of faith in his promises, and obedience to his commands, as in the next verse, where the condition, promise, and end are all set down.

h Ex. 15. 26. Deut. 6. 3. ch. 11. 4, 7. i Ex. 19. 5. Lev. 26. 12.

23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, [h]Obey my voice, and [i]I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

This thing, or word, which is the rule by which all obedience is to be tried, viz. what commands, every thing else being but mere superstition. *That it may be well unto you:* he shows what would be the good effect of their obedience, Exod. xv. 26; Deut. v. 29, 33, which implies that their sufferings are from their perverseness, as it is expressed in the next verse.

k Ps. 81. 11. ch. 11. 8. l Deut. 29. 19. Ps. 81. 12. ‖ Or, *stubbornness* + Heb. *were.* m ch. 2. 27. & 32. 33. Hos. 4. 16.

24 [k]But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but [l]walked in the counsels *and* in the ‖imagination of their evil heart, and †[m]went backward, and not forward.

Nor inclined their ear: it notes something of a higher degree of non-attention than bare *not hearkening*, viz. their not *listening* that they might obey what they hear, chap. vii. 26; xi. 8, noting not only their slightness, but their stiffness. *The imagination*, or *stubbornness*. See chap. iii. 17. *Went backward, and not forward*, like restive beasts; see chap. ii. 27; a sign of their contempt; implying either, 1. They were worse by their admonitions and corrections, and so nothing did thrive with them. Or, 2. From the very first they have gone further and further from me, as ver. 25, 26. 3. Or else depending upon their outward services, they set not my commands before their eyes, but cast my true worship behind their backs, Matt. xxiii. 23.

25 Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even [n]sent unto you all my servants the prophets, [o]daily rising up early and sending *them:*

n 2 Chron. 36. 15. ch. 25. 4. & 29. 19. o ver. 13.

God seems to upbraid them with their stock, they came of a perverse kind, their very fathers were so before them, and they have continued in their perverseness, Neh. ix. 16, 17; they did not now begin to be rebellious, but it had been their practice all along; never ceasing from the time their fathers came out of Egypt to the days of Jeremiah. *I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets;* God tells them what care he had taken to inform them in their duty and happiness, not once or twice, but sending messengers to them seasonably and constantly, from first to last, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15; Neh. ix. 29, 30; Amos ii. 10, 11. See on ver. 13, and chap. xxv. 3, 4, &c. The church of God hath never wanted teachers raised up and sent by God.

p ver. 24. ch. 11. 8. & 17. 23. & 25. 3, 4. q Neh. 9. 17, 29. ch. 19. 15. r ch. 16. 12.

26 [p]Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but [q]hardened their neck: [r]they did worse than their fathers.

Their fathers had done bad enough, but they were so far from reforming, that they did worse than their fathers, Judg. ii. 19, chap. ix. 3; and whereas he had said before *your* fathers, now changing the person he saith *their* fathers, as it were in great displeasure turning away from them to the prophet, as one speaking, but in vain, to such a stupid people.

s Ezek. 2. 7.

27 Therefore [s]thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee.

Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them, viz. revive upon them all that thou hast been speaking to them from me these forty years and upwards. Whereby God shows that there is nothing wanting on his part; for notwithstanding all their perverseness, yet he still warns them by his prophet, which will leave them the more inexcusable, Ezek. ii. 5, 7. *But they will not hearken to thee:* this must needs be a great trial to the prophet, that he is assured that he shall speak to them in vain. But this God acquaints him with beforehand, partly for Jeremiah's sake, that he should not be discouraged, but the more imboldened, though he saw no success, Ezek. ii. 7; and partly for the people's sake, that being foretold of their obstinacy, they might bethink themselves and repent, if yet there might be hope, Lam. iii. 29. *Thou shalt also call unto them, but they will not answer thee:* this shows their further refractoriness, that were not only deaf to God's message by his prophet, but though he cried loud, followed one exhortation with another, yet they would make no return unto it.

28 But thou shalt say unto them, This *is* a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, [t]nor receiveth ‖correction: [u]truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

t ch. 5. 3. & 32. 33. ‖ Or, *instruction.* u ch. 9. 3.

This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God; spoke in a way of contempt: q. d. A nation more than heathenish; though they profess themselves a peculiar people to me, yet to be numbered among the Gentiles. *Nor receiveth correction*, i. e. answer not the ends of correction, viz. to be instructed, chap. v. 3, and submit their necks to the yoke, which laid the foundation of all their rebellion. *Truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth;* there is no trusting or believing them in any thing they say or do; no veracity or fidelity, but perfidious both to God and men, being all filled with hypocrisy, lies, and deceits.

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29 ¶ [x] Cut off thine hair, *O Jerusalem*, and cast *it* away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.

[x] Job 1. 20. Is. 15. 2. ch. 16. 6. & 48. 37. Mic. 1. 16.

Cut off thine hair; it was a usual token of sorrow among the Jews to cut off the hair, Job i. 20; Isa. xv. 2; Micah i. 16. But here he speaketh either, 1. To Jeremiah; for *O Jerusalem* is not in the text; or, 2. To the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and so speaks to them as a woman, whose hair is for an ornament, 1 Cor. xi. 15. Therefore this must needs signify a higher degree of sorrow. Cutting the hair among the ancients did signify, 1. Mourning. 2. Bondage. For the cutting off the hair in servants was a token of subjection; so that this speaks Jerusalem's mournful condition in her captivity. *Cast it away;* it is not to be reserved, as sometimes men and women both do for some use; but to be cast away, and as a thing good for nought. And thus it may agree with the church's lamentation, Lam. v. 16; for it is not here exhorted to as a token of repentance, but as a threatening of judgments. *Take up a lamentation on high places:* see chap. iii. 21. Lift up thy voice on high in lamentation, when thou hast thine eye or thoughts upon the high places where thou wentest a whoring from me, for which thou now goest into captivity. *The generation of his wrath;* or, of his *overrunning anger*, as some render it, i. e. with whom he is extremely vexed, *this present generation*, that by their provocations have brought themselves under his wrath, ver. 18, 20, a generation *destined to the wrath of God*, called elsewhere the *people of his curse*, Isa. xxxiv. 5, and such as the apostle calls *vessels of wrath*, Rom. ix. 22, so far as it concerns the phrase.

30 For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: [y] they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.

[y] 2 Kin. 21. 4, 7. 2 Chro. 33. 4. 5, 7. ch. 23. 11. & 32. 34. Ezek. 7. 20. & 8. 5, 6, &c. Dan. 9. 27.

The children of Judah; either Judah's posterity, Josh. xiv. 6, or Judah's inhabitants, which are often called *their children;* so chap. ii. 16. *In my sight*, i. e. though they will not see it, yet I see it, and they shall know that it is in my sight, i. e. that it displeaseth me. *They have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name:* here he instanceth in one species of their abominations for all the rest, whereby it appears they were grown to a great height of impiety. It was not enough to have their idols and superstitions abroad in the hills and groves, nor in private in their own houses, Isa. lvii. 6—8; chap. xix. 13; but they must bring them into God's house, as Manasseh did, 2 Kings xxi. 4; God having but one house in the world, as it were, to confront him, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14; chap. xxxii. 34; Ezek. xliii. 8.

31 And they have built the [z] high places of Tophet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to [a] burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; [b] which I commanded *them* not, neither † came it into my heart.

[z] 2 Kin. 23. 10. ch. 19. 5. & 32. 35. [a] Ps. 106. 38. [b] See Deut. 17. 3. † Heb. *came it upon my heart.*

High places of Tophet: see on Isa. xxx. 33. It comes from *Toph*, that signifies a *drum*, because they did beat drums to hinder the noise of their children's screeches, when they burnt them in sacrifice upon the altars, called here *high places*, to Moloch, which is also called Melchom. *Which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom: Tophet* was situate in a pleasant valley near Jerusalem, a place in the possession of the children of one *Hinnom*, Josh. xv. 8, watered by the river of Siloe. *To burn their sons and their daughters in the fire:* this most inhuman practice of burning their children, even their own bowels, to Moloch, not their sons only, but their daughters, who were most tender, they did expressly against the command and caution of God; see on Deut. xviii. 10; having learned it of the heathen, Deut. xii. 30, 31; the devil commanding them so to do by his oracles. They took pattern from the Samaritans, where those of every nation make gods of their own, 2 Kings xvii. 29—31. *Neither came it into my heart;* which was always so far from my approving, that I never let it come into my thought or debate, whether I should or not; or, which I abhorred from my heart: he speaks herein after the manner of men: see chap. iii. 16; xxxii. 35.

32 ¶ Therefore, behold, [c] the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter: [d] for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place.

[c] ch. 19. 6. [d] 2 Kings 23. 10. ch. 19. 11. Ezek. 6. 5.

It shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom: they were called so after this, and are known by those names to this day; but the meaning is, they shall acquire a name from another occasion, that shall suit them as well, viz. for the great slaughter that shall be made there, or rather thereabouts, in and about Jerusalem, and therefore called the *valley of slaughter*, from the effect of slaughter; as Judas's field was called *Aceldama*, Acts i. 19, being a place for burying of the slain, as the next words show. *They shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place;* either there shall be so great a slaughter made upon that spot by the Chaldeans, that they shall bury as many as the place will contain, and the rest of the carcasses they shall throw on heaps, to rot above ground; for to lie unburied is frequently used as a curse on such, the burying of the dead being accounted as a thing sacred, and a significant symbol of the resurrection: or those that are slain in and about Jerusalem, at the siege and taking of it, shall be carried thither to be buried, either because there shall be no burying-places left about Jerusalem, or that valley shall be filled till there be no place for more, that hereby it may be so polluted, that no thoughts of holiness may remain in it; for a dead carcass under the law was unclean; and that which before was a valley of pleasure and great delight, and they had dedicated to God, shall now be a *valley of slaughter.*

33 And the [e] carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray *them* away.

[e] Deut. 28. 26. Ps. 79. 2. ch. 12. 9. & 16. 4. & 34. 20.

The *birds* and *beasts* of prey shall feed on them, being exposed to open view for want of interment, chap. xix. 7, *and none shall fray them away;* (a piece of humanity that even nature itself teacheth;) either by reason of the enemy's presence, for fear of whom they durst not; or rather, because there will be none left to do it: and this is reckoned among the curses, Deut. xxviii. 26.

34 Then will I cause to [f] cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for [g] the land shall be desolate.

[f] Is. 24. 7, 8. ch. 16. 9. & 25. 10. & 33. 11. Ezek. 26. 13. Hos. 2. 11. Rev. 18. 23. [g] Lev. 26. 33. Is. 1. 7. & 3. 26.

All kind and degrees of mirth shall cease, Rev. xviii. 23, all places shall be filled with lamentations and woe; their singing shall be turned into sighing; they shall lay aside all things that are for the comfort of human society, which is to be understood in this expression. *For the land shall be desolate;* there shall be such an utter devastation, that there shall be neither season nor place for these things, Isa. lxiv. 10, 11; chap. xxv. 10: where marrying shall cease, without which mankind cannot subsist, there must needs be desolation.

CHAP. VIII.

The calamity of the Jews, both dead and alive, 1—3. *Their brutish impenitency,* 4—7. *Their vain boast of wisdom; their covetousness, security, impudence,* 8—12. *Their grievous judgments,* 13—17; *bewailed by the prophet,* 18—22.

AT that time, saith the LORD, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves:

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This chapter being a continuation of the former, he proceeds in carrying on the threatening with higher aggravations of the judgment, viz. that when the time shall come spoken of chap. vii. 32, the Chaldeans' rage shall reach, not only to the living, but even against those that are in their graves, and that sparing none of any degree or quality. *They shall bring out the bones* of the *nobles* and *princes*, as Manasseh and others, possibly led to it out of greediness, supposing to find great treasure in their sepulchres; of the *priests* and *prophets*, principally the false ones, as a just judgment of God against them for deceiving the people; of the *inhabitants of Jerusalem*, out of their spite and fury kindled against them, as soldiers, or in contempt and ignominy: and this notes the utter desolation of the city, not only razing the walls, but turning up the very sepulchres, which were accounted sacred, and not to be violated.

2 And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and [a] whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, [b] nor be buried; they shall be for [c] dung upon the face of the earth.

a 2 Kings 23. 5. Ezek. 8. 16.
b ch. 22. 19.
c 2 Kings 9. 36. Ps. 83. 10. ch. 9. 22. & 16. 4.

They shall spread them before the sun; not gather them together into charnel-houses, as we usually do out of humanity, but scatter them about as it were to be turned into dust and dung. *And the moon, and all the host of heaven*, viz. all the rest of the stars, to show that they should not lie out in the day time only, but night also, before the moon and stars, chap. xxxvi. 30. Their carcasses shall be cast to their idols, Lev. xxvi. 30; 2 Kings xxiii. 14, 20; a kind of *lex talionis*, that as they had served and worshipped these creatures, God doth, as it were, appoint them as spectators and witnesses of his vengeance, and what contempt he pours upon them, their carcasses being brought before their idols, which will be so shameful, as if one should draw forth the adulteress with the adulterer into open view, and expose them together; and it also insinuates the inability that is in these dumb idols to help them in their misery. *Whom they have loved:* this and the following term serve to express the greatness and variety of their affection and zeal in their worshipping of them, Deut. iv. 19; 2 Kings xxiii. 5; chap. vii. 18: he multiplies words, as it were implying that there can hardly be words enough to express their folly and madness, the Gentiles worshipping these creatures, not only for their beauty and lustre, but, according to their ancient philosophy, apprehending them to have been living creatures, and that all events were ordered by them. *They shall be for dung upon the face of the earth;* on the superficies of it; there shall be no care taken of them, but they shall lie in the open country in the air, till they rot into dung, or dry into dust, as in the beginning of the verse; see Psal. lxxxiii. 10; chap. ix. 22; they shall be ignominious even after death.

3 And [d] death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts.

d Job 3. 21, 22. & 7. 15, 16. Rev. 9. 6.

And death shall be chosen rather than life; a description of the unexpressibleness of their misery, that notwithstanding all the barbarism of the Babylonians exercised both upon the living and the dead, yet a small matter in comparison of what the living would feel, of the greatness of which misery there was a double cause; not only their being led into captivity, but God's displeasure following them, even in their banishment, being sorely oppressed; one of those threatenings Lev. xxvi. 36, 39: see Job iii. 20, 21; Rev. ix. 6. *Which remain in all the places whither I have driven them;* some dispersed among the mountains and hiding-places of Judea, others in the desert of Moab and Idumea, whither they fled for fear of the Chaldeans, and all other places where God would scatter them; an hypallage. *The Lord of hosts*, he that hath all the creatures as an army at his command, can do this against those with whom he is displeased.

4 ¶ Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return?

Moreover thou shalt say unto them; though possibly it be all in vain, yet thou shalt keep in thy work. *Shall they fall, and not arise?* an interrogation that hath the force of a negative, i. e. surely none. Or, *Will men*, is there no hope? And are they upon this ground desperate? Or rather, Will men fall, and not arise? Are they such fools, that having fallen by their sins, and been foretold all that is coming, that they will not accept of a remedy? chap. vii. 27; Hos. xiv. 1. *Shall he turn away, and not return?* a metaphor taken from one that is out of his way; can any imagine that if one tell him of it, and direct him aright, that he will not hearken to him, and turn back? It is even against nature itself for a man not to seek his own good.

5 Why *then* is this people of Jerusalem [e] slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? [f] they hold fast deceit, [g] they refuse to return.

e ch. 7. 24.
f ch. 9. 6.
g ch. 5. 3.

By a perpetual backsliding: either a universal backsliding; or rather, obstinately resolved to hold on, though they see they are out of the way; not out of levity or inconsiderateness. The Hebrew word signifies *strength*, the same used Psal. xiii. 1, and translated *for ever*, implying a strong, stiff, stout refusal. See Isa. lvii. 17; chap. v. 3. *Deceit:* either their injustice and cozenages in circumventing one another, which was so frequent among them, chap. ix. 4—6; Micah vii. 3, 4; or their hypocrisy, whereby they thought to deceive God, but they did indeed deceive themselves; the great impediment of their repentance, Isa. xliv. 20; or rather, their sticking close to their false prophets, who did deceive them, thence encouraging themselves in their wickedness, and pleasing themselves that their miseries should not come upon them. See on Isa. xxx. 10; chap. v. 31; xiv. 13, 14, &c.

6 [h] I hearkened and heard, *but* they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.

h 2 Pet. 3. 9

And heard, i. e. *that I might hear;* the words rather of God than of the prophet, which the continuance of the speech seems to show in the next verse, in the close whereof it is plain that God speaks, expressing himself after the manner of men, who are wont to listen diligently after the things they are very desirous of. See 1 Kings xx. 33; Mal. iii. 16. *Not aright;* or, *not so*, as the LXX., and the word is thus used, Exod. x. 11; Psal. i. 4; not so as I would have had them; so far from repentance, that I do not perceive a word from them tending that way. *What have I done?* I see no tendency to repentance, I see none of them so much as calling themselves to an account, not recoiling upon themselves, where repentance usually begins, 2 Chron. vi. 37, as men use upon an inconsiderate act to smite upon their breast, or thigh, and say, What have I done? as 2 Sam. iii. 24. *Every one turned to his course;* to their accustomed way, committing all wickedness without restraint. See on Isa. lix. 7. The fury and unbridledness of their lusts, being spurred on by their wills, is described in the next expression, showing how, like a headstrong *horse*, he runs away with his rider; or compared to the delight that a horse seems to take in running violently and headstrongly into the battle, as it is described, Job xxxix. 21, &c.; and this word *rushing*, signifying properly an inundation of waters, helps to show their uncontrollableness in another metaphor: see this verified of them chap. ii. 23, 24. It is said *every one* by an hyperbole, as Psal. xiv. 3, and frequently elsewhere.

7 Yea, [i] the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and [k] the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but [l] my people know not the judgment of the LORD.

i Is. 1. 3.
k Cant. 2. 12.
l ch. 5. 4, 5.

In the heaven, i. e. in the air, which is often called *heaven*, where the birds fly, Psal. viii. 8; compare chap. vii.

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33, who possibly observe the fit time by the temperature of the air. *Knoweth her appointed times*, i. e. observeth the several seasons of her going and coming by some natural instinct, and this is said of the *stork:* what kind of fowl is here meant is disputable: see English Annotations and Latin Synopsis. *Observe the time of their coming;* the same thing diversified in these several fowls, that know also their seasons. *But my people know not:* this notes the great stupidity of his people, seeming not to have as much sense in them as the birds in the air, not knowing their *summer of prosperity*, to make a good use of God's favours, nor the *winter of adversity*, either to prevent or remove that wrath of God that hangs over their heads, Isa. v. 12; Luke xix. 42, 44; they know not their time for repentance, and making their peace with God, compared also, on the same account, to the beasts of the field, Isa. i. 3; and thus Christ upbraids the Pharisees, Matt. xvi. 2, 3. *The judgment of the Lord;* either God's vengeance in general, or particularly hovering over Jerusalem and Judea; or rather, the manner of God's dispensations with them. So the word is used 1 Sam. ii. 13; viii. 11.

m Rom. 2. 17. ‖ Or, *the false pen of the scribes worketh for falsehood,* Is. 10. 1.

8 How do ye say, We *are* wise, [m] and the law of the LORD *is* with us? Lo, certainly ‖in vain made he *it:* the pen of the scribes *is* in vain.

How do ye say, We are wise? q. d. These things considered, where is your wisdom, when you see the very fowls of the air are not so stupid as you are? he speaks either to princes and priests, or to the whole body of the people. *The law of the Lord is with us:* this may be understood either more general of all, or may have a more special eye to the priests, with whom it was intrusted, Deut. xxxiii. 10; Mal. ii. 7. They were wont to boast much of the law, as well as of the temple, chap. xviii. 18; Rom. ii. 17, 23. *In vain made he it:* q. d. For any use they made of it, they had as good have been without it; God needed not to have given them a law, Hos. viii. 12. *The pen of the scribes is in vain;* neither need it ever have been copied out, divulged, and conveyed down to them by the scribe, Deut. xvii. 18; or the prevarications and collusions these lawyers used in the false interpretation of the law, wherein they sided with the false prophets, should be in vain. A *scribe* was a teacher, one well versed in the Scripture, or esteemed so.

n ch. 6. 15. ‖ Or, *Have they been ashamed,* &c. † Heb. *the wisdom of what thing.*

9 [n] ‖The wise *men* are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and † what wisdom *is* in them?

The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; they trusted to their refuge of lies, but when God shall bring the judgment threatened, the wisest among them will find that they shall be confounded among themselves, not knowing what to do for all their wisdom, but shall be taken with the rest, chap. iv. 9: by *wise men* he means the *scribes* in the former verse. The same said of Babylon, Isa. xlvii. 10. *What wisdom is in them?* or, *what is wisdom to them?* How can they say they are wise, when they have no fear of God, which is the *beginning of wisdom*, Prov. i. 7; when they have no respect at all to the word of God, as to any holy practice, which is the *fountain of all wisdom?* Deut. iv. 6; Psal. xix. 7; 2 Tim. iii. 15.

o Deut. 28. 30. ch. 6. 12. Amos 5. 11. Zeph. 1. 13. p Is. 56. 11. ch. 6. 13.

10 Therefore [o] will I give their wives unto others, *and* their fields to them that shall inherit *them:* for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to [p] covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them; a paraphrastical description of the miseries of war: God doth here insinuate that their misery shall not be for a short time, but so long, as that strangers, viz. the Chaldeans, shall enjoy their land by inheritances, so far should they be from possessing their land for ever. *Every one is given to covetousness;* so greedy after their own private gain, that they took no care of equity or justice, in which word is comprised all their fraudulent dealings one among another. Of this and the two next verses, see on chap. vi. 13—15.

q ch. 6. 14. r Ezek. 13. 10.

11 For they have [q] healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, [r] Peace, peace; when *there is* no peace.

s ch. 3. 3. & 6. 15.

12 Were they [s] ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

‖ Or, *In gathering I will consume.* t Is. 5. 1, &c. Joel 1. 7. u Matt. 21. 19. Luke 13. 6, &c.

13 ¶ ‖I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: *there shall be* no grapes [t] on the vine, nor figs on the [u] fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and *the things that* I have given them shall pass away from them.

I will surely consume them; or, *In gathering I will consume them:* q. d. I will so gather them together into their several cities to be besieged, that it shall be no hard matter to destroy them, ver. 16, viz. the body of the people; not every one, for there was a remnant that did escape. *There shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree:* these fruits, grapes and figs, it is probable, were of greatest account and use among them, Isa. xxxvi. 16, and so may be put for all other things, either for necessity or delight, which God threatens he will deprive them of by reason of the siege, which a famine shall succeed, chap. v. 17; Joel i. 7; Hab. iii. 17. See the like Zeph. i. 2, 3. Or possibly it may be spoken by way of similitude: q. d. They shall be wasted, *as* when there is no *grapes on the vine*, &c.; the land shall be left as bare as when by tempests or other violence there is neither leaf nor fruit left upon the tree, Psal. lxxviii. 47. *And the things that I have given them shall pass away:* if this refer to the further punishment, as some, then it is as much as to say, what they have already received from me and laid up, they shall also be deprived of, Hos. ii. 8, 9; or, though I have given it to them, yet they shall not enjoy it, it shall be taken away by their enemies: if it relate to the reason of the punishment, as others, then the copulative is put for the causal: q. d. *Because* the things that I gave them, viz. *my laws, pass away*, i. e. they have transgressed, Isa. xxiv. 4, 5: either sense lies fair.

x ch. 4. 5. y ch. 9. 15. & 23. 15. ‖ Or, *poison.*

14 Why do we sit still? [x] assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the LORD our God hath put us to silence, and given us [y] water of ‖gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD.

Why do we sit still? the people at length seem to bethink themselves, and thus to bespeak each other. *Let us enter into the defenced cities;* in the scattered villages there is no safety for us, let us retire into places of greater security, Matt. xxiv. 16—18; possibly they thought they might be secured there, as they had been before in the time of Sennacherib. *Let us be silent there;* keep close within our walls, say or do nothing to provoke the enemy; but sit down and bewail the desperateness of our condition, Lam. iii. 28, 29, or tremblingly expect the issue of this sad war, for there is no possibility of making head against such an enemy, that bears down all before them. *The Lord our God hath put us to silence:* they now begin to perceive that the hand of God is in all this, and that therefore they have not a word to say, as if they were wronged; God hath put them to shame: much less courage to oppose the Babylonians; their heart fails them, they are as men in a great terror and consternation; God *hath put us to silence*, let us be silent. *Water of gall;* or, poison; probably the name of some poisonous herb, with the juice or infusion whereof they were wont to kill persons, as hemlock, nightshade, &c. See Hos. x. 4. It notes those bitter destructive judgments that God was bringing upon them, chap. ix. 15, which did spring from that bitter root of their sinning against him, as in the next words.

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a ch. 14. 19. 15 We [a]looked for peace, but no good *came; and* for a time of health, and behold trouble!

Viz. Upon the persuasion of our prophets, we expected that these troubles would never come, but all would be well; but we find ourselves merely deluded by them; we looked so long, till even our eyes failed us, but we see no remedy for us, Lam. iv. 17. A metaphor. Miseries are often in Scripture compared to diseases, and deliverances to *healing*, Deut. xxxii. 39; Psal. ciii. 3; chap. xxxiii. 6.

a ch. 4. 15. 16 The snorting of his horses was heard from [a]Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his [b]strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and †all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein.

b Judg. 5. 22. ch. 47. 3. † Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

The fury of the Chaldeans' march is described by the snorting of their horses, which is a noise they make through their nostrils, when they are chafed and fretted. *Was heard from Dan*, i. e. even to Jerusalem: q. d. The dreadfulness of the noise shall be heard from far: or rather, Though Jerusalem seem to be secure, yet the farthest coasts of the land are in great consternation, viz. the outmost boundary of Canaan northward, through which the Chaldean army was to march: see chap. iv. 15: or it is said *to be heard*, either the noise itself, or the fame of it, chap. vi. 24. *His strong ones;* his choice horses or cavalry; or his stout and sturdy ones, as the word signifies, and expressed by their brisk frolicsomeness and courage in the word *neighing*, properly applied to horses, understanding here the chief of them; and the word for *strong ones* is applied to any thing that excels, as to *man*, Job xxxiv. 20; to *angels*, Psal. lxxviii. 25, *angels' food*, or the *bread of the mighty;* and for *horses*, as here, and Judg. v. 22; chap. xlvii. 3. *All that is in it*, Heb. *the fulness of it*, the trees, and fruits, and wealth of the land; they are entered upon their spoil, and will leave nothing in the land, chap. iv. 20. It is spoken in a prophetical style, who use to express the certainty of what shall be as if it actually were already. *The city*, viz. Jerusalem; or rather the cities, with all their inhabitants, as well as the country, the singular number being put for the plural, as Isa. xxvii. 10.

17 For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which *will* not *be* [c]charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.

c Ps. 58. 4, 5. Eccl. 10. 11.

He proceeds in increasing of their terror: q. d. There will be no appeasing or allaying of their fury by any art or method; therefore represented by the cockatrice, called in Latin *regulus*, or king of serpents, as putting to flight all other serpents; but by apposition to *serpents*, showing what kind of serpent they shall be, a sort that cannot be charmed, viz. such an enemy as by no entreaty can be made exorable: see on Isa. xi. 8. LXX. *deadly serpents. They shall bite you;* they shall afflict you with sore punishments, not only stings in their tails, as scorpions, but in their teeth, whereby they shall devour you, ver. 16.

18 ¶ *When* I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart *is* faint †in me.

† Heb. *upon.*

The language of the people, being long shut up in their cities, and finding no relief, at last faint, Lam. iv. 17. But more probably the prophet now seems to speak his own resentments, how greatly the calamity of his people did affect him; the like Isa. xxii. 4: when he would sometimes refresh himself with the comfortable refreshments of nature, the thoughts of his people's misery do so afflict him, that his heart is ready to faint, to sink within him.

19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people †because of them that dwell in [d]a far country: *Is* not the LORD in Zion? *is* not her king in her? Why have they [e]provoked me to anger with their graven images, *and* with strange vanities?

† Heb. *because of the cruelty of them that are far off.* d Is. 39. 3. e Deut. 32. 21. Is. 1. 4.

The voice of the cry, i. e. the greatness of their cry, the bitter cries, and screeches, and complaints that methinks I hear: the words are abrupt, because the prophet is to represent several persons speaking; himself, the people, and God. *Of the daughter of my people;* see chap. iv. 11; possibly because Jeremiah loved them, instructed them, admonished them as a *daughter*. *Them that dwell in a far country*, viz. their enemies the Babylonians, that were to come against them from a far country, chap. vi. 22; or the voice of them that were captives under those of a far country; now they begin to cry, which would not be persuaded to it before: the first is most to be approved of. *In Zion*, viz. in Jerusalem, a metonymy of the subject. *Is not her king in her;* or, as King in Zion; or, have we not a king of the seed of David, to whom the kingdom was granted to be perpetual? Either the words of God: q. d. Was not I among you, to provide for you, and protect you, but you must needs repair to idols? The like kind of speech is in 2 Kings i. 3, and the close of the verse seems to favour this. Or, as others, an expostulatory lamentation of the people, that the cruel adversary should prevail over a people that had God so near them, Psal. xlviii. 2, 3; lxxvi. 1, 2: Hath God now left us? and is the promise of his continuance here at an end? Psal. lxxxix. 36—38. *Why have they provoked me with strange vanities?* as if God should seem to reply here, Let them not think it strange, seeing they have turned their backs upon me, and trusted to idols, which are but vanity, chap. ii. 11, 13; called *vanity*, not only because idols are as *nothing*, but because all the confidence that is put them is *vain*, and because idolaters are *vain* in their minds, and want understanding. I have not forsaken them, but they me.

20 The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.

The harvest is past, and the winter no time for war; the people's continued complaint, not unlike that ver. 15. The year is gone, and we are still frustrated in our expectations, the time that we expected help from Egypt, Isa. xxx. 2, 3, 5. *We are not saved*, viz. by the Egyptians, or any other confederates.

21 [f]For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am [g]black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.

f ch. 4. 19. & 9. 1. & 14. 17. g Joel 2. 6. Nah. 2. 10.

The prophet here shows how deeply he is affected with the people's misery, he deeply sympathized with them. *The hurt;* it signifies *breach*, I am broken in my spirit; and so it answers to the *breach* that is made upon the people. *I am black;* I am as those that are clad in deep mourning, Psal. xxxviii. 6; chap. xiv. 2. *Astonishment hath taken hold on me;* I am amazed to think that my people should sin themselves beyond help, no remedy for them, as the next verse, that no threatenings or counsels should prevail with them.

22 *Is there* no [h]balm in Gilead; *is there* no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people †recovered?

h Gen. 37. 25. & 43. 11. ch. 46. 11. & 51. 8. † Heb. *gone up.*

Gilead was eminent for *balm*, Gen. xliii. 11, taken for *rosin* or *turpentine*, which is a kind of more liquid *rosin*, and either flows or drops from certain trees of its own accord, or their juice flows from several holes pierced into them, as from the pine, cedar, cypress, or terebinth tree. Heb. *tseri;* Gr. ῥητίνη, from ῥέω, to flow, or run; Lat. *resina;* Engl. *rosin*. A near affinity of the words in each language, the nature whereof is to dissolve hardness, to clear and close up wounds. *Physician*, or *chirurgeon:* probably in a country where were such plenty of remedies there could not want artists, whereby their cures might be facilitated, by means of which the Gileadites and Arabians did excel there. *Recovered.* Heb. *gone up;* the like expression 2 Chron. xxiv. 13, *the work was perfected;* Heb. *the healing* went up upon the work; and so Neh. iv. 7: the prophet expresseth his grievous complaint by way of admiration, by a metaphor, implying the inveteracy and obstinacy of their hearts, that either would not come to the *physician*, or that they should be thus incurable, where they wanted not for prophets and teachers, or for any spiritual means, flowing down daily upon them; can Jerusalem and Judea be without spiritual *physicians?* Some understand it by way of

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sarcasm: q. d. Where are your medicines, your *arms*, your *counsels*, your *confederacies*? And where are your *physicians*, your *princes* and *priests*, that promised you relief? Without God you see no help in any means. But the former more natural, and agrees best with the beginning of the next chapter.

CHAP. IX.

The prophet's lamentation continueth over their adultery, deceit, idolatry, which God would certainly punish, and they should be laid waste, when they should sufficiently lament, 1—22. *No trust in ourselves, but in God, who will punish all nations,* 23—26.

cir. 600. OH † [a]that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

† Heb. *Who will give my head, &c.*
[a] Is. 22. 4. ch. 4. 19. & 13. 17. & 14. 17. Lam. 2. 11. & 3. 48.

Oh that my head were waters! Heb. *Who will give*, &c.? by way of inquiry, because the Hebrews do want the imperative mood. The prophet in this chapter principally bewailing his poor countrymen's calamity, whom he therefore calls the *daughter of his people*, he expresseth the greatness and excess of his sorrows, by wishing that his brains were as it were dissolved into water, (for the word is singular,) as if he wished it were all one water, signifying plenty, and that his eyes might distil tears like a fountain; the same word in the Hebrew for *eye* signifies a fountain; noting the continuance of it, as not to be drawn dry, expressed by *day* and *night*, apprehending it a misery so great, as never sufficiently to be bewailed. See Luke xix. 41. *The slain*; or that are to be slain, viz. by the Babylonians; a prophetical style; as sure to be slain as if they were slain already.

2 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for [b]they *be* all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.

[b] ch. 5. 7, 8.

He proceeds in his lamentation, which in the former verse he did by way of compassion, in this in a way of indignation, wishing for some retiring place, or sorry shed, or night cottage; see on Isa. xxiv. 20; though it were but some mean and sorry hut in the wilderness, as David, Psal. lv. 6, 7, such as might but shelter him from the injuries of the weather: LXX., in some remotest station or corner, where he might not be an eye-witness of their miseries to grieve him so at the heart, Psal. cxix. 136, 158; see 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8; and where he might hope to find better entertainment from the savage beasts than from his own countrymen. *They be all adulterers*, i. e. for the most part, chap. v. 8, both properly and metaphorically, being full of idolatrous practices; or, there is no integrity found among them. *An assembly of treacherous men*; that deal perfidiously with God and man in all the concerns they are conversant about, Isa. i. 4. And though the word here for *assembly* is most ordinarily used for a *holy assembly*, Lev. xxiii. 36; Numb. xxix. 35, which causeth some to understand it of their being most vile when they should be most devout; yet here it most naturally signifies a kind of combination among them, as such that have conspired one among another to act all manner of villanies.

[c] Ps. 64. 3. Is. 59. 4, 13, 15.

3 And [c]they bend their tongues *like* their bow *for* lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they [d]know not me, saith the LORD.

[d] 1 Sam. 2. 12. Hos. 4. 1.

Bend, Heb. *tread*, because bows are usually kneeled or trod upon when they are bent, chap. l. 14; li. 3. *Like their bow*; their tongues are here compared to a *bow*, and lies to *arrows*, because as a *bow* shoots out *arrows*, so doth the tongue words, Psal. lxiv. 3. *For lies*, i. e. all reproachful, false, and noxious words, to the damage of one another; and so bending may be preparing, framing, and contriving that mischief which they purpose to vent with their *tongues*, Psal. lii. 2—4; lxiv. 3, as *bending* is preparing the bow to do execution with the arrow. *They are not valiant for the truth*; equity, justice; they are as eager in the ways of falsehood as men engaged in war, but show no valour in maintaining the truth. *Upon the earth*, i. e. no truth in the earth in them, as we use to express ourselves; or rather more genuinely in the land wherein they live, they have no courage in what is good. *They proceed from evil to evil*; either in kind or in degree; they go on from bad to worse, 2 Tim. iii. 13, which speaks little hopes of their repentance; the ground of all which is said here to be, their *not knowing of God*, as in the next clause, Judg. ii. 10, 11; 1 Sam. ii. 12. The heart cannot work strongly after God where there be but mean apprehensions of him.

4 [e]Take ye heed every one of his ‖ neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will [f]walk with slanders.

[e] ch. 12. 6. Mic. 7. 5, 6.
‖ Or, *friend.*
[f] ch. 6. 28.

Take ye heed every one of his neighbour; better rendered friend, or companion, as 2 Sam. xvi. 17, and in the next verse; showing the general corruption will be so malignant, that one friend will betray another; no faith in friends. *Will utterly supplant*; wholly given to it; Heb. *supplanting will supplant*; or, *treading down treadeth down*; trampling them under their feet, noting their oppression, which they exercise all manner of ways, as in the next verse, both by fraud and force. Like the interpretation that Esau puts upon Jacob, Gen. xxvii. 36; not only such as are near in habitation, pretending neighbourhood and friendship; but near in relation, even a *brother* will circumvent; no respect to blood, arguing them to be monstrous in nature, putting off humanity. The word is here in allusion to Jacob, who had his name from *supplanting*; a metaphor taken from the *sole of the foot*, Gen. xxv. 26. *Walk with slanders*; carrying tales and reports up and down, whether true or false, to the disturbance of the peace of neighbourhood, chap. vi. 28, and against the law of God, Lev. xix. 16.

5 And they will ‖ deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, *and* weary themselves to commit iniquity.

‖ Or, *mock.*

They will deceive, Heb. *mock*, or *deride*; they are scoffers. *They have taught their tongue to speak lies*; they have so framed their tongues to it by custom and constant use, that *lying* is become so familiar to them that they cannot leave it. The same word is applied to the wild ass, used or taught to the wilderness, chap. ii. 24; xiii. 23. *Weary themselves to commit iniquity*; they use a great deal of industry, diligence, and contrivance in it, Psal. vii. 14; Isa. v. 18. They spare for no labour and feel no weariness in it, whereby they are become expert.

6 Thine habitation *is* in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.

This God speaks to the prophet, either to inform him that there is no hope of this people's reformation, chap. viii. 5; therefore he expresseth a deceitful people by the abstract, *deceit*, i. e. nothing among them but deceit one to another, and hypocrisy towards me, as Psal. cix. 2, and *vanity* for *vain men*, Job xxxv. 13; or to caution and advise him how to behave himself among such a people, that he be very wary he be not insnared by them, chap. xii. 6. *They refuse to know me*; either hoping to shift well enough by their several means they think to use, they are careless of turning to me, chap. viii. 5; or by hearkening to their false prophets, who have all along deceived them, they obstinately reject my ways and counsels, Psal. xxxvi. 1—4; lxxxii. 5.

7 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, [g]I will melt them, and try them; [h]for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

[g] Is. 1. 25. Mal. 3. 3.
[h] Hos. 11. 8.

I will melt them, and try them; the same metaphor used chap. vi. 29; try them by melting them, i. e. either I will try what lesser afflictions will do before I do utterly destroy

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them; or rather, I will bring judgment upon them, the fire and fury of the Chaldean war, that shall clear away their dross from among them, and purge away those deceits in which they trust, that the remnant may be purified, Dan. xi. 35; as when the dross is separated from metals, the rest remains pure: see on Isa. i. 25. *How shall I do?* q. d. There is no remedy, I have tried all other means, and they have been ineffectual, my people will take no warning; they are grown to such a height of impiety, that I can do no less, though they are my people, Hos. vi. 4. Or God doth expostulate with them, How can you expect that I should treat you otherwise, that have so provoked me, and whose impieties have redounded so much to my dishonour?

i Ps. 12. 2. & 120. 3. ver. 3. k Ps. 28. 3. & 55. 21. † Heb. in the midst of him. ‖ Or, wait for him.

8 Their tongue *is as* an arrow shot out; it speaketh [i]deceit: *one* speaketh [k]peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but †in heart he layeth ‖his wait.

Their tongue is as an arrow: before, ver. 3, it was compared to a *bow*, i. e. ready prepared, and furnished with materials contriving their wickedness, Psal. xi. 2; and here to an *arrow* shot out, actually executing what they have designed. Some translate it a *murdering arrow*. *It speaketh deceit;* never speaking what they mean, that thereby they may the easier deceive the credulous; a double tongue, speaking fair when they mean to destroy, Psal. lv. 21, as the next words explain it, intending to do the greatest mischief when they speak fairest. *In heart he layeth his wait*, Heb. *in midst of him*, i. e. in his very inwards, with his whole heart he contrives mischief.

l ch. 5. 9, 29.

9 ¶ [l]Shall I not visit them for these *things?* saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

See chap. v. 9, 29.

m ch. 12. 4. & 23. 10. Hos. 4. 3. ‖ Or, *pastures.* ‖ Or, *desolate.* † Heb. *from the fowl even to, &c.* n ch. 4. 25.

10 For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and [m]for the ‖habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are ‖burned up, so that none can pass through *them;* neither can *men* hear the voice of the cattle; †[n]both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone.

The prophet having, ver. 1, taken up a lamentation for the slaughter of the people, he now reassumes it for the desolation of the whole land, every part of it being to be laid waste: see chap. iv. 23, 26. And it either sets forth the greatness of his grief, that shall reach to the very mountains, as the words may be read; or rather, the cause of his mourning, because he presently adds, for the *habitations of the wilderness. Of the wilderness; plain*, or *valley*, as it often signifies; so the word is used Isa. lxiii. 13, 14; or, *pleasant plains*. The country of Judea being mountainous, these plains and valleys were their chief places for pasturage, which doth greatly aggravate the devastation; these shall be burnt up, the herbage so burnt that it shall be left utterly barren, like a parched heath, ver. 12. The *mountains* shall not be able to secure them, nor the *valleys* to feed them. *None can pass through them;* either there being no path; the LXX. render it, *on the paths of the wilderness;* or none to pass to and fro, and so leave it desolate; or so parched and waste that none can pass through it, so far are they from being inhabited, chap. ii. 6. *Neither can men hear the voice of the cattle;* there, where once all sorts of cattle and fowls in great plenty where wont to feed and graze, there is not so much as the chirping of a bird, the bleating of a sheep, or lowing of an ox to be heard: see chap. xxiii. 10—12; l. 3. They are said to be fled and gone; either the enemy hath swept away all, or they have forsaken the land, because there was no food, chap. xii. 4. A figurative expression of a universal desolation.

o Is. 25. 2. p Is. 13. 22. & 34. 13. ch. 10. 22. † Heb. *desolation.*

11 And I will make Jerusalem [o]heaps, *and* [p]a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah †desolate, without an inhabitant.

Heaps, viz. of stones and rubbish. *A den of dragons;* noting a desolate place, not any longer fit for the habitation of mankind, as the next words do speak; but for hideous beasts; as they had made use of the temple for a *den of thieves*, chap. vii. 11. The same also he afterwards threatens on Babylon herself, chap. li. 37.

q Ps. 107. 43. Hos. 14. 9.

12 ¶ [q]Who *is* the wise man, that may understand this? and *who is he* to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth *and* is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?

Who is the wise man, that may understand this, viz. the ground of all these evils? q. d. Is there not a wise man among you, that will concern himself and search into the cause of all these threatened judgments, which hath provoked God to so great displeasure? See Hos. xiv. 9. It is a question that implies there is none, or very few, that consider common calamities in the causes of them; but rather say of judgments, it is a *chance*, 1 Sam. vi. 9.

13 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein;

Either this and the next verse refer to the former, viz. because there are none can give the reason why the land perisheth, therefore God will; or else they refer to the 15th and 16th verses, as showing the causes of those judgments threatened; for either of the references do not alter the sense: see chap. v. 19: this verse contains negative reasons. *They have forsaken my law;* he chargeth them with their apostacy, and refusing to obey his precepts, and conform their conversation to them. *Which I set before them:* lest they should plead they were obscure and hard to be understood, therefore he tells them he had made it plain to them, they could not be ignorant of it, except it were out of wilfulness and obstinacy: the like expression Deut. xi. 32.

r ch. 3. 17. & 7. 24. ‖ Or, *stubbornness.* s Gal. 1. 14.

14 But have [r]walked after the ‖imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, [s]which their fathers taught them:

Imagination, or stubbornness and obstinacy: see chap. vii. 24. *Baalim:* see chap. ii. 23. The prophet doth not charge them with new crimes, but with their tenacious sticking to their idolatry. *Which their fathers taught them:* see chap. vii. 18. It seems they might partly thank their education for it, as well as their own natural perverseness: hence we should learn to follow God's counsel in the Scriptures, and not blindly follow our fathers' counsel, precepts, or examples, or our own will, which is the worst guide.

t Ps. 80. 5. u ch. 8. 14. & 23. 15. Lam. 3. 15, 19.

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will [t]feed them, *even* this people, [u]with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.

Even this people: this supplement *even* shows that it is spoken emphatically, though they be a people that presume to be my peculiar. *Wormwood; worms*, Dutch Annotations. A plant to purify and cleanse them, say some; but this doth not seem to be spoken in favour to them; therefore rather some poisonous plant, which may agree to any other destructive herb as well as wormwood, and this the Hebrew word doth intimate, to which purpose the *water of gall* is mentioned in the next words; both joined together Deut. xxix. 18; possibly the one pointing at their drink, the other at their bread; both metaphorically to be understood, of which see on chap. viii. 14.

x Lev. 26. 33. Deut. 28. 64. y Lev. 26. 33. ch. 44. 27. Ezek. 5. 2, 12.

16 I will [x]scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: [y]and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

I will scatter them also among the heathen; either you shall wander up and down among strangers, like Cain's curse; or rather, you shall have no friend abroad, but be sold as so many slaves from person to person. *Whom neither they nor their fathers have known;* part of the curse threatened Deut. xxviii. 64. *And I will send a sword after them:*

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neither shall this serve their turn, but I will follow them with the sword till they be destroyed; probably meant of those that might escape out of Jerusalem, and flee into Egypt, the Chaldeans should pursue them thither, and either take or slay them there, i. e. such of them as were appointed for destruction; for otherwise they were not all consumed, a full end was not to be made, as is promised, chap. v. 10.

17 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts,
Consider ye, and call for [a] the mourning
women, that they may come; and send
for cunning *women*, that they may come:

a 2 Chron. 35. 25. Job 3. 8. Eccles. 12. 5. Amos 5. 16. Matt. 9. 23.

Consider ye; either in how sad a condition you are, what circumstances you are under; or rather, bethink yourselves what course to take: and therefore he puts them upon mourning and bewailing their condition, intimated by the following expression. *The mourning women;* a sort of persons, and principally women, as more apt for passions in this kind, which they had among them, 2 Chron. xxxv. 25; whose work it was, either to compose funeral elegies, or panegyrics in praise of the dead, and to act them in some mournful manner, as tearing their hair, and beating their breasts, with other mourning postures, or to sing them in some doleful tone, thereby artificially to provoke and excite both passions and expressions of grief in the friends of the deceased, rather wringing out tears than shedding them, in which probably they made greater seeming lamentations than those that did really mourn, as being most concerned; not that God calls upon them to do this as approving the formality, (though this foolish custom had obtained in most ages and countries,) any more than other customs that were made use of by way of illustration; as the *Olympic games*, and possibly that practice mentioned 1 Cor. xv. 29; but makes use of it, as being customary, either to excite them to and put them upon true repentance, or to convince them hereby that they were not able themselves sufficiently to bewail so great calamities as were coming upon them, intimating hereby that he would give them occasion for the most unfeigned weeping and lamentation. *Cunning women;* such as are most skilful in it, Amos v. 16; *wisdom* being taken for *skill* in any arts, as Exod. xxxi. 3, and elsewhere.

18 And let them make haste, and take
up a wailing for us, that [a] our eyes may
run down with tears, and our eyelids
gush out with waters.

a ch. 14. 17.

Let them make haste: as by the calling for their artificial mourners he did intimate the greatness of the misery that was coming upon them, that with all their art they could not sufficiently bewail it; so here, by making haste, he intimates the near approach of it, that it was even at the doors. *Take up a wailing for us;* pitch upon some form of mourning that may be suitable to our condition. *Our eyelids gush out with waters:* this and the former are each of them a hyperbolical expression, and yet are too little to bewail the greatness of the judgment, which suits with the prophet's lamentation, ver. 1. The prophet would herein intimate that they that were so stupid as to hear the prophets denouncing their judgments with dry eyes, though he wished them to have been *fountains of tears*, shall now suddenly feel that they shall have cause enough to send for all the helps, not only real, but artificial, to stir up their mournings.

19 For a voice of wailing is heard out
of Zion, How are we spoiled! we are
greatly confounded, because we have for-
saken the land, because [b] our dwellings
have cast *us* out.

b Lev. 18. 28. & 20. 22.

Is heard out of Zion, i. e. Jerusalem, spoken in the present tense, after the prophetical style, being a frequent way of the prophet's expressing the certainty of a thing. *How are we spoiled!* how great is our misery! or, how come we to be in such a desolate condition? possibly expressions of the artificial mourners, or rather their real sense of it, now it is all too late. *We are greatly confounded:* whether this be the complaint of the country people forced to flee from their habitation to Jerusalem for shelter, or of Jerusalem itself, that could expect no less, it filled them with great consternation, that they who thought their houses should have continued for ever, because of God's promise, Psal. cxxxii. 10, &c., must now forsake them, Lev. xviii. 25; either their persons carried out into captivity, or have them utterly demolished by the enemy.

20 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye
women, and let your ear receive the word of his
mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and
every one her neighbour lamentation.

Yet, or *therefore, hear the word of the Lord*, i. e. do not think I speak words out of my own mind or fancy, but what I speak is from the Lord. *O ye women;* either those *hired women* mentioned before, or rather the women of the land; for God would have it not a mercenary, but a real mourning; and he mentioneth *women*, 1. To upbraid the men with their stupidity. 2. As being more apt to grieve, thereby to express the readiness that he would have the land to be in for mourning. 3. Because of the decay and want there would be of men, as is expressed in the next verse, by reason partly of the slaughter, and partly of the captivity; therefore here is mention of *women* with reference to *children* in the next verse, after whom their bowels would yearn; and *daughters*, either the scholars of the mourning women, or rather, with reference to *young men*, unto whom they might be given in marriage. 4. Because the female sex is least able to help themselves in a common calamity. Or, 5. Because they would be least solicitous, but would indulge their delicacies, pride, sloth, and wantonness, Isa. xxxii. 9, 11. *Every one her neighbour*, Heb. *a woman her friend;* namely, that the grief might spread the further, and become deeper; for affections and passions, of what kind soever, are augmented by company: it notes how large and universal the mourning shall be, Amos v. 16.

21 For death is come up into our win-
dows, *and* is entered into our palaces, to
cut off [c] the children from without, *and* c ch. 6. 11.
the young men from the streets.

Death is come up; the unavoidableness of the ruin is expressed metaphorically, Ezek. xxi. 14; chap. vi. 5, most likely alluding to the violent and universal storming of a city, chap. v. 10, wherein there is no respect had to sex, youth, or age. Several other allusions. See English Annotations. The Chaldeans are here understood by *death*, as bringing death wherever they come; a metonymy of the effect. *To cut off the children from without;* no safety within or without; the enemy shall cut off all, not only those at home, but even those that are conversing or playing in the streets, which most commonly *young men* and *children* are, chap. vi. 11.

22 Speak, Thus saith the LORD, Even
the carcases of men shall fall [d] as dung d ch. 8. 2. & 16. 4.
upon the open field, and as the handful
after the harvestman, and none shall gather
them.

Speak, Thus saith the Lord; lest they should think these things would never be, cease not to tell them from me that they shall certainly come to pass, viz. what was said before, and what is said now in this verse (these words, *Speak, Thus saith the Lord*, being best read in a parenthesis). *The carcasses of men*, Heb. a *carcass* of a man, noting here and there a scattered carcass. *Shall fall as dung upon the open field;* as Jezebel was, 2 Kings ix. 37, exposed to all contempt, strewed up and down on the superficies of the earth, Heb. *face of the field*, and be offensive by their stench to all that pass by, chap. xliv. 12. *As the handful after the harvest man;* either laid in heaps by death, as the harvestman doth his cocks of hay or sheaves of corn; or rather, they shall be no more regarded than a few scattered ears that drop out of the reaper's hand, which either lie on the ground, and are eaten by birds, or trod to dirt by beasts; thus God would pour contempt upon them, which must needs be grievous to so proud a people as the Jews were. *None shall gather them;* none shall have so much respect to them, or compassion of them, as to afford burial, chap. viii. 2.

23 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, [e] Let not e Eccles. 9. 11.
the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither
let the mighty *man* glory in his might,
let not the rich *man* glory in his riches:

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The Jews did glory in the counsel of their *wise men*, the strength of the *soldiers*, and the wealth of their *cities*; but here God takes them off from their vain confidences, that neither their *counsels* and *policy*, Eccles. ix. 11, nor their *forces* and *arms*, Psal. xxxiii. 16, 17, nor their *wealth* or *riches*, Prov. xi. 4; Ezek. vii. 19, should be able to deliver them from being either destroyed or carried captive by the Chaldeans. In these, or some of these, men are apt to put their confidences, and neglect God their only succour in distress; and therefore he puts them upon that in the next verse.

f 1 Cor. 1. 31. 2 Cor. 10. 17.

24 But f let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: g for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.

g Mic. 6. 8. & 7. 18.

Understandeth and knoweth me: whether we make any curious distinction between *understanding* God, as if that be more speculative, whereby we rightly apprehend his nature; and *knowing* God, as if that be more practical, as directing the conversation; we need not here inquire; yet certainly both centre in this, that we so know and understand God as to trust in him and depend on him alone in all conditions. *Which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; kindness*, as it relates to his own people, Psal. v. 12; *judgment*, with reference to his punishing the wicked; *righteousness*, namely, as he deals justly and uprightly with both, Psal. xcii. 15. The meaning here, I conceive, is to show God's orderly governing and disposing of things in the world in his distributive justice, that all things are right and equal. *In these things I delight;* both in himself and others, Psal. xi. 7.

25 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that h I will † punish all *them which are* circumcised with the uncircumcised;

h Rom. 2. 8, 9. † Heb. visit upon.

I will punish, viz. by the Babylonians, *all them which are circumcised:* q. d. Do not think to insist upon your external privilege of *circumcision*, that you are Abraham's natural seed, and thereby distinguished from other nations, as you sometimes were wont to do of the *temple*, that you had God in the midst of you. Do not think that shall privilege you; for you shall see it shall not be long ere I bring the Chaldeans upon those other nations, which either are circumcised in the flesh as well as you, and upon you also, who are uncircumcised in heart as well as they; or whether circumcision was lost, as being cast off by them, and so they were indeed uncircumcised; God tells them they shall fare alike: hence in the next verse he ranks Judah next to Egypt among the other uncircumcised nations; for he looks to the circumcision of the heart, not of the body; to *inward* worship, not *outward* only; therefore some read it the *circumcised* in *uncircumcision*.

i Judith 14. 10. † Heb. *cut off into corners, or, having the corners of their hair polled.* k ch. 25. 23. & 49. 32. 1 Lev. 26. 41. Ezek. 44. 7. Rom. 2. 28, 29.

26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, i and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all *that are* † in the k utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all *these* nations *are* uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel *are* l uncircumcised in the heart.

In the utmost corners: some refer this to the place of their habitation, as in corners, and remote parts of the wilderness, as it were separated from other nations, and therefore might think themselves furthest remote from danger; but some rather choose to refer it to their manners, as in cutting the corners of their hair, which was forbidden the Jews, Lev. xix. 27. The like description in chap. xxv. 23. *Uncircumcised in the heart:* see the foregoing verse. God regards not the outward sign, but principally respects the circumcision of the heart. Here ends that sermon that began at chap. vii.

CHAP. X.

They are forbid to be afraid of the tokens of heaven, and consult idols, which are vain, 1—5, and not to be compared with the majesty and power of God, who is Jacob's portion, 6—16. The Babylonians destroy the temple; the brutish pastors and the flocks are scattered, 17—22. The prophet's humble supplication, 23—25.

HEAR ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: cir. 600.

Here begins another sermon, i. e. most probably relating to Jechonias and the Jews, that were already in captivity. *Israel;* the ten tribes.

2 Thus saith the LORD, a Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

a Lev. 18. 3. & 20. 23.

Learn not the way of the heathen: the Jews being to live among the Chaldeans in their captivity, where many of them were already, the prophet in this sermon admonisheth them against the superstitions of the Chaldean idolatries, which he understands here by *heathen*, who were also much addicted to astrology, and esteemed it the original of sciences; the customs and their manners he calls here their *way*, as is frequent in Scripture, Lev. xviii. 3; xx. 23. *Be not dismayed at the signs of heaven:* this was a practice and study so common among them, that judicial astrologers, of what nation soever, were generally termed Chaldeans; a practice so hateful to God, that sometimes he positively prohibits it, Deut. xviii. 10, 14, and sometimes in a way of scorn and derision sarcastically sends them to such, Isa. xlvii. 13, and often labours to persuade against it; for though astronomy be not only lawful, but useful, as being subject to reason and the rules of art, whereby many actions of human life are directed, and guided, and proportioned, yet judiciary astrology is indeed originally diabolical and heathenish; and though God do suffer their predictions sometimes to fall out right, yet it is to punish the curiosity of the inquirer *For the heathen are dismayed at them:* q. d. Leave this to heathens; it doth not become God's people, who do wholly depend upon him; for indeed the heathen, as many ignorant Christians do to this day, were more afraid of the signs of heaven and astrological predictions than of God, and what is foretold in his word of prophecy, as if things were governed rather by the influence of the stars than the providence of God; not but that we may be affected with such preternatural appearances in the world, which God doth extraordinarily cause to appear, as some tokens of his approaching judgments, Joel ii. 30, 31; Matt. xxiv. 7; Luke xxi. 11.

3 For the † customs of the people *are* vain: for b *one* cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax.

† Heb. *statutes*, or, *ordinances are vanity.* b Is. 40. 19, 20. & 44. 9, 10, &c. & 45. 20.

The customs of the people are vain, i. e. such courses, institutions, idolatrous customs, and ceremonies as these, that many people follow, they are *vain*, and it is a foolish and wicked thing that any that profess the true God should give heed to such lying vanities. *One cutteth a tree out of the forest:* here he annexeth their idolatry to their astrology: q. d. They cut down timber to make the images and representations of these stars and planets that they fear and worship as gods, either in memorial of them, when they could not see them, or else upon a superstitious conceit that the stars which they worshipped did by some magic art convey some virtue or spirit into these statues or images; or rather, he doth set forth the folly of the heathen, that whereas for the *matter* of them, they are but a piece of wood, a tree out of the forest; and as to the *form* of them, no other than the carver, a sorry man, is pleased to put them into by his *axe*, which I suppose is here put for any cutting tool of the artist whereby he shapes it; yet they are afraid of these, as if they were gods, Isa. xl. 20. See on Jer. viii. 2.

4 They deck it with silver and with gold; they c fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

c Is. 41. 7. & 46. 7.

A further description of their workmanship, having no other comeliness but what they confer upon it, and they no greater security or certainty of it than as they can with hammer and nail make it fast, and fix it to some place, the

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wooden god being not able to preserve itself from falling; therefore it is rather to be meant of fastening to some wall or pillar, than of fastening their parts together, because they seem to be cut out of one entire piece, and therefore need it not.

5 They *are* upright as the palm tree,
d Ps. 115. 5. & 135. 16. Hab. 2. 19. 1 Cor. 12. 2. e Ps. 115. 7. Is. 46. 1, 7. f Is. 41. 23.
[d]but speak not: they must needs be [e]borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for [f]they cannot do evil, neither also *is it* in them to do good.

They are upright as the palm tree; the nature of which is to grow upright and tall, without any branchings, till it comes to the top, thereby possibly representing majesty. *But speak not;* looking as if they were about to speak, standing in a speaking posture; but have not a word to utter, being only dumb stocks, wooden gods. *They must needs be borne, because they cannot go;* they move no further or faster than you lift them, either when you go to set them up, or upon any occasion of removal, as stiff as stakes, being indeed but sticks. *Be not afraid of them;* they can do you no more harm than the signs of heaven could do; they are but dead stocks. The heathens worshipped some idols that they might do them good, and others that they might do them no harm; but God tells them here, they can do *neither good nor harm*, as in the next words; they can neither punish nor reward; they can neither hurt their enemies, nor help their friends: by this the true God will be distinguished from idols, that he alone can foretell things to come, and he alone can reward or punish, Isa. xlviii. 5, and therefore the prophet endeavours to turn them off from their idols to the true God.

g Ex. 15. 11. Ps. 86. 8, 10.
6 Forasmuch as *there is* none [g]like unto thee, O LORD; thou *art* great, and thy name *is* great in might.

Forasmuch; this particle מִן *min*, is to be taken here causally, and refers either to what goes before, showing there is no comparison between God and idols; or rather, to what follows, as the ground and reason of all due subjection to God, as in the next verse. *Thy name is great*, or, thou art transcendently great, *in might*, i. e. though idols may have something of a name in the world among the heathen, yet there was nothing of their real power or might seen; or if the devil might act something through them to delude the world, yet nothing to be compared with that might that hath manifested itself in God's works, Psal. cvi. 8; cxi. 6. All the works of idols are either none, or feeble and weak, ver. 8.

h Rev. 15. 4. ‖ Or, *it liketh thee.* i Ps. 89. 6.
7 [h]Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for ‖to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as [i]among all the wise *men* of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, *there is* none like unto thee.

Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? he is called a *great King*, Mal. i. 14: q. d. Thou, by whom all nations are governed, and all affairs in them disposed, and by none else, who would worship any but thee, or be afraid of any but thee, seeing it is fit for, and therefore can belong to, none besides? as in the next words; it is thy right and due. Or, Who can be so stupid as not to acknowledge one Supreme Being, and this to be but one? as, among the heathens, Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and divers others did; and therefore is it not a prodigious thing that any should so withhold the truth in unrighteousness, be so gross as to worship many gods? *Among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee:* q. d. If you search among all their *wise men* and philosophers, all the *great men* and rulers, in their kingdoms; for these the heathens were wont to worship as gods after death, *wise men* for their wisdom, and *kings* for their power; you will find none to compare with God, either for wisdom or power; their wise men are but as so many fools.

† Heb. *in one*, or, *at once.* k Ps. 115. 8. Is. 41. 29. Hab. 2. 18. Zech. 10. 2. Rom. 1. 21, 22.
8 But they are †altogether [k]brutish and foolish: the stock *is* a doctrine of vanities.

They are altogether brutish: the awe that the idol doth impress upon carnal men's minds, and thereby taking them off from a due apprehension of the essence of God, doth keep them between such hope and fear, that they become as senseless and as inapprehensive of any true worship as brutes. *And foolish;* not only some of them, but even all, both Jews and Gentiles: q. d. I need not stand to particularize, but take them altogether, they are become stupid idolaters, and have drunk in the most gross superstitions of the Gentiles, as Rom. i. 19, 21. *The stock;* a synecdoche put for all sorts of idols, of what materials soever; and a metonymy of the matter, to render them contemptible, either as deluding the ignorant, or in themselves considered; they are mere vain, foolish, helpless things. *Is a doctrine of vanities;* the Hebrew word *musar* is taken for bad instruction, Prov. xvi. 22: q. d. It is an easy matter to prove them very fools and brutish, when they look upon a stock, a piece of wood, to be their god, which hath neither knowledge nor providence, and therefore must needs be a doctrine of vanity, when they think to be taught devotion by images, which is a teacher of lies; that saith to the *dumb stone, It shall teach*, Hab. ii. 18, 19; like that *doctrine of devils* first broached by Pope Gregory, who first commended Serenus bishop of Massilia for not permitting images to be worshipped, but reproved him for throwing them out of the church, because they serve for ornaments and laymen's books, which since hath been received as a catholic doctrine, that images are *laymen's books.*

9 Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and [l]gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: [m]blue and purple *is* their clothing: they *are* all [n]the work of cunning *men.*
l Dan. 10. 5. m Hab. 3. 12, 72. n Ps. 115. 4.

Silver spread into plates; it was not wood washed with gold, nor massy silver or gold, but covered over with *plates of silver* or *gold*, Exod. xxxix. 3. *From Tarshish;* from some remote place, probably from Spain, whence the best gold came; *Tarshish* is the proper name of a sea-town in Cilicia, Ezek. xxvii. 12, 25; Jonah i. 3; and being a noted port, from whence they had passage to Africa, India, and other remote countries, it is usually put for the *ocean*, and may as well signify from any place *beyond the sea.* If you take it properly, then possibly it is noted as the best silver coming from thence, as *Uphaz* for the best gold; for though we read also of gold coming from thence, 1 Kings x. 22; 2 Chron. ix. 21, yet where the most proper commodities of it are mentioned we read of no gold, Ezek. xxvii. 12, unless what seems rather to be brought thither, ver. 22. *Gold from Uphaz*, i. e. probably the best gold, coming from thence in those days, as the best silver from *Tarshish*, and that here was the best gold is probable from Dan. x. 5. There are various conjectures at what place this points at, whether the same with Phas, or Fez, by an aphæresis, or Ophir, a place not far from Tarshish; and divers other places are conjectured; and some think it refers to no place at all, but to point at the excellency of the gold only. But it is not the design that this comment should swell with things rather conjectural than profitable, it is enough to know that this place intends the purest gold. *The work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder:* thus, saith he, the artificer takes it, and each, according to his art, shapes it and adorns it; fits the silver and the gold for it. *Blue and purple is their clothing:* expositors differing about the materials out of which they were dyed, do differ also in the colours, which here are called *blue* and *purple;* the dispute is not worth the while in a vulgar comment, they that will may consult the English Annotations. Either this relates to the further adorning those rich idols of silver and gold; or it implies other artists, such as shape, or sew silk or cloth, woollen or linen, made use of to make these garments for those idols of more inferior materials, as wood or stone, the other being sufficiently beautified without them. *They are all the work of cunning men*, i. e. the choicest men in their respective arts were picked out for this work, that there might be nothing wanting as to exactness, richness, and curiosity; all this the prophet speaks the more to ridicule their idols, as if all this would put any thing of power, virtue, or excellency in them, still *deest aliquid intus.*

10 But the LORD *is* the †true God, he *is* °the living God, and an †[p]everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble,
† Heb. *God of truth.* Ps. 31. 5. o 1 Tim. 6. 17. † Heb. *King of eternity* p Ps. 10. 16

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and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

The Lord is the true God: q. d. All these are but false gods: Jehovah is the alone true God; they are but lies, and the teachers of lies. God is truth itself, and that both in regard of his *essence*, as it is ascribed to Christ, 1 John v. 20; and also in regard of his *faithfulness*, Numb. xxiii. 19; Psal. xxxi. 5. *He is the living God;* these are all but dead stocks and stones, Jehovah is the only living God, having life in himself, and giving life to all things else, John v. 21, 26. Hence these idols are not only more base than any other creature, but even viler than the matter itself of which they are made. *An everlasting King:* these, though accounted kings, and countenanced by kings, yet both they and their kings do all perish; time devours them all with worm or rust, or by injuries and violence offered to them, as in the next verse; but none of these or any thing else can affect the true God, he is *everlasting. At his wrath the earth shall tremble;* he can with his look or frown make the foundations of the heaven and the earth to shake, whereas these stocks can move them no more than they can themselves, which is not one hair's breadth from their stations. *The nations shall not be able to abide his indignation;* not able either to *stop* it or *bear* it, but must stoop and fall under it, Psal. lxxvi. 7; the wicked will not be able to *stand in judgment*, Psal. i. 5.

† In the Chaldean language.
q See Ps. 96. 5.
r ver. 15. Is. 2. 18. Zech. 13. 2.

11 † Thus shall ye say unto them, [q] The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, *even* [r] they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.

Say unto them, viz. to your great lords, the Babylonians, when they shall solicit you to worship idols. *The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth:* this seems to have some allusion to a saying common among those Greeks that held one supreme Deity, *Let him that saith he is a god make another world.* Here is noted both how frail they are, *they shall perish;* and how weak they are, they could not *make the heavens* or *the earth.* This verse is writ in the Chaldean tongue, and not in the Hebrew, that when they came among them that did worship their idols, they might openly and plainly profess the true God in that language, which the enemies understood better than they did the Hebrew, and that in such kind of bold language as this; Let all those gods perish from off the earth, and under the heavens, that were not able to make either. It is an imprecation upon their idols.

a Gen. 1. 1, 6, 9. Ps. 136. 5, 6. ch. 51. 15, &c.
t Ps. 93. 1.
u Job 9. 8. Ps. 104. 2. Is. 40. 22.

12 He [a] hath made the earth by his power, he hath [t] established the world by his wisdom, and [u] hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.

In this and the next verse the prophet enumerates some particulars wherein he is transcendently above all creatures which he hath made, much more above idols, which are the works of man's hands. *The earth*, Acts xiv. 15, i. e. the whole globe, consisting of waters as well as earth. *By his power:* it must needs speak an almighty power to make such a vast body; where would the idols have found materials of which to have composed such a body and bulk? the true God was not at a loss, he drew them out of nothing, and commanded them into a being by the word of his power, Gen. i. 1. *He hath established the world by his wisdom;* either he hath made it firm, solid, and unmovable, i. e. off from its basis, or rather centre; (for it is out of our sphere and province here to meddle either with the fixation or the motion of it, that is left to the old and new philosophers to dispute among themselves;) or else by *establishing* we understand he hath appointed it its use, or hath prepared it to be every way subservient to the inhabitants thereof, both as to *delight* in prospect, and varieties of recreation, by its ornamental parts in mountains, little hills, woods, meadows, fields, &c., and *necessity* to accommodate man and beast with all things useful, both for habitation and provision, to sustain the natural life, and to praise and magnify the founder of it, Gen. i. 11, 12; all which cannot choose but greatly manifest the *unsearchable wisdom* of God. *And hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion:* these are *stretched out*, i. e. expanded and spread over our head, through the whole circumference of the earth, with all their glorious furniture, and varieties of motions, moving regularly in their several orbs, i. e. not varying the least degree, either in time or space, from the order and law that God hath set them, even in those which are more eccentric and erratic; which must needs argue an unparalleled skill and understanding in God, which the word *discretion* doth here properly signify, Exod. xxxvi. 1; Job xii. 13; all which are his *handiwork*, and do *declare his glory*, Psal. xix. 1.

13 [x] When he uttereth his voice, *there is a* ‖ multitude of waters in the heavens, and [y] he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings ‖ with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

x Job 38. 34.
‖ Or, *noise.*
y Ps. 135. 7.
‖ Or, *for rain.*

As in the former verse he relates God's unspeakable power and wisdom in his creating and fixing the stated order of things; so here he further sets it forth in his providential ordering and disposing their accidents. *When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters;* i. e. either at his command, when he is pleased to call for the rain; or rather, when he thundereth in the heavens, Job xxxvii. 4, 5; Psal. lxxvii. 18: though it often rains when it thunders not, and thunders when it rains not, yet when it rains and thunders the rain usually falls more forcibly from the clouds, and in more sudden plenty, as it were a more immediate consequent of it. *The heavens*, viz. the *lowest heaven*, the region of the air. *The vapours;* exhalations, whether wet or dry, causing wind or rain, by the ascending whereof the lower heavens gather them into clouds, which, when full and burdened, descend in showers for the conveniences of the earth and springs. *He maketh lightnings with rain:* though fire and water be contrary, yet it opens the clouds to make way for the rain, and is produced in the midst of waters, all which is wonderful. *And bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures;* which, partly, notes that it is secret and hidden, as coming from the caverns and hollow parts of the earth; no man knows from whence they come, or whither they go, John iii. 8; and it is wonderful to observe how suddenly at a calm time the winds will rise, how they will whirl about, how various, unconstant, and contrary in their motions; and partly, the plenty, both for vehemency and continuance, signified also by *treasures*, the plenty of snow and hail being thus expressed, Job xxxviii. 22; and partly, that it is at his disposal to bring out of his *treasure* when he pleases. See Psal. cxxxv. 7.

14 [a] Every man ‖ is [a] brutish in *his* knowledge: [b] every founder is confounded by the graven image: [c] for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them.

a ch. 51. 17, 18.
‖ Or, *is more brutish than to know.*
a Prov. 30. 2.
b Is. 42. 17. & 44. 11. & 45. 16.
c Hab. 2. 18.

Every man is brutish in his knowledge: some limit it to the makers of these idols, that can employ their arts and wits to no better purpose than to frame such stocks into gods; this suits the next expression. Men are bewitched and besotted by these things, so as to see no more into their folly than if they were brutes; and the reason that it hath taken such root may be, because of men's so much admiring the art of carving and painting, or rather through their ignorance: q. d. It is for want of knowledge and understanding that men are thus brutish, Isa. xliv. 18. *Every founder is confounded by the graven image;* either it shall turn to his reproach; or rather, he shall see his folly, and shall be ashamed of it when he shall discover it, that ever he should make such a thing, and trust in it, and expose it to be adored by others. *His molten image is falsehood;* it is not that which it pretends to be, but a *deceitful* thing, a *lie;* they turn the *truth of God into a lie*, Rom. i. 25. *There is no breath in them;* they have nothing of life in them; nay, that very vegetative life that once was in their stocks is now lost; much less are they spirits sent down from heaven.

15 They *are* vanity, *and* the work of errors: in the time of their visitation [d] they shall perish.

d ver. 11.

They are vanity, and the work of errors; either in their

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rise, as springing from men of corrupt minds, or the foundation of them; a metonymy of the effect; teachers and encouragers of *lies*, Hab. ii. 18; things rather to be scoffed at and derided, than adored and worshipped; and it is expressed in the plural number, to note the multiplicity of them. *In the time of their visitation they shall perish;* when God shall have a controversy with them, shall come to reckon with Babylon and her idols, they and their worshippers shall be destroyed, alluding possibly to the manner of the pagan conquests, who were wont to carry away both persons and the idols of the country, and either break them to pieces, or burn them; thus were they served by the Persians: see on Isa. xlvi. 1. This possibly may be spoken by way of encouragement to the Jews, that took offence at the Chaldean idols that were set up in their sight; that God may strengthen their patience he tells them he visits them in *mercy*, and their enemies in *judgment;* he will destroy those idols.

e Ps. 16. 5. & 73. 26. & 119. 57. ch. 51. 19. Lam. 3. 24. f Deut. 32. 9. Ps. 74. 2. g Is. 47. 4. & 51. 15. & 54. 5. ch. 31. 35. & 32. 18. & 50. 34.

16 e The portion of Jacob *is* not like them: for he *is* the former of all *things;* and f Israel *is* the rod of his inheritance: g The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

The portion of Jacob; a periphrasis for the true God, who vouchsafeth to be the portion of his people, and to be so called, Deut. xxxii. 9; Psal. xvi. 5, and many other places, because he is in covenant with his people in the Messiah, whose co-heirs are as dear to him as a portion is that descends to a man by inheritance; and he tells you his name in the close of the verse, Isa. xlvii. 4, one who hath the whole host of heaven and earth at his disposal. *He is the former of all things;* idols are things framed and formed, but God is the former of all things, *the Maker of heaven and earth. Israel is the rod of his inheritance;* so called, because the portions and inheritances of Israel were measured by a *line*, *reed*, or *rod*, and therefore called the *rod of his inheritance*, Deut. xxxii. 9; Psal. lxxiv. 2, and because they were his by a continual line of succession; beside Israel is שבט *schebet*, the *rod* or *sceptre* of his inheritance, because God did set up his kingdom in Israel.

h See ch. 6. 1. Ezek. 12. 3, &c. † Heb. *inhabitress.*

17 ¶ h Gather up thy wares out of the land, O †inhabitant of the fortress.

The prophet now enters upon another subject, and probably begins another sermon. *Gather up thy wares*, i. e. every thing thou hast any advantage by, not only thy domestic concerns, but all thy traffic and merchandise, wherever thou hast any concerns in the land, as men use to do in case of invasion by an enemy, to secure them. It seems to be a sarcasm, or kind of military derision. *O inhabitant of the fortress:* this is understood by some as spoken to the Babylonians, that they should make provision for their escape, their idols being not able to save them; but this seems to be remote from the prophet's meaning. It is rather therefore directed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that being the chief place of security in Judea, and by a synecdoche to all other places that they promised themselves security in; the approaching destruction being to pass through the whole country.

i 1 Sam. 25. 29. ch. 16. 13. k Ezek. 6. 10.

18 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will i sling out the inhabitants of the land at this once, and will distress them, k that they may find *it so.*

I will sling out; it notes with how much violence, and speed, and with ease the Chaldeans shall hurry away the people into Babylon, as the stone doth swiftly and violently pass which is thrown out of a sling, with so much ease, and therefore it is said *at this once;* I will not delay, but make one thorough quick work of it; noting not only the time, but implying the clear riddance that he would make of them, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17—19: they had been often assaulted by enemies, and sometimes they redeemed themselves, sometimes delivered by God, their enemies being sometimes divided; but it should not be so now, but all swept away. *That they may find it so;* that they may see I am in good earnest, that I have not only said it, but they shall find that I will execute it; and though they would never believe it, yet they shall actually find the truth of my threatenings. See chap. v. 12, 13; Ezek. vi. 10.

l ch. 4. 19 & 8. 21. & 9. 1. m Ps. 77. 10. n Mic. 7. 9.

19 ¶ l Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, m Truly this *is* a grief, and n I must bear it.

Here the prophet doth not so much express his own sorrow, though that be great, as personate the sorrow and complaint that the land, i. e. the people of the land, manifest, or at least ought to do; which because they do not, causeth no little grief in the prophet himself, who cannot but be affected with their condition, which he calls not only a hurt, but a wound, and both of them very grievous. *But I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it;* or rather, but *I better considered it*, and said within myself, I were as good be silent; it is indeed a grief *grievous* in itself, and *grievous* that I must smother it, and not complain, but it is my duty to bear it patiently. There is in this expression a double necessary preparation to repentance, viz. 1. An acknowledgment that they had deservedly brought the judgment upon themselves, and that therefore, 2. They would patiently bear it; and it doth imply something of their stupidity: q. d. We could not have imagined the damage could have been so very great, but now we see how it is, we will patiently bear *the indignation of the Lord, because we have sinned against him.* If this be not the meaning, then it is a further obstinate persisting in their rebelling: q. d. Seeing it must be so, truly it is very *grievous*, but I am bound now to bear it and rub through it as well as I can; a further persisting in their pertinacy, but I incline most to the former sense.

o ch. 4. 20.

20 o My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they *are* not: *there is* none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains.

He proceeds in his prosopopœia to bring in the land, or the inhabitants thereof, enumerating their calamities, and by a metaphor sets out the overthrow of the land, or Jerusalem, by the breaking of the *cords* of a *tabernacle*, the use whereof is to fasten it on every side to stakes in the ground, which *cords* being broken the *tabernacle* falls, implying all the supports of city and country were gone, nothing but desolation to be expected. See chap. iv. 20. *My children are gone forth of me;* either the inhabitants of the land, or the lesser cities, being frequently called *daughters*, viz. the Chaldeans have snatched them away from me, and carried them into captivity. *They are not;* of the phrase and meaning of it see chap. xxxi. 15. *There is none to stretch forth my tent any more*, i. e. it is irrevocable, I am without all help, either for defence or beauty, or any thing to regain my pristine state, which he chooseth to describe hereby, continuing this metaphor rather than any other, of a *shepherd's tent;* possibly insinuating the ground of it to arise principally from their pastors, the neglect both of their civil and ecclesiastical governors, which the next verse favours.

21 For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.

The pastors are become brutish; not that the prophet takes off all blame from the people, but that he layeth it chiefly upon the rulers of church and state; for so is pastor taken frequently. See chap. xxiii. 1—3. *And have not sought the Lord;* not sought unto him, and taken him into their counsels. *Therefore they shall not prosper:* the prophet gives the reason why nothing went well with them, namely, because there was no regard had to godliness, without which we cannot expect a blessing upon any thing. *All their flocks shall be scattered*, i. e. all that have been committed to their care shall be carried unto Babylon, and divers of them dispersed abroad into several countries for their sakes.

p ch. 1. 15. & 4. 6. & 5. 15. & 6. 22. q ch. 9. 11.

22 Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the p north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, *and* a q den of dragons.

The prophet had divers times sounded this alarm in their ears, but to very little purpose; his words seemed but as idle tales, they believed him not: he speaks of it partly as one conceiving what dreadful *commotions* and concussions would be upon the land by the clattering of arms, prancings

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and neighings of horses, sounding of trumpets, and rattling of chariots, making as it were the earth to shake under them, when that vast army of the Chaldeans should furiously break in upon them. Partly, insinuating an antithesis, opposing the voice of God's prophets, that had so often spoken of this, but they would not hear, against this dreadful noise, which they should not but hear, and see, and feel too. So that they that would not learn of God's prophets shall be sent to harder masters, that shall teach them in a manner as Gideon did the men of Succoth, Judg. viii. 16. *The north country:* see chap. i. 14; v. 15. *A den of dragons:* see on chap. ix. 11.

r Prov. 16. 1. & 20. 24.

23 ¶ O LORD, I know that the r way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

The prophet finding that all he could say prevailed nothing upon this people, but they rather grew worse, he turns himself to God. How far these words concern Pelagianism, or free-will, either one way or other, or whether at all, concerns not this comment; they seem literally to be the words of the prophet, relating either to himself and other holy men: q. d. It is not in our power, neither do we presume, to stop this decree of thine against Judea: or else to the enemies in general, or Nebuchadnezzar in particular: q. d. We know all their marches and designs are of thine appointing, and all their achievements of thine ordering, it is thy providence that directs every *step* they take against this land, without whom no counsels shall prosper, who alone turnest men's hearts which way thou pleasest, Prov. xxi. 1, who canst bring men on, or turn them back, as thou seest good, Isa. xxxvii. 29, so that no man's way is properly his own, to give them what success he will: or to the people, whereby he doth tacitly insinuate that all the counsels and measures they think to take, whether by their own strength at home, or confederacies and alliances abroad, will avail nothing; however they may think to escape by some devices or stratagems of their own, it is to no purpose, God can overturn all in a moment, when men think their counsels are ripe, and they want nothing but execution: or lastly, as others think, this is by way of petition: q. d. Lord, we know it is not in our power to divert these judgments that are coming upon us by the Chaldeans, but thou canst moderate and limit them as thou pleasest; seeing all their designs are ordered by thy providence, they cannot do any thing against us without thy permission: this the next verse seems to favour.

s Ps. 6. 1. & 38. 1. ch. 30. 11. † Heb. diminish me.

24 O LORD, s correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou † bring me to nothing.

O Lord, correct me: q. d. Seeing thou wilt bring the Chaldeans upon us to punish us for our sins, let it be a correction only, not a destruction and utter ruin. *But with judgment;* let it be in measure, in judgment, i. e. in wisdom, proportioning it as a father toward his children, chap. xxx. 11; for so the Hebrew *mishpat* signifies, and thus *judgment* is taken, Isa. xxx. 18. We refuse not correction, but we cast ourselves upon thee, therefore *in the midst of judgment remember mercy. Not in thine anger;* the reason of this he gives in the next clause; lest if thou shouldst let out thy fury upon me, thou wouldst *bring me to nothing*, i. e. thou wouldst utterly consume me, or *make me few*, as Heb., that I should be no more a people, never lift up the head again.

t Ps. 79. 6. u Job 18. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 5. 2 Thes. 1. 8. x ch. 8. 16.

25 t Pour out thy fury upon the heathen u that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and x devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.

Pour out thy fury upon the heathen: this may imply both *petition*, that God would do so, and *prediction*, that God will certainly do so, which toward the close of the prophecy we find was fulfilled, God first sending the king of Babylon to overthrow divers of the heathen nations, and then Babylon itself destroyed with a great destruction. He will make a difference between us and the heathen, such as *know thee not*, i. e. such as do not acknowledge and own thee for their God: the phrase is frequent; 1 Sam. ii. 12; Job xviii. 21; 2 Thess. i. 8: the sense is expressed here in the next words, that *do not call on thy name. That call not on thy name;* a synecdoche, one part of worship put for the whole: q. d. If thou wilt be pouring out thy fury, the effects of it be to thine *enemies*, not unto thine own *people*, who worship thee. *For they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate:* here he gives a reason as a motive to God why he should do so; which words see explained on Psal. lxxix. 5—7, whence they are taken, and possibly Jeremiah himself was the author of that Psalm after the city was destroyed, and he carried into Egypt; and for the phrase of *devouring him*, see chap. viii. 16.

CHAP. XI.

God's covenant, 1—7. *Their disobedience*, 8—10. *Evils to come on them*, 11—17, *and on the men of Anathoth, for conspiring to kill Jeremiah*, 18—23.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, cir. 608.

What time and in what manner this revelation came from God to the prophet is not expressed, whether it were in the days of Josiah or Jehoiakim.

2 Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

Hear ye the words of this covenant: God speaking in the plural number, not *hear thou*, but *hear ye*, makes some conjecture that this was a charge given to some other prophets, either Zephaniah (if it were in Josiah's time, Zeph. i. 1) or Uriah (if it were in the time of Jehoiakim). The term *this* also manifests that the book of the law was before Jeremiah's time, for all conclude that the covenant here spoken of was the covenant of the law of God, delivered by Moses, to which the people more than once promised obedience.

3 And say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; a Cursed *be* the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, a Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.

In Deut. xxvii. 26, it is, *Cursed* be *he that confirmeth not* all *the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.* The people's saying *Amen* testified their assent, and made the law a covenant; but they had besides formally and explicitly covenanted with God, Exod. xxiv. 3, 7, with religious rites and ceremonies used in stipulations, and afterwards consented that God should punish those that violated that covenant, Deut. xxvii. 26.

4 Which I commanded your fathers in the day *that* I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, b from the iron furnace, saying, c Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God: b Deut. 4. 20. 1 Kin. 8. 51. c Lev. 26. 3. 12. ch. 7. 23.

Which I commanded your fathers, which law (that you by your restipulation made a formal covenant) I that am the Lord, and so had a sovereign power to lay laws upon my creatures, commanded your fathers, *in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace;* and obliged them to obedience before I laid my law upon them, by bringing them out of the land of Egypt, from the furnace wherein iron is melted, which may either be taken literally (probably that was a piece of their work in Egypt) or metaphorically, serving at iron furnaces being a very hard and servile labour. *Saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you;* for which kindness I required no more of them but a gentler service to me, in obeying my voice as to the things of this law which I gave them in charge. *So shall ye be my people, and I will be your God;* nor did I only lay my commands upon them, but I also encouraged them to the obedience of it, by my gracious promise, that if they would, they should be a people, I would bless, protect, and defend, and bear the name of my people, and I would be their God to own and bless them.

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d Deut. 7. 12, 13. Ps. 105. 9, 10.

5 That I may perform the [d]oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is* this day. Then answered I, and said, †So be it, O LORD.

† Heb. *Amen*, Deut. 27. 15,—26.

I required their obedience for their own good; I had sworn to their fathers that I would give their posterity a land abounding with plenty of all good things, the best and choicest things, upon supposition of their obedience. I have performed that oath, I have brought them into such a land, and showed myself faithful to them. *So be it, O Lord:* God having ended his speech, the prophet saith, *Amen*, either asserting the truth of what God had said, or wishing that the people would do according to their covenant, or assenting to the curse according as God had commanded, Deut. xxvii. 26.

6 Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, [e]and do them.

e Rom. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 22.

Let it be thy work to call upon this people, not only to hear, but to do, the words which I have commanded them, and they have engaged to do.

7 For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day *that* I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, *even* unto this day, [f]rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice.

f ch. 7. 13, 25. & 35. 15.

In *protesting* I *protested*, a usual way in the Hebrew, by which they express the seriousness and vehemency of an action. By *protesting* he meaneth the same with charging and commanding, with promises annexed to obedience, and threatenings denounced in case of disobedience. This God saith he had done with a great deal of patience and diligence, even from the time that this people were brought by him out of the land of Egypt.

g ch. 7. 26.

8 [g]Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but [h]walked every one in the ‖imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did *them* not.

h ch. 3. 17. & 7. 24. & 9. 14.

‖ Or, *stubbornness.*

But had not hearkened unto his counsels, but every one *had walked after the imaginations of his own heart.* A phrase by which sin is often expressed in holy writ, Deut. xxix. 19; chap. iii. 17; vii. 24; ix. 14; xiii. 10; xvi. 12; xviii. 12; xxiii. 17. The imaginations of man's heart are only evil, Gen. vi. 5; viii. 21. Hence holiness is set out by the notion of *self-denying*, not pleasing ourselves, mortifying our members, &c. For this God threateneth to bring upon them all his words of threatening annexed to the covenant of the law.

i Ezek. 22. 25. Hos. 6. 9.

9 And the LORD said unto me, [i]A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

All sorts of people, whether of the city or country, have done alike, as if they had conspired together to break my law, and to provoke me to wrath, they are all alike and act alike. The thing is manifest, it is not done secretly, nor is it done rashly, but upon a conspiracy, upon counsel and deliberation.

k Ezek. 20. 18.

10 They are turned back to [k]the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

They are turned back from me, or they are turned back from their own better courses in the time of David, *to the sins of their forefathers* that worshipped the golden calf, or the many idols which they worshipped in the time of the judges. They are all alike, both the ten tribes, which were *the house of Israel*, and the two tribes, which made the kingdom of Judah, they have all broken the covenant which I made with their forefathers.

† Heb. *to go forth of.* 1 Pet. 18. 41. Prov. 1. 28. Is. 1. 15. ch. 14. 12. Ezek. 8. 18. Mic. 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13.

11 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able †to escape; and [l]though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.

Evil upon them which they shall not be able to escape; a judgment from which they shall by no means be delivered, by any counsels of their own, or assistance of their friends and allies. *And though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them;* and though prayer to me hath been their usual course in such cases, and I have delivered them, yet I will no more hear them, though they cry unto me, Prov. i. 28, 29; Zech. vii. 11, 13. God will not hear them crying to him in their adversity, who refuse to hear him speaking to them in their prosperity.

12 Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and [m]cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their †trouble.

m Deut. 32. 37, 38.

† Heb. *evil.*

Shall here signifieth *will*, and might as well have been so translated, denoting the hardness of the hearts of this people, whom affliction would not reduce to God; or rather the indicative mood is here put for the imperative, and the sense, *Let the cities of Judah*, &c., and the phrase taken ironically. So it agreeth with God's answer to the people crying to him, Judg. x. 14, and what this prophet had before said, chap. ii. 28. But, saith the prophet, they shall do them no good, then they shall understand their vanity in their superstition and idolatry, that they have bestowed a divine homage upon lies and vanities, and things able to do them no good, nor at all to profit them.

13 For *according to* the number of thy [n]cities were thy gods, O Judah; and *according to* the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to *that* †shameful thing, *even* altars to burn incense unto Baal.

n ch. 2. 28.

† Heb. *shame*, ch. 3. 24. Hos. 9. 10.

Not that they had just so many idols as were cities in Judah, or altars as were streets in Jerusalem; the meaning is, they had very many, and that the people who lived in every city and street were guilty. What he calls *their shame*, or the shameful thing, is afterwards expounded *Baal*, called a *shameful thing*, because it was what they had reason to be ashamed of, and what would certainly bring them to shame and confusion. *Baal* signifieth lord, and was a common name given to more idols than one; the Phœnicians used the name *Baal*, the Chaldeans *Bell*. God, Hos. ii. 16, forbade his people to call him by this name, because so abused to idolatry. Many think that the sun was what the Phœnicians worshipped under this name; some say Saturn was he. Manasseh, who preceded Josiah, *reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them*, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3. Learned men say that the Asians called the same idol Baal, whom those of Europe called Jupiter. It is not improbable which learned men judge, that the heathens acknowledging one Supreme Being, worshipped him in several creatures; some mistaking *the sun, moon, and stars* to be he, others other things; these they called *Baalim*, lords, as they called the principal god *Baal*. The heathens' idolatry seems to be their worshipping God *in creatures*, and paying a divine homage to creatures, the sun, moon, and stars, and other far inferior to them, not believing that those creatures were the Divine Being, but that the Divine Being was in them, and from them would hear their supplicants, and do them good; which, though the heathens might a little be excused in, having no Scriptures showing them the nature of the true God, and how he would be worshipped; yet in the Jews was inexcusable, they having the oracles of God committed to them, which both showed them the true nature of God, and let them know that no creature could be any similitude or representation of him; and that his will was, that they should pay their homage to

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him without any similitudes or representations exciting them to that homage, fit for nothing but to beget in the minds of people false conceptions and apprehensions of the Divine Being, which is merely spiritual; notwithstanding which direction from the Divine law, the Jews, after the manner of the heathens, would pay their homage to God before the sun, moon, and stars, and before images made with hands, and make altars to such creatures and images, which was the idolatry God complains of, and of which he declares a greater abhorrence than almost of any other sin. It is likely that *Baal* here mentioned was the *sun*, because it was near Manasseh's times, who thus highly offended God; and it is probable that though Josiah had begun a famous reformation, yet a great deal of this leaven was left in the common people; besides that the sins of Manasseh, 2 Kings xxiii. 26, are reckoned up as the special proximate cause of this wrath of God against Judah.

o Ex. 32. 10. ch. 7. 16. & 14. 11. 1 John 5. 16.

14 Therefore °pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear *them* in the time that they cry unto me for their † trouble.

† Heb. *evil.*

Once before, and we shall find once after this, chap. xiv. 11, God forbiddeth the prophet to *pray for this people;* hence ariseth a question how the prophet is excused from sin, in praying for them after this prohibition, especially when God had assured him that he would not hear. *Solut.* 1. God (say some) sometimes forbiddeth prayers for persons and people to stir them up to more fervent prayer. 2. We find the like done by Moses, Exod. xxxii. 10, and Samuel, 1 Sam. xv. 35; xvi. 1. Others say, 3. That we must not understand these words as an absolute prohibition to Jeremiah, but for the terrifying of the people. 4. God speaks only of a temporal evil, and willeth Jeremiah not to be too positive in his prayers for them, that they might be delivered from that; but he might pray for the pardon of their sins, and their deliverance from the eternal vengeance of God. 5. He might not pray for the obstinate part of this people, but for the elect of God amongst them.

p Ps. 50. 16. Is. 1. 11, &c. † Heb. *What is to my beloved in my house?* q Ezek. 16. 25, &c. r Hag. 2. 12, 13, 14. Tit. 1. 15.

15 P† What hath my beloved to do in mine house, *seeing* she hath qwrought lewdness with many, and rthe holy flesh is passed from thee? ‖ when thou doest evil, then thou srejoicest.

‖ Or, *when thy evil is.* s Prov. 2. 14.

Some make these words the words of the prophet, declaring that God (whom they suppose here called the *beloved*) was about to forsake the temple. Others make them the words of God, speaking of his prophet, whom he calleth his *beloved;* or rather, speaking of his people, whom he calleth his *beloved,* upon the account of his ancient union with them, and marriage to them; this seemeth most probable, and agreeth both with chap. vii. 9, 10, and also with the usual confidence of the Jews, because of the temple of the Lord, and their formal services of God in it. *My people,* saith God, though I was formerly their Husband, yet have wrought lewdness with many, that is, committed idolatry with many idols; and now what have they to do more in my house, than a base strumpet which hath turned a whore hath to do in the house of her husband? *And the holy flesh is passed from thee:* some by this phrase understand that God would own them no more as a holy people. Others that their circumcision was become uncircumcision. Others more probably understand it of the flesh of the sacrifices they were wont to offer; either they had been remiss in offering the sacrifices God had commanded them; or (which is more probable) the *flesh* of their *sacrifices,* being set before idols, as well as before him who was the only true God, became polluted, and was abomination to the Lord. The learned author of our English Annotations notes, that the words may very fairly be translated, *and the holy flesh they shall pass away from thee;* so the words import a threatening, that because they had polluted and profaned the sacrifices, God would make their sacrifices to cease. *When thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest:* and this the Lord would rather do against them, because they were not only evil, but gloried in their wickedness, or at least were as full of mirth and jollity as if they had done no iniquity.

16 The Lord called thy name, t'A green olive tree, fair, *and* of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken.

t Ps. 52. 8. Rom. 11. 17.

That is, the Lord fixed thee when he brought thee first into Canaan, in a beautiful flourishing state and condition, so as thou wert in a capacity both to have done thyself much good, and to have brought him much glory, like a beautiful fair olive tree, fit to bear fair and goodly fruit. But thou hast so behaved thyself, that the Lord is altering the course of his providence to thee, he that planted thee is about to pluck thee up. God is about to kindle a fire which will burn thee up, and to break thy branches. There is nothing more usual in prophetical writings than to have things yet to come expressed as if past, because of the certainty of them; they being what shall as certainly be as if already done.

17 For the Lord of hosts, u that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal.

u Is. 5. 2. ch. 2. 21.

This verse expounds what was metaphorically expressed in the former verse, viz. that God had declared his will to his prophet; that he would destroy his people, the blame of which must lie upon themselves, for they had by idolatry most highly provoked him, and had therein done against themselves, as indeed all sinning is but an acting against ourselves. God is invulnerable, we cannot hurt him, though we may provoke his justice to take vengeance upon us for our iniquities. And the prophet tells them that the Lord *that planted them* would do this, thereby hinting to them both his power to do it, and also that they had no reason to be confident, that because God had made them, he would not destroy them; or because he had planted them in that good land, therefore he would not pluck them up and throw them out of it: see Isa. xxvii. 11.

18 ¶ And the Lord hath given me knowledge *of it,* and I know *it:* then thou shewedst me their doings.

This may be understood either more generally, as relating to all the wicked actions of his countrymen, to obviate their saying, How comest thou to know our doings? or else (which seemeth most probable) more specially, with relation to that conspiracy against him which is mentioned in the following verses.

19 But I *was* like a lamb *or* an ox *that* is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that x they had devised devices against me, *saying,* Let us destroy † the tree with the fruit thereof, y and let us cut him off from zthe land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

x ch. 18. 18. † Heb. *the stalk with his bread.* y Ps. 83. 4. z Ps. 27. 13. & 116. 9. & 142. 5.

We have no other mention of this conspiracy in holy writ, but it is plain, both from this verse and what followeth to the end of this chapter, that the men of Anathoth (which was Jeremiah's own town) were offended at his prophesying so sharp things against the land of Judah, and had threatened to kill him if he would not leave off that style, and had conspired to that purpose, some think to mix poison with his meat, others by starving of him, others think by beating of him, into which variety of sense they interpret that phrase in this verse, *Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof;* but the sense is plain, Let us not only put an end to his prophesying, but to his being also; *let us cut him off* some way or other, *that his name may no more be remembered.* Of this the prophet saith he was as ignorant as an *ox* or a *lamb* that is brought to the slaughter-house, that knoweth nothing what design is against its life.

20 But, O Lord of hosts, that judgest righteously, that atriest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause.

a 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Ps. 7. 9. ch. 17. 10. & 20. 12. Rev. 2. 23.

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The prophet appealeth to God, and appealeth to him as one that knew both the innocency of his heart toward them, and the malice of their hearts toward him, and used to deal out justice impartially, and committeth his cause unto God, (as we are commanded, 1 Pet. ii. 23,) and desires that God would avenge him, and that he might see the *vengeance;* which words some learned interpreters think spoken not without some passion and mixture of human frailty. Others, not as a prayer so much as a prophecy. Others, not out of a desire of private revenge, but out of a pure zeal for the glory of God, whose prophet he was, and servant, in the delivery of those prophecies that were so ungrateful to them.

21 Therefore thus saith the LORD of
[b] ch. 12. 5, 6. the men of Anathoth, [b] that seek thy life,
[c] Is. 30. 10. Amos 2. 12. & 7. 13, 16. Micah 2. 6. saying, [c] Prophesy not in the name of the LORD, that thou die not by our hand:

22 Therefore thus saith the LORD of
† Heb. *visit upon.* hosts, Behold, I will †punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine:

23 And there shall be no remnant of
[d] ch. 23. 12. & 46. 21. & 48. 44. & 50. 27. Luke 19. 44. them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, *even* [d] the year of their visitation.

The prayers of God's prophets, though they may sometimes have too much passion and human infirmity mixed with them, yet are heard of God, and many times answered in righteousness by terrible things, as to those against whom they are directed. The same thing they designed to do against the prophet God threateneth to do against them, utterly to consume them, so as no remembrance of them should remain.

CHAP. XII.

The prophet complaineth of the wicked's prosperity; by faith seeth their ruin, 1—4. *God admonisheth him of his brethren's treachery against him, and lamenteth his heritage,* 5—13. *A return from captivity promised to the penitent,* 14—17.

[a] Ps. 51. 4. ‖ Or, *let me reason the case with thee.* [b] Job 12. 6. & 21. 7. Ps. 37. 1, 35. & 73. 3, &c. ch. 5. 28. Hab. 1. 4. Mal. 3. 15. RIGHTEOUS [a] *art* thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet ‖let me talk with thee of *thy* judgments: [b] Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously?

Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: the prophet begins here with a recognition of God's unquestionable righteousness and justice, in all his providential dispensations in the government of the world. Some read the latter part, *should I plead with thee.* But let it be *should I plead;* or, *although* or *when I plead,* that is, *argue with thee;* yet the prophet doth it not without a previous resolution to agree the Lord's dispensations just, whatsoever he should say. *Yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments;* yet, saith he, let me talk with thee, not by way of accusing thee, but for my own satisfaction concerning thy judicial dispensations in the government of the world. *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal treacherously?* by *all they,* he means *many of them,* and is thought to have spoken with a special relation to the priests at Anathoth, that had conspired against his life. The prosperity of the wicked hath in all times been a riddle, and a sore temptation to the best of God's people; to Job, chap. xxi. 7, 13; to David, Psal. xxxvii. 1; lxxiii. 3, 12; xciv. 3, 4; Hab. i. 4, 5. Lord, saith Jeremiah, I know thy ways of providence are just and righteous, but they are dark and hidden from me, I cannot understand why thou doest this.

2 Thou hast planted them, yea, they
† Heb. *they go on.* [c] Is. 29. 13. Matt. 15. 8. Mark 7. 6. have taken root: †they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: [c] thou *art* near in their mouth, and far from their reins.

Here are a people that indeed talk of thee, and one that only observeth their mouths would judge thou wert near to them, and they had communion with thee; but he that observeth their lives may easily discern that thou art far from their inward parts, they have neither fear of thee, nor love for thee, nor desire after thee, nor delight in thee, nor are they obedient to thee; yet thou hast planted them by thy power, and by thy providence they thrive, go on, and prosper.

3 But thou, O LORD, [d] knowest me:
[d] Ps. 17. 3. & 139. 1. [e] ch. 11. 20. thou hast seen me, and [e] tried mine heart
† Heb. *with thee.* †toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for
[f] Jam. 5. 5. [f] the day of slaughter.

But thou, O Lord, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried my heart toward thee: here seemeth to be something understood, viz. *But, Lord, it is otherwise with me,* I am maligned, and my life is hunted after; yet, Lord, thou knowest the sincerity of my heart before and towards thee, thou hast had experience of me in the discharge of my prophetical office, and knowest that I have been faithful in revealing to the people what thou didst reveal to me, yet for this it is they seek my life and would have my blood. *Prepare them for the day of slaughter:* Lord, avenge me on this wicked generation, confirm the words against them which I have from thee denounced. Concerning the meaning of expressions of this nature, and the lawfulness of putting up such petitions against those who are not only our enemies, but God's also, see what was noted on chap. xi. 20.

4 How long shall [g] the land mourn, and
[g] ch. 23. 10. Hos. 4. 3. [h] Ps. 107. 34. the herbs of every field wither, [h] for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? [i] the beasts are consumed, and the birds; [i] ch. 4. 25. & 7. 20. & 9. 10. Hos. 4. 3. because they said, He shall not see our last end.

The prophet seems to give a reason of his former passion and prayer against those wicked men he before reflected on, because they were the cause of the nation's ruin, which is also asserted by the psalmist, Psal. cvii. 34. A land is said *to mourn,* metaphorically, when it is brought to an ill complexion, and looketh unpleasantly, the grass and green herbs in it being destroyed by enemies, or drought, or vermin. Nay, the effects of their wicked courses reached to the very beasts and birds, because they were so presumptuous as to conclude that they should do well enough, neither the prophet nor any other should see their last end.

5 ¶ If thou hast run with the footmen,
and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and *if* in the land of peace, *wherein* thou trustedst, *they wearied thee,* then how wilt thou do in [k] the swelling of Jordan?
[k] Josh. 3. 15. 1 Chron. 12. 15. ch. 49. 19. & 50. 44.

That these are the answer of God to the prophet is reasonably well agreed by the best interpreters, as also that this is a proverbial expression; but as to the application of it in this place, there is some difference. Some make it this: If thou dost not understand what is done by the men of thine own city, how canst thou think to fathom my dispensations of providence in the government of the world? But this sense seemeth not very probable, because the sense of the proverb seemeth to be, If thou be not able to encounter lesser dangers, how wilt thou be able to over come greater? I rather agree with those who make the sense this: Jeremiah, I have greater dangers for thee to encounter than those thou art exposed to at Anathoth; if thou be so disturbed with them, who are but as *footmen,* how wilt thou be able to grapple with those far greater enemies which thou art like to meet with at Jerusalem? Anathoth also seemeth to be understood by *the land of thy peace;* that is, the land of thy friends, wherein thou hadst a confidence: If thy enemies thou hast there met with tire thee, what wilt thou do *in the swellings of Jordan?* that is, in a place where thou art like to meet with an increase of greater troubles, like the swelling of Jordan (which in harvest used to overflow its banks). Many other things are said by interpreters, both with reference to the sense of this text, and the explication of these proverbial expres-

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sions; but the sense above mentioned seemeth to me least strained, and best agreeing with what went before and what follows.

1 ch. 9. 4. & 11. 19, 21.

6 For even [1]thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, ‖ they have called a multitude after thee: [m]believe them not, though they speak †fair words unto thee.

‖ Or, *they cried after thee fully.* m Prov. 26. 25. † Heb. *good things.*

The men of Anathoth, thine own town and country, and those of thy own family, have conspired evil against thee secretly. *They have called a multitude after thee;* either they have exposed thee to the rage and rudeness of a multitude, or they have accused thee to a multitude. Though therefore they give thee many fair words, yet repose no trust nor confidence in them, but look to thyself.

7 ¶ I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given †the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies.

† Heb. *the love.*

God by his *house* here understandeth the temple, which God is said here to have *forsaken* with respect to his gracious manifestations in it to the people that came thither to worship him. By his *heritage* he means the whole body of the Israelites, called God's heritage not in this chapter only, but chap. ii. 7; Joel ii. 17; Micah vii. 14: whom God threateneth to leave with respect to his special providence, by which he had taken care of them; upon which account Canaan is called the land which God *cared for*, Deut. xi. 12; that is, so cared for, as in comparison with them he might seem to neglect all other countries. *I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies;* that is, he had given that nation which was once his dearly beloved into the hands or power of their enemies.

‖ Or, *yelleth.* † Heb. *giveth out his voice.*

8 Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest; it ‖ †crieth out against me: therefore have I hated it.

That is, the reason why my heart is alienated from them, is because they are altered; those that were as my sheep, following me their chief Shepherd, and the guidance of those prophets and pastors which I set over them, are become like *lions* in the forest roaring against me, and rending and tearing the prophets which I sent unto them.

‖ Or, *having talons.* ‖ Or, *cause them to come.* n Is. 56. 9. ch. 7. 33.

9 Mine heritage *is* unto me *as* a ‖ speckled bird, the birds round about *are* against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, ‖ [n]come to devour.

Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird: the word in the Hebrew signifies to dye, or colour, and interpreters are here divided, whether to interpret it of a bird *coloured by nature* (so our translators understood it, and therefore have translated it *speckled*) or *by accident*, as ravenous birds are coloured by the blood of other birds killed by them. Hence some interpret the text as a reflection upon the Jews for their cruelty, coloured by their oppression and innocent bloodshed. Others, of their tincture by a variety of superstition and idolatry. The latter seemeth to me most probable, because of what follows, it being what is usual and natural for other birds to flock about a strange-coloured bird, such as they have not been used to see, but rather to fly from, than to come at a bird of prey, that hath already stained her feathers with the blood of other birds. But it may be understood of either, for the Jews were notoriously guilty of both, and it is God that causeth the birds to come against her, and the beasts of the field to devour.

o ch. 6. 3. p Is. 5. 1, 5. q Is. 63. 18. † Heb. *portion of desire.*

10 Many [o]pastors have destroyed [p]my vineyard, they have [q]trodden my portion under foot, they have made my †pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

By *pastors* most here think civil persons, not ecclesiastical officers, are meant; but they are divided, some interpreting it of the rulers and princes of Nebuchadnezzar's army, who took Jerusalem, and destroyed Judah, called God's *vineyard*, Isa. v. 1, 2; others understanding it of the rulers of the Jews, who by their wicked government, and as wicked example, had ruined their country, and caused God to turn the country which he had chosen for his portion, and declared such a pleasure in, into a wilderness, and such a wilderness as was not only thinly inhabited, but wholly desolate.

11 They have made it desolate, *and* *being* desolate [r]it mourneth unto me; the whole land is made desolate, because [s]no man layeth *it* to heart.

r ver. 4. s Is. 42. 25.

They have made it desolate, Heb. *He hath made it desolate;* but it cannot be meant of God, for it is God that speaketh, and God is he mentioned in the next words: it must therefore either be understood of Nebuchadnezzar, the instrumental cause; or (one number being put for another) of the people or the rulers as the meritorious cause; and in that rueful state into which their sins had brought it it cried unto God. And one great cause of this sore judgment upon the land was the people's not laying to heart, not seriously considering, what God had done or was doing against it.

12 The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness: for the sword of the LORD shall devour from the *one* end of the land even to the *other* end of the land: no flesh shall have peace.

The prophet (as very usually) speaketh of a thing as already done which was very shortly to be done; he saith they were come up because they should come up, and no places should be so high but they should climb them, none so strong but they should subdue them. The sword of the enemy is called *the sword of the Lord*, because he ordereth and succeeds it, though the enemy manageth it; and he saith it shall be against all, of all ranks and orders, no flesh should have peace; by *no flesh* he meaneth no ranks, no orders of men.

13 [t]They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, *but* shall not profit: and ‖ they shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

t Lev. 26. 16. Deut. 28. 38. Micah 6. 15. Hag. 1. 6. ‖ Or, *ye.*

They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: if these words be understood literally, they only signify that God would blast the labours of the husbandman, and curse them in the field. The earth's bringing forth *thorns* and *thistles* was part of the curse for the first transgression of man, Gen. iii. 18. God's blasting the labours of husbandmen is often threatened as a punishment of sin. See Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut xxviii. 38. If it be taken metaphorically, it is expounded by the next words. *They have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit;* that they should labour in vain, all the works of their hands, all their counsels and deliberations, should be of no profit or avail unto them. *They shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the Lord;* the fierce anger of God against them shall be so showed, that the returns of their labours or estates, the profits of their trades, &c., shall be so small that they shall be ashamed of them.

14 ¶ Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbours, that [u]touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will [x]pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them.

u Zech. 2. 8. x Deut. 30. 3. ch. 32. 37.

God will not be angry for ever with his own people, nor suffer the rod of the wicked for ever to rest upon the back of the righteous; for saith he, for those that are my *evil neighbours*, the nations bordering upon Judea, which God calls his inheritance, upon which account he calleth them his neighbours, who *touched* his inheritance, not so much by contiguity of habitation, as by rapacious fingers to do them hurt, insulting over them when the hand of God was upon them, and contributing to their affliction and misery by helping their enemies against them, as did the Edomites, Philistines, Moabites, &c.; *I will* also *pluck them out of their land*, I will bring the sword upon them also, and they

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shall be led into captivity; and though they may have made some inroads upon my people, and have carried away some of them into captivity, yet I will fetch them out of their captivity.

y Ezek. 28. 25. 15 yAnd it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them,

z Amos 9.14. zand will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land.

This seemeth not to be a prophecy only of the Jews' return into their land after the fulfilling of the years of their captivity, but also of the bringing back of these nations after that they should be plucked up, and seems to relate to the calling of the Gentiles; but this prophecy must be limited by what followeth in the next verse, and not understood of all the inhabitants of those nations.

16 And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my peo-

a ch. 4. 2. ple, ato swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught my people to swear

b Eph. 2. 20, 21. 1 Pet. 2. 5. by Baal; then shall they be bbuilt in the midst of my people.

Though these people be heathens, yet if they will leave their idolatries, and superstitious ways of worship, and learn to worship and serve me, as my people do and ought to worship me, and *swear by my name, The Lord liveth;* that is, pay that homage which they pay to the Divine Being to me, the living and true God; owning me alone as the fountain of life, and searcher of the hearts (for there is a great homage paid to the true God in swearing by his name only, which showeth the great impiety and profaneness of other oaths); then, saith God, I will bless and prosper them also, and they shall not only have a portion in the earth, but amongst my people; which was eminently fulfilled in the conversion of the Gentiles, Rom. xi. 17; they were originally *wild olives*, and *grafted in* amongst the Jews, and *with them made partakers of the root and fatness of the olive tree.*

c Is. 60. 12. 17 But if they will not cobey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the LORD.

But for those, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, that shall continue in their idolatrous and superstitious courses, that shall refuse the Messias, and continue in unbelief, and go on in courses of rebellion and disobedience, (saith God,) I will utterly destroy that people. Thus Isa. lx. 12, *The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*

CHAP. XIII.

In the type of a linen girdle God prefigureth their destruction, 1—11. *Under the parable of bottles filled with wine, is foretold their drunkenness with misery,* 12—14. *He exhorteth to prevent these judgments by repentance for their sins, which are the cause thereof,* 15—27.

vir. 602. THUS saith the LORD unto me, Go and get thee a linen girdle, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water.

God's design, by what is recorded in this chapter, is by two types, as in two glasses, to let the people understand by the prophet how he looked upon them, and what they were in his eyes, and also what he would do unto them, and they might expect from him; to this purpose he directeth the prophet to procure himself a girdle, not woollen, but *linen*, made of flax, or the like, and to put it not upon his clothes, but upon his loins, to signify (as some think) that this people were a people whom God had made near to him. He commands him not to put it in water, to soften it, as some think; linen newly made, before it is wetted in water, being rough; and this they conceive the prophet was forbidden, for a further type of the stiffness, and roughness, and stubbornness of this people. Others think, to typify that God was no cause of this people's rotting and growing corrupt.

2 So I got a girdle according to the word of the LORD, and put *it* on my loins.

According to the word of the Lord; that is, according to God's command. *And put it on my loins;* and used it as God commanded me, never disputing the reason why God bid me do such a thing.

3 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying,

4 Take the girdle that thou hast got, which *is* upon thy loins, and arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock.

God having commanded the prophet to procure such a girdle as was before mentioned, and to tie it upon his loins, he a second time comes to him, and commandeth him to take this girdle, and carry it to Euphrates. This was one of the four great rivers that the river out of the garden of Eden divided itself into, Gen. ii. 10, 14. It was the border of the Promised Land, Gen. xv. 18; Deut. i. 7; xi. 24; 1 Chron. v. 9. Reuben's lot was bounded by it. The prophet was commanded to hide his girdle in the *hole* of a *rock* in that river. But why there? Were there not other places nearer where the prophet might have hid it? It is judged by some that this command was also to signify unto them that they should be carried out of their own borders into captivity; or rather, that they had corrupted, and were become rotten, by doing after the fashions and manners of the heathens, who lived on the other side of Euphrates always, but having (a hundred years before this) captivated the ten tribes, lived also on this side of it.

5 So I went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me.

Most think that Jeremiah did this but in a vision, for it was a very long journey for the prophet to take to go from Anathoth or Jerusalem as far as Euphrates. Jeremiah was obedient to God's command, without any disputing or asking God the meaning of this injunction to him.

6 And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there.

God, who had bidden the prophet go and hide the linen girdle, after some considerable time speaks again to him to go and take it away from the place where he had lodged it.

7 Then I went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it: and, behold, the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing.

Whether the prophet really made such a journey, or all this was but a vision, is very uncertain. When he came to the place, or in his vision, he thought, when he came to the place, that he saw all the girdle rotted, and good for nothing but to be thrown upon a dunghill.

8 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

9 Thus saith the LORD, After this manner awill I mar the pride of Judah, and a Lev. 26.19. the great pride of Jerusalem.

By this it appears that God commanded Jeremiah to do this, not only as a representation of the rotten and corrupt state of this people, but of his vengeance, which should suddenly be brought upon them, though they were a *proud people*, lifted up and swelled in the opinion of themselves, from the favour which God had showed them, in making them a people near unto him, and as it were wearing them upon his loins; yet, they having corrupted themselves by mixing their streams with the streams of Euphrates, corrupting themselves with the superstitions, corruptions, and idolatries of heathens, God would make use of some of those nations to abate their pride and pluck their feathers, and they should rot amongst those people and in some of those nations with whom and by whose example they had sinned against the Lord. This sense of these words is much confirmed by the following words.

10 This evil people, which refuse to hear my

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words, which [b]walk in the ‖ imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing.

[b] ch. 9. 14. & 11. 8. & 16. 12.
‖ Or, *stubbornness.*

Hitherto the prophet had yielded a blind obedience to God, doing what he commanded him, though he possibly knew no other reason for it but because God bade him do so (which is a homage we owe unto God, though to none but him); now God expounds himself what he meant to teach the Jews by this, viz. that he did intend that they should be consumed by the people beyond the river Euphrates, as that girdle was there marred; and he also shows them that their own sins in disobeying his word, and following the imaginations of their own hearts, particularly their idolatry, was what had brought this sore judgment upon them.

11 For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that [c]they might be unto me for a people, and [d]for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.

[c] Ex. 19. 5.
[d] ch. 33. 9.

Here God openeth to the prophet why he commanded him to put the girdle about his loins, viz. to show that he of his singular favour had used the Jews as a man useth his girdle, which he fasteneth about his loins; and as a man weareth his girdle, made up of some costly materials, for an honour and praise to him, so God's design in honouring this people, wearing them as a girdle, was, that they might bring him honour and glory, living to his praise, in the obedience of his commands, especially such commands as related to his worship. *But they would not hear;* but they would not answer God's designs, nor hearken to any counsels of that nature which he gave them, and therefore he was resolved to pluck them from his loins, and to suffer them to rot and consume as that girdle was rotted: see Psal. lxxxi. 8—16, which the author of the English Annotations saith well is an excellent comment on this text.

12 ¶ Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word; Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine: and they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine?

God by his prophet showeth them their ruin in another glass, he bids the prophet tell them that *every bottle should be filled with wine.* Wine was what they delighted in; Hos. iii. 1, *they loved flagons of wine,* and were for those prophets that would prophesy *to them of wine and strong drink,* Micah ii. 11. God therefore sendeth them a prophesy about wine, bids the prophet tell them that *every bottle should be filled with wine.* Glad news to the drunkards among them! but no very strange thing to them who often enough were wont both to fill and to empty bottles of wine: but they little understood the *wine* which God and his prophet intended; God therefore openeth it to them.

13 Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, [e]with drunkenness.

[e] Is. 51. 17, 21. & 63. 6. ch. 25. 27. & 51. 7.

There is a *wine of astonishment* and confusion, Psal. lx. 3, a wine that intoxicateth, and inflameth, and stupifieth, as well as a wine that refresheth; saith God, With that wine I will fill all orders of persons, *kings, priests, prophets,* and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Nor shall the *throne of David* be a protection to your kings; I will have no regard to them upon that account, nor to the priests, though they be persons consecrated to me.

14 And [f]I will dash them †one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the LORD: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, †but destroy them.

[f] Ps. 2. 9.
† Heb. *a man against his brother.*
† Heb. *from destroying them.*

And I will set them one against another, raising up an evil spirit of division amongst them, that they shall be like earthen bottles dashed one against another, which are easily broken in pieces. I will have no pity on them, therefore let them not presume upon my mercy, and pity, and compassion; for I am resolved to show them no mercy, but to bring them to utter ruin and destruction.

15 ¶ Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken.

God ordinarily subjoineth exhortation and counsel to his reproof, if peradventure people will change their hearts and ways. Having threatened them, therefore the prophet speaketh to them, that they would yet hear, and that not formally, but *give ear;* not exalting themselves against God, and nourishing a vain confidence or presumptuous hopes, and going on in their rebellious courses, despising him and others, who were but the Lord's prophets and his messengers unto them. The word which we bring is not ours, it is the Lord that hath spoken by us.

16 [g]Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause [h]darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye [i]look for light, he turn it into [k]the shadow of death, *and* make *it* gross darkness.

[g] Josh. 7. 19.
[h] Is. 5. 30. & 8. 22. Amos 8. 9.
[i] Is. 59. 9.
[k] Ps. 44. 19.

Glorify God, by a humble confession of your sins, Josh. vii. 19, 20, by submitting yourselves to God, James iv. 7, humbling yourselves under his word, James iv. 10, and under his mighty hand, 1 Pet. v. 6, before God brings upon you his great and heavy judgments before threatened. As a state of prosperity is set out often in Scripture by the notion of *light,* which is a pleasant and cheering thing; so a state of affliction is often set out to us in Scripture under the notion of *darkness,* Isa. viii. 22; Joel ii. 2; Amos v. 18, &c.: and as in the want of light, which is directive to our feet, men are prone to stumble at any thing that lies in their way, so as they know not how to direct their feet or take their steps; so in times of affliction, especially great afflictions, men are ordinarily perplexed, and know not what course to take. In the latter part of the verse he seemeth to threaten God's disappointment of their expectations. The Jews to the last appeared highly confident, looking for light, but they met with great disappointment, even gross darkness.

17 But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for *your* pride; and [l]mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD's flock is carried away captive.

[l] ch. 9. 1. & 14. 17. Lam. 1. 2, 16. & 2. 18.

That is, if you will not listen to what I say, take heed to what I say, and obey the counsel which I give you, I shall seriously and secretly mourn for your rebellion and obstinacy, which is rooted in your pride, and lifting up yourselves against the Lord's monitions and counsels; and I shall also mourn for your calamity when it comes upon you, I shall have a personal and family concern with you, but that will not so much trouble me as to consider that you who are the church and people of God should be led into captivity.

18 Say unto [m]the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your ‖ principalities shall come down, *even* the crown of your glory.

[m] See 2 Kin. 24. 12. ch. 22. 26.
‖ Or, *head tires.*

The author of holy writ is discernible by this as by other things, that the Scripture equally speaks to the greatest persons as to persons of meaner rank. God here calls to the king of Judah, whether it was at this time Jehoiakim, or his son Jehoiachin, is uncertain. By *principalities* he means both their *dignity* and their *liberty,* that which he often calleth the crown of their glory. Some expound it *headtires,* because the word deriveth from a word which signifies the head.

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19 The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open *them:* Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive.

Either the cities of Judah which lay southward from Chaldea, and therefore their enemies in the next verse are said to come from the north, and this great evil is said to have come from the north; or (as some would have it) the cities of Egypt, which lay yet more southward, so as the Egyptians should neither come with sufficient force to raise the siege, nor should there be any sanctuary or refuge for them in Egypt, but they should certainly be wholly carried into captivity.

20 Lift up your eyes, and behold them
m ch. 6. 22. m that come from the north: where *is* the flock *that* was given thee, thy beautiful flock?

He speaks to them as if their enemy was even then upon their march, that if they did but look they might see him coming. *Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?* the prophet either speaks to the king, or to the rulers, or chief of the congregation of Judah. Prov. xiv. 28, *In the multitude of the people is the king's honour.* So in the multitude of subjects, or of members, lies much of the honour of a church or state.

21 What wilt thou say when he shall
† Heb. *Visit upon.* † punish thee? for thou hast taught them *to be* captains, *and* as chief over thee:
o ch. 6. 24. shall not o sorrows take thee, as a woman in travail?

That is, thou wilt have nothing to say, but be wholly confounded and ashamed when God shall visit thee with this sore judgment, or when Nebuchadnezzar's army sent by God shall visit thee; for thou, either by thy commerce and trading with them, or by thy so often calling them to thy assistance, or by thy idolatry borrowed from them, and other nations, hast taught them to be captains over thee; thy sorrows and affliction will come upon thee suddenly and terribly, as pain cometh upon a woman in travail; yea, and as certainly also.

p ch. 5. 19. & 16. 10. q Is. 3. 17. & 47. 2, 3. ver. 26. Ezek. 16. 37, 38, 39. Nah. 3. 5. ‖ Or, *shall be violently taken away.*
22 ¶ And if thou say in thine heart, p Wherefore come these things upon me? For the greatness of thine iniquity are q thy skirts discovered, *and* thy heels ‖ made bare.

Hypocrites will rarely confess their own shame and God's righteousness, but are ready to expostulate and dispute with God, and to call him to account why he hath dealt so with them, as if God had dealt unjustly. But (saith God) if thou shouldst have any such thoughts in thine heart, do but remember thine iniquities, how many and how great they have been, thy *nakedness* is discovered because of these, and for these thou art exposed to contempt and shame. Probably these phrases are fetched from the usual practice of soldiers, when they have conquered a place and taken prisoners, to strip them, and leave those of either sex, either no clothes to cover their nakedness, or nothing but their own rags, not sufficient to cover their nakedness. By *skirts* is meant the lower part of their bodies covered with the lower part of their garments.

23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin,
† Heb. *taught.* or the leopard his spots? *then* may ye also do good, that are † accustomed to do evil.

In the Hebrew it is, *Can the Cushite*, &c.? from whence it is well concluded, as learned men judge, that the Ethiopians are of the posterity of Cush the son of Ham, brother to Mizraim, the *father of the Egyptians*, Gen. x. 6. For these were the only people of old noted for their black colour in Scripture, as the Ethiopians are now. God showeth that the Jews by their continued customary sinning had so inured themselves to wicked practices, that it was as much labour in vain to endeavour to reclaim them, as to go about to wash a blackamoor, or to take out the natural spots of the beasts called *leopards*.

24 Therefore will I scatter them r as
r Ps. 1. 4. Hos. 13. 3. the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness.

The words denote a great and clear dispersion, like that of the scattering of stubble by a fierce wind.

25 s This *is* thy lot, the portion of thy
s Job 20. 29. Ps. 11. 6. measures from me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in t falsehood.
t ch. 10. 14.

This is what thou shalt have at the Lord's hand, the dispensation which thou shalt meet with, and thou mayest thank thyself for it; for hadst thou remembered either my former kindness to thee, or the law that I gave thee, this had not come unto thee; but thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in lies, or in idle, vain, and presumptuous hopes, therefore I have given thee but a just lot, and measured to thee a just measure.

26 Therefore u will I discover thy skirts
u ver. 22. Lam. 1. 8. Ezek. 16. 37. & 23. 29. Hos. 2. 10. upon thy face, that thy shame may appear.

Therefore I will expose thee to all manner of shame and contempt, without any regard to thy honour. Those that honour God, God will honour, but those that despise and dishonour him shall not be able to maintain their own honour.

27 I have seen thine adulteries, and
x ch. 5. 8. thy x neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, *and* thine abominations y on
y Is. 65. 7. ch. 2. 20. & 3. 2, 6. Ezek. 6 13. the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean?
† Heb. *after when yet?* † when *shall it* once *be?*

Some think the prophet here reflects upon them for their corporal adulteries, and their madness upon them, which he compareth to the *neighings* of horses; but those words *on the hills in the fields* in the next clause seem to inform us that he means here only their idolatries, which are in holy writ often compared to *adulteries*, which are the greatest sins in their kind, the greatest violations of the marriage covenant, and provocations of persons in conjugal relation, and the only cause of lawful divorce. He concludes with pathetical interrogations, intimating that yet there was hope if they would reform; and though giving over their case almost as desperate, and not knowing what would not be, yet he leaves no means untried, but asks them if it was not yet time, or when such a thing might be hoped for at their hands.

CHAP. XIV.

A grievous famine prophesied; its miseries, 1—6. *The prophet prayeth, but God will not be entreated for them*, 7—12. *Lying prophets no excuse for them*, 13—16. *The prophet's complaint*, 17—22.

THE word of the LORD that came to Je-
cir. 601. † Heb. *the words of the dearths*, or, *restraints.* remiah concerning † the dearth.

What *dearth* we are not told, nor when it happened; some think that it was in the time of the siege of Jerusalem; others, that it was in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah; but they judge most probably that think it was in the time of Jehoiakim, for we read, chap. xxxvi. 9, of an extraordinary fast by him proclaimed, which many judge was upon this occasion. The Hebrew phrase which is here used signifying, *the matter of the restraints*, gives interpreters some liberty to abound in their senses of this text; but the following words make it evident, ver. 4, 5, that the *restraints* here mentioned were God's restraining of water from them, so that the *dearth* was occasioned from a great drought, which is elegantly described in the five next verses, and deprecated ver. 7—9, which make indeed but a preface to the revelation of the mind and will of God in this prophecy.

2 Judah mourneth, and a the gates
a Is. 3. 26. thereof languish; they are b black unto
b ch. 8. 21. the ground; and c the cry of Jerusalem
c See 1 Sam. 5. 12. is gone up.

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By *Judah* is meant the men and women in the whole country of Judah. The *gates* is put for their cities; or the men of their cities languished, for want of moisture for themselves or their beasts. They are all in the habits of mourners, or their faces looked swarthy and starvedly, for want of due and wholesome nourishment, *and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up;* either their cry unto God by their prayers in his temple, or their cry by the reason of their misery and grief, is gone up to heaven.

3 And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, *and* found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were [d]ashamed and confounded, [e]and covered their heads.

d Ps. 40. 14. e 2 Sam. 15. 30.

This scarcity of water afflicted not mean persons only, who have not so good means to supply their necessities as others; but their greatest persons; so as they sent their *little ones* (it were better translated *servants*, for they are meant) to the places made to receive and retain water; but finding no water in the pits, they came back again with their vessels empty, like men ashamed and confounded, and troubled upon the seeing their expectations frustrated.

4 Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads.

The Hebrew word signifieth more largely than *chapt*, broken, spoiled, turned into dust, as is usual in great droughts. The word also which we translate *ploughmen*, doth not strictly signify ploughmen, but *husbandmen*: there having been no rain upon the earth, it brought forth little or no grass for those that employed themselves in breeding or feeding cattle; and it was so hard, and so much wanted moisture, that they could not plough nor sow, but were like men ashamed and confounded, who knew not what to do.

5 Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook *it*, because there was no grass.

Hinds use not to get their food in fields, but upon the mountains and in wildernesses; but the drought was such, that these wild creatures came into the lower grounds, nearer the habitations of men than they were wont, and there brought forth their young. The hinds are loving creatures, and as all creatures by a natural instinct love their young, so the hinds especially; but their moisture being dried up, they could not suckle them, but were forced to leave them, running about here and there to seek grass to eat.

f ch. 2. 24.

6 And [f]the wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because *there was* no grass.

The wild asses, wanting water, got upon *high places*, where was the freest and coolest air, and sucked in the wind, and this it is said they did *like dragons*, of whom Aristotle and Pliny report, that by reason of the great heat of their bodies, they ordinarily stand upon high places sucking in the cool air, and they tell us those creatures will live upon it for some time. The prophet describing this great drought, tells us the wild asses did the like. But for want of grass their eyes were either almost sunk in their heads, they being almost starved; or else the phrase signifies the frustration of their expectation, which this phrase also sometimes signifies in Scripture, Psal. lxix. 3.

7 ¶ O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou *it* [g]for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

g Ps. 25. 11.

The prophet having described their misery, both in the cause of it, the drought for want of rain, and the effects of it, he applieth himself to that God who he knew was he who alone could give the former and the latter rain; confessing that their sins and backslidings were very many, and testified against them that they had deserved God's severe scourge, and God was righteous in what of this nature he had done against them. But yet, saith he, *do thou it;* that is, do thou what we desire, and what we stand in need of; give us rain; though not for our sake, we deserve no such kindness from thee, yet for *thy name's sake*, thy word, or promise; or rather, hear for thine honour and glory' sake. So Isa. xliii. 25; xlviii. 11, where God promiseth them to show them kindness for his *name's sake;* so as Jeremiah's prayer is but a pleading of God's promises, that he would fulfil his word. *For our backslidings are many; for* here signifies *though*, and might have been better so interpreted.

8 [h]O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man *that* turneth aside to tarry for a night?

h ch. 17. 13

O the hope of Israel; that is, the object of Israel's hope, he in whom alone thy people Israel have been wont to hope, or he in whom alone Israel hath just reason to hope. *The Saviour thereof in time of trouble;* thou who hast formerly been their Saviour in the times of their trouble, or who alone canst save them in such times of trouble as thou hast now brought them into. See Psal. ix. 9; xlvi. 1. Why shouldst thou be as one that regardest thy ancient people no more than a stranger or a traveller, who taketh no further care for the place or the house where he lodgeth than for the short time that he is to stay or abide in it.

9 Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man [i]*that* cannot save? yet thou, O LORD, [k]*art* in the midst of us, and [†]we are called by thy name; leave us not.

i Is. 59. 1. k Ex. 29. 45, 46. Lev. 26. 11, 12. † Heb. *thy name is called upon us.* Dan. 9. 18, 19.

Astonied; the Hebrew word here used being found in no place of holy writ but this, hath given interpreters a liberty to translate it variously, *sleepy, weak, astonished, frighted*, like a man in such disorder, through some great passions, that he is able to do nothing. *As a mighty man that cannot save;* like a man who in his own nature is strong and mighty enough, but through sickness or passion is so weakened, that he cannot put forth any strength for the succour and relief of his friends. *Yet* (saith the prophet) *thou art in the midst of us;* that is, we have thy *temple*, to which thou hast promised thy special presence; or rather it is to be understood of the whole land, according to what God had declared, Numb. v. 3; xxxv. 34, *Defile not the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel. We are called by thy name;* that is, we are called the Lord's people, and that not only by others, amongst whom we have that repute, but by thyself. God often calleth his people in Scripture *his people, his portion.* Therefore he begs that God would not leave them; he means as to that special providence by which he had formerly watched over them, and cared for them, and been a protection to them; nor as to his *ordinances*, and his special gracious presence with them in his temple.

10 ¶ Thus saith the LORD unto this people, [l]Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; [m]he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins.

l See ch. 2. 23, 24, 25. m Hos. 8. 13. & 9. 9.

Here beginneth that Divine revelation mentioned ver. 1, as an answer to the prophet's complaint and prayer in the nine first verses; the substance of which is, that for their manifold sins he was resolved to punish them, and therefore would not be any more solicited on their behalf. *Thus have they loved to wander;* they have gone aside out of the way of my precepts, and that out of a principle of love and delight, they have been fond of their idols. *They have not refrained their feet;* and they have persisted in those deviations and sinful courses, notwithstanding all counsels and arguments used with them to the contrary, nothing could keep their feet to the way of my testimonies. *Therefore the Lord doth not accept them;* therefore though they pray, and cry, and fast, God will not accept them. *He will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins;* but by his punishment of them for their sins, he will let them know, that as he hath seen and taken notice of, so he hath not forgot what they have done.

11 Then said the LORD unto me, [n]Pray not for this people for *their* good.

n Ex. 32. 10. ch. 7. 16. & 11. 14.

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Twice before God had given the prophet this charge, chap. vii. 16; xi. 14; how it could consist with the piety of Jeremiah after those charges to put up the prayer we have ver. 7—9 of this chapter, see the notes on chap. xi. 14.

o Prov. 1. 28. Is. 1. 15. & 58. 3. ch. 11. 11. Ezek. 8. 18. Mic. 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13.
p ch. 6. 20. & 7. 21, 22.
q ch. 9. 16.

12 °When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and ᵖwhen they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but ᵍI will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

When they fast, I will not hear their cry; the like threatening we have Prov. i. 28; Isa. i. 15; chap. xi. 11; Ezek. viii. 18; Micah iii. 4. *When they offer burnt-offering and an oblation, I will not accept them:* men may so long despise God's calls, exhortations, and counsels, as their case may be desperate, as to the prevention of temporal judgments by such religious applications to God as ordinarily have their effect to prevent and remove judgments. See chap. xv. 1; Ezek. xiv. 14, 20. *But I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence;* he threateneth to add to their plague three sore judgments, ordinarily accompanying one another, both in God's threatenings, and in the execution of them, chap. xxix. 17, 18; xxxiv. 17, &c.

r ch. 4. 10.

13 ¶ ʳThen said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you †assured peace in this place.

† Heb. *peace of truth.*

We have many complaints of this prophet against false prophets that contradicted his prophecies, chap. iv. 10; xxiii. 9, and we shall hereafter meet with the names of some of them. Corrupt governments never want prophets to their humour, though a bolder transgression can hardly be imagined, than for men to entitle God to their own imaginations and fancies, and we shall, ver. 15, meet with the usual wages of such works.

s ch. 27. 10.
t ch. 23. 21. & 27. 15. & 29. 8, 9.

14 Then the Lord said unto me, ˢThe prophets prophesy lies in my name: ᵗI sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.

They did not only prophesy falsehoods, but *lies*, what they knew to be false; for they pretended that God had revealed such things unto them; for admit the things they spake (as to men) but future contingencies, which might be true or false, yet it was a lie for them to pretend that God had told them any such things. The things were certainly false in themselves, being contrary to God's revelation; but setting that aside, for them to pretend God had revealed that to them which he had not revealed was a formed lie. God denieth that he ever commanded them to speak any such things, or sent them upon any such errands; they prophesied what came in their own foolish heads, and the deceits of their own hearts.

u ch. 5. 12, 13.

15 Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, ᵘyet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.

It is a most dangerous thing for ecclesiastical ministers to deliver that to people as the will of God which is not so. God here threateneth that these prophets, in testimony of the truth of the word of God delivered by Jeremiah, should die by these very judgments which they falsely prophesied to this people, as from God, an immunity from: see chap. vi. 15; xx. 6; 1 Kings xxii. 25.

16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the

x Ps. 79. 3.

sword; ˣand they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.

The security promised by these false prophets shall be no excuse to the people for giving credit to them; the prophets shall perish for prophesying falsely in my name, and the people that hearken to and believe what they say, and practise accordingly, shall perish for their light and vain credulity. As the sinful commands of superiors in things civil will not free those from guilt that execute their commands, so the lies and false teachings of ministers will not excuse those that run into error upon the credit of their words: both the one and the other owe their first homage and allegiance to God, by whose word they ought to examine the precepts of the one, and the prophesyings of the other.

y ch. 9. 1. & 13. 17. Lam. 1. 16. & 2. 18.
z ch. 8. 21.

17 ¶ Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; ʸLet mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: ᶻfor the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow.

a Ezek. 7. 15.
‖ Or, *make merchandise against a land, and* men *acknowledge it not.* ch. 5. 13.

18 If I go forth into ᵃthe field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with famine! yea, both the prophet and the priest ‖go about into a land that they know not.

The prophet is by God directed to speak still of the calamities of this people as a thing past, though yet to come, according to the usual style of prophetical writings; and to tell them, that whatsoever their false prophets told them, yet he so certainly knew the contrary, that he could even wish himself melted into tears for them, and had even already before his eyes the doleful spectacle of their miseries; some in the field slain by the enemy's sword, others within the walls almost starved to death. *Both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not:* the word in the Hebrew סחר which we translate *go about*, signifies so primarily, and in a second sense to merchandise, because merchants go about countries to trade. This hath made that variety of sense which the margins of our Bible have; but our translation is true enough, and the sense seems to be, that priests and prophets (though accounted sacred persons) should be made captives also, and wander in a land wherein they were foreigners. This is thought to relate to the first captivity in the time of Jehoiakim, when the people of the best fashion were carried into captivity.

b Lam. 5. 22.
c ch. 15. 18.
d ch. 8. 15.

19 ᵇHast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul lothed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and ᶜ*there is* no healing for us? ᵈwe looked for peace, and *there is* no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble!

The prophet again returns to God, expostulating with him, and humbly imploring mercy for his people, which lets us know that he did not understand God's words to him, ver. 11, as an absolute prohibition of him to pray for this people. *Zion* was a place whose gates God loved, and *Judah* was his pleasant portion. Lord, saith the prophet, is it possible thou shouldst loathe a place which thou so much lovedst, or cast off a people which thou hast so much owned? *Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us?* he acknowledgeth God to be he that had smitten them, and their condition without him to be helpless and hopeless; and that all their hopes and expectations were frustrated.

e Ps. 106. 6. Dan. 9. 8.

20 We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, *and* the iniquity of our fathers: for ᵉwe have sinned against thee.

That is, both we and our fathers have sinned against thee, and have given thee a right to punish and destroy us; we desire not to cover or cloak our sin, we own and acknowledge it.

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21 Do not abhor *us*, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: [f]remember, break not thy covenant with us.

f Ps. 74. 2, 20. & 106. 45.

The thing which the prophet deprecateth is, the judgments come already and further coming upon this people, the famine, sword, and pestilence, with the drought, under the sad consequents of which they at present laboured; but he prays for the removal of these judgments, and the prevention of such as were yet to come, in this phrase, *Do not abhor us;* noting to us that the love of God to a people is the root of all good which they can expect, and his hatred and displeasure the root of all the evil that can betide them. Here are divers arguments brought to back this petition. 1. *For thy name's sake;* that is, thine honour and glory' sake; an argument often made use of in holy writ, in the prayers of God's people, Josh. vii. 9, &c., and upon a very good foundation, whether we consider God's concern for his own glory, or the tenure of God's promises, promising mercy for his own name's sake. He also argueth with God from his former love and kindness to this people, which he had made *the throne of his glory*. The words are either to be understood of the throne of the house of David, called the *Lord's throne*, 1 Chron. xxix. 23, or else the *temple*, and the ark in it, the more special symbol of God's presence: hence he is said to have dwelt *betwixt the cherubims*, Psal. lxxx. 1; so chap. xvii. 12, the prophet saith, *A glorious high throne from the beginning is our sanctuary*. Lord, (saith the prophet,) we have deserved all the disgrace thou canst throw upon us, but do not thou disgrace the throne of thine own glory. *Remember, break not thy covenant with us*. Did not Jeremiah then know that God could not break his *covenant? Answ.* He did know it; but he also knew that it is our duty to pray to God to fulfil it; or possibly he would extend it a little further, and for God's covenant' sake made with the faithful in Israel he would have obtained mercy for the whole body of the nation.

g Zech. 10. 1, 2. h Deut. 32. 21. i Ps. 135. 7. & 147. 8. Is. 30. 23. ch. 5. 24. & 10. 13.

22 [g]Are there *any* among [h]the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? [i]*art* not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these *things*.

The present judgment under which they groaned was a drought, which he had described in the six first verses; the prophet imploring God for the removal of it, argues from the impossibility of help in this case from any other way; none of the idols of the heathens, which he calls *vain things*, nothing in themselves, and of no use or profit to those that ran after them, could give rain. The heavens indeed give it, but in the order of second causes; if God stoppeth those bottles, they cannot run. *Art not thou he, O Lord our God?* Lord, art not thou able to do it? (saith the prophet;) nay, art not thou he who alone is able to do it? (for so much the phrase doth import). The Scripture constantly giveth God the honour of giving rain, Gen. ii. 5; Deut. xxviii. 12; 1 Kings viii. 36; 2 Chron. vi. 27; Job v. 10; xxxviii. 26, 28; Psal. cxlvii. 8; chap. v. 24; li. 16; Joel ii. 23; Zech. x. 1; Matt. v. 45; Acts xiv. 17. *Therefore*, saith the prophet, *we* thy people *will wait upon thee* by prayer, and the payment of those homages thou requirest; for *thou hast made all these things*; that is, (say some,) thou hast caused all these judgments, or afflictive dispensations; or rather, thou hast made the *rain*, last mentioned.

CHAP. XV.

The Jews' rejection, and judgments, especially of four kinds; the sins which procured them, 1—9. *The prophet complaineth that the people curse and persecute him for these prophecies; they are threatened, and he instructed and comforted*, 10—21.

cir. 601. a Ezek. 14. 14, &c. b Ex. 32. 11, 12. Ps. 99. 6. c 1 Sam. 7. 9.

THEN said the LORD unto me, [a]Though [b]Moses and [c]Samuel stood before me, *yet* my mind *could* not *be* toward this people: cast *them* out of my sight, and let them go forth.

We are (though in another chapter) yet in the same prophecy, or discourse betwixt God and this prophet. Jeremiah having been once denied, solicited God again, as we had it in the four last verses of the former chapter. God here replieth to that prayer; and the sum of what he saith is, that he was inexorable in their case. Though Moses, who could obtain so much of God upon their sinning, in the case of the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 11, 14, and in the case of the people's murmuring, Numb. xiv. 19, 20; and Samuel, who was so prevalent with God, 1 Sam. vii. 9; though these two, formerly so potent and prevalent mediators for a people with me, *stood before me*, waited (that is) upon me, and solicited me on the behalf of this people, yet I could not favour this people. *Cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth:* q. d. I am not able to abide the sight of them, and therefore let them go forth.

2 And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; [d]Such as *are* for death, to death; and such as *are* for the sword, to the sword; and such as *are* for the famine, to the famine; and such as *are* for the captivity, to the captivity.

d ch. 43. 11. Ezek. 5. 2, 12. Zech. 11. 9.

If they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? if they ask thee what thou meanest by going forth; which being a term of motion, implieth a term to which the motion should be. Saith God, In the general, it is to ruin and destruction, but they shall not all be destroyed one and the same way; some shall be destroyed by the pestilence, (for that is here to be understood by *death*,) others shall be destroyed by *the famine*, others by *the sword* of enemies, others shall go into *captivity*, but one way or other the land shall be quitted of the most of you.

3 And I will [e]appoint over them four †kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and [f]the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy.

e Lev. 26. 16, &c. † Heb. *families.* f ch. 7. 33. Deut. 28. 26.

Four kinds of destroyers; the enemies' swords shall slay them, and so make meat for the dogs, who shall tear their carcasses, and for the birds of prey, who shall prey upon their dead bodies that shall lie unburied. And I will also send amongst them wild beasts, who shall both tear their living bodies and their dead carcasses.

4 And †I will cause them to be [g]removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of [h]Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for *that* which he did in Jerusalem.

† Heb. *I will give them for a removing.* g Deut. 28. 25. ch. 24. 9. Ezek. 23. 46. h 2 Kings 21. 11, &c. & 23. 26. & 24. 3, 4.

Though the body of the people were removed into Babylon, yet as it is more than probable that many of them fled into other countries to save themselves, so there is no doubt but the king of Babylon removed them into several kingdoms belonging to his large empire. What Manasseh did may be read 2 Kings xxi. 11, 16, *He did wickedly, above all that the Amorites did that were before him, and made also Judah to sin with his idols. Moreover, he shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin*, &c. Some make a question whether God means the personal sins of Manasseh and his ministers, or only the sins of the same kind that the Jews still continued. Manassch lived fifty-five years, his son Josiah thirty-one years, it was now the time of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, who reigned but eleven years, and it is probable this was his fifth year, for in that year he proclaimed the fast for the drought, (as is supposed,) chap. xxxvi. 9. Though the people were bad enough still, yet it is no way probable that they were so bad as in the time of Manasseh. We know all Josiah's time, the father of this prince, was a time of reformation, though it be certain much of their old leaven of idolatry and superstition was yet in them. Whatever therefore some think, God undoubtedly meaneth the guilt

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that Manasseh and his subjects contracted forty years before this time: nor do I see any reason why any should question, whether it be consistent with the justice of God to punish the sins of parents upon their posterity, when it is no more than we see done every day in the punishments of traitors and felons, by the seizing the estates of their children, and in wars, upon the taking of cities and fortified places; and it is no more than God hath threatened in the second commandment, Exod. xx., and declared it as a piece of his name, Exod. xxxiv. 5, and done in a multitude of Scriptural instances. Manasseh is here named as the son of Hezekiah for his shame, because of his degeneracy from so good a parent; it is expressly said, 2 Kings xxiii. 26, that notwithstanding Josiah's reformation, yet the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his wrath kindled against Judah for the provocations of Manasseh.

i Is. 51. 19.

5 For [i]who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside †to ask how thou doest?

† Heb. *to ask of thy peace.*

The sum of this is, that this people should be in a most miserable, pitiless state and condition; none should regard them in the day of their calamity, nor so much as once inquire after them, or how they fared, or what they did.

k ch. 2. 13.
l ch. 7. 24.

6 [k]Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art [l]gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; [m]I am weary with repenting.

m Hos. 13. 14.

God here, by more phrases of the same import with many that we have before met with, declareth his steady resolution to destroy them for their apostacy from him; and sets out himself to them as angry princes or parents, that had been often provoked against a subject or a child, and often resolved to punish the offender; but out of their own clemency, or upon the mediation and intercession of others for them, had altered their minds, and resolved to spare them, but at last met with so many fresh provocations, that they are weary of forgiving them any longer; so God declareth himself weary of his patient bearing with them, and resolved to bear no longer.

‖ Or, *whatsoever is dear.*
n Is. 9. 13. ch. 5. 3. Amos 4. 10, 11.

7 And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave *them* of ‖children, I will destroy my people, *since* [n]they return not from their ways.

I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; not a *purging fan* by affliction, to separate their chaff and dross from them, but a scattering fan. Some translate it *into the gates of the earth;* so it is the same that God had before said, that he would remove them into all nations (*gates* being put for cities): but it is more probable that this is added in pursuit of the metaphor of *fanning*, men usually choosing *barn-doors* to fan at, that they may have the advantage of the wind. *I will bereave them of children;* of *children* is not in the Hebrew, and is needlessly supplied; it may as well be, of any or all their comforts or good things. *I will destroy my people, since they return not from their ways;* their privilege claimed of being my people shall not protect them, so long as they go on in their lewd and sinful courses.

‖ Or *against the mother* city *a young man spoiling, &c.* or, *against the mother* and *the young men.*

8 Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas: I have brought upon them ‖against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noonday: I have caused *him* to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city.

The prophet speaking in the name of that God who calleth things that are not as if they were, still continueth his style, speaking of things to come as if present. In Jehoiakim's time we read of no such plenty of *widows;* they were multiplied when the city was besieged and taken in Zedekiah's time to a great number, hyperbolically compared to *the sands of the sea. I have brought upon them against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noon-day:* there is a great variety amongst interpreters as to their sense of this phrase, about which those that are curious may consult the English Annotations upon this verse. By *the spoiler at noon-day* is meant Nebuchadnezzar, in the sense of the best interpreters, who came not like a thief, who cometh by night to rob and to spoil, but with an army in the day time: the question only is about those words *against the mother of the young men.* The Hebrew word, which our translation renders *young men*, is בחור which properly signifieth a choice man, or a person chosen, from the Hebrew verb which signifieth to choose; so as it may as well be translated *the mother of the chosen*, as *the mother of the young men.* Because young men are looked upon as the *choice men*, whether for beauty, or strength and ability for any thing, the word often signifies a young man, Deut. xxxii. 25; 2 Sam. vi. 1; Psal. cxlviii. 12; Cant. v. 15; Isa. xxiii. 4; Ezek. ix. 6, and in many other texts. Some will have the sense, (as in our margin,) *against the mother* a *young man*, meaning by the *young man* Nebuchadnezzar, and by the *mother* Jerusalem. The Jews are in the Canticles called the *daughters of Jerusalem*, and *Jerusalem which is above* is by the apostle called *the mother of us all.* The Hebrew word is in the singular number; how we translate it *young men* I understand not. Pagnine translates it *electi*, the *mother of the chosen.* I do think that by the *mother* is meant Jerusalem, and that *populi* may be understood to *electi.* Jerusalem was the mother of the Jewish people, or Judea at least, against whom Nebuchadnezzar the spoiler at noon-day was sent; and we know that the Jews were God's *chosen people. I have caused him to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city:* this last clause is yet more obscure than the other; word for word, as it is in the Hebrew, it is, *I have caused to fall upon it suddenly, the city and terrors.* The word here used עיר commonly signifies a *city* in Scripture, and is very rarely translated otherwise. Were it not for the adverb suddenly coming between *it* and *city*, the sense were plain, and thus, *I will cause to fall upon that city terrors;* others read it, I will cause him to fall upon it, and terrors upon the city. The word sometimes in Scripture signifies enemies, and is so translated, 1 Sam. xxviii. 16; Psal. cxxxix. 20; Dan. iv. 19. In this signification of the word the sense is plain, I will send upon it the enemy and terrors. The learned author of our English Annotations observes it is translated a *watcher*, Dan. iv. 13, 23, and thinks the sense may be thus, I have caused it to fall upon them suddenly, a *watcher* that bringeth *terrors;* to which purpose he tells us the Chaldean forces are compared to watchers, chap. iv. 16, 17; v. 6.

o 1 Sam. 2. 5.
p Amos 8. 9.

9 [o]She that hath borne seven languisheth: she hath given up the ghost; [p]her sun is gone down while *it was* yet day: she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD.

Seven signifies many, 1 Sam. ii. 5; Job v. 19. The prophet complains that Jerusalem, or the country of Judah, that had been very numerous in people, now grew feeble, neither able to maintain those she had borne, nor yet to bear more. *Her sun is gone down while it was yet day;* in the midst of her prosperity she became thus miserable. *She hath been ashamed and confounded:* a part of them were confounded by the judgments of God, which came upon them before their captivity. For the remainder of them, (saith God,) they shall be destroyed by the sword of the enemy.

q Job 3. 1, &c. ch. 20. 14.

10 ¶ [q]Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; *yet* every one of them doth curse me.

The prophet in this verse cannot be excused from a great measure of passion and human infirmity; he almost curseth the day of his birth, denouncing himself a woeful, miserable man, to be born a man of *strife* and *contention* to the whole world, that is, those nations in it against which God sent him to denounce his judgments; which denunciations, how true soever, and the truth of which they afterward did effectually find, yet they were not able to bear, and therefore they strove with him, and contended against him; yet

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it was not for his sin. *Usury* was forbidden the Jews, Deut. xxiii. 19, and so was the more odious; but saith the prophet, I have not followed that trade, I have neither lent nor borrowed upon usury; I have done them no wrong, nor given them any occasion against me; yet they will not be reconciled to me, but speak of me all manner of evil. This was the lot of the old prophets, the lot of Samuel, of Christ, of his apostles, and of all the faithful ministers of the gospel ever since; let them carry themselves never so innocently and obligingly to people, yet if they will be faithful, and truly reveal unto people the mind and will of God, that is enough to anger a people whose wills are not subjugated to the will of God, and they will curse them.

11 The LORD said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily ‖ I will cause [r]the enemy to entreat thee *well* in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.

‖ Or, *I will entreat the enemy for thee*

[r] ch. 39. 11, 12. & 40. 4, 5.

The latter words of the verse expound the former; for by *remnant* is here meant the residue or remnant of days that Jeremiah had yet to live, not the remnant of the people who should come out of Babylon. *I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction;* I will, by my providence, so order it, that how cruelly and severely soever the enemy deals with thy countrymen, yet he shall use thee kindly when he shall take the city. See the fulfilling of this prophecy chap. xxxix. 11; xl. 3, 4.

12 Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?

There is a great variety among interpreters as to this verse also, some interpreting this as a prophecy that none should break the prophet, whom God would make as *the northern iron and steel*, which was the hardest of all iron, the *Chalybes* (from whom steel had its name *Chalybs*) being northern people, and the most famous of any then known in the world for tempering iron to make it hard and tough; others interpreting it, as denying that there should ever be an agreement betwixt the Jews and the Chaldeans: but to me the words of the next verse seem to give us the sense, that the Jews should certainly be overrun and conquered by the Babylonians; for as *the northern iron and steel* is the hardest, and no *iron* could break that, so God having edged and hardened their enemies the Chaldeans, all their opposition to them would signify nothing.

13 Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the [s]spoil without price, and *that* for all thy sins, even in all thy borders.

[s] Ps. 44. 12. ch. 17. 3.

All thy riches and precious things shall be spoiled, I will have no regard, saith God, to loss or gain in it, or there shall be no price taken for the redemption of them; for what shall be done shall be by me done for all the sins which thou hast been guilty of in all the parts of the country.

14 And I will make *thee* to pass with thine enemies [t]into a land *which* thou knowest not: for a [u]fire is kindled in mine anger, *which* shall burn upon you.

[t] ch. 16. 13. & 17. 4.
[u] Deut. 32. 22.

As the former verse, so this also, must be understood, not of the prophet, for he was not carried into Babylon, but of the people, whose captivity is threatened in this place, and the cause of it declared, the wrath of the Lord against them for their sins, the effects of which are compared to a fire which should burn them.

15 ¶ O LORD, [x]thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and [y]revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that [z]for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.

[x] ch. 12. 3.
[y] ch. 11. 20. & 20. 12.
[z] Ps. 69. 7.

O Lord, thou knowest; either thou knowest my sincerity, how faithfully I have revealed thy will; so Psal. cxxxix. 1, 23; or thou knowest my sufferings, how wickedly they deal with me; or *thou knowest* what thou hast to do, what is in thy purpose and resolution to do; I will say no more unto thee; only for my own sake I beg, *remember me and visit me*, that I may not be out of thy thoughts, nor without the visitations of thy love, while this people is under the visitations of thy wrath, Neh. v. 19; xiii. 14; chap. xviii. 20. *Revenge me of my persecutors:* thou hast commanded me not to avenge myself, Lord, do thou avenge me upon my persecutors. (See the notes on chap. xi. 20; xvii. 18, how the prophet could thus pray against his enemies.) *Take me not away in thy long-suffering;* confirm thy word, let not me be taken away into captivity; though I be a sinner, yet exercise toward me patience and long-suffering. *Know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke;* Lord, remember that my reproach, and all that I suffer, is for thy sake, because I have faithfully published thy truth, and maintained and defended thine honour and glory.

16 Thy words were found, and I did [a]eat them; and [b]thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for †I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

[a] Ezek. 3. 1, 3. Rev. 10. 9, 10.
[b] Job 23. 12. Ps. 119. 72, 111.
† Heb. *thy name is called upon me.*

Either the words which from time to time thou didst reveal to me were by me greedily digested; and though some of them were dreadful and terrible words, yet because they proceeded from thee, I was glad to hear them, and to be thy instrument to communicate them to thy people; or, (which better pleaseth the learned author of our English Annotations, and possibly may be more the sense of the place,) Thy word of commission, (of which see chap. i.,) by which I was made thy prophet, was at first very grateful and pleasing to me: I was glad at the heart, when thou at any time didst reveal thy will to me. Thou art the *Lord of hosts*, and so able to protect thy messengers. Lord, *I am called by thy name*, I became a prophet by thy authority, therefore do thou own, protect, and defend me.

17 [c]I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation.

[c] Ps. 1. 1. & 26. 4, 5.

I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced. some, and those the most, interpret these words as an argument the prophet useth with God to obtain his favour, because though the country was full of wicked men, such as scoffed at the denouncings of God's judgments, yet he had no share with them; therefore he desires he might have no share with those wicked men, in whose company he had no delight, and in whose profane contempt of God he had no share: but the learned author of our English Annotations thinks (and that very probably, if we consider what follows) that the words should rather be translated thus, *I sat not in the assemblies of those that made merry;* intimating, that though he rejoiced in his heart when God gave him commission to be his prophet, yet God had all along filled his mouth with such dreadful messages to be delivered to his people, that his whole prophetical life had been to him a time of mourning and solitude, a time when he *sat alone*, mourning and weeping in secret for the wrath of God revealed to him against his people, and by him to be revealed unto the people.

18 Why is my [d]pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, *which* refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me [e]as a liar, *and* [f]*as* waters *that* †fail?

[d] ch. 30. 15.
[e] See ch. 1. 19.
[f] Job 6. 15, &c.
† Heb. *be not sure.*

The words are judged to be the words of Jeremiah, and that with relation unto himself, complaining of the hard task which God had put upon him, continually filling his mouth with such bitter words of evil against the people, as exposed him to their most implacable rage against him, and persecution of him, so as his misery seemed like a *pain* and a *wound*, for which was no remedy but patience. Jeremiah, though a great prophet of the Lord, was (as Elijah) a man subject to like passions with other men; he here chargeth God with unfaithfulness, as if he had deceived his expectations, and had been to him as a pit of waters that promised fair, but failed a man when he had most need of them. The servants of God have sometimes been surprised with such passions and temptations, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1; Psal. lxxvii. 7, 9. It is a hard thing not to see, and yet believe.

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19 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD, g Zech. 3. 7. g If thou return, then will I bring thee h ver. 1. again, *and* thou shalt h stand before me: i Ezek. 22. 26. & 44. 23. and if thou i take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.

If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: at the first reading of these words, one would take them to be a promise of God to restore this people to their former state, if they would reform; but upon a more wise and diligent consideration of what follows, both in this and in the following verse, they seem rather God's words unto the prophet, rebuking his diffidence and distrust in God, and promising him, that if he did return from that his diffidence and distrust in God's promise and providence, he would restore him to the former favour he had had with him, and he should be his prophet to reveal his mind to the people. And if he would separate *the precious* truths of God *from the vile* conceits of men, or rather preach so as to distinguish good and bad men one from another, then God would continue him as his prophet, to speak in his name unto the people. *Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them:* he chargeth the prophet to keep his ground, and not to go over unto wicked men, but to use his endeavour to reduce them to that obedience which he yielded to him.

20 And I will make thee unto this k ch. 1. 18. & 6. 27. 1 ch. 20. 11, 12. people a fenced brasen k wall: and they shall fight against thee, but l they shall not prevail against thee: for I *am* with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall: these words are expounded by those that follow. *They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee:* look, as men may throw stones or strike at a brazen wall, but do it no hurt; so, saith God, though thou shalt have enemies that will be offering at thee, yet if thou continuest steady in the doing of thy duty, they shall do thee no harm; for thou shalt have my power engaged for thee, *to deliver and save thee* from their malice.

21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked; the wicked Jews; *and out of the hand of the terrible;* and the power of the terrible Chaldeans, into whose hands thou shalt come, but be preserved from any harm by the workings of my providence for thee.

CHAP. XVI.

The prophet is commanded to abstain from marriage, from mourning, or festival assemblies; hereby representing to them their approaching misery, 1—9. *Their sins which caused it,* 10—13. *Their strange deliverance from Babylon,* 14, 15. *After that their iniquity is recompensed,* 16—18. *The prophet's comfort in the calling of the Gentiles,* 19—21.

cir. 601. THE word of the LORD came also unto me, saying,

2 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place.

It is uncertain whether what we have in this chapter be a new revelation, or a continuance of his former prophecy. God commandeth the prophet in it under certain types to foretell their utter ruin and destruction. First he commandeth him to marry no wife, nor have sons or daughters. He expoundeth this command ver. 3, 4.

3 For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land;

4 They shall die of a grievous deaths; a ch. 15. 2. they shall not be b lamented; neither shall b ch. 22. 18. 19. & 25. 33. they be buried; *but* they shall be c as c Ps. 83. 10. ch. 8. 2. & 9. 22. dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their d carcases shall d Ps. 79. 2. ch. 7. 33. & 34. 20. be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

God in these verses opens the reason why he would not have the prophet marry nor multiply relations. In evil and calamitous times, those who multiply relations do but multiply sorrows and afflictions to themselves; the apostle in evil times tells the Corinthians that married persons should have trouble in the flesh, 1 Cor. vii. 28; and Christ pronounceth a woe to those that should be with child, and to those that gave suck, at the time when Jerusalem should be besieged. God tells the prophet he was resolved that the people of this land, both young and old, should die miserable deaths, and die so fast, that there should be none to bury them. They should die by the *sword* and the *famine*, and be devoured by the *fowls* and the *beasts;* and therefore it was better for him to abide free from relations, for whose miseries he would be as much concerned as for his own affliction.

5 For thus saith the LORD, e Enter not e Ezek. 24. 17, 22, 23. into the house of ‖mourning, neither go ‖ Or, *mourning feast.* to lament nor bemoan them: for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even* lovingkindness and mercies.

Mourning, מרזח There is so great a difference in the translation of this word, that, Amos vi. 7, the very same word signifieth a *banquet,* and is so translated; yet is there no contradiction, for banquets are now (and probably anciently were) in the houses of mourning, as well as in the houses of those that rejoiced. It appeareth plainly by the words that follow, that the apostle was here forbidden to go to funeral feasts, or to lament and bemoan any. *For* (saith God) *I have,* that is, I will *take away peace from this people.* Possibly the meaning of God might be this, Do not go to comfort such as mourn for any relations dead, (for their feastings upon those occasions were upon a consolatory account; thence, ver. 7, you read of a *cup of consolation,*) for, saith God, they have no need of it; those that die are most happy; for I will take away the peace of this people, and deprive them of all my *mercy and loving-kindness* which I have hitherto showed them.

6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried, f ch. 22. 18. g Lev. 19. 28. Deut. 14. 1. ch. 41. 5. & 47. 5. h Is. 22. 12. ch. 7. 29. f neither shall *men* lament for them, nor g cut themselves, nor h make themselves bald for them:

There shall so many of all ranks and sizes die in this land, that men shall have no time to bury them, or there shall not be enough left living to bury the dead; nor shall men, for their own miseries, have leisure to lament for the miseries of other men. Cutting themselves in their flesh, and cutting off their hair, were pagan customs, which God forbade his own people; but yet it should seem they practised these barbarous customs; but saith God, I will put an end to that practice, men shall die so fast and in such multitudes, as they shall have no leisure to cut themselves for such as are dead, they shall not have such solemn mournings as they have had.

7 Neither shall *men* ‖tear *themselves* ‖ Or, *break bread for them,* as Ezek. 24. 17. Hos. 9. 4. See Deut. 26. 14. Job 42. 11. i Prov. 31. 6, 7. for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to i drink for their father or for their mother.

Neither shall men tear themselves for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead: if we allow our translation here of the word סם with the word supplied, *themselves,* it will be hard to give a tolerable sense of these words, for then *tearing* is the same with the *cutting themselves* men-

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tioned in the former verse, which though it might be as a passionate expression of the person's sorrow that did it, yet how it should comfort the friends of the deceased will be very hard to conceive. But the truth is, the word hath but two significations, and we have here given it what doth worst suit this text. It signifies to *divide*, and to *tear* or *rend*. Both in *kal* the first conjugation, and in *pihel* the third conjugation, it is used to signify *dividing:* in the former, Isa. lviii. 7, where we interpret it *deal;* to deal, that is, *divide* thy bread to the hungry; which is the only text (excepting this) where it is used in this conjugation. In the other conjugation it is so used in many texts, Lev. xi. 4, 5, &c.; Deut. xiv. 7; so certainly it ought to have been translated here, *Neither shall men deal out bread for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead*, and seemeth to hint to us a custom in use amongst them, when they had any friend that had lost his or her relations, to send them some meat or victuals, (for amongst the Hebrews all things that they ate were called *bread,*) and then to go and dine or sup with them, to have opportunity to speak comfortably to them. This doubtless is the sense of the words, and so it is plain enough, and this is confirmed by the next phrase. *Neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother; neither shall men drink the cup of consolation for their father*, &c.; as in such cases they were wont to have something to eat, so they were also wont to send bottles of wine, or other cheering liquor, to drink, that they might forget their sorrows; this is called *the cup of consolation*, from the end for which the sending and drinking of it was intended. God tells them that the time should come that so many should die, and so fast, and the rest should be so much upon the brink of the grave, that they should have no leisure for or heart to these ceremonies.

8 Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting, to sit with them to eat and to drink.

God did not only forbade his prophet to go into houses of mourning, to eat and to drink according to their custom, to comfort those who had lost their friends; but he forbade him also to go into houses where they were wont to eat and to drink upon a more cheerful account.

9 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, [k] I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.

k Is. 24. 7, 8. ch. 7. 34. & 25. 10. Ezek. 26. 13. Hos. 2. 11. Rev. 18. 23.

And he declares that he laid this injunction upon him as a type that his countrymen, by such his forbearance, might understand that God in his providence was about to put an end to all their civil mirth in their days.

10 ¶ And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, [l] Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what *is* our iniquity? or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?

l Deut. 29. 24. ch. 5. 19. & 13. 22. & 22. 8.

When thou shalt shew this people all these words, or all these things; when thou shalt be observed by this people to refuse marriage, and to go to the houses of mourners, according to the custom, to eat or to drink with mourners, to make them to forget their sorrows, or to go into the house of feasting for jollity and mirth, and they shall ask the reason of thy singularity in this behaviour, and thou shalt give them the reason of it, according as I have instructed thee; and they shall pretend to be at a loss to know the reason why God is so severe against them, for what sin or iniquity it is, thinking perhaps that Manasseh's or Jehoiakim's commanding them to worship idols would excuse them, and only leave their superiors guilty; for otherwise, while there was such plain idolatry amongst them, they could not be ignorant of cause sufficient that God had, considering the multiplied threats in the law.

11 Then shalt thou say unto them, [m] Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law;

m Deut. 29. 25. ch. 22. 9.

Your fathers; the idolatrous kings of Judah that were before Manasseh's time, since whose time there were hardly forty years yet elapsed.

12 And ye have done [n] worse than your fathers; for, behold, [o] ye walk every one after the ‖ imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

n ch. 7. 26.
o ch. 13. 10.
‖ Or, *stubbornness.*

Ye in latter ages, in the time of Manasseh, *have done worse than your fathers* did, and now in the time of Jehoiakim you run on much in the same course of idolatry and superstition, which in this is worse in you, because for thirty years together you had the better example of good Josiah the father of your present king, together with what his authority could do to reduce you; he hath not been gone now above five years, and you are returned to your old vomit, and are all of you serving me according to your own fancies, so stubborn are you, and resolved against obedience to me.

13 [p] Therefore will I cast you out of this land [q] into a land that ye know not, *neither* ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour.

p Deut. 4. 26, 27, 28. & 28. 36, 63, 64, 65.
q ch. 15. 14.

You would not hearken to me to obey my voice in that good land which I gave you, and which you have known and inherited now many years; therefore I will throw you out into a land which you know not, and which your fathers knew not. You would not serve me in this land, but chose to serve other gods in my land; you shall serve other gods in a strange land, you shall there have no such opportunities as you have here at Jerusalem to worship me the true God, according to the prescription and direction of my word; ye shall there have no gods else but idols to worship, and what is now matter of choice to you shall then be forced upon you, the governors of those countries into which you shall be carried shall force you to fall down and to worship their idols, which was verified afterward by Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iii., &c.

14 ¶ Therefore, behold, the [r] days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

r Is. 43. 18. ch. 23. 7, 8.

Therefore; it were better translated *Notwithstanding*, for that is manifestly the sense. God sweeteneth the dreadful threatenings preceding with a comfortable promise of their restoration.

15 But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and [s] I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

s ch. 24. 6. & 30. 3. & 32. 37.

Which he saith should be so grateful a mercy to them, that either in regard of the newness of this deliverance, or in regard of the great misery they should be in during the captivity of Babylon, when they should be delivered from it, they should not so much remember their deliverance from the house of bondage in Egypt, and magnify God for that salvation, as this new deliverance of them out of this captivity; for he would certainly bring them again into the land of Canaan, a land which he had given unto their fathers.

16 ¶ Behold, I will send for many [t] fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

t Amos 4. 2. Hab. 1. 15.

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Though some interpreters make these words a promise, either of God's restoration of this people, and making use of Cyrus, who, as a *fisherman* or *huntsman*, by his proclamation fetched the Jews out of all parts of his dominions, to return to Jerusalem; or of the calling of God's elect by the apostles, who were God's fishermen, and went up and down preaching the gospel in all places; yet the next verse rather guideth us to interpret it as a threatening, and by these fishermen and huntsmen to understand all those enemies whom God made use of to destroy these Jews, hunting them out of all holes and coverts wheresoever they should fly and take sanctuary.

u Job 34. 21. Prov. 5. 21. & 15. 3. ch. 32. 19.

17 For mine [u]eyes *are* upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

God is of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity in any so as to approve it, and therefore though he be long patient, yet he will at last punish evil-doers; for his eyes behold them, their sins are open in his sight, and he particularly observeth men's actions, that he may render unto every one according to his works.

x Is. 40. 2. ch. 17. 18. y Ezek. 43. 7, 9.

18 And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin [x]double; because [y]they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcases of their detestable and abominable things.

Before I will restore them, and return in my wonted favour to them, I will punish them for their ways which I have seen, which are ways of iniquity, and will plentifully punish them; (for so *double* here signifies, not the double of what their sins deserve;) because by their idolatry, blood, and cruelty, and other sins, they have defiled the land which I own, and which I have given them; and have filled that country which I have chosen for and named *my inheritance* with their *abominable things*, that is, practices, or unclean beasts offered to their idols in sacrifices, or innocent persons slain by them.

z Ps. 18. 2. a ch. 17. 17.

19 O LORD, [z]my strength, and my fortress, and [a]my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited

b Is. 44. 10. ch. 2. 11. & 10. 5.

lies, vanity, and *things* [b]wherein *there is* no profit.

The prophet hearing God's resolution, before he showed this people any mercy, to be avenged on them for their sins, leaves off speaking to him upon that argument; but applieth himself to God for mercy for himself, and, to confirm his faith in him, gives him names suited to his hopes in him, and which might declare his faith in him for the obtaining favour from him in an evil day; and comforteth himself with the thoughts of those good days that were coming, when not only the Jews should be again restored to their country, but the *Gentiles* also from all parts of the world (whom also many of the Jews should accompany) should apply themselves to God, confessing that both they and their fathers, in their worshipping dumb idols, had but inherited lies and vanity, and things that were unprofitable.

c Is. 37. 19. ch. 2. 11. Gal. 4. 8.

20 Shall a man make gods unto himself, and [c]they *are* no gods?

It is doubtful whether these be to be understood as the words of God, showing the unreasonableness of the sin of idolatry, or, as others make them, the continued speech of the Gentiles, who after their conversion should see the unreasonableness of worshipping the works of their own hands. Whoso owneth a God owneth an *infinite Being*, a First Cause, and Mover, and Creator of all things. Now can any be so sottishly stupid as to think that a *finite being* should give a being to an *infinite Being*; that he who is a creature should make his Creator, that he should be a cause to the First Cause? (things which are all contradictions to the common sense of men). A man is no god himself; how can he communicate a divine nature, which himself hath not, to another?

21 Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that [d]my name *is* ‖ The LORD.

d Ex. 15. 3. ch. 33. 2. Amos 5. 8. ‖ Or, JEHOVAH. Ps. 83. 18.

Because all the goodness and mercy that I have showed them will not learn them to know me, my power and might, I will once for all make them to understand it by the dreadful strokes of my vengeance. They shall know that my name is Jehovah; that I am not such a one as their idols, but one who have my being from myself, and give life and being to all other things, and have all might and power in my hand, and can do whatsoever I please; and one that will make good whatsoever I have spoken, whether in a way of promise or threatening.

CHAP. XVII.

The captivity of Judah for her sin, 1—4. *Trust in man cursed; in God, blessed*, 5—8. *The deceitful heart and most secret practices are known to God*, 9—11. *The salvation of God*, 12—14. *The prophet complaineth of the mockers of his prophecies*, 15—18. *Of keeping the sabbath*, 19—27.

THE sin of Judah *is* written with a [a]pen of iron, *and* with the † point of a diamond: *it is* [b]graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars;

a Job 19. 24. † Heb. *nail.* b Prov. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 3. 3.

There is much arguing amongst those that are critical about the true signification of words, what is here signified by שמיר which we translate a *diamond;* most agree that it doth not signify a *diamond*, (not used in engraving,) but that by the *pen of iron*, and the *point of a diamond*, are meant some tools with which they were wont to engrave things upon hard substances; it may be made in a figure resembling the *claw of a bird*, as the word seemeth to import. *It is graven upon the table of their heart;* it is graven in their hearts; they are so accustomed to sin, so inured to idolatry, that there is no hope of any reclaiming them. For how can they that are accustomed to do evil, do well? *And upon the horns of your altars;* nor is it a thing done in secret, but it is written, or painted, or engraven upon the horns of their altars. God's altar was foursquare, and at each corner there was a rising part made of brass something high, these were called the *horns of the altar*. See Exod. xxvii. 2; Ezek. xliii. 15, 16. Now their sin is either said to be engraven or published upon the horns of the altar, because the blood of the sacrifices which they offered to idols was sprinkled there, or because their altars had some inscription upon them, declaring to what idol that altar was consecrated, as the altar of Athens had.

c Judg. 3. 7. 2 Chron. 24. 18. & 33. 3. 19. Is. 1. 29. & 17. 8. ch. 2. 20.

2 Whilst their children remember their altars and their [c]groves by the green trees upon the high hills.

This showed how inveterate they were in this sin of idolatry, that they taught it their children, and their children remembered their idolatrous altars and the groves where they were wont to worship idols by the green trees, as they did also upon the high hills; so their sin was derived from one age to another. Others think that the phrase rather expresseth their fondness of their idols, and think it should be read, *as their children they remember*, &c.; that is, they loved their idols and their idolatrous services as they loved their children, which also was true; yea, they that made their children pass through the fire to Molech loved them better than their children.

d ch. 15. 13.

3 O my mountain in the field, [d]I will give thy substance *and* all thy treasures to the spoil, *and* thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders.

O my mountain in the field; O Mount Zion; for though Jerusalem stood in a plain, yet it was at the foot of a hill, and part of it was built upon the side of the hill, upon the top of which hills were many pleasant fields. Or, O Judah; which was a country full of mountains. God calls it his

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mountain, because of the particular favour he had to this country. He threateneth to give all the riches of the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem as a spoil, and all the *high places* where they had committed idolatry throughout all their country into the enemies' hands.

† Heb. *in thyself.*

4 And thou, even †thyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine
e ch. 16. 13. enemies in e the land which thou knowest
f ch. 15. 14. not: for f ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, *which* shall burn for ever.

In the word *discontinue* there is a secret promise that they should again come and possess and inherit their land; they should not lose their inheritance, but only discontinue their possession and occupation of it. Some learned authors considering that the same word is here used which is used Exod. xxiii. 11, in the law concerning the *sabbatical rest*, when they were to let the land rest, and lie still, Lev. xxvi. 34, think this text hath a reference to that, and the meaning is, Thou shalt discontinue thy ploughing and tilling the land; and go into thine enemies' country, and serve them in a land of which thou hast no knowledge; because by thine idolatry and other sins thou hast increased my wrath into such a fire, as shall burn for a long time, for so the word *for ever* is oft taken, Exod. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17; Psal. lxxxix. 1; Isa. xxxiv. 10.

g Is. 30. 1, 2. & 31. 1.

5 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; g Cursed *be*
h See Is. 31. 3. the man that trusteth in man, and maketh h flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

It was the great sin of this people, for which they are often taxed in holy writ, 2 Chron. xvi. 7; xxviii. 16, 20; Isa. xxx. 1, 2; xxxi. 1, 2, when any danger threatened them for their sins, to make leagues with and flee to foreign idolatrous nations to help and succour them, and to repose a confidence in them, and so bolster up themselves in their wicked and sinful courses, promising themselves deliverance from the dangers that threatened them by the power of their confederates and allies. This sin the prophet here reflecteth upon, that while their hearts *departed from God*, they would yet encourage themselves from the hoped-for help of men. The prophet from God declares that such are and shall be *cursed*, and mentioned man, under the notion of *flesh*, to show his frailty and impotency to help against the mighty power and wrath of God; withal showing us that God alone is the true object of our faith and confidence, as well for the things of this life as those of another life, and that none *whose heart departeth from God* can with any security look for any help from the creature.

i ch. 48. 6.
k Job 20. 17.

6 For he shall be i like the heath in the desert, and k shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched
l Deut. 29. 23. places in the wilderness, l *in* a salt land and not inhabited.

The sum is, he shall not thrive, nor prosper, but *be like the heath*, by which is meant some barren shrub or tree, about which the various guesses of interpreters (which the reader that is curious may find in the English Annotations) are but uncertainties, and this planted in the wilderness too, which is a barren soil, which tree or plant is never the better for all the moisture that comes from heaven, nor for all the beams of the sun; but stands in a dry and salt place, not inhabited by people. The scope is, to let us know that sinners who depart from God, and do not place their confidence in him in times of danger, but trust in creature aids and assistances, shall miss of these very good things which they might have had if they had expected them from him, from whom alone they could have been obtained.

m Ps. 2. 12. & 34. 8. & 125. 1. & 146. 5. Prov. 16. 20. Is. 30. 18.

7 m Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

Trusting in the Lord necessarily implieth also a walking close with him, and not in heart departing from him; for it is naturally impossible that any should repose a confidence in another for any good things, which that other hath promised under any condition, without some satisfaction in himself that he hath in some measure fulfilled the condition upon which the promise is made. But that man that truly trusteth and hopeth in the Lord is and shall be a blessed man.

n Job 8. 16. Ps. 1. 3.

8 For he shall be n as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of
‖ Or, *restraint.* ‖ drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

The sum is, he shall be prosperous and successful in his counsels and undertakings; like a tree planted by the side of a river, which is not affected with drought, but in a time when the leaves of trees standing in dry mountainous places parch and wither, its leaves hold their greenness, and its colour is not altered by drought, neither doth it cease from yielding fruit, but bringeth forth much fruit when other trees are wholly unfruitful.

9 ¶ The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

The words translated *deceitful*, and *desperately wicked*, are very variously translated, fraudulent, perverse, supplanting. He speaks to the Jews, that they might not lean too much to their own counsels, fancies, or understandings; but it is a proposition true concerning the hearts of all the sons and daughters of men; there is nothing so false and deceitful as the heart of man; deceitful in its apprehensions of things, in the hopes and promises which it nourisheth, in the assurances that it gives us, &c.; unsearchable by others, *deceitful* with reference to ourselves, and abominably wicked, so that neither can a man know his own heart, neither can any other know our hearts.

o 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Ps. 7. 9. & 139. 23, 24. Prov. 17. 3. ch. 11. 20. & 20. 12. Rom. 8. 27. Rev. 2. 23. p Ps. 62. 12. ch. 32. 19. Rom. 2. 6.

10 I the LORD o search the heart, *I* try the reins, p even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings.

Lest these hypocrites should pretend that their hearts were not departed from God, or should say, Who then can judge us if none knoweth the heart? saith God, Though no creature knoweth the heart of another fellow creature, yet I know the hearts of all creatures, I search the secret thoughts, and counsels, and designs of all my creatures; for I will judge them according to their thoughts and the secret motions and affections of their souls, according to all their ways, and the fruit of their doings. You cannot therefore mock me, and tell me your hearts are not departed from me.

‖ Or, *gathereth young which she hath not brought forth.* q Ps. 55. 23. r Luke 12. 20.

11 *As* the partridge ‖ sitteth *on eggs*, and hatcheth *them* not; *so* he that getteth riches, and not by right, q shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be r a fool.

As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not: it is no wonder if we cannot be certain as to the sense of these words so far as they concern natural history, when we are not certain what bird it is to which they relate; we translate the word *partridge;* others will have it the *cuckow;* but certain it is that it is the same word which we translate *partridge*, 1 Sam. xxvi. 20, and cuckows use not to be much hunted after. How the partridge is said to *sit on eggs, and hatch them not*, is yet a greater question. It may be occasioned so many ways, viz. either sitting upon *wind-eggs*, or *being killed* before the eggs are hatched, or having *its eggs destroyed* by the male partridge, or by some dog or other vermin, or its nest being found having her eggs taken from her, that it is hard to determine which the prophet means. Of all other I least approve of that which Jerome makes the sense, though the thing be true, (if we may believe Cassiodorus, and several natural historians, Aldrovandus, &c.,) that partridges have such a love and desire to hatch young ones, that having lost their own eggs, they will steal the eggs of other partridges and hatch them, which birds being hatched, the young ones, knowing the cry of their proper dams, hearing them call, leave the partridge that hatched them (which is one thing quoted by Aldrovandus to show the sagacity of that bird): but if this were the sense, the words would be, *As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them, but enjoyeth them not*, whereas they are,

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hatcheth them not; that is, having lost them, either by some man that hath taken them from her, or by some vermin or wild beast. *So he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool;* so he that getteth an estate by oppression, or any cozenage, or unrighteous actions, shall lose it again before he cometh to die; and when he comes to die, shall understand what a fool he was to take so much pains to no more purpose.

12 ¶ A glorious high throne from the beginning *is* the place of our sanctuary.

It is much more hard to give an account of the connexion of these words with the former, than of their sense considered absolutely in themselves. Some would have them the words of the people, reckoning up another vain ground of their confidence, because they had amongst them the *temple of the Lord*, which we know was what they mightily gloried in. Others would have them the words of the prophet owning his and the good Jews' confidence to be only in God, and themselves to worship God not in groves or high places, but only in that place which he had chosen to be worshipped in, even in his sanctuary or temple. Many other conjectures there are, but these two seem to me the most probable.

a ch. 14. 8. t Ps. 73. 27. Is. 1. 28.
13 O LORD, [a]the hope of Israel, [t]all
u See Luke 10. 20.
that forsake thee shall be ashamed, *and* they that depart from me shall be [u]written in the earth, because they have for-
x ch. 2. 13.
saken the LORD, the [x]fountain of living waters.

The hope of Israel; that is, he in whom alone the true Israel of God can hope. *All they that forsake thee shall be ashamed;* those who forsake thy law, and that rule thou hast given them whereby to direct their conversations, first or last will be ashamed of such their disobedience. *And they that depart from me shall be written in the earth;* and those that depart from what I have, as thy prophet, revealed to them as thy will, shall have no portion beyond the earth which they seem so fond of; or their names and memories shall vanish, and perish, and be presently extinct, like words written in dust. *Because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters;* because they have forsaken thee, who art the alone certain relief and comfort of any people, the fountain and original of all that good they can hope for.

y Deut. 10. 21. Is. 109. 1. & 148. 14.
14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for [y]thou *art* my praise.

Most interpreters here understand the prophet speaking in these words to God for himself; he represents himself to God as a person wounded or sick, either with his sense of God's dishonour by the sins of the people, or with their reproaches or threatenings, and beggeth of God to heal him, he being he in whose hand or power it was to heal him, and who could certainly do it. The argument is in those words, *for thou art my praise*, he whom alone I have reason to praise for mercies already received, to whom alone I owe all my good things.

z Is. 5. 19. Ezek. 12. 22. Amos 5. 18. 2 Pet. 3. 4.
15 ¶ Behold, they say unto me, [z]Where *is* the word of the LORD? let it come now.

They say unto me, Where is the word of the Lord? scoffing at me, as if I had threatened them in thy name without any order or direction from thee, as the scoffers mentioned by Peter, 2 Pet. iii. 4, said. *Where is the promise of his coming?* This hath been the practice of all wicked men hardened in their sinful courses, and resolved to go on, to put the evil day far from them, and to scoff at all denunciations of God's judgments, Isa. v. 19; Amos v. 18. *Let it come now;* daring the vengeance of God, and challenging God to damn them, or to execute the vengeance with which he threateneth them.

a ch. 1. 4, &c. † Heb. *after thee.*
16 As for me, [a]I have not hastened from *being* a pastor †to follow thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was *right* before thee.

I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee: that the words contain the prophet's appeal to God upon some reproaches cast upon him by this wicked people, as if he had thrust himself into the prophetical office, is evident, and reasonably well agreed by interpreters; but they are divided about the sense of the word אחש which yet always in Scripture signifies to *make haste*, or *to urge*, or *press;* the sense seemeth to be this: Lord! as I did not seek the office of a prophet, so when thou wert pleased to call me to it, I did not decline to be a pastor after thee. *Neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest;* neither (saith he) have I desired to be a prophet of these sad tidings, those woeful miseries which thou hast made me thy messenger to foretell. *That which came out of my lips was right before thee;* I have spoken nothing but what was right in thy sight, being what thou commandedst me to deliver as from thee, and so I know was right in thy sight.

b ch. 16. 19.
17 Be not a terror unto me: [b]thou *art* my hope in the day of evil.

Though these rebellious wicked men affright and terrify me, yet, Lord, be not thou a terror to me, own and defend me as thy prophet; for thou alone art he in whom I place my hope and trust in a day of trouble.

c Ps. 35. 4. & 40. 14. & 70. 2. d Ps. 25. 2. † Heb. *break them with a double breach.* e ch. 11. 20.
18 [c]Let them be confounded that persecute me, but [d]let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and †[e]destroy them with double destruction.

That is, with abundant destruction. Concerning these prayers of the prophet against his enemies, see the notes on chap. xi. 20.

19 ¶ Thus said the LORD unto me; Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem;

Most think that here begins a new prophecy, and therefore this verse should have began a new chapter. The prophets were often commanded to publish such revelations as they had from God, either at the gates of the city, or the gates of the temple, chap. vii. 2; xix. 2. It is not agreed what this particular gate was at which the kings of Judah were wont most ordinarily to come in and go out, but the prophet was also commanded to publish it in all the gates of Jerusalem, that all might take notice of it.

f ch. 19. 3. & 22. 2.
20 And say unto them, [f]Hear ye the word of the LORD, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates:

The word of the Lord equally concerneth the highest and the lowest, the greatest princes as well as the meanest subjects.

g Num. 15. 32, &c. Neh. 13. 19.
21 Thus saith the LORD; [g]Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring *it* in by the gates of Jerusalem;

Take heed to yourselves; the Hebrew is, *Take heed to your souls*, intimating to us that the sanctification of the sabbath is a great thing, wherein the welfare of our souls is concerned.

22 Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I [h]commanded your fathers.

h Ex. 20. 8. & 23. 12. & 31. 13. Ezek. 20. 12.

This command for the sanctification of the sabbath was given Exod. xx. 8, repeated chap. xxiii. 12; xxxi. 14, 15; Lev. xix. 3; xxiii. 3; Deut. v. 12, 15; Ezek. xx. 12: the bearing of burdens forbidden was such as was for profit; for in some cases it was lawful to carry burdens for the saving the lives of men or beasts, and some learned men justify the poor sick man carrying his bed when he was cured, not only from the command of Christ alone, who could authorize him to it though against the rule of the law, but because he had no further occasion himself to be

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there, and was not obliged by the law of the sabbath to leave his bed behind him, himself going away; but no unnecessary burdens, no trading burdens, might on the sabbath day be either carried out of the gates of the city, or out of the gates of any of their private houses.

i ch. 7. 24, 26. & 11. 10.

23 [i] But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.

The Jews were a very covetous people, and their covetousness as well as their other lusts were temptations to them to profane the Lord's sabbaths, Neh. xiii. 19; Ezek. xx. 21.

24 And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein;

k ch. 22. 4.

25 [k] Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever.

26 And they shall come from the cities

l ch. 32. 44. & 33. 13.

of Judah, and from [l] the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin,

m Zech. 7. 7.

and from [m] the plain, and from the moun-

n Zech. 7. 7.

tains, and from [n] the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offer-

o Ps. 107. 22. & 116. 17.

ings, and incense, and bringing [o] sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the LORD.

The sum of all these three verses is, that if they would sanctify the Lord's sabbath, they should either continue in, or be restored unto, their ancient, civil, and ecclesiastical order, they should have kings and princes in their former order and splendour, and men should come from all parts of the country bringing their usual sacrifices and offerings to the temple, and those of all sorts. Some think this promise is to be understood synecdochically, one principal part of the law of God, and such a one as was in their power to obey, being put for the whole law of God. Those who desire to be satisfied in the niceties as to the terms and places here mentioned, may find satisfaction in the English Annotations upon this verse. The general sense is no more than that both their city and their temple, their civil and ecclesiastical state, should continue and flourish in that order wherein it was.

27 But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the

p ch. 21. 14. & 49. 27. Lam. 4. 11. Amos 1. 4, 7, 10, 12. & 2. 2, 5. q 2 Kings 25. 9. ch. 52. 13.

gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then [p] will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, [q] and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

A threatening quite contrary to the former promise, upon their acting contrary to the duty to which that promise was annexed. God would destroy their city; it should be burned with fire, and the highest and noblest structures should be burned; and though the hand of the enemy should do this, yet God should order them to do it, so as it should be a fire of his kindling, and therefore not like to be quenched, till it had effected that thing for which God so kindled it.

CHAP. XVIII.

By the parable of a potter God's absolute power in disposing of nations is set forth, 1—10. *Judah's unparalleled revolt, and her judgments,* 11—17. *The prophet prayeth against his conspirators,* 18—23.

THE word which came to Jeremiah cir. 605.
from the LORD, saying,

2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

It is likely there was but one *potter* near the place, or at least that there was one more noted and eminent than the rest, to whose house the Lord here sendeth the prophet, intending there further to tell him his mind what he would have him publish as his mind and will to this people.

3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the ‖ wheels.

‖ Or, *frames*, or, *seats*.

Jeremiah yields a present and free obedience to the command of God, though he did not know God's meaning in it, and findeth the potter at work upon *wheels* or *frames* which he formed his clay upon, to bring it into that form which he desired. For the true form of those frames or instruments it is hard to assert any thing, such kind of instruments differing not only according to several countries, but according to the several fancies of workmen, getting frames or engines made fitted to their own fancies and purposes.

4 And the vessel ‖ that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he † made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*.

‖ Or, *that he made was marred, as clay in the hand of the potter.* † Heb. *returned and made.*

That which we read *of clay* may be read, (as our margin tells us,) *as clay;* that is, *while it was yet clay* it was spoiled in the potter's hand, so as he did not think fit to go on with his design as to the form of the vessel, but made it into another form, such as he liked best.

5 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

6 O house of Israel, [a] cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, [b] as the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

a Is. 45. 9. Wis. 15. 7. Rom. 9. 20, 21. b Is. 64. 8.

God now expoundeth to the prophet his design in bidding him go to the potter's house, it was to instruct or confirm him in the power that he had over his creatures. For, saith he, as is the clay to the potter, so is the house of Israel (and indeed so are all the sons and daughters of men) unto God; God hath the same power over them that a potter hath over the clay, and a greater right to do what he pleaseth with them, than any potter hath relating to the clay; the clay is but the potter's purchase, not his creature, but man is God's creature. God, by his prophet Isaiah, made use of the same similitude, Isa. xlv. 9. So doth the apostle, Rom. ix. 20. That God hath an absolute sovereign power to do what he pleaseth with the work of his hands, can be denied by no men of sense, whether God useth this his sovereignty in the eternal punishment of sinners, that is another thing; he hath a sovereign power, but he acteth as a just judge, rendering to every man according to his works.

7 *At what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to [c] pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy *it*:

c ch. 1. 10.

God thus speaketh concerning nations and kingdoms more immediately in his word, or more mediately by his prophets and ministers; he told Jeremiah, chap. i. 10, that he had *set him over nations, to root out, and to pull down.*

8 [d] If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, [e] I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

d Ezek. 18. 21. & 33. 11. e ch. 26. 3. Jonah 3. 10.

If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil; if that nation leaveth off those sinful courses which I have by my prophets threatened with judgments; *I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them;* I will also turn from the methods of my severe providence which I had resolved in case of their impenitency

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to proceed in against them. There is a difference betwixt repentance in man, and repentance as it is attributed to God; repentance in man must be, not only a change in action, but a change of heart; repentance as attributed to God never signifieth a change of heart, or purpose, or counsels, but only a change in action, an alteration of the course of his providence. Hence God in Scripture is said to *repent*, as in this text, and Jonah iii. 10. And it is also said of him, that he is not *as man, that he should lie or repent*, Numb. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29. God never changeth his counsels or purposes, though he often varieth his actions of providence, according to the behaviours of his creatures.

9 And *at what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it*:

10 If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

Speaking, ver. 9, and *repenting*, ver. 10, must be understood in the same sense as in the two former verses. The reason of this is, because in all God's threatenings and promises of this nature there is a condition either expressed or understood. God's threatenings of evil must be understood with this condition, Unless men and women repent and turn from their evil ways; and his promises of good must be understood with this condition, If those to whom they are made be a willing and obedient people, and keep in the way of the Lord's statutes.

11 ¶ Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: [f]return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.

[f] 2 Kings 17. 13. ch. 7. 3. & 25. 5. & 26. 13. & 35. 15.

The Lord fixeth a particular application to the more general doctrine which he had before delivered. God had told this people, that though he had by his prophet denounced his wrath and anger, and threatened to pluck them up and destroy them, yet if they turned from their sinful courses, he would show mercy to them, and alter the course of his providence. Now he tells them that this was their case, God had a work upon the wheel against them, and was framing evil against them, and bringing ruin upon them; therefore it was their wisdom now to return from their evil ways, and to make their doings good. Those who think that these exhortations are vain, if man hath not a power in himself to turn from his evil way, ought to consider that none denieth that man hath a power in himself, by virtue of that common grace of God which he denieth to no man, to turn from such evil courses as were before mentioned, viz. not to carry out burdens upon the sabbath day, not to bow down to and worship idols, but to worship the true and living God according to the prescription of his word. In short, there is no man but hath a power to do much more than he doth do, and so much as may serve to avert temporal judgment; and although no man without special grace, beyond the outward means of grace, hath a power to do whatsoever God requireth in order to his salvation, yet he hath a power to do so much, as if he doth, no instance can be given of any to whom, so doing, God denied his special grace, enabling him to do whatsoever God requireth of him in order to eternal life.

12 And they said, [g]There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

[g] ch. 2. 25.

There is no hope of us, thou dost but labour in vain in talking to us; for we are resolved to run on in our former race. It cannot be imagined that they should call the imaginations of their own hearts evil, unless it were in derision. The sum of what they said was this: Jeremiah, thou hadst as good say or do nothing as talk to us, we are resolved upon our course, and if thou callest our hearts *evil*, we cannot help that; according to the purposes, counsels, and thoughts of those our evil hearts we are resolved to steer our courses, we will not be guided by thee.

13 Therefore thus saith the LORD; [h]Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done [i]a very horrible thing.

[h] ch. 2. 10. 1 Cor. 5. 1. [i] ch. 5. 30.

God was moved at this desperate obstinacy and hardness of this people's hearts, he appeals to the world whether ever any heathens behaved themselves so towards their idols, which were no gods, as this people had behaved themselves towards him. He calls Israel a *virgin*; it is a term given to Zidon, Isa. xxiii. 12, and to Babylon, Isa. xlvii. 1. The horrible thing which they had done was their forsaking God, their God, a thing not usual amongst the heathens, as God tells them, chap. ii. 11.

14 Will *a man* leave ‖the snow of Lebanon *which cometh* from the rock of the field? *or* shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?

‖ Or, *my fields for a rock, or for the snow of Lebanon? shall the running waters be forsaken for the strange cold waters?*

Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? The margins of our Bibles will let us know that there is some variety in the opinions of the most learned interpreters as to the sense of these words. The general sense is plain and obvious, that it is a foolish thing for men to forsake God, who is the fountain of all good and refreshment, and what men do not use to do with reference to poor creature comforts, not to be named with God. But for the grammatical sense of the words, it is not so obvious. The vulgar Latin translates them, *Shall the snow of Lebanon fail from the rock of the field?* The Septuagint, *Shall the dugs fail from the rocks?* or, *the snow from Lebanon?* The Syriac version followeth them. The Arabic version translateth it, *Should the snow fail from the mountain of breasts, and from Lebanon?* The Chaldee paraphrast thus glosseth, *Behold, as it cannot be that the snow water should fail from Lebanon.* Pagnine seems to make *Lebanon* the nominative case, and renders the sense thus, *Shall Lebanon leave the snow from the rock of the field?* Our translators supply these words, *a man*, and so make that the nominative case, and make *Lebanon* the genitive case. *Lebanon* was a mountainous place, in which were rocks; it had also fruitful valleys; snow fell upon those rocks, and upon a thaw ran down into the lower places, and was grateful to them, as it moistened them, and made them more fruitful. *Or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?* The latter part of the verse seems as hard. Pagnine translates them, *Shall other cold flowing waters be forsaken?* The vulgar Latin, Or *can the other cold flowing waters be plucked up?* The LXX. and the Syriac, Or *shall the water fail, violently snatched up or taken away with the wind?* The Arabic, Or *should the foreign cool waters desist?* The Chaldee paraphrast glosseth, *So the rain waters that come down*, and *the waters of the fountain that spring, shall not fail.* In this great variety, it is very hard certainly to assert the particular sense of these phrases, the knowledge of which depends upon some affections or customs of those places, which we are not so well acquainted with. The next verse is the best guide we have, where the sin laid to the charge of this people is *their forsaking God*; which sin is here aggravated by this topic, That reason teacheth men not to forsake a greater good for a lesser, though that greater good were but a poor creature comfort, not to be compared with God. This is the general sense, scope, and sum of this verse; so as we shall not need be very solicitous to be able to assert the particular grammatical sense.

15 Because my people hath forgotten [k]me, they have burned incense to [l]vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways *from* the [m]ancient paths, to walk in paths, *in* a way not cast up;

[k] ch. 2. 13. 32. & 3. 21. & 13. 25. & 17. 13. [l] ch. 10. 15. & 16. 19. [m] ch. 6. 16.

Forgotten and *forsaken* are much the same thing, differing only as the cause and the effect; for if men remembered God as they ought to do, they would not forsake him. By *vanity* he means *idols*; which are called *vanity*, not only because they are in themselves *nothing* of what they are pretended to be, and because the worshipping of them

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is a high degree of sin, which is often called *vanity* in Scripture, but because the service of them is of no use nor profit, or advantage; and any expectations from them are idle and vain, for which there is no ground at all. Whether the false prophets or the idols are here said to *cause them to stumble* by receding from the *ancient paths* is uncertain. The words may either be translated *paths of eternity*, or paths of *antiquity*; the most and best translate it as we do. *Quod verum primum*, The ways of truth are the most *ancient ways*; the ways wherein Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the ancient patriarchs did walk. *To walk in paths*, or *in a way not cast up*, not fitting for God's people to walk in. Prov. xv. 19, *The way of the righteous* is said to be a way *made plain*, Heb. *raised up as a causey*. Wicked men, in opposition to these ways, are said to walk *in a way not cast up*.

n ch. 19. 8. & 49. 13. & 50. 13. o 1 Kin. 9. 8. Lam. 2. 15. Mic. 6. 16.

16 To make their land [n]desolate, *and* a perpetual [o]hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head.

Not that this was *finis operantis*, their end which they aimed at, none wisheth ill or doth any thing designedly to bring evil upon himself; but it was *finis operis*, the end these courses would certainly issue in, they would bring the land of Judah to desolations, and to be a reproach; so as strangers that were wont to admire at the prosperity of this people above any other people should stand *astonished*, and wag their heads at them in scorn and derision.

p ch. 13. 24. q Ps. 48. 7. r See ch. 2. 27.

17 [p]I will scatter them [q]as with an east wind before the enemy; [r]I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

The east wind is (or was at least in those parts) the fiercest wind. As the east wind scatters the chaff, so, saith God, I will scatter them. And when they shall be in great calamity and misery, I will not hearken to them, I will not turn my face to them, or show them my face; but I will turn my back upon them, I will not regard them crying, nor hear their prayers.

s ch. 11. 19. t Lev. 10. 11. Mal. 2. 7. John 7. 48, 49.

18 ¶ Then said they, [s]Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; [t]for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him ‖with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

‖ Or, *for the tongue.*

This faithful dealing of the prophet with them did only enrage them (as is usual) against the prophet; they plot against the prophet, how to be revenged on him, because he would cross their humours, and would not prophesy as they would have had him. *For the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet;* we have the church on our side; the *regular priests* and the prophets, they know God's mind as well as he; for there is a promise that *the law shall not perish from the priest, nor the word from the prophet;* the priests and prophets tell us other things than this Jeremiah doth. *Let us smite him with the tongue*, expose him by railing on him, telling lies about concerning him, representing him to be what we know the people hate, abusing him to his face, informing against him; or, *in the tongue*, let us silence him, command him to speak no more; or, *for his tongue*, for prophesying at this rate; and for his *words*, let us not value them at a rush, nor at all regard them.

19 Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me.

The several following verses, to the end of this chapter, contain the prophet's prayer by way of appeal to God against these wicked men: Lord, (saith he,) though they are resolved to take no heed to my words, yet do thou give heed to them, and do thou take notice of those men that contend with me. Take notice of what they say, not to confirm, but to cross their desires, and to be revenged on them for them.

u Ps. 109. 4, 5. x Ps. 35. 7. & 57. 6. ver. 22.

20 [u]Shall evil be recompensed for good? for [x]they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, *and* to turn away thy wrath from them.

Shall evil be recompensed for good? to requite *good for evil* is *divine*, God maketh his sun to shine, and his rain to fall, upon the just and unjust; to requite *evil for evil*, or *good for good*, is but *human*, what the nature of reasonable men prompt them to; but to requite *evil for good* is *diabolical*, and the character of those that are the children of the evil one. *For they have digged a pit for my soul;* Lord, saith the prophet, these men have done thus, they have laid snares for my life; though thou knowest that as a prophet I stood before thee, both preaching and praying for their good. Their wrath is kindled to a great height against me, and thou knowest my business was, both in my preachings to them, and prayers for them, *to turn away thy wrath from them.* Lord, *remember* this, both for good to me, and for vengeance upon them.

y Ps. 109. 9, 10. † Heb. *pour them out.*

21 Therefore [y]deliver up their children to the famine, and †pour out their *blood* by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and *be* widows; and let their men be put to death; *let* their young men *be* slain by the sword in battle.

Deliver up their children to the famine; a dreadful imprecation; we meet with more of the same nature, chap. xi. 20; xv. 15; xvii. 18. We find also several such imprecation in the Psalms, Psal. xxxv. 4; xl. 14; lxix. 22—25, 27, 28; cix. 6—10, &c. Hence a question is raised, whether it be lawful for God's servants to pray for evil against their enemies. That which makes the doubt is, Christ's command to us to *pray for them that persecute us*, Matt. v. 43, 44, his own example, and Stephen's, Acts vii. 60. See the notes upon the aforementioned texts. It is doubtless our duty to pray for the *conversion*, *forgiveness*, and *eternal salvation* of our worst enemies; so Christ prayed, and Stephen, but neither of them prayed for their outward prosperity in their persecution and rage; and without doubt we may pray against God's enemies, that God would tie their hands, weaken their power, confound their devices. For such other particulars as are mentioned in this verse, and the beginning of the following verse, and such as David mentions, Psal. lxix., we must know they were both prophets, and did but pray to God to do that thing which God had revealed to them he would do.

22 Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for [z]they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet.

z ver. 20.

That is, Let the enemy break into their houses, which are, in an ordinary course of providence, men's castles and sanctuaries, and cause such shrieks as use to be heard in such cases, for their malicious seeking my life by all secret practices.

† Heb. *for death.* a Ps. 35. 4. & 109. 14. ch. 11. 20. & 15. 15.

23 Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against me †to slay *me:* [a]forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight, but let them be overthrown before thee; deal *thus* with them in the time of thine anger.

Lord, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay me; Lord, thou knowest I do not charge them falsely, though their counsels have been secret against my life. *Forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight. Object.* Will some say, Doth Jeremiah here pray for the eternal damnation of his adversaries? Is this lawful? *Solut.* I do not think this is to be granted lawful, being so highly against charity; nor that Jeremiah in this is to be excused as a prophet, for even prophets had no such revelations; but I take these phrases to be expounded by the next words, *let them be overthrown before thee;* and that all which the prophet prayeth for is God's showing some temporal displeasure and vengeance against them. For *forgiving*, and *not forgiving sin*, doth not always in holy writ signify the discharging or not discharging the persons

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from the obligation to eternal death, under which sin layeth them; but sometimes the discharging or not discharging of them from the punishments in this life, to which sin doth expose the sinner; and all Jeremiah's meaning is, that however it should please God to deal with these wicked men as to their eternal state, yet he would so far not forgive, not blot out, their sins, as that he would set some mark of his vengeance on them in this life for their treachery and ingratitude to him. Whether we in it consider Jeremiah as an ordinary suppliant in this cause, praying in faith, or as a prophet, foreknowing what God would do, it ought to lay a law upon all to take heed of being mischievous and treacherous to others. It is seldom but God, before they die, repays such men into their own bosom, especially if it be against any who are God's ministers or people; and that for their speaking to or doing before them the will of God: it is a sin seldom escapes without a temporal vengeance; and if such men be saved at last, it will be as through fire. God will mind them that he hath said, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*, 1 Chron. xvi. 22; Psal. cv. 15.

CHAP. XIX.

Under the type of breaking a potter's vessel is foreshown the desolation of the Jews for their sins committed in the valley of Hinnom and elsewhere.

cir. 606. THUS saith the LORD, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and *take* of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests;

Critics dispute the figure and fashion of this *bottle*; (see the English Annotations, and Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis;) but that is not much material, for God's design was only to show the *fragility* of this people, how easily he could break them, and how certainly he would break them in pieces. For the more public notice of this typical action, Jeremiah is commanded to take for witnesses some of the gravest *of the people and of the priests*; whether they were members of the Sanhedrim (which was made up of these two sorts) or not, the Scripture saith not.

a Josh. 15. 8. 2 Kings 23. 10. ch. 7. 31.

2 And go forth unto [a]the valley of the son of Hinnom, which *is* by the entry of

+ Heb. *the sun gate.*

[+]the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee,

Go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom: we shall hereafter hear why God commanded Jeremiah to go thither, rather than to another place, to break this earthen pot. This valley was a place very near unto Jerusalem, of which one Hinnom was owner in Joshua's time, Josh. xv. 8; xviii. 16. The valley is in Scripture sometimes called *Ge-hinnom*, from whence came the Greek word *Gehenna*, used by our Saviour for *hell*, Matt. v. 22, εἰς τὴν γέενναν τοῦ πυρός, because of the hellish torments they there put their children to when they sacrificed them, and of the hellish cries they made. *The east gate*; in the Hebrew it is, *the sun gate*, supposed to be so called, because the sun riseth in the east. This valley is said to have lain very near to this gate; thither Jeremiah is commanded to go, and there to proclaim the following words.

b ch. 17. 20.

3 [b]And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will

c 1 Sam. 3. 11. 2 Kings 21. 12.

bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall [c]tingle.

That is, a very great evil; it is a Hebrew way of expression, which we also find 1 Sam. iii. 11; 2 Kings xxi. 12. As a very great glaring light affects our eyes, and blindeth them, so a very great sound affecteth the ear, and makes it tingle, and for some time deaf. This God commandeth the prophet to proclaim, as particularly directed to all, both high and low, as well the *kings of Judah* as the *inhabitants of Jerusalem.*

d Deut. 28. 20. Is. 65. 11.

4 Because they [d]have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with [e]the blood of innocents;

ch. 2. 13, 17, 19. & 15. 6. & 17. 13.

e 2 Kings 21. 16. ch. 2. 34.

Because they have forsaken me; the laws, statutes, and ordinances which God had given them, to direct them both in their religious behaviour towards him, and in their civil conversations. *Have estranged this place*; either this city, or this temple, (which stood very nigh to this valley,) or this particular valley, which they had turned to a use quite contrary to the end for which God gave it them; for in it they had paid a religious homage to idols, strange idols, which their fathers knew not, and had filled that place with the blood of such as had not deserved death, either innocent men, or children, that they had there sacrificed to idols; of which he afterward speaketh more particularly.

5 [f]They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings unto Baal, [g]which I commanded not, nor spake *it*, neither came *it* into my mind:

f ch. 7. 31. 32. & 32. 35.

g Lev. 18. 21.

This and the following verse contain another great sin of this people, with the punishment which God proportioneth to it. The sin in the general was idolatry, but a most barbarous species of it, mentioned also chap. vii. 31; xxxii. 35, where it is said they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire to Molech; the place where they did it is called *Tophet*, ver. 6, of which also mention is made Isa. xxx. 33; chap. vii. 31—33. For the opening of this text, as also of those other texts that mention this idolatry, we must open what is meant by *Baal*, *Moloch*, *Tophet*, and *the valley of the son of Hinnom*. There is no doubt but Baal and Molech, or Moloch, signify the same thing; *Baal* signifieth a *lord*, *Molech* a *king*. They ordinarily called their idols by these names; as also *Malcham*, Zeph. i. 5; upon which account God would not be called *Baal*, Hos. ii. 16, though he was called *Jehovah*, *Elohim*, and *Adonai*, all which signified *lord*, as *Baal* did. Both Baal and Molech seem common names to all idols. There was more than one idol in the house of Baal, 2 Kings x. 26. The Ammonites called their principal idol *Milcom* and *Molech*, as appears from 1 Kings xi. 5; 2 Kings xxiii. 13. To this idol they sacrificed their children. It was a very ancient idolatry, as appeareth by the very early law of God against it, Lev. xx. 3—5. Some say it was derived from Saturn, whom they make contemporary with Deborah and Barak, who, to appease the gods in an imminent danger, sacrificed his son. Others say it began in the time of Serug, the father of Nahor, of whom we read Gen. xi. 20, and that it had its original from the devil, speaking out of the belly of some dead persons, commanding this homage, possibly in imitation of God, who, Gen. xxii. 2, to try Abraham's obedience, commanded him to offer up Isaac upon the Mount Moriah. We must know there were other sacrifices they offered to Baal: they *burnt incense to Baal*, 2 Kings xxiii. 5; *they offered sacrifices and burnt-offerings of beasts*, 1 Kings xviii. 26; 2 Kings x. 24; only in some extraordinary straits, to show their great obedience to the devil, they offered their children. What creature they worshipped under this name is not certain, but very probably it was the *sun*, from 2 Kings xxiii. 5, or some superior being, which they owned as their supreme lord and king, which they, some of them, mistook the *sun*, *moon*, and *stars* to be; they being glorious beings removed out of men's knowledge, so as they had not sufficient means to understand their natures, might, considering their motions, and vast influence they had upon all other creatures, mistake them for animate and supreme beings, to which as they paid other homages, (such as swearing by them, Zeph. i. 5, burning incense, offering beasts, praying to them,) so in imitation of the heathens, and in a pretence of high devotion and homage in some special cases and straits, they offered their children. Some think they only made them go *through the fire*, but did not burn them; and indeed so most of the scriptures express this abominable idolatry; but some scriptures speak it plain enough, that they actually burnt

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them: the psalmist, Psal. cvi. 37, saith, *They shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood,* which it could not have been by their children's merely passing through the fire; and it is laid to their charge, Ezek. xvi. 20, 21, *Thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and those hast thou sacrificed to them to be devoured.—That thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them.* We read of the idolatry of Jeroboam, who worshipped the true God, but by calves set up at Dan and Beth-el. Ahab exceeded this, bringing in the terminative worship of the creatures, worshipping the *sun, moon,* and *stars,* under the name of *Baal.* But the first in Judah, of whom we read that he made *his son to pass through the fire,* was Ahaz, the father of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xvi. 3. He was followed by his grandchild Manasseh, 2 Kings xxi. 6. Josiah, the good son of a bad father, *defiled* the place where this abominable idolatry was committed, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. The place where they committed this horrible abomination was the valley of the son of Hinnom, very near the city, and the particular place was called Tophet. There was a high place built for the idol, and many think that the name *Tophet* ariseth from their use of a *drum* or *tabret,* with which, while the poor children were burning, they made great noises to drown the sound of the children's yellings; though others think the word *Tophet* originally signifies hell, or the place of the damned, of which this place, both for the torments and roarings in it, was a lively representation. Now of this barbarous and horrible idolatry God saith, *he commanded them not, neither came it into his mind.* It was so far from it, that God had most severely forbid it, Lev. xx. 2—5, making it a capital crime for any to do it, and for any to conceal others that they knew did it; so that here is a *meiosis,* less spoken than was true in the case; but possibly God's expressing a thing of this nature, being an error in his worship, under these soft terms, *I commanded them not, neither did it come into my mind,* giveth no small ground to considerate men to judge that we must have a command from God, though not for every *individual act of our worship,* nor for every circumstance of human action which we do in his worship, yet for every specifical religious act, and for any thing whereby we pay a homage to God; it being indeed the most reasonable thing imaginable, that God should have the same privilege which every prince or great man amongst men claimeth as his right, to prescribe the acts, modes, and methods for his own homage.

6 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place shall no
h Josh. 15. 8. more be called Tophet, nor [h]The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter.

For this God, by his prophet, threateneth that this place, anciently, in Joshua's time, called *The valley of the son of Hinnom,* and more lately *Tophet,* from the noise of drums and tabrets there, whilst children were burning, should have a new name, and be called *The valley of slaughter,* from the multitude of dead bodies which upon the taking of the city should be slain and thrown into this valley. It was expounded chap. vii. 32, 33, *For they shall bury in Tophet till there be no place; and the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth, and none shall fray them away.*

7 And I will make void the counsel of
i Lev. 26. 17. Deut. 28. 25. Judah and Jerusalem in this place; [i]and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their
k Ps. 79. 2. ch. 7. 33. & 16. 4. & 34. 20. [k]carcases will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

In this place, amongst others, I will make void all the counsels that the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem have taken to escape my righteous judgments; I will frustrate all their little arts and designs to avoid the dint of my judgments; I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, so as there shall be no way of escape for them.

8 And I will make this city [l]desolate, l ch. 18. 16. & 49. 17. & 50. 13.
and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof.

This is no more than we met with before, chap. xviii. 16, and shall again meet with. Men's honour and reputation is ordinarily very dear to them, it was especially to the Jews, who valued themselves much upon the reputation their city and their temple had, and the security they promised themselves from their right in the holy city and land. God tells them he will make them as much a scorn and reproach as ever they were for an honour or praise; as great a wonderment for the wrath and vengeance he would execute upon them, as they had been in their flourishing state for the mercies which he bestowed upon them.

9 And I will cause them to eat the
m Lev. 26. 29. Deut. 28. 53. Is. 9. 20. Lam. 4. 10. [m]flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them.

These were the miserable effects or consequents of the famine with which God had often before threatened them, the just fulfilling of God's word threatened Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 53, and the accomplishment of which our prophet hath recorded, Lam. iv. 10.

10 [n]Then shalt thou break the bottle
n So ch. 51 63, 64. in the sight of the men that go with thee,

The earthen bottle, which, ver. 1, he was commanded to carry with him into the valley of the son of Hinnom, (where he now was,) in the sight of the ancients of the priests, and of the people, the men who there were appointed to go with the prophet. This symbolical or sacramental teaching by signs was much in use by the prophets.

11 And shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; [o]Even so will I
o Ps. 2. 9. Is. 30. 14. Lam. 4. 2. break this people and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot
† Heb. *be healed.* †be made whole again: and they shall
p ch. 7. 32. [p]bury *them* in Tophet, till *there be* no place to bury.

The Lord of hosts; a name ordinarily given to God, here very properly, to let them know that he said nothing with his lips but what he had power by his hand to accomplish, being the Captain-general of all the armies of his creatures. God, by ordering the prophet to carry no other vessel but one of *earth,* had a design, upon the breaking of it, not only to show them that he would bruise, wound, or endamage them greatly, but so destroy them, as there should be no present remedy. If a vessel of brass, silver, gold, &c. be broken, it may be mended, but an earthen vessel, if broken, cannot be made whole. See the like Isa. xxx. 14. He tells them that this *Tophet,* which they had made a place of barbarous slaughter for the children, killed for idolatrous sacrifices, should continue for a slaughter-house, but of another nature, even for them that had committed such wickedness in it, who should be slain there in such plenty, that they should want ground to bury dead carcasses in.

12 Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and *even* make this city as Tophet:

That is, a place of slaughter and burials, or a base, ignominious place, or where the noise of drums, and trumpets, and cryings, and yellings shall be heard, as used to be in Tophet

13 And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled [q]as the place of Tophet, be-
q 2 Kings 23. 10. cause of all the houses upon whose
r 2 Kings 23. 12. ch. 32. 29. Zeph. 1. 5. s ch. 7. 18. [r]roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and [s]have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

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Under the Judaic law, persons and places were defiled by touching dead bodies, or any unclean, filthy thing: God threateneth in this sense to defile Tophet, as it was said before it should be filled with dead bodies which should be buried or lie unburied there. He showeth that the aforementioned judgment of filling places with dead bodies should not be restrained to Tophet in the valley of Hinnom, but reach to the dwelling-houses in Jerusalem, both their kings' houses, and the meaner subjects; the provoking cause of which should be their idolatry, which they had also brought into their dwelling-houses, for they having flat roofs, had upon them, though not burnt children in sacrifice to idols, yet poured out drink-offerings to the sun, moon, and stars, and to other idols.

14 Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to pro-
t See 2 Chro. 20. 5. phesy; and he stood in t the court of the LORD'S house; and said to all the people,

Jeremiah had now despatched the errand upon which God had sent him to Tophet; coming back by God's direction, he stands in the court, which was common to all people, where the most might hear.

15 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it,
u ch. 7. 26. & 17. 23. because u they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

He assureth the people from God that he would most certainly justify all his words, and bring to pass all his threats against that city, and that they must thank themselves for it, for hardening their heart, so as all that he had said made no impression upon them, nor found any place with them.

CHAP. XX.

Pashur, smiting Jeremiah for this prophecy, receiveth a new name, and a fearful doom, 1—6. *Jeremiah's impatience under their treachery and contempt,* 7—10. *He rejoiceth in hope of vengeance,* 11—13. *Curseth his birth,* 14—18.

cir. 606. NOW Pashur the son of a Immer the
a 1 Chron. 24. 14. priest, who *was* also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things.

The course of *Immer* was the sixteenth course of the priests, as we read in 1 Chron. xxiv. 14. *Pashur* was his son, that is, descended from him through many generations. It is neither much material for us to know, nor very easy to determine, in what sense he is called the *chief governor of the temple*, whether he was *deputy* to the high priest, or the head of his course, which at that time waited in the temple, or had some place as *captain of the temple*, to take notice of any disorders should be committed there, contrary to the law. Certain it is he was no high priest, for then he could not have been one of the course of *Immer*. *Heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things;* either he heard Jeremiah himself, (which is most probable,) or somebody told him what Jeremiah had prophesied in the temple, which was within his charge and jurisdiction.

2 Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that *were* in the high gate of Benjamin, which *was* by the house of the LORD.

Then Pashur smote Jeremiah; it is not said how he struck him, though some think it most probable that it was with his *fist*, as the false prophet struck Micaiah, 1 Kings xxii. 24. We are as uncertain what is here meant by *stocks*, whether such an engine as is in use amongst us to punish offenders, which we call by that name; or, as others, an engine like our pillory, where malefactors are fastened by the necks; or, as others, with three holes, one for the neck of the offender, one for each hand; or whether merely a prison, where he was kept all night a prisoner; the Hebrew word will not determine us further than that it was a place of restraint, and where that will not determine, other conjectures are as uncertain as needless. There is as much uncertainty as to the place where this prison or these *stocks* were; we are told it was near the temple, and *in the high gate of Benjamin;* but whether this was a gate belonging to the temple that opened toward that part of the country which was the lot of Benjamin, or a gate of the city that opened that way, whether in the inner wall or outer wall, whether called the high gate, because nearer the temple, or upon some other account, are nice and curious speculations, the determination of which is of no moment for us to know.

3 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out
‖ That is, *fear round about*, Ps. 31. 13. ver. 10. ch. 6. 25. & 46. 5. & 49. 29. of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name Pashur, but ‖ Magor-missabib.

Possibly by this time the mad-brained priest thought he had done more than he could justify by law, for if he were a false prophet, the judgment of him belonged not to him, but to the sanhedrim; he had nothing to do to smite him. Possibly he brought him forth in order to his bringing him before the sanhedrim; but it doth not appear that he did so, though Jeremiah's following words to him might reasonably be thought provocative enough, if he had designed any formal charge against him. He had it seemeth no more to say to Jeremiah, but Jeremiah (to whom God had appeared in the prison that night, while he was separated from communion with men, and revealed to him what end this hot-headed priest should come to) had something to say to him. God's meaning was, not that he should by men be no longer called *Pashur*, (for doubtless after this he was called by the same name he had before,) but his state and condition should not answer the name *Pashur*, which signifies, as some say, a noble, flourishing priest; or, as others, one who by his authority maketh others to tremble; but *Magor-missabib*, that is, *fear and terror on all sides*.

4 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold *it:* and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword.

God now expoundeth the name of *Magor-missabib*, threatening to fill this wicked priest with terrors, that he and all his friends should be affrighted, reflecting upon his most miserable state and condition; and his friends, from whom he might possibly expect some relief, should be as miserable as he; and it should be an addition to his misery, that his eyes should see it, and see his whole country ruined, some being slain by the sword of the king of Babylon, others by him carried into captivity.

5 Moreover I b will deliver all the
b 2 Kings 20. 17. & 24. 12.—16. & 25. 13. &c. ch. 3. 24. strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon.

This is but the repetition of what God had often threatened, viz. the perfect ruin of Jerusalem, and the land of Judah. *All the strength of this city;* their military men, or rather their riches. *And all the labours thereof;* and all the fruit of their labours. *And all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the king of Judah;* and whatsoever was valuable in their eyes, or in the eyes of the greatest persons amongst them. The Babylonians should make a spoil and a prey of them all.

6 And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou
c ch. 14. 13, 14. & 28. 15 & 29. 21. hast c prophesied lies.

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Those that teach others to disobey the commandments of God seldom escape that vengeance which cometh upon them who are seduced by them. *Pashur* was one whose office it was to have taught others the fear of the Lord, and obedience to his will; he teacheth them what was false, and is not patient to hear the will of God. Jeremiah tells him he should feel the truth of it, for he himself should be one of those who should be carried into captivity, and should die there, out of his own country, and be buried there, and this should be the portion of all his friends, whom he had seduced by his false and lying prophecies.

7 ¶ O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was ‖deceived: [d]thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: [e]I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.

‖ Or, *enticed.*
[d] ch. 1. 6, 7.
[e] Lam. 3. 14.

The following part of the chapter to the end of it containeth a complaint or prayer of the prophet unto God, made (as some think) during his imprisonment by Pashur, but the certain time is not known. Our translators here might have translated the word מיתני more favourably than *thou hast deceived me.* It might have been, *thou hast persuaded me*, or, thou hast allured or enticed me, as it is translated, Judg. xiv. 15; 1 Kings xxii. 21, 22; Exod. xxii. 16; Prov. i. 10; xvi. 29; Psal. lxxviii. 36. The word signifies no more than by words to remove a man from his own opinion. That is, doubtless, the sense here: Lord, I was not fond of this employment as a *prophet*, by thy words I was removed from my own opinion of myself; which might be spoken by the prophet without any reflection upon God; it only signifieth his undertaking the office of a prophet at God's command, not out of any ambition of his own. *Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed;* but thou prevailedst against me. Jeremiah at first excused himself to God, as we read, chap. i. 6; he said *Ah, Lord God! behold, I am a child, and cannot speak;* but the Lord prevailed upon him, replying, ver. 7, *Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.* Ver. 9, *The Lord put forth his hand, and touched his mouth, and said, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.* This is all that is here meant by *deceiving*, viz. God's overruling of him contrary to his own inclinations. *I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me;* he complaineth that now he was in this office every one mocked him and derided him, and that for the faithful discharge of that office to which God had called him.

8 For since I spake, I cried out, [f]I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily.

[f] ch. 6. 7.

For since I spake, I cried out: if the particle be translated *since*, as we translate it, the meaning is, Since I first began to be a prophet, I have faithfully discharged my prophetical office, and that with some warmth and zeal. *I cried violence and spoil:* some understand it of the violence which he himself experienced: others understand it of those acts of injustice and violence which were found amongst the people; he cried out against them: others understand it as a denunciation of judgment; he prophesied that violence and spoil was coming upon them. *Because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily;* because of that scorn and derision with which they treated him. But others think that it were better translated *surely* than *because*, as it is in many texts, Isa. lx. 9; lxiii. 16, &c. It is not much material which way we translate it, for it appeareth, from 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, that this people's *mocking of God's messengers, despising his words, and misusing his prophets*, was one great cause of the wrath of God coming upon them; and it is certain that Jeremiah was made such a *scorn* and *derision to them.*

9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But *his word* was in mine heart as a [g]burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and [h]I could not *stay.*

[g] Job 32. 18, 19. Psa. 39. 3.
[h] Job 32. 18. Acts 18. 5.

Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name: this daily scorn and reproach which the prophet saw himself exposed unto, for preaching against the sin and wickedness of the people, was a sore temptation upon him to lay down his employment as a prophet. He did not speak this openly, but he spake it in his heart, he had (as he confesseth) many such thoughts in his breast. But he saith he was not able to do what he thought to do, he found in his heart a constraint to go on, that when a revelation came at any time from God unto him, it was like a fire in his bones, which he must quench by uttering what God had revealed to him.

10 ¶ [i]For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, *say they*, and we will report it. †[k]All my familiars watched for my halting, *saying*, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on ‖him.

[i] Ps. 31. 13.
† Heb. *Every man of my peace.*
[k] Job 19. 19. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 13, 14. Luke 11. 53, 54.

The prophet here rendereth a reason why he thought of giving over his work as a prophet, his ears were continually filled with the obloquies and reproaches of such as reproached him, and besides he was afraid on all hands, there were so many traps laid for him, so many devices devised against him. They did not only take all advantages against him, but they sought advantages and invited others to raise up false stories of him. They said to men like themselves, Raise but you the report, we will blow it abroad. *All my familiars watched for my halting;* not only strangers, but those that I might have expected the greatest kindness from, those that pretended most courteously, watched for opportunities to do me mischief, and lay in wait for my halting. *Saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him;* desiring nothing more than that I might be enticed to speak or do something which they might make matter of a colourable accusation. *And we shall take our revenge on him;* that so they might satisfy their malice upon me. This hath always been the genius of wicked men; Job and David both made complaints much like this, Job xix. 19; Psal. xxxi. 13; lv. 12—14. Thus it fared with Christ himself. The same spirit which yet possesseth wicked men was found in wicked men in all former times. And this ought to be a great relief to the people of God under the like measures, to consider that the servants are not above their Lord, and wicked men thus of old *persecuted the prophets.*

11 But [l]the LORD *is* with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not [m]prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: *their* [n]everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

[l] ch. 1. 8, 19.
[m] ch. 15. 20. & 17. 18.
[n] ch. 23. 40.

The prophet recovering himself out of his fit of passion, encourageth himself in his God, whom he calls the *mighty* and *terrible one*, so declaring his faith in the power of God, as one able to save him, and in the promise and good-will of God toward him; therefore he saith, *The Lord is with me;* such was the promise of God to this prophet, when he first undertook the prophetical office, chap. i. 8, *Be not afraid of their faces; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.* From hence he concludeth, that though he had many that pursued after his life, yet they should *stumble* in their ways of violence, and should *not prevail;* that they should either be *ashamed* of what they had done, or be brought to shame for what they had done; for *prosper* they should not; or, they acted like fools, and did not deal prudently for themselves (so this word is translated, Isa. lii. 13). *Their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten;* they should come to a reproach and ignominy, and their reproach should not be like his, for a time, but it should be a lasting, perpetual reproach that should not be forgotten. This was not only written for that generation, but for all generations that are yet to come, and hath been made good in the experience of all ages past. The persecutors of God's ministers have found that God hath been with his ministers according to his promise, Matt. xxviii. 20, and that they have stumbled in their way, and not at last prevailed; that they have not acted prudently for their own good, and the good of their families; that a perpetual ignominy clave to the memory of those who have been em-

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ployed in this work. There stands to this day a blot upon the memory of them who persecuted Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c., the apostles, and such faithful ministers as have been since their time.

o ch. 11. 20. & 17. 10.

12 But, O LORD of hosts, that °triest the righteous, *and* seest the reins and the heart, ᵖlet me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause.

p Ps. 54. 7. & 59. 10.

Seest the reins and the heart: the prophet had, chap. xvii. 10, spoken unto God under this notion; here he appealeth to him as such, who therefore must needs see as well the prophet's sincerity as his enemies' malice. *Let me see thy vengeance on them:* for his prayer against his enemies, it is of the same nature with what we met with chap. xi. 20, indeed this whole verse is the same with that. David, Psal. lviii. 10, prophesieth that *the righteous should rejoice when they see the vengeance which God brings on his enemies.* But yet the prophet seems in this petition to have showed himself a man (as the apostle speaks of Elijah) subject to like passions with other men; for although God sometimes in his providence causeth vengeance to come upon his and his people's enemies in their sight, yet whether they may absolutely pray for it is a question. See the notes on chap. xi. 20.

13 Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for ᵍhe hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers.

q Ps. 35. 9, 10. & 109. 30, 31.

The prophet here riseth higher, from prayer to praise: it is not certain whether this was a rejoicing of faith or of sense; a thanksgiving to God upon his deliverance out of the hand of Pashur, or some other enemies, or a rejoicing in the sure belief that God would deliver his life out of the hands of these wicked men. If we take it in the latter sense, it teacheth us our duty, to give God the honour of all our deliverances from the hands of wicked men. If in the former sense, it showeth us the power of *faith*, which being *the substance of things not seen*, and *evidence of things but hoped for*, showeth us things to come as if already present, and teacheth us to rejoice in the hope of those things of which we have no present possession.

r Job 3. 3. ch. 15. 10.

14 ¶ ʳCursed *be* the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed.

This sudden change of the prophet's style maketh both Mr. Calvin, and some other good interpreters, think that these words proceeded from Jeremiah rather as a repetition of a former passion, into which the abuses of his enemies had put him, than as the immediate product of his spirit at this time. Whenever they were spoken, they speak a very extravagant passion, to show us, that though Jeremiah was a great man, yet he was but a man, encompassed with infirmities, and subject to like passions with other men. We find Job in the like passion, chap. iii. 3. These great failures of God's people stand in Scripture, as rocks in the sea appear, to mind mariners to keep off them, not to run upon them.

15 Cursed *be* the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad.

Parents are usually rejoiced when a son is born to them.

16 And let that man be as the cities which the LORD ˢoverthrew, and repented not: and let him ᵗhear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide;

s Gen. 19. 25.
t ch. 18. 22.

By *the cities* he means those cities mentioned Gen. xix. 25, Sodom and Gomorrah; by *the cry in the morning and shouting at noon*, he means the shouts and noises that enemies make when they break in upon a place in a hostile manner.

u Job 3. 10, 11.

17 ᵘBecause he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb *to be* always great *with me*.

These various expressions do only let us see to what a tide passion swelled in this good man's heart, and teach us how much need we have to pray to be delivered from our own passions. Jeremiah's leaving these things recorded by himself, is one instance of what is brought as a rational argument to prove that only men wrote the Scriptures by inspiration from God, they would never else have recorded their own gross failings, men commonly writing for their own honour, not to their own defamation.

18 ˣWherefore came I forth out of the womb to ʸsee labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?

x Job 3. 20.
y Lam. 3. 1.

These words let us know the prophet's temptation to these extravagant eruptions of passion; it was the reproach, and shame, and affliction which he endured for the faithful discharge of his ministry; which both lets us see the goodness of God towards those whom he spareth as to these trials, and what need we have under them to keep a watch upon our own hearts. These records also of holy writ are useful to us, if at any time we be overtaken with such errors, to comfort us, in that they are not such spots but have been found in the faces of God's fairest ones; and to make us charitable towards such as we may see sometimes overborne with the like temptations.

CHAP. XXI.

King Zedekiah in the siege sendeth to Jeremiah to inquire of the event, 1, 2. *He foretelleth a hard siege and miserable captivity,* 3—7. *He counselleth the people to fall to the Chaldeans,* 8—10; *and upbraideth the king's house,* 11—14.

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, when king Zedekiah sent unto him ᵃPashur the son of Melchiah, and ᵇZephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying,

cir. 589.
a ch. 38. 1.
b 2 Kings 25. 18. ch. 29. 25. & 37. 3.

God at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, Heb. i. 1. The two principal were *visions* and *dreams*, Numb. xii. 6. How the following word came to Jeremiah is not expressed, it is enough that he knew it came from the Lord. It is apparent some prophecies in this book are not put in the right order as they were delivered. Chap. xxv. we have an account of the word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, who was the second son of Josiah, made king by Pharaoh-necho, pursuing his victory (mentioned 2 Chron. xxxv. 22) upon the battle, in which Josiah was killed, as we read there. The people made Jehoahaz king, but he reigned but three months; and the conqueror carrying him away, made Eliakim his brother king, changing his name to Jehoiakim, who reigned eleven years, that is, seven after the word of the Lord, mentioned chap. xxv., came to Jeremiah; after whom Jehoiachin his son reigned three months and ten days: Zedekiah was his uncle, the son of Josiah, he reigned eleven years. So that it is plain that Jeremiah's prophecy (mentioned chap. xxv.) was seven years and three months before this, besides the number of years that Zedekiah had reigned. But some think that Jeremiah, chap. xxiii., xxiv., xxv., doth but make a repetition to Zedekiah's messengers of what he had before prophesied. This message was (as appeareth by the next verse) when Nebuchadrezzar was come up to make war against Jerusalem, chap. xxxix. 1. Jeremiah was at liberty when the word of the Lord at this time came to him, so as it was some time before the city was taken. The fatal siege held about a year and half, as appears by chap. xxxix. 1, 2. The *Pashur* mentioned here was another from him mentioned chap. xx. 1: he was the son of Immer, of the sixteenth course of the priests, and of a more rugged, ill temper; this was *the son of Melchiah*, and so of the fifth course. See 1 Chron. xxiv. 9, 14.

2 ᶜEnquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us.

c ch. 37. 3, 7.

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Zedekiah, as he was none of the best, so he was none of the worst, of the kings of Judah; he had some convictions and impressions (possibly from his education) not worn off; and having some reverence of God, he sends to the prophet to *inquire of the Lord*, because the *king of Babylon* was come up to make war against them. It is true, the greatest contemners of God and his faithful ministers will sometimes, in great straits, choose to send for them rather than those who in their prosperity pleased them. Hence we read of Saul, when he went to the witch at Endor, desiring that Samuel might be raised up. But in Zedekiah's whole story we read no such eminent contempt of God, but a disobedience to the commands of God, proceeding rather from his easiness to be ruled by his corrupt court, than from a stubbornness in himself. By mentioning God's former *wondrous works*, possibly he may have a respect to God's raising Sennacherib's siege in the time of his grandfather Hezekiah. The remembering of God's former wondrous works is of use to raise in us a hope and confidence in God for further deliverances, supposing ourselves under the same circumstances of obedience to God's will; otherwise not, as we shall see in the case of Judah and its king at this time; therefore Zedekiah saith, *if so be*. Guilt of sin hinders confidence and holy boldness in the best: but as the guilt is greater, so the hope or confidence of any is justly less.

3 ¶ Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah:

4 Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that *are* in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and *against* the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and [d]I will assemble them into the midst of this city.

d Is. 13. 4.

The honour that the king of Judah had put upon the prophet, in sending these special messengers to him, is no temptation to this good prophet to prophesy smooth and pleasing things, for which he had no warrant from God. The prophet styleth God *the God of Israel*, because the whole posterity of Jacob were in covenant with God; notwithstanding which, ten parts of twelve were at this time carried into a captivity from which they never returned; yet God was the God of Israel, for all were not Israel that were descended from Israel, but those only who were Israelites indeed, without guile; so that the prophet by this name given to God doth both assert God's faithfulness to his covenant, and also show the consistency of that faithfulness with those judgments which he was now bringing upon that remnant of Israel which yet were in their own land. The message which God by the prophet sendeth to Zedekiah is exceeding terrible. The sum of it is, that as they had not dealt with God according to the works of Israel, and the former generation that descended from him, or those at least who were the true Israel of God; so they must not expect that God should deal with them according to his former wondrous works, but that as he with the *pure* had showed himself *upright*, so with the *froward* he should show himself *froward*. For God had determined to turn into their own bowels, and against themselves, the weapons they had in their hands taken up *against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans* that were now besieging them (by which we may learn that this message was sent during the time of the siege, probably about the beginning of it, for it lasted eighteen months). *I will assemble them into the midst of this city;* God threateneth to bring the Chaldeans into the midst of the holy city, that their city should be broken up, their arms taken from them, and they killed with their own swords. There is a great emphasis in the pronoun *I*. It is not an enemy that is to be feared, but God's being our enemy.

5 And I myself will fight against you with an [e]outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.

e Ex. 6. 6.

I will fight against you, (as a prince is said to fight against a nation whose captains fight against it, though himself stirreth not from his royal palace; yea, more than so,) animating and influencing the Babylonians and Chaldeans, whom I have sent to fight against you, and discouraging and dispiriting your armies. *With an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath;* with such a hand and power as I manifested for my ancient Israel, Exod. vi. 6. God is here spoken of in a dialect which maketh him more intelligible to us. He hath no hands, no arms, neither are *anger* and *fury* in him considered as turbulent passions, as they are in us; but as men stretch out their hands and arms when they intend to give smart and terrible strokes, and are egged to such blows from their passions and excessive wrath, so God is set out to us by expressions proper to men, and in him significative only of his just will to be revenged severely upon a sinful people. The sense is no more, than that an end was now come, and God was resolved no longer to bear with such a provoking people, but to bring his utmost wrath upon them, and to deal with them no longer according to his wondrous works of mercy, but in wondrous works of justice, which in men would look like the effects of wrath and fury.

6 And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence.

Still God proclaimeth himself this people's enemy. Pestilences are but the usual consequents of long sieges, through the scantness and unwholesomeness of food; but God is the first cause of such sore judgments, though there be other second causes. The murrain of beasts bears proportion to the pestilence amongst men, and the beasts are threatened as well as men, not because of any sin in them, but because men are punished in them, they being part of their substance; and this is a part of that bondage of corruption from which the creature groaneth to be delivered, of that vanity to which they are subject, which maketh the irrational part of the creation to be brought in by the apostle, Rom. viii. 20—22, like as a woman *travailing in pain*, and desiring the day of judgment.

7 And afterward, saith the LORD, [f]I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; [g]he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

f ch. 37. 17. & 39. 5. & 52. 9.

g Deut. 28. 50. 2 Chron. 36. 17.

Afterward; after that many of the people of this city shall be destroyed, some by the enemy assaulting and skirmishing with them; others by the famine that shall be amongst them through a want of victuals, being all spent with the long siege; others by the pestilence. Zedekiah, who shall escape these three judgments, together with his courtiers, and the residue of the people, shall be delivered into the power of the king of Babylon, and into the power of such as will not be content with the plunder of their houses, but thirst after their blood; and these enemies (set on by Nebuchadnezzar) shall smite them with the sword, without showing them any mercy or pity. This is not to be understood of king Zedekiah himself, for God let him know, chap. xxxiv. 4. that he should not *die by the sword*, but *in peace*, as he did afterward in Babylon, though in prison; but it was true of his sons and courtiers, and a great part of the people, chap. xxxix. 6, 8; lii. 10. Those who went into captivity were only such as had revolted during the siege, and many of those that were of the poor of the land, for the rest there was little pity had of them, or mercy showed to them, as may be seen, chap. xxxix., lii.; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17.

8 ¶ And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, [h]I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.

h Deut. 30. 19.

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I tell you the way that you should take if you would save your lives, and the course which if you take you will certainly lose your lives.

i ch. 38. 2, 17, 18.

9 He that [i]abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and [k]his life shall be unto him for a prey.

k ch. 39. 18. & 45. 5.

But certainly, if ever any man spake high treason, this prophet now did it, when there was an enemy besieging them, telling them, that if they would save their lives, they must revolt from their king, and join with their enemies. All that can be said in excuse for the prophet is, that this was a Divine revelation to him, and a message sent to the king himself. *His life shall be given him for a prey*, appeareth to have been a proverbial expression, either signifying, 1. A man's possession of his life, as a prey or booty recovered from death, or the hand of the enemy; or, 2. A man's *rejoicing* in the saving of his life, as if he had got some notable booty.

l Lev. 17. 10. ch. 44. 11. Amos 9. 4.

10 For I have [l]set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: [m]it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall [n]burn it with fire.

m ch. 38. 3. n ch. 34. 2, 22. & 37. 10. & 38. 18, 23. & 52. 13.

I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good; that is, I will set myself against it, I will be an enemy to it. See the like phrase Lev. xvii. 10; xx. 5. It is a phrase signifying not only God's aversion from them, and the taking his affection off them, but his determination to bring ruin upon them, and choosing methods of providence tending and conducive thereunto; and so it is opened in the following words, which are rather to be understood of the structure of the city than of the inhabitants, for that not the people were burnt with fire, though probably many of the people perished in so great burnings.

11 ¶ And touching the house of the king of Judah, *say*, Hear ye the word of the LORD;

By *the house of the king of Judah* he means the house of Zedekiah, the court, or those (as appeareth by the next verse) who were the magistrates. These, how great soever, are not excused from the common obligation upon all to listen to and to obey the revelations of the Divine will.

cir. 609.

12 O house of David, thus saith the LORD; [o]† Execute judgment [p]in the morning, and deliver *him that is* spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings.

o ch. 22. 3. Zech. 7. 9. † Heb. *Judge.* p Ps. 101. 8.

He calls these the *house of David*, either checking them, who were indeed so in a lineal descent, or minding them what they ought to be in imitation of their father David. The only way they had to keep off those Divine judgments which now hanged over their heads was to *execute judgment*, that is, *justice*, without partiality; the prophet's advice to them *to execute judgment in the morning* either lets them know they must do it *quickly*, or else it hath respect to the time when the courts of justice sat. One species of justice was the deliverance of the oppressed from the hands, that is, from the power and malice, of the oppressors; which if it were not done, God threateneth certain ruin and destruction to them, which none should be able to hinder or avoid. The cause of which was, their wicked doings; for that God who doth people good, and showeth them favour, not for their sake, but for his own name's sake, yet never punisheth them but for a cause found in them.

q Ezek. 13. 8. † Heb. *inhabitress.* r ch. 49. 4.

13 Behold, [q]I *am* against thee, O †inhabitant of the valley, *and* rock of the plain, saith the LORD; which say, [r]Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations?

Inhabitant of the valley; the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem are those here intended, Psal. cxxv. 2. The mountains were round about Jerusalem, yea, Jerusalem itself was builded in part upon the rocky mountain of Zion; but a great part was in the valley, and the higher mountains about Mount Zion made that mountain itself, in comparison with them, as a valley. *And rock of the plain*; though also a *rock of the plain*, that is, near to the plain. Which situation of this place made the Jews think it to be impregnable, and to mock at dangers, or threats of enemies, saying, *Who shall*, that is, *Who can* or *who will*, dare to *come against us?* or, Who will be able to enter into our city? Saith the Lord, *I am against* you; I will come down against you, and I, by such as I shall employ, will enter into your habitations. No natural position or situation of places, no artificial fortifications, are sufficient against an almighty God.

14 But I will †punish you according to the [s]fruit of your doings, saith the LORD: and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and [t]it shall devour all things round about it.

† Heb. *visit upon.* s Prov. 1. 31. Is. 3. 10, 11. t 2 Chron. 36. 19. ch. 52. 13.

I will punish you; in the Hebrew it is, *I will visit upon you*. God's visitations are either of *mercy*, Psal. lxxx. 14; cvi. 4, or of *judgment*; therefore the sense is here rightly given by our translators *punish*. *According to the fruit of your doings*; the fruit of men's doings is the product of their actions; God punisheth the fruit of our doings. In showing mercy, he acts from prerogative; in punishments, he doth but fill men with their own ways, and give them according to the fruit of their doings; so ver. 12. *I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof*; by the *forest* he either meaneth the forest of Lebanon, or their houses made up of wood cut out of that forest, or their idolatrous groves. *And it shall devour all things round about it*; and this fire he saith should not determine in the destruction only of this city, but in the total destruction of all the country adjacent to Jerusalem.

CHAP. XXII.

God sendeth the prophet to court with promises, 1—4, *and threats against the king's house and Jerusalem*, 5—9. *The judgment of Shallum*, 10—12; *of Jehoiakim*, 13—19; *and of Coniah*, 20—30.

THUS saith the LORD; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, cir. 609.

Some by *the king of Judah*, here mentioned, understand Jehoahaz, made king upon the death of Josiah by the people, (being the second son of Josiah,) 2 Kings xxiii. 30. Others understand Jehoiakim, whom Pharaoh-necho made king, carrying his elder brother Jehoahaz, after a short reign of three months, with him into Egypt, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 4.

2 And say, [a]Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates: a ch. 17. 20.

None is so great but he is obliged to hear the word of the Lord. The prophet's mentioning him under the notion of him that sat *upon the throne of David*, both minds him of God's faithfulness, who had promised that David should not want one to sit on his throne; and his duty, to walk in the steps of him upon whose throne he sat; and also of his errors, he not walking in David's steps, though he sat upon his throne. The word of the Lord concerned not the king alone, but all his instruments in places of magistracy, and also all the people of Jerusalem and Judea.

3 Thus saith the LORD; [b]Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and [c]do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. b ch. 21. 12. c See ver. 17.

That is, Administer justice to all your subjects. The

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stranger, the fatherless, and *the widow* are particularly named, as persons who have fewest friends, and so are most exposed to the lusts of great men, who have a power to oppress them. Two things are observable: 1. That the terms upon which God promiseth mercy to them are such as were in their power to perform. 2. They are the due performance of relative duties, to teach us how much lieth upon men's just performance of the duties of their relations, and more particularly, how much God loveth justice and judgment, without the impartial execution of which no princes, no magistrates, can promise themselves security from temporal judgments; which much commendeth the love of God to human society, injustice being the greatest enemy to it, and justice the great foundation and pillar of it.

d ch. 17. 25. 4 For if ye do this thing indeed, [d]then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting †upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people.

† Heb. *for David upon his throne.*

If ye do this thing indeed; if ye will not pretendedly, but really, give to every one their due, and look that inferior magistrates acting under you do so. Then, he doth not say, you shall be saved: the promise is only of a secular, temporal nature, of all prosperity, and continuance of the family of David, with great honour and splendour, expressed by those phrases of *riding in chariots and on horses.* Though the performance of moral acts of justice and mercy, which men may perform without any special grace of God, be not enough to entitle them to the hopes of spiritual and eternal good things; yet they may entitle them to the hopes of outward prosperity and happiness in this life, Dan. iv. 27; which is sufficient to demonstrate that men's outward infelicities and sufferings under the grievous judgments of God upon themselves is from their selves; they might in a great measure avoid them, by doing such acts as are in their power to do.

e Heb. 6. 13, 17. 5 But if ye will not hear these words, [e]I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation.

By *hearing* the prophet meaneth *hearkening to* and *obeying.* God accounteth us to hear no more than we practise. If (saith the prophet) you will not *execute judgment,* &c., I give you the greatest assurance imaginable that this noble *house of David shall become a desolation.* The apostle saith that God, because he could swear by no greater, sware by himself. The end of an oath is, the confirmation of a thing where any doubt of the truth of it, or any have strife about it. Sinners finding in themselves a difficulty to believe God upon his word, revealing his will against the interests of their lusts, the Lord is brought in as swearing, not by a greater, (that is impossible,) but by himself, that the *house of David,* or the *house of Israel,* or *his own house,* the temple, (though the first seems most probable to be here meant, which seemeth to be the house mentioned ver. 4, through the gates of which kings should enter, riding in chariots and on horses,) should be made desolate.

6 For thus saith the LORD unto the king's house of Judah; Thou *art* Gilead unto me, *and* the head of Lebanon: *yet* surely I will make thee a wilderness, *and* cities *which* are not inhabited.

Interpreters are not agreed in what sense God saith that *the king's house of Judah* was unto him as *Gilead,* or *the head of Lebanon.* Gilead was a country fertile for pastures; upon which account the Reubenites and Gadites, being men whose estates lay in cattle, begged it of Moses for their portion, Numb. xxxii. 2, and Moses gave it to the sons of Manasseh, ver. 40. It was also famous for *spicery, balm,* and *myrrh,* Gen. xxxvii. 25. It had in it a famous mountain. Lebanon also was a very pleasant place, famous for cedars, and indeed whatsoever could gratify the senses; they both were in the lot of Gad and Manasseh. Some think God compareth the king of Judah's house to these places, in regard of the height and nobleness of the structure; others, for the pleasantness and delightfulness of it. Others consider Gilead as the principal part of the inheritance of the ten tribes, wasted by Tiglath-pileser, 2 Kings xv. 29; and that God telleth them, by this comparison, that he would certainly destroy them, and make them as Gilead, which was the *head of Lebanon.* Though Jerusalem were a noble and pleasant place, yet they might remember so was Gilead, which yet for their sins was wasted and brought to ruin. So also Jerusalem, formerly the garden of Judea, and joy of the whole earth, should be made a wilderness, and the cities of Judah should not be inhabited.

7 And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut down [f]thy choice cedars, [g]and cast *them* into the fire.

f Is. 37. 24. g ch. 21. 14.

They shall not only be edged with their own lusts and malice, but commissioned and influenced by me, and shall come sufficiently prepared for their work. And they shall cut down and burn thy buildings, which are made of goodly cedars.

8 And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, [h]Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city?

h Deut. 29. 24, 25. 1 Kings 9. 8, 9.

According to God's threatenings, Deut. xxix. 24; 1 Kings ix. 8. Though the Jews would not understand that there was a cause, yet others would understand it, and inquire into it.

9 Then they shall answer, [i]Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.

i 2 Kings 22. 17. 2 Chron. 34. 25.

Some shall answer them, or they shall answer one another, Surely it is because they have broken the Divine law, which the Israelites made a covenant, Exod. xix. 8; xxiv. 3, 7; Deut. v. 27, upon which account their sinning was an apostacy, and a *forsaking their covenant.* Their sinning was not of an ordinary nature, but by idolatry, worshipping images and idols, which indeed were no gods but only in the opinion of those nations that worshipped them.

10 ¶ Weep ye not for [k]the dead, neither bemoan him: *but* weep sore for him [l]that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.

k 2 Kings 22. 20. l ver. 11.

Weep not for Josiah your dead prince, for whom there was a great mourning, 2 Chron. xxxv. 25, mentioned Zech. xii. 11. Josiah is happy, you need not trouble yourselves for him; but weep for Jehoahaz, who is to go, or is gone, into captivity: Jehoahaz was set up upon his father's death by the people, 2 Kings xxiii. 30; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1, but, ver. 3, put down within three months, and carried into Egypt, ver. 4, where he died, 2 Kings xxiii. 34; so as he no more returned into Judah. The participle being in the present tense, inclineth me to think that this prophecy was long before that in the former chapter, soon after the death of Josiah, upon the people's setting up of Jehoahaz in his stead, or presently after he was carried away. Some interpret this of the people that were dead, and those that were going into captivity; but the next verse makes it far more probable that it is to be understood of Josiah and Jehoahaz.

11 For thus saith the LORD touching [m]Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, [n]which went forth out of this place; He shall not return thither any more:

m See 1 Chr. 3. 15. with 2 Kings 23. 30. n 2 Kings 23. 34.

Who this *Shallum* was is a little doubted. Some think it was Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, 1 Chron. iii. 15, called *Johanan:* there is also mentioned one Shallum, but he is there mentioned as the fourth son of Josiah. In the Book of Kings we read only of three sons which Josiah had, viz. Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. Most think that this Shallum was Jehoahaz, or Johanan, (as he is called, 1 Chron. iii. 15,) who was indeed the second son of Josiah; for it is plain, from 2 Kings xxiii. 31, 36, that Jehoiakim was two years older, otherwise he could not have been twenty-five years old when he began to reign after Jehoahaz, who began to reign at twenty-three years of age, and reigned but three months; but, 1 Chron. iii. 15, he is called Josiah's

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first-born, because he was first made king; and here he is called *Shallum*, for the shortness of his reign, in derision to the Jews, who so called him, upon the account of their good hopes of prosperity under him; and in allusion to Shallum the son of Jabesh, one of the last kings of the ten tribes, mentioned 2 Kings xv. 13, who reigned but a month: for this, as some think, could not be that Shallum mentioned after Zedekiah, as the fourth son of Josiah, 1 Chron. iii. 15, for that Shallum, they say, never reigned; this, as the text saith, did reign three months *instead of Josiah his father;* which phrase seemeth also to conclude that he immediately succeeded his father Josiah. *Which went forth out of this place;* he was carried away from Jerusalem presently after he was set up, 2 Kings xxiii. 31, 33, imprisoned at Riblah, and, ver. 34, died in Egypt.

12 But he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more.

So as he returned no more to see his native country, as is here said. But others think this Shallum was Josiah's fourth son, that Johanan died before his father, and the people made Shallum his youngest son king, calling him Jehoahaz, so as he reigned immediately after Josiah.

o 2 Kings 23. 35. ver. 18.

13 ¶ °Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his cham-

p Lev. 19. 13. Deut. 24. 14, 15. Mic. 3. 10. Hab. 2. 9. Jam. 5. 4.

bers by wrong; p*that* useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work;

We have not here any certain guidance to let us know whether the prophet intended Jehoahaz or Jehoiakim; both of them *did evil in the sight of the Lord*, as we read in their story. The sin here reflected upon is manifestly *injustice* and *oppression*, but possibly, in the former part of the verse, all unjust and oppressive acts by which either of these princes endeavoured to promote their grandeur may be understood; for we need not take *building his house* in a strict, literal sense, but signifying the promotion of his family, or establishing his state and dignity. In the latter part, a special oppression, withholding workmen's wages, is the sin upon which the woe is denounced; a sin contrary to the law, Lev. xix. 13; Deut. xxiv. 14, 15, and against which the judgment of God is also denounced under the New Testament, James v. 4. An evident demonstration of God's love to mankind, securing by his law just dealings between man and man, and revenging acts of injustice, and particularly where men take advantage of their greatness above and superiority over others, to trample them under their feet, and to withhold their just rights from them: though such persons may be out of the reach of human justice, yet God hath denounced a woe against them.

14 That saith, I will build me a wide house and †large chambers, and cutteth him out ‖windows; and *it is* cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion.

† Heb. *through-aired.* ‖ Or, *my windows.*

That is, Woe to that man, who suffering oppression in his government, or making it his business himself to oppress, yet buildeth himself great houses and large chambers, ceiling them with cedar, promising himself prosperity and splendour, notwithstanding his wicked courses! for otherwise, it is lawful enough for princes to build themselves stately houses, &c. Yet some think that Jehoiakim's pride, and luxury, and magnificence is here blamed, which also may be, considering what fate he was under, for Judah was reprieved only during Josiah's life, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 24—28. And this prince had seen Shallum or Jehoahaz his brother carried into captivity, and he still walked in the same wicked courses his brother had done; yet, in contempt of the word of the Lord by Huldah in his father's time, he promiseth himself all prosperity and splendour, and accordingly was building himself stately houses, and adorning them; for this the woe is here denounced.

15 Shalt thou reign, because thou closest *thyself* in cedar? q did not thy

q 2 Kings 23. 25.

father eat and drink, and do judgment

r Ps. 128. 2. Is. 3. 10.

and justice, *and* then r*it was* well with him?

Art thou so vain as to think that brave houses will continue thy kingdom? Thou art mistaken; magnificent buildings are not those things which establish a prince's throne. How was it with thy father? he lived prosperously, yet had no such stately edifices; his throne was established by justice and judgment; that were the right way for thee to sit sure upon thy throne.

16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then *it was* well *with him: was* not this to know me? saith the LORD.

He judged the cause of the poor and needy; by himself in person, for the kings of Israel and Judah often sat personally to judge causes; or by setting such judges as did it, administering justice impartially, particularly to such as in respect of their low condition were most exposed to the power of others: and doing thus he prospered. *Was not this to know me? saith the Lord;* this was for him truly to own and acknowledge me. They only truly know God who obey him; and men vainly pretend to piety who are notoriously defective in duties of justice and charity.

17 s But thine eyes and thine heart *are* not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for ‖violence, to do *it*.

s Ezek. 19. 6. ‖ Or, *incursion.*

All that thou lookest after, and that thy heart is set upon, is thy own grandeur and riches. And to make thyself great, thou makest no difficulty to destroy thy subjects that are innocent, and have not deserved death, and to oppress others, using all manner of violence against them. It is not to be thought that Jehoiakim did all this in person, but by such corrupt and unjust judges as he set up; so God accounted that Ahab had *killed* and taken *possession*, 1 Kings xxi. 19, though the *elders and nobles* were those that did it, ver. 11—13. Princes are responsible to God for the sins of their ministers and judges.

18 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; t They shall not lament for him, *saying*, u Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!

t ch. 16. 4, 6. u See 1 Kin. 13. 30. Fulfilled 599.

Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; a very bad son of a good father, whose name was Eliakim, by Pharaoh-nechoh turned to Jehoiakim, 2 Kings xxiii. 34, and by him set up. He reigned wickedly, and infinitely oppressed the people for money for Pharaoh-nechoh, that made him king, ver. 35. He reigned but eleven years; but rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, as we read, 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2, he was carried by him into Babylon in fetters, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, where, for aught we read, he died. Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, his son, succeeded him, ver. 9, reigning only three months and ten days. *They shall not lament for him;* he died not lamented; for as it is not probable his enemies would lament him, so he had disobliged his own people by violence and oppression to that degree, that it is not likely that those of them that were in Babylon made any great lamentation for him.

19 x He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

x 2 Chron. 36. 6. ch. 36. 30.

He shall be buried with the burial of an ass; that is, he shall not be buried at all, or he shall be buried in an indecent and contemptible manner, none attending him to his grave, none mourning for him. The last words of this verse incline some to think that Jehoiakim was buried near to Jerusalem; but the Scripture, which mentioneth his being carried into Babylon, saith nothing of his being brought back; nor is that very probable which some say, that the king of Babylon thought to have carried him to Babylon, but upon second thoughts altered his purposes, and caused him to be slain at Jerusalem, and his body to be ignominiously dragged out of the gates. The Scripture saith expressly he was carried to Babylon, 2 Kings xxiv. 15; and if he died there, yet this text remaineth true, the scope of which seemeth to be to show the vanity of this prince in his great and stately buildings, which he was not like long to enjoy, nor to be buried nigh to them, nor in

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any degree of honour proportionate to the splendour of them.

599. 20 ¶ Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages: for all thy lovers are destroyed.

The Hebrew verb being feminine, lets us know that Jerusalem was the place to which this speech is directed; to the inhabitants of which the prophet here calleth to *go up to Lebanon;* and to *Bashan.* Both Lebanon and Bashan were hills or places that looked towards Assyria, from whence the Jews looked for help, and had it sometimes, as 2 Kings xvi. 7: he calls to them ironically to go up to the mountainous parts of them, where standing and crying they might be soonest and best heard. What we translate *from the passages*, others translate *from the borders*, or *from the sides*; others, *from Abarim*, which is the name of a mountain, as well as Lebanon and Bashan; see Numb. xxvii. 12; xxxiii. 47; which seemeth to me the best interpretation: the meaning is, Go and cry for help from all places, but it will be in vain; for *all thy lovers are destroyed;* the Egyptians and Assyrians, to whom thou wert wont heretofore to fly, choosing rather to trust to them than in me, are themselves in the power or danger of the Chaldeans, who shall also destroy them.

+ Heb. prosperities. 21 I spake unto thee in thy †prosperity; *but* thou saidst, I will not hear.

y ch. 3. 25. & 7. 23, &c. [y]This *hath been* thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice.

I, by my prophets, spake to thee while all things went well with thee, so as thou hast not sinned ignorantly or without warning; I have not surprised thee with my judgments, but thou refusedst to hearken and obey my admonitions and precepts. From the time that I brought thee out of the land of Egypt, thou hast been thus a rebellious people.

z ch. 23. 1. a ver. 20. 22 The wind shall eat up all [z]thy pastors, and [a]thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness.

Either a vain hope and presumption shall destroy thy rulers and governors who flatter thee with promises of prosperity; or a judgment shall seize them, that shall be like a violent wind, which presently scattereth the clouds and the smoke; or they shall be blasted by my judgments, as plants are blasted and eaten up by winds. And those that have been thy friends and allies, Syria and Egypt, in whom thou hast trusted, shall themselves be made captive. Surely when thou seest this, thou wilt be convinced, and ashamed of thy wicked courses.

+ Heb. inhabitress. 23 O †inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come

b ch. 6. 24. upon thee, [b]the pain as of a woman in travail!

Jerusalem, which is called an *inhabitant of Lebanon*, either because their houses were built of wood cut down out of the forest of Lebanon, or because they lived in as great plenty and delight as if they lived in Lebanon, or because they thought the mountain of Lebanon was a certain refuge to them. They are said to *make their nest in the cedars*, either because their houses were built of the cedars of Lebanon, or because of the security they promised themselves from that forest and mountain, so full of and famous for cedars. What favour wilt thou find when my judgments shall come upon thee, as suddenly and as smartly as the pains of a woman in travail come upon her! a similitude often made use of by this prophet, to express the suddenness, unavoidableness, and greatness of judgments, chap. iv. 31; vi. 24; xiii. 21; xxx. 6; xlix. 24; l. 43; and so in other scriptures, Psal. xlviii. 6; Micah iv. 9; 1 Thess. v. 3.

c See 2 Kin. 24. 6, 8. 1 Chro. 3. 16. etc. 37. 1. d Cant. 8. 6. Hag. 2. 23. 24 *As* I live, saith the LORD, [c]though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah [d]were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence;

By *Coniah* he meaneth *Jehoiachin*, 2 Kings xxiv. 8, whose name was *Jeconiah*, 1 Chron. iii. 16, (for all Josiah's sons had two names, and so had his grandchild Jeconiah,) here in contempt called *Coniah*. He saith, that though this *Coniah* were as dear to him as his signet, which every man keepeth safe, yet this should not secure him from Divine vengeance.

e ch. 34. 20. 25 [e]And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand *of them* whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans.

That is, into the power of the Chaldeans and Babylonians, whom they were afraid of, and justly, for they thirsted after their blood and ruin.

f 2 Kings 24. 15. 2 Chron. 36. 10. 26 [f]And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die.

Jeconiah's mother was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem, 2 Kings xxiv. 8. Ver. 12, the fulfilling of this prophecy is recorded; and it is said that *Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants*, &c., so ver. 15, together with eight thousand prisoners of the meaner sort, besides princes and nobles.

+ Heb. *lift up their mind.* ch. 44. 14. 27 But to the land whereunto they †desire to return, thither shall they not return.

That is, they shall never come again to Jerusalem; though they be fond of it as their native country, and may promise themselves such favours from the king of Babylon, yet there shall no such thing be their portion.

g Ps. 31. 12. ch. 48. 38. Hos. 8. 8. 28 *Is* this man Coniah a despised broken idol? *is he* [g]a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not?

The prophet either speaketh this in the person of God, or of the people, who are here brought in, affirming that this prince, who was the idol of the people, was now, through the just judgment of God, become like a broken idol; or like a vessel which men care not for, being either so cracked, or so tainted, that they can make no use of it; and admiring at this catastrophe, and inquiring the cause why it so came to pass. *He and his seed.* It is said, ver. 30, that *no man of his seed should prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah;* nor is there any mention made of any of his children where his carrying into captivity is recorded, 2 Kings xxiv. 12, which makes some think that by *his seed* here is meant the posterity of his grandfather Josiah; but others think that he had *children*, either before he went into captivity, or born while he was in Babylon: and Matt. i. 12, it is said, that *after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begat Salathiel.*

h Deu. 32. 1. Is. 1. 2. & 34. 1. Mic. 1. 2. 29 [h]O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD.

By *earth* he either means the land of Judah, to which he calls thrice, to signify the deafness of this people, and unwillingness to hear and believe what God spake by him; or else he calls to the whole earth, as he calls *heaven* and *earth* to witness, Deut. xxx. 19; xxxii. 1; Isa. i. 2; xxxiv. 1; Jer. vi. 19.

i See 1 Chro. 3. 16, 17. Matt. 1. 12. k ch. 36. 30. 30 Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man [i]childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, [k]sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

The word translated *childless* is but thrice read in holy writ, and by various interpreters translated *barren, not increasing, empty, full of sorrow, wanting children*, &c. It is thought to be interpreted by the next words, *no man of his*

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seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah; for there are seven of his sons named 1 Chron. iii. 17, 18. So that he is said to be *childless*, either because all his children died before their father, or (which is most probable) because he had no child that sat upon the throne, or ever had any ruler's place in Judah, but only some that lived in a mean condition in captivity, amongst whom Salathiel is named, Matt. i. 12, as a progenitor of Christ.

CHAP. XXIII.

Woe against wicked pastors; the scattered flock shall be gathered; Christ shall rule and save them, 1—8: *against false prophets,* 9—32, *and mockers of the true,* 33—40.

599.
[a] ch. 10. 21. & 22. 22. Ezek. 34. 2.

WOE [a] be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.

There is the like *woe* against the *pastors* denounced Ezek. xxxiv. 2. Interpreters judge that by the *pastors* are to be understood the *civil magistrates*, for ver. 9 he denounceth the judgments of God against their ecclesiastical officers. The civil magistrates at this time in Judah were great tyrants; and whereas God had committed his people (whom he calls the sheep of his pasture) to them in trust, that they should protect and govern them, and that they might live under them godly and peaceable lives, in all prosperity, they had acted quite contrary to their trust, and worried the people like wolves, instead of feeding them like shepherds. God took notice of their oppressions, and by the prophet denounceth this *woe* against them, to verify that of Solomon, Eccles. v. 8.

2 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited
[b] Ex. 32. 34. them: [b] behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.

That feed my people: God calleth them *his people, his flock, the sheep of his pasture*, with respect to the ancient covenant which God had made with their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They are said to have fed this people, because it was their duty, and the business of their office, so to have done, though they had failed in it, and had done the quite contrary, scattering them by their acts of violence and oppression, and driving them from their places to seek some more safe and quiet places of abode; or by their prodigious wickednesses, having been the cause of their being carried into captivity: *not visiting them*, that is, taking any due care of their good and welfare, seeing what they wanted, and supplying them, as good rulers ought to have done; for which neglect God threateneth to *visit upon them the evil of their doings*. The Hebrew word signifieth to visit with a visitation of care and love, and also with a visitation of justice and severity, and is often so used in holy writ.

[c] ch. 32. 37. Ezek. 34. 13, &c.

3 And [c] I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.

God puts a difference betwixt those that were misled by the examples of others, and the rulers who set them such an ill example; he threatened Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, that they should return no more; but for the people, he here promiseth them a return, at least a remnant of them, when he should have *punished the goats*, as he speaketh, Zech. x. 3. By *their folds*, he meaneth Jerusalem, and other cities, the towns of Judah which they had formerly inhabited. *And they shall be fruitful and increase;* where they should once more be in prosperity. He speaks here concerning the return of this people out of the captivity of Babylon, though there be some that think this text is primarily to be understood *of the gathering together in one the people of God scattered abroad* in and by Christ, according to the prophecy of Caiaphas, John xi. 52.

4 And I will set up [d] shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

[d] ch. 3. 15. Ezek. 34. 23, &c.

And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: some think this prophecy was fulfilled in Nehemiah and Zorobabel, who were pious and good governors, and consulted in their government the good of the people committed to their trust, Neh. ii. 10; v. 14. Others rather understand it of Christian princes and governors under the gospel. *And they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed;* under whom they shall live peaceably and securely. *Neither shall they be lacking;* and none of them shall perish. The two last passages of this verse incline interpreters to think that this promise doth not so much refer to their coming out of Babylon, as to their spiritual deliverance by Christ, for after their return out of Babylon they were not secure long, but feared Sanballat and Tobiah, the Grecians, and Romans, and other enemies; besides that the last words exactly agree with John x. 28, when Christ saith his sheep should not *perish*, and it appears ver. 6 that the prophet is speaking of a time when not Judah only, but Israel also, should be saved, and the next verse doth manifestly refer unto Christ.

5 ¶ Behold, [e] the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, [f] and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

[e] Is. 4. 2. & 11. 1. & 40. 10, 11. ch. 33. 14, 15, 16. Dan. 9. 24. Zech. 3. 8. & 6. 12. John i. 45.
[f] Ps. 72. 2. Is. 32. 1, 18. & 9. 7.

Though some interpreters think that Zorobabel may be here intended, who was descended from David, and ruled the people when they came out of Babylon, yet even the Jewish doctors themselves, as well as the Christian interpreters, understand this as a prophecy and promise of the Messiah; the prophecies and promises of whom are usually ushered in with this particle *behold*, to stir up people's attention; and who also was the *Son of David*, and who is called *the Branch*, Isa. iv. 2; liii. 2; Zech. iii. 8: Isa. xi. 1, where the reason is also given, he being there called *a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, a Branch out of his root;* besides that, the application to him of the name *King*, ordinarily applied to Christ, never given to Zorobabel, and the term *righteous*, make it evident. Chap. xxxiii. 15, he is called a *Branch of righteousness*, which is the same with the *righteous Branch* here mentioned. He is called the *righteous Branch*, not only because himself was *righteous*, therefore called the righteous One, Acts iii. 14; xiii. 35, but because he maketh his people *righteous*, Isa. liii. 11; lx. 21. Jesus Christ, answering the type of Melchisedec the king of Salem, and who is *the King of kings*, 1 Tim. vi. 15, *shall reign* spiritually, and shall not be like Jeconiah, of whom God said he should not prosper; but he *shall prosper, and shall execute justice and judgment*, protecting the innocent, and defending his people throughout the world, judging the prince of the world, and by his Spirit governing his people. So as the prophet relieveth the people of God, under their oppressions by these latter kings of Judah, with the promise of the kingdom of Christ, a usual argument made use of by the prophets to comfort the people of God in those days against any evils come or coming upon them.

6 [g] In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel [h] shall dwell safely: and [i] this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, †THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

[g] Deu. 33. 28. Zech. 14. 11.
[h] ch. 32. 37.
[i] ch. 33. 16. 1 Cor. i. 30.
† Heb. *Jehovah-tsidkenu.*

During the reign and kingdom of the Messias (whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom) the people of God, typified by Judah and Israel, the true Israel of God, those that are Jews indeed, *shall be saved* with a spiritual salvation; for he was therefore called *Jesus*, because he was *to save his people from their sins*, Matt. i. 21, and God will be a special protection to them. The name wherewith this *Branch* shall be called shall be, *The Lord our Righteousness*. Some have applied this to the people, as if the people should be so called, or should say, The Lord hath dealt graciously with us; or, In the Lord we have righteousness. But this will appear but the new invention of some who either can-

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not or will not understand how Christ should be his people's righteousness, those who consider not that it is the *Branch* which was before spoken of, and that the word *people* is not to be found going before; there is indeed a mention of Judah and Israel, but surely they were not to be other men's righteousness, and if that had been the prophet's meaning, he would not have said, The Lord *our*, but the Lord *their* righteousness. Nor is the only place where Christ is called *our righteousness*, 1 Cor. i. 30. This place is an eminent proof of the Godhead of Christ, he is here called *Jehovah;* and what is proper to God alone, viz. to *justify*, is here applied to Christ. The prophet saith Christ shall be so called, that is, by his people, who should believe in him and trust in him alone for that righteousness wherein they should at the last day stand before God: thus he was to bring in *everlasting righteousness*, Dan. ix. 24. He, *who knew no sin, was made sin* (that is, a sacrifice for sin) *for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

k ch. 16. 14, 15. 7 Therefore, behold, [k]the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

8 But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house

l Is. 43. 5, 6. ver. 3. of Israel out of the north country, [l]and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

See the notes on chap. xvi. 14, 15; where much the same words are to be found. The prophet aggravateth the greatness of that salvation, which should be brought by Christ to all the true Israel of God, by comparing it with the deliverance of the ancient Israel of God out of the land of Egypt; which he saith it should so far transcend and excel, that the deliverance out of Egypt should not be named when this salvation should appear, which should be after their return from Babylon, and when God should gather them from all countries, which was fulfilled when by the preaching of the gospel, not the Gentiles only were converted, but many of the Jews also which were scattered abroad, James i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1. Possibly part of this promise or prophecy remains yet to be accomplished, for the Jews are not yet come to *dwell in their own land;* unless that term be to be expounded of Christians, who during the times of persecution in the primitive church were scattered abroad, but upon the ceasing of those persecutions, when Christian emperors came to have the government, returned to their own countries, where they enjoyed a more still and quiet habitation.

m See Hab. 3. 16. 9 ¶ Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; [m]all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness.

The prophet having denounced the wrath of God against the wicked rulers of Judah under the notion of *pastors*, cometh here to discharge the like trust with reference to those orders of persons amongst the Jews, whose office it was, or at least who took upon them, to reveal the mind and will of God to people, and who were upon that account called *prophets:* for these he declares a great passion and trouble; either for their sake, in prospect of that vengeance of God which he saw was like to be poured out upon them; or for the people's sake, who had been deceived by their unfaithful revelations of the Divine will, and led into wickedness by their vile examples. For this he saith his *heart was broken*, his *bones shaked*. And he was even astonished and stupified, and *like a drunken man* he knew not what he did; he was so stricken at the apprehensions of the wrath of the Lord ready to be revealed against them; and to consider what *words* the holy God had put into his mouth to speak against them.

n ch. 5. 7, 8. & 9. 2. o Hos. 4. 2, 3. ‖ Or, *cursing.* 10 For [n]the land is full of adulterers; for [o]because of ‖ swearing the land mourneth; [p]the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their ‖ course is evil, and their force *is* not right.

p ch. 9. 10. & 12. 4. ‖ Or, *violence.*

Under that term *adulterers* all species of uncleanness are comprehended. *Because of swearing the land mourneth;* by false swearing, or by idle and profane swearing, the land is brought to ruin. The word signifies also a curse or cursing. Many good interpreters judge that the more genuine sense and true translation of this text were, *for because of the curse* (that is, the curse of God) the land is brought to that misery which is coming upon it. *The pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up;* the pastures of the wilderness, or *of the plain*, for so the word is rendered, Isa. lxiii. 13; Lam. iv. 19. The wrath of God was extended to all places, whether more or less inhabited. *Their course is evil, and their force is not right;* the prophets did not only err in single acts, but the whole course of their actions was naught, and particularly their power, rule, and government was not right. If any say, What were the prophets concerned in the people's wickedness? *Answ.* They were profane as well as the people, as we shall find, ver. 11; but besides this, the people were thus vile through their connivance; they did not warn the people of their sins, but soothed them up in their wicked courses, and so were the cause of the people's wickedness, who had not been so vile but for them.

q ch. 6. 13. & 8. 10. Zeph. 3. 4. r ch. 7. 30. & 11. 15. & 32. 34. Ezek. 8. 11. & 23. 39. 11 For [q]both prophet and priest are profane; yea, [r]in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD.

Those whose work was to reveal the mind of God to the people, and who pretended to that office; and those that were employed in offering sacrifices, and other works which belonged to the priestly office, according to the law; the whole ecclesiastical order, all their ministry, were *profane;* not merely hypocritical, but lewd, immoral, and debauched. Yea, they were grown to that impudence, that they made the temple, which was the Lord's *house*, a den of thieves, a place where they committed *wickedness*. Thus it was in the time of Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 22, and more generally afterward, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14. See chap. vii. 10, 11, and ver. 14 of this chapter. There is no more certain sign of a ruining nation, than when God suffereth in it a lewd and corrupt ministry.

s Ps. 35. 6. Prov. 4. 19. ch. 13. 16. 12 [s]Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery *ways* in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I [t]will bring evil upon them, *even* the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

t ch. 11. 23.

As their ordinary course is wicked and sinful, so they shall find that it will in the event be to them pernicious, perilous, and full of danger, as a slippery path is to them that walk in a dark night, they *shall be driven on* till they *fall therein*. Courses of sin may look smooth, but they always prove slippery. *For I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation;* for I am resolved to punish their wicked courses, and to visit them with my judgments.

‖ Or, *an absurd thing.* † Heb. *unsavoury.* u ch. 2. 8. x Is. 9. 16. 13 And I have seen ‖† folly in the prophets of Samaria; [u]they prophesied in Baal, and [x]caused my people Israel to err.

There was a time when I saw *folly in the prophets* that belonged to the ten tribes, whose chief city was Samaria. The word translated *folly* signifies *unsavoury*, or an absurd thing. Our Saviour compareth wicked ministers to *unsavoury salt*, Matt. v. 13, salt that is turned foolish (as the Greek word signifies). The ministers of God's word are, or ought to be, *the salt of the earth*, to season people with sound doctrine, and by the good example of a holy life; if they be corrupt in doctrine or manners, they become *unsavoury*, and the very worst of men. Such God says the prophets of the ten tribes were, before they were carried away captive. *They prophesied*, pretending they had their instructions and revelations from Baal, and so *caused* the ten tribes *to err*, which after the division of the kingdom

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in Jeroboam's time were called *Israel*, in contradistinction to the two tribes and half cleaving to the house of David, which were called *Judah*, after the name of their principal tribe.

14 I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem ‖ an horrible thing: [y] they commit adultery, and [z] walk in lies: they [a] strengthen also the hands of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as [b] Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

‖ Or, *filthiness.*
y ch. 29. 23.
z ver. 26.
a Ezek. 13. 22.
b Deu. 32. 32. Is. 1. 9, 10.

An horrible thing; the word signifies *filthiness*, *stench*, or an abominable thing, things every whit as bad, in some kind worse, than what I saw in the prophets of the ten tribes. *They commit adultery;* they commit not spiritual adultery only, but carnal adultery, they are whoremongers. *And walk in lies;* and they make it their business to instil falsehoods into people, and entitle me to them; and this is their trade, not a single act, but their ordinary practice. *They strengthen also the hands of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness:* this is the great aggravation of the sin of those that occupy the place of spiritual guides, that they encourage profane men, either by their false doctrine, extenuating sin, and putting a fair gloss upon them; or at least by their mealy mouths fearing or forbearing to tell sinners of their wicked courses; or by their wicked examples, the most of people thinking they may do what their teachers do, by which means sinners, instead of being brought to a sense of their sins, and a repentance for them, are hardened in their wicked courses. By this means *all of them*, either of their prophets and priests, or all of the people, (the first seemeth chiefly here intended,) are become to me as contemptible and abominable *as* the people of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah:* though they were the sons of Aaron, and of the priestly order, yet living lewd lives, and acting quite contrary to the end of their holy calling, God declares himself to value them no more than as the vilest of men, such were the Sodomites. Or by those words God threatens that he would destroy them with as notorious a destruction as he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus the comparison is used Isa. i. 9, and consonant to this are the words in the next verse.

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with [c] wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is ‖ profaneness gone forth into all the land.

c ch. 8. 14. & 9. 15.
‖ Or, *hypocrisy.*

Under the term *prophets* he comprehendeth all the ecclesiastical guides of Jerusalem at this time, whether priests or prophets. He threatens to *feed them with wormwood;* some think the word is better translated poison: by *wormwood*, or *poison*, and the *water of gall*, he threatens great and fatal judgments that he would bring upon them. And he giveth the reason why God would deal so severely with that order of men, who seemed by their office and employment to have the nearest relation to himself, because they were the fountain of wickedness, those from whom wickedness flowed out over the whole land. This was either by their conniving at wicked men's sins, for fear of displeasing them; or by teaching them licentious doctrine, that gave a liberty to the flesh; or by their vile lives setting the people patterns of sin. And indeed thus it is generally, when ministers, and such as are to teach others, are wicked, either in their doctrine or practice, they are a fountain of wickedness; wickedness floweth from them to the whole city, town, parish where they are employed: and on the contrary it is observed, that where God gives a place a good ministry, goodness in one degree or other floweth from them to the whole city, town, or parish; though all are not converted, yet the generality are civilized and restrained from those gross and brutish immoralities which other places abound with. Ill ministers must look for the severest indignation of God. Others sin, and shall die in their sins; but they teach others to break God's commandments, and have the sins of many to answer for, who perish either by their flatteries, or loose doctrine, or looser lives and examples.

16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: [d] they speak a vision of their own heart, *and* not out of the mouth of the LORD.

d ch. 14. 14. ver. 21.

People are under no religious obligation to hear any thing but the revealed will of God, and are not to obey those that call to them for what that doth not call to them; nor to listen to them, the scope of whose teaching is but to make them *vain*, sinfully vain, or to deceive their souls; no man is under an obligation to deceive himself. They pretend to visions, that God hath revealed his mind to them in the same way as he useth to reveal himself to true prophets; but there is no such thing, it is but a fiction of their own. Our Lord, Matt. vii. 15, gives us the same way to know *false prophets:* ver. 20, *By their fruits you shall know them.* Let their external mission be what and which way it will, if what they teach agree not with the revealed will of God, they are false prophets. Many of these priests were regularly enough descended, and the prophets regularly enough educated and constituted, yet by this showed themselves false prophets, that what they published was not from God, nor agreed with his revealed will; therefore the people were under no religious obligation to hearken to them.

17 They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, [e] Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the ‖ imagination of his own heart, [f] No evil shall come upon you.

e ch. 6. 14. & 8. 11. Ezek. 13. 10. Zech. 10. 2.
‖ Or, *stubbornness.*
ch. 13. 10.
f Mic. 3. 11.

Lewd and corrupt ministers are a hatred and abomination in the house of the Lord to all serious good people, and are therefore obliged to make themselves a party of those that are like themselves, whose favour they cannot have without indulging them in their lusts. Hence they prophesy *peace* to the vilest and worst of men, who have no patience of being daily alarmed with hearing of the wrath of God due and like to come upon them for their sins. Hence they promise no evil to those that walk according to the counsels of their own heart, that is, sinfully, for, Gen. vi. 5, *Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil, and that continually.* Hence a sinful course is very often expressed in Scripture under this notion of walking after the imaginations of our own heart, as Deut. xxix. 19; but it is most in prophecy; see chap. iii. 17; vii. 24; ix. 14; xiii. 10; xvi. 12; xviii. 12. Hence a religious walking is called a *self-denying.* None have a worse guide of their actions in their lapsed state, before regeneration, than their own hearts.

18 For [g] who hath stood in the ‖ counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard *it?*

g Job 15. 8. 1 Cor. 2. 16.
‖ Or, *secret.*

Who besides us hath known *the counsel of the Lord?* arrogating to themselves a fellowship and acquaintance with the mind and will of God. Or, (which I should rather judge the sense,) Which of those prophets, that prophesy such terrible things against this city, is a privy-counsellor to God? The words seem rather to be the words of the false prophets, either arrogating to themselves a peculiar acquaintance with God and fellowship with him, from whence they knew his mind, or mocking at Jeremiah, and other true prophets, as arrogating to themselves such a knowledge of the mind and counsels of God as indeed they had not, than (as some think) the words of Jeremiah denying them to have stood in God's counsels, or to have known his mind and will. This in all ages hath been the practice of corrupt prophets and ministers, to charge those servants of God who have faithfully published the will of God against sinners as making too bold with God's secret counsels, though they publish nothing but God's revealed will.

19 Behold, a [h] whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked.

h ch. 25. 32. & 30. 23.

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A severe judgment of God, that should resemble *a whirlwind*, for the sudden and utter destruction that it shall bring. See chap. xxx. 23, 24. The same word is elsewhere translated a *storm*, Psal. lxxxiii. 15; Amos i. 14; Jonah i. 4. It is called *a whirlwind of the Lord*, either to denote the greatness of it, as Psal. xxxvi. 6, or to let us know that the judgment came forth from God, and was of his sending. And whatever these flattering teachers said, it should fall upon wicked men, so as they should have no peace, but evil should most certainly come upon them.

i ch. 30. 24. 20 The [i]anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his
k Gen. 49. 1. heart: [k]in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly.

It is therefore called a *continuing whirlwind*, chap. xxx. 23. The prophet speaks of the judgment as of a messenger, which coming from God, should not return till it had done its errand, and executed what it came for, even whatever God had resolved it should effect. Men are ready to flatter themselves that they shall either outride or outlive the storms of Divine vengeance. No, (saith the prophet,) the anger of the Lord shall bring to pass whatsoever the just will of God is. And though you will not now believe it, but flatter yourselves with idle, vain hopes, yet hereafter, when it shall be too late, (which is the usual folly of sinners,) then you shall *consider it perfectly*.

l ch. 14. 14. & 27. 15. & 29. 9. 21 [l]I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.

m ver. 18. 22 But if they had [m]stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear
n Jer. 25. 5. my words, then they should have [n]turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

These false prophets did not prophesy without the approbation of the rulers of the ecclesiastical state amongst the Jews in their corrupt state, but so they might, and yet not be sent of God. The judgment of a Divine mission for the revelation of God's mind unto people must not be merely from their external mission, (which yet they ought to have in a church that is in order,) but from the faithful discharge of their ministry. Those whom God sends, and who are truly acquainted with his counsels, will cause his people to hear, not their own conceits and inventions, but the word of the Lord. God sendeth none upon any other errand but to reveal his will and tell his mind unto people. *Then*, saith the prophet, *they should have turned them from their evil way*; that is, they would have made this their scope, business, and end, to turn sinners from their sinful ways; and though possibly their labours would not have had so good an effect upon all, yet they would have had an effect upon some to turn them from their evil doings.

23 *Am* I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off?

Atheism is generally the foundation of ill life. Men say God sees them not, the Almighty doth not regard them. By a *God at hand* many understand heaven: Do you think that my eyes are limited like yours, that I cannot see their practices, though far off from me; that is, from the place of my glorious residence? Others interpret the particle with respect to time: Am I a God of yesterday, like the idols? Am not I the Ancient of days, the eternal God, whose majesty and omniscience you ought to have taken notice of?

o Ps. 139. 7, &c. Amos 9. 2, 3. 24 Can any [o]hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the
p 1 Kings 8. 27. Ps. 139. 7. LORD. [p]Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.

What do these atheistical priests, and prophets, and people think? Do they think that I, who am a God of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, see and take notice of what doctrine they preach, and what lives they live? If they did, surely they would not dare to do as they do. Do they think that I do not see or take notice of them? Can any hide themselves out of my sight? *I fill heaven and earth*, not only with my influence, but with my essence, with the immensity of my being; which, as it cannot be circumscribed by any, so it is shut out of no place.

25 I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.

Visions and *dreams* were two usual ways by which under the law God made himself known of old to his prophets, making them sometimes, being awake, to hear a voice; sometimes attended with, and proceeding upon, some visible appearance, sometimes not: at other times causing them, being asleep, to dream; and in their sleep revealing to them, as in a dream, what his will was they should declare and publish to his people. These false prophets speaking what came into their own heads, and suited their own lust, or the lusts of a debauched people to whom they spake, would pretend that God had revealed to them what they so published in a dream; not in the mean time considering God took notice of these their little arts by which they cheated the people. But saith God, I am a God that know afar off as well as at hand, and I have heard what they say, prophesying lies as from me, and pretending that I had in dreams revealed them to them.

26 How long shall *this* be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, *they are* prophets of the deceit of their own heart;

Will these prophets never have done? Have they not deceived people long enough with their lies, and the deceit of their own hearts; and that not unwarily, and by involuntary mistake, but of set purpose, it being in their heart, their purpose and design, to do it. Some join it to the following verse, and make the sense this: Do these prophets, that publish lies, and the deceits of their hearts, for my revealed will, think to cheat my people always, and to cause my people to forget my name? as it followeth in the next verse.

27 Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, [q]as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.

q Judg. 3. 7. & 8. 33, 34.

To forget my name; that is, to forget me, and those things by which I have made myself known unto them, my word and my works. *By their dreams which they tell* abroad *every one to his neighbour*, as if they were revelations which I had in their sleep made unto them; but they are indeed lies, and nothing but the deceits of their own hearts. *As their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal*; so that in effect they are Baal's priests: for as Baal's prophets, by publishing their pretended revelations from Baal, seduced the people from the service and obedience of the true God; so these, by telling their pretended dreams, seduced men from their obedience to God in what he revealed to them by the true prophets: they agreed in the end, the seducing of the people from God, though they differed in the mean, the one pretending relations from Baal, the other from the true God by their dreams.

28 The prophet †that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What *is* the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

† Heb. *with whom is*.

A dream; not a Divine dream; a revelation which I have made to him in his sleep (as appeareth by the following opposition, betwixt a *dream* and the *word of the Lord*); but if any man hath dreamed an ordinary dream, let him tell it as a dream; let him not entitle God to it. *And he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully*; and let him to whom I have revealed my will publish and declare that in all truth and faithfulness, not adding his own fancies or dreams to it, 2 Cor. ii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 2, not corrupting my word. *What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord*; there is as much difference between my will and their dreams as there is betwixt the *chaff and the wheat*; the one is of value to make food for the soul, as wheat doth for the body; the other is of no value: the one (viz. my word)

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is of a solid, abiding substance; the other is light and airy, and easily scattered by every wind.

29 *Is* not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer *that* breaketh the rock in pieces?

Full of life and efficacy, John vi. 63; Heb. iv. 12; *like a fire* that warmeth, and healeth, and melteth, and consumeth the dross; *and like a hammer that breaketh* the flints, so my word breaketh hard hearts. Others think that the word is here compared to fire, and to a hammer, because of the certain effect that it should have upon those that would not obey it, to burn them up like fire, and break them in pieces like a hammer, and so think this text well expounded by the apostle, 2 Cor. ii. 16. Certain it is that God's word is like fire in both senses; no words of men have an effect and efficacy like God's words; nothing but that taketh hold upon the conscience, and hath such an effect upon the hearts of men; no words shall so certainly and infallibly be justified and made good.

r Deut. 18. 20. ch. 14. 14, 15.

30 Therefore, behold, [r] I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour.

There are various opinions as to what the prophet meaneth here by those prophets that *stole the Lord's words* from their neighbours. Some, by their *neighbour*, understanding the true prophets, from whom they stole those forms of speech, *Thus saith the Lord*, or, *The word of the Lord*, or, *The burden of the Lord*. Or some of the matter which they prophesied, though they mixed it with their own lies and deceits. Others by neighbours understanding their associates, think that these false prophets conspired together what to say to deceive the people, and so stole what they said one from another; or, the generality of the people, from whom they are said to steal the Lord's word, because they withheld it from them injuriously; or by their arts and flatteries brought men out of love with or fear of the words of the Lord, which had by the true prophets been delivered to them.

‖ Or, *that smooth their tongues.*

31 Behold, I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, ‖ that use their tongues, and say, He saith.

Some think the Hebrew words were more properly translated *smooth their tongues:* see the English Annotations. But the next words seem to assure us that the crime for which God here by the prophet reflecteth upon the false prophets, was not so much their flattering people, and speaking to them such smooth things as pleased them, as their entitling of God to their lies, saying, *He*, that is, the Lord, *saith*. So it may be, though the word might be translated *smooth*, yet it is here better translated *use*.

s Zeph. 3. 4.

32 Behold, I *am* against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by [s] their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

False dreams; that is, false things under the notion of things which I have revealed unto them in their sleep. By *lightness* here some understand volubility and smoothness of tongue and speech; others, lasciviousness; others, levity and inconstancy: the last seemeth most probably the sense. *I sent them not*, (saith God,) *therefore they shall not profit.* None can expect God's blessing upon their ministry that are not called and sent of God into the ministry.

t Mal. 1. 1. u ver. 39.

33 ¶ And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What *is* [t] the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? [u] I will even forsake you, saith the LORD.

The true prophets, to let the people know how little pleasing it was to them to be the messengers of God's threatenings, to denounce his judgments, usually thus began their prophecies of that nature, calling them *the burden of the Lord*, as may be seen, Isa. xiii. 1; xv. 1; xxii. 1; Hab. i. 1; Zech. ix. 1; Mal. i. 1. The profane people, and false prophets, and corrupt priests, not loving to hear their doom, would ordinarily mock at the true prophets; and in derision ask them what *was the burden of the Lord?* what ill news they had for them next? God bids the prophet tell them that God would forsake them, either as to the Spirit of prophecy, they should have no more prophets, or (which is more probable) as to his special providence, by which he had watched over, protected, and hitherto defended them; a *burden* heavy enough, Hos. ix. 12.

† Heb. *visit upon.*

34 And *as for* the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even † punish that man and his house.

That is, that shall in derision say thus, mocking at my theatenings and judgments. I will not only punish him, but his whole family.

35 Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the LORD answered? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

I will have you speak more reverently of me and my word to my prophets.

36 And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more: for every man's word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the LORD of hosts our God.

The burden of the Lord shall ye mention no more; not in scorn and derision, as not believing there were any such judgments as they threaten; nor hardly, as if I sent you no other messages but burdens. These false and irreverent speeches, which are in every man's mouth, shall be burdensome to them, being such as shall bring down Divine vengeance upon them; because you have derided or misinterpreted *the words of* God, *the living God;* the sin of which is the more aggravated against you, because he is the living, mighty God, and because he hath been *our God.*

37 Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

Thus shalt thou say to the prophet; to my true prophet. You shall speak to them reverently, and as becometh you.

38 But since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD; Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD;

Because you go on in your scoffing and deriding my word and my prophets; and that when I have expressly forbidden you those profane speeches, or that deriding form of speech; adding further contempt to your former profaneness.

x Hos. 4. 6. y ver. 33.

39 Therefore, behold, I, even I, [x] will utterly forget you, and [y] I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, *and cast you* out of my presence:

I will forget you as to my affection, and that is more than if all your friends forgot you. There is a great emphasis in the doubling of the pronoun, *I, even I. I will forsake you* as to the presence of my special gracious providence. And do not flatter yourselves that I will not do it, because of your fathers, or because I gave this city to your fathers, for that very city I will withdraw my special providence from, and that land, which heretofore was called *the land which the Lord thy God careth for, upon which the eyes of the Lord are always, from the beginning of the year even to the end of the year*, Deut. xi. 12. And I will cast both city and people out of my gracious presence; so as I will no longer do them good as I have done.

40 And I will bring [z] an everlasting re- z ch. 20. 11.

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proach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

And you shall be a reproach, and that not for a few days, but for ever; and a penal shame, which neither you nor those that see or hear of it shall forget. See such expressions chap. xx. 11.

CHAP. XXIV.

Under the type of good and bad figs, 1—3, he foreshoweth the return of some from captivity, 4—7, and the ruin of Zedekiah and the rest, 8—10.

The sum of what God by his prophet revealeth in this chapter is, that he would deal more graciously with those carried into captivity with Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, of which read 2 Kings xxiv. 12; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, than with those that should afterward be carried into captivity with Zedekiah. This the prophet hath revealed to him in a vision of two baskets of figs, as followeth.

cir. 598. THE [a]LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs *were* set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar [b]king of Babylon had carried away captive [c]Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon.

[a] Amos 7. 1, 4. & 8. 1.

[b] 2 Kings 24. 12. &c. 2 Chron. 36. 10.

[c] See ch. 22. 24, &c. & 29. 2

Some think these *two baskets of figs* were such as the people had brought for their first-fruits, because they are mentioned as *set before the temple;* but this might be no more than a vision, or an appearance of two baskets. The time of this vision was some time betwixt the carrying away of Jeconiah, of which we read 2 Kings xxiv. 12, &c.; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, and the carrying away of Zedekiah his uncle, which was eleven years after. In 2 Kings xxiv. 16, there is a particular mention of the king of Babylon's carrying away the *craftsmen and the smiths a thousand.*

2 One basket *had* very good figs, *even* like the figs *that are* first ripe: and the other basket *had* very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, †they were so bad.

† Heb. *for badness.*

God afterwards explaineth to the prophet, and he to the king's house, the significancy of this vision. The figs first ripe are usually best. By these *good figs,* as will appear by the following verses, are intended Jeconiah or Jehoiachin, with the ten thousand mentioned 2 Kings xxiv. 14, and the seven thousand mentioned ver. 16, which went with him into captivity. By the other figs which were very bad, not to be eaten, are signified Zedekiah and the residue of the people carried with him into captivity. Some may object that Jeconiah and the people then carried away were wicked enough, why else were they carried away? and being so, how are they compared to good figs? *Answ.* 1. Though they were bad, yet they might be comparatively good; this people, for the eleven years they continued in their own land, after that their brethren were carried away, not only continuing in their former courses, but still growing worse and worse. 2. They seem not to be called good or bad figs with respect to their manners or quality, but in respect to what God intended to do to them, viz. to use them as bad figs are used, not fit to be eaten.

3 Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.

God having caused the prophet to have such a visible object appear to him, asked him what he saw, as chap. i. 11.

4 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

5 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge †them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for *their* good.

† Heb. *the captivity.*

Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel; who have power to do what I please, and who yet am in covenant with Israel, and have a kindness for the seed of my servant Jacob. Look, as thou approvest of one of these baskets of figs, so I do approve of those that were carried away captive with Jeconiah, repenting of their sinful courses, and accepting of that punishment of their iniquity. *Whom I have sent;* though Nebuchadnezzar carried them away, it was by commission from me; so that though he carried, yet I sent them. *For their good;* which words may either refer to the last-mentioned words, intimating that God in sending them away aimed at either their spiritual good, to bring them to repentance, and an acknowledgment of their sins; or their temporal good, they being only quietly led away, without the miseries of famine, fire, and sword, besides carrying away; which those who remained, and were afterwards carried away with Zedekiah, experienced: or else they may be referred to the former words. I will acknowledge them for their good; that is, I will show them favour, being of the number of those who were not leaders to sin, but led away by the ill example of others, and who being carried away grew sensible of their sins by which they provoked me, and so accepted of the punishment of their iniquities.

6 For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and [d]I will bring them again to this land: and [e]I will build them, and not pull *them* down; and I will plant them, and not pluck *them* up.

[d] ch. 12. 15. & 29. 10.

[e] ch. 32. 41. & 33. 7. & 42. 10.

I will set mine eyes upon them for good; the soul looking out at the eye, discovereth its inclinations and affection, whether of love or wrath. Hence we read of God's setting his eyes upon people *for evil,* Amos ix. 4, as here of his setting his eyes upon them for good. Or else it may signify God's setting himself to do them good, as a man when he sets upon doing a thing, sets his eyes upon it in order thereunto. *I will bring them again to this land;* some of them probably returned before the end of the captivity, some at the end of the seventy years. *I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up:* the meaning of these metaphorical expressions is, I will prosper them, and provide for them. We read, 2 Kings xxv. 27, 28, *that Evil-merodach, king of Babylon, in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, lifted his head up out of prison, spake kindly to him,* &c.; but this prophecy was also fulfilled in Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Mordecai, and others, who are thought to be carried away with Jeconiah; or the prophecy may be understood of the posterity of those who were at this time carried away.

7 And I will give them [f]an heart to know me, that I *am* the LORD: and they shall be [g]my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me [h]with their whole heart.

[f] Deut. 30. 6. ch. 32. 39. Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 26, 27.

[g] ch. 30. 22. & 31. 33. & 32. 38.

[h] ch. 29. 13.

Under the term *know me* is here (as in many other texts) comprehended faith, love, obedience, all those motions of the soul which rationally should follow a right comprehending of God in men's knowledge. *They shall be my people, and I will be their God;* I will be a God in covenant with them; as I will fulfil what I have promised them, so they shall do what is their duty to me. *For,* or *when,* or *after* that *they shall return to me;* not feignedly, but with their heart; not partially, but *with their whole heart.* This is promised as an effect of special grace, not of the mere good inclination of their natural wills, for so the words *I will give,* in the beginning of the verse, must be understood, otherwise God gives such a heart no more to one man than another.

8 ¶ And as the evil [i]figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the LORD, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain

[i] ch. 29. 17.

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[k] See ch. 43, & 44.

in this land, and [k]them that dwell in the land of Egypt:

Whither it is probable many of the Jews had fled, upon the coming, or noise of the coming, of the king of Babylon, as they had done before, Isa. xxx. 2; xxxi. 1.

† Heb. *for removing, or, vexation.* 1 Deut. 28. 25, 37. 1 Kings 9. 7. 2 Chron. 7. 20. ch. 15. 4. & 29. 18. & 34. 17. [m] Ps. 44. 13, 14. [n] ch. 29. 18, 22.

9 And I will deliver them † to [l]be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for *their* hurt, [m]*to be* a reproach and a proverb, a taunt [n]and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them.

The Lord by his prophet expresseth those tremendous judgments which he had designed to bring upon this wicked prince and people in the words of Moses the man of God; as well because the Jews had a great reverence (pretendedly at least) for Moses, how little soever they had for Jeremiah; as to let them see that what the Lord here threatened, and suddenly would bring to pass, was but in a just accomplishment of what he before had threatened in his law, by which they ought to have taken warning. The sum is, he would make them a common scoff and by-word, that their misery should be a common proverb, and when men would curse one another, they should wish them like Zedekiah and the Jews.

10 And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.

Many of them shall not live to be carried into captivity, but shall die miserably in their own land, if not by the enemies' *sword*, yet by the *famine* and the *pestilence*, which two things ordinarily attend long sieges. By one of these three sore judgments of God they shall be consumed out of the land, and shall not hold it by the title of God's gift of it *to their fathers*. No gifts of God, except those of special grace, are perpetuities; but either given *quamdiu bene se gesserint*, so long as men behave themselves well in the use of them; or *durante bene placito*, during God's good will and pleasure.

CHAP. XXV.

Their disobedience to the prophets reproved, 1—7. *The seventy years of captivity foretold*, 8—11; *and after that the destruction of Babylon*, 12—14. *By a cup of wine is foreshown the destruction of all nations*, 15—33. *The howling of the shepherds*, 34—38.

607. Ending. 606. Beginning. [a] ch. 36. 1.

THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah [a]in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that *was* the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon;

The fourth year of Jehoiakim was seven years and odd months before Jeconiah or Jehoiachin his son was carried into captivity, as appears from 2 Kings xxiii. 36; xxiv. 8, 15, and eighteen years before the taking of the city, and the more general captivity; which argueth that this prophecy is misplaced, and set after the former, whereas in order of time it was sixteen or seventeen years before it. This is said to be *the first year of Nebuchadrezzar* (called by Ptolemy, Nabopolassar). It is said, Dan. i. 1. that this Nebuchadrezzar came up in the third year of Jehoiakim; to which is answered, that the first year of Nebuchadrezzar's reign must be understood of his *absolute reign*, which concurred partly with the third, partly with the fourth year of Jehoiakim; they say he was before a sharer in the kingly government with his father, but this was the first year that he had the name of king entirely given unto him.

2 The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

That is, the word concerned them all, and he spake it to so many of them as he met with in any public assembly at Jerusalem or elsewhere.

3 [b]From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that *is* the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; [c]but ye have not hearkened.

[b] ch. 1. 2. From 629. till 606. [c] ch. 7. 13. & 11. 7, 8, 10. & 13. 10, 11. & 16. 12. & 17. 23. & 18. 12. & 19. 15. & 22. 21.

We read, chap. i. 2, that Jeremiah began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah. Josiah reigned thirty-one years, 2 Kings xxii. 1; so that taking in the thirteenth year, Jeremiah prophesied nineteen years during the life of Josiah, to which adding the four of Jehoiakim's reign, it maketh twenty-three. These twenty-three years, saith the prophet, I have been a preacher to you, and I have not been negligent in my work; but like men that get up early in the morning to despatch their business, so have I been in the discharge of my prophetical office.

4 And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, [d]rising early and sending *them;* but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.

[d] ch. 7. 13, 25. & 26. 5. & 29. 19.

Nor am I the only prophet whom the Lord hath sent you, and whom you have neglected and despised; God hath sent you many more, and you have despised as many as he hath sent, though the Lord hath made it his business to send you one after another from time to time. This contempt of the Lord's messengers is made the proximate cause of God's wrath coming upon this people, till there was no remedy, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.

5 They said, [e]Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever:

[e] 2 Kings 17. 13. ch. 18. 11. & 35. 15. Jonah 3. 8.

The substance both of their and my sermons hath been to persuade you to leave off those sinful courses wherein you have lived, and which you might have amended by virtue of that common grace which I did not deny you. We have not differed in our doctrine, to the practice of which you have also been encouraged both by them and me, with an assurance from God that if you did it, you should enjoy this good land, which the Lord promised and gave to you and your fathers, and you have now possessed from age to age.

6 And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.

Gods; idols, which indeed are no gods, but so called by idolaters. *To serve them, and to worship them;* to pay any divine homage unto them. *And provoke me not to anger by* idols, which are *the work of men's hands* (no uncreated beings). Or more generally, any works which are contrary to the law of God. If you do this, *I will* by my providence *do you no harm*, you shall yet enjoy your own land and prosper.

7 Ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the LORD; that ye might [f]provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

[f] Deut. 32. 21. ch. 7. 19. & 32. 30.

Ye heard me and other the Lord's prophets thus speaking to you, but you did not obey and hearken. As if you had done it on purpose to incense me against you, who am of myself slow to wrath, and must be provoked to execute vindictive justice by men's own wicked works; which do not otherwise affect or hurt me, but are to their hurt who do them.

8 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words,

That is, because you have not hearkened to and obeyed my words; for it is manifest they had heard Jeremiah and the other prophets.

9 Behold, I will send and take [g]all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon,

[g] ch. 1. 15.

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h ch. 27. 6. & 43. 10. See 1 Kin. 11. 26. & 15. 1. ch. 40. 2.

[h]my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy

i ch. 18. 16.

them, and [i]make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.

I will put it into the heart of all those kings whose territories lie northward of Judea, and particularly into the heart of *Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon*, who in this work shall be *my servant;* though you will not be my servants in obeying my commands, yet he shall serve me, chap. xxvii. 6; xliii. 10. I *will bring them* and their armies up against this people, and I will put you out of hopes from your alliances with other nations, for he shall first bring them under his command: thus we read, 2 Kings xxiv. 7, that the *king of Babylon* had invaded the Egyptian dominions, and *taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.* And I will make the inhabitants of Jerusalem, not only a desolation, but a scorn, and reproach, and wonderment to the world. See chap. xix. 8.

† Heb. *I will cause to perish from them.*

k Is. 24. 7. ch. 7. 34. & 16. 9. Ezek. 26. 13. Hos. 2. 11. Rev. 18. 23.

l Eccles. 12. 4.

10 Moreover †I will take from them the [k]voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, [l]the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

I will take away all your mirth and jollity, whether used at weddings, or at any of your merry meetings; I will leave you nothing to rejoice in; your very wedding times shall be times of mourning and lamentation. Nay, I will not only deprive you of your mirth, but of those things that are necessary for you, as necessary as bread and light; the millstone shall not move, you shall not have the light so much as of a candle. See the like expressions Rev. xviii. 22. 23. God here threatens not only to take away their superfluities, and what he had hitherto lent them for their pleasure and delight, but also what they had for their necessary sustenance, and to capacitate them to do their ordinary works.

11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

This prophecy is a famous prophecy in regard of its fixing the particular space of time in which the Jews abode in the captivity of Babylon, viz. *seventy years.* When they determined we are plainly enough told, Ezra i. 1, *in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia*, but when they commenced is more disputed; for we read of three carryings into that captivity: the one in the third and fourth year of Jehoiakim, when it should seem that Nebuchadrezzar only carried away some few persons to be bred in his court, amongst whom were Daniel and the *three children*, Dan. i. 1, 2, &c.; a second seven years after, in Jeconiah's time, 2 Kings xxiv. 15, 16; the last and most general eleven years after, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah: it seemeth most probable that the *seventy years* must be reckoned from the *second;* for Jeremiah, chap. xxix. 1, &c., writing to those then in captivity, tells them, that when *seventy years should be accomplished*, God would *bring them back.* This is confirmed by Ezekiel, chap. xl. 1, where the *fourteenth year* after the taking of the city is expressly said to be the *twenty-fifth* year of their captivity.

m 2 Chron. 36. 21, 22. Ezra i. 1. ch. 29. 10. Dan. 9. 2.

* Beginning *circ.* 606.

2 Kin. 24. 1. Ending *circ.* 536. Ezra i. 1.

† Heb. *visit upon.*

12 ¶ And it shall come to pass, [m]when *seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will †punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, [n]and will make it perpetual desolations.

n Is. 13. 19. & 14. 23. & 21. 1, &c. & 47. 1. ch. 50. 3, 13, 23, 39, 40, 45. & 51. 25, 26.

When seventy years are accomplished; seventy years accounted from the time that the Jews were carried away in the time of Jeconiah or Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiv. 15, 16. This was fulfilled by Darius the king of Persia, Dan. iv. 31. Of these seventy Nebuchadnezzar reigned thirty-six, 2 Kings xxv. 27, Evil-merodach thirty-two, and Belshazzar at least two, Dan. viii. 1. Though God, whose all the creation is, and who is the Lord of all the hosts of his creatures, doth often make use of heathens and other wicked men to punish his own people, yet he will at last punish them too; and ordinarily when he doth punish them, it is with a more severe and grievous destruction than that by which he punisheth his people, Isa. xxvii. 7; thus he threatens to make the Chaldeans a *perpetual desolation.*

13 And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

That land; the land of the Babylonians and Chaldeans.

o ch. 50. 9. & 51. 27, 28. p ch. 50. 41. & 51. 27. q ch. 27. 7. r ch. 50. 29. & 51. 6, 24.

14 [o]For many nations [p]and great kings shall [q]serve themselves of them also: [r]and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

God threateneth the destruction of that monarchy by the Persians, according to the prophecy of this prophet, and declareth that their destruction was of themselves, God did but recompense unto them their own deeds, and the works of their hands; which is not to be restrained to their excesses in executing Divine vengeance, and the cruelty they used to the Israelites, but more generally interpreted of all their wicked courses.

s Job 21. 20. Ps. 75. 8. Is. 51. 17. Rev. 14. 10.

15 ¶ For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the [s]wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.

God's judgments are often in Scripture expressed under the notion of a cup of hot and intoxicating drink, and their suffering is set out under the notion of drinking such a cup, as Psal. lxxv. 8; Job xxi. 20; Isa. li. 17; Psal. xi. 6; lx. 3; Lam. iv. 21; Ezek. xxiii. 32, 34. God made Jeremiah to see the appearance of such a cup in a vision, and bade him to carry it to the nations to whom he sent him, to signify to them that his wrath should be poured out on them, and they should drink of it.

t ch. 51. 7. Ezek. 23. 34. Nah. 3. 11.

16 And [t]they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.

Whether they will or no, they shall drink it, and be disturbed, and be mad, and rage like men overcome with wine, because of those dreadful judgments which I shall send amongst them.

17 Then took I the cup at the LORD'S hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me:

That is, in the vision; for it cannot be thought that the Lord made the prophet to travel up and down to all the nations afterward named with a cup of wine in his hand.

18 *To wit*, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them [u]a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and [x]a curse; as *it is* this day;

u ver. 9, 11.

x ch. 24. 9.

Judgment usually beginneth at the house of God, 1 Pet. iv. 17. God hath more known them and done them more good than other people, therefore their sins are higher provocations, and they are less excusable. By the kings here mentioned are to be understood Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah; these princes with their people God threatens to punish to astonishment, and so as men should mock at them, and curse them; which expressions we have before met with in the same cause. But here ariseth a doubt how the prophet saith, *as it is this day*, whereas this prophecy, ver. 1, was in *the fourth year of Jehoiakim*, but Jerusalem was not made such a desolation till *the eleventh year of Zedekiah*, which was eighteen years after. Some think that though the thing were yet to come, yet the prophet speaketh of it as past, because of the certainty of it, which is but what is ordinary in the prophetical writings. Others

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think that these words were added after the captivity of Jeremiah, writing over his former prophecies. Others from these words judge that this part of the chapter was a prophecy at some other time following what was in the beginning of this chapter. Others think that he adds these words because the carrying into captivity was at this time begun, though not completed until the eleventh year of Zedekiah.

[f] ch. 46. 2, 25. 19 [f] Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people;

The Egyptians being that people whom the Jews most trusted to for help, are named as the first to whom the prophet was sent with the wine-cup of God's fury, to let the Jews know, that if they trusted to them, their confidence was vain; for they should themselves be destroyed, which was fulfilled within the twelve years after the death of Josiah unto the time of Jehoiachin, as appears from 2 Kings xxiv. 6, 7, for the king of Egypt made Jehoiakim king, 2 Kings xxiii. 34.

[g] ver. 24. 20 And all [g] the mingled people, and
[a] Job 1. 1. [b] ch. 47. 1, 5, 7. all the kings of [a] the land of Uz, [b] and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron,
[c] See Is. 20. 1. and [c] the remnant of Ashdod,

It is of no great moment to determine whether God by *the mingled people*, here mentioned, intended the various nations afterwards particularly expressed by their names, or some people that were not native Egyptians, but lived mingled with them, or some other people of several nations who lived near Judea or the Arabians. By *the kings of the land of Uz*, it is most probably judged are to be understood those kings who ruled over that people, who descended from Dishan, Gen. xxxvi. 28, and are judged to have inhabited some part of Arabia Petræa, near to Idumea. The cities of *the Philistines* are reckoned afterward. *Azzah, Ekron, Ashdod*, and *Ashkelon* were four of them; the fifth, which was Gath, is not here named. See 1 Sam. vi. 17. It had a king in former times, to whom David fled, 1 Sam. xxi. 10; but before this time it was destroyed, either by Psammeticus, father to Pharaoh-nechoh, or by Tartan, captain-general to Sargon king of Assyria, of whom read Isa. xx. 1, that he took Ashdod, which may be the reason that here mention is made of no more than *the remnant of Ashdod*.

[d] ch. 49. 7, &c. [e] ch. 48. 1. [f] ch. 49. 1. 21 [d] Edom, and [e] Moab, and the children of [f] Ammon,

The Edomites were the posterity of Esau the son of Isaac, to whom God had given a land which they inherited, and he would not suffer the Israelites to make their way through them by force, when they denied them a passage through their country; now he threatens their ruin, as also chap. xlix. 7; and Obadiah's prophecy was against them, where their triumphing in the captivity of the Jews is mentioned as one thing that had provoked God against them. The Moabites and Ammonites were descended from Lot. Chap. xlviii. is an entire prophecy against Moab; they had lived in long prosperity, as appears there, ver. 12; so had the Ammonites, against whom also Jeremiah prophesied particularly, chap. xlix. 1—7.

[g] ch. 47. 4. ‖ Or, *region by the sea side.* [h] ch. 49. 23. 22 And all the kings of [g] Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the ‖ isles which *are* beyond the [h] sea,

Tyrus was a strong city upon the borders of the tribe of Asher, Josh. xix. 29; 2 Sam. xxiv. 7, a very rich city, and a kingdom, with the king of which (who was Hiram) Solomon in his time traded much, 2 Chron. ii. 3. Isaiah prophesied its ruin, chap. xxiii. 1; so did Ezekiel, chap. xxvii. 28, 29: it was destroyed by Nebuchadrezzar, Ezek. xxix. 18. *Zidon* was nigh to it, therefore we shall ordinarily find Tyre and Zidon joined together in Scripture: both Isaiah and Ezekiel, as well as this prophet, prophesied their ruin. By *the isles beyond the sea*, some understand Greece and Italy; others Rhodes, Cyprus, and Crete; but others think Nebuchadnezzar never conquered these, and rather understand those parts of Syria that coasted upon the midland sea.

[i] ch. 49. 8. † Heb. *cut off into corners*, or, *having the corners* of the hair *polled*; ch. 9. 26. & 49. 32. 23 [i] Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all † *that are* in the utmost corners,

We read of a *Dedan* the issue of Ham, Gen. x. 7. The other the posterity of Abraham by Jokshan, Gen. xxv. 3. It seemeth to be a city of Idumea, chap. xlix. 8. *Tema* descended from Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 15; his posterity inhabited in Arabia, Isa. xxi. 14, where they are joined with those of Dedan. *Buz* was one of the posterity of Nahor, Gen. xxii. 21. These were people mixed with the Saracens or Arabians. *All that are in the utmost corners*; that dwell in the corners or furthest parts of the world. Some interpret it of the fashion of their cutting their beards, as the Saracens did: see Lev. xix. 27, where God forbade his people that fashion.

[k] 2 Chr. 9. 14. 1 See ver. 20. ch. 49. 31. & 50. 37. Ezek. 30. 5. 24 And [k] all the [l] kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the [l] mingled people that dwell in the desert,

All the kings of Arabia; there were several kings in Arabia, 2 Chron. ix. 14. *All the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert*; people of several nations that were got together in the desert, and had made to themselves several kings or chief rulers.

25 And all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of [m] Elam, and all the kings of the Medes,

[m] ch. 49. 34.

All the kings of Zimri; those descended from Zimran, Abraham's son by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 2 (the Zamarens, as some think, mentioned by Pliny). By the Elamites are meant the Persians, descended from Shem, Gen. x. 22. Elam is also mentioned Isa. xxii. 6. See also chap. xlix. 34. The Medes came from Madai the son of Japheth, Gen. x. 2; they are usually joined with the Persians, Dan. v. 28.

[n] ch. 50. 8. 26 [n] And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which *are* upon the face of the earth: [o] and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.

[o] ch. 51. 41.

All the kings of the north, far and near; all under the government of the Chaldeans, or (as others) all those princes that have dominions between the north and east. *All the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth*; that is, in those parts of the world which were at that time known, with whom there was ordinary commerce. *And the king of Sheshach shall drink after them*; and the *king of Babylon*, who was last of all to drink of this cup of the Lord's fury. That he is here meant is plain from chap. li. 41, where Sheshach is thus interpreted. But why Babylon is called Sheshach is a harder question, and not easily resolved. Those who think the prophet gives Babylon here another name to avoid an odium from the king of Babylon, at this time their enemy, neither consider the usual courage of this prophet, nor that he speaks plainly enough, chap. li. 41, where he mentioneth both Babylon and Sheshach, and expoundeth the latter by the former. It is thought that Babylon is called Sheshach from the name of an idol called Shach which they worshipped, to whose honour they yearly kept a festival for five days together, which they called Shace, and they say that during this festival Cyrus took Babylon. But these are all uncertain guesses; it is enough for us to know that by the king of Sheshach is meant the king of Babel, as the prophet expounds himself, chap. li. 41.

27 Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; [p] Drink ye, and [q] be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.

[p] Hab. 2. 16. [q] Is. 51. 21. & 63. 6.

28 And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ye shall certainly drink.

The meaning of these two verses is no more than this; God let Jeremiah in a vision know that it was his will that

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he should prophesy a certain and unavoidable ruin to all these nations, which was brought upon all the rest by the king of Babylon, whom God made his instrument to execute his vengeance upon them; and last of all upon the king of Babylon himself by Cyrus the king of Persia. This judgment which he telleth them should be by the sword he expresseth by the effects, *falling* and *rising no more*, and commands them to *drink* it, to comport with the metaphor of the wine-cup of God's fury, mentioned ver. 15; the drinking of cups of heady, intoxicating wine ordinarily producing such effects as *spewing* and *falling*, &c. This cup of the Lord's fury he assures them they should not turn by, but should most certainly drink it.

29 For, lo, [r] I begin to bring evil on the city † [s] which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for [t] I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts.

r Prov. 11. 31. ch. 49. 12. Ezek. 9. 6. Obad. 16. Luke 23. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 17.
† Heb. *upon which my name is called.*
s Dan. 9. 18, 19.
t Ezek. 38. 21.

By the city called by his name, or upon which his name was called, he means Jerusalem, elsewhere called the holy city. The apostle, 1 Pet. iv. 17, speaketh much to this purpose, *The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?* If God spareth not the green tree, how shall he spare those that are dry and withered? Atheists and lewd and profane persons have little reason to promise themselves an escape from God's righteous judgment, when they see God not sparing those that make the highest profession of him, and stand in some relation to him. *For I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth;* it is in vain for you to promise yourselves an escape, for God is about to punish all your neighbours.

30 Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall [u] roar from on high, and utter his voice from [x] his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon [y] his habitation; he shall give [z] a shout, as they that tread *the grapes*, against all the inhabitants of the earth.

u Is. 42. 13. Joel 3. 16. Amos 1. 2.
x Ps. 11. 4. ch. 17. 12.
y 1 Kin. 9. 3. Ps. 132. 14.
z Is. 16. 9. ch. 48. 33.

Reveal my will unto them presently, to revenge myself upon them, in words to this sense or purpose; tell them that I, who hitherto have been toward them as a lamb, will now be to them as a lion; so Joel iii. 16; Amos i. 2; iii. 8; and, as a lion, will roar from heaven; for though the temple be sometimes called *his holy habitation*, yet the foregoing words, *from on high*, expound this term in this place otherwise. *Upon his habitation*, or *in his habitation*, which is more likely to be understoood, in heaven, (as the former,) than, in Jerusalem, as divers would have it; for God is here revealing his wrath against foreign nations, upon some of which these judgments came after God had done roaring in or upon Jerusalem. *He shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth;* a shout, such as soldiers use to give when they storm a city, or assault their enemies, to encourage their fellows, and to dishearten their enemies; like the shout of those that *tread the grapes*, singing one to another, or rejoicing and triumphing in the vintage.

31 A noise shall come *even* to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath [a] a controversy with the nations, [b] he will plead with all flesh; he will give them *that are* wicked to the sword, saith the LORD.

a Hos. 4. 1. Micah 6. 2.
b Is. 66. 16. Joel 3. 2.

There shall be such confusions and noises as shall ring over all the world; for God's quarrel is not against the Jews only, but other nations also. Nor will he in any thing he doth act unjustly; if they will join issue with him, he will plead with them, and make it appear to all that he acteth righteously. He will give up many to the sword, but they shall be such only as by their wickedness have deserved it, recompensing to them their own works and evil doings.

32 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and [c] a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

c ch. 23. 19. & 30. 23.

It is much the same thing which was said before, only repeated for the greater terror in a variety of expressions. He tells them that the judgment should be like a contagion, going from one nation to another, or like a fire catching hold of another house before the first is burned down, like a *whirlwind* that blows from all sides, cometh suddenly, and devoureth dreadfully.

33 [d] And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from *one* end of the earth even unto the *other* end of the earth: they shall not be [e] lamented, [f] neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

d Is. 66. 16.
e ch. 16. 4, 6.
f Ps. 79. 3. ch. 8. 2. Rev. 11. 9.

That those who should be slain by commission from the Lord in this time of his judgments should be in all places, and so numerous, that there should be none left to lament for or to bury the dead; but the dead bodies should lie and rot upon the surface of the earth, and be as muck to it. See the like phrases chap. xvi. 4.

34 ¶ [g] Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves *in the ashes*, ye principal of the flock: for † the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like † a pleasant vessel.

g ch. 4. 8. & 6. 26.
† Heb. *your days for slaughter.*
† Heb. *a vessel of desire.*

Shepherds, and the *principal of the flock*, are in this place of the same significancy, by both he means the civil rulers; so the word is used chap. xxii. 22; xxiii. 1. These he calls aforehand to bewail their fate; for the days were now come when they should be slain and scattered. And he tells them their fall should be like the fall of a crystal glass, or some delicate tender *vessel*, which when it falleth breaketh in pieces, and cannot again be set together.

35 And † the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.

† Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escaping from, &c.* Amos 2. 14.

In ordinary dispensations of judgment, there is some way left to escape, and if there be any way of escape, great men are likeliest to find it; but he telleth them that the greatest men should find no way to flee from or escape this terrible dispensation of God.

36 A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, *shall be heard:* for the LORD hath spoiled their pasture.

That is, there shall be heard a great outcry of the princes and rulers, when they shall see how the Lord hath spoiled the cities in which, and their people upon which, they have lived, and amongst whom they were wont to feed securely.

37 And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

That is, the places where these great men were wont to live splendidly, and dwell peaceably and securely, shall be as surely destroyed, through the Lord's anger, as if it were already done.

38 He hath forsaken [h] his covert, as the lion: for their land is † desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.

h Ps. 76. 2.
† Heb. *a desolation.*

God had before compared himself to a lion, ver. 30; here he declares himself to be about to move like a lion, who when he goeth out to seek his prey, leaveth his covert: see chap. l. 44. The effects of this rising up of God out of his covert is the desolation of the land through the fierceness of the enemy, caused from the fierce anger of God now ready to be poured out upon this people.

CHAP. XXVI.

The prophet, by God's command, in the court of the temple, threateneth that the temple shall be as Shiloh, and the

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land a curse: exhorteth to repentance, 1—7. *He is apprehended and arraigned,* 8—11. *His apology,* 12—15. *The princes clear him by the example of Micah,* 16—19, *and of Urijah,* 20—23, *and by the care of Ahikam,* 24.

610. Ending. 609. Beginning. IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word from the LORD, saying,

The prophecy, chap. xxv., is said to have been revealed in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, this in the beginning of his reign, which makes learned men think it ought to have been placed before that. The affairs of the Jews were then in a very desperate condition; Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt had overcome Josiah, and killed him in battle, Jehoahaz or Shallum being made king in his stead, 2 Kings xxiii. 30; he had reigned but three months, and Pharaoh-nechoh taketh him, and imprisoneth him, and lays a tribute upon the land of three hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold, and makes Eliakim king, changing his name to Jehoiakim, ver. 33, 34. Now in the beginning of this king's reign cometh this word of God to Jeremiah, the people being still hardened and going on in their sinful practices.

a ch. 19. 14. 2 Thus saith the LORD; Stand in [a]the court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, [b]all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; [c]diminish not a word:

b Ezek. 3. 10. Matt. 28. 20. c Acts 20. 27.

Stand in the court of the Lord's house; in the largest court of the temple, where the most may hear what thou sayest, and there speak to all those that dwell in any of the cities of Judah (from whence they were wont to come up, more especially thrice in a year to the temple to worship, Psal. cxxii. 4). In the gate or court of that house wherein they have such a confidence do thou *stand,* (so chap. vii. 2,) and declare unto them what I command thee. *Diminish not a word;* neither smoothing what may appear rough, nor suppressing what may offend them, entirely delivering my will unto them, not shunning to declare unto them the whole counsel of God, as Paul, Acts xx. 27.

d ch. 36. 3. 3 [d]If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may [e]repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings.

e ch. 18. 8. Jonah 3. 8, 9.

Not that God was ignorant of their obstinacy and the hardening of their hearts, which was the future event; but to let us know that their destruction would be of themselves, he would give them both a time and space, and also means, for repentance, and the prevention of the judgments of God coming on them. He did give them time, for it was after this eleven years before the captivity of Jehoiakim, and two and twenty before that of Zedekiah; and for means, God afforded them the ministry of this prophet. Repentance applied to man signifieth a change of heart and counsels, as well as of his course of actions: in the unchangeable God it only signifieth the turning of the course of his providence, not bringing that evil upon them for the evil of their doings which, supposing their progress and obstinacy in their sinful courses, he had fully resolved to bring upon them.

4 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; [f]If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you,

f Lev. 26. 14, &c. Deut. 28. 15.

A course of actions in Scripture is ordinarily called a way; in which sense we often read of *the way of the Lord,* the *way of the wicked,* the *way of the righteous,* &c.; and a motion in this course is usually called walking, Psal. i. 1; Ezek. xviii. 9, and applied both to God and men. To walk in God's laws is expounded by hearkening unto them, or (as in other places) by observing, keeping, and doing them. God is said to have set his laws before them, both in respect of their first promulgation to them at Sinai, and writing them in tables; and the daily expositions and urging of them upon their practice by his servants the prophets, as it followeth.

5 To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, [g]whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending *them,* but ye have not hearkened;

g ch. 7. 13, 25. & 11. 7. & 25. 3, 4.

My servants the prophets; those prophets who in prophesying were my servants, revealing my will unto you. *Hearkening* here is the same with hearkening unto God's laws mentioned ver. 4. *Whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them;* whom I have made my business to send unto you; and to whom you ought therefore to have hearkened, as unto me, but you have not done it hitherto, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, 16.

6 Then will I make this house like [h]Shiloh, and will make this city [i]a curse to all the nations of the earth.

h 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11. Psa. 78. 60. ch. 7. 12, 14. i Is. 65. 15. ch. 24. 9.

Shiloh was the city where the tabernacle was pitched, and the ark, the symbol of God's presence, was, Judg. xviii. 31; xxi. 19; 1 Sam. i. 3, 9, 24; iii. 21. Out of it the ark was carried, 1 Sam. iv. 3, when it was taken by the Philistines, and was carried no more thither, but rested in Kirjath-jearim, 1 Sam. vii. 2, where it rested twenty years. David fetched it from thence, 2 Sam. vi. 2. So that, as the psalmist tells us, Psal. lxxviii. 60, 61, God *forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh;* here he threateneth to do the like as to the temple, because of which they had such a confidence. Jeremiah, chap. vii. 12, had spoken much the same thing; it is a threatening that God would deprive them of his ordinances. To which he addeth a threatening of destruction to the city, to that degree, that when men should curse any place, they should say, God do unto thee as he did to Jerusalem. We had the like phrase chap. xxiv. 9, and have it again chap. xxix. 18, 22, &c.

7 So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD.

All the people present at that time heard the prophet, who, according to the command of God, came into the court of the Lord's house, and discharged his office, speaking these words.

8 ¶ Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.

Either they had a reverence for the prophet, or the terror of God fell upon them, so as they did not interrupt him till he had fully despatched his errand. Then the chief of the priests, with the assistance of the people, apprehend him, and tell him he should be put to death.

9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

They charge him with being a false prophet, speaking false things in the name of God; their pretence seemeth to have been from the promises of God; such as that, Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14, *For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.* Which they interpreted into such a sense, as if they could not by their sin drive God away from them, and therefore Jeremiah must prophesy falsely against the will of God before revealed. This caused a seditious tumult of the people in the temple, which alarmed the civil magistrates.

10 ¶ When the princes of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD, and sat down ‖ in the entry of the new gate of the LORD's *house.*

‖ Or, *at the door.*

When the nobles and other civil magistrates heard of the tumult, occasioned by Jeremiah's unpleasing prophecy, they came from the king's court, where the nobles and great officers in nations usually are, to the temple; *and sat down at the entry of the new gate in the Lord's house.* Some

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think it was called the *new gate* because repaired by Jotham, 2 Kings xv. 35; 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. Some say it was the eastern, others that it was the western gate. It was certainly the place where their sanhedrim, who were to judge of false prophets, were wont to sit.

11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, † This man *is* worthy to die; [k] for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

† Heb. *The judgment of death is for this man.*
k ch. 38. 4.

In the corrupt state of all kingdoms and cities, the ecclesiastical officers always were the greatest enemies to the faithful ministers of God, as we shall find in the whole story both of the Old and New Testament. They speak to the members of the great court, who are called *princes*, and also to the people who were in the court, charging Jeremiah with sedition, by prophesying falsely, which was a capital crime. It was the charge against Stephen, Acts vi. 13, that he spake *blasphemous words against the holy place*. To prove this they appeal to those of the people that had heard him.

12 ¶ Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.

The priests having given Jeremiah his charge, he makes his defence. The sum of which was, he acknowledgeth that he had prophesied against the temple, and against the city, and tacitly acknowledgeth their power to take cognizance of seditious persons and false prophets, and doth not deny but such persons deserved to die; but denieth that he was a false prophet, or guilty of any design to stir up sedition, for he had said nothing but what God had sent him to speak; and therefore could not prophesy what was false, nor was to be charged with any seditious design.

13 Therefore now [l] amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will [m] repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

l ch. 7. 3.
m ver. 3, 19.

It is not I that have pronounced evil against you, but the Lord, who made both you and me: you rage against me, who am but God's instrument, by whom he lets you know his mind and will; it were more advisable for you to reform your wicked lives and practices; and that by a full obedience to what the Lord hath commanded you in his law, and by me speaketh to you. If you will do this, the Lord will change the course of his providence, and do that which in men is called a repenting, and not bring those evil things upon you which he, by me his servant, hath pronounced against you.

14 As for me, behold, [n] I *am* in your hand: do with me † as seemeth good and meet unto you.

n ch. 38. 5.
† Heb. *as it is good and right in your eyes.*

I am in your hand; that is, I am in your *power* (as hand often signifieth in Scripture). Jeremiah doth not by this acknowledge any power they had justly thus to restrain and question him. Nor doth he dare them to do what they had a natural power to do, by saying, *Do with me what seemeth good unto you;* the phrase imports no more than that he could not hinder their doing with him what they pleased. The hands in which he was were the hands of violence, not of justice; for though they had a just power against false prophets, yet they had no such power against any prophet sent by God, let the matter of his prophecy be never so threatening and ungrateful to them. Therefore he addeth,

15 But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

If you make this sedition, and put me to death for it, you have a natural power to do it, but you will get nothing by it, but further bring down the vengeance of God upon you by shedding my blood without a cause, the guilt of which will be added to your other guilt, and lie upon you, and upon your city: for you may think and talk what you please, it is a certain truth, that I spake nothing out of any evil design, nor of my own head; but only what the Lord sent me to speak.

16 ¶ Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man *is* not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.

The judges in this case, with the assent of the people, acquit the prophet, and vindicate him from the charge of sedition given against him by the corrupt priests and false prophets, distinguishing betwixt one who of his own head spreadeth false news, and threateneth evil to a place, and one who doth it by authority from God, or by Divine revelation, which is here meant by *in the name of our Lord God*. Thus the civil magistrates taught the priests and prophets a point of divinity, which they ought not to have been ignorant of. Some may inquire how the princes knew that Jeremiah spake what he spake in the name of the Lord. To which it may be replied, that Jeremiah had been a prophet now about twenty years, for he began in the thirteenth of Josiah, chap. i. 1, 2. Josiah reigned thirty-one years, 2 Kings xxii. 1. Then Shallum or Jehoahaz reigned three months; this was in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, in which time they had had a large experience both of his doctrine and conversation; and though the priests and prophets, who had had the like experience, were filled with malice and prejudice, yet the princes and a part of the people were more equal; and though the people were many of them led away with the priests, yet hearing the prophet's defence, and the princes' judgment upon it, they concur with them to acquit the prophet.

17 [o] Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying,

o See Acts 5. 34, &c.

Probably these *elders* were some of the court, or else advocates, for they were wont to rise up, either to plead or to judge, Isa. iii. 13; Acts v. 34. They rise up and apply themselves to the people to justify their absolutory sentence.

18 [p] Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; [q] Zion shall be plowed *like* a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.

p Mic. 1. 1. cir. 710.
q Mic. 3. 12.

This was that *Micah* whose prophecies are part of holy writ, as appeareth by Micah i. 1; iii. 12, where are the very words of the prophecy here mentioned. The substance of that prophecy was the same with this of Jeremiah, that Zion should be plough d up, and the place where the temple stood should become so desolate that trees should grow there, as in a wood or forest.

19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? [r] did he not fear the LORD, and besought † the LORD, and the LORD [s] repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? [t] Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.

r 2 Chron. 32. 26.
† Heb. *the face of the LORD.*
s Ex. 32. 14. 2 Sam. 24. 16.
t Acts 5. 39.

The interrogation here hath the force of a negation; that is, Hezekiah, and the sanhedrim in his time, did not go about to call him in question for his life, nor put him to death; his prophecy had a quite contrary effect on him; it begat in him an awe and dread of that God in whose name the prophet spake, and quickened him to apply himself to God by earnest prayer: and the course he took had a very good issue; the Lord did not do what he threatened to do. Now if we should take a quite contrary course, and put this man to death, we should do contrary to what that good prince did, (and that with good success,) do ourselves no good, but *procure great evil against our souls;*

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that is, against ourselves, both bodies and souls strictly taken.

20 And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath-jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah:

This is a piece of story which we have recorded in no other part of Scripture. Some judge these words were the words of the same that spake before; but this is not likely, for then they had brought one instance for acquitting him, another for the condemning of him. They are therefore rather to be interpreted as the words of some others, either of the court, who were enemies to Jeremiah, or of his accusers, or their counsel, urging a later precedent, in the time of Jehoiakim, the king that at this time reigned, who also pretended to speak in the name of the Lord, and whose prophecy was the same in substance with this of Jeremiah.

21 And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death: but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt;

When Jehoiakim, our present king, and all his great men, heard of it, (probably by the information of others,) they judged it a capital crime, and used means to apprehend him, in order to the putting him to death, upon which the prophet being advertised of it, and fearing the issue, fled into Egypt.

22 And Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt, *namely*, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and *certain* men with him into Egypt.

The innocent prophet considered not the king of Judah's alliance with the king of Egypt, (obliging him upon demand to deliver up any of his subjects who, being charged with capital crimes, should flee into his country for sanctuary,) and fled thither; but the king sent after him one of his great men, (mentioned also chap. xxxvi. 12,) with some others to his assistance.

cir. 609. 23 And they fetched forth Urijah out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king; who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of the †common people.

† Heb. *sons of the people.*

These persons sent by Jehoiakim brought back the prophet by force; he was tried and cast, judged worthy to die, and put to death, and ignominiously buried, not in the sepulchres of the prophets, or any men of repute and fashion, but amongst the vulgar people; which, as also his diligence to send for Urijah, (fled into a foreign country to save his life,) showed the great malice of this prince against the Lord's true prophets; though it had but very ill effects. The sum is, (if we take these words as the speech of Jeremiah's enemies,) What do you tell us of what Hezekiah did, you have a later instance of it in our present king's time, the cases of Urijah and of Jeremiah are fully parallelled. So as the case is a judged case.

u 2 Kings 22. 12, 14. ch. 39. 14. 24 Nevertheless [u]the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

Though Jeremiah's enemies pleaded this instance of Urijah, which had this advantage of the other, because it was matter of fact done lately, and a case judged in this very king's reign; yet *the hand*, that is, the power and interest, *of* one *Ahikam*, who, as appears from 2 Kings xxii. 12, was one of Josiah's counsellors, and the father of Gedaliah, chap. xxxix. 14, who upon the taking of the city was made governor, chap. xl. 5, *was with Jeremiah*. So as, through the good providence of God, Jeremiah was not delivered *into the hands of the people*, some of whom were mutable, and malicious enough, ready to do any thing the priests put them upon. And the after-advancement of the son of this Ahikam to be governor of Judah may justly be interpreted a reward in this life, which God gave him for his kindness to his prophet.

CHAP. XXVII.

The prophet sendeth yokes to five neighbour kings, thereby foreshowing their subjection to Nebuchadnezzar, 1—7. He exhorteth them to yield, and not to believe false prophets, 8—11. The like he doth to Zedekiah, 12—18. The remnant of the vessels shall be carried to Babylon, and continue there till the appointed time, 19—22.

IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah [a]king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, cir. 598. a See ver. 3, 12, 19, 20. ch. 28. 1.

Here is a difficulty ariseth from this verse, which there have been various attempts to resolve, and whether any hath been fully satisfactory I doubt. It is said *this word of the Lord came to Jeremiah in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim*, and, ver. 3, the prophet is bid to *send the bonds and yokes by the hand of the messengers which came to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah*, who began not to reign till about eleven years after the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim. To solve this difficulty, 1. Some think Jehoiakim was a common name to all the sons of Josiah, and that Zedekiah is here called Jehoiakim, but I see no foundation for that conjecture from holy writ. 2. Others think it is an error in those that copied out the prophecies, but it is dangerous to admit that. 3. Others think that the prophecy came in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, but was to be concealed until the reign of Zedekiah. 4. I had rather agree with those who think that this command came to the prophet first in the time of Jehoiakim, but was to be repeated by the prophet often, and accordingly was so until and in the time of Zedekiah; not that he always went about with bonds and yokes about his neck, but that by times he put them on, and went about with them, as a type of that bondage which the Jews were suddenly to endure.

2 Thus ‖saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, [b]and put them upon thy neck, ‖ Or, *hath the LORD said.* b ch. 28. 10, 12. So Ezek. 4. 1. & 12. 3. & 24. 3, &c.

God commandeth the prophet to procure, either by his own labour, or with his money, some yokes, with bonds to make them more fast; and to put some one of them upon his own neck, that therein he might be a type both to his own people, and also the people afterward mentioned, that they should be in bondage to the king of Babylon, and their yoke should be so fastened with bonds, that they should not be able to slip them, or get them from off their necks.

3 And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah;

It was and is the custom of neighbour princes, to send ambassadors into each other's countries to reside there, and maintain correspondence on the behalf of their masters. These nations were neighbours to the Jews, and their princes had their ambassadors resident at Jerusalem. Jeremiah is directed to carry each of these ambassadors a yoke with a bond, as a present from God to their masters; the meaning he is also ordered to tell them in the following words.

4 And command them ‖to say unto their masters, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters; ‖ Or, *concerning their masters, saying.*

The Lord of hosts, who hath therefore a power over all the creatures; who though he be in a special sense *the God of Israel*, yet his dominion is extended to your masters' countries, as well as unto Israel.

5 [c]I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* upon the ground, by c Ps. 115. 15. & 146. 6. Is. 45. 12.

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my great power and by my outstretched
d Ps. 115. 16. Dan. 4. 17, 25, 32. arm, and [d]have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.

To evince to them that his dominion extendeth to them, he mindeth them that he was the first efficient cause of all the creatures, and made both all men and all beasts that are upon the earth, and therefore had a special propriety in them, and a universal power over them, it being in his power to dispose of what was at first the work of his hands, and accordingly in the methods and workings of his providence he did daily dispose of kingdoms and nations according to his pleasure, without being for such disposal of them accountable unto any person.

e ch. 28. 14. 6 [e]And now have I given all these
f ch. 25. 9. & 43. 10. Ezek. 29. 18, 20. lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar
g ch. 28. 14. Dan. 2. 38. the king of Babylon, [f]my servant; and [g]the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

By the former words God gave the prophet authority to assert his dominion, and right to dispose of all creatures; by these he authorizeth him to reveal his will, concerning the disposal of the lands of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Zidon, viz. that he had disposed of them to *Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon*, whom he calleth his *servant*, because he did the work which he would have him to do; though, as God said of the Assyrian, Isa. x. 7, he *meaned not so*, he had nothing less in his thoughts than to obey any command of God; wicked men being God's servants, as the hawk is the prudent falconer's servant, who maketh use of the ravenous quality of the hawk to get game for him. Twice more at least we find Nebuchadnezzar thus called, chap. xxv. 9; xliii. 10. God further adds that *the beasts* should *serve him*, by which he either means that the cattle which were in the possession of the men of those nations should also come into his power; or that God had also given the horses, and oxen, and other beasts which he should use in his wars for carriages, or conveniency to him, so as they should be really serviceable to him in his conquests of those countries.

h 2 Chron. 36. 20. i ch. 25. 12. & 50. 27. Dan. 5. 26. k ch. 25. 14. 7 [h]And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, [i]until the very time of his land come: [k]and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.

All nations shall serve him; that is, all *these* nations; and some think that it is expressed in the article used here demonstratively, though not so taken notice of by our translators. *And his son, and his son's son;* and Evil-merodach his son, who succeeded him, chap. lii. 31, and Belshazzar his grandchild, Dan. v. 1, 11. Until the period of his kingdom shall come, (for nations have their periods,) which was after *seventy years*, according to chap. xxix. 10, during which years some say four princes ruled in Babylon, the Scripture mentions but three. After that he shall himself be conquered, as it came to pass in Belshazzar's time, Dan. v. 30, Darius the emperor of the Medes taking his kingdom.

8 And it shall come to pass, *that* the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.

That is, that will not, upon Nebuchadnezzar's coming against them, freely submit to his power, and yield themselves to his subjection. I will humble them by my sore judgments of *sword, pestilence*, and *famine*, and make them yield; and they shall not avoid what through their stubbornness they study to avoid, but shall at last be brought under by his power.

9 Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to
† Heb. *dreams.* your †dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon:

It is uncertain whether these words were part of the message which Jeremiah by command from God sent to the kings above mentioned, or the prophet's words to the Jews; for as those pagan nations had *diviners, dreamers, enchanters*, and *sorcerers*, so the Jews had them also, Isa. xlvii. 12, 13: the meaning is, Hearken to none of them that pretend as from God to foretell your escape from this judgment, and not being brought into servitude to the king of Babylon, for you shall serve the king of Babylon. By *prophets* he means such as pretended to some Divine revelations. By *diviners* he means soothsayers, of which were several sorts. By *dreamers*, such as pretend to revelations in their sleep. By *enchanters* and *sorcerers*, he means their astrologers, and such as used necromancy, or by any unlawful ways and means pretended to know the mind and will of God.

10 [l]For they prophesy a lie unto you, l ver. 14.
to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish.

Let them come by their pretended knowledge which way they will, what they say is false; and the issue of your belief of what they say will be nothing but your carrying into captivity out of your own country, and your ruin and destruction.

11 But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

Those that upon the first summons, or without making any hostile opposition, shall yield themselves servants to the king of Babylon, they shall remain still, and be left in the land to till the ground, and shall dwell therein. It is the time when God is resolved to put an end to the kingdom of Judah for a time, and to the other nations mentioned for ever: there is therefore no resisting of God's counsels; those that most quietly yield will be in the best condition.

12 ¶ I spake also to [m]Zedekiah king 598.
m ch. 28. 1. & 38. 17. of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live.

Some think this was at another time, but it is most probable it was the same time.

13 [n]Why will ye die, thou and thy n Ezek. 18. 31
people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon?

That is, Why wilt thou wilfully not only ruin thyself, but thy innocent people, by the sword, the famine, and the pestilence? The word is spoken by the Lord, that all nations who will not willingly yield to the king of Babylon shall be thus destroyed.

14 Therefore hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: for they prophesy [o]a lie unto o ch. 14. 14. & 23. 21. & 29. 8, 9.
you.

We shall find throughout all the Jewish story that wicked princes never wanted false prophets, ecclesiastical ministers who would entitle God to what they spake in humour to their governors. Such ministers they would have, and usually they proved fatal to them: so did Ahab's prophets, that encouraged him to go up to Ramoth-gilead, and Zedekiah's prophets, who persuaded him not to submit to the king of Babylon. Jeremiah persuades Zedekiah not to hearken to them; that is, not to believe them, nor follow their advice; and he giveth him a good reason, because what they said was false.

15 For I have not sent them, saith † Heb. *in a lie, or, lyingly.*
the LORD, yet they prophesy †a lie in my

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name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you.

They make use of my name, and pretend to say what they say by commission from me, saith the Lord; but there is no such thing, I never gave them authority to speak any such things. And though possibly they do not design your ruin by these practices, for none can be thought to design their own ruin, yet that will be the end of it; for by this means your hearts are hardened against the revelations of my will, by which I shall be provoked to give you up to ruin; nor shall they escape, for they shall be ruined with you.

16 Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, [p] the vessels of the LORD's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you.

p 2 Chron. 36. 7, 10. ch. 28. 3. Dan. 1. 2.

The prophet, like God's faithful servant, spared none, but faithfully gave warning to all sorts, to take heed of the false prophets that undertook to foretell that the vessels of the temple carried away in the time of Jehoiakim, and his son Jehoiachin or Jeconiah, of which we read 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7, 10, should be brought back again to Jerusalem in a short time.

17 Hearken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should this city be laid waste?

Believe them not, but satisfy yourselves as to God's providence with respect to you, and be content to be subject to the king of Babylon, so may you have your lives for a prey; though you be straitened as to your accommodations and plenteous and splendid way of life: if you do not, your city will certainly be laid waste; and why should you pull such a judgment upon your own heads?

18 But if they *be* prophets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, let them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, and *in* the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon.

If they be true prophets, and have any communion with God, instead of foretelling the bringing back of the vessels carried away, let them apply themselves to hinder the carrying away of what vessels yet remain, and that either in the house of the Lord, or the king's house, or in Jerusalem; which is to be done no other way than by pleading with God to turn away his wrath, and not to bring those sore judgments which he is most certainly bringing upon you.

19 ¶ For thus saith the LORD of hosts [q] concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city,

q 2 Kings 25. 13, &c. ch. 52. 17, 20, 21.

These were all parts of the temple, or vessels used in it. See 1 Kings vii.

20 Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away [r] captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem;

r 2 Kings 24. 14, 15. ch. 24. 1.

Concerning the persons and things which the king of Babylon then carried away, see 2 Kings xxiv. 13—15.

21 Yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain *in* the house of the LORD, and *in* the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem;

The prophet enlargeth his prophetical threatening, and makes it extend to all other vessels of price, in the houses of the king, the nobles, or more wealthy citizens.

22 They shall be [s] carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I [t] visit them, saith the LORD; then [u] will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

s 2 Kings 25. 13. 2 Chron. 36. 18.
t 2 Chro. 36. 21. ch. 29. 10. & 32. 5.
u Ezra 1. 7. & 7. 19.

They shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be: see the fulfilling of this prophecy, 2 Kings xxv. 13—15, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18; and that they abode in Babylon till the end of the captivity, appeareth from Dan. v. 2, where we read of Belshazzar's sending for them to drink wine in at his fatal feast. *Until the day that I visit them;* that is, until the expiration of the time of the Jewish captivity, which was seventy years. *Then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place;* the fulfilling of that part of the prophecy we have Ezra i. 7—11, in these words, *Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem.* So punctually was Jeremiah's prophecy in this place fulfilled, and so exactly doth one part of holy writ agree with another, which are great arguments to prove the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Hananiah's false prophecy: Jeremiah's answer, 1—9. *Hananiah breaketh Jeremiah's yoke: he foretelleth an iron yoke, and Hananiah's death,* 10—17.

AND [a] it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, *and* in the fifth month, *that* Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which *was* of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying,

cir. 806. a ch. 27. 1.

Here is a great appearing difficulty, viz. how *the fourth year* could be called *the beginning of Zedekiah's reign*, who reigned in all but eleven years, which if they be divided into three parts, the fourth year can hardly be in any propriety called the beginning of his reign. Many things are said to untie this knot, which by such as are curious may be read both in the English Annotations and in Mr. Pool's Synopsis, I shall only repeat what seemed to both them, and seemeth also to me, the best solution. Though it be said *in the fourth year*, yet it is not said, in the fourth year of Zedekiah's reign; they therefore think, that *the fourth year of the sabbatical course* is here intended. The Jews had a kind of jubilee every seventh year, it was a year when the land was to rest, and not be tilled, Lev. xxv. 1—4, and in that year they were to release their debtors and servants, Deut. xv. 1; which notion of this fourth year is very probable, if the year wherein the city was besieged was a sabbatical year, or year of rest. For if Zedekiah's first year were the fourth of the seven that made the *sabbatical circle*, his third year was another sabbatical year, and his tenth another, presently after which the city was taken.

Of this *Hananiah* we read no more in Scripture; it is probable from the place where he lived, which was one of the cities of the priests, that he was a priest, but no more than a pretended prophet. He comes to Jeremiah in the temple, where he was wont to deliver his prophecies, to confront him in the presence both of the priests and the people, saying,

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2 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken
b ch. 27. 12. b the yoke of the king of Babylon.

The false prophet counterfeiteth the style of the true prophets, both in the names which he gives unto God, and in speaking of what God would do, as if already done.

c ch. 27. 16. † Heb. *two years of days.*
3 c Within † two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon:

It appeareth by what we met with chap. xxvii. 16, that this was the constant song of the city prophets at that time, but we read not of any but this Hananiah, who was so confident as to limit a time; nor doth he mention any long time, he saith *within two full years;* but he spake falsely, for it appeareth, from chap. lii. 31, that Jeconiah was there thirty-seven years.

4 And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of
† Heb. *captivity.* Judah, with all the † captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.

Only it is admirable, that being so nigh the king's court he should mention the return of Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, which, had it been true, must have been to the prejudice of Zedekiah, for Jeconiah was the right heir to the crown, being the son of Jehoiakim. Zedekiah his uncle was put in by the conqueror, but it is probable he saw Jehoiachin was more acceptable to the people, and that the faction for the nephew was greater than for the uncle. False teachers are always on the greatest side, either for number or for power.

5 ¶ Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD,

6 Even the prophet Jeremiah said,
d 1 Kings 1. 36. d Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD's house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place.

The true *prophet Jeremiah* speaks to this false prophet with as much boldness as he had spoke to him with impudence, and in the same presence of the priests and of the people, but with a preface of great charity and modesty. *Amen*, saith he; which particle is used in holy writ, either as a particle of *assertion*, as it is most ordinarily used both in this single form, and doubled by our Saviour in the gospel; or as a particle of *wishing* and *praying*, upon which account it is used in the Lord's prayer, though there it signifieth more than here, viz. a *faith* or *belief* that God will grant the petitions, as well as a *desire* that he would grant them; here it signifieth no more than the latter, and is expounded by the next words: nor indeed doth it, or can it here, signify so much as an absolute hearty desire, for Jeremiah could not heartily pray for that which God had told him he would not do. Jeremiah therefore must be understood here, either to have spoken only as a man, testifying the kindness he had for his country; then the sense is, If it be the will of God, or may it be the will of God; I wish what thou hast said might come to pass: or else in *sensu composito:* q. d. The Lord give unto this people a heart to reform and amend their ways, that the words which thou hast spoken may come to pass.

7 Nevertheless hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people;

The word which I am now about to speak concerneth thee, and not thee alone, but all the people; therefore do thou mark it well, and let them mark it also.

8 The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.

That is, Thou and I are not the first prophets that have foretold to countries and nations the great judgments of God coming upon them, *war, evil, pestilence:* by *evil*, some think is to be understood famine, but it is not much material.

9 e The prophet which prophesieth of
e Deut. 18. 22. peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, *then* shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

By *peace* is here meant *prosperity*, all good being by the Hebrews usually understood under the notion of *peace*. The prophets either prophesied evil or good, according as God revealed his will unto them; what way was for them to discover whether the prophets were truly sent of God, yea or no? It was known by the event: this was the rule God set, Deut. xviii. 22, *When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken.* But this was not true on the contrary part, for a prophet might speak a thing, which thing *might come to pass*, and yet he be none of the Lord's prophets, nor be hearkened to, as appeareth from Deut. xiii. 1—3. Some have thought that prophecies concerning good things always were brought to pass if the prophet were a true prophet, but it appeareth otherwise from chap. xviii. 9, 10. Prophecies both concerning good and evil might not come to pass, and yet the prophet be a true prophet, in case the manners of the people altered; for in all promises or threatenings of temporal good or evil there is a condition to be understood; God neither by his promises bindeth himself to do good to wicked men, nor by his threatenings tieth up his own hands from showing mercy to such as turn good: but some observe yet this difference, that good things are in Scripture never absolutely promised, but they come certainly to pass, and are fulfilled; but God for terror often threateneth evil things, without expressing any condition, when notwithstanding a condition is understood, upon the fulfilling of which the threatening cometh not to pass, as it was in the case of Nineveh, upon the prophecy of Jonah. But the greater difficulty is to determine by what rule they could judge one a true or false prophet, if they might not always judge by the event, the coming or not coming to pass of what he prophesied. I answer, they were to judge from the word of God, as well as from the event, Isa. viii. 20; therefore, Deut. xiii. 1—3, the people were commanded not to hearken to that prophet which should confirm what he said by a sign or wonder, if his scope were by it to persuade people to idolatry. So that if a prophet prophesied good and prosperity to any people, the people were to consider what his scope was, and whether what he prophesied was according to the law of God, which speaketh no good to a wicked impenitent people; and though what he said came to pass, yet he was to be determined no true prophet, if what he said were contrary to God's revealed will, or his scope in speaking of it was to harden people in sinful courses, or to seduce them from the right ways of God. Jeremiah here, as to the trial of the truth of his and Hananiah's contrary prophecies, appealeth to the event, telling him that he as a man heartily wished that his words might prove true.

10 ¶ Then Hananiah the prophet took the f yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's
f ch. 27. 2. neck, and brake it.

The prophet Jeremiah's coming into the temple with a *yoke* upon his neck, as a type of the yoke of the king of Babylon, under which the Jews were to come, gave occasion to the affront given him by the false prophet; in a further degree of impudence, being thus confronted by Jeremiah, he pulls the yoke off Jeremiah's neck, and breaketh it in a high and impudent contempt of God, and his will revealed by this prophet, and confirmed by this yoke as a sign, adding also the following words.

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11 And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke
g ch. 27. 7. of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon[g] from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

As God hath his sacraments to confirm the truth of his word, of which his ministers are the stewards and administrators; so the devil hath his sacraments, of which his prophets are the administrators. God by his prophet Jeremiah had revealed his will as to the king of Babylon's success against many nations, and bringing them into his servitude; as a sacrament or sign of this, he had commanded Jeremiah to put on a yoke with bonds. Hananiah, the false prophet, cometh in the name of God, and declares the contrary, that within two years God would break the yoke of the king of Babylon, and free the nations in subjection to him; and as a sacrament or sign to gain credit to this falsehood, he plucks off Jeremiah's yoke, and breaks it, and expounds himself that God should so break the king of Babylon's yoke from the neck of all nations, and pretends he had a commission from God to say this. Jeremiah, not able to endure to hear such lies, goeth away in testimony of his dissent from him, and adherence to what he had said.

12 ¶ Then the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah *the prophet*, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying,

Some time after this, God taking notice of the affront put upon his prophet Jeremiah, for faithfully discharging the message with which he had intrusted him, revealeth his mind unto Jeremiah, that he might declare it unto the people, and particularly to this false prophet.

13 Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron.

Jeremiah seeing the impudence of Hananiah, and that his further discourse with him would do no good, but it may be have caused more danger to himself, prophesying what was more ungrateful to the people than what the false prophet prophesied, and possibly desirous further to know the will of God, withdrew himself. Soon after God sends him back to the people and to Hananiah with this message, That he by his false prophecy had done the people no good, but much hurt, further incensed God against them, and provoked him to make their judgment heavier, giving them iron yokes instead of those of wood.

14 For thus saith the LORD of hosts,
h Deut. 28. 48. ch. 27. 4, 7. the God of Israel; [h]I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve
i ch. 27. 6. him: and [i]I have given him the beasts of the field also.

For notwithstanding all he had said, God was resolved to justify his word, and to bring them under subjection to Nebuchadnezzar, and to give all they had also into his power.

15 ¶ Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee;
k ch. 29. 31. Ezek. 13. 22. but [k]thou makest this people to trust in a lie.

Jeremiah being a second time confirmed in the truth of his revelation, and having likewise a special revelation relating to this false prophet, comes now and tells him his doom, viz. that he should die within a year, because he had taught people to believe, and to hope for, and trust to what was false, and they were never like to see.

16 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, be-
l Deut. 13. 5. ch. 29. 32. † Heb. revolt. cause thou hast taught [l]† rebellion against the LORD.

And because by this his doctrine he had made God a liar, contradicting his will revealed by Jeremiah, and by it taught people to hold out against Nebuchadnezzar, and not quietly to yield to him.

17 So Hananiah the prophet died the cir. 595.
same year in the seventh month.

That is, within the compass of a year after that Jeremiah had spoken these words, within two months after that Jeremiah had thus prophesied, as appeareth from ver. 1; so dangerous a thing it is for ministers to teach people contrary to the revealed will of God.

CHAP. XXIX.

Jeremiah's letter to the captives in Babylon, to be quiet there, 1—7: not to believe false prophets; nor expect to return till after seventy years, 8—14. The destruction of those who remained in Judah for their disobedience, 15—19. The fearful end of two lying prophets, 20—23. Shemaiah's letter against Jeremiah, 24—29, who readeth his doom, 30—32.

NOW these *are* the words of the letter cir. 599.
that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon;

There were two carryings into the captivity of Babylon, the latter about eleven or twelve years after the former; the first was in the time of Jehoiachin, of which we read in 2 Kings xxiv. 14, when *the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths, were carried away*, as we read there, amongst whom were some priests and prophets.

2 (After that [a]Jeconiah the king, and a 2 Kings 24. 12, &c. ch. 22. 26. & 28. 4.
the queen, and the ‖eunuchs, the princes ‖ Or, chamberlains.
of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;)

After this captivity.

3 By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon) saying,

Zedekiah the king of Judah having some occasion to send two messengers, named *Elasah* and *Gemariah*, to Babylon, whether to carry his tribute money or upon what other errand is not expressed; Jeremiah, knowing that as there were some false prophets at Jerusalem, who fed people with hopes of a speedy return, so there were some with them in Babylon who did the like, (two of which he afterwards in this chapter reflecteth upon,) writeth the following letter, and sends it by these two messengers, to quiet the people's minds, and to help to compose their spirits, disturbed by these false prophets, and raised up to vain and idle hopes, for which there was no ground at all.

4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon;

So as this letter was not wrote from himself, advising them charitably, but he had commission from God, by whom he mindeth them, as the principal efficient cause they were ordered to be carried away by, though their own sins were the meritorious cause, and Nebuchadnezzar with his captains and soldiers where the instrumental cause.

5 [b]Build ye houses, and dwell *in them:* b ver. 28.
and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;

6 Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your

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daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.

That is, Be not uneasy in your minds, not resolving what to do, through the prophecies of the false prophets, that tell you the captivity shall be but two years, or at least very short; but do all things which you would do if Babylon were to be your fixed habitation (as it is like to be for seventy years, say the prophets what they please); marry, and give and take in marriage, do whatsoever it becometh prudent men to do, who would accommodate themselves in a place where they are like to abide, and preserve their families, that they might not be utterly extinguished. The words must not be understood as a precept, obliging all in the captivity to do every of these things, which it may be they were not able all to do, but as a counsel and advice not to forbear any thing of this nature, which they would do, if they did fully believe they were to abide in a place seventy years.

7 And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away
c Ezra 6. 10. 1 Mac. 12. 11. 1 Tim. 2. 2. captives, [c]and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

That is, Seek to God for it, or rather live peaceably in it, and by all lawful means seek the welfare of it; do not raise any tumults or seditions, nor take part with those that do. And while your captivity lasts do you pray for it; (from whence those who think that Christ hath added new moral precepts, and reckon this precept of praying for enemies as one, may understand that praying for enemies was but a branch of that love to our neighbour which God required under the Old Testament;) for it was lawful for them to pray against Babylon at other times, Psal. cxxxvii. 8; Jer. li. 35; but when God hath put a yoke upon our necks, we must patiently wait until he takes it off. The lawyers say that *protection requireth allegiance to governors.* This text lets us know also that it requireth our prayers for them, though they be conquerors and tyrants. *For in the peace thereof shall ye have peace;* for God having by his providence cast us under their power, our peace dependeth upon theirs.

8 ¶ For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst
d ch. 14. 14. & 23. 21. & 27. 14, 15. Eph. 5. 6. of you, [d]deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.

The Lord knows that you have a company of false prophets that tell you other things, and promise you a sudden return out of your captivity, pretending to know it by revelation from God, or by divination, &c., or to have it discovered to them in dreams. It is the will of God that you should not hearken to them, for they do but deceive you, and ye are accessory to your own ruin; they see you are pleased to hear such stories, and that causeth them to dream, as chap. v. 31, *The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so.* Thus, Isa. xxx. 10, they said *to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not to us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.* False teachers and guides of people's souls are the greatest plague can befall a nation, people from them expecting to hear the mind of God, and for the most part people are accessory to their own ruin in them. It can indeed hardly be imagined what other temptation persons whose office it is to reveal the mind of God should have to do otherwise, but the humouring and pleasing of a corrupt people, who through their fondness of their lusts are not patient of sound doctrine; so as though the church of God hath in all ages been troubled with dreamers, yet it is a wicked people that causeth them to dream.

e ver. 31. † Heb. in a lie. 9 [e]For they prophesy †falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.

cir. 606. 10 ¶ For thus saith the LORD, That after [f]seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.
f 2 Chro. 36. 21, 22. Ezra 1. 1. ch. 25. 12. & 27. 22. Dan. 9. 2.

From this text appears that the seventy years' captivity was to be accounted from the first carrying into captivity in the time of Jehoiachin, so that eleven years of it were elapsed before Zedekiah was carried away. Whatever, saith the prophet, these dreamers tell you, you must abide seventy years in Babylon, accounted from your first going thither; it is therefore your wisdom to acquiesce in the will of God, and to compose yourselves; and, to encourage you, the Lord by me assureth you, that after those seventy years shall be expired, as he hath now visited you with evil, so he will visit you for good, and fulfil the promise he hath made to you, and you shall return again to Jerusalem. We have the fulfilling of this recorded in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21, 22; Ezra i. 1. The promise was before, chap. xxv. 12; xxvii. 22. Daniel understood it from the words of this prophecy, Dan. ix. 2, which put him upon prayer at the expiration of that time.

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an †expected end.
† Heb. *end and expectation.*

This deliverance will not depend upon your merits, but upon my own mercy and kind thoughts and purposes I have for the seed of Abraham my servant, and I am resolved in my own thoughts what to do; I intend not the blotting out of the name of Israel from the earth, but to give such an end to their trouble as themselves expect and desire, though not so soon as they may expect it, being deceived by their prophets. There shall be an end of your captivity in my time, and that is after you shall have fulfilled seventy years in that captivity.

12 Then shall ye [g]call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.
g Dan. 9. 3, &c.

I will not only give you a temporal salvation and deliverance, and bring you into your own land, but you shall go thither with new hearts; you shall worship idols no more, but you shall worship me, and be serious and diligent in your addresses and applications to me, and I will listen to you in those applications.

13 And [h]ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me [i]with all your heart.
h Lev. 26. 39, 40, &c. Deut. 30. 1, &c. i ch. 24. 7.

That is, sincerely, as Psal. cxix. 2.

14 And [k]I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and [l]I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.
k Deut. 4. 7. Ps. 32. 6. & 46. 1. Is. 55. 6. l ch. 23. 3, 8. & 30. 3. & 32. 37.

This verse containeth no more than was said before, only it is repeated in a little different phrase, for the further confirmation of their faith, and the promise is a little enlarged. God saith he will be *found of them*, that is, he will answer them. It is expressed in this notion to correspond with the term *seeking*, by which prayer is expressed, and to let us know that those that will have God's favour must *find it;* which implieth a seeking and inquiry after it. The promise, which before mentioned only their return from Babylon, is enlarged, and made here to extend to all places whither they were driven; for though the body of the people were carried to Babylon, yet it is more than probable that many of them shifted for themselves into other countries, and were in exile, but not in captivity. Cyrus's proclamation, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23, extended to his whole empire.

15 ¶ Because ye have said, The LORD hath raised us up prophets in Babylon;

The prophet here turneth his speech to some wicked

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Jews that were in Babylon, or in Judea, and more believed some false prophets, who told them of a much quicker return, than Jeremiah telling them the truth from the mouth of God.

16 *Know* that thus saith the LORD of the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and of all the people that dwelleth in this city, *and* of your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity;

The word *know* is, as some think, needlessly supplied, for the following particle might be as well translated *for*, or *because*, or *therefore*. By *the king* he meaneth Zedekiah, whom he chooseth to express under the notion of him *that sitteth upon the throne of David*, to take away the vain hopes which the Jews conceived from the promises which God had made to David and to his seed.

17 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the [m]sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like [n]vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.

[m] ch. 24. 10.
[n] ch. 24. 8.

18 And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and [o]will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, †to be [p]a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them:

[o] Deut. 28. 25. 2 Chron. 29. 8. ch. 15. 4. & 24. 9. & 34. 17.
† Heb. *for a curse.*
[p] ch. 26. 6. ch. 42. 18.

These verses contain no more than the threatening which we have had more than once before. He had compared them to *vile figs*, chap. xxiv. 8, and ver. 9, 10 there threatened them with being made a *reproach*, a *proverb*, a *taunt*, and a *curse*; and consuming them with the *sword*, *famine*, and *pestilence*: the same thing before delivered by word of mouth to those in Judea, is here repeated in a letter to that part of the Jews in Babylon, to take them off from giving credit to their false prophets, whether in Judea or in Babylon, who deluded them with the promises of a speedy return. Believe it, (saith the prophet,) you shall be so far from returning, whatever your idle prophets tell you, that your brethren that are here shall be brought to you, or destroyed with the *sword*, the *famine*, and the *pestilence*, or scattered into other kingdoms, where they shall be made *a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach.*

19 Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which [q]I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them*; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.

[q] ch. 25. 4. & 32. 33.

A contempt of the word of the Lord was the cause of this people's ruin, and will be the cause of ruin to any people. See chap. vii. 26; xi. 7, 8; xvii. 23. Lest they should say that they only disobeyed the prophets, God mindeth them that in not hearkening to them they did not hearken to him. The same thing Christ saith of the gospel ministers, Luke x. 16. The not believing, or not obeying, what ministers teach not in a due discharge of their office of revealing the will of God, is no contempt of God, but of them, who for that cause deserve to be contemned; but supposing that what ministers deliver be the mind and will of God revealed in holy writ, and but a true explication and application of that, not to hearken to God and not to hearken to them is the same thing. *Ye would not hear, saith the Lord;* ye wilfully refused to believe them, speaking the truth to you in my name, and to obey those monitions they gave you by my direction. All this was a not hearing God.

20 ¶ Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon:

Those phrases, *I have sent*, and *I have driven*, &c., are diligently to be observed by us. There is no evil in cities or nations which is an evil of punishment, but, whoever be the instruments to bring it, God is the author of it. These phrases also signified to those Jews that God was likeliest to know best how long they should stay there, because he sent them thither.

21 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name; Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes;

Of these two persons we read no more in holy writ: that they pretended to be prophets, that they abused the name of God, pretending to reveal his will, whenas what they said was not the will of God, but a falsehood, we learn out of this verse; and that they were both of them burnt by the king of Babylon we find in ver. 22. What the falsehoods they published were is not expressed, but it is most probable they were some of those that pretended that God had revealed to them, that within two years, or a short time, the captives carried away with Jehoiakim should return out of Babylon. God here tells those that were of the captivity, that those two wretches should themselves be slain by the king of Babylon.

22 [r]And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which *are* in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, [s]whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire;

[r] See Gen. 48. 20. Is. 65. 15.
[s] Dan. 3. 6.

As false teachers are of the highest sort of transgressors, speaking lies in the name and under pretence of the authority of the God of truth; so God in his providence ordinarily makes them the greatest examples of his vengeance. God threateneth to bring them to an end that should turn into a proverb, that when men had a mind to curse others, wishing them the greatest evils, they should pray to God to make them like Ahab and Zedekiah, whom the king of Babylon burnt, or roasted in the fire; the word צלה signifieth both, Lev. ii. 14; and roasting signifieth only to burn by degrees, which probably was the specifical punishment of these two false prophets, for we learn from the instance of the three children, Dan. iii. 19, that the consuming of persons slowly in a fiery furnace was a kind of punishment in use amongst the Chaldeans.

23 Because [t]they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and *am* a witness, saith the LORD.

[t] ch. 23. 14.

The reason here given must not be understood as the reason of the king of Babylon's punishment of them, but why God gave them up into his hands, because they had committed *villany* or *folly* in Israel; which is expounded by the next words, they had *committed adultery with their neighbours' wives.* All sin is *folly*, and so called in Scripture, uncleanness particularly, Gen. xxxiv. 7; here it is called *villany*, to denote the heinousness of it, especially in those whose office it was to teach others that they ought not to do it, Rom. ii. 22. Falsehood in discharge of a trust is ordinarily attended with debauchery of life, nor indeed can it be reasonably imagined that those who, to humour men, have debauched their consciences, and declared things as the will of God, which they know are not so, should be more true and honest in their conversation towards men. The second crime of these false prophets was, what gave them their denomination, teaching people what God never bid them speak. Now this, saith the Lord, *I know, and am a witness to;* their adulteries are in secret, but I am a witness to them; the poor people do not know that they teach them lies, but I know it. God will deal with men not according to what men like themselves know of them, and can prove against them, but according to what he knows and can witness against them.

24 ¶ *Thus* shalt thou also speak to Shemaiah the ‖Nehelamite, saying,

‖ Or, *dreamer.*

We have no guidance from any other scripture to teach

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us who this *Shemaiah* was, but it is very probable that he was one of those who at this time were in the captivity of Babylon, and so came to the knowledge of Jeremiah's letter, mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, and wrote what followeth to Zephaniah, the son of Maasciah the priest, and the rest of the priests, to have Jeremiah punished; but why he is called the *Nehelamite* is not so evident, for that the word is derived from חלם a dreamer, is not very probable; we read of no such place in Judea as Nehelam or Halem, but we cannot imagine that the names of all the towns in Judah are to be found in Scripture: he is thrice in this chapter called the *Nehelamite;* so as it is probable that there was such a place as Nehelam, from whence he was.

25 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thy name unto all the people that *are* at Jerusalem, [u] and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying,

[u] 2 Kin. 25. 18. ch. 21. 1.

26 The LORD hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be [x] officers in the house of the LORD, for every man *that is* [y] mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest [z] put him in prison, and in the stocks.

[x] ch. 20. 1. [y] 2 Kings 9. 11. Acts 26. 24. [z] ch. 20. 2.

Priest, that is, high priest, as some have thought; but it appears from 2 Kings xxv. 18, that Seraiah was at this time the high priest, and this Zephaniah was the second priest, as he is there styled, as also chap. lii. 24; nor must any think that the Jehoiada here meant was the immediate predecessor of Zephaniah, for besides that Jehoiada was high priest, which Zephaniah never was, there were near two hundred years betwixt the death of Jehoiada and this time; *in the stead* therefore here signifieth, that thou shouldst be like the good high priest Jehoiada; unless some other Jehoiada was meant, who was turned out, and this Zephaniah put in his room. *That ye should be officers in the house of the Lord, for every man that is mad;* that thou mightest have a care of religion, and particularly take care of persons who being mad or phrenetic make themselves prophets. The priests had a power to restrain such persons by imprisoning them, or putting them *in the stocks*, by which most agree a particular punishment is expressed, but for the nature and way of it, it is not determined. Those who in so uncertain a thing have a mind to read what hath been said, may find it both in Mr. Pool's Synopsis Criticorum, and the English Annotations upon this verse, but the learned author of them reciting what authors have said, concludes it at last not with any certainty to be determined.

27 Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you?

He means it of an active, real reproof, as appears by what went before; he would have had Jeremiah imprisoned, or put to that punishment which they called *the stocks*, the nature of which we cannot determine, concluding him to be but a madman, and one who was not made a prophet by any immediate mission from God, but had only made himself a prophet.

28 For therefore he sent unto us *in* Babylon, saying, This *captivity is* long: [a] build ye houses, and dwell *in them;* and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

[a] ver. 5.

The matter of fact was true, as appeared ver. 5, 6, but it was false that this was the effect of phrensy, or that he spake this of his own head, without commission from God; for he wrote nothing of this nature but by order from God, as appeareth from ver. 4, where he began his letter with, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel.*

29 And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet.

It is uncertain whether Zephaniah did this out of kindness to Jeremiah, for we read he was sent to Jeremiah upon messages, chap xxi. 1; xxxvii. 3, from the king, or because he would not apprehend him before he heard him, and let him know that he did nothing against him but upon information, &c.

30 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,

31 Send to all them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite; Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, [b] and I sent him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie:

[b] ch. 28. 15.

This is the great mischief of false teachers, they are the causes of people's trusting in lies; and from hence the sins of false prophets are ordinarily aggravated.

32 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; [c] because he hath taught † rebellion against the LORD.

[c] ch. 28. 16. † Heb. revolt.

I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: punishments of this life ordinarily are extended to the children of sinful parents, for the parents' sake, who are punished in their children, being *res parentum*, a considerable part of their parents' goods and portion. *He shall not have a man to dwell among this people;* he and his whole posterity shall be rooted out; *neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people;* and neither he nor they shall live to the time of my people's return from the captivity of Babylon. *Because he hath taught rebellion against the Lord;* because by the falsehoods which he hath taught he hath been an instrument to make people disobey the commands of God. We had the same clause chap. xxviii. 16, and such a kind of threatening we find Amos vii. 17, denounced by that prophet against Amaziah the priest of Beth-el, forbidding him to prophesy at Beth-el, because it was *the king's court* and *chapel.* To obstruct the revelation of God's will to people, or to publish what is contrary to it, to seduce people from believing it, or yielding obedience, are both crimes that have been and will be of fatal consequence to them and their families who are so hardy as to incur the guilt of them.

CHAP. XXX.

God showeth Jeremiah the deliverance and return of the Jews, 1—9. *He comforteth Jacob,* 10—17. *Their return shall be gracious. Wrath on the wicked,* 18—24.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

This title is thought to extend to all we have both in this and the next chapter, both which mostly consist of comfortable promises of the restoration of this people, and teacheth us what ought to be the matter of our sermons; we ought to speak nothing for substance but what we can justify to come from the Lord, which all doctrine doth that is bottomed on Scripture, though opened and made more plain and intelligible by words formed in our own minds.

2 Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.

It is uncertain whether this was a command from God to Jeremiah to record all the revelations which God had made to him, or only the revelation contained in this and the following chapter, which consists chiefly of promises of the people's restoration; and so God might command them to be written, that they might not be forgotten, but be at hand for the people to read during their captivity, to keep up their faith and hope in God. A book, in the Hebrew dialect, signifieth any parchment or roll; God would have them re-

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corded to testify his truth, and the truth of the prophet, when they should see the things accomplished.

3 For, lo, the days come, saith the
a ver. 18. ch. 32. 44. Ezek. 39. 25. Amos 9. 14, 15. LORD, that [a]I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah,
b ch. 16. 15. saith the LORD: [b]and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

The reason why God would have the prophecy written, was for a memorial of God's truth in his promises. Israel never returned as to the body of the people, but those of the ten tribes which were God's people did return; we read, Luke ii. 36, of one Anna who was of the tribe of Asher, and many more doubtless did return according to the promises, chap. iii. 12, 14; xxiii. 6; xxxi. 1, 6; Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 22. It is uncertain whether this promise of returning to their own land was fulfilled in those few of the ten tribes who joined themselves with those of Judah after they were returned from Babylon, or remaineth yet in part to be fulfilled. The former is most probable, and that there shall be no such time when the Jews shall return again to Jerusalem, and possess their own land, for it is hard now to give an account where the posterity of the ten tribes be by whose return the promise should be justified. Besides that the phrase in the beginning of this verse, *For, lo, the days come*, seem to import a more speedy fulfilling of the promise than after some thousands of years, though it is certain the Jews feed themselves with some such expectations.

4 ¶ And these *are* the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

5 For thus saith the LORD; We have
‖ Or, there is *fear, and not peace.* heard a voice of trembling, ‖of fear, and not of peace.

God here speaketh, but whether personating other nations or the Jewish nation is not agreed, nor yet whether this text refers to the times of the Messiah, when the nations should tremble, or the time when Darius invaded Babylon, or the times of Gog and Magog, (of which read Ezek. xxxviii.,) or the time when the Chaldeans invaded Judah: this last seemeth most probable, and that God by this intended only to rouse the Jews out of their security, and put them off from expecting peace according to the flatteries of the false prophets, assuring them that the times that were coming next were not times of peace, but such as should make them tremble.

† Heb. *a male.* 6 Ask ye now, and see whether †a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins,
c ch. 4. 31. & 6. 24. [c]as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?

The voice which I hear is not the voice of women, but of men, and those the strongest and stoutest men, yet it is a voice like the voice of women in travail, roaring out through their pains; and the posture I see the generality of men are in is like the posture of women in travail, who hold their hands upon their loins, hoping thereby to abate their pain. Was it ever heard that males had the pains that use to attend child-bearing women? *And all faces are turned into paleness;* and all men's faces look as if they had the yellow jaundice; or are of the colour of blasted corn, as the word signifieth, Deut. xxviii. 22.

d Joel 2. 11, 31. Amos 5. 18. Zeph. 1. 14, &c. 7 [d]Alas! for that day *is* great, [e]so that
e Dan. 12. 1. none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

It is no wonder that there is such a trembling upon all hearts, such a consternation and great complaining; for it will be a time of no ordinary calamity, but of great evil and misery, in the same sense as it is called a great day, Joel ii. 11, *great* and *terrible;* and Zeph. i. 14, &c.; there never was such a day before. It will be a day of trouble to those that are the posterity of Jacob, both good and bad; they shall not be delivered from it, but they shall be delivered out of it.

8 For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:

In that day; not in that great day before mentioned, but in the day when God should deliver the seed of Jacob *out of trouble.* God threatens to break the yoke of the king of Babylon, that is, to break that power of his which for seventy years he should exercise in keeping the Jews under; and he would break the bonds in which they should be kept, and foreign nations should no more serve themselves upon the Jews.

9 But they shall serve the LORD their
f Is. 55. 3. 4. Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 24. Hos. 3. 5. God, and [f]David their king, whom I will
g Luke 1. 69. Acts 2. 30. & 13. 23. [g]raise up unto them.

Who is here meant by David is not well agreed. Some think this promise was fulfilled in the rule of Zorobabel, and those after the captivity of Babylon, of the family of David, who ruled over the Jews, though not under the style of kings; others think that Christ is intended, as in the other parallel prophecies, Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 22; Hos. iii. 5, and that the deliverance here promised was spiritual; and indeed unless we so understand it, it will be hard to assign a time when the promise of the former and this verse was made good, for upon the return from the captivity to the coming of Christ, and from his time to this day, other nations have served themselves upon the Jews, and they have been in perpetual servitude, first to the Persians, then to the Grecians, then to the Romans, in servitude to whom they were at the coming of Christ, and soon after miserably subdued by them, and since that time almost all nations have served themselves of the Jews. Either therefore this prophecy must be understood in a spiritual sense of the kingdom of Christ, under which the Jews that received him were made spiritually free; or else there is a time yet to come, when this ancient people of God shall be restored to a further civil liberty than they have enjoyed ever since the captivity of Babylon, and be more fully converted to Christ than they yet are; towards which sense many texts of Scripture, besides this, look; particularly Rom. xi. 25, 26.

10 ¶ Therefore [h]fear thou not, O my
h Is. 41. 13. & 43. 5. & 44. 2. ch. 46. 27, 28. servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed [i]from
i ch. 3. 18. the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make *him* afraid.

You that are my servants, and the posterity of Jacob, though your captivity be threescore and ten years, yet be not afraid that I have quite forgotten you, or my promise made to your fathers. For I will assure you, that though I have for your sins sent you afar off, yet you are not beyond the reach of my saving arm; you shall return out of the captivity of Babylon, and be at rest: as they were for one hundred and fifty years during the time of the Persian monarchy; a short history of which we have in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

11 For I *am* with thee, saith the
k Amos 9. 8. LORD, to save thee: [k]though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, [l]yet will I not make a full
l ch. 4. 27. end of thee: but I will correct thee [m]in
m Ps. 6. 1. Is. 27. 8. ch. 10. 24. & 46. 28. measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

To save thee with a temporal salvation and deliverance, and those of thee who are Israelites indeed with a spiritual and eternal salvation; but the first is what is here principally intended. God puts a difference betwixt the chastisements of his people, and the punishments of their enemies; the latter he destroyeth with an utter and total destruction, to make an end of them; but he chastens his people like a father for their profit, and will not bring them to utter ruin. He corrects them *in measure;* the Hebrew word signifieth, in judgment; that is, not in equity only, but in wisdom, or with moderation, whereas he is said to punish his enemies in fury. There are many texts of Scripture that mention this difference which God puts betwixt his punishing his

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people and his punishing their enemies, Isa. xxvi. 14, 19; xxvii. 7, 8. But yet God will not let his own people go *altogether unpunished*, that by it they may be reclaimed, and the world may take notice that God is of purer eyes than that he can, in any persons, behold iniquity.

n 2 Chro. 36. 16. ch. 15. 18.

12 For thus saith the LORD, [n]Thy bruise *is* incurable, *and* thy wound *is* grievous.

Interpreters generally understand by *bruise* or *wound* here the state that the Jews should be in in the captivity of Babylon, which would be miserable, and so miserable that it would be incurable from any hand, except the hand of God. But I do not understand why it may not as well be interpreted of their sinful state, with reference to God's purpose, and interpreted by 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, where it is said, *The wrath of God arose against them till there was no remedy*. They had sinned to that degree that God had resolved into captivity they should go, and there should abide till the determination of seventy years.

†Heb. *for binding up*, or, *pressing*. o ch. 8. 22.

13 *There is* none to plead thy cause, †that thou mayest be bound up: [o]thou hast no healing medicines.

Concerning the general design of the prophet in these words, all interpreters seem agreed that the prophet's scope is to bring their uneasy thoughts to a rest, and make them rest satisfied with the providence of God; for there was no resistance of the will of God, which he metaphorically expresseth under the notion of one miserably and incurably wounded, whom no physician or surgeon could heal, and for whom there was no effectual plaster: but concerning the particular sense of the Hebrew words much is critically said, which I conceive not my work to repeat, nor is it of much moment to us to know whether the word more properly signifies *healing medicines*, or *courses of cure*, or *plasters*; those who are curious may read sufficiently about it in the English Annotations upon the text. It may be more material to consider whether the prophet's meaning be, there was none would do it, or there was none could do it, or there was none should do it, that is, whom God would admit at present to do it; as he elsewhere saith, though Noah, Daniel, and Job, and though Moses and Samuel, stood before him, they should save none but their own souls. The prophet's design doubtless was to satisfy this people that there was no present remedy for them but patience: though some would in charity plead for them, and though their false prophets might promise a cure; yet in very deed God would admit now of no plea for them, and all means that could be used for their more speedy restoration would prove no healing medicines, but like medicines that make the patients worse, and irritate instead of allaying the distemper.

p Lam. 1. 2.

14 [p]All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded

q Job 13. 24. & 16. 9. & 19. 11. r Job 30. 21. s ch. 5. 6.

thee with the wound [q]of an enemy, with the chastisement [r]of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; [s]*because* thy sins were increased.

In the time of thy prosperity thou hadst many friends, but now they have *forgotten thee*. Very probably the Egyptians and Assyrians, whose help the Jews made often use of, are the *lovers* here intended, 2 Chron. xxviii. 21; Hos. xii. 1; indeed the Egyptians were before conquered, or very much brought low, by the king of Babylon. They see the miserable case they are in, and now do not covet thee as formerly, they discern that I have wounded thee with such a wound as cruel men use to give their enemies; though it be in me no act of cruelty, for it is but in a just punishment of your iniquities, which were increased to a very great multitude.

t ch. 15. 18.

15 Why [t]criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow *is* incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: *because* thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee.

Why criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable: Why complainest thou of my dealings with thee? or, as chap. xv. 18, the cause of thy sorrow is incurable: or, as others, Why complainest thou that thy sorrow is incurable? Though it be so, yet thou hast no reason to complain of my dealings, for thy destruction is of thyself; I am just in what I have done, for I have but given thee that death which is the wages of thy work of sin; nor was I suddenly provoked, it is for the multitude of thine iniquities, and in that case the living man hath no just reason to complain, Lam. iii. 39.

16 Therefore all they that devour thee [u]shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.

u Ex. 23. 22. Is. 33. 1. & 41. 11. ch. 10. 25.

The particle לכן is thought here to be ill translated *therefore*, for manifestly it is not a causal or illative, and those who interpret it *therefore* refer it to what went before, ver. 10, 11. It were better translated *nevertheless*, or *notwithstanding yet:* so the learned author of the English Annotations thinks it should be translated Isa. vii. 14; xxx. 18, and in many other texts.

This text is a declaration of God's free mercy: though this people had justly provoked the Lord by their iniquities to punish them, yet he would at length revenge them of their enemies, and those that spoiled them should feel his justice, and be themselves spoiled: so Isa. x. 12; xxxiii. 1. God ordinarily punisheth those that have been enemies to his people more severely than his people have been punished by them; the reasons are, because though they serve God in chastising his people, yet they do it not designedly, Isa. x. 7, and commonly they exceed a measure in their executing God's vengeance.

x ch. 33. 6.

17 [x]For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, *saying*, This *is* Zion, whom no man seeketh after.

As the miserable state of this people was by the prophet, ver. 12, 13, described under the similitude of a man wounded, and bruised, and sick; so their more prosperous state is described under the notion of health, and God's action in restoring them expressed under the notion of healing, both here and in many other texts, Isa. vi. 10; xix. 22; lvii. 18, 19. The particle here translated *because* may so signify here, for often the scorn and contempt of God's people's enemies causeth God to make haste to their salvation and deliverance; but many think that it were better translated *although*, as it is Josh. xvii. 18: though the heathens call thee one that I have cast off, as a man doth his wife; yet they shall see the contrary, for I will heal thee of thy wounds. *Saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after;* though they deriding say, This Zion whom none cares for. Some think that in this they alluded to the original signification of the word Zion, which is, a dry or waste place.

18 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; Behold, [y]I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and [z]have mercy on his dwelling-places; and the city shall be builded upon her own ‖heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof.

y ver. 3. ch. 33. 7, 11. z Ps. 102. 13. ‖ Or, *little hill.*

This verse manifestly is a promise of the rebuilding of the city, and was fulfilled in the times of Ezra; and the term *captivity*, which in its proper sense relates to persons, not to places, being here applied to places, signifies the miserable state of Jerusalem upon the taking it by Nebuchadnezzar, which God promiseth to change or alter under the notion of *bringing again;* so we read of the captivity of Job, who yet strictly was never a captive, Job xlii. 10. Whether by the term *heap* be meant the heap of rubbish into which the city was turned, upon the taking of it by the king of Babylon, or the *hill* upon which the city was builded, is not much material; by the *palace* is meant either the king's house or the temple: so the verse is a promise of the building again of the city, the temple, and the chief governor's house, all which was fulfilled by Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zorobabel, the history of which we read in the books wrote by Ezra and Nehemiah.

19 And [a]out of them shall proceed

a Is. 35. 10. & 51. 11. ch.

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31. 4, 12, 13. & 33. 10, 11. thanksgiving and the voice of them that
b Zech. 10. 8. make merry: [b]and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

Out of them shall proceed thanksgiving; thanksgiving to God, as chap. xvii. 26, either thank-offerings, Lev. vii. 12, 13, or vocal thanksgivings. *And the voice of them that make merry;* either in a religious sense, or in a civil sense: if it be taken in the former, it signifieth their mirth at their religious festivals, of which we read much in Scripture, Psal. xlii. 4; cxviii. 15, &c.; if in the latter, it signifieth their happy and joyful state after their restoration. *I will multiply them, and they shall not be few;* though they be diminished in the captivity, yet I will return to them in my wonted providences, and multiply them according to my promise to Abraham, so as they shall be for number many. *I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small;* and as to their quality, it shall be honourable; though during those seventy years they shall be a people of mean or no reputation, yet after that time they shall recover their ancient reputation, and again be a people great for honour and glory.

c Is. 1. 26. 20 Their children also shall be [c]as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.

Their posterity also shall be as happy, and in as much repute, as they were before this carrying into Babylon. Their church, or the body of the people of the Jews, shall from generation to generation be established. And though in those times there will be some that will oppress them, yet they shall not escape my vengeance that do it, for I will protect and defend them.

21 And their nobles shall be of themd Gen. 49. 10. e Num. 16. 5. selves, [d]and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will [e]cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who *is* this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD.

Their governor shall proceed from the midst of them: this promise was made good in Zorobabel, and other governors of the Jews after their return out of captivity, till they came to be subdued by the Romans. Some restrain this unto Christ, and make it a prophecy of Christ being born of the Jewish nation; it is he, they say, that was meant by David, ver. 9: and it is not improbable that the sense of the text may reach unto Christ, but it seems literally to be understood of Zorobabel, and to be opposed to *strangers* ruling over them, which was no small piece of their calamity while they were in captivity. *He shall approach unto me;* that is, he shall serve me, and I will favour him; or, this people shall serve me, and I will favour them, and not be as one at a distance or far off from them. Some understand this of the civil governor that should be after the captivity; some understand it of the people; some understand it of Christ. Those that understand it of the governor, make it to signify the special favour that governor should be in with God and his religion; those that understand it of the people, make it to signify the religion of the people, and the favour they should be in with God; those who understand it of Christ, interpret it of his favour with God, by whom also the saints have their access. *For who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?* Interpreters are yet more divided about this phrase; some apply it to Christ, either as an admiration of his excellency, or as denoting that none but he could draw near to God in that manner as he did, nor had any such a delight in the sons of men as he, so as for him to be a Mediator betwixt offenders and an offended God; none but he durst look in the face of an angry God. Others understand it of God's people, intimating that in the day when they should return out of captivity there would be but few that with any serious purpose of heart would apply themselves unto God, or signifying the impotency that is in man heartily to draw nigh to God, till (as it is before said) God causeth him so to do; and some think the words have a reference to the covenant mentioned in the next verse.

22 And ye shall be [f]my people, and I will be your God. f ch. 24. 7 & 31. 1, 33. & 32. 38. Ezek. 11. 20. & 36. 28. & 37. 27.

God in these words declares that in that day he would renew his covenant with Israel, (at least the true Israelites,) and they should be his people to serve and to obey him, and he would be their God to protect and bless them with all temporal and all spiritual blessings.

23 Behold, the [g]whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a †continuing whirlwind: it shall ‖fall with pain upon the head of the wicked. g ch. 23. 19, 20. & 25. 32. † Heb. *cutting.* ‖ Or, *remain.*

The whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury; the vengeance of God compared to a *whirlwind,* for the suddenness of it, and because it should encompass them to their ruin, *a terrible whirlwind. A continuing whirlwind;* or, a continuing whirling; not a sudden blast of wind, that shall presently go over, but a vengeance that shall abide. The miserable effects of which, in destroying, shall be either upon the heathen, or upon the wicked Jews that shall continue in their disobedience and stubbornness.

24 The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have done *it,* and until he have performed the intents of his heart: [h]in the latter days ye shall consider it. h Gen. 49. 1.

He expoundeth in these words the continuing whirlwind, spoken of ver. 23, and withal lets them know that what the false prophets said of a speedy return out of Babylon of those already there, or of the not going of those which as yet were in Judea, was all but falsehood; for the Lord was angry, and was resolved to fulfil the purpose of his heart in punishing them. And though at present they would not consider nor believe it, yet afterward, when they should see things come to pass according as he had said, then they should consider what he had told them.

CHAP. XXXI.

The restoration of Israel published, 1—14. *Rachel mourning is comforted,* 15—17. *Ephraim repenting is brought home,* 18—21. *Christ promised,* 22—26. *His care over the church,* 27—30. *His new covenant,* 31—34. *The stability and enlargement of the church,* 35—40.

AT [a]the same time, saith the LORD, [b]will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. a ch. 30. 24. b ch. 30. 22.

When the Lord's anger shall turn, he having performed all the thoughts of his heart upon the wicked Israelites, he will declare himself not unmindful of the covenant which he made with Abraham and his seed, but will be their God, and they shall be the people of his favour, whom he will protect and bless. It is uncertain whether Israel here is to be taken in a more large sense, as it signifieth the whole twelve tribes, or only Judah, being that part of Israel which was before spoken of.

2 Thus saith the LORD, The people *which were* left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; *even* Israel, when [c]I went to cause him to rest. c Num. 10. 33. Deut. 1. 33. Ps. 95. 11. Is. 63. 14.

God confirmeth the aforementioned promises, and his people's hope and faith in them, by minding them of what he had anciently done for this very people. Though God did, in the journey which the Israelites had from Egypt to Canaan, cut off many of them by the sword for their iniquities, some by the Amalekites, Exod. xvii. 8, some by the swords of their brethren for the idolatry they committed about the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 28; yet those that survived that and other judgments found favour in God's eyes while they were going to Canaan the land of rest, or while God, going before them, brought them into Canaan. God paralleleth his future providences and gracious purposes with his past gracious providences.

3 The LORD hath appeared †of old unto me, *saying,* Yea, [d]I have loved thee with [e]an everlasting love: therefore † Heb. *from afar.* d Mal. 1. 2. e Rom. 11. 28, 29.

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‖ Or, *have extended lovingkindness unto thee.* f Hos. 11. 4.

‖ with lovingkindness have I f drawn thee.

The word *saying* being not in the original, hath given advantage to some to think that the first words are either the words of some of the people owning that the Lord indeed had of old appeared to and for them, but doubting whether the kindness of God still held toward them; or else complaining that these were old stories. To which the prophet replies by assuring them that God's love was not a temporary love, manifested to a single generation, but it was an everlasting love; therefore he had drawn them with loving-kindness, he had all along dealt graciously with them, that way attempting to oblige them to that duty which they owed to him: this drawing with loving-kindness he calleth a drawing with *the cords of men*, Hos. xi. 4, who ordinarily are little wrought upon by force, but won by love.

g ch. 33. 7.

4 Again g I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou

h Ex. 15. 20. Judg. 11. 34. Ps. 149. 3.

shalt again be adorned with thy h ‖ tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them

‖ Or, *timbrels.*

that make merry.

As upon their being carried into captivity both their civil state and church, which either of them were as a building framed together, were broken and pulled down, and they were scattered here and there, like the stones of a building pulled down; so God's bringing them again together, and cementing them by a political and ecclesiastical government, is fitly compared to a building. The calling them the *virgin Israel* doth not signify that the body of that people had not been defloured by idolatry, but either signifies that this promise only concerned such as had kept their virginity; or else (which it may be is more probable) Israel is here called a *virgin* with relation to the following words, they being *virgins* which were wont to go out with tabrets, 1 Sam. xviii. 6, and to dance in the time of their mirth and jollity, Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34. The virgins are said to be *adorned with their tabrets*, or timbrels, either (as some think) because they were wont to tie scarfs or ribands about them, or because they looked comelily with these instruments of music in their hands, or should use them in a more handsome and comely manner than they had done before, when they used them at unseasonable times. That which is here prophesied is, a merry, joyful, pleasant time to this people, when their mirth should become them; or the restoration of their religious festivals, at which they used instruments of music to express their inward spiritual joy and gladness. The prophets, 1 Sam. x. 5, came from the high place with a tabret, &c.

i Is. 65. 21. Amos 9. 14.

† Heb. *profane* them. Deut. 20. 6. & 28. 30.

5 i Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall † eat *them* as common things.

Samaria was the metropolis of the ten tribes, called so from Shemer, who owned the hill: Omri king of Israel bought it, and built Samaria upon it. Mountains in many places are judged the most convenient places for vineyards, being free from shades, and most exposed to the sun. God promiseth them a liberty to plant, and that they should enjoy their plantations, eating them as common things, which they could not do till the fifth year, as appears from Lev. xix. 23—25. The three first years it was to be accounted by them as *uncircumcised*, that is, unclean; in the fourth year it was to be *holy to the Lord*; in the fifth year they might eat the fruit of it, as any common thing that was not unclean, nor yet devoted and consecrated to the Lord.

6 For there shall be a day, *that* the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall

k Is. 2. 3. Micah 4. 2.

cry, k Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God.

That *Mount Ephraim* was a part of the lot of the ten tribes is out of question. Whether by *watchmen* be to be understood *state sentinels* set to give warning of dangers approaching, or *keepers of vineyards*, seemeth not much material. It is said they should call upon men to *go up to Zion*, that is, *to the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem*, to worship the Lord. The only question is, what time this prophecy was fulfilled. For though Judah returned from the captivity of Babylon, yet the *ten tribes* (that we read of) never returned. Some think that it was fulfilled in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, when though the body of the ten tribes returned not, yet many particular persons of those tribes did return and join themselves with those who returned out of the captivity of Babylon, and rebuilt both the city and the temple. Besides, it appeareth from Josephus, l. 13. cap. 5. 8, that the Demetrii gave Samaria, Galilee, and Perea to the Jews. But the best interpreters judge that this prophecy was fulfilled under the gospel; for both Galilee and Samaria received the gospel, as appeareth from Acts viii. 1, 5, 9, 14; ix. 31.

7 For thus saith the LORD; l Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.

l Is. 12. 5, 6.

This grave, authoritative preface, *Thus saith the Lord*, seemeth to be prefixed to put the people of God out of fear of the accomplishment of the good things he had before promised and prophesied of. The verse in itself is either an exhortation to those amongst the Jews who feared God, or to the heathen, to sing and rejoice on the behalf of the Jews, to whom God would certainly show such mercy as they might *sing* for; before they had it in their hands, they might both publish the thing that it should certainly be, and also bless God for it. But withal he minds them that there would be occasion for prayer as well as praise, there would be a *remnant of Israel* that would have at least no present share in these mercies, through their impenitency, unbelief, and hardness of heart. Hereby minding us that we ought not so to rejoice in our good things, as to forget those who are no sharers with us. The best of God's people's lot, while they are in this life, is such as will show them a need of prayer as well as praise.

8 Behold, I will bring them m from the north country, and n gather them from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.

m ch. 3. 12, 18. & 23. 8. n Ezek. 20. 34, 41. & 34. 13.

By *the north country*, is unquestionably meant Babylon, and the land of the Chaldeans, and those places which were northward of Jerusalem; and by *the coasts of the earth*, all other parts into which any of the Jews had been driven. The meaning of this is, that nothing should hinder such from returning as had a mind to return; blind men that could not see their way, and lame persons, who had no strength to walk in it, though they saw it, and women with child, in regard of their heaviness, and women travailing, in regard of their pain, are persons more unfit to travel long journeys than any others; but saith God, I will make such provision, that some under those circumstances shall come. That these phrases must be interpreted only into this general sense appears, because such persons in a literal sense could not come. And though some worthy interpreters understand it in a spiritual sense, of ignorant and impotent persons, and such as are laden with the burden of their sins, and of coming to Christ, it seems not to be the primary sense of the text.

9 o They shall come with weeping, and with ‖ supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk p by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim *is* my q firstborn.

o Ps. 126. 5, 6. ch. 50. 4.
‖ Or, *favours.* Zech. 12. 10.
p Is. 35. 8. & 42. 16. & 49. 10, 11.
q Ex. 4. 22.

They shall come with weeping; some think that it had been better translated, *They went weeping*; for though the verb be the future tense in the Hebrew, yet that tense hath often the signification of the preterperfect tense; thus it answereth, Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6. *He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing*, &c.; but there is no need of it here, for there is a weeping for joy as well as for sorrow, as we have it in the instances

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both of Jacob and Joseph, Gen. xxix. 11; xliii. 30; and thus the text correspondeth with that, Zech. xii. 10, *I will pour upon them the Spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn.* *Weeping* also here may be understood for their past sins. *I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters;* and they shall have no want as they had when they came out of Egypt, through the wilderness, where they often wanted water. *In a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble;* neither shall they have any rough ways, nor turn backward and forward, as God made them to do in their passage through the wilderness. *For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born;* for as I have the affection of a father for all Israel, so will I show the care and kindness of a father to them, and use them as a man useth his first-born; so God anciently called the Jews, Exod. iv. 22, they being the first of all nations, whom God owned and took into covenant, and who owned God, and worshipped the true and living God only.

10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel [r] will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd *doth* his flock.

r Is. 40. 11. Ezek. 34. 12, 13, 14.

God willeth his promises of good to his people to be published and declared beforehand, and that not to them only, but to other people, that the hand of his providence, when he brings them to pass, may be more conspicuous, and it may be undeniably owned to be the work of God, being no more than what he had foretold long before. God is not only the author of those judgments which come upon his people, but of their mercies; and his power in scattering them is enough to confirm us in a belief of his power to gather them. He will not only gather them, but keep and protect them when gathered; and thus God showeth himself their Shepherd: it is the work of a shepherd not only to call and gather his sheep together, but to watch over them, protect, and keep them, when they are so gathered together.

11 For [s] the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him [t] from the hand of *him that was* stronger than he.

s Is. 44. 23. & 48. 20. t Is. 49. 24, 25.

Because of the certainty of Divine prophecies and promises, things in them are often said to be already done which are not to be fulfilled of many years after. The sense is, God will as certainly do it as if he had already done it; for whether it be understood of a deliverance from Babylon, or of the salvation of the gospel by Christ, which by a metaphor is often also called *redeeming* and *ransoming*, it was to be accomplished long after this time. By *him that was stronger than he*, some understand the Chaldeans, others understand the devil (interpreting the text of the spiritual redemption of God's people by the blood of Christ, being the ransom given for them); but undoubtedly the text is literally to be understood of their deliverance from Babylon, though (as the apostle saith) *all these things happened to them in a figure.* In their deliverance, as well from Babylon as Egypt, they were types of the deliverance of God's people from spiritual Babylon and Egypt by Christ, as well as in their entering into Canaan they were (as the apostle proveth, Heb. iii., iv.) types of the saints entering into heaven, of which Canaan was a type.

12 Therefore they shall come and sing in [u] the height of Zion, and shall flow together to [x] the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a [y] watered garden; [z] and they shall not sorrow any more at all.

u Ezek. 17. 23. & 20. 40. x Hos. 3. 5. y Is. 58. 11. z Is. 35. 10. & 65. 19. Rev. 21. 4.

The particular phrases in this verse must not be strained, nor do they need a particular explication, all signifying but one thing, viz. the happy and prosperous state the Jews should be in after their return from the captivity, both as to their religious and civil state. *The height of Zion* may either signify Jerusalem, or the temple more especially, where those that returned, as well those of the ten tribes as those strictly of Judah, should come and sing praises to God; and should there come to beg of God good things upon the account of his goodness, owning him as the God of their mercies, whether of a spiritual or temporal nature; such as corn, wine, oil, and an increase of their cattle, both flocks and herds. And they should be a beautiful, flourishing, growing people, like *a watered garden* that looks cheerly, and in which things grow and thrive (for soul doth not seem here to be taken for men's spiritual and immortal part, but for the whole man). And they shall be sorrowful no more in that manner as they have been, and for that age and generation were; or many years: see Isa. xxxv. 10. Some think that under these expressions is also promised the spiritual joy which the true Israel of God should have under the gospel, and the eternal joy they shall have in heaven, when, and not before, all tears shall be wiped from their eyes; for in a strict sense it was not fulfilled to the Jews, who at the taking of their city by the Romans, sixty years after Christ, met with more sorrow than they had ever before met with.

13 Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.

This verse containeth only a further variety of expressions, all signifying the same thing, viz. their happy state for some time after the captivity. We may understand the *dancings* here of all sorts of people, either of their religious rejoicing in their holy festivals, (for under the Old Testament in their religious rejoicing they used these external expressions of joy, as appears from Psal. cl. 4, and from David's dancing before the ark,) or of their civil joy, where dancing was more usual: the last words of the verse expound all the former.

14 And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.

By *priests* some understand the ministers of the gospel, whom God here promiseth liberally to provide for; or rather, by giving a success to their ministry, and letting them see the fruit of their labours, make to rejoice: in which metaphorical sense I should rather interpret it, applying it first to the priests of the Jews after the captivity, of whom it is said, Ezra vi. 16, that they *kept the feast of the dedication of the second temple with joy;* and ver. 22, *the Lord had made the people joyful.* Nor were the people for a short time only *satisfied with the Lord's goodness.* In a secondary typical sense it may also signify the spiritual success and rejoicing of good ministers under the gospel, and the spiritual joy of believers. This rejoicing is metaphorically expressed by *fatness*, with allusion to the fat of the sacrifices under the law. It is a usual thing for God by his prophets to express New Testament duties and privileges by phrases borrowed from the worship of God under the Old Testament. See Isa. lxvi. 22, 23.

15 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; [a] A voice was heard in [b] Ramah, lamentation, *and* bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because [c] they *were* not.

a Matt. 2. 17, 18. b Josh. 18. 25. c Gen. 42. 13.

Interpreters are much divided in the sense of these words, whether they should refer to the slaughter of the Jews belonging to the ten tribes, upon their being captivated by the Assyrians, or to the slaughter of the Jews, upon the siege and taking of the city by the king of Babylon, or to Herod's killing the infants in Bethlehem. Certain it is, the evangelist, Matt. ii. 18, applieth them unto the latter; but whether the evangelist's application of it be as a literal fulfilling of the prophecy, or by way of allusion, or no, is the question. Those that think that it is primarily to be understood of the slaughter of the infants, urge, 1. That Matthew, chap. ii. 18, so applies it. 2. That women's mourning for children seems rather to be for the loss of infants, (as was there,) than expressive of the mourning of all sorts of people, in a general desolation. 3. That the place of the mourning seems to hint it; for Ramah was near to Bethlehem, and contained under the *coasts about Bethlehem*, mentioned by the evangelist. 4. The words *because they were not* they think make for them; for by

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being carried into captivity, they did not cease to be, though they ceased to be in that happy estate they were in before. 5. Because they think that this is here propounded as a sign of his coming, upon whose coming these promises of felicity to the Jews should be fulfilled. These reasons are not unanswerable; for, 1. Matthew may apply it only by way of allusion, speaking of such a providence, when such a thing should happen as happened before; in which sense particular texts of Scripture are in Scripture often said to be *fulfilled*, though they had their fulfilling before. 2. *Rachel* here doth not signify a single person, no, nor a particular sex, but is brought in as a *common parent*, lamenting the loss of her offspring. 3. *Ramah* was indeed near Bethlehem, but it was a city in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 25; 1 Kings xv. 17. Rachel was buried betwixt it and Bethlehem, Gen. xxxv. 19; 1 Sam. x. 2; and it was also the place where Nebuzaradan, after he had taken Jerusalem, disposed of his prisoners, as we read, chap. xl. 1. 4. Though the greater part of the Jews were not slain, but carried into captivity; yet doubtless many were slain, and those left alive *were not* as to her, being now carried out of Canaan into a strange land. 5. Although the promises in this chapter made to the Jews were more eminently and fully made good under the kingdom of Christ; yet it may be doubted whether any of these promises were primarily and solely fulfilled to them under the kingdom of Christ, but literally before that time, though more fully and largely then. In *Ramah* therefore *a voice was heard*, that is, in Canaan, and particularly in Ramah, where Nebuzaradan, chap. xl. 1, disposed of the prisoners he had taken, setting some at liberty, (as Jeremiah in particular,) ordering others to death, and carrying the rest away to Babylon, which caused a bitter weeping and lamentation. *Rachel weeping for her children: Rachel* is here brought in, having been buried near that place, as if she were risen up from the grave, and lamented the Jewish nation, which came out of her loins, (for so Benjamin did, which was one of the two tribes that made the kingdom of Judah,) all the people of which tribe are properly enough called her children. *Rachel* here signifieth all the Benjamitish women who descended from Rachel. *Refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not;* and, like a passionate woman, she refused all arguments of comfort, because her children either *were not* absolutely, being slain by the pestilence, the famine, and the sword of the king of Babylon, or were no longer her children, being transplanted and removed into Babylon. So as I take this text literally and primarily to refer to the lamentation for the miseries the people suffered, upon the king of Babylon's taking the city; to which mourning Matthew alludeth, there being a lamentation like this when Herod caused the infants of two years old to be slain in Bethlehem, and in the coasts about Bethlehem, of which Ramah was one.

16 Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and [d] they shall come again from the land of the enemy.

[d] ver. 4, 5. Ezra i. 5. Hos. i. 11.

The prophet in this and the following verses is brought in as one appointed of God to quiet and comfort the *Rachel* before mentioned, calling to her to quiet herself, and not to mourn so excessively, for God would recompense her for her afflictions, which are here understood by the term *work* (as some think); but the Hebrew word פְּעֻלָּה is hardly found in Scripture taken for affliction: others therefore apply it to Rachel, for whose piety's sake God would show mercy to her children, as a reward of grace, though not of debt. The best interpreters think that the terms of *work* and *reward* are here used only to express the succession of a comfortable state to their miserable state in captivity, (as the wages use to follow the work,) which should make them amends for their long time of affliction; and so it is expounded by the last words of the verse.

17 And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border.

And again here, where, by *end*, is meant the end of the seventy years, and the words are but a repetition of the promise of the return of the Jews out of the captivity of Babylon, of which the prophet had often before assured them, and here only repeats it as an argument why they should not be immoderately afflicted; for their affliction was not endless, nor their captivity for ever; they should return again into their own land.

18 ¶ I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself *thus;* Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed *to the yoke:* [e] turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou *art* the LORD my God.

[e] Lam. 5. 21.

The prophet in this verse showeth the change that should be wrought in the hearts of the Israelites preceding this turn out of their captivity. God had made an ancient promise to this people in their enemies' hands, Lev. xxvi. 40—42, *If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that they also have walked contrary unto me; and that also I have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.* The Lord, to show his faithfulness to his word, and also to mind them of what must first be done before the aforementioned promises could be fulfilled, and made good to them, and to quicken them to their duty, speaks of a thing yet to come as of a thing past, foretelling that before their deliverance should come he should hear Ephraim, that is, the ten tribes, or rather, those of all the twelve tribes that feared the Lord, bemoaning or bewailing their miserable state, or themselves, both for that and their sins, which had brought them into such a state, and acknowledging not only what God had done unto them, that it was he who had chastised them, and that justly; for they were as wanton bullocks not used to the yoke, which ordinarily are very unruly when they are first put into it, but by use are more quiet under it; and praying to God that he would both change their hearts and also their state; for without him it could never be done, and by him it would be done easily; and to this purpose laying a claim to God as their God, and owning him as their God, promising him that though other lords had ruled over them, yet hereafter he alone should be owned, acknowledged, worshipped, and obeyed by them.

19 Surely [f] after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon *my* thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.

[f] Deut. 30. 2.

We must consider that we are not in a history or a narration of things done, but in a prophecy foretelling what should come to pass. The prophet foretelleth that before this promised deliverance should come, the Israelites should be in another temper, that their uncircumcised hearts should be humbled, they should accept of the punishment of their sins, confess God's justice and righteousness, and their own wantonness and unruliness, pray unto God to change their hearts, which would never else be changed, and change their conditions, which would depend upon that change of their hearts, laying claim to God as their God, who had promised, Deut. xxx. 1, 2, that when the blessings and the curses spoken of chap. xxviii., xxix. should come upon them, and *they should call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord had driven them, if they returned unto the Lord their God, and obeyed his voice, according to all that he commanded them, they and their children, with all their heart, and all their soul; that then the Lord their God would turn their captivity, and have compassion on them*, &c. Now, saith Ephraim, *after I was turned*, after God had changed our hearts, we *repented* and changed our practices; after that God had instructed us, either by his prophets, or by briers and thorns, by our afflictions, or by his Holy Spirit, we smote upon our thighs in testimony of our sorrow and affliction, Ezek. xxi. 12. Then I was *ashamed* and *confounded* for my sins, understanding that I

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did but bear the just punishment of the sins which I had long ago committed, in the time of my wantonness, rebellion, and disobedience to God. This is expressed by the term *youth*, because ordinarily men and women's youth is their time of wantonness; persons ordinarily growing more considerate and sober as years increase upon them. Thus the prophet foretelleth that God would prepare this people for mercy. In the next verses he showeth how ready God's ear would be to hear.

20 *Is* Ephraim my dear son? *is he* a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: [g] therefore my bowels †are troubled for him; [h] I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.

g Deut. 32. 36. Is. 64. 15. Hos. 11. 8.
† Heb. *sound.*
h Is. 57. 18. Hos. 14. 4.

Interpreters run into a very great variety in their explications of this text; that which seemeth to be the cause of it is, that, amongst the Hebrews, affirmative interrogations are notes of the vehement denial of the thing as to which the question is propounded, which leads some to interpret these words into a denial that Ephraim was his *dear son*, or a *pleasant child*, and denying the truth of his professed repentance. But certainly this is quite contrary to the whole scope of the prophet. The reverend author of the English Annotations hath observed, that the affirmative interrogation sometimes in Scripture doth imply a negative, for the negative particle is suppressed, and ה is put for הֲלֹא; so that, *Is Ephraim my dear son?* here, is the same with, *Is not Ephraim my dear son?* He gives for instances 1 Sam. ii. 27, 28, where *did I?* plainly is the same with *did I not?* So Job xx. 4, where we have supplied *not*, *Knowest thou not*, &c.? So chap. iii. 6, where, *Hast thou seen?* is the same with, *Hast thou not seen?* So Ezek. xx. 30; Amos vi. 2. So that though the particle prefixed ה be an affirmative particle, yet it is often put for הֲלֹא and signifieth negatively, the negative being suppressed and to be understood. I have also sometimes thought that even here it may be fairly enough interpreted, Is Ephraim now become my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? Is his heart turned? So is mine. *For since I spake against him*, or *with him*, or *of him, I do earnestly remember him*, מִדֵּי דַבְּרִי Ar. Montanus translateth it, *from the sufficiency* of my speaking with him; the reason of the difference is, דַּי signifies to *suffice*, and it signifies *time*. I see no reason to vary from our translation, *since*, or *from the time*, as the same particle signifieth, 1 Sam. xviii. 30; 1 Kings xiv. 28; Isa. xxviii. 19, I spake against him by my threatenings, I do remember him with the affection and compassion of a father. *My bowels are troubled for him*, is as much as, I have pitied him; as the bowels of parents are turned and troubled for their children in calamities; therefore, saith God, I will certainly show him favour.

21 Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: [i] set thine heart toward the highway, *even* the way *which* thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.

i ch. 50. 5.

The latter part of this verse expounds the former. Thou shalt (saith God) return again to these cities which thou now leavest, therefore take good notice of the way thou goest, set up some marks by which thou mayst know it again; make thee pillars of some high heaps of stone in the way, which thou mayst know again when thou comest at them; mind well the way that the Assyrians and the Babylonians carried thee, for thou shalt come back the same way. Further to assure them they should return, he calls to them to *turn again*, and doubleth his words, for the further confirmation of the thing.

22 ¶ How long wilt thou [k] go about, O thou [l] backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.

k ch. 2. 18, 23. 36.
l ch. 3. 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 22.

That the Jews are here meant by the *backsliding daughter* is out of question; but what *going about* is here intended is not so plain. Some interpret it of their running after idols; some, of their seeking help from foreign nations, instead of applying themselves unto God; others, of their wandering up and down in captivity. But the greater difficulty is about this *new thing*, which the Lord saith he will *create in the* new *earth, a woman compassing a man;* some by women understanding feeble persons that should prevail against strong men. But the two interpretations of this difficult passage, which seem most reasonably to contend for preference, are, 1. The interpretation of those who think it contains a promise both of the Jewish church in its time, and of the gospel church after the Jewish church's period, prevailing over all its enemies, whether temporal or spiritual; though, considering the paucity of the church's members, with the multitude of its enemies, and their power, it seemed as strange a thing as for a woman to prevail against a strong and mighty man. This the learned author of the English Annotations judgeth the true and genuine sense of these words. 2. Others interpret this woman to be the Virgin Mary, who was to enclose in her womb the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom the converted Jews were to adhere; which sense neither Mr. Calvin nor our learned English Annotator approve of. But it being the received sense of very many interpreters, it is fit we should hear their reasons, which are, 1. They urge the particle כִּי for God, they say, here gives the reason why the Jews should desire to return into the country of Judea, because the Messias was to be born there. 2. They urge the term *created*, the body of Christ being not begotten by man, but created by God, though of the flesh of the Virgin. 3. They say this indeed was a new thing. It was a new thing for a virgin to become a mother, still remaining a virgin, and to be the mother of him who was God blessed for ever, though not the mother of the Divine nature; for so Christ answered the type of Melchisedec, *without father* as man, *without mother* as God. 4. All other encompassings of a man they say were as well out of Judea as in it, this was in Judea only. 5. The word translated *woman* in Scripture they say always signifies a particular individual woman, which could be no other than the Virgin. 6. They say the whole context refers to benefits coming by Christ, therefore he must certainly be the man here intended. 7. They urge that this prophecy follows ver. 15, which, Matt. ii. 8, is applied by the evangelist to Herod's murder of the infants upon the birth of Christ. But on the other side it is objected, 1. That the verb סָבַב is never used in Scripture to signify such an encompassing. 2. That the word translated *a man*, signifying a *strong man*, doth not properly agree to an infant in the mother's belly. But it is again replied, 1. That this is not the only word in Scripture that is but once read in the same sense. 2. That the word signifieth any encompassing, and may be properly applied to the Virgin's womb encompassing an infant. And for the word translated *man*, they say it is applied to a new-born infant, Job iii. 3; Isa. ix. 6; that it is applied to God, Deut. x. 17, and to Christ, Zech. xiii. 7, compared with Matt. xxvi. 31. In a matter wherein so many learned men are divided, it is enough for me to give their opinions and reasons, leaving my reader to his own judgment, in a matter wherein neither his faith nor holiness are much concerned; for the question is not concerning the thing, whether Christ was encompassed in the womb of a woman, which is plain enough from other scriptures, but only whether that be the sense of the phrase here.

23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; [m] The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, *and* [n] mountain of holiness.

m Ps. 128. 5, 6. 7, 8. Is. 1. 26.
n Zech. 8. 3.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: these prophecies of the restoration of the Jews are very ordinarily prefaced with these two attributes of God; the one of which asserts his power to do the thing promised; for what cannot be done by the Lord of hosts? the other asserting his goodness or good-will to this people, because he is their God, related to them, in covenant with them: ability and love, or good-will to us, being the two pillars of our faith and confidence in God, which requireth no more than that we should be assured that the person whom we trust is able and willing to do what we trust to him for. *Yet they shall use*, &c.: the particle עוֹד seemeth better translated, ver. 5,

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yet again they shall use, &c. The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness. Three things the prophet here foretelleth. 1. That the cities which had formerly been the habitations of bloody, unjust, cruel men, should become the habitations of men who should do justice to all. 2. That the city which stood upon Mount Zion, and had formerly been a habitation of idolaters, and other unholy persons, should become a place in which men should in a due and holy manner serve and worship the true God. 3. That they should be so famous both for justice and holiness, that men should take notice of it, and wish them well under that notion; and upon that account, as they had for their sins been made a curse and a proverb, so upon their reformation they should be for a blessing. By this we may observe that those who would be blessed by God and men, must be just towards men, and holy towards God.

24 And there shall dwell in Judah
[o] ch. 33. 12, 13. itself, and [o]in all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they *that* go forth with flocks.

This whole verse is but an expression of their peaceable state after their return; they should live innocently and peaceably. So chap. xxxiii. 12.

25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

I have here is of the same significancy with *I will*, as ordinarily in prophetical promises, which are the words of Him who calleth the things that are not as if they were, and would have his people look upon the things which he hath promised to do as certain as if they were already done. The words are only a promise to the same sense as before, that God would give his people abundance of ease and plenty, and wipe all tears from their eyes.

26 Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me.

Either this revelation was made to Jeremiah in a dream, from whence he awaking, looked about him; and he was very well pleased with his sleep at that time, because of the gracious promises concerning Judah which the Lord had in that dream revealed to them. Or else in a vision, upon the sight and hearing of which he was as well pleased as a man that had slept quietly, and had had no ill and unpleasing, but sweet and delightful, dreams while he slept.

27 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the
[p] Ezek. 36. 9, 10, 11. Hos. 2. 23. Zech. 10. 9. LORD, that [p]I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.

That is, I will exceedingly multiply them, both with men and with cattle: they are now laid waste, their men are destroyed, or gone into other lands, their profitable beasts are destroyed, and killed up; but it shall not be so always, I will again plant them, and there shall be as great plenty of either as if they were sown. The multiplying both of men and of beasts in nations is God's blessing.

28 And it shall come to pass, *that* like
[q] ch. 44. 27. [r] ch. 1. 10. & 18. 7. as I have [q]watched over them, [r]to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I
[s] ch. 24. 6. watch over them, [s]to build, and to plant, saith the LORD.

Nothing can produce in God a change of counsels, purposes, and decrees, for he is not as man *that he should lie* or *repent*, he is *the God that changeth not*, but men's reformation may produce in him a change of providential dispensations. God is here set out as a man that is vindictive, and his vindictive nature prompts him to watch all opportunities of doing hurt to the person against whom he is set. There is no fury nor revenge in God, but what he doth is justice; but here an angry God is set out as taking all opportunities to punish sinners, as if he had watched for them, whereas he never slumbereth nor sleepeth: but the time of their reformation and his favour being come, God promiseth to be as diligent to do them good, which is here expressed by the metaphorical notions of planting and building them, as he was before to execute his justice upon them.

[t] Ezek. 18. 2, 3. 29 [t]In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

That is, We are punished for our fathers' sins; which yet God may justly do; and none questioneth the justice of man in the case, depriving children of their patrimonial estates for their parents' treasons; nor more than God threateneth in the second commandment. God indeed, Ezek. xviii. 2, seemeth displeased at their use of this proverb; but the reason is, because they so used it as to acquit themselves, intimating they were guiltless, and suffered only for the sins of their parents, whereas that was false; otherwise the punishment of children for the sins of their parents was no more than God had threatened, Exod. xx. 5; xxxiv. 7; chap. xv. 4. But, saith God, your captivity shall, as to you, expiate your parents' guilt past, and you shall no more say so.

30 [u]But every one shall die for his [u] Gal. 6. 5, 7. own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

But yet (saith God) you must not think that sinners shall escape my vengeance; but if men commit iniquity, they shall die; no man's teeth shall be set on edge but his only who hath eaten the sour grape.

31 ¶ Behold, the [x]days come, saith the
[x] ch. 32. 40. & 33. 14. Ezek. 37. 26. Heb. 8. 8,—12. & 10. 16, 17. LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

The apostle's application of this, Heb. viii. 8—10, puts us out of doubt that this promise referred to the gospel times. It was not only made with the Jews, but all those who should be ingrafted into that olive; but it is said to be made with them, either as those two terms signify the whole church, with whom that covenant was made (they being the whole church which God had upon the earth at that time); or because they were the only people that had broken the first covenant, the Gentiles being strangers at that time to the *covenant of promise*, Eph. ii. 12, covenants being usually renewed upon one party's violation of them; or because it was at first made with the Jews, though it concerned also those *that were afar off, even as many as the Lord should call*, Acts ii. 39. Neither is it called the *new covenant* because it was as to the substance new, for it was made with Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7, and with the Jews, Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. And it was then confirmed by the blood of Christ, though not actually shed, yet as he was *the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world*, whose blood was typified by the blood of the paschal lamb, and of all those living creatures killed for sacrifice, but upon many other accounts, thus enumerated by divines. 1. Because it was new in the notion of a testament, not confirmed by the actual death of Christ till gospel times. 2. Because it was revealed and preached after a new manner, more fully and particularly, plainly and clearly. 3. Because it had no such mixture of promises of temporal blessings as it had when first made with the Jews. 4. Nor was the ceremonial law any part of it, as it was to the Jews, who were obliged to approve themselves God's people by a strict observance of that. 5. It was in the publication extended both to Jews and Gentiles, which the former was not. 6 In regard of the efficacy of the Spirit attending the publication of it, in a much fuller and larger manner, with the distribution of its gifts and graces, enabling souls to fulfil it. See more in the English Annotations upon this subject.

32 Not according to the covenant that
I made with their fathers in the day *that*
[y] Deut. 1. 31. [y]I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my cove-
‖ Or, *should I have continued an husband unto them?* nant they brake, ‖although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

Not in substance differing from it, but in circumstances vastly differing, as was showed before, and is further declared afterward. The covenant which God made with the Jews when they came out of the land of Egypt, was on God's part the law which he gave them, with the promises annexed to their observation of it; on their part (which made it a formal covenant) their promise of obedience to it, of which see Exod. xxiv. 7, 8; Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. This

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covenant God saith he made with them when they were an impotent, weak people, the care of whom he took upon him, and led them as a parent leadeth the feeble child by his hand. None must imagine that this covenant did not contain the promise of pardon, through the blood of the Messiah, upon their application to him, for to what purpose else was it confirmed by blood? Exod. xxiv. 8. Which covenant they are said to have broken, not because of every disobedience to the law of God, for so every one daily breaketh it, but by their gross and eminent sinnings, so oft repeated and continued in without repentance; and more particularly by their idolatry, which is compared to whoredom, which breaketh the covenant and bond of marriage, and causeth God to say unto a people, *Lo Ammi*, You are not my people. And this covenant-breaking is aggravated from God's kindness to them, and care of them; who had for them the love, and declared the care, of a husband, and gave them no temptation to go a whoring from him.

33 [a] But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, [a] I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; [b] and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

[a] ch. 32. 40.
[a] Ps. 40. 8. Ezek. 11. 19, 20. & 36. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 3. 3.
[b] ch. 24. 7. & 30. 22. & 32. 38.

With the house of Israel; that is, with those *Israelites indeed*, who shall be without *guile*, (as Christ saith of Nathanael, John i. 47,) with those who are (as the apostle speaks, Rom. ii. 29) Jews inwardly, by the circumcision of the heart and Spirit, spoken of and promised by God, Deut. xxx. 6. *After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts:* in the times of the gospel, God's law is not abrogated and made void. Christ himself came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; but it is written in the hearts of God's true Israel by the finger of the Spirit, not in tables of stone only; and they become obedient to it, not from compulsion and force, but from their secret approbation of it, and acknowledgment of it, as *holy*, *just*, and *good*, the delight they take in it *after the inward man*, Rom. vii. 22. But some may object, How was this a new covenant? Did not God of old write his law in the hearts of his people? Did not David, and other the servants of God, (of whom we read in the Old Testament,) serve God out of a principle of love and delight in his law? *Answ.* Undoubtedly David and others did so, and the law of God was wrote in their hearts, but it was by virtue of this *new covenant*, from the free and efficacious grace of God. Mr. Calvin, I think, judgeth right, that the prophet's design here is to express the difference betwixt the *law* and the *gospel*. The first showeth duty; the latter bringeth along with it the *grace of regeneration*, by which the heart is changed, fitted, and enabled for and unto duty. All under the time of the law that came to salvation were saved, not from the law, or by that, but by the gospel, and this new covenant; but this was not evidently exhibited, neither was the regenerating grace of God so common, under the time of the law, as it hath been under the gospel, which maketh it look like *a new covenant* with men, though it was the same covenant which God was always in with his people; for what difference is there between the terms of the covenant as recited here, chap. xxiv. 7; xxx. 22, and as made with Abraham? Gen. xvii. 7; Deut. xxx. 6. It is further observable, that God maketh the writing the law in people's hearts his own work. There were no need of God's putting his law into men's inward parts, if they had such an inward power (as some talk of) of themselves to do it, and could write it there with a pen of their own making. The papists allow God a share in this work, only give man himself the greatest share. Others indeed give God nothing but the honour of giving man a *reasonable soul*, furnished with such a power, and that he hath done to heathens as well as those within the pale of the church, and the *preaching of the gospel;* and to those within the church, a further aid and assistance to them than heathens have to use their natural power well. But let any understanding person judge whether this be probably the sense of this text, or comprehensive of all within the *covenant* which God hath made with his people; or supposing this were true, what that is which differeth one man living under the gospel from another, but himself; and whether by this doctrine man be not made a god to himself, that is, the principal cause of all spiritual and eternal good, which how it comporteth with the honour and glory of God, or with this text, and many others of like nature, I do not understand.

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for [c] they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for [d] I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

[c] Is. 54. 13. John 6. 45. 1 Cor. 2. 10. 1 John 2. 20, 27.
[d] ch. 33. 8. & 50. 20. Mic. 7. 18. Acts 10. 43. & 13. 39. Rom. 11. 27.

This must not be so interpreted as if under the gospel there should be no more need of ministerial teaching, for Christ himself sent out his apostles to preach; nor yet as if there should be no more need of brotherly teachings, by instruction or correption; the contrary is commanded, Col. iii. 16. It is only an expression signifying the increase of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord, that should be after the pouring out of the Spirit: we have such expressions 1 John ii. 27. The learned author of our English Annotations thinks this phrase signifies, that under the gospel there should be a greater measure of means of knowledge, and of knowledge got by that means, and of clearness of understanding in persons, or ability to conceive things revealed, and a greater number of persons that should be enlightened with the saving knowledge of God. Others say, that by *knowing the Lord* is to be understood the first knowledge of God; Christians should not need be taught the first rudiments: but the apostle speaks otherwise, Heb. v. 12. Others by *knowledge* understand the *fear of the Lord*. God saith, they should all know him; but it must not be understood of the same degree and measure, but in a degree of sufficiency for the duties which God expected from them upon their notion and apprehension of God. God makes the root of all this grace to be the free pardon and remission of their sins.

35 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, [e] which giveth the sun for a light by day, *and* the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth [f] the sea when the waves thereof roar; [g] The LORD of hosts *is* his name:

[e] Gen. 1. 16. Ps. 72. 5, 17. & 89. 2, 36, 37. & 119. 89.
[f] Is. 51. 15.
[g] ch. 10. 16.

The word רגע is here ill translated *divide*, which hath led some interpreters to think that God here hath a respect to his dividing the Red Sea, that the Israelites might pass over, which seemeth not at all here to be intended. The word indeed signifieth to *divide*, but it also signifieth to *quiet* and *bring to rest*, and is so interpreted, chap. l. 34; Isa. xxxiv. 14, and in this very chapter, ver. 2, and doubtless were better here translated, which *quieteth the sea* when the waves thereof roar. All the acts mentioned are acts speaking the Divine almighty power of him who is the Lord of all the regiments in the hosts of the creation.

36 [h] If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

[h] Ps. 148. 6. Is. 54. 9, 10. ch. 33. 20.

There are ordinances of worship, which are God's laws relating to his worship; and ordinances of justice, which are God's laws for the executing civil justice; and ordinances of nature, which are God's establishments for the working of natural causes in their order; these are those here spoken of, which shall hold and continue to the dissolution of the world, the continuance of which God pawneth as a pledge of the continuance of Israel as a nation *all the days*, (so it is in the Hebrew,) that is, many days, or all the days they shall keep close with him, or which he hath appointed. If we interpret it (as in our version) *for ever*, it must be understood not of Israel according to the flesh, but of the church, the true Israel of God, which shall never fail.

37 Thus saith the LORD; [i] If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath,

[i] ch. 33. 22.

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I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.

That is, I will never cast off all the seed of Israel, (which promise the apostle, Rom. xi. 1, 2, proveth to have been by God made good, notwithstanding the rejection of the great body of that people,) for none but God can either measure the heavens, or pierce to the centre of the earth.

38 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD [k] from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner.

k Neh. 3. 1. Zech. 14. 10.

That is, it shall be built round, as largely as ever. We read of this *tower of Hananeel*, Neh. iii. 1; xii. 39; Zech. xiv. 10; it was in the south, or rather the eastern part of the city. We read of the *gate of the corner*, 2 Kings xiv. 13; Zech. xiv. 10; most agree that it is in the north-east part of the city.

39 And [l] the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath.

l Ezek. 40. 3. Zech. 2. 1.

That is, it shall be built round about upon its old foundations: see Neh. iii. We are ignorant of the ancient situation of the city, so are the Jews themselves, therefore it is vain to pretend to an exact skill in these names of places; some say *Gareb* signifies a *scab*, and the *hill* had its name from leprous persons lying there.

40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, [m] unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, [n] *shall be* holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

m 2 Chron. 23. 15. Neh. 3. 28.

n Joel 3. 17.

The whole valley of the dead bodies; a valley so called (as some think) from the multitude of Sennacherib's army slain there; or, (as others think,) from the bodies of malefactors put to death at Golgotha, (which was near,) cast or buried there. *And of the ashes;* so called (as is thought) from the ashes of the sacrifices carried thither. Some think that *the horse gate* had its name from the king's horses led out at it. The sum is, the whole city shall be built. *Shall be holy unto the Lord;* all these places shall be parts of the holy city, and God's name shall be sanctified, and he shall be worshipped in them all; and the city for a long time shall abide, and *not be plucked up, nor thrown down;* for we know after many years it was plucked up by the Romans. If we interpret the word *for ever* of a perpetuity, the church of God must here be understood, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, as Christ hath promised.

CHAP. XXXII.

Jeremiah, in the siege of Jerusalem, being imprisoned by Zedekiah, buyeth a field, taketh witnesses, draweth a writing, sealeth and delivereth it to Baruch to preserve, as tokens of the people's return, 1—15. *He prayeth with admiration of God's majesty and works; and representeth his own conflict,* 16—25. *God confirmeth the captivity for their sins,* 26—35; *but promiseth a gracious return,* 36—44.

cir. 590. THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD [o] in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which *was* the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.

o 2 Kings 25. 1, 2. Jer. 39. 1.

That is, something more than a year before the city was taken, for it was taken in the fourth month of the eleventh year of this king's reign, chap. xxxix. 2. This tenth year concurred with the eighteenth year of the king of Babylon's absolute reign, who began so to reign in the third and fourth year of Jehoiakim, Dan. i. 1; so as Jehoiakim's last year was the seventh and eighth of Nebuchadrezzar, who is also sometimes called Nebuchadnezzar and Nabuchodonosor.

2 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up [b] in the court of the prison, which *was* in the king of Judah's house.

b Neh. 3. 25. ch. 33. 1. & 37. 21. & 38. 6. & 39. 14.

The king of Babylon (as appears from 2 Kings xxv. 1; chap. xxxix. 1) besieged Jerusalem in the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah, so as he had besieged it some time before the revelation of this prophecy came to Jeremiah. Jeremiah was at that time a prisoner, in a prison within the king's house. The king could keep him from revealing God's will to the people, but he could not keep God from revealing himself to him. Prisons hinder us from communion with men, but often contribute to God's people freer and sweeter communion with him. In the mean time the desperate hardness of this prince and these people's hearts appear, in that the fear of an enemy besieging them could not awe them from such outrageous acts of persecution.

3 For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, [c] Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it;

c ch. 34. 2.

We no where read that Zedekiah immediately commanded Jeremiah to be imprisoned, he seemeth rather to have been favourable to Jeremiah, and judicious interpreters think his present prison was a favourable prison; but God accounteth princes to do that which their ministers or subordinate magistrates do with their connivance, and without their hinderance. Though it be wild divinity for any to say, that inferior ministers or subjects are excused by the command of the superior, and the guilt lieth only on them; yet it is as wild to say they contract no guilt by the extravagant acts of subordinate magistrates, whom they put in place, and can punish and remove from their places.

4 And Zedekiah king of Judah [d] shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes;

d ch. 34. 3. & 38. 18, 23. & 39. 5. & 52. 9.

5 And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be [e] until I visit him, saith the LORD: [f] though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper.

e ch. 27. 22.

f ch. 21. 4. & 33. 5.

Here the cause of the prophet's imprisonment is expressed. The things were true which Jeremiah prophesied, and fulfilled, chap. xxxix. 5—7, and Jeremiah could not forbear speaking them, because he was sent of God upon the errand, chap. xxxiv. 2, 3; yet the king and court could not bear his words. *There shall he be until I visit him, saith the Lord:* interpreters are divided whether the visitation here mentioned were a visitation of judgment, and the same with *until he die;* or of mercy: it is certain Zedekiah was not put to death, only his eyes put out, and he carried into Babylon, chap. xxxix. 7, where some think he afterward found favour with the king of Babylon; certain it is that he died in Babylon, and had an honourable burial, but whether he met with any other favour, or no, the Scripture saith not. Some will have the words read, *until I visit this people,* and think that Zedekiah lived in prison in Babylon till the restoration; but he was twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years, so as he was thirty-two years old when he was carried to Babylon, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11, and must be then ninety-two years old when he died, which is hardly probable, considering the delicate education and life of princes, that he, having lost his eyes, and seen so much misery, should continue sixty years longer. *Though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper;* though ye make many sallies out upon the Chaldeans, that are now besieging you, yet you shall be beaten in all, and not be able to drive them from your walls. Hitherto hath been

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but the preface to the prophetical type and discourse in this chapter, which now followeth.

6 ¶ And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

7 Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that *is* in Anathoth: for the [g] right of redemption *is* thine to buy *it*.

[g] Lev. 25. 24, 25, 32. Ruth 4. 4.

From hence may be concluded the certainty of future contingency in God's eye; the coming of Hanameel was a future contingency, yet certainly known to God, so as he could tell the prophet he would come. Anathoth (as appears from Josh. xxi. 18) was one of the cities of the Levites; hence ariseth a question, how it could be sold to Jeremiah, who by the law might not possess it, Numb. xviii. 20, being a Levite. 1. Some excuse it from the command of God, who might dispense with his own law; but this seemeth not enough, because it is said afterward, *the right of redemption is thine*. 2. Others therefore say the Levites might have some small possessions, though no ploughed land; they might have houses, and orchards, and gardens, in cities and suburbs. But that these might be sold seemeth contrary to the law, Lev. xxv. 34. It is therefore rather thought to be meant of some small estate left to Hanameel from his ancestors. *The right of redemption* belonged to the next of kin, Lev. xxv. 25; Ruth iv. 4.

8 So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that *is* in Anathoth, which *is* in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance *is* thine, and the redemption *is* thine; buy *it* for thyself. Then I knew that this *was* the word of the LORD.

Hanameel came *freely*, none drove or forced him, yet he came *necessarily* as to the event; he could not but go, else God had not told the prophet truth. *Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord;* when I saw it came to pass, knowing that God alone knew what was in men's hearts, and what they would do, I knew my former mentioned revelation was from God.

9 And I bought the field of Hanameel my uncle's son, that *was* in Anathoth, and [h] weighed him the money, *even* ‖ seventeen shekels of silver.

[h] Gen. 23. 16. Zech. 11. 12. ‖ Or, *seven shekels and ten pieces of silver.*

That is, about £2 2*s*. 6*d*., a small purchase, which argues the field here mentioned to be but some *orchard* or *garden*; though we must allow the price of land strangely fallen at this time, when the enemy was besieging the chief city of the country. It should seem they were wont there to make their payments more by weight than by tale.

10 And I † subscribed the evidence, and sealed *it*, and took witnesses, and weighed *him* the money in the balances.

† Heb. *wrote in the book.*

I went through with the purchase, setting my hand to and sealing the deed, and taking witnesses to it, as is usual.

11 So I took the evidence of the purchase, *both* that which was sealed *according* to the law and custom, and that which was open:

It is most probable that, upon such bargains and sales amongst the Jews, two instruments were made, the one sealed up, to be kept by the purchaser, the other open, to be showed to the judges, and by them ratified, and that this was the law and custom ordinarily amongst the Jews upon purchases; both which Jeremiah kept, the one for his use, the other to produce in court for ratification. There is no certainty in the guesses that some others make why there were two copies: nothing appeareth but that the prophet bought this little purchase with the same rites and circumstances that men ordinarily in that country made purchases in times of peace and civil order.

12 And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto [i] Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's *son*, and in the presence of the [k] witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison.

[i] ch. 36. 4. [k] See Is. 8. 2.

This *Baruch* (as appeareth from chap. xxxvi. 4, 26) was a scribe, and an attendant upon Jeremiah, and one who wrote things for him, and from his mouth. He made this purchase with all the usual formalities; to make it public, he signed and sealed it before witnesses, and delivered it to Baruch, to keep in the presence of them all, and in the presence of the Jews who casually were in the place when the thing was done.

13 ¶ And I charged Baruch before them, saying,

14 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days.

15 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards [l] shall be possessed again in this land.

[l] ver. 37, 43.

Here is nothing of any seeming difficulty in these verses, but only why the prophet commandeth Baruch to put the evidences in an *earthen vessel*, which himself also expounds, that they might continue many days, that is, not defaced: had they been hid many days in the earth, they would have been rotten; had they been above ground in a box or chest, they might have been lost, or taken away by the soldiers plundering houses, or at least burnt with fire. Ver. 15, the prophet expounds God's meaning in this command to him, and his own design, in so formal a buying of so small a purchase, especially considering, that, very probably, Jeremiah was no great purchaser, nor very greedy of purchases. He lets them know that all this was for a sign of the truth of what God had revealed to him concerning the people's return, though after many days, (sixty years from this time,) and also of the firm assent he gave to that Divine revelation, that purchases should one day be enjoyed again in Judea, and houses, fields, and vineyards in it should be again possessed.

16 ¶ Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the LORD, saying,

What he prayed for the matter of his prayer in the following verses will inform us; but it should seem by it that he was not without his perplexities; though he yielded an absolute obedience to God's command, yet he prayeth for a clearer revelation of his meaning in this thing.

17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, [m] thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, *and* [n] there is nothing ‖ too hard for thee:

[m] 2 Kings 19. 15. [n] Gen. 18. 14. ver. 27. Luke 1. 37. ‖ Or, *hid from thee.*

He beginneth his prayer with a recognition of God's omnipotency, and the infiniteness of his power, which was showed in his first making the heaven and the earth, as we read, Gen. i.; Psal. cxlvi. 6. God himself used this instance to confirm his people's faith in his ability to do what he pleased, chap. xxvii. 5. It is observable, that the servants of God in holy writ used in their prayers to give God such names as might help to confirm their faith as to what they asked. Nothing can further be necessary to confirm our faith that we shall have what we ask, than for us to be persuaded that the person is *able* to do it, and also willing. The prophet beginneth with a declaration of his faith in God as to the first, then goes on to the second.

18 Thou shewest [o] lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, [p] the Mighty God, [q] the LORD of hosts, *is* his name,

[o] Ex. 20. 6. & 34. 7. Deu. 5. 9, 10. [p] Is. 9. 6. [q] ch. 10. 16.

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Thou showest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: this is the name which God gave himself, Exod. xxxiv. 7; Deut. v. 9, 10, and of this latter clause, declarative of the vengeance of God in punishing children for their parents' sins, are many instances in Scripture, Josh. vii. 24; 1 Sam. ii. 33, 34; 1 Kings xiv. 10, 11; xxi. 24.

r Is. 28. 29.

19 [r]Great in counsel, and mighty in †work: for thine [s]eyes *are* open upon all the ways of the sons of men: [t]to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:

† Heb. doing.
s Job 34. 21. Ps. 33. 13. Prov. 5. 21. ch. 16. 17.
t ch. 17. 10.

Who dost nothing but in infinite wisdom, as if thou hadst taken counsel upon it; and art mighty in thy works of providence, by which thou governest the world; whose eyes run to and fro the earth, beholding the evil and the good; so that all things are naked before thee, and thou art not a mere curious and idle spectator of men's actions, but lookest upon them for that end, that thou mightest reward or punish them, according as thou seest their actions good or bad in thy sight.

20 Which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, *even* unto this day, and in Israel, and among *other* men; and hast made thee [u]a name, as at this day;

u Ex. 9. 16. 1 Chr. 17. 21. Is. 63. 12. Dan. 9. 15.

Who didst wonders of justice in the land of Egypt, such as are remembered and made matters of astonishing discourse even to this day; and wroughtest wonders of mercy in Israel, bringing them out of Egypt through the Red Sea, raining them down *manna* and *quails* from heaven, and fetching water out of the rock for them, &c.; and hast done also many wondrous works in other places, by which thou hast made thyself a glorious name.

x Ex. 6. 6. 2 Sam. 7. 23. 1 Chron. 17. 21. Ps. 136. 11, 12.

21 And [x]hast brought forth thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with great terror;

The history of this we have in the eleven or twelve first chapters of Exodus. God sent ten plagues upon Egypt one after another, before Pharaoh would let them go; and when he pursued after them, divided the Red Sea for them, that they might pass through, and then brought the waters back upon the Egyptians, pursuing after them through the sea.

22 And hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, [y]a land flowing with milk and honey;

y Ex. 3. 8, 17. ch. 11. 5.

God owneth this oath, Exod. vi. 8. *A land flowing with milk and honey;* that is, abounding with all necessary things, and all pleasant things. Canaan is often thus described, Exod. iii. 8, 17; xiii. 5; xxxiii. 3; Lev. xx. 24; Numb. xiv. 8; xvi. 13, 14; Deut. vi. 3; xi. 9, &c.

23 And they came in, and possessed it; but [z]they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them:

z Neh. 9. 26. ch. 11. 8. Dan. 9. 10, —14.

In the former passage he acknowledged God's goodness, here he owns his truth and faithfulness, in so conducting this people by his providence, that they came into the Promised Land and possessed it. Having acknowledged God's power, omniscience, goodness, truth, and faithfulness, he comes to own his justice, confessing that this people for whom God had done so much had very ill requited him, not *obeying his voice*, which he expounds by *not walking in his law;* for the law was God's voice to them. This he aggravateth by saying they had done nothing of what he had commanded, not breaking some particular law, but the whole law of God. Therefore God was righteous in bringing this sword, pestilence, and famine upon them.

24 Behold the ‖mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city [a]is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, because of [b]the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest *it*.

‖ Or, *engines of shot.* ch. 33. 4.
a ver. 25, 36.
b ch. 14. 12.

Mounts; the word signifies *ramparts*, or rather *battering rams*, engines of war, which those nations used to batter walls, or to shoot great stones into places besieged. *They are come unto the city to take it;* they are already besieging Jerusalem, and have been for some time; and the city is even ready to be taken, and cannot hold out; so many daily are killed, either with the sword of the enemy, or by famine for want of provision, or by the pestilence; *and what thou hast spoken is come to pass;* thou art just and righteous in all this, and hast done but according to what thou threatenedst to do to a sinful people that would not obey thy voice.

25 And thou hast said unto me, O Lord GOD, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; ‖for [c]the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

‖ Or, *though.*
c ver. 24.

In this verse again the particle is ill translated *and*, and *for* in the latter clause. The learned author of the English Annotations judgeth well, that it had been better translated *whenas* in the second place, as Gen. iv. 11; Psal. cii. 5, or *albeit*, or *though*, as it is translated, Josh. xvii. 18; Psal. xxiii. 4; and *yet* instead of *and* in the beginning, as it is chap. xxiii. 21. Lord, saith the prophet, expound thy meaning to me, why, when the city is upon the matter ready to be yielded up to the Chaldeans, and cannot possibly hold out long, thou shouldst set me to make purchases for thine enemies to possess.

26 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,

27 Behold, I *am* the LORD, the [d]God of all flesh: [e]is there any thing too hard for me?

d Num. 16. 22.
e ver. 17.

The Lord beginneth this revelation, for the prophet's satisfaction, with the preface expressive of his power and universal dominion, from which Jeremiah might understand that he could do whatsoever he pleased, and man, that was but flesh, Gen. vi. 3, could not hinder his effecting what he designed to do. God is also the God of the spirits of all flesh, Numb. xvi. 22; but he expresseth man here only under the notion of flesh, as Gen. vi. 3, to denote his vileness and inconsiderableness as to any grappling with God, and encountering his purposes.

28 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, [f]I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it:

f ver. 3.

29 And the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come and [g]set fire on this city, and burn it with the houses, [h]upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger.

g ch. 21. 10. & 37. 8, 10. & 52. 13.
h ch. 19. 13.

Thou judgest right, this city shall be taken, and that by this very army of Chaldeans which now besiegeth it, they shall set fire on it, and burn the houses; I have made all flesh, and I have power to dispose of it, I will give this city into their hands. But in this execution of my vengeance I shall not act by prerogative, but as a just and righteous judge, vindicating the violation of my laws: they have polluted their houses by idolatry upon the roofs of them, they have *offered incense*, paid a divine homage, to the idol Baal; and in them they have worshipped other gods; therefore I will watch over and protect them no longer, but send the Chaldeans by their fires to purge them.

30 For the children of Israel and the chil-

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dren of Judah [i]have only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the LORD.

[i] ch. 2. 7. & 3. 25. & 7. 22.—26. & 22. 21. Ezek. 20. 28.

If they had offended me only by some particular single acts, or by some few omissions, or but for a small time, I might have been judged too severe upon them; but from the time they first began to be a nation they have made it their business, course, and trade, passing from one idolatry to another, &c.

31 For this city hath been to me *as* †a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from the day that they built it even unto this day; [k]that I should remove it from before my face,

† Heb. *for my anger.*

[k] 2 Kings 23. 27. & 24. 3.

Solomon finished the building of Jerusalem, and he at least suffered idolatry in it, 1 Kings xi. 4, 8. People have always been so fond of worshipping God according to their own fancies and inventions, that even in Judah (except in David's time) the worship of God could hardly be preserved pure during the entire reign of one king. As if they had done it on purpose to provoke me to destroy the city, and cast the people of it out. Nothing more easy than for people to keep close to the Divine rule, as to external acts in worship; nothing is more provocative of God than their doing the contrary. Yet nothing hath been more rarely done in any nation, as if men had set themselves to dare a jealous God.

32 Because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, [l]they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

[l] Is. 1. 4, 6. Dan. 9. 8.

Still God maketh their destruction to be of themselves, as the meritorious cause, provoking him to that wrath he executed upon them. The whole head was sick, the whole heart faint. All orders of men were corrupted, so as there was no hope of their reformation or growing better.

33 And they have turned unto me the †[m]back, and not the face: though I taught them, [n]rising up early and teaching *them*, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction.

† Heb. *neck.*

[m] ch. 2. 27. & 7. 24.

[n] ch. 7. 13.

They have behaved themselves against me contemptuously, like men who, when they are spoken to, admonished, or instructed, instead of looking towards those who instruct or admonish them, turn their back upon them. Yet their sin had not been so great and heinous, if I by my prophets had not diligently instructed them, and they as stubbornly refused to be taught or amended by their instruction.

34 But they [o]set their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it.

[o] ch. 7. 30, 31. & 23. 11. Ezek. 8. 5, 6.

Their abominations; their idols, which above all things the jealous God abhorreth, and therefore he calleth them *abominations*, in the abstract, for abominable things, Deut. xxxii. 16; 1 Kings xi. 5; 2 Kings xxiii. 13. *In the house which is called by my name;* that is, in the temple, which was ordinarily called the house of the Lord, and the temple of the Lord.

35 And they built the high places of Baal, which *are* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to [p]cause their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto [q]Molech; [r]which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

[p] ch. 7. 31. & 19. 5.

[q] Lev. 18. 21. 1 Kings 11. 33.

[r] ch. 7. 31.

See the notes on chap. xix. 5, 6, where all passages we meet with here are fully opened.

36 ¶ And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, [s]It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence;

[s] ver. 24.

The Jews now began to see that the Chaldeans would take the city, and to be as dead-hearted as before they were full of courage, and to give over themselves for ever as lost.

37 Behold, I will [t]gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them [u]to dwell safely:

[t] Deut. 30. 3. ch. 23. 3. & 29. 14. & 31. 10. Ezek. 37. 21.

[u] ch. 23. 6. & 33. 16.

Though the city shall be taken, and you shall go into captivity; yet you shall not be utterly lost, I will gather you again, and you shall have as quiet a habitation as ever.

38 And they shall be [x]my people, and I will be their God:

[x] ch. 24. 7. & 30. 22. & 31. 33.

I will renew my covenant with them, and keep my covenant towards them; they shall serve me more faithfully, and I will own them, and take care of them, and bless them.

39 And I will [y]give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me †for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:

[y] ch. 24. 7. Ezek. 11. 19, 20.

† Heb. *all days.*

I will give them one heart; I will give them union and concord, or a oneness of mind and judgment; as to the things of God, they shall not be some for superstitious and idolatrous worship, and some for my true worship. *And one way;* they shall all worship me according to the rule I have given them. *That they may fear me for ever;* that they may worship me in truth, as a people that have a dread of me upon their hearts. *For the good of them, and of their children after them;* this will be for the profit both of them and their posterity many days, even so long as they shall continue so to do.

40 And [z]I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away †from them, to do them good; but [a]I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

[z] Is. 55. 3. ch. 31. 31.

† Heb. *from after them.*

[a] ch. 31. 33.

This promise manifestly relateth to those Jews that should receive the Lord Jesus Christ, or that were Israelites indeed; for as to others, God did turn away from doing them good, when their city was taken by Titus; unless it be to be understood of a national conversion of the Jews, not yet effected. *I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me;* my Spirit, which shall beget in them a dread of me, so as they shall not depart from me. Hence some conclude well, that when once the body of the Jews shall be converted, they shall never again apostatize from God. It may well from hence be concluded, that both conversion unto God, and perseverance in the ways of God, are the gifts of God; we are kept *by the power of God through faith unto salvation.*

41 Yea, [b]I will rejoice over them to do them good, and [c]I will plant them in this land †assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.

[b] Deut. 30. 9. Zeph. 3. 17.

[c] ch. 24. 6. & 31. 28. Amos 9. 15.

† Heb. *in truth, or, stability.*

I will not only do them good, but I will take pleasure and delight in doing them good; and I will certainly bring them to this land, and constantly and freely do them good when they shall be there.

42 For thus saith the LORD; [d]Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.

[d] ch. 31. 28.

You shall find me as true to my promises as you have found me to my threatenings.

43 And [e]fields shall be bought in this land, [f]whereof ye say, *It is* desolate with-

[e] ver. 15.

[f] ch. 33. 10.

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out man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

44 Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal *them*,
g ch. 17. 26. and take witnesses in [g]the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the
h ch. 33. 7, 11, 26. south: for [h]I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.

Now, Jeremiah, thou understandest wherefore I commanded thee to buy the field offered thee by Hanameel in Anathoth in the lot of Benjamin; it was to assure thee, that though at present the Chaldeans shall prevail against Jerusalem, and the Jews shall be carried into captivity, and the Jews shall neither buy nor sell here at present, yet fields shall here be bought again; men shall buy, and sell, and seal evidences in all parts of Judea, as they were wont to do in former times, for they shall return again out of the captivity of Babylon into their own land, and have commerce one with another as formerly.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The taking of Jerusalem, carrying away the people, their return, 1—8; *joyful state and settled government,* 9—14. *Christ the Branch of righteousness: his everlasting kingdom and priesthood; and blessed seed,* 15—26.

cir. 580. MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time,
a ch. 32. 2, 3. while he was yet [a]shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

See the notes on chap. xxxii. 2. Jeremiah was forced out of the temple, God followeth him to the prison, and there revealeth his mind to him once and again. The wickedness of the Jews in persecuting the prophet could not make God's promises of no effect for mercy to be showed to the people after the ceptivity, which though made before, are again confirmed a second time, for this chapter for substance contains no more than promises of the like nature with those in the foregoing chapters.

b Is. 37. 26. ‖ Or, *JEHOVAH.* c Ex. 15. 3. Amos 5. 8. & 9. 6. 2 Thus saith the LORD the [b]maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; ‖ [c]the LORD *is* his name;

The maker thereof, that is, say some, of Jerusalem, (so Mr. Calvin,) or the maker of these promises, (so others interpret it,) *his name is Jehovah;* so as he hath a sufficiency in himself to make good his word to establish Jerusalem, or to establish the word spoken by him for the establishment of it.

d Ps. 91. 15. ch. 29. 12. ‖ Or, *hidden.* Is. 48. 6. 3 [d]Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and ‖mighty things, which thou knowest not.

God either speaketh to the people to pray unto him, or to the prophet on the behalf of the people to pray, promising him he would show him great things. *Object.* But how doth God say that Jeremiah did not know them, when God before this time had revealed them to the prophet, and the prophet had revealed them? *Solut.* He did not know them before God had revealed them, and though God had revealed them, yet by his prayer in the former chapter it appears he did not fully understand them, or firmly believe them as he ought to have done.

4 For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of
e ch. 32. 24. Judah, which are thrown down by [e]the mounts, and by the sword;

That is, which in part are thrown down, and shall yet further be thrown down, by the engines of war which the Chaldeans use to batter down the city: see before, chap. xxxii. 24. Some read *for the mounts,* as if they were thrown down by the citizens to make room for the citizens to cast up defensive mounts. The word translated *sword* may be as well translated *hammers* or mattocks, as it is 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6. It is translated *axes,* Ezek. xxvi. 9.

5 [f]They come to fight with the Chal-
f ch. 32. 5. deans, but *it is* to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city.

It is very difficult to determine whether these words contain an entire sense in themselves, or what connexion they have with the foregoing words: not to repeat men's diverse apprehensions, of which a large account is given by the author of the English Annotations, I think they judge best who think they have an entire sense in themselves, and judge that the *they* here mentioned are the Jews, of whom the prophet saith *they come,* because he knew they would sally out and fight with their enemies; but to no purpose but to fill their houses with their own dead bodies, whom he would cause in his anger to be slain, for their wickedness which they had provoked God by, and caused him to hide his face from that city which had so much of his countenance formerly.

6 Behold, [g]I will bring it health and
g ch. 30. 17. cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

The latter part of this verse expoundeth the former, for by *health and cure* the prophet meaneth *peace and truth:* we met with the like metaphorical expression chap. xxx. 17: see the notes on that place. The miserable disturbed state of a nation being compared to wounds and sickness, the restoring of it to a peaceable, prosperous state is fitly called its health and cure. By *truth* here seems to be meant faithfulness, or stability, not truth of propositions: q. d. I will, after this great wound which I have given this people, bring them again into a quiet and peaceable state, in which they shall abide many days.

7 And [h]I will cause the captivity of Ju-
h ch. 30. 3. & 32. 44. ver. 11. i Is. 1. 26. ch. 24. 6. & 30. 20. & 31. 4, 28. & 42. 10. dah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, [i]as at the first.

In this verse the latter part is expounded by the former: the restoring of them is called *building them,* in opposition to the throwing them down, by the mounts mentioned ver. 4; unless by building be to be understood not laying the foundation of their new state, but the further prospering of them in that state.

8 And I will [k]cleanse them from all
k Ezek. 36. 25. Zech. 13. 1. Heb. 9. 13, 14. their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will [l]pardon all their
l ch. 31. 34. Mic. 7. 18. iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

Here is but one thing expressed by two phrases; the word by us translated *cleanse* signifies to expiate or purify, with allusion to the legal purifications, so as cleansing must not be understood of regeneration, but of that pardon which is mentioned in the latter part of the verse.

9 ¶ [m]And it shall be to me a name of
m Is. 62. 7. ch. 13. 11. joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall [n]fear and tremble for all the good-
n Is. 60. 5. ness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

I will do so well by this people, that other nations shall honour and praise me for my goodness to them; and not only so, but shall fear to engage against a nation so beloved and favoured by me, Exod. xv. 14, 16. Others interpret it of a religious fear and trembling, to which God's mercy to the Israelites should invite those people that should see and hear of it; but I think the former is the most probable sense of the prophet here.

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10 Thus saith the LORD; Again there
o ch. 32. 43. shall be heard in this place, °which ye say *shall be* desolate without man and without beast, *even* in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast,

Ye say; those of you who, though you find no great difficulty to believe what I have prophesied concerning the Chaldeans' taking this city, seeing it upon the matter already taken, yet find a difficulty to believe what I tell you about the people's returning, and the rebuilding of it. The Lord speaketh the one as well as the other; There shall be heard again in it, &c.

p ch. 7. 34. & 16. 9. & 25. 10. Rev. 18. 23. 11 The ᵖvoice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, ᑫPraise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD *is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and* of them that shall bring ʳthe sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For ˢI will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD.

q 1 Chron. 16. 8, 34. 2 Chron. 5. 13. & 7. 3. Ezra 3. 11. Ps. 136. 1. Is. 12. 4.
r Lev. 7. 12. Ps. 107. 22. & 116. 17.
s ver. 7.

The sum of this verse is, that those that should be carried into captivity should return, and upon their return they should be in their former states; both as to civil transactions, they should again marry and give in marriage; and as to civil and spiritual joy, they should publicly praise the Lord as they were wont to do in the words of David, Psal. cvi. 1; cvii. 1; cxviii. 1; cxxxvi. 1, (we have a record in holy writ of the fulfilling of this prophecy upon the laying the foundations of the second temple, Ezra iii. 11,) and offer sacrifices of thanksgiving. See Neh. xii. 27.

12 Thus saith the LORD of hosts;
t Is. 65. 10. ch. 31. 24. & 50. 19. ᵗAgain in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds causing *their* flocks to lie down.

That is, a great part of which is, and the other part shall soon be, desolate. In all these places there shall be flocks and herds of sheep and goats, which the shepherd shall take care of as in former times.

u ch. 17. 26. & 32. 44. 13 ᵘIn the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in
x Lev. 27. 32. the cities of Judah, shall the flocks ˣpass again under the hands of him that telleth *them*, saith the LORD.

So as to keep tale of them, as it is said they were wont to do both morning and evening in those countries.

y ch. 23. 5. & 31. 27, 31.
z ch. 29. 10. 14 ʸBehold, the days come, saith the LORD, that ᶻI will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

The Lord is not *yea* and *nay*, he cannot lie nor repent. I speak not of the present time, but there shall be a time when God will justify every good word of this nature which he hath spoken to his ancient people.

15 ¶ In those days, and at that time,
a Is. 4. 2. & 11. 1. ch. 23. 5. will I cause the ᵃBranch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

Whatsoever the Jews and some others say, the *Branch of righteousness* here spoken of can be meant of no other but Christ, who is called a *Branch* out of the stem of Jesse, Isa. xi. 1; the *Branch of the Lord*, Isa. iv. 2; *a righteous Branch*, chap. xxiii. 5. (See the notes on those places.) Zorobabel, though descended from David, cannot be meant here, but the same who is thus called in all those parallel texts, of whom yet Zorobabel (being a good man, and descended from the family of David) may be allowed to have been a type; but this text far more concerneth Christ, as he in whom all the promises are founded, and in whom they are all *yea* and *Amen*. The kings they had hitherto had of the line of David were most of them unrighteous men, but God promiseth that after the captivity they should have a *Branch of David* that should execute judgment and righteousness in the land, for the protection and government of those that feared him.

16 ᵇIn those days shall Judah be saved, b ch. 23. 6.
and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, † Heb. *Jehovah-tsidkenu.*
†The LORD our righteousness.

In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: it is the opinion of some that a spiritual salvation and security is promised under these expressions, but the most and best interpreters rather understand it of a temporal salvation as primarily intended, though typical of that spiritual and eternal salvation which is often promised to the true Israel of God; as their rest in Canaan typified that *rest* which remaineth for the people of God. *And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness:* our translation of this phrase is something strange, the words in the Hebrew are וזה אשר־יקרא־לה יהוה צדקנו Pagnine translateth them, *and he who shall call it the Lord our righteousness*, supplying the verb substantive, *is:* He who shall call it *is the Lord our righteousness.* We translate it, *this is the name wherewith it shall be called*, &c.; that which causes the difficulty is, that the pronoun זה which signifieth *he*, is applied both to *persons* and *things*, and translated *he* or *it*, and the relative אשר is of all cases, so may be translated *who*, or *which*, or *with which;* those words which our translators have supplied, *is the name*, are not in the Hebrew. This hath made a great doubt amongst interpreters, whether *The Lord our righteousness* be the name of Christ, or the name of the city. I do incline to their opinion who think that it is here mentioned as the name of Christ. In that sense there is nothing to be understood but the verb substantive, *is*, which is ordinarily understood; so the words are thus, and *he who shall call it*, is, *the Lord our righteousness.* The context seemeth to favour this, Christ being that Ruler mentioned ver. 15, as he who shall execute *justice and judgment in the land;* besides that, there is no such name any where given, either to the Jewish or Christian church, as the *Lord our righteousness*, but the full import of that name is spoken of Christ, Isa. xlv. 23, which text is applied to Christ, Rom. xiv. 11; Phil. ii. 10; he is called the just King, Zech. ix. 9, and our righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30.

17 ¶ For thus saith the LORD; †Da- † Heb. *There shall not be cut off from David.*
vid shall never ᶜwant a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; c 2 Sam. 7. 16. 1 Kings 2. 4. Ps. 89. 29, 36. Luke 1. 32, 33.

This is apparently a promise relating to Christ, for David's line had failed long since, had it not been continued in Christ, whose kingdom is and shall be an everlasting kingdom. So long as Israel remained a kingdom, those of the line of David ruled over it; when that failed, Christ came in the flesh, who ruleth, and shall rule, over the Israel of God for ever.

18 Neither shall the priests the Levites
want a man before me to ᵈoffer burnt d Rom. 12. 1. & 15. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. Rev. 1. 6. offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.

The best interpreters understand this of a ministry to abide in the church to the end of the world, according to Matt. xxviii. 20; nor is it unusual for God in the Old Testament to express promises relating to, and to be fulfilled under, the gospel by expressions and terms proper to the Old Testament, as Isa. lxvi. 23; and in this sense it must be expounded, or restrained to the times immediately following the captivity; but it is generally understood as a promise for a gospel ministry to succeed the ministry in the Jewish church, and to abide to the end of the world.

19 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying,

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e Ps. 89. 37. Is. 54. 9. ch. 31. 36. ver. 25.

20 Thus saith the LORD; eIf ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season;

By the *covenant of day and night* here is meant the same with the *ordinances* mentioned chap. xxxi. 35. God's law established in the course of natural causes, by virtue of which the day and night orderly succeed one another. These verses are but a further confirmation of what was said before, and the sense of them no more than this, that the succession of the gospel ministry in the church of God, to abide for ever, should be as certain as the succession of darkness and light; God had established the latter in a necessary course of natural causes, and he would by his providence take care for the other, that the effect should be every whit as certain. Though the second causes are widely different, yet God, who is the First Cause of both, is the same, and would as certainly bring the one to pass as the other.

f Ps. 89. 34.

21 *Then* may also fmy covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.

g Gen. 13. 16. & 15. 5. & 22. 17. ch. 31. 37.

22 As gthe host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.

The former promise was for the stability, this for the multiplication of the church, which is here expressed under the notion of the *seed of David*, that is, the members of Christ: the Jews were ordinarily called the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but I do not remember they are any where called the seed of David, unless it be 1 Kings xi. 39, where it seems also to be understood only of the princes that came from David; nor indeed could they be so called in any proper sense; David being no common head to the whole Jewish nation, as both Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were; but Christ is often called the *seed of David*, John vii. 42; Acts xiii. 23; Rom. i. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 8; and Christ is himself called David, whose *seed* and whose *Levites* are multiplied in the multiplying of Christians and of faithful ministers under the gospel, which certainly are the things here promised.

23 Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

h ver. 21, 22.

24 Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, hThe two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.

This people, that is, (say some,) the enemies of the Jews; but it may as well be interpreted either of the wicked Jews, wicked men being always full of groundless, presumptuous hopes, or sunk in despair; or of such amongst them as were better, but weak in faith, that knew not how to give any firm assent to promises, the fulfilling of which seemed to the eyes of sense and reason so improbable. By *the two families* here mentioned, the prophet either meaneth the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, or, which seemeth to me much more probable, the families of David and Aaron, mentioned before. Thus, saith God, they have spoken scornfully of my people, as if they should never be a nation more, having rulers of themselves and a ministry.

i ver. 20. Gen. 8. 22.

25 Thus saith the LORD; If imy covenant *be* not with day and night, *and if* I

k Ps. 74. 16, 17. & 104. 19. ch. 31. 35, 36.

have not kappointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;

l ch. 31. 37.

26 lThen will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, *so* that I will not take *any* of his seed *to be* rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for mI will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.

m ver. 7, 11. Ezra 2. 1.

By *the seed of Jacob*, and *of Abraham* and *Isaac*, are meant the body of the Jews, to whom these three patriarchs were common heads; by *the seed of David*, persons lineally descended from David, who should rule over the Israel of God. The sum of these two verses is plainly no more than God had said before, that a restoration of them to their own land should as certainly succeed their captivity as the night succeedeth the day, or the day succeedeth the night. God had as certainly established and ordained the one as the other, though not as yet so established the one in the order of natural causes as the other. God would certainly have mercy on them, and in showing his mercy would take care that one of the seed of David should be their ruler, which was fulfilled in the Messiah.

CHAP. XXXIV.

The captivity of Zedekiah and the city, 1—7. *The princes and people by solemn covenant, according to the law, dismiss their bond-servants, but the Babylonians leaving the siege, they reassume them*, 8—11. *For this God threateneth a return of the enemy, and destruction of Jerusalem*, 11—22.

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THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, awhen Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and ball the kingdoms of the earth †of his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying,

a 2 Kings 25. 1, &c. ch. 39. 1. & 52. 4.
b ch. 1. 15.
† Heb. *the dominion of his hand.*

The revelation of the will of God to Jeremiah, to be published to the people during the time of the siege. The seven first verses are plainly a distinct prophecy from that in the latter part of the chapter. It was (as some think) for this sermon that the prophet was imprisoned (for in this prophecy the sermons are much disordered in the placing of them); so as this, showing the cause for which the king imprisoned him, is set after others, chap. xxxii., which were during the time of his imprisonment.

2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, c I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and d he shall burn it with fire:

c ch. 21. 10. & 32. 3, 28.
d ch. 32. 29. ver. 22.

3 And e thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and † he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon.

e ch. 32. 4.
† Heb. *his mouth shall speak to thy mouth.*

We had all this chap. xxxii. 3, 4. See the notes there.

4 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword:

5 *But* thou shalt die in peace: and with f the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, g so shall they burn *odours* for thee; and h they will lament thee, *saying*, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the LORD.

f See 2 Chro. 16. 14. & 21. 19.
g Dan. 2. 46.
h See ch. 22. 18.

This only place informeth us concerning the manner of Zedekiah's death, and that both negatively and positively. Negatively, that he did not die by the sword, the king of Babylon took him, killed his sons before his eyes, then put out his eyes, and bound him in chains, chap. xxxix. 7, but killed him not, as we learn from this text; but he died a natural death, which is here meant by *dying in peace*; and had an honourable burial, which the *king of Babylon* would

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not allow Jehoiakim, as we read, chap. xxii. 18, 19; he was buried *with the burial of an ass*, and his body was *cast out of the gates of Jerusalem*, and no man lamented for him; but as to Zedekiah, they burned *sweet odours for him*, (after the manner of the burial of kings, 2 Chron. xvi. 14,) and made solemn lamentation for him. The Jews, in their chronology, called by them *Seder Olam*, give us the form of their lamentation, thus: *Alas! Zedekiah is dead, who drank the dregs of all ages;* that is, who was punished for the sins of all former ages.

6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem,

7 When the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah: for [i] these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah.

i 2 Kings 18. 13. & 19. 8. 2 Chron. 11. 5, 9.

The prophet was not afraid to go and do the message God had intrusted him with to the king, upon which he was imprisoned, as we read before, chap. xxxii. 3: the time it should seem was after that the king of Babylon had invaded the country, and taken the greatest part of it; only three fortified places remained, which he was besieging, viz. Jerusalem, which was the chief city of that country, and Lachish, of the conquest of which we read Josh. x. 31, disposed of to the tribe of Judah. Josh. xv. 39, and Azekah, which was a city of Judah, of which we read in the same chapters.

cir. 591. 8 ¶ *This is* the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which *were* at Jerusalem, to proclaim [k] liberty unto them;

k Ex. 21. 2. Lev. 25. 10. ver. 14.

This verse plainly beginneth a new prophecy, but at what particular time this revelation or the publication of it was we are not told, only the occasion of it is recorded. God had made a particular law respecting the Jewish nation, that if any *had bought an Hebrew servant, he should serve but six years, and in the seventh should go out free*, Exod. xxi. 2; Deut. xv. 12. It came into Zedekiah's mind to make a proclamation for the execution of this law; what moved him to it we have not recorded. The learned author of the English Annotations observeth well, that it was their usual course when they were in some great straits to make some partial reformation, Judg. x. 15, 16; Psal. lxxviii. 34, 35; Hos. vi. 1.

1 Neh. 5. 11. 9 [l] That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, *being* an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; [m] that none should serve himself of them, *to wit*, of a Jew his brother.

m Lev. 25. 39,—46.

This was the tenor of God's law mentioned in the above-named texts; and it seemeth Zedekiah, taking notice of the common violation of this law, and the Jews' ordinary oppressing those of their own nation this way, judging that this might be one of those sins for which the wrath of God was at this time kindled against them, he caused the people to make a covenant, that they would give that liberty to their servants of either sex which the law of God required, of which he made proclamation.

10 Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more, then they obeyed, and let *them* go.

The princes and the people, having first with the king agreed to the thing, upon the issuing out of his proclamation they at first yielded obedience to it.

cir. 590. 11 But [n] afterward they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids.

n See ver. 21. ch. 37. 5.

Like a company of wretched hypocrites, they reformed this abuse only to serve a turn, which when it was served they returned again to their old oppression; and in this thing not the people alone, but the government, was to be blamed, for their judges in the courts of justice ought to have executed the law of the Lord, and to have restrained the covetous and oppressive humour of the people. The learned author of the English Annotations thinketh that that which altered their minds was a little alteration of their state, during the siege; for, chap. xxxvii. 5, we read that the Babylonians and Chaldeans hearing of an army coming out of Egypt, to relieve the city, left the siege for a time, and that the prophet, ver. 22 of this chapter, relates to that, when he prophesied that the king of Babylon's army should return. But these wretched men, seeing the Babylonian army raised from the siege, concluded they were now out of God's hands, and repented of their repentance in this particular, and would make all their servants return into their former servitude.

12 ¶ Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

13 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying,

The law of God is called often a *covenant*, because it containeth the will of God which he would have them do, to which (whether they express their consent or no) they are bound to consent and agree. But to the Jews all God's laws given on Mount Sinai were a formal, explicit covenant, God explicitly telling them what he would have them to do, and they as explicitly promising they would do it, Exod. xxiv. 3. Here was a double aggravation of their sin, in breaking this covenant made between God and them: 1. From the consideration of God's kindness in bringing them out of Egypt. 2. From the consideration of their having been bond-men in Egypt, which should have taught them to *know* the hearts of bond-men, so as to have compassionated them whom they kept in the like distress in which they had been themselves, and from which God had delivered them. We stand concerned to remember the vows we make to God in our distress, for God will not forget them, Gen. xxxv. 1; as also to compassionate them who fall into the same distresses that we have been in, and out of which God hath saved us: God expecteth that we should show the same compassion to others, Matt. xviii. 33.

14 At the end of [o] seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which ‖ hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear.

o Ex. 21. 2. & 23. 10. Deut. 15. 12.

‖ Or, *hath sold himself*

This is but a repetition of the law, Exod. xxi. 2; Deut. xv. 12, which concerned such persons as were sold by others, or had sold themselves. God would not have his people take advantage of the sudden and rash acts of their brethren, which were the effects of passion. Notwithstanding this law the Jews, who were always a very covetous, griping people, did otherwise.

15 And ye were † now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had [p] made a covenant before me [q] in the house † which is called by my name:

† Heb. *to day.*

p 2 Kings 23. 3. Neh. 10. 29.

q ch. 7. 10.

† Heb. *whereupon my name is called.*

Ye were now turned; that is, reformed in this particular, in which you had done the thing which I commanded you, *proclaiming* a *liberty* to your servants. And you *made a covenant* in my presence to that purpose, and that in the *temple*, where it seemeth this covenant was made.

16 But ye turned and [r] polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he

r Ex. 20. 7. Lev. 19. 12.

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had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids.

You again licked up your vomit, and profaned my name, swearing by it to do that which you have not done, and forced your servants, though dismissed, to return again unto their former bondage and subjection to you.

17 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: [a] behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, [t] to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you † to be [u] removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

[a] Matt. 7. 2. Gal. 6. 7. Jam. 2. 13.
[t] ch. 32. 24, 36.
† Heb. *for a removing.*
[u] Deut. 28. 25, 64. ch. 29. 18.

They had turned and given a liberty, ver. 20; how doth God say here they had not? So God accounteth none to have done those good acts which they do in a fit, or merely to serve themselves of God; he saith they had not done it, because they did not persist to do it; in such a case men's righteousness shall by God never be remembered, but they shall die in the sins they have committed. Seeing you have refused to manumise your servants at my command, I will manumise you, and set you free from my protection and care. You shall perish by the sword, famine, and pestilence; and those of you who escape them shall see how pleasant a thing it is to be slaves, and in servitude, for you shall be dispersed in many nations, and be servants to the rulers of them.

18 And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when [x] they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof,

[x] See Gen. 15. 10, 17.

This was a ceremony which they used in making of covenants, not without something of a warrant from a Divine precedent, Gen. xv. 9, 10: it is said, ver. 18, that *same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham* (that covenant was a promise that Abraham's seed should possess the land of Canaan). Ver. 8, Abraham said unto God, *Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?* Ver. 9, God bids him *take an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old*, &c. Ver. 10, it is said, that *he took them, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another.* Indeed we read nothing there of the parties covenanting passing betwixt the parts of the beasts so divided, but this was afterwards used in making covenants betwixt men, which had in it a secret imprecation or wishing that they might be cut in pieces like those beasts, if they did not keep the covenants which they made. It should seem that these Jews, in the making of their solemn promise or covenant with God about releasing their servants, used this rite; they caused a calf or heifer to be cut in pieces, and the parts to be laid in the temple right over against one another, then they recited this covenant, and in the way of a solemn promise, or confirmation of their resolution to make their promise good, they passed betwixt the parts of the calf or heifer so cut; silently agreeing that God should cut them in pieces like that beast if they did not make their words good. Hence is the Hebrew phrase of *cutting a covenant*, for making it. This was a ceremony ordinarily used also amongst the heathens, as we are informed by Cicero, Livy, and others.

19 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf;

20 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their [y] dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.

[y] ch. 7. 33. & 16. 4. & 19. 7.

God doth not threaten all the Jews, but those only who had made this covenant, and formally confirmed it, by killing a beast, and passing through the parts of it thus divided and laid opposite one to another. Of these he spareth none, but threatens both the king, and nobles, and great courtiers, as well as the people, that he would give them into the hand of their enemies that thirsted after their blood; they should be slain, and their dead bodies should not be buried. Herein the righteousness of God appeared, by doing to them as they desired (by passing betwixt the calf) that God would do in case they did not keep to the promise they had made, and called God to witness, and challenging him to destroy them if they did not fulfil what they covenanted for.

21 And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, [z] which are gone up from you.

[z] See ch. 37. 5, 11.

Here is nothing in this verse but what was said before, save only in the last clause, where mention is made of the king of Babylon's army, which was gone up from them, the occasion of which we shall meet with chap. xxxvii. 5, because there was an army came out of Egypt to assist the Jews.

22 [a] Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, [b] and take it, and burn it with fire: and [c] I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant.

[a] ch. 37. 8, 10.
[b] ch. 38. 3. & 39. 1, 2, 8. & 52. 7, 13.
[c] ch. 9. 11. & 44. 2, 6.

I will put it into their hearts to return, saith the Lord, and they shall come back again to the siege, and shall rise up no more till they have taken the city, and burned it with fire, and made the whole country desolate. The motions of armies are under the government of Divine Providence, they are at God's command; when he bids them come they come, what he bids them do they do, and shall certainly effect what God hath determined. When we come to chap. xxxix., we shall read of the fulfilling of this prophecy.

CHAP. XXXV.

By the obedience of the Rechabites, 1—11, *God condemneth the Jews' disobedience,* 12—17. *The Rechabites are blessed,* 18, 19.

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying, cir. 607.

This is another evidence that the prophecies of this book are not left us in that order wherein they were delivered, for those which we had in the two or three foregoing chapters being in the time of Zedekiah must needs be ten or eleven years after this.

2 Go unto the house of the [a] Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of [b] the chambers, and give them wine to drink.

[a] 2 Kings 10. 15. 1 Chron. 2. 55.
[b] 1 Kings 6. 5.

These *Rechabites* had their name from Rechab their father, who, as appears from 1 Chron. ii. 55, descended from Hemath, who was a Kenite, who is also called Hobab, Judg. iv. 11 (unless it may be Hameth who was the son of Hobab). This Hobab was Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, as appears from Judg. iv. 11. We read, Judg. i. 16, that *his children went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad, and they went and dwelt among the people.* The Rechabites here mentioned descended from this stock. Jehonadab, mentioned 2 Kings x. 15, was of this family, a man of some note, as appeareth by Jehu's taking him there into his chariot. God commandeth the prophet to bring some of this family into the temple, into some of the chambers; for in and about the temple were several chambers for the priests, and

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where they disposed of the holy garments and several oblations, 1 Kings vi. 5, 6, 10; 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12. God commands Jeremiah to bring these Rechabites into some of these chambers, and to set *wine before them*. This was either for the more publicness of the thing, or, if may be, for the reproof of the priests who drank too much wine.

3 Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites;

4 And I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which *was* by the chamber of the princes, which *was* above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, [c] the keeper of the †door:

c 2 Kings 12. c. & 25. 18. 1 Chron. 9. 18, 19

† Heb. *threshold*, or, *vessel*.

This term, *the man of God*, doth in Scripture signify a prophet sometimes; but whether it so signifieth here, and if it doth, whether it relateth to Igdaliah or Hanan, is a question. Probably by *the chamber of the princes* is meant some chamber where the princes were wont to meet in a court, or for counsel. Thither Jeremiah brings these Rechabites, and sets vessels of wine before them, not commanding them to drink it, but only inviting them.

5 And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6 But they said, We will drink no wine: for [d] Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, *neither* ye, nor your sons for ever:

d 2 Kings 10. 15.

It is uncertain whether *father* here signifies their immediate parent, or (which is more probable) their progenitor; it is most likely it referreth to that Jonadab of whom we read 2 Kings x. 15, who was the father (that is, the progenitor) of this family of the Rechabites, at three hundred years distance. The reason why he left his posterity this charge is uncertain, probably to warn them against the luxury which he saw began to abound in Israel, and being desirous that they should inure themselves to a more hard and laborious life; being originally Kenites, and used to husbandry, and keeping of sheep and other cattle, he desired they should live according to their quality.

7 Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have *any*: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye *be* strangers.

e Ex. 20. 12. Eph. 6. 2, 3.

The last words of the verse probably give us a reason of the former; they were no native Jews, but strangers amongst them, who commonly are envied when they are observed to thrive too much, or to live splendidly; and that envy of the natives of the place where they sojourn exposeth them to their hatred and malice, so as their lives are made uneasy to them. Jonadab therefore cautions his sons to avoid these inconveniencies by a thrifty, sober, laborious life, to which they had been bred, in keeping flocks, and to avoid any thing might expose them to envy, or hatred, or malice of the people amongst whom they were come to sojourn.

8 Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters;

9 Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

10 But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.

Tents; movable habitations, which they could with little labour remove from place to place, as they had convenience to feed their flocks: this was their ordinary way of living, until necessity compelled them to come and live in Jerusalem.

11 But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem.

When the Chaldean army came into the land, they saw there would be no quiet abode for them any where but in some fortified place. The Syrians joined with the Chaldeans in this war, as we read, 2 Kings xxiv. 2. This they tell the prophet was the reason why they, who never used to dwell in cities nor fixed houses, came to dwell at Jerusalem, to prevent being destroyed by the foragers for these armies.

12 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,

13 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not [f] receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the LORD.

f ch. 32. 33.

14 The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment: [g] notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, [h] rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me.

g 2 Chron. 36. 15. h ch. 7. 13. & 25. 3.

15 [i] I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them*, saying, [k] Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.

i ch. 7. 25. & 25. 4. k ch. 18. 11. & 25. 5, 6.

God, in this revelation of his mind to the prophet, expoundeth to him why he had set him to bring the Rechabites into the temple, and commanded him to set wine before them, and invite them to drink of it, viz. that by their refusal of doing according to the invitation, in obedience to their father Jonadab, he might convince the Jews of their disobedience to his commands, though God's commands were more advantaged than the commands of Jonadab, in that, 1. Jonadab was but an earthly parent, and so had no absolute universal sovereignty over his children; but God was *the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*. 2. Jonadab's command was not for the performance of a moral duty, but the doing of a thing which they might do, or leave undone; God required of them what was but their moral duty, and for which was the highest reason. 3. Jonadab's command had no promise annexed; God's precept had a promise annexed, yet they had not yielded him that obedience which the sons of Jonadab had yielded him: he was their Father, but where was his honour?

16 Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me:

17 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: [l] because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

l Prov. 1. 24. Is. 65. 12. & 66. 4. ch. 7. 13.

This is but the same threatening confirmed, which we have often met with before, concerning the ruin of this people, only the meritorious cause of it is further amplified, their not paying that homage to God which these Rechabites

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paid to an earthly parent, and had been steady in the payment of now for three hundred years together.

18 ¶ And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you:

19 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; †Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to [m]stand before me for ever.

† Heb. *There shall not a man be cut off from Jonadab the son of Rechab to stand, &c.*

m ch. 15. 19.

For ever here signifies the *ever* of the Jewish state or church; whether the promise relates to the abiding of Jonadab's family, when many families of the Jews were quite rooted out, cut off, and extinct, or to some special favour that God would show them, or to some place of office they should have in or about the temple, (as some judge, because, 1 Chron. ii. 55, it appears they were scribes,) is uncertain. But it is a question of more moment, How God promiseth a reward to these sons of Jonadab for obeying the command of their father, and whether they had sinned if they had not obeyed this command of Jonadab; which brings in another question, *Whether parents have a power to oblige their children in matters which God hath left at liberty.* To which I answer, 1. *God might reward these Rechabites for their reverence and obedience to Jonadab their father, though they were not strictly, by the Divine law, obliged thus far to have obeyed him;* as he rewarded David for his thoughts in his heart to build him a house, though it was not God's will that he should do it; so as God's promise of the reward doth not prove their obedience in this particular to have been their duty. Admit that it remained still a matter of liberty, yet the general honour and reverence they testified might be rewarded by God. 2. Unquestionably *parents have not a power to determine children in all things as to which God hath left them a liberty,* for then they have a power to make their children slaves, and to take away all their natural liberty. To marry or not, and to this or that person, is matter of liberty. Parents cannot in this case determine their children; Bethuel, Gen. xxiv. 58, asketh Rebekah if she would go with Abraham's servant before he would send her. 3. *In matters of civil concernment they have a far greater power than in matters of religion.* All souls are God's, and conscience can be under no other dominion than that of God. 4. *In civil things parents have a great power, during the nonage of children, and after also in matters which concern their parents' good,* as to command them to assist them, to help to supply their necessities, &c. 5. *Parents being set over children, and instead of God to them, as it is their duty to advise their children to the best of their ability for their good; so it is the duty of children to receive their advice, and not to depart from it, unless they see circumstances so mistaken by parents, or so altered by the providence of God, as they may reasonably judge their parents, had they known or foreseen it, would not have so advised.* But that parents have an absolute power to determine children in all things as to which God hath not forbidden them, and that children by the law of God are obliged to an obedience to all such commands, however they may see their parents mistaken, or God by his providence may have altered circumstances, I see no reason to conclude. Jonadab had prudently advised his sons as before mentioned; they were things they might do, and which by experience they found not hurtful to them, but of great profit and advantage, and that with reference to all the ends of man's life: herein they yield obedience, and pay a reverence to their parent; this pleaseth God, he promiseth to reward them with the continuance of their family, according to what he had said, Exod. xx. 12, in the fifth commandment, which the apostle calleth the first commandment with promise.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Jeremiah causeth Baruch to write his prophecy, and publicly to read it, 1—10. *The princes send to fetch the roll and read it,* 11—18. *They advise Baruch and Jeremiah to hide themselves,* 19. *The king Jehoiakim teareth part of the roll, and burneth it,* 20—26. *Jeremiah denounceth his judgment,* 27—31. *Baruch writeth a new copy,* 32.

AND it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

Jehoiakim was three years a tributary to Nebuchadnezzar, as we read, 2 Kings xxiv. 1, then he rebelled; which three years are judged to be the sixth, seventh, and eighth years of his reign, for Pharaoh-nechoh set him up, to whom he was first a tributary, as we read, 2 Kings xxiii. 35. Pharaoh-nechoh having conquered him, Jehoiakim became servant to the conqueror three years, then rebelled; upon which the armies of the Chaldeans, with the Syrians, &c., came up against him, and carried him away. This word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the first year that he was tributary to the king of Babylon, which was the fourth year of his reign.

2 Take thee a [a]roll of a book, and [b]write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against [c]all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of [d]Josiah, even unto this day.

a Is. 8. 1. Ezek. 2. 9. Zech. 5. 1.
b ch. 30. 2.
c ch. 25. 15, &c.
d ch. 25. 3.

By a *roll of a book* is to be understood *parchments,* which anciently were their books, the art of binding books being not then known. The precept is for recording all the revelations he had from God for twenty-two years last past; for he began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah, who reigned one and thirty years, so as he prophesied eighteen years during Josiah's life, and this was the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim. God would have them recorded, that there might be a memorial of them, that so the truth of them might appear, when God should bring them to pass, the time of which now drew very near.

3 [e]It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may [f]return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

e ver. 7. ch. 26. 3.
f ch. 18. 8. Jonah 3. 8.

What we translate *it may be* אוּלַי others translate *if perhaps,* which better expresseth the sense. God knew what would be, but yet he would not be wanting in means by which they might be informed in his will, and so believe the thing, for believing and reforming are here meant by *hearing,* as the next words in part expound this term here. Forgiveness of sin in Scripture sometimes signifieth the acquitting of a sinner from the obligation sin layeth the sinner under to eternal death, sometimes the remission of a temporal punishment; it may here well be understood as comprehending both, though I think the latter to be what is here principally intended.

4 Then Jeremiah [g]called Baruch the son of Neriah: and [h]Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.

g ch. 32. 12.
h See chap. 45. 1.

We shall find this Baruch, being one of Jeremiah's disciples, more than once thus employed as Jeremiah's secretary or amanuensis. None shall need ask how Jeremiah could remember all the prophecies he had prophesied for twenty-two years before past, that considereth who it was that commanded him to do this. God undoubtedly revived the prophet's memory, or he could not have called all to mind.

5 And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I *am* shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD:

6 Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the

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i Lev. 16. 29. & 23. 27.—32. Acts 27. 9.

LORD'S house upon [i]the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities.

We do not read that Jeremiah was a prisoner in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and therefore it is very uncertainly guessed in what sense he here saith he was *shut up*. Some think Jehoiakim had imprisoned him, or at least restrained him to his house, though we do not read of it. Others think he restrained himself; but in what sense he was shut up is not certain; that he was so is certain. He knew that God had not commanded his prophecies to be written for any other end, but that the people might have them recalled to their memories: he being not in a capacity himself at present to speak any thing to the people in so public a place, sendeth Baruch to do it in his stead, choosing for it a day of public fast; not the day of the yearly fast mentioned Lev. xxiii. 27, but on a fast day (of which we shall read more ver. 9) proclaimed by Jehoiakim, probably to avert the vengeance hanging over them from the Chaldeans, or rather from the drought. It was, undoubtedly, because of the concourse of people which the prophet knew would that day be in the temple that he chose that day, when some would be present from all parts of Judah.

k ver. 3. † Heb. *their supplication shall fall.*

7 [k]It may be †they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great *is* the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people.

We had an expression like this ver. 3; it teacheth us that the only means to turn away God's fierce anger ready to fall upon people is prayer and reformation.

8 And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD'S house.

cir. 606.

9 And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, in the ninth month, *that* they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem.

This fast was appointed upon a particular emergency, whether it was for a famine which was then in the land, or to avert the ruin which they justly feared from the king of Babylon, who had lately brought them under his servitude, is not certain; the yearly fast, Lev. xxiii. 27, was to be kept in the seventh month, nor did God ever ordain any fast to be kept in the ninth month.

10 Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the ‖[l]entry of the new gate of the LORD'S house, in the ears of all the people.

‖ Or, *door.* l ch. 26. 10.

This verse only attesteth Baruch's obedience to the command of the prophet Jeremiah, not only as to the thing, his reading it in the temple, but as to the circumstance, in as public a manner as he could, *in the chamber of Gemariah*, &c., most likely out of some window, or in some balcony, the people being below, and hearing it.

11 ¶ When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD,

12 Then he went down into the king's house, into the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the princes sat there, *even* Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes.

It is uncertain whether this *Michaiah* went to make this relation to the princes who sat in the secretary's chamber, as a piece of news only, or out of a malicious design to accuse the prophet and Baruch for what was done as a seditious practice.

13 Then Michaiah declared unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people.

That is, the substance of all the words, for none can imagine that a hearer could remember every word; which shows the vanity of those who overstrain such universal particles to signify every particular word or person.

14 Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and came unto them.

That is, all the princes that at that time sat there in council sent a messenger with a command to Baruch to appear before them, and to bring the roll which he had read in the ears of the people.

15 And they said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So Baruch read *it* in their ears.

The courage of Baruch is admirable, he was now before the council, in the king's house, the substance of the prophecies were threatening both to the king and court, and to all the people. The king, as appears by all history, was of no good temper; we read, chap. xxvi. 23, of his sending for Urijah the prophet out of Egypt, when he had fled thither for fear of the king, and slaying him, and we shall find that at that time the princes advised both Jeremiah and Baruch to hide themselves; yet Baruch is not afraid, but reads the prophecy in their ears.

16 Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, they were afraid both one and other, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words.

It is hardly to be imagined that all these counsellors should sit still till they had heard all Jeremiah's prophecies for twenty-two years read, but *all* signifies many, or the sense and substance of all the prophecies. They were all of them afraid: Jeremiah had now been above twenty years a prophet to this people, and doubtless in great esteem for eighteen years of it, while Josiah was alive, and one whose prophecies they could not but observe had been oft accomplished; therefore they could not but be afraid that they should see these words also fulfilled, and took themselves bound in duty to acquaint the king with them. Some, if not all, of these probably had been great men in Josiah's time, which was but four or five years before, and from him sucked in some good and religious principles, which begat some awe of God in them.

17 And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth?

This now seemed but a reasonable question, considering they were the substance of what he had been prophesying for so many years. The thing seemed strange to the princes, prophets being not used to study and pen their discourses, but to speak them extempore.

18 Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book.

This could not but add to the princes' fear and amazement. They must needs conceive that the thing was done from God, for without a special influence of God it had been a thing impossible that Jeremiah should have called to mind all that he had spoken at several times in so many years; and proceeding from the God of truth, they must needs fear that they would have their certain and just accomplishment in their season.

19 Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go,

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hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be.

This speaketh these princes to have been men of a much gentler temper and better disposition than those who succeeded them in Zedekiah's time; they were not willing that any harm should come to the prophet, nor to Baruch, and knew the fierce temper of Jehoiakim, and therefore advised Baruch that both he and the prophet should hide themselves.

20 ¶ And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king.

They were obliged by their office as counsellors to the king to acquaint him with what they heard, which might be prejudicial to him and his nation; and indeed this was the very end why God had commanded the enrolling of these prophecies, that both the king, and princes, and people might take notice of them; but they did not carry the book with them, but laid it up in the secretary's chamber.

21 So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

It appeareth by ver. 14 that this *Jehudi* was a messenger commonly employed by the king and council; him the king sends *to fetch the roll*, (before called a book,) then he employeth him to read it.

m See Amos 3. 15.

22 Now the king sat in [m] the winter-house in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him.

The ninth month with them answered part of our November and December, which was a time of the year called for fires.

23 And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth.

He, that is, the king, not having patience to hear above three or four columns, or periods, or titles, took the penknife that (it is like) Jehudi had, and cut it in pieces, and burned it in the fire that was before him, not considering that it was the revelation of the will of God, but exalting himself above all that was called God. This showed both the wickedness and passionate temper of this prince, and his high contempt of God and his prophets.

n 2 Kin. 22. 11. Is. 36. 22. & 37. 1.

24 Yet they were not afraid, nor [n] rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

So hardened were this people's hearts, that though they knew that Jeremiah was a prophet of the Lord, upon the experience now of more than twenty years, and the whole scope of his prophecies had been to denounce the just judgments of God that now were coming upon this people, and they could not but understand that God must be greatly assistant to Jeremiah in writing this *roll*, all the matter of which he could not otherwise have kept in mind so many years, yet they had no serious fear of God upon their hearts, working upon the hearing the dreadful matter of these prophecies, nor showed any sign of remorse, or sense of their sins, or God's judgments coming upon them as indications of his wrath.

25 Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them.

These three princes seemed to have had a greater dread of God upon their hearts than the rest, for so far as they durst, they interposed, and besought the king not to burn the roll; but he would not hearken to their advice.

26 But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son ‖ of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

‖ Or, *of the king.*

The king was not satisfied with burning the roll, but gives order to apprehend both Jeremiah and Baruch, and commandeth the three persons named in this verse to do it; but God by his providence kept them both out of their hands. How the Lord hid them we are not told; the princes (as we read before) advised Baruch that they should both hide themselves. This phrase (probably) imports no more than that God directed them to find such a place of recess as the king's messengers could by no means find out, nor understand where they were, till the king's passion was a little over.

27 ¶ Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, cir. 606.

28 Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned.

29 And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast?

It speaketh nothing but the impotency, and passion, and debauchery of human nature, to swell against any revelations of the Divine will; the counsels of the Lord shall stand, and men only further entangle themselves by struggling in the Lord's net. Jehoiakim burns one roll, God will have the same thing wrote in another. We learn here both what was the matter of Jeremiah's prophecy, and the cause of the king's anger; he had prophesied that the king of Babylon should come, take Jerusalem, and lay the country waste, which, as to Jehoiakim's part, was fulfilled within six years after this, more fully in eighteen years; but corrupt princes can endure nothing that shall make their lives uneasy.

30 Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king of Judah; [o]He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be [p]cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.

o ch. 22. 30.
p ch. 22. 19.

That is, none that shall be king any considerable time; Jeconiah or Jehoiachin his son was set up, but kept his throne but three months, 2 Kings xxiv. 8—10. We no where read of the time or manner of this king's death, but that he had an ignominious burial, chap. xxii. 19, like the burial of an ass, none accompanying his corpse, none mourning for him; and it appears from this text, that wherever he died, his body lay for a time unburied.

31 And I will †punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

† Heb. *visit upon.* ch. 23. 34.

As to the people, God threateneth they should feel, what they were not willing to hear, even all the evil which God by his prophet had pronounced against them.

32 ¶ Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah;

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who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many †like words.

† Heb. as they.

Wicked men get nothing by opposing themselves to the revealed will of God, how ungrateful soever it be to them, but the addition of guilt to their souls, and the increase of Divine wrath; God's counsels shall stand, and what he speaks shall most certainly be accomplished. Here is another roll, written with additional threatenings, confirmative of what God had before said.

CHAP. XXXVII.

The Egyptians raise the siege of the Chaldeans; and king Zedekiah sendeth to Jeremiah, to pray and inquire of the Lord for them, 1—5. *He prophesieth the Chaldeans' return and victory,* 6—10. *He is apprehended for a fugitive, beaten, and put into prison,* 11—15. *He assureth Zedekiah of the captivity; and, entreating for liberty, obtaineth some favour,* 16—21.

cir. 599. a 2 Kin. 24. 17. 2 Chron. 36. 10. ch. 22. 24.

AND king [a]Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah.

The history of this succession we have 2 Kings xxiv. 17; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10. Zedekiah's name was Mattaniah, the king of Babylon changed his name to Zedekiah. He reigned instead of Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim, who reigned but three months, 2 Kings xxiv. 8; his name was Jeconiah, 1 Chron. iii. 16, and, in a way of derision or contempt, is here called *Coniah*. The king of Babylon made this Zedekiah king, who is here called the son of Josiah, and, 2 Kings xxiv. 17, Jehoiachin's father's brother, to distinguish him from another Zedekiah, son of Jehoiakim, as appears from 1 Chron. iii. 16.

b 2 Chron. 36. 12, 14.

2 [b]But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake †by the prophet Jeremiah.

† Heb. by the hand of the prophet.

This Zedekiah was little better than Jehoiakim; he seemeth by his story to be of a little better temper, not so cruel and bloody; but he no more regarded God's word by his prophet than Jehoiakim had done.

c ch. 21. 1, 2. & 29. 25. & 52. 24. 590.

3 And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah and [c]Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us.

This was apparently in the time of the siege; for, ver. 5, we read of Pharaoh's army being come to relieve the besieged, whether it was before the Babylonians were departed, or no, is uncertain; but it is plain, if they were departed, the king was afraid they would come back again. That which is most observable for us from hence is this, that wicked men of all ranks are desirous of the prayers of those ministers in their distresses, whose counsels and admonitions they never regard while they are in a time of prosperity; which is an evidence of their acting contrary to the convictions of their consciences, in obedience to their lusts, in their contempt of their instructions and admonitions. When affliction hath cooled their lusts, then their consciences can be heard in dictating their duty to them.

4 Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people: for they had not put him into prison.

We shall read afterward, ver. 15, that he was imprisoned; and we have heard, chap. xxxii., of two *revelations* he had while he was in prison; but as yet he walked at liberty.

d See 2 Kin. 24. 7. Ezek. 17. 15. e ver. 11. ch. 34. 21.

5 Then [d]Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: [e]and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

Zedekiah was set up by the king of Babylon, instead of Jehoiachin, whom the king of Babylon had carried into Babylon. Zedekiah (as is usual in those cases, and as it appeareth, Ezek. xvii. 16) had taken an oath of allegiance to the king of Babylon, but brake it, and the covenant which he made with him, ver. 16; and, ver. 15, *rebelled against him, and sent his ambassador into Egypt for horses, and much people.* Now the king of Egypt came in person no more after the great overthrow given him in Carchemish, by the river Euphrates, of which we read chap. xlvi. 2, which was thirteen or fourteen years before this; yet he sent an army at Zedekiah's request to relieve him, at this time besieged by the armies of the king of Babylon. The Chaldeans that were in the siege of Jerusalem hearing of it, raised the siege for a time, during which time (probably) it was that Zedekiah sent to the prophet to pray for them.

6 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto the prophet Jeremiah, saying,

7 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, [f]that sent you unto me to enquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land.

f ch. 21. 2.

The word *inquire* lets us know that Zedekiah did not send to the prophet only to pray for him, but to *inquire* of God what the issue would be of this future contingency; it may be more desirous to know that, than that Jeremiah should intercede with God for them. The prophet tells them from God that the king of Egypt's army should do them no service; it is expounded, Ezek. xvii. 17, *He should not make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons.* Probably the Egyptian army, upon the sight of the strength of the Chaldeans, and the weak and impotent state of the Jews, were discouraged, and would not adventure to fight them, but by and by returned to their own land.

8 [g]And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire.

g ch. 34. 22.

9 Thus saith the LORD; Deceive not †yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart.

† Heb. souls.

10 [h]For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained *but* †wounded men among them, *yet* should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.

h ch. 21. 4, 5.

† Heb. thrust through.

The substance of the answer returned by the prophet to the king is this: That whereas they pleased themselves with fancies that the Babylonian army now withdrawn to meet with the army of the Egyptians would return no more to the siege, it was a dream; he assures them from God they should return, besiege the city, and take it, and burn it; and therefore they did but deceive themselves to think otherwise; though they were gone, yet it was but for a very short time. He further assures them that the potency or impotency of the Chaldeans was inconsiderable; for if their whole army were made up of *wounded men*, or if they could prevail so far as to wound all their soldiers, or thrust them through, (as the word is translated, chap. li. 4,) yet they should do the work. When God is resolved upon an effect, the instruments are very little to be regarded. It is not the arm of flesh, but the power of God, which is in that case alone to be considered.

11 ¶ [i]And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans was †broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army,

i ver. 5. † Heb. made to ascend.

12 Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem

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‖ Or, *to slip away from thence in the midst of the people.*

to go into the land of Benjamin, ‖ to separate himself thence in the midst of the people.

The word we translate *separate* signifieth to *divide, soften,* or *make slippery,* which hath made interpreters vary in the exposition of it. But the general use of it, especially in *Pihel,* (the conjugation in which it is here used,) being to signify a *dividing* or *separating,* and the latter signification being secondary, it seemeth most reasonably here translated to *separate,* or to withdraw. Jeremiah had no further revelation from God which he was under an obligation to communicate; and knowing the city would suddenly be taken, and that he could be no further useful to the people, taking advantage of the withdrawing of the Chaldean army, resolves to provide for himself, designing to go to his own country, to Anathoth, which was in the land of Benjamin; and because he was a noted person, who might probably be stopped (as he was) if known, he attempts to slip out in the crowd of people that were going out. This seemeth to me the most probable sense.

13 And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward *was* there, whose name *was* Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans.

The gate of Benjamin was some gate that looked toward the inheritance of that tribe, or where those used to go out who went that way; we read of it chap. xxxviii. 7. *Irijah* was a captain of the guard that was set to watch at the gates, to keep people from going out, or at least some persons; for it should seem by Jeremiah's endeavour to go out in the crowd, they suffered many to go out, as is usual in sieges, when victuals grow scarce; and though the Chaldeans were at present gone, yet they were not out of fear of their coming back. This captain apprehends Jeremiah, as one who was about to desert the city, and fall off to the Chaldeans. That Hananiah the grandfather of this Irijah was the false prophet we read of chap. xxviii., who died according to Jeremiah's prophecy, and this his grandchild apprehended Jeremiah in some revenge of his grandfather, is but uncertainly guessed. But Jeremiah's so frequent prophesying that the Chaldeans should take the city exposed him to this suspicion probably.

† Heb. *falsehood, or, a lie.*

14 Then said Jeremiah, *It is* †false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes.

Though Jeremiah, as the Lord's prophet, faithfully revealed the will of God, that the Chaldeans should take the city, to warn the people (if possible) to prevent it by solemn addresses unto God, or at least to prevent what mischief might be prevented by a timely surrender to the king of Babylon, yet he had no design to fly to them; he was so far from delighting in their company, that when the city was taken, and the captain of the guard offered him either to go along with him to Babylon, promising to *look well to him,* chap. xl. 4, 5, or to go back to Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon had left as deputy governor in Judea, he chose rather to go and dwell under Gedaliah's government in a poor condition, than to mend his commons in an idolatrous country: but the captain would not believe him, but carrieth him before the princes.

15 Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, [k] and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison.

k ch. 38. 26.

These princes seem more fierce against the prophet than those that were in the time of Jehoiakim, for they proceed here upon the captain's information, cause the prophet to be beaten, and send him to prison, a prison within the compass of the court, bad enough, as appeareth by Jeremiah's complaint of his condition there to the king, ver. 20, and by what followeth in the next verse.

16 ¶ When Jeremiah was entered into [l] the dungeon, and into the ‖ cabins, and Jeremiah had remained there many days;

l ch. 38. 6. ‖ Or, *cells.* Heb. *houses.*

The Hebrew words which we translate *dungeon* signify the *house of the lake;* they certainly signify some pit, or deep hole, or place in the prison, where were some *cells* or apartments, in which they were wont to keep those whom they judged great malefactors, or against whom they had some special anger; how many days the prophet was forced to abide in this miserable place it is not said, but it should seem by ver. 9, that it was until the Chaldean army was returned to the siege.

17 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took him out: and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there *any* word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.

Is there any word from the Lord? that is, Hath God revealed any thing to thee, concerning what will be the issue of the return of the Chaldean army to the siege of the city? What needed Zedekiah to have asked this, to whom God by this prophet had so often revealed his will in this case? Wicked men are always more curious to know, than careful to believe, observe, and obey the will of God. But God seldom or never speaketh good unto them: Jeremiah tells him there was, but it was a sad word, viz. that God would certainly deliver him into the hand or power of the king of Babylon.

18 Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, What have I offended against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison?

That is, What have I done worthy of bonds? I have faithfully heretofore revealed to you the mind and will of God; if this hath offended you, I am not to be blamed, I could not but execute God's commands.

19 Where *are* now your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land?

You now see what kind of prophets they are, who fed you with hopes that the king of Babylon's army should return no more to the siege of the city. I told you they would return, you had other prophets that told you they should not, judge now who were the true prophets. The devil in all ages had some that contradicted the true prophets of the Lord. Three hundred false prophets contradicted one Micaiah, as to Ahab's going up to Ramoth-gilead, and prospering in that expedition. There were many that contradicted Isaiah and Jeremiah, and other true prophets, as to the king of Babylon's coming to besiege Jerusalem, and his return again to the siege when he had risen up from it to meet the Egyptian army; and as to the length of time in which the Jews should be in captivity; yet, (to let us see men's madness upon their lusts,) as there still have risen up in other generations false teachers and flatterers, so they have always found more favour than those that have dealt more faithfully in revealing God's will.

20 Therefore hear now, I pray thee, O my lord the king: †let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there.

† Heb. *let my supplication fall.*

Though Jeremiah had dealt very faithfully with the king and princes, and they had dealt very hardly and cruelly with him, casting him for no just cause into a nasty prison, and Jeremiah knew well enough that Zedekiah was very soon to be disarmed of his power; yet (to learn us our duty) he speaks with all due respect and reverence to his sovereign, though a very bad man, and one who had dealt very ill with him. This petition of Jeremiah speaks the prison he was in was in a very inconvenient place, where he was in danger of his life.

21 Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah [m] into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, [n] until all the

m ch. 32. 2. & 38. 13, 28.

n ch. 38. 9. & 52. 6.

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bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

Commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison; so as he was a prisoner still, but in a freer air, where he did not suffer those inconveniences which he endured in the hole or dungeon. It is of no great moment to know whether the portion of bread allowed the prophet by the king were a loaf, (as some think,) or a piece of a loaf; it was such a proportion as could be allowed according to the proportion which others had, and the straits which the city was in, and so much as served to keep him alive. Jeremiah remained here till, upon the suggestion of the princes, he was removed to a worse place, as we shall read in the sixth verse of the next chapter; where he staid not long, but was again removed to the court of the prison, as we shall read there, ver. 13, where (as it followeth there, ver. 28,) he continued until the city was taken.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Jeremiah prophesieth; is by the princes, with the king's permission, cast into a dungeon; but is by Ebed-melech, with the king's consent, taken out again, 1—13. *He hath a secret conference with the king, in which he counselleth him by yielding to save his life,* 14—23. *By the king's command he concealeth the conference from the princes.* 24—27. *He abideth in prison till Jerusalem is taken,* 28.

THEN Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and
a ch. 37. 3. b ch. 21. 1. c ch. 21. 8. [a]Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and [b]Pashur the son of Malchiah, [c]heard the words that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people, saying,

Here are four of the great men, counsellors, or great officers to Zedekiah, named, of whom we have no further mention in holy writ, nor are they worthy of much inquiry after. Jeremiah being now removed into a little freer air, where his friends, or such as had a desire to see him, came to him, and it is very likely were inquisitive to know what God would do with the city, he could not but tell them what he knew of the mind of God in the case, and advise them the best he could. Some of them go to these princes, and inform them of what they had heard from the prophet.

d ch. 21. 9. 2 Thus saith the LORD, [d]He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live.

As to what is ver. 3, it is no more than had for some time been the constant tenor of this prophet's prophecies. The crime seemeth to lie in this, that in such a time of extreme danger he should repeat this prophecy, and also advise the people to leave the city, and shift for themselves, by going out to the Chaldeans, telling them that if they did so, though the city would be lost, and their estates in it lost, yet they should save their lives, which words might encourage many of low and cowardly spirits to desert their posts; which indeed had been crime sufficient in an ordinary time, and under ordinary circumstances, but was no crime now that God had revealed his will to the king, princes, and people that the city should be lost; there lay now no further duty upon any to contribute to its defence, but they were obliged to make as good provisions for themselves as they could; but these wicked princes believed no such thing, therefore they make this a great charge.

e ch. 21. 10. & 32. 3. 3 Thus saith the LORD, [e]This city shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it.

f See ch. 26. 11. 4 Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, [f]let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the †welfare of this people, but the hurt. † Heb. peace.

The prophet now seemeth under sad circumstances, the princes seek his life, though for delivering no other doctrine than he had been preaching for twenty years; their pretence was, his discouraging and weakening the military part of the city, letting them know that they laboured in vain, for the city was not defensible. This they interpret a seeking not the welfare of the people, but their hurt, though indeed their welfare was that alone which he sought, knowing that there was no other way for any of them to save their lives but by submitting to the Chaldeans; though the great men (being persons God had determined to ruin) would not believe it, and would have the welfare and hurt of the place determined by their opinions.

5 Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he *is* in your hand: for the king *is* not *he that* can do *any* thing against you.

He is in your hand; that is, in your power, either by the established law against false prophets, or else I yield up my power to you, I surrender him into your hands. But neither of these seemeth very probable, for here is no mention of the sitting of the sanhedrim to judge him as a false prophet, nor of any judicial proceedings of that nature: and it should seem by Zedekiah's relieving of him soon after from the dungeon, into which they threw him, that he had not surrendered Jeremiah so into their hands, but he reserved to himself a superintendency upon them to correct their too severe dealings with him. The meaning seems rather to be, If you will do any such thing, I shall not oppose you, but I will not be the author of it. *For the king is not he that can do any thing against you;* I see I am as it were no king, I can do nothing against you, you will do what you please. I incline to this sense from the consideration of the favour showed him by Zedekiah, both before and after this.

g ch. 37. 21. 6 [g]Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son ‖of Hammelech, that *was* in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon *there was* no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire. ‖ Or, *of the king.*

Cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison; a place much of the same nature with that of which we read chap. xxxvii. 16, but in another prison. It should seem there was no passage into it by stairs, so as they were forced to let him down with cords. And in the bottom was nothing but mire, into which the prophet sank, in respect of which circumstances it was a much worse place than the dungeon in the prison in Jonathan's house appeared to be, though Jeremiah feared that he should die there. It is probable these princes thrust him into this place, designing he should die in this hole a miserable death, but God otherwise provided for him.

h ch. 39. 16. 7 ¶ [h]Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin;

Ebed-melech was unquestionably the name of the person, though some interpret it appellatively *a servant of the king.* It is particularly noted that he was an Ethiopian or a Cushite, to let us know that this prophet of the Lord found more kindness from a stranger, that was a native heathen, than from his own countrymen. Princes were wont to keep *eunuchs* in their houses in those countries, 2 Kings ix. 32; Dan. i. 9; Acts viii. 27. It should seem the princes had privately put Jeremiah into this miserable place, but yet the noise of it came to Ebed-melech's ear, who was attending in the court. The gates of the city were places where princes were wont to sit to execute jus-

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tice, and to receive petitions, and give answers, 2 Sam xix. 8; Prov. xxxi. 23, &c.

8 Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying,

9 My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and †he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for *there is* no more bread in the city.

† Heb. *he will die.*

The courage of this good eunuch was very remarkable; he did not stay till the king came in, but went to the king, as he was *sitting in the gate of Benjamin*, administering justice, or receiving and answering petitions, where doubtless he was not alone, and probably was attended there by some of those princes who had thrown Jeremiah into this miserable place. Ebed-melech was not afraid of them, but openly complains of their cruelty to the king, and tells him that Jeremiah would be starved to death: those who were alive in the city could not long subsist, for the stores were almost all spent, and though the king had appointed the prophet an allowance, yet being in such a hole, and there being so little bread left in the city, it was not likely there would be much care taken of him.

10 Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men †with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.

† Heb. *in thine hand.*

There are several guesses why the king commandeth Ebed-melech to take *thirty men* for the doing of that for which three or four were sufficient. I think they judge best who think it was to guard him against any opposition. Things were now in a great disorder, the city being upon the matter taken, and the king himself was much in the government of his princes, and, as may easily be judged by what went before, and what we shall hereafter meet with, could not rule them, but was in some fear of them, and he did not know but some of the most boisterous of them might oppose the execution of this command of his. This king in his whole story seemeth to have been of a much better humour than his predecessors, and to have had a kindness for the prophet, though he suffered himself to be miserably overruled by his courtiers, who were of a much fiercer temper, and worse affected to the prophet.

11 So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah.

12 And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now *these* old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so.

i ver. 6.

13 [i]So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained [k]in the court of the prison.

k ch. 37. 21.

The sense of these verses is obvious. Ebed-melech having received a commission from the king, presently puts it in execution, only because the dungeon was deep, and full of mire, and the prophet possibly not over-well clothed, he prudently takes some old clouts and rags, and lets them down with cords, that Jeremiah, to prevent the galling and macerating his flesh, might put them under the cords, by which they drew him up: thus he was restored to the *court of the prison*, where he was before this suggestion of the princes, and where he did abide until the city was taken. The rest of the chapter is spent in a private conference betwixt king Zedekiah and the prophet, after he was restored to the court of the prison.

14 ¶ Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the prophet unto him into the ‖third entry that *is* in the house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me.

‖ Or, principal.

That is in the house of the Lord: some think that this were better translated, *that is near the house of the Lord*, and that this *third entry*, or *principal entry*, was that *ascent out of the king's house* into the temple mentioned 1 Kings x. 5, which was one of the things the *queen of Sheba admired;* for it is hardly probable that Jeremiah being in a prison within the compass of the king's house, the king should, especially at such a time, go out of his house to so public a place as the temple, for a private conference with the prophet. The king desires him faithfully to tell him what he knew in a business he should inquire of him.

15 Then Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare *it* unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken unto me?

Jeremiah had reason to caution with the king for his life, considering the easy answer of the king to the princes, moving for his death, ver. 4, 5. We must imagine Jeremiah at this time under no Divine command to reveal God's will in this case unto the king. *Wilt thou not?* is here as much as *thou wilt not hearken unto me.* Zedekiah had often been advised by the prophet, but would never take his advice, and the prophet knew it would be the same case still, that the king would be overruled by a corrupt court, and his own aversion, to change his state, as a king, for the state of a prisoner.

16 So Zedekiah the king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, *As* the LORD liveth, [l]that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life.

l Is. 57. 16.

Zedekiah saith nothing to the latter part of Jeremiah's speech, promising nothing as to his hearing and obeying his counsel: as to the former, he gives him the security of his oath, that he would neither himself slay him, by giving any immediate command from himself, nor surrender him up into the hands of those malicious princes who he perceived sought his life. The form of his oath is what was usual, *As the Lord liveth*, with an addition, the Lord that gave me my life: *If I put thee to death*, and *if I deliver thee;* which form carrieth with it a concealed imprecation, *Let the Lord do so to me, and more also;* or, Let the Lord that gave me this soul take it from me, if I do either of these things. Thus he secures Jeremiah, as to any hard measure for his telling him the truth, though it should be what might be interpreted a capital crime to publish.

17 Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly [m]go forth [n]unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house:

m 2 Kings 24. 12.
n ch. 39. 3.

Thy soul shall live; that is, thou shalt live. *And this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house;* and thou shalt save the city from being burned with fire, and thy wives and children from death. God did certainly know that Zedekiah would not do this, though it was in his power to do it, yet he doth not judge it vain for him to exhort him to it, and to annex such a promise; for thereby he was left inexcusable, in his not saving the city and his relations' lives.

18 But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and [o]thou shalt not escape out of their hand.

o ch. 32. 4. & 34. 3. ver. 23.

As he before had used exhortations and promises, so here he useth threatenings, to persuade him to that which indeed was in his power to do, but God infallibly knew that he would not do; the end of God in which could be

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no other than to leave him without excuse, in not obeying what God commanded.

19 And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they [p] mock me.

p 1 Sam. 31. 4

But if Zedekiah went out according to the prophet's advice, and delivered himself, what needed he to fear his subjects (that had deserted the city) delivering of him? It seems rather therefore to be the sense, lest the Chaldeans, when I have yielded myself to them, should deliver me into the hands of those Jews which have fallen to them, and they should mock me: so as he seems to be more concerned for his honour than for his own life, and his family's, and the whole city: thus often great persons are more patient of death than of reproach and dishonour.

20 But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver *thee.* Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live.

The Chaldeans shall not do so base an act, but deal with thee as with a prince. Let not this therefore be a temptation to thee to disobey the command of God, which if thou doest, thou shalt live, though not in that splendour in which thou now livest, yet in a much more comfortable state than thou wilt do if they take the city by storming.

21 But if thou refuse to go forth, this *is* the word that the LORD hath shewed me:

22 And, behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house *shall be* brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and those *women* shall say, †Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, *and* they are turned away back.

† Heb. *Men of thy peace.*

Thou that art afraid of the insultings of men that are thy subjects shalt fall under the insultings and taunts of the women: either the court ladies who were left when Jehoiachin was carried away, or the women belonging to thine own court, shall be taken and brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, to be disposed of at their pleasure; and these women shall deride thee, and tell thee, for this thou mayst thank thy hearkening to thy priests and false prophets, called, in the Hebrew, *the men of thy peace*, because they soothed up the king with the promises of peace. *Thy feet are sunk in the mire:* now they have left thee in evils out of which thou canst not escape. *And they are turned away back;* and as for them whom thou believedst and trustedst to, and by whose words thou art brought into these snares, they have forsaken thee, every one shifting for himself.

23 So they shall bring out all thy wives and [q] thy children to the Chaldeans: and [r] thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and † thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire.

q ch. 39. 6. & 41. 10.
r ver. 18.
† Heb. *thou shalt burn, &c.*

This is no more than what was said before, only here repeated, as an argument to persuade his obedience in surrendering himself, if not for the city's sake, yet for his own sake, and for his children's sake; for he assures the king that not himself only, but his wives and children also, would otherwise fall into the hands of the Babylonians, and their reflections upon him for the misery he had brought upon them would be no small aggravation of his affliction.

24 ¶ Then said Zedekiah unto Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, and thou shalt not die.

These words sufficiently let us know that Zedekiah stood in awe of his courtiers, and we might probably think, that had it not been for them, he would have done better. This is the righteous judgment of God; those that will not sanctify the Lord of hosts, and make him their fear, shall fear men, whom to fear is much more base and ignoble.

25 But if the princes hear that I have talked with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king, hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; also what the king said unto thee:

It could hardly be imagined that Zedekiah should have this private discourse with Jeremiah, but some or other of his courtiers would take notice of it; but yet it argues that this poor prince was in a miserable subjection to them, that he could discourse with nobody but they must come and inquire what he said.

26 Then thou shalt say unto them, [s] I presented my supplication before the king, that he would not cause me to return [t] to Jonathan's house, to die there.

s ch. 37. 20.
t ch. 37. 15.

The king instructs the prophet, in case the princes should be inquisitive to know what discourse passed betwixt the king and him, to tell them that he petitioned him that he might be sent no more to the prison in the house of Jonathan, of which he complained, and petitioned the king to be freed from it, chap. xxxvii. 20.

27 Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him: and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So † they left off speaking with him; for the matter was not perceived.

† Heb. *they were silent from him.*

As the king suspected, so it came to pass; the king's private discourse with the prophet took wind, and all the princes then at court came and inquired of Jeremiah what was the substance of his discourse. Jeremiah answered them according as the king had directed. A man is not bound in all cases to speak the whole truth, much less to those who have nothing to do to inquire of us, which these princes had not. By this means the princes never knew the matter of this discourse.

28 So [u] Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was *there* when Jerusalem was taken.

u ch. 37. 21. & 39. 14.

Thus God hath several ways to hide his people in an evil day; he hid Josiah from it in the grave; he hid Noah in an ark, Lot in Zoar, Jeremiah in a prison, which in probability was a safer place for him than the land of Benjamin, whither he would have gone had not Irijah stopped him, chap. xxxvii. 12, 13. Conquerors have commonly the greatest kindness for those whom they find under the frowns of the conquered, especially when that which hath made them so hath been something spoken or done in the favour of the conquerors.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Jerusalem is taken: Zedekiah's sons are slain; his eyes put out; he is sent to Babylon: all the nobles of Judah are slain: the city is burnt, and the chief of the people carried captive, 1—10. *Nebuchadrezzar's charge concerning Jeremiah,* 11—14. *God's promise to Ebed-melech,* 15—18.

IN the [a] ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it.

590.
a 2 Kings 25. 1,—4. ch. 52. 4,—7.

This exactly agreeth with the historical part of Scripture, 2 Kings xxv. 1, and with the repetition of it, chap. lii. 4. This month was called Tebeth, Esth. ii. 16, and answers to part of our December and January. Princes are said to do that which is done by their great officers by their order,

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yet some think Nebuchadrezzar came first in person, though he quickly left his army, and was not there at the taking of the city.

568. 2 *And* in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth *day* of the month, the city was broken up.

The siege lasted a year and half, for it was the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year before it was taken: it is said here to be *broken up*, because their way of taking fortified places then was by beating down the walls of the besieged with iron rams and engines, as we now do with great guns. This kingdom had now held three hundred and eighty years, from Rehoboam their first king, in which they had had twenty kings (besides Athaliah). The ten tribes had been now in captivity one hundred and thirty years, so as the kingdom of Israel stood but two hundred and fifty years after the division, in which time they had had eighteen princes, but of several families; all the kings of Judah were of the house of David, lineally descended from him.

b ch. 38. 17. 3 [b]And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, *even* Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

All the great men of Babylon that were employed in the conduct of the Babylonian army (the city being taken by storm or surprise) entered into it, but rested *at the middle gate*. The city, they say, was encompassed with two walls, before they came to the wall of the temple; the gate in the inner wall is supposed to have been that which is called *the middle gate:* they would not at first adventure in further; the city being large and well fortified, there might have been some traps laid for them; they would therefore have their soldiers first clear the streets, and search all places, that they might enter further into the city without hazarding their persons. Some interpreters have examined the signification of the names of these princes, but I know of no use it can be to us, whether they were the names of the persons, or significative of the offices they bare.

c 2 Kings 25. 4, &c. ch. 52. 7, &c. 4 ¶ [c]And it came to pass, *that* when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain.

It should seem that the city was taken by a surprise; the Chaldeans battering the walls incessantly with their rams and engines of war, on a sudden made such a breach as gave them a liberty to enter in. The king either heard of it, or possibly might be in some place where he might see it; then he begins to think of escaping, but for greater privacy stayeth till he had the covert of the night, and then goeth out towards the plains of Jericho, for there the Chaldeans overtook him, as we read in the next verse. He is said here to have gone *by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls.* It is very hard for us at this distance of time to pretend to any certainty in determining the way by which he made his escape. They seem to judge most probably that think that the king had prepared for himself a private passage out of his garden betwixt two walls, leading to the wall of the city, which they had before so weakened, as on a sudden they might dig it through. Possibly these particulars are the rather set down, to show us how God verified what he had revealed in this matter to the prophet Ezekiel, chap. xii.; where God set the prophet, ver. 3, to *prepare stuff for removing*, and to *remove by day in the sight* of the people from his own place to another place; and, ver. 4, *to go out at even in their sight, as they that go out into captivity:* ver. 5, to *dig through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby:* ver. 6, *in their sight to bear it on his shoulders, and carry it forth in the twilight;* to *cover his face*, so as not to *see the ground:* and he told him, that in all this he was *to be a sign;* and, ver. 10, tells him, *this burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem* (who was that Zedekiah). Ver. 12, *And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to go out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes.*

5 But the Chaldeans' army pursued after them, and [d]overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to [e]Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he †gave judgment upon him.

d ch. 32. 4. & 38. 18, 23.

e 2 Kings 23. 33.

† Heb. *spake with him judgments.* ch. 4. 12.

Thus God by his providence fulfilled his threatening by his prophet Ezekiel, chap. xvii. 12. Riblah was upon the borders of Canaan, as appeareth from Numb. xxxiv. 11; it was in the land of Hamath, of which we read 2 Kings xvii. 24, being one of those provinces in the dominion of the king of Assyria, from whence he brought men to place them in the land of Israel after that he had conquered the ten tribes. It is not usual for princes upon conquests to sit in judgment upon princes conquered, but the reason of it in this case was because Zedekiah was a tributary to the king of Babylon, and so subject to his power, having made a covenant with him, and secured his allegiance by his oath to him, and then rebelled against him, as we read, Ezek. xvii. 13—18.

6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah.

Thus the stubbornness of this prince and his nobles proved the ruin of his family, and of themselves, and of the whole people. The nobles were great authors of this mischief, and brought Zedekiah into that obstinacy which he showed to the prophet's admonitions and exhortations, upon them, therefore, a more exemplary punishment is taken. The Hebrew calls the nobles *white men*, either from their *white garments*, or from that *candour of spirit* which should be found in persons of their quality.

7 Moreover [f]he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him †with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

f Ezek. 12. 13. compared with ch. 32. 4.

† Heb. *with two brazen chains*, or, *fetters.*

Thus the two prophecies were fulfilled; that of this prophet, chap. xxxiv. 4, that Zedekiah should not *die by the sword;* and that of Ezekiel, that *he should not see Babylon, though he should die there*, Ezek. xii. 13. Riblah was at a great distance from Babylon, where the king was at this time, probably to be nearer his army while the siege lasted at Jerusalem, and to give orders about it, and to divert himself, the place being a pleasant place, and the king not willing to trouble himself about the siege to go thither in person; but the siege being over, he now removeth to Babylon, and carrieth Zedekiah and the rest of the prisoners along with him.

g 2 Kin. 25. 9. ch. 38. 18. & 52. 13. 8 ¶ [g]And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.

Still it is observable how punctual the Holy Ghost is in recording the fulfillings of the words of the Lord. This prophet had at least four times foretold that this would be one consequent of the king's and nobles' stubbornness, in not submitting to the king of Babylon. See chap. xxxvii. 8; xxxviii. 18, 23.

h 2 Kin. 25. 11, &c. ch. 52. 15, &c. ‖ Or, *chief marshal.* † Heb. *chief of the executioners*, or, *slaughtermen*: And so ver. 10, 11, &c. See Gen. 37. 24. 9 [h]Then Nebuzar-adan the ‖†captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained.

This Nebuzar-adan was in that place which we call the *provost-marshal*, with them it was called the *captain of the guard;* and here are two sorts of prisoners reckoned up whom he carried away: 1. Such as, after the armies were come into Judea, had yielded themselves. 2. Such as, when they took the city, remained in it, not being before consumed by the sword, famine, and pestilence; and so were taken upon the storming or surprisal of the city. Both

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sorts were carried away prisoners, although it is probable that the conqueror treated the former much more gently than he treated the latter, as is usual in those cases.

10 But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields †at the same time.

† Heb. *in that day.*

This is usual with conquerors, for whose profit it is not that the countries conquered by them should lie waste, like wildernesses, but be peopled, and manured, that they may render some tribute to them: withal the justice of God is often seen in this, thus restoring to them ofttimes with advantage, by the hands of enemies that prove conquerors, those estates which in corrupt times their proper magistrates by violence and oppression took from them, or at least more than compensating their losses by acts of violence and injustice.

11 ¶ Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah †to Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, saying,

† Heb. *by the hand of.*

12 Take him, and †look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.

† Heb. *set thine eyes upon him.*

It is more than probable that Nebuchadrezzar had been informed by some of the chief commanders of his army, who had it from some of the Jews that had escaped out of the city to the Chaldean army, that Jeremiah had constantly told the king and the nobles that the Chaldeans should take the city, and as steadily persuaded both the king, and princes, and people to surrender it to them, and prevent the effusion of blood; and that he was imprisoned for this, and had been a great sufferer that way; and that this made this heathen prince so kind to the prophet as to give this order. In the mean time the hand of God is to be taken notice of, who undoubtedly put this into the heart of this pagan prince; and we may learn that none shall lose any thing at last by being faithful to the commands of God, though they may be for the present losers. What we translate, *look well to him*, is in the Hebrew, *set thine eyes upon him*; and expounded by the following words, commanding him to *do him no harm*, and to give or grant to him whatever he desired.

13 So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the king of Babylon's princes;

14 Even they sent, [i]and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him [k]unto Gedaliah the son of [l]Ahikam the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

[i] ch. 38. 28.
[k] ch. 40. 5.
[l] ch. 26. 24.

The king of Babylon's officers were very religious to their prince's order, and take the prophet out of prison. For the latter part of the 14th verse, it seems but an anticipation of what we shall find related more fully and particularly chap. xl.; or else *so* ought to be translated *yet*, as appeareth from the first verse of the next chapter, from whence it is plain that the prophet was also *bound in chains* amongst *them that were carried away captive*, and not discharged until he came at Ramah, which probably might be in that hurry of affairs; though the princes at first freed him from prison, the under officers not so diligently observing their special charge relating to Jeremiah, the neglect of which the captain of the guard observing when he came as far as Ramah, himself took care in it, as we shall find, chap. xl.; after which, upon his choice, he was committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor over the country.

15 ¶ Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

These words let us know that these four verses (which contain mostly a promise to Ebed-melech for his kindness to Jeremiah while he was in the dungeon of Malchiah, of which we read chap. xxxviii. 6—11) mention a matter that happened before the things mentioned in the foregoing verses.

16 Go and speak to [m]Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, [n]I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be *accomplished* in that day before thee.

[m] ch. 38. 7, 12.
[n] Dan. 9. 12.

Ebed-melech is here again called the *Ethiopian*, to the reproach of the Jews, that a stranger should show more kindness to a prophet of the Lord than any of that nation to whom he was specially sent; which was a type of the calling of the Gentiles, and rejection of the Jews. God assures Ebed-melech the city should be taken and burnt, and the people carried into captivity.

17 But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou *art* afraid.

But promiseth Ebed-melech he should be delivered in that evil day; and, whether he feared the Chaldeans, that he should lose his life by them when they should break up the city, or the princes, whom he had angered by complaining to the king of their hard usage of the prophet, he should come into none of their power.

18 For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but [o]thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: [p]because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

[o] ch. 21. 9. & 45. 5.
[p] 1 Chron. 5. 20. Ps. 37. 40.

For God would deliver him, so as he should not die by the sword; but how little else soever he saved, he should save his life, because he had *put his trust in God*, not fearing the wrath of men in the doing of what was his duty. We read no more in holy writ of this man, and so cannot tell how otherwise God dealt with him; only may be assured that he was not slain by the Chaldeans. And from this we may observe, 1. How kind God hath always declared himself to those who have showed the least kindness to those that have been his true and faithful ministers. 2. That the root of such good works as God rewardeth must be faith, a trusting in the Lord. 3. That those who do good works out of a principle of faith may yet be encumbered with slavish fears.

CHAP. XL.

Jeremiah, being set free by Nebuchadnezzar, goeth to Gedaliah, 1—6, *to whom the remaining Jews repair,* 7—12. *Johanan revealing Ishmael's conspiracy, is not believed,* 13—16.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, [s]after that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in ‖chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon.

588.
[s] ch. 39. 14.
‖ Or, *manacles.*

These words refer to the forty-second chapter, where begins the revelation which Jeremiah had from God, for all this chapter and the next are no prophecy, but only an historical narration of some passages after the taking of the city, and so cannot be called a prophecy, but are a piece of history previous to that prophecy. *Ramah* was a city in the tribe of Benjamin near Gibeon. See chap. xxxi. 15. Jeremiah was by mistake, and expressly contrary to the king's orders, chap. xxxix. 11, manacled and carried away amongst the other prisoners; probably the captain of the guard at that place called over his prisoners, and amongst them he found the prophet, contrary to his expectation.

2 And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah,

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[b] ch. 50. 7. and [b]said unto him, The LORD thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place.

3 Now the LORD hath brought *it*, and [c] Deut. 29. 24, 25. Dan. 9. 11. done according as he hath said: [c]because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you.

This pagan commander could see that which the blind Jews would not understand: they said, *Wherefore is this great evil come upon us?* Nebuzar-adan knew wherefore, and gives God the glory of his master's victory, as also of his own faithfulness, saying God had but done what he said, brought the evil which he had pronounced against that city; he also acknowledgeth God's justice, that this evil was come upon them because of their sins. Thus the men of Tyre and Sidon, and of Nineveh, (according to our Saviour's words,) shall rise up in judgment against the Jews that lived in our Saviour's time, and Nebuzar-adan another day shall rise up in judgment against those Jews that lived in Jeremiah's time, and shall condemn them.

‖ Or, are upon thine hand. [d] ch. 39. 12. 4 And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which ‖*were* upon thine hand. [d]If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and †I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, [e]all the land *is* before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go.

† Heb. *I will set mine eye upon thee.* [e] Gen. 20. 15.

Nebuzar-adan, like a faithful servant, remembers his master's orders to him about the prophet, chap. xxxix. 11, and offers Jeremiah greater favour than to any others of his prisoners; he determined others by his right of conquest to what they should do, but he giveth the prophet a liberty to choose whether he would go to Babylon, or stay at Jerusalem in his own country; he promised him that if he would go to Babylon, he would take a particular care of him.

5 Now while he was not yet gone back, *he said*, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, [f] 2 Kings 25. 22, &c. [f]whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go.

While he was not yet gone back: it is not much material whether we interpret the *he* here mentioned of Jeremiah or Gedaliah. If we interpret it of Jeremiah, the sense is, that before Jeremiah was gone out of the presence of Nebuzar-adan, he, either by his silence, or by some declaration of his mind that is not here recorded, declaring that he was more inclined to stay in his own country, Nebuzar-adan bid him, *Go back*, &c. If we understand it of Gedaliah, the sense must be, Because Gedaliah is not to come back any more to me, *go thou to him*, &c. We read that the *king of Babylon* left Gedaliah as his viceroy or deputy in Judah. What he was, more than the son of Ahikam, and grandchild of Shaphan, the Scripture tells us not, only that he was left by the king of Babylon as ruler over the people he thought fit to leave, 2 Kings xxv. 22; probably he was one of them who, during the siege, had gone out to the king of Babylon: to him the captain of the guard directeth the prophet, but gives him liberty to dwell where he pleaseth; so sends him away with *victuals and a reward*. It is more than probable that the king of Babylon had heard from some of the Jews, who, during the siege, had made an escape to his army, that the scope of the prophet's prophecies were for the delivery of the city, and the Jews' submission to him, as was before said.

[g] ch. 39. 14. [h] Judg. 20. 1. 6 [g]Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to [h]Mizpah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

Mizpah was built by Asa, 1 Kings xv. 22, or rather enlarged or further built, for we read of it as a city belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 26.

[i] 2 Kings 25. 23, &c. 7 ¶ [i]Now when all the captains of the forces which *were* in the fields, *even* they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of [k]the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon;

[k] ch. 39. 10. 8 Then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, [l]even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

[l] ch. 41. 1. It is most likely that these captains with their forces were no newly raised and formed companies; for to what purpose should that be when their city and whole country was lost? but some commanders of parties, which either were within the city till it was taken, and then escaped out, or were about before some where in the country, and were not so much regarded by the Chaldeans, who were more intent upon the conquest of the city than pursuing these little parties, who they knew could do them no hurt. These hearing that the business was over, and a deputy governor set up, who was of their own country, and a man of a good, ingenuous temper, out of the love they had to their native country come unto him. Of these captains we read little save Ishmael, (of whom we shall afterwards read more,) nor are we at all concerned to seek their genealogy.

9 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.

They might reasonably suspect that the Chaldeans would have a jealous eye upon any conflux of people to Jerusalem, especially military men, and therefore be something suspicious of him who was the Chaldean deputy governor; the securing of them from fears on this account was the cause of this voluntary oath taken by Gedaliah. He encourageth them to be servants to the Chaldeans, and to dwell in the land, assuring them that if they would, they should fare well; he was well enough assured of the Chaldeans' favour, that if they would live peaceably in their own land, they should, they would not come any more to carry them away captive.

† Heb. *to stand before.* Deut. 1. 38. 10 As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, †to serve the Chaldeans, which will come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine, and summer fruits, and oil, and put *them* in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken.

That is, I have made choice of Mizpah, a city upon the frontiers, where I intend to make my residence, it being a convenient place for me to receive orders from the king of Babylon, and to manage state matters. But do ye live in the country, and gather such fruits as the country affordeth; do not fear being stripped or spoiled of them, but do as you use to do in the times of greatest peace and security.

11 Likewise when all the Jews that *were* in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that *were* in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan;

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12 Even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.

Probably upon the king of Babylon's first invading Judah many fled, and more as he went on in his conquests, overrunning the country, and it is likely at the taking of the city many escaped, and fled into several countries as they had opportunity, or judged this or that country would be safest; some fled to Moab, some to Ammon, some to Edom, some one way, some another. But when they heard that the king of Babylon had set a governor of their own religion and country over them, they came back to him; and there being few people left in the land, which was of itself wonderfully fruitful, they gathered a great plenty of grapes and other summer fruits which the country produced.

13 ¶ Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah,

They had been with him before, ver. 8, 9, but now they come to discover a conspiracy against his life.

14 And said unto him, Dost thou certainly know that [m] Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah †to slay thee? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not.

m See ch. 41. 10.

† Heb. *to strike thee in soul?*

Dost thou, for dost thou not; for *not* is plainly understood, as the sense makes evident. Whether this *Baalis* be a proper name of the *king of the Ammonites*, or, as some think, an appellative name, signifying the *lady* or the *queen regent*, is uncertain. What made the prince of the Ammonites do this can be but guessed; probably the old hatred they had to Israel, or hopes that they should have the better fishing in these waters when they were troubled. Gedaliah seems a man of a good humour, not too credulous, and believes not the information.

15 Then Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know *it*: wherefore should he slay thee, that all the Jews which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish?

Discerning that Gedaliah took no great notice of his word spoken to him in the presence of the other captains, he goeth to him secretly, offereth him his service to prevent the stroke, if he might have commission from him; mindeth him that if he did not value his own life, yet he ought to consider in what a condition the people would be in in case he were cut off; they were now but a small remnant, and then that remnant also would perish.

16 But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.

Thus God dementates those whom he designeth to destroy. Gedaliah in this showeth an excellent temper, not to be over-credulous and suspicious, *Charity thinks no ill*, but not that prudence which became a chief magistrate. He ought to have been watchful against one against whom he had received such an information, which we shall in the next chapter find he was not, but was slain by him.

CHAP. XLI.

Ishmael, under a colour of friendship, killeth Gedaliah and others, both Jews and Chaldeans, 1—9. *He purposeth to carry the residue captive to the Ammonites, but they are rescued from him by Johanan, who intendeth to flee into Egypt*, 10—18.

NOW it came to pass in the seventh month, [a] *that* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah.

a 2 Kings 25. 25. ch. 40. 6, 8.

In the seventh month; that is, three months after the city was taken, chap. xxxix. 2. *Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal*; the same Ishmael that came to Gedaliah, chap. xl. 8, 9, to whom he sware protection; only here we are told that he was of the royal blood, which might both raise his spirits, as having a more legal pretence to the government, and rendered him a fitter instrument for Baalis, the king or queen of the Ammonites, to make use of. *And the princes of the king, even ten men with him*; some of the princes, who had escaped the army of the king of Babylon; they and their retinue came in pretended compliment to Gedaliah, who treated them kindly, they dined or supped with him.

2 Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and [b] smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.

b 2 Kings 25. 25.

These ten men with their retinue fall upon Gedaliah, and barbarously murder him. Their quarrel against him was, that he was deputy governor to the king of Babylon; so desperately hardened were these Jews, that they would not yet see that God had given their country into the hand of the king of Babylon, who having now a right of conquest over them, had authority to set whom he pleased as his viceroy or deputy governor over them, to whom they ought to have yielded all subjection and obedience.

3 Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, *even* with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, *and* the men of war.

It appeareth from ver. 10, that by *all the Jews* here must be understood only all those who were about the court of Gedaliah, for it is there said that he carried away many that were with him.

4 And it came to pass the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew *it*,

That is, no man who lived at any great distance from Mizpah, for Ishmael was concerned what in him lay to keep this slaughter private, for fear the news of it should have reached the ears of the king of Babylon, or the commanders of some of his forces, so as he should not have had time to make his escape.

5 That there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, *even* fourscore men, [c] having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring *them* to [d] the house of the LORD.

c Lev. 19. 27, 28. Deut. 14. 1. Isa. 15. 2.

d See 2 Kin. 25. 9. 1 Sam. 1. 7.

Samaria was the name both of a city and a province; Shechem was a city within that province, within the limits of the tribe of Ephraim, Josh. xx. 7. These places were now inhabited by a mixed people, partly Jews, partly such as the king of Assyria had upon his conquest of the ten tribes brought to inhabit there. From thence came eighty men, who possibly had not heard of the temple being burnt, at least when they came out; or if they had heard of it, yet thought, hearing some Jews were left, that they might have erected some altar for sacrifices; or it may be they brought no beasts, for the text speaks only of *incense and offerings*; they came with all indications of mourning used in those countries, *shaven beards, clothes rent, and having cut themselves* in a barbarous fashion used by the heathens, and forbidden the Jews, but yet practised by many of them.

6 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, †weeping all along as he went: and it

† Heb. *in going and weeping.*

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came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam.

He cometh out weeping. the better to deceive them into his trap, that they might believe he was as they equally affected with God's dispensations, and inviteth them to the new governor for protection, as if he had been one of his courtiers and friends: by those arts he concealeth his bloody design against them.

7 And it was *so*, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, *and* [e]*cast them* into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that *were* with him.

[e] So 1 Mac. 7. 19.

When he had thus enticed them into Mizpah, he and his followers slay them, and throw their dead bodies into a pit, with the assistance of those bloody men that were with him.

8 But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbare, and slew them not among their brethren.

He slew seventy of them, but ten of them pleading for their lives, urged that they had estates in the country, both of corn, oil, and honey. His covetousness prevailed over his cruelty, he spared their lives to become master of what they had.

9 Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men, whom he had slain ‖† because of Gedaliah, *was* it [f]which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel: *and* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with *them that were* slain.

‖ Or, *near Gedaliah.* † Heb. *by the hand*, or, *by the side of Gedaliah.* [f] 1 Kin. 15. 22. 2 Chron. 16. 6.

The word which we translate *because of* בּיד signifieth *in the hand of Gedaliah*, which hath given critics a scope to vary in their notion of it, and to translate it, *in the power of, by occasion of*, &c. But the learned author of our English Annotations saith the sense of the place is plain enough; chap. xxxviii. 10, we have the same term twice, where we have translated it *with thee*, so here it doubtless signifies those who were *with Gedaliah* under his power or charge. What pit this was is not so well agreed, that is, upon what occasion made; the text telleth us it was digged by Asa king of Judah, and that it was made for fear of Baasha the king of Israel; but whether it was to *receive water*, or to hinder Baasha's coming near some weak part of the city, we are not told, and it is but in vain to guess. We read, 1 Kings xv. 22, of Asa's fortifying Mizpah with the stones of Ramah, but of this pit we read nothing.

10 Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that *were* in Mizpah, [g]*even* the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, [h]whom Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to [i]the Ammonites.

[g] ch. 43. 6. [h] ch. 40. 7. [i] ch. 40. 14.

By this verse appeareth that *all the Jews*, ver. 3, must be understood in a restrained sense, concerning all those about Gedaliah. For he carried many away as prisoners, as also Zedekiah's daughters, who either had concealed themselves at the taking of the city, or were left behind by the conquerors, as not like much to hurt them; and having done this, he knew there was no abiding for him long there, so he hasteneth away to the Ammonites, who (as we had it before) employed him in this murder.

11 ¶ But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all [k]the captains of the forces that *were* with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done,

[k] ch. 40. 7, 8, 13.

12 Then they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by [l]the great waters that *are* in Gibeon.

[l] 2 Sam. 2. 13.

These *great waters* are supposed to be a lake, or some great pool in Gibeon, the very same that is mentioned 2 Sam. ii. 13, where Joab and the servants of David met, the one keeping on one side of the pool, the other on the other side.

13 Now it came to pass, *that* when all the people which *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, then they were glad.

To see a probability of their escape out of the hands of this bloody man, who had slain so many of their brethren.

14 So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah.

15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites.

When the people whom Ishmael had carried away prisoners saw Johanan coming with greater forces, they contrived and wheeled about and went to him, only Ishmael and eight men escaped and went to the land of Ammon.

16 Then took Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after *that* he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, *even* mighty men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon:

17 And they departed, and dwelt in the habitation of [m]Chimham, which is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt,

[m] 2 Sam. 19. 37, 38.

When Johanan had (as was before expressed) recovered the Jews whom Ishmael had carried away as prisoners, he came and dwelt with them *in the habitation of Chimham*. Concerning this *Chimham*, all that we read in Scripture is 2 Sam. xix. 37, 38, 40; he was the son of Barzillai, whom David would have had to have gone along with him to his court; but he being eighty years old excused himself, and desired that his son Chimham might be accepted in his stead. David agreeth it, and promiseth to do for him whatsoever his father should desire on his behalf: possibly David, having an estate near thereabouts, might give a portion of it to him, which though it returned to the family of David in the year of jubilee, yet from Chimham's house there might retain the name of *the habitation of Chimham*. Into those parts Johanan retired, with a further design to go into Egypt.

18 Because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, [n]whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land.

[n] ch. 40. 5.

Here was one slain whom the conqueror Nebuchadnezzar had made governor in the land of Judah, and it was but reasonable for them to think that Nebuchadnezzar would take the affront done to himself, he being constituted governor by him; and though Johanan had nothing to do in that murder, yet he did not know but that the king of Babylon, being ignorant of any parties amongst the Jews, might look upon them all as guilty who were Jews, and revenge Gedaliah's blood upon all the remainder of that nation; he therefore chooseth them a habitation for the present, from whence they might in a short time go down into Egypt, which was Johanan's design, as we shall read in the next chapter.

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CHAP. XLII.

Johanan and the people desire Jeremiah to inquire of God, promising obedience to his will, 1—6. *Jeremiah assureth them of safety in Judea,* 7—12, *and destruction in Egypt,* 13—18: *reproveth their hypocrisy and obstinacy,* 19—22.

The three following chapters give us an account of what happened to Johanan the son of Kareah, and the rest, after the slaughter of Ishmael, and their going to dwell in the habitation of Chimham, in order to their going into the land of Egypt; their coming to Jeremiah to go and inquire of the Lord for them, his inquiry of God, with the revelation of the Divine will unto him, that they should not go into Egypt, promising God's protection of them if they did not go, threatening their destruction if they did go; their proud answer to Jeremiah, and resolution to go, which they accordingly did, and there fell in with the idolatry of the Egyptians, for which God by his prophet threateneth them with an utter ruin.

[a] ch. 40. 8, 13. & 41. 11. THEN all the captains of the forces, [a]and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came near,

After that this captain Johanan (who now had made himself head of the Jews) had fixed their abode in the habitation of Chimham in the way to Egypt, with thoughts of going down to inhabit there, for fear of the Chaldeans coming to revenge the death of Gedaliah upon all the remainder of the Jews, both these captains and many of the people, or some of all sorts of the people, (for it cannot be imagined that every particular person came,) made their address to the prophet Jeremiah, who probably was with them, carried away by Ishmael, and rescued by this captain.

2 And said unto Jeremiah the prophet, [1] Or, *Let our supplication fall before thee.* [b] 1 Sam. 7. 8. & 12. 19. Is. 37. 4. Jam. 5. 16. [c] Lev. 26. 22. ‖ Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and [b]pray for us unto the LORD thy God, *even* for all this remnant; (for we are left *but* [c]a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:)

These men (though wretched hypocrites) yet come to the prophet with great respect and reverence, first desiring that he would allow them to make their request to him: probably the evidence they had had so lately of his being a prophet of the Lord, by the fulfilling of all that he had foretold against both the city and the temple, might in some measure occasion this. Their request was, that he would put up his prayer to God for the remnant, for now there was but a small remnant of Jews left, a few of many.

3 That the LORD thy God may shew [d] Ezra 8. 21. us [d]the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.

The thing they would have him pray to God for, was direction what they should do in this desolate state into which God had brought them. What could be more pious? a practice founded upon a Divine precept, and encouraged by a promise, Prov. iii. 6, *Acknowledge him in all thy ways, and he shall direct thy steps.* But we may well apply here what God had said to their forefathers, Deut. v. 29, when they had so freely promised their obedience to the law of God, *Oh that there were such an heart in them,* &c.

4 Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard *you;* behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass, *that* [e] 1 Kings 22. 14. [e]whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare *it* unto you; I will [f]keep nothing back from you. [f] 1 Sam. 3. 18. Acts 20. 20.

I have heard you; that is, I will do for you according as you desire. And I will be faithful in giving you an account of what God shall reveal to me to be his will on your behalf. They called God Jeremiah's God, here Jeremiah calls him *their God,* both to mind them of God's relation to them, and their duty towards him.

[g] Gen. 31. 50. 5 Then they said to Jeremiah, [g]The LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us.

6 Whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; [h]that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God. [h] Deut. 6. 3. ch. 7. 23.

The preceding words are a perfect oath, the form of which lies in a calling of God to witness the sincerity of the heart of those that swear, for a security to those to whom the oath is given, which also includeth a secret challenging God to take vengeance upon the persons that give that security, if they should not do accordingly as they promise; which speaketh the atheism of the heart of the false swearer; for did a man believe that there is a God, and that the Divine Being is infinite in power, and a true and faithful witness, it were impossible that he should challenge him to be revenged on him for not doing what he never seriously intends to do, which was the case of these wicked men. The thing they promise is a perfect obedience to God's will, whether grateful or ungrateful to them; and they further declare a conviction, that if they did it, it should be well with them, according to that, Deut. v. 29; which showeth the mighty power of lusts in unregenerate hearts, and the mighty operations of the evil spirit in the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2; that although they be convinced that if they did obey the voice of God it would be well with them, yet they will not do it in things which they have a power to do.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah.

The word mentioned chap. xl. 1; to which all that we have met with from the beginning of chap. xl. is but an historical preface.

8 Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which *were* with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest,

9 And said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him;

The prophet after ten days, all which time some (but upon what ground I know not) think he spent in prayer, receiveth an answer from God, which he presently communicates to the princes and people, with a preface that containeth in it many arguments to have induced this compliance with it: 1. Because it came from the Lord. 2. From that God who, as he was in covenant with Israel, so in all the course of his providence had so carried himself to them, as they had no just reason to suspect either his kindness or his power. 3. From their employing of him to seek God upon their behalf.

10 If ye will still abide in this land, then [i]will I build you, and not pull *you* down, and I will plant you, and not pluck *you* up: for I [k]repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. [i] ch. 24. 6. & 31. 28. & 33. 7. [k] Deut. 32. 36. ch. 18. 8.

That is, if you will not go into the land of Egypt, as you are thinking, but abide where you are, or in any part of Judah, under subjection to the king of Babylon, into whose power I have given you, then I will see to your security and prosperity, and make you a happy people. The happiness and prosperity of people is in Scripture often set out under the notion of building and planting, as on the contrary their misery or destruction is expressed under the metaphorical notions of pulling down and plucking up. *For I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you;* for I am satisfied with the punishment your nation hath undergone; and as to the remainder, if they do not destroy themselves by new disobedience, I will change the course of my providence.

11 Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: [l]for I *am* with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. [l] Is. 43. 5. Rom. 8. 31.

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I know whom you are afraid of; you fear that the king of Babylon will come and utterly root you out, because one of your nation hath murdered his viceroy Gedaliah: suffer not your passion of fear to rise too high in this case, and to make you flee into Egypt; for you shall have my presence with you, to preserve and deliver you from his power, it shall not be in his power to do you any harm.

m Ps. 106. 45, 46.

12 And [m]I will shew mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land.

We are beholden to God for all the pity and compassion which we meet with from men, God inclineth their hearts, though we receive the kindness from their hands. The mercy which God here promiseth these men is, that the king of Babylon should give them a liberty to go every one of them to their own inheritances, for at present they were banished by their own fear, from their own houses, though not from their own country.

n ch. 44. 16.

13 ¶ But if [n]ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the LORD your God,

Our translation a little darkens the sense, translating the Hebrew particle בלתי *neither*, which signifies no more than *not*, or by *no means*, Numb. xiv. 16; 1 Sam. ii. 2; xx. 26; Hos. xiii. 4; and it is certain here is but one thing spoken of, for the thing wherein they disobeyed the voice of the Lord was not continuing in their own land, but going into the land of Egypt.

14 Saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell:

The sense of the words is obvious, they thought that their life in the land of Judah would be at best an uneasy life, where they should be continually alarmed with the noise of war; and though they could not fear the want of bread in a land that flowed with milk and honey, yet they also considered that Egypt was a very fruitful country, by the overflowing of Nilus; and the prospect of this made them quit that usual fondness which people have of their native country. From whence appears that their great sin was *unbelief*; they would not take the promise of God for a security to them for a quiet and peaceable abode in Judah, but would fancy noises of drums and trumpets, and fear where no fear was. The prophet saw they were resolved into Egypt they would go, to live a more certain easy life (as they fancied); he therefore tells them, that if after their sending him to God to inquire for them, and promising a compliance with his will, and hearing now what that will was, this were their resolution, he had another word from God to them.

15 And now therefore hear the word of the LORD, ye remnant of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; If ye [o]wholly set [p]your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there;

o Deut. 17. 16. ch. 44. 12, 13, 14.
p Luke 9. 51.

This verse is wholly prefatory to what followeth. If, saith God, all your mind be upon Egypt, and you be resolved thither you will go,

16 Then it shall come to pass, *that* the sword, [q]which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, †shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die.

q Ezek. 11. 8.
† Heb. *shall cleave after you.*

In the general the prophet threateneth them, that in Egypt they should meet with the very same evils the fear of which made them flee out of their own country, the *sword* and *famine*; the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, who, after this, fully conquered Egypt; and a famine through want of bread; for although Egypt was a fruitful country, yet we know there was a famine there, against which Joseph provided; besides that scarcity of victuals commonly followeth great armies. Those who shun dangers, or think to shun them, by acts of disobedience to God, ordinarily are suffered by God to take such courses as they fall into the same or worse dangers than what they labour to avoid.

17 †So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they shall die [r]by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: and [s]none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them.

† Heb. *So shall all the men be.*
r ch. 24. 10: ver. 22.
s See ch. 44. 14, 28.

Those words, *that set their faces to go*, may reasonably be interpreted as a limitation of the universal particle *all*; for as eventually we can hardly conceive that every individual person that went into Egypt did thus perish, so it can hardly be thought that the just God should order an equal punishment to those who were the ringleaders in this design, and those who were forced or overruled by them, or perhaps knew not how to live when the rest were gone. But, saith God, for those who drive on this design, and go with their whole heart resolvedly against the contrary revelation of my will, there shall none of them escape one or other of my sore judgments, sword, pestilence, or famine; they shall not be the lot of one or two, but of all such persons.

18 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and my fury hath been [t]poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and [u]ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

t ch. 7. 20.
u ch. 18. 16. & 24. 9. & 25. 6. & 29. 18, 22. & 44. 12. Zech. 8. 13.

If you would see your doom in a glass, look upon Jerusalem, which according to my word I have dealt so severely with, that amongst men it would be called fury, though in me it was but deliberate justice, that my wrath declared against it (like liquid things melted) diffused itself into all the parts of it: I will deal so with you soon after you shall have entered into that land, where you promise yourselves so much ease, rest, and prosperity; and as I threatened to make Jerusalem a curse, an astonishment, and a reproach, chap. xxiv. 9; xxix. 18, so I will deal with you; and in this I will (saith God) deal worse with you, that whereas those of your brethren that were carried from Jerusalem to Babylon shall some of them come back again after sixty years, you shall see this place no more. There was this aggravation of the Jews' sin, to whom God was now by his prophet speaking, they had lately seen the words of the Lord spoken by the same prophet verified, and yet would take no warning, but ran into the same sin of unbelief

19 ¶ The LORD hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah; [x]Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have †admonished you this day.

x Deut. 17. 16.
† Heb. *testified against you.*

The good prophet, knowing how much it concerned this people to listen unto him, and to believe and obey what he said, repeats again the same thing which he had said before, assuring them that it was the Lord commanded him to say this to them. Critics note that the word which we translate *admonish*, in this form, signifieth to admonish before witnesses.

20 For ‖ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, [y]Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do *it*.

‖ Or, *ye have used deceit against your souls.*
y ver. 2.

Ye dissembled in your hearts; or, *you have used deceit*, either towards God, dealing falsely with him, calling him to be a witness to your sincerity in what you never intended any sincerity in; or towards me, sending me to inquire of God for you, and promising to do according to what I should reveal to you from God as his will, whenas you never intended it; or towards your own souls, as every sinner doth but deceive his own soul: you made a pretence of what was not in your hearts, when you sent me to pray God's direction for you, and made me such a firm

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promise to do whatsoever I should reveal to you from God as his will in this case.

21 And *now* I have this day declared *it* to you; but ye have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God, nor any *thing* for the which he hath sent me unto you.

I have been faithful to you, I went according to your desire to inquire of God for you, I had his will revealed to me in your case, and now I have as faithfully told you what it is; *but ye have not obeyed.* How did Jeremiah know this, for they had not yet declared their minds to him? He had either learned it from their discourses during the ten days which God had made him to wait for the revelation, or he had learned it from some contemptuous behaviour of them when he delivered it, or (which is most probable) God had aforehand told it to him.

22 Now therefore know certainly that [z] ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire ‖ to go *and* to sojourn.

[z] ver. 17. Ezek. 6. 11.

‖ Or, *to go to sojourn.*

The prophet ascertaineth that doom unto them which, ver. 15—17, he had threatened them with, in case they were resolved to go into Egypt. We must expect nothing but utmost disappointments upon actions done in disobedience to the revealed will of God: you think to avoid death by going thither for a little time to sojourn, but you shall die there, and that by those very deaths which by going thither you seek to avoid.

CHAP. XLIII.

Johanan and the commanders discredit Jeremiah's prophecy, 1—3, and, with the people, carry him and Baruch into Egypt, 4—7. He prophesieth, by a type, the conquest of Egypt by the Babylonians, 8—13.

AND it came to pass, *that* when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, *even* all these words,

The Hebrew word which we translate *words* signifieth also *things*. The prophet is very exact in letting us know that he had from the Lord what he delivered to them, he therefore twice repeats it, *the words of the Lord their God*, and *for which the Lord had sent him to them:* not that the prophets always limited themselves to those syllabical words they had revealed to them, but to the matter only of the revelation; which every minister of the gospel is still bound to do, delivering to the people only *what they have received from the Lord*, as 1 Cor. xi. 23, as to the matter and substance of what they deliver, though they clothe it with words and phrases of their own.

2 [a] Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there:

[a] ch. 42. 1.

Of *Johanan* we have before heard, but not of *Azariah*, unless under the name of Jezaniah, chap. xlii. 1, but that is uncertain. These men are called *proud men*, either because they were the *great men*, or because *their conceit of themselves led them into this fatal error.* Pride is nothing else but a man's mind swelling in an opinion of himself, and always takes its rise from some higher ground the person possessed of it thinks he stands upon, and a very little hillock will serve the turn; those who have nothing else of pretence will make a silk coat or a piece of silver lace serve their turn. One man's spirit swells upon account of his descent, another upon account of his riches, a third upon the account of his learning, parts, and wit, a fourth upon the account of his or her beauty. These men are called *proud men*, possibly upon account of their greatness, they were captains, and the chief of the Jews now left; but chiefly upon account of the good opinion they had of their own reason and wit, by which they judged they knew better how to guide themselves for their own security than Jeremiah could teach them; which pride or good opinion men have of themselves is a great root of disobedience: all men sin either through passion or pride, or both, either to gratify their sensitive appetite, or their rational appetite, as it is in man since the fall.

Because it had been downright atheism, and a disclaiming of God, to have said they knew better what to do than God could tell them, they only tell the prophet God had not sent him. As in these times hypocrites, whose lusts will not allow them to do the will of God, think to secure themselves by denying that to be the will of God, and finding out other senses to put upon Scripture than are according to truth.

3 But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon.

Baruch was but a clerk or secretary to Jeremiah, so not very probable to overrule the prophet to a falsifying of his trust, and a betraying of his countrymen into the hands of their enemies; but so fond are wicked men of their lusts, that they will say any thing in justification of them, rather than deny themselves in them, and become obedient to the will of God.

4 So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the Lord, to dwell in the land of Judah.

That is, they resolved not to obey the message God had sent them by Jeremiah.

5 But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took [b] all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah;

[b] ch. 40. 11, 12.

This resolution they presently put in practice. Though it is certain that Jeremiah and Baruch were not willing to go along with them, and probably that many of the people were not willing, yet these rebellious captains forced them all along with them, so as many of them were now a kind of prisoners to their own countrymen.

6 *Even* men, and women, and children, [c] and the king's daughters, [d] and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah.

[c] ch. 41. 10.
[d] ch. 39. 10. & 40. 7.

Of *the king's daughters* here mentioned, see chap. xli. 10.

7 So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: thus came they *even* to [e] Tahpanhes.

[e] ch. 2. 16. & 44. 1. called *Hanes*, Is. 30. 4. See ending.

Egypt at this time, though it was humbled by the king of Babylon, by an inroad he had made into it, of which we read, 2 Kings xxiv. 7, yet it was a distinct kingdom, and being near to Canaan, the Jews often fled thither for sanctuary, and borrowed assistance against their enemies from them. Of this city we read little but in holy writ. 1 Kings xi. 19, we read of a queen of Egypt called *Tahpenes*, in honour to whom probably this city was builded, after whose name this city was called, of which the Scripture saith nothing, but in this prophet, chap. ii. 16, in this chapter, and chap. xliv. 1, and xlvi. 14; it appears by ver. 9 that it was at this time the place where the king of Egypt made his residence, or at least had a palace. Thither these captains and the Jews came, forcing Jeremiah and Baruch along with them.

8 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

9 Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the brickkiln, which *is* at the

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entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah;

God commandeth the prophet to take these *stones*, and to place them *in the clay*, &c., for a sign of what we shall meet with expounded in the next verse: it is plain from hence that the king of Egypt, called Pharaoh, either resided, or at least had a royal palace, in Tahpanhes; Jeremiah is directed to fix these stones at the entrance into this palace. This hath made interpreters divided about the true sense of the word which is here translated a *brick-kiln*. That the word so signifies is out of doubt, and is so translated, 2 Sam. xii. 31. All that troubleth some is, that they fancy there should not be a *brick-kiln* so near the king's palace; but possibly those learned men do not enough consider the difference of times and places. Great princes' sons and daughters do not use in our age to keep sheep, which yet we know Jacob's sons and Laban's daughters did; the grandeur of princes was not so great but it might admit of as plain a thing as this. Others say the palaces of their princes were very vast, so that the brick-kiln might be at a distance from the entry into the dwelling-house, though it was at the entry of the place called by the name of the palace. Others think it might be a house used not for making, but polishing earthenware. But the greatest offensiveness of such kilns with us is from the smoke, of which they had none, drying their bricks in the sun. But it is a nicety not worth so many guesses.

10 And say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, [f]my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them.

f ch. 25. 9. & 27. 6. See Ezek. 29. 18, 20.

Now God expounds his meaning in his former command: he ordered Jeremiah to take stones, and hide them in a place near the king of Egypt's palace; now he tells them that this was for a sign that Nebuchadnezzar should set his throne and spread his pavilion in that place. This Nebuchadnezzar God calls his *servant*, because he was to obey him in what he should do, though he intended not so. Thus Assyria is called *the rod of his anger*, Isa. x. 5; and Nebuchadnezzar is so called, chap. xxv. 9; xxvii. 6. *Upon these stones that I have hid;* God owneth the stones to be laid by himself, because they were laid at his command.

11 [g]And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, *and deliver* [h]such *as are* for death to death; and such *as are* for captivity to captivity; and such *as are* for the sword to the sword.

g ch. 44. 13. & 46. 13.

h ch. 15. 2. Zech. 11. 9.

He prophesieth the certain ruin of the Egyptians by the king of Babylon, some of whom the king of Babylon should slay, others of them he should lead away into captivity as prisoners of war. See the like phrases chap. xv. 2.

12 And I will kindle a fire in the houses of [i]the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace.

i ch. 46. 25.

God by his prophet declares a particular hatred to the idols of Egypt, that he would burn up their temples, i. e. by the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. *And carry them away captives;* he shall carry away both the idols and the inhabitants of Egypt captives. *He shall array himself with the land of Egypt;* that is, with the spoils and plunder of the land of Egypt the king of Babylon shall clothe his army. *As a shepherd putteth on his garment:* our unacquaintedness with the fashions of shepherds causeth divers guesses at the sense of this phrase; that which the best interpreters fix in as the best is, that as a shepherd that while he hath been attending his flocks goes in any rags, and is careless of his clothes, but when he goes home at night he puts on his coat; so the Babylonish soldiers, when they have finished their work in the conquest of Egypt, shall go home clothed in the better habits of the Egyptians. *And he shall go forth from thence in peace;* and the armies shall go home in peace, as conquerors not foiled in their undertaking.

13 He shall break also the †images of ‖Beth-shemesh, that *is* in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.

† Heb. *statues, or, standing images.*

‖ Or, *the house of the sun.*

Beth-shemesh signifies *the house of the sun*, and it is also the name of a city in Egypt; so most take it here, as the name of a city which had its name from a famous temple builded in it to the honour of the sun. This idol is called *On*, Gen. xli. 45. By this it appears that the Egyptians, as well as other pagans, paid Divine adoration to the creature. God threatens not only the destruction of the idolatrous temples, but the houses of the inhabitants of Egypt, by the king of Babylon; from whence these Jews, would they have believed, might have understood, that they would not have the security which they promised themselves in the land of Egypt.

CHAP. XLIV.

Jeremiah representeth to the people in Egypt the former sins and punishment of Judah, 1—10. *He prophesieth their destruction in Egypt,* 11—14. *Their obstinacy,* 15—19; *threatened,* 20—28. *For a sign, the destruction of Egypt is foretold,* 29, 30.

THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at [a]Migdol, and at [b]Tahpanhes, and at [c]Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying,

587.

a Ex. 14. 2. ch. 46. 14.

b ch. 43. 7.

c Is. 19. 13.

The patience and goodness of God to this remnant of his ancient people is very remarkable; he leaveth them not even in their rebellion, but sendeth Jeremiah, whom he had before sent to prevent their going into this idolatrous country, to try if in Egypt they would be brought to a better mind. It should seem that the generality of the Jews that went into Egypt had planted themselves at these four places. Of *Migdol* we read Exod. xiv. 2; Numb. xxxiii. 7; from which places we may learn it was a city or town upon the borders of the Red Sea. We shall read of it again chap. xlvi. 14. It was a place which might have minded them better of their obligations and duty to God, for upon their removal from thence God divided the Red Sea for their forefathers. *Noph* was another city in Egypt, of which we read Isa. xix. 13; chap. ii. 16; xlvi. 14; Ezek. xxx. 13, 16. The Greeks and Latins call it Memphis; it is thought to be that city which is now called Cairo. *Pathros* was a region or province, some think it derived its name from Pathrusim the son of Mizraim, Gen. x. 14. It is the same (as some think) which is since called Thebais.

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they *are* [d]a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein,

d ch. 9. 11. & 34. 22.

He referreth to the late destruction of it by the king of Babylon; this remnant of the people was a brand plucked out of that fire, and their eyes had been witnesses to the desolations that God had wrought.

3 Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went [e]to burn incense, *and* to [f]serve other gods, whom they knew not, *neither* they, ye, nor your fathers.

e ch. 19. 4.

f Deut. 13. 6. & 32. 17.

As they were eye-witnesses to the effect, so it was nothing but their unbelief made them strangers to the cause; for God by his prophets had told them that the great moving cause was their paying a Divine homage to idols; the sin

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of which is aggravated from this, that they were as much strangers to the idols, as to the people with whom they joined in the worship of them, neither they nor any of their fathers having had any experimental knowledge of what they had done or could do for such as adored them.

g 2 Chron. 36. 15. ch. 7. 25. & 25. 4. & 26. 5. & 29. 19.

4 Howbeit [g]I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.

5 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods.

These two verses contain another aggravation of this people's sin, viz. that they did this against light, and admonitions to the contrary. God had by his prophets let them know that this was an abominable thing, a thing which he hated, and that not with an ordinary degree of hatred; yet they would not hear, so as to yield obedience to God, but went on in their idolatries.

h ch. 42. 18.

6 Wherefore [h]my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted *and* desolate, as at this day.

For these very reasons, their idolatry and contempt of my word by my prophets, the very sins you are now committing, I have given Judah and Jerusalem into the hand of the king of Babylon, and it is (as you at this day see it) waste and desolate.

7 Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye *this* great evil

† Num. 16. 38. ch. 7. 19. + Heb. *out of the midst of Judah.*

[†]against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, +out of Judah, to leave you none to remain;

What prudence can guide you to do such actions as these, by which you cannot hurt God, but yourselves only? You are now but a few of many; what love have you for your country, in taking courses which will certainly tend to the utter extirpation of those few, so as there shall be neither man, nor woman, nor child, nor suckling remaining of all the Jews?

k ch. 25. 6, 7.

8 In that ye [k]provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye

l ch. 42. 18. ver. 12.

might be [l]a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?

Idols are usually thus defamed, and indeed nothing can argue a greater stupidity than for any to pay a homage (confessedly due to the Supreme Being) to what is the work of men's hands, and therefore must be made by one superior to that order of beings in which idols are. But how doth the prophet say that they worshipped the works of men's hands? for it is apparent, from ver. 17, that they paid this homage to the *queen of heaven*, which is not the work of men's hands. *Solut.* It was before images, which are but the works of men's hands. And this certainly was the idolatry of the generality of the heathens, they worshipped an unknown Divine Being before a creature, either as representing it, or rather putting them in mind of it. *That ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth;* the term *that* doth not denote the idolater's end of intention, for none ever did any act intentionally to ruin themselves, it only signifies the end of their work, that their utter ruin would be the certain consequent of their work.

+ Heb. *wickednesses*, or, *punishments, &c.*

9 Have ye forgotten the +wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem?

God accounteth men and women to have forgotten that, the sight and reflection upon which hath made no such impression upon them, as to produce a practice suitable to those notices, according to the conduct of a reasonable soul, which teacheth every man, having notice of a great evil brought upon a man by such or such practices, to avoid running into the like danger. It was the aggravation of this people's sins, that they were committed in the holy land, and in a city which God had more favoured than any other place: to have done these things in any place had been guilt enough, but more to do it *in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem.*

+ Heb. *contrite.* Ps. 51. 17. m Prov. 28. 14.

10 They are not +humbled *even* unto this day, neither have they [m]feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers.

They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared: neither they nor you are humbled; for the prophet's passing from the second person to the third, and by and by from the third person again to the second, lets us know that he intendeth what he spake as well of them to whom he spake, as of them concerning whom he speaks. *Nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes;* from whence we also learn that reformation and obedience are the first-fruits of contrition, or true humiliation. God accounteth those not humbled, but hardened, who are not reformed, and become obedient to his will, let their pretended attrition, contrition, or humiliation be in outward appearance what it will.

n Lev. 17. 10. & 20. 5, 6. ch. 21. 10. Amos 9. 4.

11 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, [n]I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah.

Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: these names are frequently given to God in threatening prophecies, partly to let this people know that God is able to make good his word, and to bring the threatened evils upon them; and partly to let them know that the dealing thus with them would not make him quit his relation to Israel, but he was and still would approve himself the God of those who were his true Israel. *Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah;* the meaning is, My full design against you is to bring evil upon you; this is expressed under the notion of *setting his face*, and, Amos ix. 4, *setting his eyes* against them.

12 And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and

o ch. 42. 15, 16, 17, 22.

[o]they shall all be consumed, *and* fall in the land of Egypt; they shall *even* be consumed by the sword *and* by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and

p ch. 42. 18.

[p]they shall be an execration, *and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach.

This is no more than the prophet had told these very persons before they went unto Egypt, chap. xlii. 16, 17; here he doubleth his words for the confirmation of the truth of them to them now that they were there.

q ch. 43. 11.

13 [q]For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence:

14 So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they +have a desire to return to dwell there: for

+ Heb. *lift up their soul.* r ver. 28.

[r]none shall return but such as shall escape.

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There is a great variety in the reading of the words, ver. 14; some reading *besides such as have a desire to return;* others, *although they have a desire to return;* others, *for they have a desire to return.* The words seem to hint that these Jews went into the land of Egypt, not with a design to live there always, but to stay for a while till the heat of the Chaldeans in inquiring after the blood of Gedaliah should be over, then thinking to return into their own country; which one would think were true, considering it not only as their native soil, but also a place where was now room enough, and they might live in much greater plenty than they could in Egypt. The only difficulty is in the last words, compared with what in the same verse went before; it is said in the beginning of the verse that *none of them should escape,* and in the close, *none shall return but such as shall escape.* But reason will guide us to interpret the first *none* in a restrained sense, i. e. none of those who have been the authors of this counsel and rebellion against God, and who went into Egypt willingly; for none can think that God involved Jeremiah and Baruch who were in Egypt (at least the first of them) in the same punishment with which he punished the rebellious Jews. Or none of those who in Egypt have burnt incense to idols, and defiled themselves with the idolatry of Egypt; but there shall some escape, such as have been forced into Egypt against their wills; and such as, being so forced, when they came here did not fall in with the idolatry of the Egyptians, (for we may gather from the next verse that all of them did not,) these men shall again return into the land of Judah. This to me seemeth the fairest and most probable sense of the words.

15 ¶ Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying,

The burning of incense was a religious rite, which God had appointed the Jews as a piece of Divine homage to be paid to him alone, and by an ordinary figure is put for worship; so as burning incense to other gods is the same with worshipping other gods. It should seem that all the Jews had not been thus far guilty, and those that did it were mostly women, or at least they were the leaders in this idolatry; and one would think the phrase implieth that those who were thus culpable did it with some privacy, so as all their husbands did not know of it; but those that did were as bad as their wives, conniving at them, and justifying them in their idolatry, and joining with them in the following peremptory answer to and contempt of the prophet.

16 *As for* the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD,
[a] So ch. 6. 16. [a]we will not hearken unto thee.

We read, chap. xliii. 5, Johanan and the rest only denied that God had spoken such things, and told Jeremiah he had spoken falsely; but now these women and men rise higher, they acknowledge Jeremiah had spoken to them in the name of the Lord, but tell him in plain and direct terms they would not obey it. And indeed this is in the hearts of all sinners that are ruled by their lusts; though they will sometimes pretend that what they hear is not the will of God, but spoken out of malice and prejudice, yet they are pre-resolved they will not do it, let their understandings be never so well informed.

[t] Num. 30. 12. Deut. 23. 23. Judg. 11. 36. See ver. 25.
[‖] Or, *frame of heaven.*
[u] ch. 7. 18.

17 But we will certainly do [t]whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the ‖ [u]queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for *then* had we plenty of
†Heb. *bread.* †victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.

Here is the root of all sinners' disobedience, their resolution to please and humour themselves, not knowing how in any thing to deny themselves; hence it is that denying ourselves is by Christ made the first law or condition of his disciples. By the *queen of heaven* some here understand the sun, which notion is favoured from the words being of the feminine gender, which signifieth the sun in Hebrew; others reading it not the *queen,* but the *frame of heaven,* by it understanding the sun, moon, and stars. *Drink-offerings* were a Divine homage which God had commanded to be paid to him, Lev. xxiii. 13; Numb. vi. 17. Their arguments for it were, 1. Custom and antiquity, they and their fathers had used to do it. 2. The example of their kings and princes. 3. The plenty and prosperity they had while they did so, as if their idolatry had been the cause of it.

18 But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all *things,* and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.

19 [x]And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our ‖ men? [x] ch. 7. 18.
[‖] Or, *husbands.*

Their last argument is drawn from the evils that had befallen them since they had left worshipping the sun, moon, and stars; thus strangely making their omission of that the cause of their sufferings, their former doing of which was indeed the true cause. They had lost their husbands in the siege and in battles, and had suffered famine and hunger; and all because they had burnt incense to other gods: they interpret these providences as a punishment of them for not doing it as they had formerly used to do. So bad interpreters are those of God's providences, who indulge their lusts in opposition to God's law.

20 ¶ Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him *that* answer, saying,

21 The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it *not* into his mind?

22 So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, *and* because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land [y]a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, [z]as at this day. [y] ch. 25. 11, 18, 38. [z] ver. 6.

23 Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; [a]therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day. [a] Dan. 9. 11, 12.

There is in these verses nothing of difficulty, nor any new phrases to be opened. That which is observable is, that though the prophet was but one against many, yet he feareth not their faces: the substance of what he saith is this, that they interpreted God's voice in his providences toward their country directly contrary to the true sense of it. They concluded that their omission of late to burn incense to the sun, moon, and stars was the cause why it was so ill with them; as if these were animate beings, and the Supreme Being, whereas they were but creatures. Or as if it were the will of the Supreme Being to be adored and worshipped in them, or before statues and images represented by them, whereas the will of God was directly contrary: and as he in the second commandment had forbidden any such worship, because he was a jealous God; so he had for the breach of that commandment, by their burning incense to these creatures, burned up their houses and temple, and brought their nation into that misery into which they were come: from whence may be observed how ill an argument for any religious worship antiquity is,

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unless we by it mean what is most ancient; as also that prescription in that which is false in the worship of God justifieth none. Nor is it a good conclusion that those who lived nearest to the primitive institution are most likely to have done best, as having the best means to know what is truly primitive. Idolatry was as old as Laban, and the worst of idolatry (offering children to Molech) was older than the Levitical law, if not as old as Serug. In matters of worship the word of God is a sufficient rule, we need not plead antiquity, nor the *practice of our fathers*. Error is not capable of being justified by tradition or prescription.

24 Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear
b ch. 43. 7. ver. 15. the word of the LORD, all Judah [b]that *are* in the land of Egypt:

That is, all you men and women that belong to Judah, and are now come to inhabit in the land of Egypt.

25 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the
c ver. 15, &c. God of Israel, saying; [c]Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows.

Those words *have spoken* are in the Hebrew of the feminine gender, which giveth good reason to some interpreters to conclude the women were first and principal in this idolatry, and the men's guilt lay in conniving at them, and suffering themselves to be seduced by them. Ye, saith the prophet, have spoken it, and ye have been as big as your words, and for a cover you pretend the religion of a *vow*, as if a vow could be a bond of iniquity, and it were possible by a vow to oblige yourselves to a forsaking of the true God, and a committing of idolatry. The latter words seem ironical, so as to have this sense, You are resolved upon it, and there is no moving you from your resolution; God hath resolved too.

26 Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of
d Gen. 22. 16. e Ezek. 20. 39. Egypt; Behold, [d]I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that [e]my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord GOD liveth.

Seeing you are so fixed and peremptory, God is as resolved as you are; and as you think you must be religious to your wicked vows, so be assured God will be as religious to his oath; because he can swear by no greater, he hath sworn by himself, Heb. vi. 13, 17, (for so *name* signifieth here,) There shall not any be left of the Jews that are in Egypt, to swear, *The Lord God liveth* (for it should seem that the Jews yet retained something of the religion of their country, and sware by the name of the living God, according to the precept, Deut. vi. 13; x. 20). God threateneth there should be none of them left alive to do it; he would not have his holy name polluted by those mouths that had been used to bless idols.

f ch. 1. 10. & 31. 28. Ezek. 7. 6. 27 [f]Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that *are* in the land of Egypt
g ver. 12. [g]shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them.

God here either sets out himself as one who would be industrious and solicitous to bring evil upon them, as men who are, so in any business watch opportunities to do it; or else he derides their vain confidence as to his protection of them, and care for them: saith God, I will watch over them, but not *to build and to plant*, as chap. xxxi. 28, but, as it is in the former part of that verse, *to pluck up, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict*. For so it follows, *they shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine*.

28 Yet [h]a small number that escape
h ver. 14. Is. 27. 13. the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall
i ver. 17, 25, 26. † Heb. *from me, or them.* know whose [i]words shall stand, †mine, or their's.

This justifieth the restrained interpretation of *none of the remnant*, ver. 14; for here it is plainly said that some should escape and return; but for the rest, they should there perish, and by that it would appear whether God's word or theirs should stand, and have its accomplishment; they promising themselves security, God threatening them with utter ruin and destruction.

29 ¶ And this *shall be* a sign unto
Heb. you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall [h]surely stand against you
h Ps. 33. 11. for evil:

Signs are usually antecedent to the thing signified, but the word is taken in a larger notion in this place, for that which should attend the thing signified by it, as Exod. iii. 12; besides, though their destruction and the destruction of Pharaoh-hophra were things immediately following one another, yet the latter was in order before the other.

30 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, [l]I
l ch. 46. 25, 26. Ezek. 29. 3, &c. & 30. 21, &c. will give Pharaoh-hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave
m ch. 39. 5. [m]Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

Pharaoh was a name common to all the Egyptian kings, as may be learned from Gen. xii. 15; xli. 1; Exod. i. 8, 11; but they had besides that name another peculiar to them. Whether this *Hophra* was Vaphres or Apries is not much material; nor is there any certainty when this prophecy was fulfilled; whether Pharaoh-hophra were (as Herodotus saith) slain by Amasis, one of his subjects who rebelled against him and slew him, (as the aforementioned author tells us,) or Nebuchadnezzar, who Josephus saith came about five years after he had taken Jerusalem, and overran Egypt, and slew this Pharaoh-hophra, whose overthrow was a certain sign of the Jews' destruction, it being not like that the king of Babylon should spare these Jews who had fled to this king of Egypt for shelter; considering also that the Jews had slain Gedaliah his deputy governor in Judea.

How God delivered Zedekiah into the hand of the king of Babylon, we read chap. xxxix. Here now ends the story of these Jews that had fled into Egypt.

CHAP. XLV.

Jeremiah instructeth and comforteth Baruch.

THE [a]word that Jeremiah the prophet
cir. 607. a ch. 36. 1, 4, 32. spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,

This chapter ought to have been annexed to the 36th chapter, or immediately to have followed it, for the writing of Jeremiah's prophecies we read of there. It was eighteen years before this time that the prophet thus spake to Baruch upon the writing of those prophecies which, as we read there, brought both Jeremiah and Baruch into a great deal of danger, which probably gave Baruch the occasion of the complaint we shall read of, ver. 3.

2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch;

Jeremiah had in his former discourses revealed the will of God concerning nations, here he revealeth it as to Ba-

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ruch his secretary or clerk, upon which account some compare him to Paul writing to Philemon as well as to churches.

3 Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.

Upon Baruch's reading the prophecies after he had wrote them from the mouth of Jeremiah, both he and Jeremiah were sent for before the princes, and advised to hide themselves, as we read, chap. xxxvi. 15, 19. This probably disturbed Baruch, and made him lament his condition in such-like expressions, of which the prophet had heard, probably by revelation from God.

4 ¶ Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus; Behold, [b] *that* which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land.

b Is. 5. 5.

5 And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek *them* not: for, behold, [c] I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee [d] for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

c ch. 25. 26.

d ch. 21. 9. & 38. 2. & 39. 18.

What great things Baruch was seeking is not expressed, and impossible to be determined with any certai ty; they could not be honour or riches, the time of Jehoiakim's reign was no time for any pious rational man to expect any thing of that nature; he might expect to have been a prophet, as Elisha was, who first was but a servant to Elijah. Or at least he might expect rest and protection, when others met with disturbance. But it may be the meaning is no more than, Dost thou expect what none meeteth with, or is like to meet with who feareth God? Never think of it. *I will bring evil upon all flesh;* I am bringing calamities and misery upon the whole nation wherein thou livest. *But thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest;* I will preserve thy life, that is all thou art to expect, and thou shalt live to see the time that thou wilt judge that a great booty, that thou shalt have lent thee, whithersoever the wind of my providence shall happen to drive thee. This message of God to Baruch teacheth us that God expects from his people a spirit suited to his dispensations, and that they should keep their spirits low in a time of public judgments, not making to themselves any great promises of freedom from their share in the public calamities of that nation or kingdom in which they are; but contenting themselves with such allowances as God proportioneth to them at such a time without discontent or murmuring, and blessing God for any marks of gracious providence which he in such times will please to set upon them, being thankful for them and satisfied with them.

CHAP. XLVI.

The overthrow of Pharaoh's army, 1—12. *The conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar,* 13—26. *God's people comforted,* 27, 28.

cir. 607. THE word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against [a] the Gentiles;

a ch. 25. 15, &c.

This verse contains the title to all the ensuing discourses of this prophet; for though there be some particular verses in these chapters that relate to the Jews, yet they are all concerning their restoration. The prophecies of judgments from the beginning of this chapter to the 52nd chapter are all against foreign nations, which are called Gentiles; as to whom God revealed his will for the punishment of them, for the relief and satisfaction of his people, to whom the most of them had been bitter enemies. The 52nd chapter is by most concluded not to have been wrote by Jeremiah, who it is not probable would have repeated what he had related before, chap. xxxix., but it was wrote (as it is supposed) by some of the captives in Babylon, as a preface to the Book of Lamentations. This particular chapter containeth the revelation of the will of God concerning Egypt, whither some of the Jews fled for refuge after this time, and which had been a great occasion of sin to the Jews before, not only through the Jews' too many leagues with them, and confidence in them, but from their communicating in their idolatry with them: Jer. ii. 16, *The children of Noph and Tahpanhes brake the crown of their head.*

2 Against Egypt, [b] against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah.

b 2 Kings 23. 29. 2 Chron. 35. 29. Fulfilled presently.

Pharah-necho was king of Egypt in Josiah's time; it was by his army that Josiah was killed at Megiddo, 2 Kings xxiii. 29; it was he that made Jehoiakim king of Judah, taking away Jehoahaz, ver. 34; but though he prevailed at that time, and that was one time when he came out against Carchemish, 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, yet he was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar in a battle with him afterwards, as appears from 2 Kings xxiv. 7, and Jehoiakim was made tributary to Nebuchadnezzar, as we read, 2 Kings xxiv. 1; and the king of Egypt was brought so low by that victory, that *he stirred no more out of Egypt, for the king of Babylon had taken from him all from Nilus, the great river of Egypt, to Euphrates;* and this, saith this verse, was *in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.* This prophecy must be before that time. *Carchemish* appeareth, from Isa. x. 9, to have been a place in Syria where the Egyptian army had been in Josiah's time, and then went away conquerors, as appears from 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, &c.

3 [c] Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle.

c So ch. 51. 11, 12. Nah. 2. 1. & 3. 14.

4 Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with *your* helmets; furbish the spears, *and* put on the brigandines.

Art hath so much improved all things in later ages, that it is very hard to determine of what form the several weapons and pieces of armour, whether offensive or defensive, in use at this time were; the most here mentioned seem to have been defensive, and the whole speech of the prophet directed to the Egyptians seems to be ironical, calling to this army of Pharaoh-necho to get ready to defend themselves, for they were to encounter with an enemy would put them very hard to it, so as they had need to have their *helmets,* and *bucklers,* and *shields,* and *brigandines* all in a readiness, and know the use of them well; the horses for war had need be harnessed, the spears furbished, and the riders got up.

5 Wherefore have I seen them dismayed *and* turned away back? and their mighty ones are †beaten down, and are †fled apace, and look not back: *for* [d] fear *was* round about, saith the LORD.

† Heb. *broken in pieces.*
† Heb. *fled a flight.*
d ch. 6. 25. & 49. 29.

God had either in a vision showed Jeremiah this army of the Egyptians flying, or else had revealed to him that they should be put to flight, which the prophet here publisheth. God made a fear to fall upon the Egyptians, so as when the king of Babylon came to join battle with them, they were not able at all to stand, but turned their backs, and their greatest commanders were either killed, or fled away as fast as they could.

6 Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall [e] stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates.

e Dan. 11. 19.

That is, it is in vain for the swift to flee away, the mighty men shall not escape, but they shall stumble and fall at Carchemish, which was near the river Euphrates, and northward from Egypt.

7 Who *is* this *that* cometh up [f] as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers?

f See Is. 8. 7, 8. ch. 47. 2. Dan. 11. 22.

The next verse expoundeth this.

8 Egypt riseth up like a flood, and *his* waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go

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up, *and* will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof.

The prophet compareth the Egyptians, fleshed with their former victory obtained against Josiah at Megiddo, and now preparing to another expedition, to a *flood*, (with allusion probably to the river Nilus, whose waters used to rise to a great height,) both for the multitude of their soldiers, and for their rage; they were resolved to carry such numbers as should cover the earth, and to take Carchemish, or some other city which their design was against. It should seem both by this text, and that Exod. xv. 9, 10, that the Egyptians were a people much given to vaunt and boast of the great things they would do, boasting when they were putting on their harness as if they were putting it off, not considering how uncertain the events of war were, nor yet that wherein they talked proudly there was one that could be above them.

9 Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come
† Heb. Cush. † Heb. Put. forth; † the Ethiopians and † the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydi-
g Is. 66. 19. ans, [g] that handle *and* bend the bow.

Their ancient way of fighting was with chariots and bows; the prophet calls, in the name of the commanders of the Egyptian armies, to the horses and chariots to come on, and engage in the fight. The *Ethiopians* were the Cushites, who were neighbours to the Egyptians, so were the Libyans; both of them it should seem were famous for handling the shield: the *Libyans* were descended from Phut; both the Cushites and the Phutites or Libyans were descended from Ham, Gen. x. 6. The *Lydians* were as famous for the use of the bow in war; they were descended from Mizraim or Shem, Gen. x. 13, 22: the Lydians here meant are thought to be those descended from Mizraim, and some think these were Ethiopians. They were all auxiliaries to the Egyptians in this expedition.

h Is. 13. 6. Joel 1. 15. & 2. 1. 10 For this *is* [h] the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries:
i Deut. 32. 42. Is. 34. 6. and [i] the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their
k Is. 34. 6. Zeph. 1. 7. See Ezek. 39. 17. blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts [k] hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

Or, *But this is the day of the Lord*, &c. Pharaoh is mistaken in accounting this day his own, because of the multitude of his forces, this is *the day of the Lord*, who as he is the Lord of all the hosts of his creatures, so hath a particular rule and government over hosts of men: this is further explained by the next words, *a day of vengeance*, which God hath set apart, in it to be avenged upon his enemies. *The sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood:* these phrases only metaphorically signify the great slaughter God would make that day amongst the Egyptians. This the prophet declares that God would do for his honour and glory, therefore he calls it *a sacrifice*, by which also he declareth his justice in this punishment of the Egyptians; and for the further repute and credit of his prophecy, telleth them to whom he spake of the place it should be in, viz. *near the river Euphrates*, where Josiah was slain by him, 2 Kings xxiii. 29.

l ch. 8. 22. & 51. 8. m Is. 47. 1. † Heb. no cure shall be unto thee. n Ezek. 30. 21. 11 [l] Go up into Gilead, and take balm, [m] O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; *for* † [n] thou shalt not be cured.

Great states are ordinarily in Scripture called *virgins*, for their beauty and pleasant state; *Gilead* was a most famous place for *balm*. The prophet ironically calls to the Egyptians to go to Gilead for balm, but tells them it would be to no purpose, God was about to wound them beyond all help of medicines.

12 The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, *and* they are fallen both together.

The prophet keepeth to his old prophetic style, speaking of things that were to come to pass some years after as if they were already past, because of the certainty of them; in this sense he saith other nations had seen, because they should see, the shame and confusion of the Egyptians upon their overthrow, and the cry of their slain and wounded men would fill other lands. For the Egyptians should certainly be overthrown, either by the Chaldeans stumbling upon the Babylonians, or the Babylonians on them, or they (fleeing) for haste stumbling one upon another, so as both those that went before, and those who followed after, should both fall together.

13 ¶ The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebu-
o Is. 19. 1. ch. 43. 10, 11 Ezek. 29, & 30, & 32. Fulfilled ch. 571. chadrezzar king of Babylon should come *and* [o] smite the land of Egypt.

A revelation different from the former in this, that the former only foretold the overthrow of the king of Egypt in a particular battle in Carchemish near Euphrates, of which we read that the thing was done, 2 Kings xxiv. 7. This foretells the king of Babylon's overrunning all the land of Egypt, and was not fulfilled till some years after Zedekiah was carried away captive, but prophesied of chap. xliii. 10; xliv. 30, to come to pass in the time of Pharaoh-hophra, as we heard before, and more largely foretold by the prophet Ezekiel, Ezek. xxix., xxx., xxxii., to happen after the overthrow of Tyrus, Ezek. xxix. 18, 19.

14 Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, [p] Stand fast, and pre- p ver. 3, 4.
pare thee; for [q] the sword shall devour q ver. 10.
round about thee.

Concerning these three cities of Egypt, see the notes on chap. xliv. 1: the meaning is, Publish this prophecy over all the land of Egypt. Or perhaps these three were the chief places whither the Jews that went with Johanan the son of Kareah, &c. went, and where they fixed themselves: many more places in Egypt are named by Ezekiel, chap. xxx. 14, &c. *Stand fast, and prepare thee; for the sword shall devour round about thee;* look to yourselves, and prepare yourselves for battle, for the nations are destroyed round about you, (so it is in the Hebrew,) and you have reason to expect that the sword should come next into your countries.

15 Why are thy valiant *men* swept away? they stood not, because the LORD did drive them.

The prophet first propoundeth a question, then returneth answer to himself. Egypt was full of valiant men, yet, saith the prophet, they shall be swept away, or broken down, as fruit or grass is beaten down with a violent storm of hail (so the word is used, Prov. xxviii. 3). How comes this to pass? (saith the prophet). He answereth himself; Because it was of God to destroy Egypt, who worketh, and none can let him; when he strikes, none can stand before him; none can stand up against him.

16 He † made many to fall, yea, [r] one + Heb. *multiplied the faller* fell upon another: and they said, Arise,
r Lev. 26. 37. and let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our nativity, from the oppressing sword.

The prophet had before spoken of Nebuchadnezzar, as an instrument in the hand of God, who being armed with his commission and power, made many to fall, yea, God caused such a fear to fall upon them, that in their flight they fell upon one another. And though they had many soldiers that came to help them from Cush, and Phut, and Libya, yet all was too little; the prophet foretells they should all be glad to go home again, and should speak to one another to that purpose, for the success of the king of Babylon's sword should be such, as they should quickly see there would be no standing before it.

17 They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt *is but* a noise; he hath passed the time appointed.

That is, the Ethiopians and Lubims that should come to help the king of Egypt should cry, or the Chaldeans or the

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Egyptians themselves should cry, *Pharaoh is but a noise*, that is, hath made a great noise, but it cometh to nothing: others make the sense, Pharaoh is a man of noise, or tumult, that hath made a great deal of disturbance to himself and us. *He hath passed the time appointed;* that is, say the most, he hath passed the time himself fixed whereat he would come and fight the Chaldeans. But these words compared with the next verse incline others to think, that either Pharaoh's soldiers or his allies are here brought in mocking at Pharaoh, promising himself that the *king of Babylon* would not come, and laughing at Jeremiah's prophecy, saying *the time appointed was past*, that is, the time of his coming mentioned by Jeremiah was past. Jeremiah foretells that Pharaoh's army and confederates would see reason to cry out, Pharaoh, in saying so, was but a *noise*.

s Is. 47. 4. & 48. 2. ch. 48. 15.

18 *As* I live, saith the king, s whose name *is* the LORD of hosts, Surely as Tabor *is* among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, *so* shall he come.

That is, he shall as certainly come and encompass you with his armies as Tabor is encompassed with mountains, and as Carmel is by the sea, or as Barak going down from Mount Tabor destroyed Sisera's army, or as surely as the rain came which Elijah first discovered from Mount Carmel, 1 Kings xviii. 41, 42. There are other guesses at the sense of this comparison, but the sense is undoubtedly no more than that Nebuchadnezzar should certainly come against Egypt, how vainly soever the Egyptians flattered themselves to the contrary, supposing the time past which the prophet spake of.

t See ch. 48. 18. † Heb. *make thee instruments of captivity.* u Is. 20. 4.

19 O t thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, †furnish thyself u to go into captivity: for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant.

That is, O you inhabitants in the land of Egypt, make ready to go into another country as prisoners of war; for your cities shall be destroyed; Noph particularly shall be wholly depopulated and laid waste, and have none to dwell in it.

x So Hos. 10. 11. y ch. 1. 14. & 47. 2. ver. 6, 10.

20 Egypt *is like* a very fair x heifer, *but* destruction cometh; it cometh y out of the north.

That is, Egypt is now in a thriving, prosperous condition, having not used to be under any yoke, like a heifer that is fair and fat; but she will not be so long, she is but as a beast fatted for the slaughter, and there are slaughtermen coming out of Chaldea that will kill this fair heifer, and make her a sacrifice to the justice of God.

† Heb. *bullocks of the stall.* z Ps. 37. 13. ch. 50. 27.

21 Also her hired men *are* in the midst of her like †fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back, *and* are fled away together: they did not stand, because z the day of their calamity was come upon them, *and* the time of their visitation.

Also her hired men are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks; the mercenary soldiers also, which the Egyptians have hired from Cush and Phut, and other parts, are at present in a flourishing, prosperous state. *For they also are turned back, and are fled away together; they did not stand:* we have translated כי here ill, it had been better translated *but*, for that is manifestly the sense. Though they at present lying in garrisons be fat and flourishing, like bullocks in the stalls, yet when it cometh to it they shall not stand, but turn back, and flee as well as the rest. *Because the day of their calamity was come upon them, and the time of their visitation;* because the time is come when God resolveth to punish them, and bring calamity upon them. When the time is come which God hath set in his counsels, wherein he will punish persons or nations, no probabilities to the contrary are much considerable.

a See Is. 29. 4.

22 a The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood.

Egypt is now like a heifer that makes a great bellowing, but the time shall come when she shall make a lesser noise, like the hissing of a serpent when it seeth itself set upon. For the Chaldeans shall come with a great army, armed with battle-axes, as if they came to fell down some wood in a forest or wood.

b Is. 10. 34.

23 They shall b cut down her forest, saith the LORD, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than c the grasshoppers, and *are* innumerable.

c Judg. 6. 5.

Egypt is compared to a forest, either for the multitude of cities or of people in that country; and to a thick forest, because as it is a hard thing to make one's way through a forest, so it was judged as hard for an enemy to make his way into that country: in human probability Egypt could not be searched, yet (saith God) the Chaldeans shall cut down this forest, and it shall be no more to them than for hewers of wood, with tools fitted for the purpose, to make their way through a forest. For the army of the Chaldeans shall be as numerous as the inhabitants of Egypt, more than the grasshoppers, which come in such troops as in a short time they devour every green herb in a place.

d ch. 1. 15.

24 The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of d the people of the north.

That is, into the hand or power of the Chaldeans; it is the same thing which the prophet had before said again and again, and repeats it so often only for the further confirmation of the truth of the prediction, notwithstanding the appearing improbability of any such thing.

‖ Or, *nourisher.* † Heb. *Amon.* e Ezek. 30. 14. 15. 16. Nah. 3. 8. f ch. 43. 12. 13. Ezek. 30. 13.

25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the ‖† multitude of e No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, f with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh, and *all* them that trust in him:

The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saith: these names are often in conjunction given unto God, the first signifying his power or ability to do what he either promiseth or threateneth, the other speaking his kindness and near relation to the Jews. *Behold, I will punish the multitude of No:* there are great critical disputes about this phrase, whether the word translated *multitude* signifies so, (as it doth, chap. lii. 15,) and if so, whether it should not be *multitude from No;* or whether it signifies the *nourisher*, (as some would have it,) because No (which some think is the same city with that at this time called Alexandria, being a great place of merchandise) nourished all the adjacent parts; but it is no easy thing to resolve the question, nor is the resolution of it of much moment to us. By those that trusted in Pharaoh the Jews are most probably meant, who all along in their prosperity put too much confidence in Egypt, and after that Jerusalem was taken some of them (as we before heard) fled into Egypt for sanctuary.

g ch. 44. 30. Ezek. 32. 11.

26 g And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and h afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD.

h Ezek. 29. 11, 13, 14.

The former part of this verse is but the same which the prophet hath often before said. The latter part is a promise for the restoration of Egypt to some degrees of its former prosperity and liberty. The determinate time for the fulfilling of this prophecy is told us, Ezek. xxix. 13, 14, viz. at the end of forty years. This we are told by civil historians fell out in the time of Amasis, a king of Egypt coevous with Cyrus, who was overcome by Cyrus's son Cambyses, who brought Egypt to be a province belonging to the Medes and Persians; by the fulfilling of which prophecy the truth both of Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's prophecies are justified.

i Is. 41. 13, 14. & 43. 5. & 44. 2. ch. 30. 10, 11.

27 ¶ i But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be

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in rest and at ease, and none shall make *him* afraid.

28 Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I *am* with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make [k]a full end of thee; but correct thee in measure; yet will I ‖ not leave thee wholly unpunished.

[k] ch. 10. 24. & 30. 11. ‖ Heb. *not make utterly an end of thee*

See the notes on chap. xxx. 10, 11, where is the substance of what is said in these two verses, and almost the very words are repeated. The great thing to be observed by us is the difference which the just and righteous God maketh betwixt his punishments of his church and own people, and his punishments of wicked men, who are their enemies: as there is a great difference in the root of such dispensations, God dealing them out to his people out of love, that they might not be condemned with the wicked; so there is a great deal of difference in the measure and duration of their punishments, the rod of the wicked shall not always lie upon the backs of the righteous, and they are corrected in measure.

CHAP. XLVII.

The destruction of the Philistines, Tyrians, Zidonians, and others by the sea-side.

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THE word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet [a]against the Philistines, [b]before that Pharaoh smote †Gaza.

[a] ch. 25. 20. Jer. 25. 15, 16. Zeph. 2. 4, 5.
[b] Amos 1. 6, 7, 8. † Heb. *Azzah.*

In the former chapter the prophet foretold the judgments of God upon the Egyptians, who were the Jews' seeming friends, but their real enemies, as they were occasions to them of idolatry, and of a sinful confidence in them. He comes in this chapter to foretell the judgments of God upon the Philistines, who were inveterate enemies to the Jews, against whom also Isaiah, chap. xiv. 29 of his prophecy, and Ezekiel, and Amos prophesied, Ezek. xxv. 15; Amos i. 6; and also Zephaniah, in chap. ii. 4, 5 of his prophecy. When the king of Egypt took Gaza, one of the five cities of the Philistines, the Scripture doth not tell us. Some think it was either in his way to Carchemish, or as he came back a conqueror from the battle at Megiddo, where Josiah was slain. The time when Jeremiah had this revelation is set down to let us know that it was in the time of the Philistines' prosperity, when the prophet could see no such effect existent, or probable in its causes.

2 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, [c]waters rise up [d]out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and †all that is therein; the city, and them that dwell therein: then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl.

[c] Is. 8. 7. ch. 46. 7, 8. [d] ch. 1. 14. & 46. 20. † Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

Calamities and afflictions are often in Scripture set out under the notion of *waters;* and as the miseries of Egypt were set out by the overflowings of their great river Nilus, so the calamities of the Philistines are expressed by the overflowings of the great river Euphrates; these miseries coming upon them by the Chaldeans, which were a northern people, their waters are said to *rise up out of the north.* It is said to be *an overflowing flood* that should *overflow the land,* because it was to be a sweeping judgment, which like a flood should carry all before it, which should produce amongst the inhabitants of Gaza a great howling and lamentation.

3 At the [e]noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong *horses,* at the rushing of his chariots, *and at* the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers shall not look back to *their* children for feebleness of hands;

[e] ch. 8. 16. Nah. 3. 2.

This is all but a description of the march of an army, so terrible as should make parents forget their natural affection, and flee away to save themselves, looking upon themselves as lost, and unable to protect their children.

4 Because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines, *and* to cut off from [f]Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, [g]the remnant of †the country of [h]Caphtor.

[f] ch. 25. 22. [g] Deut. 2. 23. Amos 9. 7. [h] Gen. 10. 14. † Heb. *the isle.*

Because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines; the day which God hath set and appointed for the ruin of the Philistines. Tyre and Zidon were neighbouring to the Philistines, as appears from Gen. x. 14. 15; Joel iii. 4. and so were often called to their help. God threateneth both to destroy them, and also those that helped them. It appeareth, from Gen. x. 14, that the Philistines and Caphtorims were related; for their first progenitors, Philistim and Caphtorim, were both the sons of Mizraim the son of Ham, one of the sons of Noah. It appears, from Deut. ii. 23. that they expelled the Avites, and dwelt in Hazerim to Azzah; whether their country be what was afterwards called Cappadocia or Damiata is not much material for us to know, they were a people confederate with the Philistines, whom God here threateneth to destroy with them.

5 [i]Baldness is come upon Gaza; [k]Ashkelon is cut off *with* the remnant of their valley: how long wilt thou [l]cut thyself?

[i] Amos 1. 7. Mic. 1. 16. Zeph. 2. 4, 7. Zech. 9. 5. [k] ch. 25. 20. [l] ch. 16. 6. & 41. 5. & 48. 37.

Both *Gaza* and *Ashkelon* were two principal cities belonging to the Philistines taken by Judah. Judg. i. 18: we read of them 1 Sam. vi. 17; both Amos, Zephaniah, and Zechariah prophesied their ruin, Amos i. 8; Zeph. ii. 4. 7; Zech. ix. 5, as well as this prophet. By *the remnant of their valley,* most understand those who lived in the valleys near about Ashkelon. Concerning the last clause in this verse there is some difference, whether the words should be joined with the next verse, and read, *how long wilt thou cut thyself, O thou sword of the Lord?* or as they lie in our Bibles; and then the sense is, Why will you in so desperate a case afflict yourselves, when all your mourning will do you no good.

6 O thou [m]sword of the LORD, how long *will it be* ere thou be quiet? †put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still.

[m] Deut. 32. 41. Ezek. 21. 3, 4, 5. † Heb. *gather thyself.*

7 †How can it be quiet, seeing the LORD hath [n]given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore? there hath he [o]appointed it.

† Heb. *How canst thou?* [n] Ezek. 14. 17. [o] Mic. 6. 9.

Some make the words of the 6th verse to be the words of the Philistines in their mourning and cutting themselves, crying to God to stop the sword drawn against them, and to return it again into its scabbard: others make them the words of the prophet, lamenting the havoc which he by the eye of the prophecy saw was like to be made amongst the Philistines by the Chaldeans (for good men are affected with the miseries even of the worst of men).

The latter verse must be expounded according to the former; for if the words of the former verse be understood as the words of the Philistines, those of this verse must be understood as the words of the prophet putting them out of hopes of the sword's stopping, because what it did was by commission from God, which it must execute. If the words of the former verse be to be understood as the prophet's words, the words of this verse are either the prophet's words correcting himself, and concluding that this sword could not be quiet, because it was edged by God himself, who had given it his commission, which it must execute; or the words of God, letting the prophet know that he had given this sword its commission, and therefore it could not stop till Ashkelon and the people on the sea-shore were destroyed by it.

CHAP. XLVIII.

The judgment of Moab, 1—6, *for their pride,* 7—10; *for their security and human confidence,* 11—25; *especially for their contempt of God, and insolence towards his people,* 26—46. *Their restoration,* 47.

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The prophet having, chap. xlvi., denounced God's judgment against Egypt, and against the Philistines, chap. xlvii., in this chapter he cometh to do the like against the Moabites. Moab, the father of these Moabites, was the son of Lot, Gen. xix. 37. The Moabites' country lay in the way the Israelites went to Canaan, Numb. xxi. 11, 13, near the country of the Ammonites. Balak was king of it when the Israelites passed by it, who sent for the sorcerer Balaam to curse them, Numb. xxii. 5, who, chap. xxiv. 5, &c., blessed them. They seduced the Israelites to adultery and idolatry, chap. xxv. 1.

cir. 600. AGAINST [a]Moab thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Woe unto [b]Nebo! for it is spoiled: [c]Kiriathaim is confounded *and* taken: ‖Misgab is confounded and dismayed.

[a] Is. 15, & 16. ch. 25. 21. & 27. 3. Ezek. 25. 9. Amos 2. 1, 2. [b] Num. 32. 38. & 33. 47. Is. 15. 2. [c] Num. 32. 37. ‖ Or, *The high place.*

Moab was a large country, and had many cities; we shall have divers of them named in this chapter; the first that we read of *Nebo* in holy writ is Numb. xxxii. 3, 38. Reuben built both that and *Kiriathaim*, as may be read there, ver. 38, 39. It was also the name of a mountain, Deut. xxxiv. 1. It should seem that in Jeremiah's time, the Moabites had got both the possession of Nebo, and Kiriathaim, and *Misgab*, of which we read no more in Scripture. It seems to be a city built upon some hill or *high place*. The prophet threateneth ruin to all these three cities.

[d] Is. 16. 14. [e] Is. 15. 4. ‖ Or, *be brought to silence.* Is. 15. 1. † Heb. *go after thee.*

2 [d]*There shall be* no more praise of Moab: in [e]Heshbon they have devised evil against it; come, and let us cut it off from *being* a nation. Also thou shalt ‖be cut down, O Madmen; the sword shall †pursue thee.

Heshbon was formerly the city of Sihon, Numb. xxi. 26; it became afterward one of the principal cities of the Moabites, as appeareth from Isa. xv. 4; which maketh the learned author of our English Annotations think our translation not so good; for why should they devise evil in Heshbon against Moab, unless the enemies sat there in council, when they had taken it, against the other parts of the country? But possibly the sense is, they shall no more in Heshbon magnify Moab, or Moab shall no more glory of Heshbon, for the enemies had contrived the ruin of it. *Madmen* was another city in the country of Moab. Some think the same with Ptolemy's Madiama. To that city also the prophet threateneth ruin and destruction by the sword.

[f] ver. 5.

3 [f]A voice of crying *shall be* from Horonaim, spoiling and great destruction.

Another city of Moab, mentioned only in this place, and in Isa. xv. 5. Some think it the same with Horon, where Sanballat was born, Neh. ii. 10; xiii. 28. The prophet threatens also ruin and destruction to this city.

4 Moab is destroyed; her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.

Moab was both the name of the whole country, and of a principal city in it. Some by it here understand the city; by her *little ones* some understand little children; others, inferior magistrates, or the common people.

[g] Is. 15. 5. † Heb. *weeping with weeping.*

5 [g]For in the going up of Luhith †continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction.

Of *Luhith* we read only in this place, and Isa. xv. 5; it was a city of Moab, and situated upon a hill, as appears both here and where it is mentioned in Isaiah. Some think that to this city the Moabites fled for sanctuary from the Chaldeans, and fleeing made so great an outcry that their enemies who pursued them heard their cry.

[h] Jer. 51. 6. ‖ Or, *a naked tree.* † ch. 17. 6.

6 [h]Flee, save your lives, and be like ‖the †heath in the wilderness.

It is of no great moment whether we understand these as the words of the Moabites, calling one to another to flee, and save their lives, though they lost all they had, and left themselves as bare as a naked tree; or as the words of the prophets speaking to the Moabites to the same sense.

7 ¶ For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and [k]Chemosh shall go forth into captivity *with* his [l]priests and his princes together.

[k] Num. 21. 29 Judg. 11. 24. See Is. 46. 1, 2. ch. 43. 12. [l] ch. 49. 3.

Whether by *works* in this place be meant their *riches*, got by the labour of their hands, or *their idols*, which often are called, by way of defamation, the works of their own hands, or their *fortifications*, is not much considerable; a confidence in creatures, opposed to a confidence in God, is doubtless the sin here intended, whatever the ground of it was, whether their idols, or riches, or fortified places. *Chemosh* was their principal idol, as appears by Numb. xxi. 29; Judg. xi. 24; 1 Kings xi. 7, 33; 2 Kings xxiii. 13. God showeth them the vanity of this idolatry, by telling them that this idol should go into captivity, and be so far from being able to protect them, that he should not be able to protect himself or his own priests, or the princes that favoured him.

8 And [m]the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the LORD hath spoken.

[m] ch. 6. 26. ver. 18.

That is, all the parts of the country of Moab, and all the cities, as well those that stood upon hills and mountainous places, as those that stood in valleys; *because* or *for* the Lord had said it (for so the particle we translate *as* is better translated).

9 [n]Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away: for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein.

[n] Ps. 55. 6. ver. 28.

That is, the Moabites had need of wings like a bird to escape that ruin which is coming upon them. Yea, if they had wings, they should not escape, for the Lord is resolved that the cities of Moab shall be all brought to desolation, so as no inhabitants shall be left in them.

10 [o]Cursed *be* he that doeth the work of the LORD ‖deceitfully, and cursed *be* he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

[o] See Judg. 5. 24. 1 Sam. 15. 3, 9. 1 Kings 20. 42. ‖ Or, *negligently.*

These words seem like the words of the prophet to the Chaldeans, inciting them to go on valiantly against the Moabites, calling it *the work of the Lord*, which he would have done, and to which he had called them. There is a time to withhold our hands from shedding blood, and that is always when we have not a special authority and call from God to it; and there is a time when God will curse those that do so withhold their hands, that time is when God doth require the shedding of it.

11 ¶ Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he [p]hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste †remained in him, and his scent is not changed.

[p] Zeph. 1. 12 † Heb. *stood.*

Moab hath been at ease from his youth; the Moabites ever since they began to be a people have been a quiet people, not exercised with wars, and enemies making inroads upon them. *He hath settled on his lees;* like to a cask of wine, that hath not been racked, but hath continued in the same state. *And hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel;* he follows the metaphor of wine, which is drawn out from vessel to vessel, when it is drawn off the lees. It is expounded by the next words, *neither hath he gone into captivity.* And this is the reason why they retain their old sins, pride, presumption, luxury, and old wickednesses, as wine while it remaineth in the lees retains more its nature, strength, and colour than when it is once racked.

12 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will send unto him wanderers, that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles.

By the *wanderers* here mentioned the Chaldeans are

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most certainly understood, who wandered from their own country to conquer other people; the word is variously translated, *vagrants, travellers, removers*, &c., who shall conquer the Moabites, and carry them into captivity. *And shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles:* he had before compared the Moabites to wine settled upon the lees, here he saith that God would send those that should not only disturb and roil them, but ruin and destroy them.

q Judg. 11. 24. 1 Kings 11. 7. r Hos. 10. 6. s 1 Kings 12. 29

13 And Moab shall be ashamed of [q]Chemosh, as the house of Israel [r]was ashamed of [s]Beth-el their confidence.

It is a natural and a penal shame which is here spoken of; we are naturally ashamed when we have reposed a great confidence in, and made great boasts of, a thing which, when it comes to be tried, proveth of no use, but mischievous to us. *Chemosh* was their great idol, in which the Moabites had great confidence, and of which they boasted; the prophet tells them they should be ashamed of this idol, or for this idol; as the Israelites, that is, the ten tribes, were ashamed of or for the golden calves, which Jeroboam set up at Dan and Beth-el, which were the cause of ruin to those tribes. Confidences in any thing but in God alone in a time of danger will bring both natural and penal shame.

t Is. 16. 6.

14 ¶ How say ye, [t]We *are* mighty and strong men for the war?

How can ye justify what you say, or why say you so, or to what purpose do you brag of your valour?

u ver. 8, 9, 18. † Heb. *the choice of.* x ch. 50. 27. y ch. 46. 18. & 51. 57.

15 [u]Moab is spoiled, and gone up *out of* her cities, and †his chosen young men are [x]gone down to the slaughter, saith [y]the king, whose name *is* the LORD of hosts.

Moab is spoiled; your country will be wasted and spoiled. *And gone up out of her cities;* the inhabitants of it shall be all driven out of their cities. The Hebrew is, *and her cities*, it, or *he, is gone up.* So the sense may be, Moab and her cities are all spoiled, and *he*, that is, the enemy, is gone up. *And his chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter;* and the strong and mighty men she boasted of, and gloried in, are gone to the battle, as oxen or sheep to a slaughter-house. *Saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts:* I do not speak this of myself, I cannot of myself tell things that shall come to pass hereafter, but the words I say are the words of him who is the Lord of all the armies of heaven and earth, who both knoweth what shall be, and is able to effect what he saith.

16 The calamity of Moab *is* near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast.

Josephus tells us this destruction came upon the Moabites five years after the siege of Jerusalem; but if it were longer, we must consider that he who speaketh is that God to whom a thousand years is but as one day.

z See Is. 9. 4. & 14. 4, 5.

17 All ye that are about him, bemoan him; and all ye that know his name, say, [z]How is the strong staff broken, *and* the beautiful rod!

All ye that are about him, bemoan him: the prophet having spoken of Moab's calamity as already come upon him, or at least very near, calls to his friends to come and condole with him, as is usually done in case of some calamity befallen to a friend. *All ye that know his name, say, How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod!* All ye that know how terrible Moab hath been to others, and how famous for mighty and strong men, say, How is this potent nation, and this people that hath been such a rod against others, or hath ruled over so many others, broken! for both a *staff* and a *rod* are as well ensigns of power and government, as instruments to punish offenders.

a Is. 47. 1. ch. 46. 19. b Num. 21. 30. Is. 15. 2. c ver. 8.

18 [a]Thou daughter that dost inhabit [b]Dibon, come down from *thy* glory, and sit in thirst; for [c]the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, *and* he shall destroy thy strong holds.

Of this *Dibon* we read Numb. xxi. 30. It was a land for cattle, Numb. xxxii. 3. Both Dibon, and Aroer, and Ataroth were built by the children of Gad, to whose lot it fell, ver. 34, as also to the Reubenites in part, Josh. xiii. 17. It should seem that the Moabites were now come into the possession of it, either by conquest, or upon the Assyrians taking the ten tribes. *Sit in thirst;* it was a place well watered (otherwise it had not been fit for cattle); God threateneth that she should be *in thirst*, that is, driven into some dry, barren countries. *For the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strong holds;* for the king of Babylon, whom God had appointed to spoil all Moab, shall destroy thee also, and thy strong holds shall not secure thee.

† Heb. *inhabitress.* d Deut. 2. 36. e 1 Sam. 4. 13, 16.

19 O †inhabitant of [d]Aroer, [e]stand by the way, and espy; ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth, *and* say, What is done?

Aroer was a city in the lot of Gad and Reuben, Numb. xxxii. 34. In David's time it was in the hand of the Jews, 1 Sam. xxx. 28, but in Isaiah's time it belonged to Syria, Isa. xvii. 2, and here it is reckoned to the Moabites. The inhabitants of it are called to *stand by the way*, and seeing the Moabites fleeing, to ask what news. Others think that Aroer was at this time a city of the Ammonites, and here called unto to see their neighbours the Moabites fleeing before their enemies.

f Is. 16. 7. g See Num. 21. 13.

20 Moab is confounded; for it is broken down: [f]howl and cry; tell ye it in [g]Arnon, that Moab is spoiled,

Arnon was the name of a river, Numb. xxi. 14; Deut. ii. 36; Josh. xii. 1. It was the border of Moab, whither Balak went to meet Balaam, Numb. xxii. 36; probably the adjacent country or city might take its name from the river.

h ver. 8.

21 And judgment is come upon [h]the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath,

22 And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim,

23 And upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon,

i ver. 41. Amos 2. 2

24 And upon [i]Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near.

God threateneth vengeance to come upon all Moab, which had great *plains*, Numb. xxxi. 12; xxxiii. 48. For the names of these cities, and those mentioned ver. 22—24, some of them we read of in other places of holy writ; others we read not of, neither is it material for us to know their situation; they are not at this day to be known by their old names: they are all here mentioned as cities at this time belonging to the Moabites, to whom this vengeance is threatened, and not to them only, but to all other cities of the land of Moab wherever situate.

k Ps. 75. 10. 1 See Ezek. 30. 21.

25 [k]The horn of Moab is cut off, and his [l]arm is broken, saith the LORD.

That is, the *beauty* and the *strength of Moab*. So these two terms often signify in holy writ, the horn being much the beauty of some beasts, and that part of their bodies by which they both do injury to others, and defend themselves from the assaults of others. God here declares that Moab should both lose its glory and beauty, and also all the power it formerly had to defend itself, or offend others.

cir. 600. m ch. 25. 15, 27.

26 ¶ [m]Make ye him drunken: for he magnified *himself* against the LORD: Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision.

Make ye him drunken; either make ye him to stagger like a drunken man, (the cause being put for the effect,) or fill him with the intoxicating wine cup of God's vengeance, with the effects of God's wrath. *For he magnified himself against the Lord;* because of his pride, and exalting himself against the Lord, as if he had been stronger than he, and so out of the reach of God's power. *Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision:* as drunken men vomit, and stagger, and fall, and wallow in their vomit, so let the Moabites fall by the sword, wallow in their blood, and like drunken men be mocked at and had

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in derision by all those who see what their vaunts come to, and what vengeance they have pulled upon themselves.

n Zeph. 2. 8.
27 For [n] was not Israel a derision unto thee? [o] was he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou ‖ skippedst for joy.

o See ch. 2. 26.
‖ Or, *movedst thyself.*

For was not Israel a derision unto thee? it is an ill thing to mock at the miseries of others, especially such as we have some relation to; the Moabites were descended from Lot, who was nearly related to Abraham the father of the Jews, and ought not to have mocked at them, but to have pitied their neighbours and kindred: they either mocked at the ten tribes when they were carried into captivity by Shalmaneser, or at Judah captivated by the king of Babylon. God threateneth the Ammonites, Ezek. xxv. 6, and the Edomites, by Obadiah, for the same misdemeanour. *Was he found among thieves?* why didst thou deal by Israel as men deal by thieves, when they are brought to shame? Ought not he to have been by thee accounted in a better rank than that of thieves? *For since thou spakest of him, thou skippedst for joy;* instead of compassionating the Jews in their calamity, thou never spakest of them but with joy and triumph. Others make a quite other sense, viz. *for those words against him thou thyself shalt wander.* But the learned author of the English Annotations observes well, that the word in the form here used will not so well bear it, though the verb doth in its primary sense signify to *wander.*

28 O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities, and [p] dwell in the rock, and be like [q] the dove *that* maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth.

p Ps. 55. 6, 7. ver. 9.
q Cant. 2. 14.

Still the prophet speaks of the Moabites as a people whose armies were routed, and calls to them to leave their houses in cities, not promising themselves any security, either to or from their houses, or from the walls of their cities, but to get them to rocks, which are naturally fortified, and from whence (if from any place) security might be promised. And he commends to them the natural sagacity of a dove, which being a feeble creature, and not able to encounter a hawk or eagle, makes herself a nest in the sides of some rock where she may be at safety.

r Is. 16. 6, &c.
29 We have heard the [r] pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud) his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart.

There is a passage, Isa. xvi. 6, &c., concerning Moab, very little differing from this: Isaiah lived some years before this prophet, who yet complaineth of them for the same sins, so as they were not at all reformed. God saith he had heard of their pride and arrogancy; a vice which commonly attendeth ease and prosperity, and is exceeding odious in the sight of God, so as a wicked man is often in Scripture set out under the notion of a proud man.

s Is. 16. 6. ch. 50. 36.
‖ Or, *those on whom he stayeth* (Heb. *his bars*) *do not right.*
30 I know his wrath, saith the LORD; but *it shall* not *be* so; [s] ‖ his lies shall not so effect *it.*

I know his rage, either against Israel, or other people; but he shall never execute it, or bring to pass what he thinks to do. There is no trusting to what he saith, his boastings and his confidence are but lies, and shall never effect his designs.

t Is. 15. 5. & 16. 7, 11.
31 Therefore [t] will I howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all Moab; *mine heart* shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres.

Though wicked men rejoice and triumph in the ruin of good men, yet their charity suffereth them not to do the like, but engageth them to mourn for them in the day of their affliction. Jeremiah declareth his compassion toward these Moabites, though they derided the Jews when they were carried into captivity. nay, he mourns upon the prospect of their misery at some distance; when the sight of the Jews' present calamity would not affect the Moabites with any compassion at all. We find the like compassion in another prophet, Isaiah, chap. xvi. 11. Ver. 7 there it is called *Kir-hareseth*, which was a city of Moab, as we read, 2 Kings iii. 25.

u Is. 16. 8, 9.
32 [u] O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach *even* to the sea of Jazer: the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage.

We read of this *vine of Sibmah* also Isa. xvi. 8, 9. Both Sibmah and Jahaza were places in the portion of Reuben, Josh. xiii. 18, 19. Sibmah was doubtless a place famous in those days for vines and vineyards. This *Jahaza* or *Jazer* was, as it should seem, first taken and carried into captivity, which caused a great lamentation. The prophet foretells such a weeping for Sibmah as was for Jazer. By *plants* he means the inhabitants of Sibmah, which he prophesieth should be carried into captivity over the Dead Sea. As an aggravation of the judgment that should come upon them, God, by his prophet, tells them that the spoiler should come upon them in their *vintage* and harvest time.

x Is. 16. 10. Joel 1. 12.
33 And [x] joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; *their* shouting *shall be* no shouting.

The time of harvest and vintage being times when the husbandmen were wont to reap the fruit of all their labours the preceding year, were times of great joy ordinarily; but the prophet foretells them of a year when there should be no such rejoicing, for they should have no wine from the winepresses, there should be no shouting as used to be in the time of harvest and of vintage.

y Is. 15. 4, 5, 6.
z Is. 15. 5, 6. ver. 5.
† Heb. *desolations.*
34 [y] From the cry of Heshbon *even* unto Elealeh, *and even* unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, [z] from Zoar *even* unto Horonaim, *as* an heifer of three years old: for the waters also of Nimrim shall be † desolate.

An heifer of three years old. See Isa. xv. 5. *Heshbon*, and *Elealeh*, and *Jahaz*, and *Zoar*, and *Horonaim*, were all cities of Moab, who are here all threatened with ruin; with the country about *Nimrim;* which Nimrim is mentioned no where in Scripture but here, and in Isa. xv. 6; nor are interpreters well agreed, whether in this place it be the name of a river, or a lake, or a city. The sense is, the whole country of Moab shall be destroyed, the cry shall reach from one part of the country to another, either the cry of the inhabitants, or of their enemies pursuing them with a great noise.

a Is. 15. 2. & 16. 12.
35 Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the LORD, [a] him that offereth in the high places, and him that burneth incense to his gods.

That is, every one, or some of all orders, for the Moabites generally were idolaters; though the expressing it under this notion may hint to us also one great cause of this judgment coming upon them, viz. their idolatry.

b Is. 15. 5. & 16. 11.
c Is. 15. 7.
36 Therefore [b] mine heart shall sound for Moab like pipes, and mine heart shall sound like pipes for the men of Kir-heres: because [c] the riches *that* he hath gotten are perished.

The prophet means such pipes as they were wont to use at funerals, and other sad occasions, to play doleful lessons upon; see Isa. xv. 5; because of the great change in the state of this poor people, which had got together a great deal of wealth, which is all perished.

d Is. 15. 2, 3. ch. 47. 5.
† Heb. *diminished.*
e Gen. 37. 34.
37 For [d] every head *shall be* bald, and every beard † clipped: upon all the hands *shall be* cuttings, and [e] upon the loins sackcloth.

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These phrases are expounded in the beginning of the following verse, *There shall be lamentation generally upon all the house-tops of Moab.* Shaving of the hair, and clipping the beards, and cutting themselves, were rites and ceremonies of mourning used by these heathens.

38 *There shall be* lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab, and in the streets thereof: for I have broken
f ch. 22. 28. Moab like [f]a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure, saith the LORD.

We met with the same phrase applied to Coniah, chap. xxii. 28. The meaning is, I have broken Moab all to pieces, as people use to do vessels they care not for; they never go about to mend such a vessel, but dash it in pieces against some stones or walls.

39 They shall howl, *saying*, How is it broken down! how hath Moab turned
† Heb. neck. the †back with shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him.

Those that formerly lived in Moab, when it was in its glory, shall lament to see how the case is altered with it, that all its glory is broken down, and they that were wont to conquer their enemies turn their backs with shame upon their enemies. And Moab, that was wont to be the praise and admiration of all people, was become an astonishment, and an object of derision and scoffing to them.

g Deut. 28. 49. ch. 49. 22. Dan. 7. 4. Hos. 8. 1. Hab. 1. 8.
h Is. 8. 8. 40 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, [g]he shall fly as an eagle, and shall [h]spread his wings over Moab.

Nebuchadnezzar shall come upon Moab swiftly; and as an eagle covereth the prey which he hath taken with his wings, so Nebuchadnezzar shall spread himself over Moab.

i ver. 24. || Or, *The cities.* k Is. 13. 8. & 21. 3. ch. 30. 6. & 49. 22, 24. & 50. 43. & 51. 30. Mic. 4. 9.
41 [i]||Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised, and [k]the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

Whether *Kerioth* here be the proper name of a city, as it is ver. 24, or an appellative noun signifying cities, is doubtful. The latter seems best to agree to this place: *The cities and the strong holds* are all taken; and though Moab hath in it many mighty and valiant men, yet their hearts will be full of fear, or ready to fail them, like a woman's who is in her travail and hath great and sore pains.

l Ps. 83. 4. Is. 7. 8.
42 And Moab shall be destroyed [l]from *being* a people, because he hath magnified *himself* against the LORD.

That is, for a time; see ver. 47; or being such a people as it hath been, so full of splendour and glory. The reason given is the same with that ver. 26.

m Is. 24. 17, 18.
43 [m]Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *shall be* upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD.

These three words, *fear, pit, snare*, signify no more than a variety of dangers that should be on all sides of them, so as if any escaped one danger, he should presently meet with another, for this was the time when the Lord was resolved to punish all the inhabitants of the land of Moab.

44 He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare:
n See ch. 11. 23. for [n]I will bring upon it, *even* upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

45 They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon because of the force:
o Num. 21. 28. but [o]a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon,
p Num. 24. 17. † Heb. *children of noise.* and [p]shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the †tumultuous ones.

Heshbon was a great city, and, as it should seem, a place of some force; the war being in the country, they made Heshbon the place of their sanctuary. But the prophet, applying to the Chaldeans what was said in Moses's time, Numb. xxi. 28, prophesieth that Heshbon also should be destroyed, and the fire should devour the crown of the head, that is, the glory of the brave *rebelling* gallants, called in the Hebrew the children of *noise*.

q Num. 21 29. + Heb. *in captivity.*
46 [q]Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken †captives, and thy daughters captives.

The prophet, closing the threatening part of his prophecy against Moab, repeateth the same thing which he had often said, that the Moabites should be carried into captivity by the king of Babylon, and denounceth a *woe* unto them upon that account.

r ch. 49. 6, 39.
47 ¶ Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab [r]in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far *is* the judgment of Moab.

Some think this prophecy was fulfilled upon the return of the Jews out of Babylon, when the Jews inhabited the land of Moab, Zeph. ii. 9; but this doth not seem to be the bringing again the captivity of Moab, but of Judah; besides, in that place it is said that *Moab should be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and salt-pits, and a perpetual desolation.* It is therefore rather to be understood of a spiritual reduction of them, by calling some of them under the kingdom of the Messiah, as the Jewish doctors themselves interpret it. Some think this a promise rather respecting the Jews than the Moabites; it is said, ver. 9, that the remnant of the Lord's people should possess Moab; and, ver. 11, that all the *isles of the heathen should worship God. Thus far is the judgment of Moab:* these last words are doubtless to be interpreted rather as a conclusion of this prophecy against Moab, than (as some would have it) as a limitation of the time how long this judgment on Moab should endure, as if *thus far* were as much as *thus long*.

CHAP. XLIX.

The judgment of the Ammonites, 1—5: their restoration, 6. The judgment of Edom, 7—22; of Damascus, 23—27; of Kedar and Hazor, 28—33; of Elam, and its restoration, 34—39.

CONCERNING ||[a]the Ammonites, thus saith the LORD; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why *then* doth ||their king inherit [b]Gad, and his people dwell in his cities?

|| Or, *against.* a Jer. 25. 21. & 27. 3. & 25. 2. Amos 1. 13. Zeph. 2. 8, 9. || Or, *Melcom.* b Amos 1. 13.

The Ammonites were the posterity of Ben-ammi, Lot's incestuous child, by his younger daughter, Gen. xix. 38. Their country was near the Jews' country. The Jews, in their journey from Egypt to Canaan to possess it, passed by their country, but were by God forbidden to meddle with it, because he had given it to the children of Lot, Deut. ii. 19; but they proved bad neighbours to the Israelites when in Canaan. They assisted the *king of Moab* against them, Judg. iii. 13, and made war against them, Judg. x. 9; xi. 4. Nahash their king made an inroad upon them, 1 Sam. xii. 12. David fought with them in his time, 2 Sam. viii. 12, and destroyed them, 2 Sam. xi. 1. Jehoshaphat also and Jotham fought with them, 2 Chron. xx. 1; xxvii. 5. During the long tract of time that there were wars betwixt the Jews and Ammonites, the land of Gad and Reuben, which lay beyond Jordan, fell into the hand of the Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites (whence it is that in the former chapter we read of many cities of Moab, which were, upon the division of Canaan, in the lot of Gad and Reuben). This prophecy cannot be well understood without a previous understanding this. Hence it is that the prophet saith, *Hath Israel no sons?* God had given that country of Gilead to Manasseh, and Reuben, and Gad, Numb. xxxii. 40; Josh. xiii. 29—31; and as men's estates ought to descend to their

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heirs, so this land should have continued and descended to the posterity of these tribes, but the Ammonites had by force taken away a part, and Melcom possessed it. Melcom is *their king*, or the name of their idol to whom they gave the name of *king*, as other heathens called their idol *Baal*, that is, lord. And the people of the king of the Ammonites, or of Melcom the idol of the Ammonites, dwelt in the cities belonging to Gad, which was one of the tribes of Israel.

2 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an
c Ezek. 25. 5. Amos 1. 14. alarm of war to be heard in [c]Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the LORD.

Because the Ammonites had violently seized upon some part of the Jews' land, and (as we have it, Amos i. 13, 14) cruelly *ripped up the women with child in Gilead, that they might enlarge their border*, God threatens a war to Rabbah, Amos, i. 14, calls it a fire, which should make Rabbah a heap. Of this Rabbah, as the head city of the Ammonites, we read Deut. iii. 11; Josh. xiii. 25; xv. 60. It was there where, in David's time, Uriah was slain, 2 Sam. xi. 1, 17; xii. 26. It is threatened by Jeremiah in this chapter, and Ezek. xxv. 5; Amos i. 13, 14. We read not how or when this prophecy was fulfilled, whether by the Maccabees, 1 Mac. v. 6, or rather after the coming of Christ, when most of these nations were destroyed. God threatens not only their metropolis, which was Rabbah their mother city, but all the other cities belonging to the Ammonites, which were as it were *daughters* to Rabbah. But how the last clause of this prophecy was ever fulfilled, if it were not in the time of the Maccabees, I cannot understand; for though they were swallowed up afterward by the Roman empire, yet Israel being also subdued by them, and scattered into all parts, it is not likely that many of them were suffered to abide in any considerable numbers in a country so near their own.

3 Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled:
d Is. 32. 11. ch. 4. 8. & 6. 26. cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, [d]gird you with sackcloth; lament, and run to and
‖ Or, *Melcom.* 1 Kings 11. 5, 33. e ch. 48. 7. Amos 1. 15. fro by the hedges; for ‖their king shall go into captivity, *and* his [e]priests and his princes together.

Heshbon was formerly a city of the Amorites, of whom Sihon was king, who resided here (but it appears by ver. 26 that it was taken from Moab); it is probable that it was at this time a city of Moab: the prophet calls to them to *howl for Ai* a city of the Ammonites, not the same mentioned Josh. vii. 2, for that was on the other side of Jordan. It is uncertain whether by the *daughters of Rabbah* be to be understood other lesser cities, or the younger women that inhabited Rabbah: he calls to them all to mourn; and for all the indications or signs of mourning, such as girding with sackcloth, running up and down, like persons distracted, by the hedges, where they might be hidden, and not so easily seen. For they shall all go together into captivity; their Melcom, which may signify their idol to whom they gave that name, or their *king*, or else their supreme magistrate, with their *priests* and *nobles*, all orders of persons.

‖ Or, *thy valley floweth away.* f ch. 3. 14. & 7. 24. g ch. 21. 13. 4 Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, ‖thy flowing valley, O [f]backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, [g]*saying*, Who shall come unto me?

It should seem that this country was full of very fruitful valleys, which we know are always the most fertile places, lying lower and at a greater distance from the sun than mountains, and also receiving at second hand the moisture that falls upon the hills, and being usually watered with rivers; from whence they may be called *flowing valleys*, either as flowing with receptacles of water, or plenty of corn and grass; though some read it, (and it seems rather more agreeable to the Hebrew,) *thy valley floweth*, either with the blood of men slain, or *floweth away*, the fertility of it *ceaseth* or *decayeth*. Or, *floods of waters* shall destroy the fruit of thy rich valleys, &c. *O backsliding daughter:* Ammon having never been in covenant with God, the word in the Hebrew (though it comes from שוּב which signifies to return) seemeth ill translated *backsliding*, thou that hast turned thyself away from God. *That trusted in her treasures, saying, Who shall come unto me?* thou that trustedst in thy riches, or in thy valleys full of riches, and promisedst thyself security from the situation of thy rich country, thinking none could come at thee.

5 Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts, from all those that be about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right forth; and none shall gather up him that wandereth.

As secure as you think yourselves, I will cause you to be afraid, and your enemies shall be all those that are round about you. *And you shall be driven out every man, either right forth*, into some country opposite to you, or apart one from another, or so that you shall be glad to flee right forth, and never look back, but only forward, for any place of safety that appeareth next before you. And when you are wandering, being driven by your enemies, you shall find none who will be willing to receive or entertain you.

6 And [h]afterward I will bring again h So ver. 39. & ch. 48. 47. the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.

Such a promise we read of chap. xlviii. 47, concerning Moab, but when this was fulfilled the Scripture saith not. Josephus tells us something; but it is rather thought to refer to the conversion of some of the Ammonites as well as other heathens unto Christ.

7 ¶ [i]Concerning Edom, thus saith the i Ezek. 25. 12. Amos 1. 11. LORD of hosts; [k]*Is* wisdom no more in k Obad. 8. Teman? [l]is counsel perished from the l See Is. 19. 11. prudent? is their wisdom vanished?

The Edomites were the posterity of Esau the eldest son of Isaac, but disinherited, the blessing being given to his younger brother Jacob, who was the head of the twelve tribes of the Israelites, Gen. xxvii. 29. God there, ver. 39, promised him that he should have a fat and plentiful country, though his brother should be his lord, and foretold that he should break his brother's yoke from off his neck; the *land of Seir* was his country, Gen. xxxii. 3. The Edomites coasted southward upon Canaan, the Israelites passed by their coasts to go into Canaan; their way lay through Edom, but their king refusing to suffer them to go through, God ordered them to go another way. Balaam prophesied their ruin, Numb. xxiv. 18. They were enemies to the Israelites in Saul's time, 1 Sam. xiv. 47, and in David's time, 2 Sam. viii. 14, and in Amaziah's time, 2 Kings xiv. 7, who slew of them ten thousand, and took Selah, calling it Jokteel. Many of the prophets foretold their ruin. Jeremiah in this place, Ezek. xxv. 12—14; Joel iii. 19; Amos ix. 12; Obad. 1, 8; Mal. i. 4. *Teman* was a city of Edom, mentioned also Ezek. xxv. 13; Amos i. 12; Obad. 9. Eliphaz, Job's friend, was of this place, Job ii. 11. It was a place famous for wise and prudent men, of which Eliphaz was not the meanest. The prophet asks what was become of all their counsel and wisdom, for which the Arabians, the Temanites in particular, were so famous. Now they were at their wits' end.

8 [m]Flee ye, ‖turn back, dwell deep, O m ver. 30. ‖ Or, *they are turned back.* inhabitants of [n]Dedan; for I will bring n ch. 25. 23. the calamity of Esau upon him, the time *that* I will visit him.

Dedan was the son of Jokshan, 1 Chron. i. 32, from which it is probable that the city *Dedan* had its name; it is reckoned, chap. xxv. 23, with Tema and Buz, and is mentioned Ezek. xxvii. 15, 20; xxxviii. 13. It was a city of Arabia joining on Idumea, Isa. xxi. 13. They being neighbours to the Edomites, are called to *flee*, and to get into caves and holes of the earth, where they might dwell deep in the earth, and be in some security, which they would not be in their own city, so near to the Edomites' country, for God was resolved to bring misery upon the Edomites, a time of calamity in which he would visit them with his

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judgments. There are other critical readings of these words, but this seemeth to be the plain sense of them.

o Obad. 5. 9 If °grapegatherers come to thee, would they not leave *some* gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy †till they have enough.

† Heb. *their sufficiency.*

We have much the same Obad. 5. The scope of the prophet in this place is only to show that Edom should be totally destroyed; their destruction should not be like the gleaning of grapes, where the gatherers content themselves with taking the principal clusters, but for single grapes, or small clusters, they leave them; nor yet like the robbings of thieves, who take for their hunger, and when they have got enough leave the rest.

p Mal. 1. 3. 10 ᵖBut I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his q Is. 17. 14. neighbours, and ᵠhe *is* not.

But the Edomites should be left bare; and though they sought to hide themselves in secret places, yet God would there find them out, and there should be no places sufficient to hide them. All their children should be destroyed, and the Moabites their kinsmen, and the Philistines their neighbours, should be ruined as well as they.

11 Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve *them* alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

The only question upon this verse is, whether, in the whole of it, it be a promise or a threatening: if it be a promise, the sense is, that though this great destruction should come upon the body of the Edomites, yet God would take care of some of their *fatherless children*, whose parents being carried into captivity, they had none to provide for them: if it be taken as an ironical threatening, it soundeth ruin to those as well as the rest, and *I will* is as much as I will not. But others think that these are rather to be understood with the supply of some other words, *There is not*, or *there shall be none to say, Leave thy fatherless children*, &c.; and whoso considereth those words in the tenth verse, *his seed shall be spoiled*, will see reason to judge it rather a threatening (whether by way of irony or no) than a promise.

12 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, r ch. 25. 29. Obad. 16. ʳthey whose judgment *was* not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; and *art* thou he *that* shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink *of it*.

That by *the cup* is meant the wine cup of the Lord's wrath, and that by those *whose judgment was not to drink of* it are meant the Jews, is not to be doubted; but the question is, how the prophet saith that it was not the judgment of the Jews to drink of this cup? The word here used is of so various significations as makes the fixing the sense of it here difficult; it cannot here signify *justice*, for in that sense it was the Jews' *judgment* to drink of it; nor can it here (as it often doth) signify the effect of justice, God's judicial dispensation; for they had drank of it, so it was their judgment. It must be taken in the most favourable sense imaginable. Either they who in regard of their relation to God, and God's relation to them, might have looked upon it as none of their portion, yet have drank of it; or, they who in comparison with others did not deserve to drink of the cup, yet have drank of it: and can you think to escape? No, thou shalt not escape, but most surely drink of it. 1 Pet. iv. 17, *The time is come that judgment is begun at the house of God;* and if it first begin with that, where shall the end of others be? When an Israelite hath not escaped the justice of God, an Edomite must not expect it.

s Gen. 22. 16. Is. 45. 23. Amos 6. 8. t Is. 34. 6. & 63. 1. 13 For ˢI have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that ᵗBozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.

As men, when they would confirm their promise or threatening to do any thing, add an oath to it, so doth God, who, having no greater to swear by, swears by himself, chap. xliv. 26. That which God would here confirm was his threatening against Edom, expressed under the notion of *Bozrah*, (a part for the whole,) Bozrah being its principal city, Isa. lxiii. 1, as well as a city of Moab (as we found in the foregoing chapter); and that which he threatens it with was not being a reproach, a waste, and a curse for a time, but for ever.

u Obad. 1, 2, 3. 14 I have heard a ᵘrumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, *saying*, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle.

I have heard a rumour from the Lord: Obadiah beginneth his prophecy much with such words. God hath revealed his will to me in a vision or a dream. *An ambassador is sent unto the heathen:* he speaks after the manner of earthly princes, who use to send their ambassadors to other princes to declare their minds to them. *Saying, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle:* the meaning is, God hath made such impressions upon other nations, he hath inclined them, or set them on work, to get together in armies to come against Edom in battle.

15 For, lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, *and* despised among men.

Obadiah, in his prophecy against Edom, ver. 2, hath much the same words, importing that God would bring the Edomites very low, and make them very contemptible.

16 Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, *and* the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: ˣthough x Obad. 4. thou shouldest make thy ʸnest as high as y Job 39. 27. the eagle, ᶻI will bring thee down from z Amos 9. 2. thence, saith the LORD.

Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart: Obadiah in his prophecy against Edom useth much the same expressions, ver. 3, 4. The word that is here used being of the number of those which are but once found in Scripture, hath given interpreters liberty to abound in their senses of it; some translating it *arrogance*, some, thine *idol;* but the best interpreters understand by it their terribleness to others, their being so potent that others were all afraid of them; this deceived them, making them to conclude themselves secure, and out of danger; to which is also added the *pride* of the heart. The country of Edom being mountainous, they are said to dwell *in the clefts of the rocks*, that is, in places impregnable, and inaccessible as they thought, in the heights of the hill. But the Lord lets them know no place was to his power inaccessible or impregnable, for if they dwell *as high as the eagle*, which the Scripture tells us, Job xxxix. 27, 28, *maketh her nest on high, and dwelleth and abideth upon the rock, upon the crag of the rock*, yet he would bring them down.

17 Also Edom shall be a desolation: ᵃevery one that goeth by it shall be a ch. 18. 16. & 50. 13. astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

The like is said of Babylon, chap. l. 13: it appears from 1 Kings ix. 8, that it was a kind of proverbial expression, when they would express a great desolation, or great plagues, that those who passed by such a place should *be astonished*, and *hiss at it*.

18 ᵇAs in the overthrow of Sodom and b Gen. 19. 25. Deut. 29. 23. ch. 50. 40. Amos 4. 11. Gomorrah and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.

Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities were utterly destroyed, and therefore are set down, both here and chap. l. 40, as patterns of an utter ruin and desolation.

19 ᶜBehold, he shall come up like a c ch. 50. 44, &c. lion from ᵈthe swelling of Jordan against d ch. 12. 5.

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the habitation of the strong: but I will suddenly make him run away from her: and who *is* a chosen *man*, *that* I may appoint over her? for [e] who *is* like me? and who will ‖ appoint me the time? and [f] who *is* that shepherd that will stand before me?

e Ex. 15. 11.
‖ Or, *constitute me in judgment.*
f Job 41. 10.

This verse is very variously interpreted; some by *he* understand the Jews, some understand Nebuchadnezzar, some understand the Edomites; I think the last is most probable to be here meant, because of the next words. The Edomites shall come out against the Chaldeans *like a lion*, as lions lurking about Jordan when it overfloweth come out to take their prey. *But I will suddenly make him run away from her:* these words are variously understood, those who by *he* in the former part of the verse understand Nebuchadnezzar, interpret the running here mentioned of his running over the whole country of Edom; to me it appeareth a much more probable sense to interpret it of the Edomites running away from Nebuchadnezzar out of their own country, which seems to be understood by *her;* all that makes a difficulty is the particle *from*, which yet makes the sense good enough, if by *her* we understand the Edomites' own land. In the Hebrew it is, *I will break them*, or *I will quiet them*, and make them *to run*. *Who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her?* whom shall I set over Edom? Into whose hands shall I give that country, that he may rule over it? *For who is like me?* for I can do whatsoever I please. *And who will appoint me a time* to plead with men? so Job ix. 19; or a time to fight? *Who is that shepherd that will stand before me?* what is that king or potentate of the earth that will stand before me?

20 [g] Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them.

g ch. 50. 45.

Edom and *Teman* in this verse signify both the same thing; God calls to men to hear the resolutions he had taken up against the Edomites, resolutions as wise and steady as if they had been taken upon the wisest counsels and deliberation. *Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out;* God is resolved to drive out the Edomites, and the least of Nebuchadnezzar's forces shall drag them out of their lurking-places; and God will make the place where they dwell a desolation.

21 [h] The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the † Red sea.

h ch. 50. 46.
† Heb. *Weedy sea.*

That is, the ruin of the Edomites shall be so great, that all nations round about it shall be affected at the noise of their fall; and though the Red Sea, or the weedy sea, be at a great distance from them, yet their noise shall reach thither.

22 Behold, [i] he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

i ch. 4. 13. & 48. 40, 41. cir. 600.

See the notes on chap. xlviii. 40, 41, where the very same thing, and under the same phrases, was spoken against Moab. That which is threatened is the enemies coming swiftly upon the Edomites and preying upon them, and the fear that should surprise them, which should make their hearts faint as the heart of a woman that hath a hard labour.

23 ¶ [k] Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad: for they have heard evil tidings: they are † faint-hearted; [l] *there is* sorrow ‖ on the sea; it cannot be quiet.

k Is. 17. 1. & 37. 13. Amos 1. 3. Zech. 9. 1, 2.
† Heb. *melted.*
l Is. 57. 20.
‖ Or, *as on the sea.*

The prophet comes to denounce the judgments of God against Syria, another nation of the Gentiles. *Damascus* was the head city of Syria, Isa. vii. 8; xvii. 3, or Aram, (as in the Hebrew,) because it was a country inhabited by the posterity of Aram, one of the sons of Shem; part of it lay betwixt Babylon and Arabia, and was called Mesopotamia, lying betwixt the two rivers of Tigris and Euphrates. Laban and Naaman were of this country. David had war with them, 2 Sam. viii. 5; x. 18. So had Ahab, 1 Kings xx. 20; and Joram, 2 Kings viii. 28; and Ahaz, Isa. vii. 2. After God's long patience with them he threatens them with ruin, as by Jeremiah in this place, so by Amos, i. 5. Damascus being the head of this country, is sometimes put (as here) for the whole country. *Hamath* and *Arpad* were two cities also of Syria. 2 Kings xviii. 34. The prophet foretells that they also should hear of ill news, an enemy that is coming against them, and that they should be melted through fear, and their courage should fail them, they should be as troubled as the sea is in a storm, or their inhabitants that lived near to the sea should be troubled.

24 Damascus is waxed feeble, *and* turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on *her:* [m] anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail.

m Is. 13. 8. ch. 4. 31. & 6. 24. & 30. 6. & 48. 41. ver. 22.

Syria, whose head is Damascus, hath lost her old courage and valour; it was wont to be a formidable country to its neighbours, but now they flee before their enemies. *Fear hath seized on her;* they are seized, and overpowered by their own fears. *Anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail;* great sorrows are ordinarily in Scripture expressed by the similitude of the pains of a woman in travail; we have met with it often in this prophecy, chap. vi. 24; xxii. 23: so Psal. xlviii. 6; Micah iv. 9.

25 How is [n] the city of praise not left, the city of my joy!

n ch. 33. 9. & 51. 41.

It is called *the city of praise*, because it was a city so much praised, a city of great renown, which the prophet seeing like to be destroyed, lamenteth either in the person of the king of Syria, or of the Syrian inhabitants, wondering that the conquerors should not spare so famous and renowned a city, in which so many did rejoice.

26 [o] Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD of hosts.

o ch. 50. 30. & 51. 4.

The Hebrew particles are not always well rendered in our translation, and our learned English Annotator hath rightly observed this place as one instance, for כֵּן cannot be here an illative, but is much better translated *surely*, as a note of assertion. God threateneth the Syrians with a certain ruin and desolation.

27 And I will kindle a [p] fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Ben-hadad.

p Amos 1. 4.

I will bring a judgment that shall burn in Damascus like a consuming fire, and it shall reach to the royal seat of Ben-hadad; either that which was the royal seat of Ben-hadad, 2 Kings viii. 7, or else Ben-hadad (signifying the son of Hadad, which was their idol) was the common name of all the kings of Syria, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt, Amos i. 4.

28 ¶ [q] Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the LORD; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil [r] the men of the east.

cir. 600.
q Is. 21. 13.
r Judg. 6. 3. Job 1. 3.

Kedar, Gen. xxv. 13, was one of the sons of Ishmael, whose posterity inhabited part of Arabia Petræa. See Isa. xxi. 13, 17. We read of it Psal. cxx. 5; Cant. i. 5; Ezek. xxvii. 21. We read of *Hazor* Josh. xi. 1. Ver. 10, it was the head city to several kingdoms in Joshua's time; Jabin was king of it in the times of Deborah, Judg. iv. 2. The prophet foretells that Nebuchadrezzar should also conquer these kingdoms; and saith he heard the Lord call to Nebuchadrezzar to go up against them.

29 Their [s] tents and their flocks shall they take away: they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their vessels,

s Ps. 120. 5.

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and their camels; and they shall cry unto them, t Fear *is* on every side.

t ch. 6. 25. & 46. 5.

That is, the Chaldeans shall take away the Kedarens' *tents;* for they being a people whose cattle were their livelihood, had no fixed houses, but tents, which were movable habitations, covered with skins of beasts; and the curtains which they used to draw before those tents, and served them as sides, as gable ends of houses serve us; and all the furniture of their tents or tabernacles, and their cattle; and either their enemies should fright them with terrible noises and outcries, or they should themselves cry out that they were surrounded with objects of fear.

30 ¶ u Flee, † get you far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the LORD; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you.

u ver. 8. † Heb. *flit greatly.*

The words seem to be the prophet's words of advice to this people, to make all the haste they could away, and to secure themselves as well as they could, because the king of Babylon had certainly been taking counsel against them, and was resolved to disturb them. See ver. 8, where the like counsel is given to the Edomites.

31 Arise, get you up unto x the ‖ wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, *which* y dwell alone.

x Ezek. 38. 11. ‖ Or, *that is at ease.* y Num. 23. 9. Deut. 33. 28. Mic. 7. 14.

The supposed result of Nebuchadnezzar's counsels, giving charge to his armies to march against the Kedarens, which lived at ease and quiet, and took no care; that had no cities, nor gates, nor bars to keep their enemies out, nor were near any neighbours that could assist them, nor very near to one another, living in tents, so might easily be overrun, and conquered, and made a prey to enemies.

32 And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: and I will z scatter into all winds a them *that are* † in the utmost corners; and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the LORD.

z Ezek. 5. 10. ver. 36. a ch. 9. 26. & 25. 23. † Heb. *cut off into corners,* or, *that have the corners of their hair polled.*

And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: these words sound like a part of the king of Babylon's supposed speech encouraging his soldiers from the booty they should get, which should be a great multitude of camels and other cattle; the latter words are the words of the prophet, in the name of the Lord, threatening ruin to these Kedarens and Hazorites, though they lived in corners, and might upon that account think themselves secure; God saith he would fetch them out of their utmost corners, and bring calamity from all parts upon them.

33 And Hazor b shall be a dwelling for dragons, *and* a desolation for ever: c there shall no man abide there, nor *any* son of man dwell in it.

b ch. 9. 11. & 10. 22. Mal. 1. 3. c ver. 18.

That is, the whole country subject to the king of Hazor shall be desolate. See Isa. xxxiv. 13; chap. ix. 11.

34 ¶ The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against d Elam in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying,

d ch. 25. 25. 598.

Elam was the son of Shem, Gen. x. 22, his posterity were called Elamites; these were the Persians, as is most probable, though some judge that the Persians were at too great a distance from the Jews to be the people meant here, but we read of no other Elam in Scripture but in Persia, Dan. viii. 2; and though they were indeed at a great distance, yet it is probable that Nebuchadnezzar, having conquered the Assyrians, might also make some inroads into Persia, the emperor of which afterward conquered Babylon. This prophecy being in the first year of Zedekiah must needs be long before the thing was done, for it was ten years before the king of Babylon took Jerusalem.

35 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will break e the bow of Elam, the chief of their might.

e See Is. 22. 6.

All those Eastern people were famous for the use of the bow, the Elamites in special, Isa. xxii. 6: those bows were the *chief of* their offensive armour, though by *the chief of their might* may also be meant their most mighty and strong warriors. This prophecy is probably judged to be fulfilled when the Persians made a defection from the king of the Medes, who was son-in-law to Nebuchadnezzar. Others think that this prophecy was accomplished by Alexander the emperor of Greece, or rather by his successors.

36 And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and f will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come.

f ver. 32.

The prophet threateneth the destruction of the Persians by a confederacy of enemies, suppose Babylonians, Medes, &c., which should assault them on all sides, as when the wind blows at the same time from all quarters, which causeth a whirlwind, which driveth the dust every way hither and thither, so he saith the Persians should be scattered into all nations.

37 For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil upon them, *even* my fierce anger, saith the LORD; g and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them:

g ch. 9. 16. & 48. 2.

We met with the like threatenings ver. 5, 24, 29, as to fear; and as to their destruction, we have often met with the like threatenings.

38 And I will h set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD.

h See ch. 43. 10.

God here calls the throne of Nebuchadnezzar, or Cyrus, or Alexander, (whoever he was that conquered the Persians,) his throne: 1. Because God gave it the conqueror. 2. Or because God showed himself the Lord of hosts, or the Lord of the whole earth, by disposing the kingdom of Persia at his pleasure. He doth not threaten the destruction of the whole nation, but the making of it all tributary, so as it should have no kings nor princes of its own.

39 ¶ But it shall come to pass i in the latter days, *that* I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

i ch. 48. 47. ver. 6.

We had the like promise as to Moab, chap. xlviii. 47, and as to Ammon, ver. 6; the same *latter days* either signify after many days, or in the time of the Messias. In the former sense it may refer to Cyrus, who conquered Persia. In the latter sense it is referred to the spiritual liberty which some of these poor heathens were brought into by the gospel. We read, Acts ii. 9, that some of these Elamites were at Jerusalem at Pentecost, and were some of those converted to Christ.

CHAP. L.

The judgment of Babel, and the land of Chaldea, for their idolatry, tyranny, and pride; with gracious promises of the redemption of Israel intermixed, 4, 5, 19, 20, 34.

THE word that the LORD spake a against Babylon *and* against the land of the Chaldeans † by Jeremiah the prophet.

a Is. 13. 1. & 21. 1. & 47. 1. † Heb. *by the hand of Jeremiah.* 593.

The prophet having from the 46th chapter been denouncing the judgments of God against the other Gentiles, the Egyptians, Moabites, Philistines, Ammonites, Edomites, Syrians, Kedarens, Hazorites, Elamites or Persians, (the most of which had been enemies to the Jews,) in these two chapters he denounceth God's judgments against the Chaldeans and Babylonians. These were to execute God's

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vengeance on all the rest, and therefore are themselves threatened in the last place to be destroyed by the Medes: the prophecy against them is mixed with many gracious promises to the Jews.

2 Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and † set up a standard; publish, *and* conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, [b] Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; [c] her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

† Heb. *lift up.*
b Is. 46. 1. ch. 51. 44.
c See ch. 43. 12, 13.

The prophet calls to men to publish it amongst other nations, and to *set up a standard*, to make some signal to gather all people together to hear what he had to say from God against Babylon, which had been an instrument of great mischief unto most people that lived about them, to whom it would therefore be glad and joyful news to hear that Babylon their common enemy was ruined. That by *Bel* and *Merodach* are meant two principal idols of the Babylonians, most think; but what, is not so well agreed. Some think that Bel is Baal by contradiction; but they judge most probably who think it was the image of one Belus, who was formerly a king of Babylon; and they judge the like of Merodach: we find in Scripture that Merodach was some of their kings' names, Isa. xxxix. 1; chap. lii. 31. Those who desire to be further satisfied about these idols may read the English Annotations upon Isa. xlvi. 1, and our Annotations upon that verse. It was an ordinary practice amongst the heathens, when they had any princes died that had been famous in their government, to pay a divine homage to their images and statues. These idols are said to be *confounded*, either because they should not be able at this pinch to help their suppliants, or because they should be destroyed together with the silly people that adored them.

3 [d] For out of the north there cometh up [e] a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.

d ch. 51. 48.
e Is. 13. 17, 18, 20. ver. 39, 40.

From Media, which lay northward to Babylon and Assyria, through which Cyrus's way to Babylon lay. This prophecy seemeth not to relate only to Cyrus's first taking of Babylon, who dealt very gently with it, but to a second taking of it by Darius the king of the Medes, who upon their defection from the Persian monarchy came and made a horrible devastation amongst them, hanging up (as some tell us) four thousand of their nobles, and slaying multitudes of the common people; or of the mischief done them afterward by Seleucus Nicanor, who is said to have built a city, which he called Seleucia, within fourscore and ten miles of Babylon, by which means he brought Babylon to an utter desolation.

4 ¶ In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, [f] they and the children of Judah together, [g] going and weeping: they shall go, [h] and seek the LORD their God.

f Hos. 1. 11.
g Ezra 3. 12, 13. Ps. 126. 5, 6. ch. 31. 9. Zech. 12. 10.
h Hos. 3. 5.

In the days wherein God shall begin to execute judgment upon Babylon, (which was in the time of Cyrus emperor of the Medes,) the children of Judah shall come out of captivity; and some of the children of Israel, (viz. those of the ten tribes,) hearing that their brethren were gone out of the captivity of Babylon, shall go up also from the several places into which they were disposed by the Assyrians: *weeping*, either for sorrow in the sense of their sins which had brought the miseries of captivity upon them, or for joy that God ever should show them such a mercy as to bring them home again into their own country. And those that feared God, whether of the ten tribes, or of the kingdom of Judah, worshipped God at Jerusalem, after their old accustomed manner.

5 They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, *saying*, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in [i] a perpetual covenant *that* shall not be forgotten.

i ch. 31. 31, &c. & 32. 40.

That is, those of Judah and Israel that fear the Lord shall seriously and steadily seek the true God, and the true way of his worship; and, being sensible that they had broken the covenant which their fathers had formerly made with God, with a desire to renew their covenant, and that not for a time, but for ever. See chap. xxxi. 31. The only question is, whether this promise be yet accomplished or no, or when it was or shall be fulfilled? *Answ.* It was without doubt in a great measure fulfilled upon the Jews coming out of the captivity of Babylon, when those of the kingdom of Judah returned to Jerusalem, and were very zealous for restoring the true worship of God, and renewed their covenant with God (as we read in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah); but Mr. Calvin thinks it was more eminently fulfilled under the kingdom of the Messiah, when, though many believed not, yet many others did believe, and were added to the church, and whether a further fulfilling of it be not yet to come time must show.

6 My people hath been [k] lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away *on* [l] the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their † restingplace.

k Is. 53. 6. ver. 17. 1 Pet. 2. 25.
l ch. 2. 20. & 3. 6, 23.
† Heb. *place to lie down in.*

My people hath been lost sheep: all men are compared to sheep that go astray, Isa. liii. 6; here it is applied to the Jews, who are called the Lord's people, by reason of the ancient covenant God made with their fathers; they are said to be lost, either with respect to their captivity, being cast out of the land which God gave them for pastures, or in respect of their idolatry. *Their shepherds have caused them to go astray;* their civil and ecclesiastical governors have been a cause of it. The former by their wicked commands forcing them to idolatry and superstition, or at least by their wicked example setting them an example, and by their ill government conniving at them in their idolatrous practices, for which they are gone into captivity. Their priests, and ecclesiastical governors, teaching them such practices, and encouraging them by their own examples, and promising them impunity and security in them. *They have turned them away on the mountains;* either they have been a cause of their offering sacrifices to idols upon the mountains, or of their being carried into captivity over the mountains. *They have gone from mountain to hill;* either wandering up and down in a strange land, or in their way thither, or running from one species of idolatry to another. *They have forgotten their resting-place;* they have forgotten the land of Canaan, which I gave them for a resting-place after their toilsome travel in the wilderness; or (as some would have it) they have forgotten me who am their rest.

7 All that found them have [m] devoured them: and [n] their adversaries said, [o] We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, [p] the habitation of justice, even the LORD, [q] the hope of their fathers.

m Ps. 79. 7.
n ch. 40. 2, 3. Zech. 11. 5.
o See ch. 2. 3. Dan. 9. 16.
p Ps. 90. 1. & 91. 1.
q Ps. 22. 4.

All that found them have devoured them: as they are in the condition of lost sheep, so they have been under the fate of lost sheep, which every dog, fox, wolf devours. And those that are their enemies have pretended that in destroying them they have done no ill, because they had sinned; so as the sins of the Jews did both expose them to the wrath of God, and also imboldened their enemies, and encouraged them to think that they did God service in destroying them. *The habitation of justice:* some think this is a name here given to God, who indeed is the habitation of justice, but whether the Chaldeans would call him so may be a question. Others therefore think the preposition *in* is understood, making this the aggravation of the Jews' sins, that they were committed in a land which ought to have been a habitation of justice; as, Isa. xxvi. 10, it is said that the wicked man *in a land of uprightness will deal unjustly.* Mr. Calvin hath another notion, viz. that the prophet here encourageth himself against what the adversaries had promised themselves because the people had offended God; viz. that notwithstanding this, God was a righteous God, in whom justice dwelt, and who would be faithful to his promises. *The hope of their fathers;* and

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he was their hope, and had been he in whom their fathers before them had hoped, and that not in vain.

r Is. 48. 20. ch. 51. 6, 45. Zech. 2. 6, 7. Rev. 18. 4.

8 [r]Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.

These words immediately following the other, confirm Mr. Calvin's notion. God by his prophet commanding his people to remove out of Babylon, and to go forth cheerfully, and skipping like the he-goats of the flock leading the way, and setting an example unto others. We find much such a call Isa. xlviii. 20; chap. li. 6, which is applied to spiritual Babylon, Rev. xviii. 4, where the coming out is to be understood of a separation from them as to any religious communion, which also was their duty as to old Babylon; but that is not the coming out here spoken of.

a ch. 15. 14. & 51. 27. ver. 3, 41.

t ver. 14, 29.

9 ¶ [a]For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall [t]set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows *shall be* as of a mighty ‖ expert man; [u]none shall return in vain.

‖ Or, *destroyer.* u 2 Sam. 1. 22.

He means the Medes and Persians, as it is expounded afterward. *Their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain;* I will so direct their arrows, that every arrow they shoot shall pierce one or other. Or. (as some rather choose to interpret it,) no soldier of that assembly of great nations that shall come up against Babylon shall return without some booty or other. The reason of the different reading noted in the margin is the difference of a point in the Hebrew, which if set on the right side of the letter, the word signifieth a *destroyer;* if on the left side, an *expert man,* as we translate it.

x Rev. 17. 16.

10 And Chaldea shall be a spoil: [x]all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD.

Satisfied with spoil and plunder, for Babylon and Chaldea was at that time one of the richest places in those parts of the world. She was abundant in treasure, chap. li. 13.

y Is. 47. 6. † Heb. *big,* or, *corpulent.* z Hos. 10. 11. ‖ Or, *neigh as steeds.*

11 [y]Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown † fat [z]as the heifer at grass, and ‖ bellow as bulls;

They *rejoiced* at the ruin of the Jews; the same thing is laid to the charge of the Edomites, Obad. 12. The Chaldeans were God's rod to scourge the Jews; but when men are made use of by God, as his rod and scourge, they ought not to put off humanity, but to behave themselves decently, and as persons that are sensible of the miseries which their brethren suffer. God calls them his *heritage,* because they formerly were a people whom he owned above all other people. There is some difference amongst critical interpreters, whether the heifer here mentioned be to be understood of a *heifer at grass,* (as we translate it,) or a heifer used to tread out the corn; or whether the last words be to be understood of a *horse neighing,* (as the words may be interpreted,) or a *bull bellowing.* But these are things of very small moment. The cause for which Babylon is threatened was doubtless their luxury of all sorts commonly attending great wealth, and prosperity meeting with hearts unsanctified.

12 Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations *shall be* a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.

Your chief city Babylon, or your country, which is the common *mother* of all the Chaldeans, shall be destroyed, or *shall be ashamed* of you, who are not able to defend her. The sense here seems a little difficult, because it appears no such strange thing that the hindermost of the nations should be a wilderness. It is therefore probable that the words *shall be* are to be understood before *the hindermost of the nations;* our translation supplieth them after; so the reading will be, *it shall be the hindermost of the nations, a wilderness,* &c.; that is, Babylon, that hath been so famous, and accounted the head of the nations, shall become the meanest of all nations, a mere wilderness, and a dry land, and a desert.

13 Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, [a]but it shall be wholly desolate: [b]every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

a ch. 25. 12. b ch. 49. 17.

It shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate; the same thing was threatened against Babylon, Isa. xiii. 20, *It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues:* it seemeth to be a proverbial speech made use of to express the miserable state of a place; we had it before, chap. xlix. 17, applied to Edom. It is according to the threatening, Deut. xxviii. 37. See chap. xxv. 9, 11; xxix. 18; xlii. 18; Ezek. v. 15.

c ver. 9. ch. 51. 2. d ch. 49. 35. ver. 29.

14 [c]Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye [d]that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD.

The prophet calls to the Medes and Persians, with those who should come with them to their assistance, to put themselves in military order ready to come up against Babylon. The Persians (as was noted before) were very famous for the bow, therefore he speaketh unto them as an army of archers, to shoot at the Babylonians, and to *spare no arrows;* because Babylon had *sinned against the Lord* exceedingly, as Gen. xiii. 13, by their idolatry, luxury, and cruel usage of the Jews, &c.

e 1 Chron. 29. 24. 2 Chron. 30. 8. Lam. 5. 6. Ezek. 17. 18. f ch. 51. 58. g ch. 51. 6, 11. h Ps. 137. 8. ver. 29. Rev. 18. 6.

15 Shout against her round about: she hath [e]given her hand: her foundations are fallen, [f]her walls are thrown down: for [g]it *is* the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; [h]as she hath done, do unto her.

Shout against her round about; either as soldiers use to shout when they fall upon their enemy, or as they use to shout and triumph when they are entered a city, or when their enemies flee. *She hath given her hand;* either acknowledging themselves overcome, and yielding themselves to the power of their enemies, or, as some think, confederating with the Lydians; but the former is more probable. *Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down;* that is, she is wholly subdued and conquered, as if her walls were thrown down, for literally her walls were not beaten down by Cyrus, for he took the city by surprise. *For it is the vengeance of the Lord:* God is he who brings this vengeance upon Babylon, though it be by your hands. *As she hath done, do unto her:* it is very observable, that there is hardly any sins which the Lord so ordinarily punisheth in the like kind, as those which are offences against the laws of *justice* and *charity.* The common fate of cruel and uncharitable men is to meet with others to do to them as they have done to others; unmerciful men find no mercy. See Psal. cxxxvii. 8, 9; Judg. i. 6, 7. Adonibezek acknowledged God's justice in it.

‖ Or, *scythe.* i Is. 13. 14. ch. 51. 9.

16 Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the ‖sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword [i]they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.

We are told that Babylon was so large a city, that within the walls of it there was much ploughed ground: or else the threatening imports that God would deal more severely with Babylon, than conquerors use to do with places which they conquer, who use to spare and leave behind them ploughmen, and such as use to till the ground, but in the destruction of Babylon it should not be so. *They shall flee every one to his own land:* he speaks either of such strangers as for commerce had their abodes in Babylon, or such assistants as the Babylonians had gotten against their ene-

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mies, who upon the coming in of the enemies should make as much haste home as they could.

k ver. 6. l ch. 2. 15. m 2 Kings 17. 6.

17 ¶ Israel *is* [k]a scattered sheep; [l]the lions have driven *him* away: first [m]the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this [n]Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.

n 2 Kings 24. 10, 14.

By *Israel* is here meant the whole twelve tribes (though sometimes it signifieth the ten tribes in opposition to Judah); they were all wandering sheep, they became penally *scattered sheep*. Enemies as fierce and cruel as lions had seized them, and carried them into captivity. *First the king of Assyria devoured* the ten tribes, which were strictly called *Israel*, 2 Kings xvii. 6. Then Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon took Jerusalem, as we heard, chap. xxxix., and carried away the people, and burnt the temple, which the prophet here calls a breaking of *his bones*.

18 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.

God may justly punish those who do the things which he hath commanded them to do, if they do it not in that manner which he directeth, or if what they do be not done in obedience to his command, but in satisfaction to their own lusts, which was the case of the Assyrians, Isa. x. 7. *As I have punished the king of Assyria:* some refer this to the punishment of the Assyrians in the destruction of Sennacherib and his army in the time of Hezekiah, but the prophet seemeth here to speak of a destruction of Assyria which followed after his devouring of the ten tribes, from whence we may conclude that Assyria was destroyed before the time of this revelation.

o Is. 65. 10. ch. 33. 12. Ezek. 34. 13, 14.

19 [o]And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead.

This must be understood of Judah, which was part of that people who were called *Israel*, for to this day we have neither read nor heard of the ten tribes being brought back again to their habitation. The only difficulty is, how it is said that the Jews upon their return should *feed upon Carmel and Bashan, and Mount Ephraim and Gilead*, which were places that belonged not to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin: to which it is answered, that these places were granted to the Jews by Demetrius the father and the son, as we are told by Josephus, l. 13. c. 5. 8. These places were rich grounds for feeding cattle, therefore it is said *they shall feed on Carmel and Bashan*, &c.

20 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, [p]the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them [q]whom I reserve.

p ch. 31. 34. q Is. 1. 9.

Some here restrain the term *iniquity* to *the idolatry* of the Jews, which indeed was their great sin, which God did more especially punish them for; and after the captivity of Babylon we do not read of their offending in that kind, which was according to the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. xxvii. 9. that when God should make the stones of the altar as chalk-stones that are beaten asunder, the groves and the images should not stand up. But the last words seem to guide us to a larger sense of the term *iniquity*, and to point us to another sense of the whole former phrase, viz. that God would no longer punish the sins of the Jews; they should be sought for as to punishment, and not found. And those words *and none* must be understood *as if none*, they shall be punished no more than if they had none. *For I will pardon them whom I reserve;* for as to those whom I save from the captivity of Babylon, *I will pardon them:* not that they were all excused from the obligation their sins laid them under as to eternal death, but that their temporal punishment was remitted to the whole body of the Jews, and those that were truly penitent also should be discharged from their obligation to eternal death. The obligation that sin layeth the sinner under to eternal death may be remitted, and yet the temporal punishment due to them may remain, 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14, &c. And, on the other side, the punishment in this life may be suspended or remitted, and the obligation sin layeth the sinner under to eternal death may remain.

‖ Or, *of the rebels.* r Ezek. 23. 23. ‖ Or, *visitation.* s See 2 Sam. 16. 11. 2 Kings 18. 25. 2 Chron. 36. 23. Is. 10. 6. & 44. 28. & 48. 14. ch. 34. 22.

21 ¶ Go up against the land ‖of Merathaim, *even* against it, and against the inhabitants of [r]‖Pekod: waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do [s]according to all that I have commanded thee.

There is some disputes amongst interpreters, whether the words here, *Merathaim* and *Pekod*, be to be taken as common nouns, the one signifying *rebels* or *rulers*, the other *visitation*, because the Chaldeans were rebels against the Lord, and were great rulers over all the contiguous nations; or whether they be proper names of some places which Cyrus passed by, or, it may be, took in, and conquered in his way to Babylon. The latter are God's words by his prophet, like the former, commanding him with his armies to go up and destroy them fleeing away, or them that should succeed after them, their whole posterity; intimating God's design utterly to destroy them, which destruction was gently begun by Cyrus, and perfected by Darius.

t ch. 51. 54.

22 [t]A sound of battle *is* in the land, and of great destruction.

That is, in the land of Chaldea.

u Is. 14. 6. ch. 51. 20.

23 How is [u]the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!

The latter part of the verse expounds the former; God had made the Babylonians his hammer, to break other nations in pieces, now it was itself broken: the particle *how* may be understood either as expressing triumph and rejoicing, or admiration, or as inquiring how such a thing could be in the last sense. The next verse is an answer to this.

x ch. 51. 8, 31, 39, 57. Dan. 5. 30, 31.

24 I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, [x]and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD.

We are told that Cyrus with his great army diverted the river Euphrates, so as his army passed over and surprised the city so suddenly, that those in the midst of it did not know it when part of the city was already taken. God directed Cyrus to this stratagem for the taking of the city, which the prophet calls *a snare*, wherein the Babylonians were taken. The reason of this unexpected ruin to this great people was their sinning against the Lord, ver. 14, which is here called a *striving* against him, as indeed all sin is.

y Is. 13. 5.

25 The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth [y]the weapons of his indignation: for this *is* the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.

Babylon was so rich and potent a nation, and had been so great a conqueror, that people looking only with the eye of sense, and judging according to probabilities in the eyes of men, might well ask how these things could possibly be. To which the prophet here answereth, that the hand of God was to be eyed in the case, this was the Lord's work upon the Chaldeans; God had *opened his armoury*, and the Medes were to make use of *the weapons of his indignation*. He who threatened this destruction was able to carry it through, and it was no great matter what weapons either the Babylonians had to defend themselves, or the Medes to offend them, God's power and strength was only to be regarded.

† Heb. *from the end.* ‖ Or, *tread her.*

26 Come against her †from the utmost border, open her storehouses: ‖cast her

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up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left.

The prophet in the name of God calleth to the enemies of Babylon, the Medes, to come up from the furthest parts of their dominions, or from all parts, to fight against Babylon; to open the granaries, or store-houses, or treasuries of the Babylonians, and to cast up the cities as *heaps* of rubbish, and utterly to destroy the city with such a total destruction that nothing of it should be left.

r Ps. 22. 12. Is. 34. 7. ch. 46. 21. 27 Slay all her [r]bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them!

a ch. 48. 44. ver. 31. for their day is come, the time of [a]their visitation.

By *bullocks* in this place interpreters generally understand the great and rich men of Babylon.

b ch. 51. 10, 11. 28 The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, [b]to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple.

The prophet here brings in the poor Jews that had been captives in Babylon going back upon Cyrus's proclamation of liberty towards Zion, there joyfully to declare the revenge which their God had taken for them, and for his holy *temple*, which the Chaldeans had burnt and destroyed.

c ver. 14. 29 Call together the archers against Babylon: [c]all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof

d ver. 15. ch. 51. 56. Rev. 18. 6. escape: [d]recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath

e Is. 47. 10. done, do unto her: [e]for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

The word translated *archers* signifieth also *many*, and is by divers so translated, but the following words more justify our translation. The cause of God's calling for Babylon's enemies against her is assigned to be her *pride against the Lord*.

f ch. 49. 26. & 51. 4. 30 [f]Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD.

See chap. xlix. 26, where we met with the same words.

† Heb. *pride*. g ver. 27. 31 Behold, I *am* against thee, *O thou* †most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts: for [g]thy day is come, the time *that* I will visit thee.

Babylon is particularly branded for pride, which is the swelling of a man's heart in a self-opinion, caused from something wherein he excelleth, or thinks that he excelleth, another. We have a large account of the pride of Babylon Isa. xiv. 12—14, and particularly of one of their kings, Dan. v. 20, 21. The sinner exalteth himself against God, and either judgeth himself wiser or more mighty than he.

† Heb. *pride*. h ch. 21. 14. 32 And †the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and [h]I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.

Babylon, before called *the most proud*, here *pride* in the abstract, (which speaketh this people excessively faulty in this thing,) shall fall, and so fall as never more to be recovered and raised up.

33 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The children of Israel and the children of Judah *were* oppressed together: and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go.

Were oppressed together; not together in respect of times, for there was one hundred and fifty years difference betwixt the time of Israel's and Judah's captivity; nor by the same enemy, Israel was carried away captive by the Assyrians, Judah by the Chaldeans. *Together* in this place signifies no more than that they were both oppressed, or alike oppressed. *And all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go:* and some may think that my prophecies are but flatteries and vain words, for those who have them in their hands are able to keep them, and will not be willing to let them go.

i Rev. 18. 8. k Is. 47. 4. 34 [i]Their Redeemer *is* strong; [k]the LORD of hosts *is* his name: he shall throughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name; the Lord, whose name is the Lord of hosts, is he that is their avenger (for so the word signifies); and he is as strong as any of those that hold them fast, and will not let them go. *He shall throughly plead their cause;* he will plead their cause, not like a lawyer, but actually and really effect it, as pleading is often taken, as chap. xxv. 31; Ezek. xvii. 20; Joel iii. 2. *That he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon:* these are the two ends which God aimeth at, to give his people rest, and to punish Babylon.

l Dan. 5. 30. m Is. 47. 13. 35 ¶ A sword *is* upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and [l]upon her princes, and upon [m]her wise *men*.

That is, there shall come a sword, the sword of the Medes, upon Babylon, and all the land of the Chaldeans, and all orders of persons in it.

n Is. 44. 25. ch. 4o. 30. ‖ Or, *Chief stays.* † Heb. *bars.* 36 A sword *is* [n]upon the ‖†liars; and they shall dote: a sword *is* upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed.

A sword is upon the liars; and they shall dote: the word here translated *liars* is by some translated *bars*, by some *liars;* and in the Hebrew it hath both significations; which makes some think it is to be understood of the chief men, who are the props, stays, and bars of a place, whose wisdom God threatens should fail them, so as they should dote, and show themselves fools. Others, translating it *liars* as we do, understand it of their soothsayers and wizards, whom he calls *liars*, because they divined false, and saith they should dote, not foreseeing what should be. *A sword is upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed:* and though they were full of valiant, mighty men, yet their hearts should fail them when this day came, and all be destroyed amongst the rest.

o ch. 25. 20, 24. Ezek. 30. 5. p ch. 51. 30. Nah. 3. 13. 37 A sword *is* upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all [o]the mingled people that *are* in the midst of her; and [p]they shall become as women: a sword *is* upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.

A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots; though they be full of chariots and horses, the enemy shall destroy them. By *the mingled people* some understand those whom the Babylonians had hired to their assistance from other nations; others, such strangers as lived amongst them; others, a people under the power of the Chaldeans, made up of people of several countries. See chap. xxv. 20. 24; Ezek. xxx. 5. They seem to signify a people that were not native Chaldeans, but under their dominion. *They shall become as women;* that is, faint-hearted. *A sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed;* and though Babylon hath great treasures, yet those shall not secure her, she shall be robbed of them.

q Is. 44. 27. ch. 51. 32, 36. Rev. 16. 12. r ver. 2. ch. 51. 44, 47, 52. 38 [q]A drought *is* upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it *is* the land of [r]graven images, and they are mad upon *their* idols.

A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up: some think that this phrase hath a special reference to Cyrus's stratagem used in the surprise of Babylon; one part of it was fortified by the great river Euphrates, running on one side, which Cyrus diverted by cutting several channels, till he had drained it so low, that it became passable for his army to go over. Others think that a want of rain is here threatened. *For it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols:* God gives the reason of this judgment, which was their idolatry, and exceeding zeal for it.

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a Is. 13. 21, 22. & 34. 14. ch. 51. 37. Rev. 18. 2.

39 aTherefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell *there*, and the owls shall dwell therein: t and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

t Is. 13. 20. ch. 25. 12.

u Gen. 19. 25. Is. 13. 19. ch. 49. 18. & 50. 26.

40 uAs God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD; *so* shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.

The substance of both these verses is, that Babylon should be totally ruined, as Sodom and Gomorrah, so as there should be no habitations for men, but wild beasts only of all sorts should inhabit and lodge in it. The fulfilling of this we have not in holy writ, only the beginning of its accomplishment, it being taken by Cyrus, who only made them tributaries, and took away their government. But they rebelling against the emperor of the Medes, Darius Hystaspes, a succeeding emperor, pulled down their walls. And about two hundred and fifty years after Seleucus Nicanor, a Grecian prince, the Medes being before conquered by Alexander the Great, utterly destroyed Babylon, so as in the time of Hadrian the Roman emperor there was nothing left standing of that great city but some pieces of walls.

x ver. 9. ch. 6. 22. & 25. 14. & 51. 27. Rev. 17. 16.

41 xBehold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

The Medes and Persians with their armies, who shall also have many other kings who, from the several parts of the earth, shall join with them and help them.

y ch. 6. 22. z Is. 13. 18. a Is. 5. 30.

42 yThey shall hold the bow and the lance: zthey *are* cruel, and will not shew mercy: atheir voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, *every one* put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon.

The bow and the lance were the two usual weapons of soldiers in those countries, chap. vi. 23. The Persians were a *cruel*, bloody people. These phrases signify no more than that the enemies should come upon Babylon in a terrible manner, and prepared to destroy them.

43 The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed

b ch. 49. 24.

feeble: banguish took hold of him, *and* pangs as of a woman in travail.

The Medes shall not be more prepared to destroy the Babylonians, than they shall be unprepared to make any resistance; as God will animate their enemies, so he will dispirit them, so as they shall faint upon the report of their coming, and be like a woman upon whom strong pangs of travail are.

c ch. 49. 19, &c.

44 cBehold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who *is* a chosen *man, that* I may appoint over her? for who *is* like me? and who will ‖appoint me the time? and dwho *is* that shepherd that will stand before me?

‖ Or, *constitute me to plead.*

d Job 41. 10. ch. 49. 19. e Is. 14. 24, &c. ch. 51. 11.

45 Therefore hear ye ethe counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make *their* habitation desolate with them.

See the notes on chap. xlix. 19, where we have applied unto Edom all that is here spoken against Babylon.

f Rev. 18. 9.

46 fAt the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.

We have much the same spoken with reference to Edom, chap. xlix. 20. The words are only expressive of the greatness of the destruction of Babylon, which should be such as should make all that part of the world shake, and the noise of it would ring throughout all the nations in that part of the earth.

CHAP. LI.

The severe judgment of God against voluptuous, covetous, tyrannical, and idolatrous Babel, in the revenge and for the redemption of Israel, 1—58. *Jeremiah delivereth the book of this prophecy to Seraiah, to be cast into Euphrates, in token of the perpetual sinking of Babylon,* 59—64.

THUS saith the LORD; Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in the †midst of them that rise up against me, a destroying wind;

† Heb. *heart.*

a 2 Kings 19. 7. ch. 4. 11.

In this chapter the prophecy of the destruction of Babylon is continued under new metaphors; he begins with that of a wind, *a destroying wind*, (as northerly winds are ordinarily very pernicious,) but the Hebrew idiom so ill suiteth that of other languages, that it is no easy matter positively to assert the sense of the words used. In the Hebrew they are, *and to, or against, those that inhabit the heart of those that rise up.* Some would have it those that are wise in their own opinion, and are therefore said to dwell in their heart; others, those that are secure; but the best interpreters judge our translation to have best hit the sense,—*them that dwell in the heart*, that is, in the midst of the Chaldeans, who are here said to have risen up against God, to strive against God, chap. l. 24.

2 And will send unto Babylon bfanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: cfor in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about.

b ch. 15. 7. c ch. 50. 14.

Wicked men are compared to *chaff*, Psal. i. 4. Such as execute judgment on them are called *fanners*, Jer. xv. 7; so Matt. iii. 12; because as the fanner keepeth what is in the fan unquiet in a continual motion and agitation, by which (advantaged by the wind) he emptieth it of the chaff; so the executioners of God's vengeance, by a succession of judgments, keeps a people from quiet, till all their chaff be winnowed out, and the fan be emptied of all but the more solid grain. For (he saith) as the fanner first riddleth what he hath in his fan one way, then another, first throweth it up, then lets it fall into the fan; so the enemies should be *round about Babylon*, and God would be on every side and every way destroying them.

3 Against *him that* bendeth dlet the archer bend his bow, and against *him that* lifteth himself up in his brigandine: and spare ye not her young men; edestroy ye utterly all her host.

d ch. 50. 14. e ch. 50. 21.

Whatever arms the Babylonians shall be armed with, they shall meet with their matches; those that are archers shall meet with archers to bend the bow against them, and those who are otherwise armed shall meet with persons prepared to encounter them at their own weapons. Their whole host shall be destroyed, both young and old men.

4 Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, fand *they that are* thrust through in her streets.

f ch. 49. 26. & 50. 30, 37.

Thus all of them shall be destroyed, some in the fields, some in the streets of their cities.

5 For Israel *hath* not *been* forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.

That is, not utterly forsaken, for in a sense they were

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forsaken as to some gradual manifestations of God's love to them, but Judah and Israel were not left as a widow, or were not divorced from God. The word translated *sin* signifies a most heinous sinning, or desolation, and the best interpreters judge that *sin* here signifieth the punishment of sin. God hath not forsaken the Jews utterly, though as they were formerly filled with grievous sins, so they be now filled with grievous judgments because of their sins.

g ch. 50. 8. Rev. 18. 4. 6 [g]Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not h ch. 50. 15. 28. i ch. 25. 14. cut off in her iniquity; for [h]this *is* the time of the LORD's vengeance; [i]he will render unto her a recompence.

It is a matter of no great moment whether we understand these words as spoken to the Jews in the captivity of Babylon, as chap. l. 8, or to those whom the Chaldeans had hired to help them, or to such strangers as for their secular advantages lived in Babylon. By *soul* here seemeth to be meant *life*, and by *iniquity* the punishment of the Babylonians' iniquity (as the Hebrew word oft signifies); though in the New Testament these words be used as a monition to people to separate from the idolatries of mystical Babylon, yet they seem here to be only a warning to others to remove out of the reach of Babylon's fall. *For this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence;* for the time is come when God hath determined to take vengeance on Babylon, and to recompense to her all her sin, and that cruelty which she showed to the Jews in particular.

k Rev. 17. 4. 7 [k]Babylon *hath been* a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth l Rev. 14. 8. drunken: [l]the nations have drunken of m ch. 25. 16. her wine; therefore the nations [m]are mad.

A golden cup, because of her great riches and plenty. God hitherto had made use of Babylon as a rod in his hand, and had given her riches, and power, and prosperity proportioned to the service he had for her to do; what she did she did by commission from God; therefore this golden cup is said to have been *in the Lord's hand*. She had made all the nations about her drunken with the Lord's fury, conquering them all, and making them mad through the misery and smart they felt from her. Babylon in Daniel is compared to a head of gold; and, Rev. xvii. 4, she is said to have a golden cup in her hand; but the meaning is no more than this, that God had raised up Babylon to great degrees of dignity and splendour, intending to make use of her to execute his vengeance upon many other people; and he did accordingly so use her, to give the cup of his fury to many nations to the enraging of divers people; but now the course of his providence toward her was altering, &c.

n Is. 21. 9. Rev. 14. 8. & 18. 2. o ch. 48. 20. Rev. 18. 9, 11, 19. p ch. 46. 11. 8 Babylon is suddenly [n]fallen and destroyed: [o]howl for her; [p]take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

That is, she shall suddenly fall and be destroyed; you may try all the probable ways for her cure, but they will all be used to no purpose.

q Is. 13. 4. ch. 50. 16. r Rev. 18. 5. 9 We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and [q]let us go every one into his own country: [r]for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up *even* to the skies.

The prophet here seemeth to personate the mercenary soldiers that should come to help the Chaldeans, as if they should say this, they would have helped Babylon, but there was no healing for her; and therefore they call one to another to leave her to herself, and return each man to his own country, for her punishment was very great, her case too sad for them to help. The reaching of things to the heavens, and lifting them up to the skies, are phrases used to signify high and great measures and degrees of things, so expressed Gen. xi. 4; xxviii. 12; Deut. i. 28; 1 Sam. v. 12; 2 Chron. xxviii. 9; Psal. cvii. 26.

s Ps. 37. 6. t ch. 50. 28. 10 The LORD hath [s]brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us [t]declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God.

These words are spoken as in the person of the Jews, owning the destruction of Babylon, 1. To be the mighty work of God. 2. An act of justice and judgment, pleading the cause and revenging the wrongs of his people; and owning the Jewish religion, and calling one to another to go to the temple to declare what God had done for them, and to give thanks unto him for it.

u ch. 46. 4. † Heb. *pure.* x Is. 13. 17. ver. 28. y ch. 50. 45. z ch. 50. 28. 11 [u]Make †bright the arrows; gather the shields: [x]the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: [y]for his device *is* against Babylon, to destroy it; because it *is* [z]the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple.

Make bright the arrows; prepare the arrows for fighting, whether by feathering, sharpening, or polishing and cleansing of them, is not much material. *Gather the shields;* you that are Chaldeans, gather all the shields you have together, you will have need of them all: or, you that are the enemies of the Chaldeans, gather you together your shields. For God hath put a spirit into Cyrus and Darius, &c., and his design is against Babylon to destroy it. It is a day in which God is resolved to take vengeance on Babylon, to take vengeance for the indignities they have offered to, and the horrible profanation of, his temple.

a Nah. 2. 1. & 3. 14. † Heb. *liers in wait.* 12 [a]Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the †ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon.

Some judge these words spoken to the Medes, declaring the will of God, that they should use all probable means to conquer Babylon, or (as some would have it) display their banners upon the walls of it, as signs of its being already conquered: but certainly it is more reasonable to conclude them the prophet's words to the Babylonians, either rousing them out of their security, (for it appears they were strangely secure from Dan. v.; historians tell us that the city was fortified by walls fifty cubits high, and two hundred cubits broad, and by a very deep and large ditch, besides that on one side it had the river Euphrates,) or at least quickening them to make all the preparation they could, though all would be to very little purpose, for God had resolved upon what he would do upon Babylon, and it was already as good as done.

b Rev. 17. 1, 15. 13 [b]O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, *and* the measure of thy covetousness.

Babylon is said to dwell upon many waters, because upon the great river Euphrates, which they say did not only run by it, but almost encompass it, branching itself into many smaller rivers, which made several parts of the city islands. *Abundant in treasures;* it is a city much noted in Scripture for wealth, and made much more wealthy than it was by traffic by the conquest of many nations. *Thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness:* the prophet tells them that now their gathering time was over, there was now a boundary set to their covetousness; in the Hebrew it is, *the cubit of thy coretousness*, which is by our translators well translated a *measure*, because it was amongst the Jews the common measure of height and depth. The word by us translated covetousness, as Exod. xviii. 21, may either signify *riches*, the object of their covetousness, or prosperity, or that unlawful desire of having more, which is properly called *coretousness*, either because they should be destroyed utterly, or because they should prosper no more; there was no end put to the Babylonians' lusts, but there was an end put to the satisfaction of their lusts.

c ch. 49. 13. Amos 6. 8. † Heb. *by his soul.* d Nah. 3. 15. ‡ Heb. *utter.* e ch. 6. 15. 14 [c]The LORD of hosts hath sworn †by himself, *saying*, Surely I will fill thee with men, [d]as with caterpillers; and they shall ‡lift [e]up a shout against thee.

The Lord, that is able to bring to pass what he saith, hath sworn by his life, or by himself; see the like phrase chap. xxii. 5; xliv. 26; xlix. 13; Amos iv. 2; vi. 8; Isa.

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xlv. 23; that is, the thing next mentioned shall come to pass as certainly as that there is a God in heaven, or that God liveth. *Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars;* I will bring against thee a great army, that shall be like a swarm of caterpillars, and shall come against thee in such numbers as caterpillars use to come, and for the same end, to eat thee up and destroy thee; and as soldiers use do when they go on to fight their enemies, or to assault cities, they shall make a great shout against thee.

f Gen. 1. 1, 6. ch. 10. 12, &c.
g Job 9. 8. Ps. 104. 2. Is. 40. 22.

15 [f]He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and [g]hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.

h ch. 10. 13.
‖ Or, *noise.*
i Ps. 135. 7.

16 [h]When he uttereth *his* voice, *there is* a ‖multitude of waters in the heavens; and [i]he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

k ch. 10. 14.
‖ Or, *is more brutish than to know.*
l ch. 50. 2.

17 [k]Every man ‖is brutish by *his* knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image: [l]for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them.

m ch. 10. 15.

18 [m]They *are* vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

n ch. 10. 16.

19 [n]The portion of Jacob *is* not like them; for he *is* the former of all things: and *Israel is* the rod of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts *is* his name.

We had these five verses all in the tenth chapter, ver. 12—16. See there the explication of the several passages in them; the scope of which is only to convince those to whom the prophet spoke, that notwithstanding all the power, and riches, and greatness, and alliances of the Chaldeans, yet that God who had threatened this ruin to them was able to bring it upon them, and all their idols were vanities, things of nought, that should not be able to protect them, and from whose power or impotency they must not measure nor make up a judgment of what God was able to do; for Israel's God was that God who made the world, and the Lord of all the armies of the creatures, whether in heaven or earth.

o Is. 10. 5, 15. ch. 50. 23.
‖ Or, *in thee, or, by thee.*

20 [o]Thou *art* my battle ax *and* weapons of war: for ‖with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms;

Interpreters are here divided, whether by *thou* or *thee* in this and the following verses to understand Cyrus, whom God made use of to destroy Babylon and many other places, or Babylon. Our translators understand it of Cyrus, and therefore speak of the future tense, *will I.* The Hebrew text will not resolve us; I rather incline to interpret it of Babylon, as indeed the most do, and so it should be, *Thou hast been,* and *art,* for that is the sense; Cyrus and Darius were not yet in being. God had made use of Babylon like a hammer or battle-axe to break many nations in pieces.

21 And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider;

p So 2 Chro. 36. 17.

22 With thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces [p]old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid;

23 I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers.

The sense of all these three verses is the same, viz. that God had made use of, and was still making use of, the Babylonians to waste and to destroy many nations, to spoil and impoverish much people, wasting their goods, routing their armies, killing all sorts of their inhabitants.

q ch. 50. 15, 29.

24 [q]And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD.

The particle in the front of this verse, which our translators (understanding the four former verses of Cyrus) render *and* in a copulative sense, must be rendered *now,* or *but,* if the four former verses be understood of Babylon, and the sense is this: Though I have hitherto made use of Babylon, and shall yet for a time make use of the Chaldeans and Babylonians to destroy several other nations; yet now the time is come that I will punish them, and recompense to them all the mischief they have done to the Jews, and some of the Jews shall live to see it.

r Is. 13. 2. Zech. 4. 7.
s Rev. 8. 8.

25 Behold, I *am* against thee, [r]O destroying mountain, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, [s]and will make thee a burnt mountain.

Babylon is not here called a *mountain* because it was situated upon any hills or mountains, for it appears from Gen. xi. 2 that it was situated in a plain, and we read, ver. 13, that it dwelt upon many *waters;* but because it was very *high* for its power and greatness, and had very high walls and towers, that it looked at a distance like a high rocky mountain, and, as some say, (being a very large city,) was full of trees. They had destroyed many people of the earth that lay near to them. God threatens to destroy them notwithstanding their towers and great fortifications, as many times they threw down malefactors from high rocks, mountains, and precipices; and to make them like Ætna or Vesuvius, or like some other mountains of sulphur, or other bituminous matter fired, which are always burning; or else he threateneth that their cities and towers, which appeared like a mountain, should be burnt.

t ch. 50. 40.
† Heb. *everlasting desolations.*

26 And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; [t]but thou shalt be †desolate for ever, saith the LORD.

God threateneth to Babylon an utter ruin and desolation, so as they should not have a stone left fit to lay a foundation, or to make a corner-stone; or, as some others interpret it, that city should never be built again, there should never from the rubbish of it be taken a stone to lay the foundation, nor to lay upon the corners of new houses, new walls, new towers in that place. Foundation-stones, and corner-stones, are principal stones in buildings. Nothing shall be left in Babylon of any worth, value, or considerableness.

u Is. 13. 2.
x ch. 25. 14.
y ch. 50. 41.

27 [u]Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, [x]prepare the nations against her, call together against her [y]the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers.

The former words of this verse are expounded by those that follow; setting up of standards and blowings of trumpets are preparatory to bring armies together. The setting up of standards, and blowing of trumpets, are military signs of the will of those princes or captains-general whose those standards are, and to whom those trumpets belong, that those soldiers who are under their command should gather themselves together to the places where those standards are set up, and those trumpets blown. What this *kingdom of Ararat* was, and those of *Minni* and *Ashchenaz,* is very hard to determine. We read of a mountain called Ararat, where the ark rested after the flood, Gen. viii. 4. Of Minni we read no where else: most writers think these were two kingdoms within Armenia. Ashchenaz descended from Noah by Japheth, Gen. x. 3. Certain it is that

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the emperor of the Medes had the dominion of these places, from whence it is very probable that either Cyrus or Darius, or both, drew out soldiers to help them to conquer the Chaldeans. *Appoint a captain against her:* after people are gathered together for war, the first thing to be done is to put them into military order, constituting a captain-general. *Cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars.* Others read it, like the wasting caterpillar, or like the horrible affrighting caterpillar. Great disputes there are amongst critical interpreters what caterpillars are here meant, the caterpillars being generally smooth; but as we know not the complexion of insects over all the world, so even amongst us we see some caterpillars that look a little rough: that which alone we are here to attend is why the Median *horses* are compared to these insects: undoubtedly it is either, 1. With respect to their numbers, for caterpillars in those countries used to come in vast numbers. 2. Or in regard of the horror and trembling caused by them in people when they came, being a great plague to the places which they infested.

28 Prepare against her the nations with
x ver. 11. [x]the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion.

Here the prophet declares those particular princes and nations that should be God's instruments to destroy Babylon, viz. Cyrus and Darius, the emperors of the Medes, with all the forces under their command, and people under their dominion.

29 And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the LORD
a ch. 50. 13, 39, 40. ver. 43. shall be performed against Babylon, [a]to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.

That is, Babylon, or the land of Chaldea, shall tremble and sorrow; for God hath determined to destroy it, and to leave it wholly desolate, so as none should dwell in it.

30 The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight, they have remained in *their* holds: their might hath failed;
b Is. 19. 16. ch. 48. 41. & 50. 37. c Lam. 2. 9. Amos 1. 5. Nah. 3. 13. [b]they became as women: they have burned her dwellingplaces; [c]her bars are broken.

When God hath determined an end, he ordereth means proportionable to that end. Babylon had many valiant and mighty men, and it is very probable the Babylonians trusted very much to them; but when it came to, God took off their courage, so as they had no heart to fight, but kept themselves in their strong holds, and if at any time they came out, their courage failed them, and they behaved themselves more like women than men of war; so as their enemies burned their cities, brake down their fortifications, and made what havoc they pleased.

d ch. 50. 24. 31 [d]One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at *one* end,

We have had occasion once and again to recite what we have in civil historians about the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, viz. that it was taken by surprise, by the Median emperor's unexpected diverting the river Euphrates by divers channels which he cut; as also that Babylon was a very vast city, the greatness of which might admit of posts and messengers from one end of the city to another, to acquaint the king what was done at the other end of the city in which himself was resident; and it is said that the king of Babylon, when his city was taken, did not know of his danger until the enemy had entered the city.

e ch. 50. 38. 32 And that [e]the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.

This was part of the message which the prophet saith the messenger should carry to the king of Babylon, that was in the other part of the city, that the passages over the river Euphrates, or any other passages by which the Babylonians might, upon the enemies' entrance, make their escape, were all stopped, and guarded with soldiers, or otherwise, so as there was no hope of any making an escape. The word translated *reeds* signifies also standing pools of water, and that some judge the sense, the water is drained out of the pits or pools, so as it could not hinder the entrance of the enemies: those that adhere to the translation of it *reeds*, say that upon the borders of the river Euphrates were vast quantities of great and tall reeds, which, with the mud in which they stood, were as another wall to the city, but the Medes had burnt up them, so as the way was open to the walls; and the men of war, seeing these reeds burnt up, and the water drained from them, were affrighted, so as their hearts through fear failed them.

33 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; The daughter of Babylon *is* [f]like a threshingfloor, [g]‖ *it is* time to thresh her: yet a little while, [h]and the time of her harvest shall come.
f Is. 21. 10. Mic. 4. 13. Amos 1. 3. g Is. 41. 15. Hab. 3. 12. ‖ Or, *in the time that he threshetb her.* h Is 17. 5, &c. Hos. 6. 11. Joel 3. 13. Rev 14. 15, 18.

Babylon had been a threshing instrument by which, and a threshing-floor in which, God had threshed many other nations; God now intended to make it as *a threshing-floor* wherein he would thresh the Chaldeans. *It is time to thresh her:* some think because of the next words, that the words were better translated *it is time to tread her*, (so the word properly signifies,) as men use to prepare their threshing-floors against the time of harvest, for the time of this harvest was near; *her harvest* signifieth the harvest which the justice of God would have from the ruin of the Chaldeans.

34 Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath [i]devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out.
i ch. 50. 17.

The prophet speaketh this in the name of the Jews, complaining of the *king of Babylon* as the author of all the miseries they had endured, which he expresseth by several phrases signifying the same thing, viz. that it was the king of Babylon that had ruined them, and filled himself and his soldiers with their delicate things, and cast them out of their land, dealing with them as wolves or other beasts of prey, that eat what they please of other beasts they have preyed upon, and leave the rest in the fields.

35 †The violence done to me and to my ‖flesh *be* upon Babylon, shall the †inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say.
† Heb. *My violence.* ‖ Or, *remainder.* † Heb. *inhabitress.*

The words are either a prayer, or a prediction of God's vengeance upon Babylon; so Psal. cxxxvii. 7, 8. God hath said vengeance is his, and he will repay it. The church of the Jews here commits its cause to God, and prayeth him to execute vengeance for her. How far it is lawful for us to pray against our enemies we have heard once and again.

36 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, [k]I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; [l]and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.
k ch. 50. 34. l ch. 50. 38.

Men had need take heed how they give cause of appeals to God against them, especially the appeals of such as are a people that have a covenant relation to God. God in those cases ordinarily showeth himself a *swift witness* and *judge*, and gives a speedy judgment in such causes. *Behold*, saith God, *I will plead thy cause*, not with words, but actually with my judicial dispensations, therefore it is expounded by taking vengeance. The vengeance which God threateneth is expressed metaphorically under the notion of *drying up her sea, and making her springs dry*, which signifies the depriving her of all necessaries, not only of the abundance of her men, riches, treasures, but of her springs. Thus I had rather expound it, than as referring to the particular stratagem by which Cyrus took Babylon, viz. by drying up in some measure the river Euphrates, that is, turning it into other channels.

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m Is. 13. 22. ch. 50. 39. Rev. 18. 2. n ch. 25. 9, 18.

37 m And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwellingplace for dragons, n an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.

Babylon shall become heaps; heaps of rubbish. *A dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.* See the notes on chap. l. 39, 40, where the same thing was before said.

‖ Or, *shake themselves.*

38 They shall roar together like lions: they shall ‖ yell as lions' whelps.

It is uncertain whether this be to be understood of the Medes, making horrible roarings and noises when they took Babylon; or of the Babylonians, who upon the taking of their city (as is usual) made horrid outcries, as being a people quite undone: some think it referreth to the drunken noises of the Babylonians at their festival, during the celebration of which we are told their city was taken; but to this one would think the comparison of *lions' whelps* (which ordinarily yell for want of victuals, or for some mischief done them, not when their bellies are full) should not so well agree.

o ver. 57.

39 In their heat I will make their feasts, and o I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the LORD.

When they shall grow hot with wine, I will put, or give, or make them a feast of another nature. Interpreters judge that the prophet referreth to the feast made by Belshazzar, Dan. v. 1, *to a thousand of his lords*, when he and his wives and concubines drank wine in the vessels belonging to the temple, during which feast the city was taken. So they were made drunk with the wine cup of God's fury, because the Lord had designed them to utter ruin and destruction, that as men filled with wine are merry, and shout, and then fall asleep; so the Chaldeans being drunk with the wine of the Lord's wrath, while they were merry with their cups of wine, might fall into such a sleep as they should never awake out of.

40 I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he goats.

That is, they shall be destroyed before they are aware of it.

p ch. 25. 26.

q Is. 13. 19. ch. 49. 25. Dan. 4. 30.

41 How is p Sheshach taken! and how is q the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!

We meet with this term *Sheshach* only here, and chap. xxv. 26; both places leave it doubtful whether it be to be taken for an idol, which they called by the name of *Shach*, or a name given to the city of Babylon, which worshipped that idol, to the honour of which the Babylonians kept a yearly festival for several days; in the time of which festival they say it was that Cyrus took the city of Babylon. *The praise of the whole earth;* Babylon, that was so famous over all the world for her splendour. And so it is interpreted in the next words, wherein Babylon, for the punishment brought upon it, is said to be an astonishment to all nations; which makes it probable that Babylon is what was called Sheshach, by the doubling of a letter, because she worshipped Shach.

r See Is. 8. 7, 8.

42 r The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.

A multitude of enemies, that are like the sea in which there is a multitude of waters, or that will overrun them as the sea overfloweth the shore, or any land into which it once breaketh.

s ch. 50. 39, 40. ver. 29.

43 s Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth *any* son of man pass thereby.

See chap. ii. 6; ix. 12: the words are all of them descriptive of an utter desolation, that should not only be the fate of Babylon the head city, but of all the inferior cities, that were as daughters to that mother city.

t Is. 46. 1. ch. 50. 2.

u ver. 58.

44 t And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, u the wall of Babylon shall fall.

And I will punish Bel and Babylon: Bel was the principal Babylonian *idol*, of which see what is noted chap. l. 2. *And I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up;* all the vessels of the temple, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7, and whatever gifts the Babylonians had presented to him. *And the nations shall not flow together any more unto him:* it was the custom of other nations to send presents to the gods of those nations whom they were in subjection to, or whom they would appease, whence it is that we read the Philistines when they had the ark would not send it home without a present, 1 Sam. vi. 11. God by his prophet foretelleth that the time should come when the nations should come no more to Babylon, neither to pay a homage to their chief idol, nor yet to bring offerings unto him. *Yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall;* and the city of Babylon should be also ruined.

x ver. 6. ch. 50. 8. Rev. 18. 4.

45 x My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD.

These words are an exhortation to the Jews to be willing, upon the first proclamation of liberty by Cyrus, to go out of Babylon, notwithstanding the pleasantness of the place, and that now their stakes had been pitched there many years, because of the ruin which should most certainly come on that place.

‖ Or, *let not.*

y 2 Kings 19. 7.

46 And ‖ lest your heart faint, and ye fear y for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; a rumour shall both come *one* year, and after that in *another* year *shall come* a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler.

And lest your heart faint; and lest they should be affrighted by the succession of evils year after year that should come on Babylon. Some think it were better translated, *And let not your heart faint.* Though you should hear of Cyrus's coming year after year, yet faint not; (for they say Cyrus was one year preparing, and that he spent the second year in passing through Assyria, so as he came not at Babylon till the third year;) no, not though you should see or hear of successive troubles, and a great deal of violence in the land by the opposition of great princes one to another, for none of them shall do you any harm; but this doth not so well suit to the former verse, where they are bidden to make haste out and to save their own lives. I do therefore prefer the sense of our interpreters, and their translation of it, as making another argument to persuade them to make haste out, because they would by reason of the successive evils year after year coming upon the Babylonians live there very troublesome and uneasy lives.

z ch. 50. 2. ver. 52. † Heb. *visit upon.*

47 Therefore, behold, the days come, that z I will † do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.

I will do, that is, I will execute, *judgment upon the* idols *of Babylon*, and the *whole land* of Chaldea *shall be confounded*, when they shall see that their idols will do them no more service. *And all her slain shall fall in the midst of her:* some, instead of *her slain*, would have it read, *her dancers*, (for the city was taken while Belshazzar and his whole court were revelling,) but the learned author of the English Annotations tells us the word will not bear it.

a Is. 44. 23. & 49. 13. Rev. 18. 20.

b ch. 50. 3, 41.

48 Then a the heaven and the earth, and all that *is* therein, shall sing for Babylon: b for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD.

All the creatures in heaven and earth shall rejoice at the vengeance which God shall take upon Babylon, which had been the destroyer of so many of their people. The

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Median soldiers are those here called *spoilers from the north.*

‖ Or, *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and with Babylon, &c.* ‖ Or, *the country.*

49 ‖ As Babylon *hath caused* the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all ‖ the earth.

The words in the Hebrew have some difficulty, which is not so obvious to those not acquainted with that language, but hath given occasion to interpreters to vary in their particular translations of it; but they mostly agree in the general sense, viz. that these words are given as a reason why the whole earth should so much rejoice in the ruin of Babylon, because Babylon had caused Israel to fall. The latter term, *all the earth*, must be understood in a restrained sense, for *that earth;* the Chaldeans coming up from all parts of Chaldea to help Babylon, should be slain there, as by the means of Babylon the Israelites were slain that came up from all parts of Judea to help Jerusalem.

c ch. 44. 28.

50 [c]Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the LORD afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.

It is hard to resolve whether the prophet here speaks to the Chaldeans, or the Medes, or the Jews, though most understand it of the Jews, whom God would have leave Babylon as soon as they should have a liberty proclaimed; and to remember when they came into Judea the great things, both of justice toward the Chaldeans and mercy toward them, which God had done; and keep Jerusalem in their mind, as the place where they were to worship God according to his direction, and for which God had so wrought.

d Ps. 44. 15, 16. & 79. 4.

51 [d]We are confounded, because we have heard reproach: shame hath covered our faces: for strangers are come into the sanctuaries of the LORD's house.

The words of this verse seem to prove that the Jews were the persons intended in the former verse, whom God would have to go away, and not to stand still; for it is out of doubt that it is of them the prophet here speaketh, and whom the prophet brings in here, saying, *We are confounded*, that is, *ashamed* (as it is expounded in the next words) to hear the enemies reproaching us for our God, or for our religion, as Psal. cxxxvii. 3; and *because* pagans that were strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, who, Numb. i. 51, might not come near the tabernacle of the Lord, were come, and that not to worship, but to plunder and rifle in the *sanctuaries of the Lord*, even into the court of the priests and of the Israelites, and into the most holy place; those whose very presence in these places had been a pollution of them.

e ver. 47.

52 Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, [e]that I will do judgment upon her graven images: and through all her land the wounded shall groan.

For which complaints of my people, or rather for which profanation of my holy place, I will be revenged upon their graven images, and not only upon their idols, but upon the worshippers of them, and cause a groaning of wounded men over all the country of the Chaldeans; I will cause them to know that their idols are not able to protect them from my power and justice.

f ch. 49. 16. Amos 9. 2. Obad. 4.

53 [f]Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, *yet* from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the LORD.

We are very prone to measure things by the measures of our own reasons, and to judge of events which are to be the effects of Divine power by human probabilities, therefore God is put to use many words to the same purpose: he saw the Jews saying in their hearts, How can these things be? Babylon hath impregnable walls, two hundred feet high, (so historians report,) and of a great breadth, and it hath very strong and high towers. God by his prophet tells them, that if they could mount up as high as heaven, if they could make their towers much stronger than they were, yet the *spoilers* were to come from him, and he could and would send spoilers who would pull down her walls, and break down her towers.

g ch. 50. 22.

54 [g]A sound of a cry *cometh* from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans:

To assure them that what God threatened should certainly be, he calls to the Jews to listen, as if already there were a cry from Babylon, and a sound of a great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans.

55 Because the LORD hath spoiled Babylon, and destroyed out of her the great voice; when her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of their voice is uttered:

The sword is not so much the sword of the Medes as the sword of the Lord. It is he who is to be looked at, as the spoiler of Babylon. *And destroyed out of her the great voice;* and hath made to cease in that great city the noises caused from the multitudes of people in it walking up and down, and trafficking together. The noise of her enemies that shall break in upon her shall be like the noise and roarings of the sea, when it dasheth upon the shore or upon some rocks. That shall be the only noise shall be heard in her, instead of the noises wont there to be made from the multitude of people, or from revellers.

h Ps. 94. 1. ch. 50. 29. ver. 24.

56 Because the spoiler is come upon her, *even* upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, every one of their bows is broken: [h]for the LORD God of recompences shall surely requite.

Little more is said here than was before, only the words hint the taking of Babylon by a surprise, when the king and the inhabitants were not aware of it, which he had before also told us, ver. 39, 40. In this the prophet saith that God would act but as a just God, a *God of recompences.* Where God's people suffer wrong, and either cannot revenge themselves, or may not do it, being private persons, (to whom God hath given no power of the sword,) if they can exercise faith and patience, they shall find God a God of *recompences*, that can and will requite their enemies, and plead their cause.

i ver. 39.

57 [i]And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise *men*, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith [k]the king, whose name *is* the LORD of hosts.

k ch. 46. 18. & 48. 15.

Drunken men use to fall asleep. The prophet speaks here metaphorically. His meaning is, that the Lord would fill them with the *wine* of his *fury*, mentioned chap. xxv. 15, 16, and upon the drinking of it they should sleep their last sleep, the effects of it should be their utter ruin and destruction. Yet there seemeth to be an allusion to the posture the king of Babylon, and the thousand of his lords, mentioned Dan. v. 1, were in, when their city was taken, (which, as was before said, was in the time of the festival of their idol Shach,) when they were drinking wine in the bowls that were brought from the temple at Jerusalem, ver. 3. Ver. 30, it is said, *In that very night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.*

‖ Or, *The walls of broad Babylon.* l ver. 44. ‖ Or, *made naked* m Hab. 2. 13.

58 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ‖[l]The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly ‖ broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and [m]the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.

Incredible things are told us by historians of this great city. They say the compass of it was threescore miles about; that her walls were in height two hundred feet, in breadth such as two chariots might drive abreast upon the top of them; that it had a hundred great gates, many of them of brass. God threatens the breaking down of these walls, and the burning of these high gates and towers; and that, though the people should labour to quench this fire, or to

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rebuild this city, yet it would be all lost labour, and they should give over their enterprise, as being weary.

598. 59 ¶ The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went ‖with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And *this* Seraiah *was* a ‖quiet prince.

‖ Or, *on the behalf of.* ‖ Or, *prince of Menuchs, or, chief chamberlain.*

Of this *Seraiah* we read no more than we have in this verse, though, chap. xxxvi. 26, there be mention made of another Seraiah. *When he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon:* we no where read of any journey Zedekiah made into Babylon till he was carried a prisoner thither, it is therefore probable that *with* should be translated *from*, as the same particle is in other places, Gen. iv. 1; xliv. 4, it being not usual with great princes to make visits one to another at such distances, though the Jews tell us a story of some such thing. *In the fourth year of his reign:* the expressing of this circumstance of time lets us know that this prophecy was many years before Babylon was destroyed, for it was seven years before Jerusalem was taken; so as it must be above sixty years before it was fulfilled in the first degree. *And this Seraiah was a quiet prince:* the Hebrew word admits of various interpretations; some think that *Menucha* was a place over which Seraiah had some authority under Zedekiah, the same with Manahath, 1 Chron. viii. 6. Others think it was a name of office, and signified *lord chamberlain;* but the best interpreters see no reason to vary from our translation, the sense of which is, that he was a man of a moderate, quiet temper, that persuaded to peace.

60 So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, *even* all these words that are written against Babylon.

61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words;

Not to the Chaldeans, nor possibly is it to be understood of a mere private reading of them to himself, but to the Jews that were in Babylon, acquainting them with what God had spoken against Babylon by the prophet.

62 Then shalt thou say, O LORD, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that [n]none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be †desolate for ever.

n ch. 50. 3, 39. ver. 29. † Heb. *desolations.*

Thou shalt testify that thou believest what thou hast read to be what shall most certainly come to pass, by speaking words to this sense.

63 And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, [o]*that* thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates:

o See Rev. 18. 21.

64 And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: [p]and they shall be weary. Thus far *are* the words of Jeremiah.

p ver. 58.

It hath been often said that Euphrates was that great river which ran by the walls of Babylon; into this Seraiah is commanded by Jeremiah to throw this roll of prophecy against Babylon, symbolically to teach the Jews, that according to the tenor of his prophecy the time should come, after some years, when Babylon should be destroyed never to rise again to any great view or degree of splendour, no more than that roll with the stone tied to it should rise from the bottom of Euphrates. *And they shall be weary;* some read, though they weary themselves, that is, do what they can, or, (as it is here,) and they shall be weary with that weight of judgment which shall be upon them. *Thus far are the words of Jeremiah:* either the words of Jeremiah relating to Babylon reach thus far, or all the words of Jeremiah remaining on sacred record (for it is thought that the next chapter was rather penned by some other holy man); or (which seemeth the best) the prophetical words of Jeremiah, for the matter of the next chapter is historical, and the Book of Lamentations is not prophetical, as to the main of it, though there be in it three or four prophetical passages, Lam. iv. 21, 22, &c.

CHAP. LII.

A repetition of the reign of Zedekiah: of the siege, taking, and destruction of Jerusalem; with the causes thereof; and what further happened there, 1—30. *Evil-merodach advanceth Jehoiachin,* 31—34.

599. ZEDEKIAH *was* [a]one and twenty years old when he †began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

a 2 Kings 24. 18. † Heb. *reigned.*

2 And he did *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

3 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

It is generally thought that what we have in this chapter was not penned by the prophet Jeremiah, who it is not probable would have so largely repeated what he had related before, chap. xxxix., and could not historically relate what happened after his time, as some things did, which are mentioned towards the end of the chapter, from ver. 31 to the end. They therefore rather think it penned by some or other of those in Babylon, and put in here as a preface to the Book of Lamentations. What we have in the three first verses is entirely taken out of 2 Kings xxiv. 18—20. See the notes there.

Here the wicked actings of Zedekiah, and particularly his rebellion against the king of Babylon, who had made him king, as 2 Kings xxiv. 17, and to whom he had given an oath of fealty, is ascribed to the *wrath of the Lord;* God not putting any such wickedness into his heart, but suffering him so to miscarry, having a design to send Judah into captivity. Princes are often by God suffered to miscarry for the sins of their people, which should oblige us, when we think we have cause to complain of the errors of our rulers, to consider whether we have not by some sinful courses provoked God, which hath made him leave our rulers so to miscarry in order to our ruin and punishment.

4 ¶ And it came to pass in the [b]ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about.

590. b 2 Kings 25. 1,—27. ch. 39. 1. Zech. 8. 19.

5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

6 And in the fourth month, in the ninth *day* of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

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7 Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which *was* by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans *were* by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain.

8 ¶ But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.

9 [c]Then they took the king, and car- c ch. 32. 4.

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ried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him.

d Ezek. 12. 13.

10 [d]And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah.

† Heb. *blinded.*

11 Then he †put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in ‖chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in †prison till the day of his death.

Or, *fetters.*

† Heb. *house of the wards.*

This history is found 2 Kings xxv. 1—7, much in the same words. See the annotations on that chapter. Jeremiah also hath the substance of it, chap. xxxix. 1—7; only neither of those places have the last words, from whence we learn that Zedekiah died in Babylon a prisoner.

e Zech. 7. 5. & 8. 19.

f See ver. 29.

12 ¶ [e]Now in the fifth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, [f]which *was* the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, [g]came Nebuzar-adan, ‖† captain of the guard, *which* †served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem,

g ch. 39. 9.

‖ Or, *chief marshal.*

† Heb. *chief of the executioners,* or, *slaughtermen.* And so ver. 14, &c.

† Heb. *stood before.*

13 And burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great *men*, burned he with fire:

14 And all the army of the Chaldeans, that *were* with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.

h ch. 39. 8, 9.

15 [h]Then Nebuzár-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive *certain* of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude.

16 But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left *certain* of the poor of the land for vinedressers and for husbandmen.

See the notes on 2 Kings xxv. 8—12, where all this is related, only with a small difference as to the day of the month when Nebuzar-adan came to Jerusalem and burned the temple. In the Kings it is said he came the seventh day, here it is said he came the tenth day. See the solution of it in the annotations on 2 Kings xxv. Probably he might come into Jerusalem the seventh day, and not burn the temple till the tenth. Much of it also is related by Jeremiah, chap. xxxix. The provost-marshal, about a month after the taking of the city, returned with a part of the army, burned the temple, the great men's houses in the city, and many other houses, and carried away divers prisoners, but left some of the poorer sort of the people to dress the vineyards and till the grounds, which is a thing very usual with conquerors, for their own advantage, that their conquests may yield them some revenue.

i ch. 27. 19.

k See 1 Kin. 7. 15, 23, 27, 50.

17 [i]Also the [k]pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that *was* in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.

The particular enumeration of the parts and utensils of the temple, mentioned in this and in the following verses, may be conceived to have been to justify the prophecy of Jeremiah, chap. xxvii. 19, where there is a particular mention made of the *pillars*, the *bases*, and the *sea*, that they should all, with the residue of the vessels of the temple, be carried into Babylon. Of these *pillars* we read 1 Kings vii. 15; they were of brass, eighteen cubits high, they were in the porch of the temple, ver. 21: of the *bases* we read there also largely, ver. 27—37; they also were all of brass: and of the *sea*, ver. 23—26. These being all made of brass, were, for conveniency of carriage, broken by the Chaldeans.

18 [l]The caldrons also, and the ‖ shovels, and the snuffers, and the ‖ bowls, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.

l Ex. 27. 3. 2 Kings 25. 14, 15, 16.

‖ Or, *instruments to remove the ashes.*

‖ Or, *basons.*

The caldrons also: these were called pots, 2 Kings xxv. 14. *And the shovels;* which were to remove the ashes from the altar. *The snuffers:* some think that this word in this place were better translated *tongs*, because he is speaking of instruments of brass; and that those utensils are not here understood with which they snuffed the lamps, because they were of gold. *The bowls*, or basons; it is uncertain which is here intended, there being in the temple both bowls to drink in, and also basons to receive the blood of the sacrifices. *The spoons;* the word is such as may signify ladles, or cups, or dishes.

19 And the basons, and the ‖ firepans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the cups; *that* which *was* of gold *in* gold, and *that* which *was* of silver *in* silver, took the captain of the guard away.

‖ Or, *censers.*

Some of these utensils were only of brass; others were some of them brass, some of silver, some of gold: the captain of the guard carried away all, both those of silver, and those of gold, and those of brass.

20 The two pillars, one sea, and twelve brasen bulls that *were* under the bases, which king Solomon had made in the house of the LORD: [m]† the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

m 1 Kings 7. 47.

† Heb. *their brass.*

Solomon made two pillars, 1 Kings vii. 15, which, ver. 21, he called *Jachin* and *Boaz;* ver. 23, a *molten sea*, ten cubits broad; this, ver. 25, stood upon twelve oxen, and had ten bases, ver. 27: the making of all these took up a vast quantity of brass, as any one will easily judge, who, 1 Kings vii. 27, readeth the dimensions of these things.

21 And *concerning* the [n]pillars, the height of one pillar *was* eighteen cubits; and a †fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof *was* four fingers: *it was* hollow.

n 1 Kings 7. 15. 2 Kin. 25. 17. 2 Chr. 3. 15.

† Heb. *thread.*

This agreeth with 1 Kings vii. 15, where what is called here a *fillet* is called a *thread;* concerning the height of the pillars, we read the same 2 Kings xxv. 17; 2 Chron. iii. 15.

22 And a chapiter of brass *was* upon it; and the height of one chapiter *was* five cubits, with network and pomegranates upon the chapiters round about, all *of* brass. The second pillar also and the pomegranates *were* like unto these.

23 And there were ninety and six pomegranates on a side; *and* [o]all the pomegranates upon the network *were* an hundred round about.

o See 1 Kin. 7. 20.

There are some differences as to the measure of these chapiters betwixt 2 Kings xxv. 17 and this text; here the height of them is made to be five cubits, there it is said to be three cubits: that which is said to resolve this difficulty is, that there were three parts in the chapiter, *the square*, the *belly*, and the *crown*, and that this text gives an account of the whole; but that text, 2 Kings xxv. 17, gives an account only of the *belly* and the *crown*, which were no more than three cubits. The like difference there is betwixt this text and 1 Kings vii. 20, and 2 Chron. iv. 13, about the number of the pomegranates. In the Book of Kings it is said the pomegranates were in number *two hundred;* 2 Chron. iv. 13, they are said to have been *four hundred.* The meaning is, there were a hundred in a row, in the two rows two hundred, in the four rows (two upon each pillar) four hundred. Some other difference also there is about the particular number of pomegranates on a side, which are here said to be but ninety-six, which make on the two sides but one hundred and ninety-two, on the four sides but three hundred and eighty-four, and comes up neither to the two hundred mentioned in the Book of Kings, nor to the num-

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ber of four hundred mentioned in the Book of Chronicles. See the English Annotations, where the learned author hath observed that in the Hebrew, what we translate *of a side*, is word for word *windward*, that is, toward the four winds, so as the table was *square*, and there were twenty-four on each side, which made ninety-six in all, to which four being added, one at each corner, this made a hundred. But these are niceties, a satisfaction in which is of no great concernment to us, unless to satisfy such as would make use of these little things to question the authority of the Scriptures because of these seeming contradictions, of how little concernment soever they be as to our faith and holiness.

p 2 Kings 25. 18. q ch. 21. 1. & 29. 25.

24 ¶ And [p]the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, [q]and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the †door:

† Heb. *threshold.*

See the notes on 2 Kings xxv. 18, where we have the same words. This *Seraiah* was not he mentioned chap. li. 59, but the son of Azariah, 1 Chron. vi. 14. By the *second priest*, interpreters understand him that supplied the place of the high priest in case he were sick, &c., he that was sent by Zedekiah to the prophet, chap. xxi. 1, and whom Shemaiah chose by his letters, chap. xxix. 25, for not setting Jeremiah in the stocks. It is probable there were more keepers of the door, but the captain of the guard took only three of the principal.

25 He took also out of the city an eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war; and seven men of them that †were near the king's person, which were found in the city; and the ‖principal scribe of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city.

† Heb. *saw the face of the king.* ‖ Or, *scribe of the captain of the host.*

See 2 Kings xxv. 19; only there is mention but of *five men*, here there is mention of seven, but probably two of them were of less note.

26 So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah.

27 And the king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land.

See 2 Kings xxv. 20, 21.

r 2 Kings 24. 2. s See 2 Kin. 24. 12. t See 2 Kin. 24. 14.

28 [r]This *is* the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the [s]seventh year [t]three thousand Jews and three and twenty:

That is, in the time of Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiv. 12—14; here it is said to be in the seventh year, there in the eighth year, it might be in part of both. But there is a difference in the number of the captives, which are here said to be three thousand and twenty-three, and 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 16, seven thousand, or eight. It is thought by some that the number here mentioned were such as properly belonged to Judah, and the number mentioned 2 Kings xxiv. were the number of the captives of Judah and Benjamin. See the English Annotations.

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u See ver. 12. ch. 39. 9.

29 [u]In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two †persons:

† Heb. *souls.*

That was the year when the city was broken up.

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30 In the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons: all the persons *were* four thousand and six hundred.

Of this we read nothing in holy writ; some judge it to have been upon occasion of Ishmael's killing Gedaliah, but this was four years after the taking of the city, and we are not certain what at this time brought again the Chaldean forces.

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x 2 Kings 25. 27, 28, 29, 30.

31 ¶ [x]And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the *first* year of his reign [y]lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison,

y Gen. 40. 13, 20.

Jehoiachin began his reign at eighteen years of age, 2 Kings xxiv. 8, and reigned but three months, but that he yielded himself to the king of Babylon besieging him, ver. 12, in the eighth year of the king of Babylon's reign. He was a prisoner in Babylon, (as appeareth by this text,) in which circumstances he continued (as appears from this text) about thirty years; which was during the whole reign of Nebuchadrezzar, sometimes called Nebuchadnezzar, sometimes Nebuchodonosor. *Evil-merodach* was son to this Nebuchadrezzar, who, *in the twelfth month* of that year, *the twenty-fifth day of the month*, (saith this text, but, 2 Kings xxv. 27, it is the *twenty-seventh day*; but that difference may easily be reconciled: the penman of this part of holy writ might count precisely from the day of his father's death, and the penman of the Book of Kings from the time of the coronation of Evil-merodach, or when he openly showed himself as king; or the one might reckon from the day that Evil-merodach decreed the thing, the other from the day when he put it in execution,) *lifted up the head*, which signifies in Scripture the altering of one's estate that is in misery, Gen. xl. 20, which is all that is here meant, for his bringing him out of *prison* is mentioned in the next words. The reason of this favour is variously guessed at. The reverend author of our English Annotations fancieth that Evil-merodach might be much of the same age with him, and that Jehoiachin got into the acquaintance of this Evil-merodach during his thirty years' captivity, who considering his long imprisonment, and that now there was no danger of his heading the Jews, (whose city had now been destroyed twenty-five years and upward,) this prince out of his humanity might show him this favour; nor are such things unusual in nations upon their changes of princes and counsellors.

32 And spake †kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon,

† Heb. *good things with him.*

The king of Babylon might have other kings his prisoners, his father having been so great a conqueror, or he might have other kings his subjects, that might reside at his court; and either out of a particular kindness he had to Jehoiachin, or in regard of the fame of David and Solomon, from whom Jehoiachin lineally descended, he might do him this honour.

33 And changed his prison garments: [z]and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life.

z 2 Sam. 9. 13.

34 And *for* his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, †every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

† Heb. *the matter of the day in his day.*

He treated him like a prince, with a respect becoming his former state, took care both for his habit and diet: for his habit, that it should be decent, such as became a person of his quality, though a captive: for his diet, that he should have it in his court, thereby learning others that humanity which becometh all men to treat others with that are fallen under their power; that decency which becometh them as men, and as men whose circumstances have been better; doing to others as we would they should do unto us. Thus Jehoiachin's lot was different from that of his father Jehoiakim, whose body was cast out, as we heard before; as also from that of his uncle Zedekiah, who did not only die in Babylon, but died a *prisoner*; his nephew Jehoiachin died there, and a captive, but not in durance.

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The four last verses are found also 2 Kings xxv. 27—30; and being found here in a *narrative form*, related as a piece of history relating a thing done, not in a *prophetical style*, are an argument (as was said before) that this whole chapter is no part of the prophecy of Jeremiah, and probably not wrote by him; for he beginning his prophecy in the thirteenth year of Josiah, who reigned thirty-one years, and continuing it three months during the reign of Jehoahaz, and eleven years during the reign of Jehoiakim, and three months during the reign of Jehoiachin, (or Jeconiah,) and eleven years during the reign of Zedekiah, and Jehoiachin outliving the reign of Zedekiah twenty-five years, it must needs be sixty-five years and a half after the word of the Lord first came to Jeremiah before the death of Jehoiachin; so as the prophet, if he lived to that time, must be near a hundred years old, which is not probable.

Here now endeth the history of the kingdom of Judah. I shall only note the severe judgment of God upon this people, whose kingdom was made up of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and half the tribe of Manasseh. In the numbering of the persons belonging to these two tribes, Numb. i., (counting half of the number of the tribe of Manasseh,) we find *one hundred twenty-six thousand one hundred.* Numb. xxvi. we find of them *one hundred forty-eight thousand four hundred and fifty.* Here, ver. 30, we find no more of them carried into captivity than *four thousand and six hundred.* From whence we may judge what a multitude of them were slain by the sword, or killed by the famine and the pestilence, though we make a great allowance for such as were left in the land to dress vineyards and to till the ground. It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, to *mock his messengers, despise his words,* and *misuse his prophets, till there be no remedy,* as this people did, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.

THE

LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS book in Greek, Latin, and English hath its name from the subject matter of it, which is lamentation; so also amongst the Hebrew writers; but in the Hebrew it hath its name from the first word of the book, as also the five books of Moses have.

That it was wrote by Jeremiah none can reasonably question, because in the Hebrew it is styled, The Book of Jeremiah.

There is little controversy about the time or occasion of the writing of it. That the occasion was the miseries of the people, by reason of the famine, sword, and captivity, is evident to those that read any part of it; but whether they were those miseries which began with the death of Josiah, and held on till the city was taken, which was two and twenty or three and twenty years after, or those only which began with the siege and followed on many years, hath been doubted by some. That *Jeremiah lamented for Josiah, and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations,* is plain from 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. But that these were the forms they used, or that they were composed upon that sad account, appeareth not; and the miseries which the prophet mentioneth befell not the people in the time of Josiah, but during the siege, more than twenty years after Josiah's death. Nor is there any thing which looks like a lamentation for Josiah through the whole book, unless chap. iv. 20, which (as we shall show) may also be fairly interpreted of Zedekiah. Some think that Jeremiah began to write them upon the death of Josiah, and continued his style to the time of the captivity, setting down all the miseries the people suffered all along that time.

The scope of the writing as to those whom it immediately concerned is plain and obvious, viz. to affect the people with those judgments which came upon them for their sins: as to us, (upon whom the ends of the world are come,) to mind us to take heed of their sins, lest we be sharers in their plagues.

The book is made up of complaints of their lamentable condition, petitions unto God for mercy, and prophecies both of their better estate and the ruin of their enemies.

In the four first chapters are several alphabets of letters beginning the several verses, each verse beginning with a new letter, only chap. iii. every three verses begin with a new letter; the mystery of which we do not understand, nor possibly was there any mystery intended in it, only the chapters were so composed for the advantage of our memories.

The whole book lets us see from what a height of dignity to what a depth of misery sin may bring nations, how much soever interested in God; and likewise directs us to our duty in such states of affliction and misery if we would obtain mercy.

CHAP. I.

Jeremiah lamenteth the former excellency and present misery of Jerusalem for her sin, 1—11. *She complaineth of her grief,* 12—17; *confesseth God's judgments to be righteous; and prayeth unto him,* 18—22.

B. C. cir. 588. HOW doth the city sit solitary, *that was* full of people! [a]*how* is she become as a widow! she *that was* great among the nations, *and* [b]princess among the provinces, *how* is she become tributary!

[a] Is. 47. 7, 8.

[b] Ezra 4. 20.

The interrogative particle *how*, once expressed and twice more understood in this verse, doth not so much inquire the cause or reason of the effect, as express admiration or lamentation. The prophet admires the miserable state of the city, which was full of people beyond the proportion of other cities, and now was solitary, so thin of people that scarce any could be seen in her streets. She that had a king, or rather a god, that was a husband to her, now was forsaken of God, her king taken from her, and she like a poor widow. She that was like a princess amongst the nations, that sometimes (as in David's time) had the Moabites, Ammonites, &c. tributaries to her, was now a tributary herself.

2 She [c]weepeth sore in the [d]night, and her tears *are* on her cheeks: [e]among all her lovers [f]she hath none to comfort *her*: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

[c] Jer. 13. 17. [d] Job 7. 3. [e] Ps. 6. 6. [e] Jer. 4. 30. & 30. 14. ver. 19. [f] ver. 9, 16, 17, 21

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All her hours are hours of sadness, she doth not only mourn in the day time, but in the night also, when she should rest; her cheeks are like the grass in the morning, hanging full of drops, as if her head were a fountain of water, and her eyes rivers of tears. In her prosperity she had a great many friends that sought and courted her favour, with whom she made leagues and confederated (such were the Egyptians, Assyrians, &c.); but they were now so far from helping the Jews, that they helped their enemies, and dealt treacherously with them, becoming themselves enemies instead of assistants to them.

g Jer. 52. 27.

3 gJudah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and †because of great servitude: hshe dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits.

† Heb. *for the greatness of servitude.*

h Deut. 28. 64, 65. ch. 2. 9.

This is expounded as the cause why the Jews were carried into captivity, because of the servitude and oppression exercised amongst them, oppression by their rulers, and servitude more generally, keeping their servants beyond the year of jubilee, when they ought to have set them at liberty; and that this was one cause appeareth from Jer. xxxiv. 17: or if *because of affliction*, &c. be joined to the next words, the sense is plain, *she dwelleth amongst the heathen*, by reason of her low condition, and the state of servitude she is in; where she, that is, the Jews, have neither any satisfaction nor quiet in their own minds, nor are they by their enemies suffered to be at quiet any where. Those that pursued them with all violence to destroy them overtook them in places where they could not escape them, as huntsmen and others take their game by driving them into strait and narrow places.

4 The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she *is* in bitterness.

The ways that lead to the temple have as unlovely a complexion as mourners, being overgrown, by reason that none goeth up as usually to the feasts of the passover, of tabernacles, &c. Either all the gates of Jerusalem, or the temple, or all her cities, are very thin of people, the places that use to be so full. Her priests that were wont to be so fully employed at festivals receiving the people's oblations, and offering sacrifices, they mourn, having now nothing to do. The virgins who in those feasts were wont to play with timbrels, Psal. lxviii. 25, they now mourn, and persons of all ages and ranks are in bitterness.

i Deut. 28. 43, 44.

5 Her adversaries iare the chief, her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her kfor the multitude of her transgressions: her lchildren are gone into captivity before the enemy.

k Jer. 30. 14, 15. Dan. 9. 7, 16.

l Jer. 52. 28.

God hath fulfilled his threatening, Deut. xxviii. 43; the enemy is got *above us*, and *we are brought very low*, for the multitude of our sins, directly contrary to his promise in case of obedience, ver. 13. Not only our young and old men, but the little children, have been driven like sheep before the enemy into a miserable captivity.

6 And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes are become like harts *that* find no pasture, and they are gone without strength before the pursuer.

All the inhabitants of Zion have lost their former beauty; whatsoever splendour the city had, whether from the multitude or gallantry of her inhabitants, it is all gone; her nobles are become thin and ill-favoured, like beasts almost starved, their enemies pursue them to destroy them, and they have no strength to oppose or resist them.

7 Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her ‖pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, *and* did mock at her sabbaths.

‖ Or, *desirable.* ver. 10.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem, now that they are in affliction and misery, have time to remember their former mercies, and with how many desirable things God had once blessed them, and compare her former state before she fell into the enemies' hands, with her present state now she is in their power. Now it is an affliction to them to hear her enemies mock at her sabbaths, which while they enjoyed they abused.

8 mJerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she †is removed: all that honoured her despise her, because nthey have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.

m 1 Kings 8. 46.

† Heb. *is become a removing*, or, *wandering.*

n Jer. 13. 22, 26. Ezek. 16. 37. & 23. 29. Hos. 2. 10.

She is carried out of her own land into an enemy's country, and made a hissing and scorn to those who before reverenced her, (in all this God is righteous, for all orders of men have grievously sinned,) because they have seen the Lord stripping her of all her blessings, and exposing her to the scorn and reproach of all men, as strumpets are exposed.

9 Her filthiness *is* in her skirts; she oremembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: pshe had no comforter. O LORD, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified *himself*.

o Deut. 32. 29. Is. 47. 7.

p ver. 2, 17, 21.

He persisteth in his comparison of the Jewish people, either to a sluttish, nasty woman, or to an impudent woman that is not ashamed to expose her nastiness or wickedness to the view of all. *She remembereth not her last end, therefore she came down wonderfully;* that is, the Jews never considered, or would not believe, what those degrees of sin would at last bring them to, and that hath been the cause of that prodigious calamity into which God had brought them. *O Lord, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified himself:* the prophet turns himself to God, whom he desires to behold the affliction of this people, that is, with a pitiful, compassionate eye. It is a very usual thing in Holy Scripture to signify the acts of the heart by the acts of the inward and outward senses, those especially of the memory, eye, and ear, because objects must be first brought in by the senses before they can affect the soul. Hence (the Scripture speaking of God after the manner of men) the servants of God desiring God to have compassion on them, show them favour, &c., desire him to *behold* and look upon their affliction.

10 The adversary hath spread out his hand upon qall her ‖pleasant things: for she hath seen *that* rthe heathen entered into her sanctuary, whom thou didst command *that* sthey should not enter into thy congregation.

q ver. 7.

‖ Or, *desirable.*

r Jer. 51. 51.

s Deut. 23. 3. Neh. 13. 1.

Hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things; that is, hath got them into possession. By *pleasant things* are here to be understood the *ornaments* of the temple, upon which the enemy had laid violent hands; so this phrase of *spreading out* the hand is taken Isa. xxv. 11. The things of the sanctuary were always pleasant things to those that feared God; possibly those that little valued them before, now looked upon them in their true notion. We seldom know our mercies till we come to be deprived of them. *The heathen entered into her sanctuary;* he means the Ammonites and Moabites, whom the law concerned, Deut. xxiii. 3; some of whom probably assisted the Babylonians in the conquest of Judea.

11 All her people sigh, tthey seek bread; they have given their pleasant things for meat ‖to relieve the soul: see, O LORD, and consider; for I am become vile.

t Jer. 38. 9. & 52. 6. ch. 2. 12. & 4. 4.

‖ Or, *to make the soul to come again.*

He speaketh probably with reference to the siege, after which the people had scarcely any pleasant things to exchange for bread. The whole body of the people was in a sad condition; and in a land that ordinarily flowed with milk and honey, they were at loss for bread to eat, and gave any thing for something to satisfy their hunger. *See,*

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O Lord, and consider; for I am become vile: the prophet sends up a sudden ejaculation to God, much like that ver. 9. The argument he useth is drawn from the misery the people were in, expressed under the notion of being become vile, that is, miserable or contemptible.

‖ Or, It is nothing. † Heb. pass by the way. u Dan. 9. 12.

12 ¶ ‖ *Is it* nothing to you, all ye that †pass by? behold, and see u if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted *me* in the day of his fierce anger.

The prophet speaks in the name of the Jewish church, as a woman in misery sitting by the way-side, and calling to passengers that came by to have compassion on her, suggesting to them that her affliction was no ordinary affliction, nor the effect of a common and ordinary providence, but the effect of the Lord's fierce anger, a most severe punishment.

x Ezek. 12. 13. & 17. 20.

13 From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth against them: he hath x spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate *and* faint all the day.

By *fire* he means a judgment as consuming and as afflictive as fire in the *bones*, which had consumed the strength of the Jews. *He hath spread a net for my feet;* that is, God had brought them into a condition wherein they were entangled, and could not get out. The holy man owneth God as the first cause of all the evil they suffered, and entitles God to their various kinds of afflictions, both in captivity and during the siege, looking beyond the Babylonians, who were the proximate instrumental cause.

y Deut. 28. &c.

14 y The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand: they are wreathed, *and* come up upon my neck: he hath made my strength to fall, the LORD hath delivered me into *their* hands, *from whom* I am not able to rise up.

Still the prophet eyeth God in all, and acknowledgeth his justice while he calls their afflictions the *yoke* of their *transgressions*, that is, which was put upon their neck, upon the same account that yokes are put about the necks of beasts that use to break hedges, &c. and bound to keep them fast. My punishments are twisted as cords, to make them more strong; I have a complication of judgments upon me, sword, famine, pestilence, captivity; they are not only prepared for my neck, but they are already put upon it. All my valiant men, the strength of my nation is broken; and I am so fallen, that I am not able to rise again.

z Is. 63. 3. Rev. 14. 19, 20. & 19. 15. ‖ Or, *the winepress of the virgin, &c.*

15 The LORD hath trodden under foot all my mighty *men* in the midst of me: he hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men: z the LORD hath trodden ‖ the virgin, the daughter of Judah, *as* in a winepress.

In the midst of me, may be interpreted either as *pleonastical*, or as denoting the place in which they lost their valiant men, viz. in the midst of the city during the siege, not in the field. *He hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men;* instead of those solemn assemblies that were wont to be called together within Jerusalem by sound of trumpet for the solemn worship of God, God had called an assembly of Chaldeans as adversaries against the city, to crush the inhabitants of it. *The Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a wine-press;* God had trodden upon the Jews as men use to stamp grapes in a wine-press, where they use to crush them to pieces to get out the juice, and then they throw the husks, that are good for nothing, upon the dunghills. These are but various expressions to set out the misery into which God had brought this people for their sins.

a Jer. 13. 17. & 14. 17. ch. 2. 18. b ver. 2, 9. † Heb. *bring back.*

16 For these *things* I weep; a mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because b the comforter that should †relieve my soul is far from me: my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed.

For these sore afflictions, and for my sins that have caused them, and for these impressions of Divine wrath which I discern in them, Lord! I that am thy prophet, and we that are Israelites indeed, weep, and that plentifully; having neither thee present with us as formerly to be our hope or comfort, nor any friend that will deal by us as friends sometimes do by others in swooning fits to fetch back their souls. *My children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed;* either the other cities of Judah, (Jerusalem was the mother city,) or my people, my inhabitants, are wasted, destroyed, and made desolate, because the enemy hath prevailed.

c Jer. 4. 31. d ver. 2, 9.

17 c Zion spreadeth forth her hands, *and* d *there is* none to comfort her: the LORD hath commanded concerning Jacob, *that* his adversaries *should be* round about him: Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them.

The same in this verse is meant by *Zion*, *Jacob*, and *Jerusalem*, unless Zion more specially signifieth the Jews considered as a church, because of the temple built upon it. She spreadeth out her hands as in a posture of mourning, and bewailing herself; but she had none that could afford her any comfort. God had commanded concerning the Jews who were descended from Jacob, (their twelve tribes from his twelve sons,) that their enemies should encompass them. They were become loathsome and filthy even in the eyes of their enemies, like women which were separated from the congregation during their legal uncleanness.

e Neh. 9. 33. Dan. 9. 7, 14. f 1 Sam. 12. 14, 15. † Heb. *mouth.*

18 ¶ The LORD is e righteous; for I have f rebelled against his †commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow: my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

The prophet either directeth those that feared God what they should say, or expresseth what many of them did say in the name of the rest, acknowledging both the Lord's justice and faithfulness, because they had been disobedient to the commandments of God. *Hear, I pray you, &c.:* in these words the prophet only personates a passionate woman begging pity of all because her children were taken from her.

g ver. 2. Jer. 30. 14. h ver. 11.

19 I called for my lovers, *but* g they deceived me: my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, h while they sought their meat to relieve their souls.

I desired help of my allies and confederates who courted my friendship and alliance in my prosperity, but they failed mine expectation, none of them either would or could succour me. My misery was such through the famine, that not only my common people, but those of the best rank in the city, magistrates and priests, fainted as they went along the street seeking bread to satisfy their hunger.

i Job 30. 27. Is. 16. 11. Jer. 4. 19. & 48. 36. ch. 2. 11. Hos. 11. 8. k Deut. 32. 25. Ezek. 7. 15.

20 Behold, O LORD; for I *am* in distress: my i bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled: k abroad the sword bereaveth, at home *there is* as death.

The petition is of the same nature as before, a petition for mercy, as the product of that pity and compassion which extreme misery begets in good souls, (and is ascribed unto God, though found in him in a much more perfect degree, Psal. lxxviii. 38; lxxxvi. 15; cxi. 4.) through the eyes affecting the heart. The argument the prophet useth is drawn from the misery this people was now in, which he expresseth metaphorically, telling us their bowels were troubled, their heart turned, signifying the more inward disturbance of their mind; or more plainly, and that both generally, saying they were *in distress*, and more particularly by the great judgments of the sword and famine, the sword in the field, the famine in the city; unless the sword alone be meant both without and within the gates of the city. In all this the church justifieth God, confessing this

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was but the righteous product of her sin, by which, she having formerly subjected herself to God, had grievously rebelled; for as all men are born subjects to God, so by their sins they are become rebels; so it is a great aggravation of men's rebellion against the Lord, when they have formerly taken an oath of fealty to the Lord, and, as Moses said, avouched the Lord as their God.

1 ver. 2.

21 They have heard that I sigh: [1]*there is* none to comfort me: all mine enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that thou hast done *it:* thou wilt bring [m] the day *that* thou hast ‖called, and they shall be like unto me.

m Is. 13. &c. Jer. 46. &c. ‖ Or, proclaimed.

The nations contiguous to me, Egypt, &c., those that before courted me, as pretended friends, have been no strangers to my bitter afflictions, that have brought forth sighs from me; but there is none of them can or will comfort me, but give me over as in a desperate case. The Edomites, Obad. 1, &c., and Moabites, and other heathen nations, with whom I have had hostility, they are glad at the great misery that hath befallen me. But thou hast declared thy pleasure for their destruction also, and hast by me proclaimed it, Jer. xlix., l., and thou shalt in that day bring them into as sad a condition as the church of the Jews are now in. As they seldom in themselves feel those miseries which they have felt and compassionated in others; so men hardly escape their own share at last in those evils which they have rejoiced to see brought upon God's people.

n Ps. 109. 15.

22 [n] Let all their wickedness come before thee; and do unto them, as thou hast done unto me for all my transgressions: for my sighs *are* many, and [o] my heart *is* faint.

o ch. 5. 17.

This verse is another prophetical curse or imprecation, several of which we meet with in holy writ, Psal. cix. 6—9; cxxxvii. 8; Jer. xi. 20; xviii. 23, and in many other texts; which would incline us to think that our Saviour's precept, Matt. v. 44, to pray for those that persecute us, backed by his own example, Luke xxiii. 34, and Stephen's, Acts vii. 60, is either to be interpreted of praying for the *forgiveness* of their sins, (we ought to desire the eternal condemnation of none,) or to be restrained to such as are our personal enemies, not the common enemies of the church of God. Our Saviour's precept most certainly is not to be so interpreted, but that we may lawfully pray for such evils to the implacable enemies of the church and people of God, as may restrain and weaken their hands, and put them out of a capacity of wasting the Lord's heritage: we are only obliged by it to wish well to their souls, and to desire no evil against them out of private revenge or malice, but only out of love to God, and zeal for his glory; but for their outward prosperity in their courses of enmity we ought no more to pray than against their eternal salvation; for this were to beg of God to encourage his enemies in their enmity against him. And though Jeremiah were a greater prophet than any of us can pretend to be, and had revelations of particular future contingencies which we have not; yet every one may prophesy a ruin to the enemies of God's church and people, and such as rejoice in their ruin; God never using a rod against his people which he doth not at last burn, nor ever countenancing inhumanity in any, but much less when it is rooted in a malice against himself, and his interest in the world.

CHAP. II.

Jeremiah lamenteth the misery of Jerusalem, and its causes, and their enemies' derision, 1—17. *An exhortation to true sorrow and repentance; a fervent prayer,* 18—22.

HOW hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, [a] *and* cast down from heaven unto the earth [b] the beauty of Israel, and remembered not [c] his footstool in the day of his anger!

a Matt. 11. 23. b 2 Sam. 1. 19. c 1 Chro. 28. 2. Ps. 99. 5. & 132. 7.

How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger! It hath been formerly observed that great states and kingdoms are often in Scripture expressed under the notion of *daughters*, Psal. cxxxvii. 8; Isa. x. 30; xlvii. 1, 5; Jer. xlvi. 11; Lam. iv. 21, 22: the meaning is, How hath God obscured all the beauty and glory of the church and state of the Jews! *And cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel;* that is, thrown them down from the highest pitch of glory and honour, to the meanest degree of baseness and servitude. *And remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger:* the earth is called the Lord's footstool, Isa. lxvi. 1; Matt. v. 35; Acts vii. 49, but here plainly the temple is understood, called God's footstool, 1 Chron. xxviii. 2; and the whole *temple* seems rather to be understood than the *ark*, for we read of no indignity offered to the ark by the Chaldeans, more than to any other part of the temple; God had suffered the Chaldeans to burn the whole temple, and it may justly be doubted whether those other texts that mention a worshipping at God's footstool, Psal. xcix. 5; cxxxii. 7, be not to be understood of worshipping in the temple, for it was not the privilege of all the Jews to come so near the ark as to worship before that. The reason of the complaint is God's permission of the Chaldeans to burn the temple. See Jer. lii. 13.

2 The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, [d] and hath not pitied: he hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah; he hath †brought *them* down to the ground: [e] he hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof.

d ver. 17, 21. ch. 3. 43. † Heb. *made to touch.* e Ps. 89. 39.

The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied; as he hath had no respect to his own house, so he hath had much less respect to the common habitations of the Jews. *He hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah;* their military fortifications have been of no use to them, he hath made them to touch the ground, i. e. suffered the enemies to batter them to the earth. *He hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof;* that is, either delivered them into the hands of pagans, whom to touch they judged a legal pollution, or else dealt with them as with a polluted thing, cast them off, or brake them in pieces. All this is made the effect of God's wrath, and his work; for as a man is said to do that which he encourageth others to do, and assists them in doing; so God is said to have done this, because he did not only suffer the Chaldeans to do it, but used them as a rod in his hand, inclining them to do it, and assisting them in the execution of his wrath.

3 He hath cut off in *his* fierce anger all the horn of Israel: [f] he hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy, [g] and he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, *which* devoureth round about.

f Ps. 74. 11. g Ps. 89. 46.

He hath cut off in his fierce anger all the horn of Israel; that is, the beauty and strength of Israel, so horn signifieth by a usual metaphor in Scripture, Psal. lxxv. 4; Jer. xlviii. 25, &c., the horn being much the beauty of the beast, as also that member by which the beast puts forth its strength in assaulting its adversary. *He hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy;* either God hath drawn back his assistance which he was wont to give the Jews against their enemies; or Israel, through God's leaving of them, hath drawn back his right hand; but it seems rather to be understood of God's weakening the Israelites' right hands, so as they were not able to hold them up (as before) against their enemies. *He burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about;* God had consumed them, not in this or that part, but round about, as a fire seizing a house or heap of combustible matter at once, on all sides.

4 [h] He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand as an adversary, and slew †[i] all *that were* pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire.

h Is. 63. 10. ver. 5. † Heb. *all the desirable of the eye.* i Ezek. 24. 25.

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That is, God (whom by their sins they had provoked and made their enemy) behaved himself as an enemy, bending his bow, and stretching out his right hand, and slew their young men and maidens, who were pleasant to look upon; and had brought judgments upon them like fire, which devours without any discrimination.

k ver. 4. Jer. 30. 14. l 2 Kin. 25. 9. Jer. 52. 13.

5 k The Lord was as an enemy: he hath swallowed up Israel, l he hath swallowed up all her palaces: he hath destroyed his strong holds, and hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.

See ver. 2. Several pathetical expressions signifying the same things, properly imitating the dialect of mourners, whose passion suffers them not to speak according to art, but frequently they say the same things over and over.

m Ps. 80. 12. & 89. 40. Is. 5. 5. ‖ Or, *hedge.* n Is. 1. 8.

6 And he hath violently m taken away his ‖ tabernacle, n as *if it were of* a garden: he hath destroyed his places of the assembly: o the Lord hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest.

o ch. 1. 4. Zeph. 3. 18.

The word translated *tabernacle* (say some) signifies a *hedge* or *fence*, and they would have it here so translated, and so the phrase should denote God's withdrawing his protection from the Jews; but it is no where so translated. It is another word used Psal. lxxx. 12; lxxxix. 40. The most judicious interpreters think that the word here signifieth the *temple*, and the rather because of what followeth. By the *places of the assembly* may be understood the synagogues. By *the king and the priest* are meant persons of greatest rank and eminency, though it is thought here is a special reference to Zedekiah the king of Judah, and Seraiah who was the high priest, the former of which was miserably handled, the latter slain.

7 The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath †given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; p they have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of a solemn feast.

† Heb. *shut up.* p Ps. 74. 4.

By *altar* and *sanctuary* seemeth not to be meant strictly here the places or buildings so called, which are said to be the Lord's, because he directed the making of them, and they were dedicated to his service, and used for no other use; but the stated worship and communion of the church of the Jews; as *altar* is taken, 1 Cor. x. 18. God, by his suffering the place to be destroyed where alone they might sacrifice, seemed to have abhorred his own institutions, as it is said, *The prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.* He saith the Lord also had destroyed the most stately of their civil edifices; and the enemies, with their triumphs and blasphemies, had made as great noise, to the reproach and dishonour of God, as before those that sang holy songs, or played on instruments, were wont to make in the temple to the honour and glory of God.

8 The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion: q he hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from †destroying: therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together.

q 2 Kings 21. 13. Is. 34. 11. † Heb. *swallowing up.*

The term *wall* in this verse seemeth to be taken in a metaphorical sense, for the strength and security of the Jews (the strength and security of a place lying much in its walls). *He hath stretched out a line:* artificers use with lines not only to mark out places for building, but also for destruction, to direct them what to cut off; such a line is here meant. *He hath not withdrawn his hand from destroying;* God had gone on in destroying them; and had made their walls and ramparts feeble, and to shake like a man under some languishing distemper, that had no strength left.

9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and r broken her bars: s her king and her princes *are* among the Gentiles: t the law *is* no *more;* her u prophets also find no vision from the Lord.

r Jer. 51. 30. s Deut. 28. 36. 2 Kings 24. 15. & 25. 7. ch. 1. 3. & 4. 20. t 2 Chron. 15. 3. u Ps. 74. 9. Ezek. 7. 26.

Her gates are sunk into the ground; that is, the gates of Jerusalem are destroyed, and covered over with rubbish. *He hath destroyed and broken her bars;* the bolts of the gates are broken. *Her king and her princes are among the Gentiles;* Zedekiah and the nobles of Judah that were not slain were in miserable captivity. *The law is no more;* the law was no more read and opened, nor was there any more sacrifices offered according to the prescript of it, nor any solemn feasts kept according to the direction of it. *Her prophets also find no vision from the Lord;* they had but very few prophets amongst them from this time to the time of the gospel, and very few of those at this time alive had any revelations from God; we read only of this prophet, Ezekiel, Daniel, and three after the captivity, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion x sit upon the ground, *and* keep silence: they have y cast up dust upon their heads; they have z girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

x Job 2. 13. Is. 3. 26. ch. 3. 28. y Job 2. 12. z Is. 15. 3. Ezek. 7. 18. & 27. 31.

Sitting upon the ground, keeping silence, throwing dust on their heads, girding themselves with sackcloth, hanging down the head, were all of them postures, and actions, and gestures of mourners. The meaning of this whole verse is, that the whole city of Jerusalem was in a very sad state and condition, and all persons in it in a mournful posture; not the common people only, but the gravest of their magistracy and ministry, those who were wont to sit in the chairs of magistracy and of teachers. Their young women also, which used to be most brisk and frolic, those whose condition was furthest off from sorrow, and who were least disposed to it, were now all of them drowned in floods of it.

11 a Mine eyes do fail with tears, b my bowels are troubled, c my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because d the children and the sucklings ‖ swoon in the streets of the city.

a Ps. 6. 7. ch. 3. 48, &c. b ch. 1. 20. c Job 16. 13. Ps. 22. 14. d ver. 19. ch. 4. 4. ‖ Or, *faint.*

This whole verse is but expressive of the prophet's great affliction for the miseries come upon the Jews: he wept himself almost blind, his passion had disturbed his bodily humours, that his bowels were troubled; his gall lying under his liver, upon this disturbance was vomited up: they are all no more than expressions of very great affliction and sorrow. *For the destruction of the daughter of my people;* for the miseries befallen the Jews: he had mourned for their sins before, and for their plagues too which he had in prospect, Jer. ix. 1; he now mourns for them as being come upon them: which mourning considered only as for their miseries, spake no more than the prophet's good nature and love to his country; but considered as the indication of God's wrath and displeasure, was also a *godly sorrow. Because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city;* the children and sucklings fainted and swooned, either for want of water, or bread, or milk in their mothers' or nurses' breasts during the famine, occasioned by the long siege of the city. This appears in the next verse.

12 They say to their mothers, Where *is* corn and wine? when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city, when their soul was poured out into their mothers' bosom.

The little children, ignorant of the cause of the failure of their usual food, called to their mothers for it as formerly, being ready to faint and die, as men mortally wounded, for want of spirits and blood, use to faint, and died in their mothers' arms; for so I had rather interpret the phrase *poured out their souls*, than (as some) understand by *souls* the desires of their souls, for he is speaking of *sucklings* as

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well as more grown children: the phrase is capable of both senses.

13 What thing shall I take to witness for thee? [e] what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? what shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion? for thy breach *is* great like the sea: who can heal thee?

e ch. 1. 12. Dan. 9. 12.

The sum of this verse is, that the miserable condition of the people was both *incomparable* and *incurable*. There was no people whose miserable condition was in any degree parallel to the misery of the Jews. It is some comfort to persons in misery to consider that others are, and have been, as miserable as they, but the prophet had not this topic from whence to fetch an argument of comfort to the Jews; there were none to whom he could liken them, nor was there any present cure for them; their breach was like a *sea-breach*, where the waters come in with such a torrent, that while the tide abates there is no making any bank of defence against them.

14 Thy [f] prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not [g] discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

f Jer. 2. 8. & 5. 31. & 14. 14. & 23. 16. & 27. 14. & 29. 8, 9. Ezek. 13. 2. g Is. 58. 1.

Not the Lord's prophets in thee, but those prophets to whom you chose rather to hearken, and whom you believed rather than me and others sent by God to reveal his will unto you, came and told you idle and vain stories, that those who were carried into captivity should after two years return, &c. And by telling you such smooth and pleasant things, tickled your humours instead of discovering your sins, which were bringing these judgments upon you; whereas they ought to have dealt freely and faithfully with you, and have made you sensible of your sins, and this might have prevented your miserable captivity. But they rather spent their breath in telling you false stories to encourage you in your sinful courses, and so proved to you the causes of your banishment; or else they told you false stories, which they pretended to be the causes of the captivity of your brethren, in the mean time concealing the true causes, and suffering you to run on in the same errors, till you came to be more miserable than those that went into captivity before you.

15 [h] All that pass † by [i] clap *their* hands at thee; they hiss [k] and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, *saying*, *Is* this the city that *men* call [l] The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?

h 1 Kin. 9. 8. Jer. 18. 16. Nah. 3. 19. Ecclus. 12. 18. † Heb. *by the way.* i Ezek. 25. 6. k 2 Kings 19. 21. Ps. 44. 14. l Ps. 48. 2. & 50. 2.

This was according to God's threatenings, 1 Kings ix. 8; Jer. xviii. 16; xix. 8. God had poured out all his blessings upon this people, whatsoever might adorn them, or make them happy, so as all people blessed the Jewish nation; but now the case was so altered, that all people scoffed at them, and hissed, and admired at the change which God had made.

16 [m] All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, [n] We have swallowed *her* up: certainly this *is* the day that we looked for; we have found, [o] we have seen *it*.

m Job 16. 9, 10. Ps. 22. 13. ch. 3. 46. n Ps. 56. 2. o Ps. 35. 21.

As strangers that had no quarrels with nor prejudices against the Jews, passing by their country, and their great city Jerusalem, despised and scorned it; so their enemies with whom they had former quarrels, and who had taken up prejudices against them, they reproached and abused them, and triumphed in their ruin, and in the success of their arms against them, and blessed themselves, as having now seen the day they had looked and wished for.

17 The LORD hath done *that* which he had [p] devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old: [q] he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath caused *thine* enemy to [r] rejoice over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.

p Lev. 26. 16, &c. Deut. 28. 15, &c. q ver. 2. r Ps. 38. 16. & 89. 42.

God hath not surprised us by these providences, he gave us notice what he would do, and hath done no more than what he threatened long since, Lev. xxvi. 16, &c.; Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. It is true he hath severely punished us, so as in his dispensation there appear no prints of pity, he hath set up our enemies, and hath made them to triumph over his people, but in all this he hath but justified his truth, and fulfilled his word.

18 Their heart cried unto the Lord, O [s] wall of the daughter of Zion, [t] let tears run down like a river day and night: give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease.

s ver. 8. t Jer. 14. 17. ch. 1. 16.

They cried unto God seriously, though not sincerely; from their heart, though not with their whole heart; either by the wall, or upon the wall, or (which is judged most probable) by occasion of the breaches made in the wall. Upon this he turns his discourse to the *wall* itself, and calls to it, or to those that were upon it, or near it, incessantly to mourn. *Let not the apple of thine eye cease*; in the Hebrew it is, *let not the daughter of thine eye cease*. We call it the *apple*; the Latins, the *pupil*, or *babe*, of the eye.

19 Arise, [u] cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches [x] pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, [y] that faint for hunger [z] in the top of every street.

u Ps. 119. 147. x Ps. 62. 8. y ver. 11. z Is. 51. 20. ch. 4. 1. Nah. 3. 10.

The prophet calls upon the Jews not to be slothful in this their very evil day, but to rise up from their beds, and either at the beginning of the four watches, or at the beginning of each watch, at all times in the night, to betake themselves to God by prayer, and that not in a cold, lazy manner, but so as to pour out their hearts with their words; and he moveth them to it, as for their own sake, so for the sake of their young children, who every where were starved to death.

20 ¶ Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom thou hast done this. [a] Shall the women eat their fruit, *and* children ‖ of a span long? [b] shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the LORD?

a Lev. 26. 29. Deut. 28. 53. Jer. 19. 9. ch. 4. 10. Ezek. 5. 10. ‖ Or, *swaddled with their hands.* b ch. 4. 13, 16.

Consider to whom thou hast done this; that is, not to heathen, who never owned thee, nor were called by thy name, but to thine own people, called thy portion and thine heritage; let thy former relation to us, and our former acknowledgments of thee, prevail with thee. Wilt thou suffer, or should such a thing be, as for women to satisfy their hunger with the fruit of their own bodies, and that when they are very young? And shall thy ministers be slain, and that in thy sanctuary? Any human blood polluted it; shall not the blood of those that were the ministers of God be judged a pollution and profanation of it?

21 [c] The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets: my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword; thou hast slain *them* in the day of thine anger; [d] thou hast killed, *and* not pitied.

c 2 Chron. 36. 17. d ch. 3. 43.

None of what sex or age soever are spared: though the hands of the Chaldeans have done this, yet they have been set on and assisted by thee, and have been but the executioners of thy wrath and displeasure.

22 Thou hast called as in a solemn day [e] my terrors round about, so that in the day of the LORD's anger none escaped nor remained: [f] those that I have swaddled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.

e Ps. 31. 13. Jer. 6. 25. & 46. 5. f Hos. 9. 12, 13.

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As my people were wont to be called together from all parts in a solemn day, when they were to meet at Jerusalem from all parts of Judea; so now by thy providence my terrible enemies, or terrible things, are by thee called together against that holy city, whither thy people were wont to be called to thy solemn worship. Thou hast made me as a great mother to bring up many inhabitants that were my children, and now the enemy hath consumed the far greater number of them.

CHAP. III.

The faithful bewail their misery and contempt, 1—21. *They nourish their hope by consideration of the justice, providence, and mercies of God,* 22—38. *They stir up themselves to repentance, patience, prayers, and confidence of deliverance for themselves, and Divine vengeance on their enemies,* 39—66.

I *AM* the man *that* hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.

Some understand this of the prophet, some of the people, who were before set out under the notion of a woman, a daughter, here of a *man*. *Affliction* must here be taken emphatically for eminent degrees of affliction, caused not merely from the power and malice of the enemy, but from the wrath of God, though brought upon them by the Chaldeans, who were to the two tribes the rod of God's wrath, as the Assyrians are called with reference to the ten tribes, Isa. x. 5.

2 He hath led me, and brought *me into* darkness, but not *into* light.

Darkness in Scripture (metaphorically taken) signifies *ignorance, sin,* and *misery;* and *light* signifies *knowledge,* a *state of grace,* or a state of *mirth* and jollity; they are both here taken in the latter sense, as light is taken, Esth. viii. 16; Micah vii. 8; Job xviii. 5; Psal. xcvii. 11; and also darkness is used, Jer. xiii. 16; 2 Sam. xxii. 29; Prov. xx. 20; Joel ii. 2; Ezek. xxxii. 8. The sense is, God hath not brought me into a joyful and prosperous, but into a sad and calamitous, estate and condition.

3 Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand *against me* all the day.

The course of God's providence toward me is quite altered, his hand, that is, his power, which was wont to be with me, and for me, against my enemies, is now turned against me; nor is it for a moment, or for one stroke or two, but his hand is continually against me.

4 [a]My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath [b]broken my bones.

[a] Job 16. 8.
[b] Ps. 51. 8. Is. 38. 13. Jer. 50. 17.

I was a virgin, young and fair, but I am quite altered, and am now as an old woman whose flesh is decayed, and my skin wrinkled; all my beauty is gone, and all my strength is gone; my *bones,* those in whom my strength consisted, are slain and broken.

5 He hath builded against me, and compassed *me* with gall and travel.

He hath not builded with me, increasing my prosperity, and protecting my houses, but he hath builded forts, and batteries, and castles, (military buildings,) to batter down my walls and houses, Isa. xxix. 2, 3. *And compassed me with gall and travel;* or with poison, venom, and misery, as some translate it; and it seems more proper than *gall* and *travel,* which have no cognation one with another. We are not well acquainted with the ancient dialect of other countries: the sense is obvious, God had surrounded them with misery and calamities.

6 [c]He hath set me in dark places, as *they that be* dead of old.

[c] Ps. 88. 5, 6. & 143. 3.

The prophet compareth their state in Babylon to the state of bodies in the graves, or in some charnel-house, which are places of darkness, full of rottenness and dead men's bones. Such was the state of the Jews in Jerusalem during the time of the siege before the city was taken, when Jerusalem was a most miserable place by reason of the multitudes slain by the enemy, or by the famine: such was their state in Babylon, where the company of heathens made their state as the state of the living amongst the dead.

7 [d]He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy.

[d] Job 3. 23 & 19. 8. Hos. 2. 6.

The use of a hedge about an enclosed field is twofold: 1. To keep out other beasts which belong not to the owner of the ground; in this sense God set a hedge sometimes about Canaan, Isa. v. 5. 2. To keep in those beasts that are within; thus God had now hedged them in, into a barren place where they had no pasture, but were continually pushed at by other beasts with whom they were mixed, and who were stronger than they, and they could not get out. God had dealt with them as with grievous malefactors, who are loaded with heavy chains. He had made their affliction heavy and insupportable.

8 Also [e]when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.

[e] Job 30. 20. Ps. 22. 2.

In the condition I am in, I cannot help myself, no creatures can help me, I have no hope but in God. I take the ordinary course in that case, which is prayer; I pray fervently and aloud, as those that are serious and importunate for what they desire (for shouting here signifies no more than making a loud noise, not a loud noise of joy and rejoicing, as it mostly signifies); but he deals with me as great persons that have no mind to listen to suitors, and shut their gates against them, he shutteth out my supplications: which made their case wholly desperate and remediless.

9 He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked.

Ways in Scripture ordinarily signifies men's courses, and methods of counsels, and actions; if the term be taken in that sense here, it signifieth God's defeating all their methods and counsels taken for their own security, in the pursuit of which they met not with ordinary, but with insuperable difficulties, like walls of hewn stone. Nay, God had not only defeated their counsels, but had made them prove more fatal and pernicious to themselves, which seemeth to be intended, by making their ways crooked, which should have led right on to the end intended.

10 [f]He *was* unto me *as* a bear lying in wait, *and as* a lion in secret places.

[f] Job 10. 16. Is. 38. 13. Hos. 5. 14. & 13. 7, 8.

That is, he hath taken all advantages against me to destroy me.

11 He hath turned aside my ways, and [g]pulled me in pieces: he hath made me desolate.

[g] Hos. 6. 1.

The same thing is repeated in other phrases which was before said, viz. that God had pleased by his providence to frustrate all the designs and counsels of the Jews, and miserably to destroy them, as a lion or a bear (the wild beasts mentioned before) tear in pieces the beasts they prey upon.

12 He hath bent his bow, and [h]set me as a mark for the arrow.

[h] Job 7. 20. & 16. 12. Ps. 38. 2.

He hath prepared himself for acts of vindicative justice, and he hath made me the object of it.

13 He hath caused [i]the †arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins.

[i] Job 6. 4.
† Heb. sons.

That is, he hath made his judgments to pierce the most inward parts of the nation; or, he hath mortally wounded me. In the Hebrew it is, *the daughters of his quiver,* a way of speaking very usual in Hebrew, to express any thing that comes from another as the effect either of a natural or moral cause; so sparks are called the *sons of the quick coal,* Job v. 7, and corn the *son of the floor,* &c.

14 I was a [k]derision to all my people; *and* [l]their song all the day.

[k] Jer. 20. 7. [l] Job 30. 9. Ps. 69. 12. ver. 63.

Though some think the prophet speaks this of himself, yet, considering he hath all along spoken in the name of the people, it is not probable, which makes a difficulty, how the people could be a derision to themselves? It seemeth therefore ill translated, and that it should have been, *I was a derision to all people,* leaving out *my,* that is, to all foreigners, to whom the Jews were made a derision and a hissing; there only wants the last letter in עם and it is well observed by the learned author of the English Annotations,

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that the like defect is to be found, as to the same word, 2 Sam. xxii. 44, compared with Psal. xviii. 43, so that י is not a *pronoun affix*, (upon which supposal our translators go,) but one of the letters that form the plural number, the other being left out, and עצי put for יסרים.

m Jer. 9. 15. † Heb. *bitternesses.*

15 [m]He hath filled me with †bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.

That is, he hath filled me with severe and bitter dispensations. *Wormwood* is a bitter herb, but it is also a wholesome herb, and therefore some think that the Hebrew word should rather be translated *henbane*, and that it signifies some herb whose juice is intoxicating and poisonous.

n Prov. 20. 17. ‖ Or, *rolled me in the ashes.*

16 He hath also broken my teeth [n]with gravel stones, he hath ‖covered me with ashes.

These are but more metaphorical expressions, signifying the unpleasant difficult condition into which God had brought this people. They were like men that lived upon gritty bread, more fit to break their teeth than to nourish them; they were in the state of mourners, and no ordinary mourners, who were wont to throw ashes on their heads, they were all over covered with ashes.

17 And thou hast removed my soul far

† Heb. *good.*

off from peace: I forgat †prosperity.

Peace here signifieth *prosperity*, rather than a *freedom from war*. Though during the siege they were far from peace in a strict sense, yet in their captivity they had that peace; but both their minds were far off from quiet, and their persons from prosperity: the prophet owneth God as the cause of this. They had in Canaan lived prosperously, but now they thought of it no more, nor understood what such a thing meant.

o Ps. 31. 22.

18 [o]And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD:

‖ Or, *Remember.* p Jer. 9. 15.

19 ‖Remembering mine affliction and my misery, [p]the wormwood and the gall.

If, according to our translation, we read *Remembering*, or *While I remember*, these two verses contain but one sentence; in the former part the prophet in the name of this people expresseth their despairing condition; in the latter he gives the reason of it, viz. the people's poring upon their great and heavy afflictions, which he compares to *wormwood* and *gall*, two things excessively bitter, and often made use of to signify great affliction, Psal. lxix. 21; Jer. viii. 14; ix. 15; xxiii. 15; Rev. viii. 11. But it may as well be read imperatively, *Remember* mine affliction; so the first of these two verses expresseth the dejection of the people's minds in their captivity, caused through their proneness to despair of any better condition that their angry God would bring them into. The 19th verse is a prayer directed to God, which showed that though they were mightily perplexed, yet they were not in utter despair; and to this sense the following verses seem to incline.

† Heb. *bowed.*

20 My soul hath *them* still in remembrance, and is †humbled in me.

That is, I cannot forget them, and the thoughts of them sink my spirits.

† Heb. *make to return to my heart.*

21 This I †recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

This, not what was already said, that made them despair, and their souls to bow down; but *this*, that which followeth, concerning the nature of God, and other good providences. I see nothing in the circumstances of my condition to comfort me, but I see something in God's nature, and in some other dispensations of his providence, which gives me ground to hope for better things than an utter ruin and destruction.

q Mal. 3. 6.

22 ¶ [q]*It is of* the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

Mercy is nothing else but love flowing freely from any to persons in misery, and differs from compassion only in the freeness of the emanation. It is not because God had not power enough utterly to have consumed us, nor because we had not guilt enough to have provoked his justice to have put an end to our lives, as well as to the lives of many thousands of our countrymen, but it is merely from the Lord's free love and pity to us in our miseries. If God had not a blessing in store for us, how is it that we are captives, and not slain as many others were during the siege?

r Is. 33. 2.

23 *They are* new [r]every morning: great *is* thy faithfulness.

These compassions of God are renewed day by day, to declare the great faithfulness of God in fulfilling his many promises made for mercy to his people.

s Ps. 16. 5. & 73. 26. & 119. 57. Jer. 10. 16.

24 The LORD *is* my [s]portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

God is the portion of his people, and they have chosen him as their portion; he hath declared himself to them as such, and they have accepted him as such. This gives them ground both for patience under his providences, and also of expectation of good from him in their lowest and meanest state.

t Ps. 130. 6. Is. 30. 18. Mic. 7. 7.

25 The LORD *is* good unto them that [t]wait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him.

Good is a term of a very comprehensive notion. The nature of it lieth in a suitableness to the thing or person to whom it relateth; so it signifieth *profit* and *pleasantness*. There is in God an essential goodness, which is his absolute perfection; but this text speaketh of a communicative goodness, which floweth from him to his creatures, and is seen in his suiting their various necessities and desires with satisfactory dispensations of providence. Though God be in one degree or other good to all, yet he is more especially good to the true worshippers of him; yet possibly not in their seasons or times when they expect or would have God show himself so to them, in this or that way, but always to those who wait for him, patiently enduring trials and afflictions until God please to send them deliverance.

u Ps. 37. 7.

26 *It is* good that *a man* should both hope [u]and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

Good here either signifies *honestum*, what becomes men, and is their duty; or *utile*, what is profitable, and will turn to good account to them. *Hoping* and *waiting* differ but as the *mother* and *daughter*, hope being the mother of patience and waiting; or as the *habit* and *act*, hoping and waiting being much the same, flowing from a gracious power and habit given the soul to wait. *Quietness* is necessary to *waiting*, for all turbulency and impatience of spirit under sad providences is opposed to waiting. *The salvation of the Lord* refers to the outward man, in preserving or delivering us from dangers; or to the soul and inward man, in preserving us from, and delivering our souls out of, dangers they fear, or evils they are pressed with. Now for a man in the midst of all evils to hope in God, and, without turbulence or disorder in himself, to wait for a preservation from, or a delivery out of, any evils, is what becometh a man, (a child of God especially,) and will turn to a good account to them.

x Ps. 90. 12. & 119. 71.

27 [x]*It is* good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

Good here must be expounded in the same sense as in the foregoing verse. It is not pleasant, but it is profitable, it is honourable, what becomes us, and is our duty, quietly and patiently to bear what afflictions God will please to lay upon us, to restrain our wild and wanton spirits when they are most prone to be too brisk and lascivious. Some by *yoke* understand the law of God, called a *yoke*, (because indeed it is so to flesh and blood,) Matt. xi. 29. It is not so easy to bend a neck stiffened with age, or change a heart made hard by custom. Solomon bids us to train up one in their youth in the way we would have them to walk; and whether God will tame us when young by his word or by his rod, it is of advantage to a man. It is also laudable, and what becomes a man, early to bear the yoke of God's law, or to bear afflictive providences, to have his heart betimes humbled to the will and feet of God.

y Jer. 15. 17 ch. 2. 10.

28 [y]He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne *it* upon him.

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Our English Annotations supplying *that*, makes the connexion clear, It is good for a man that he *sit alone*, Jer. xv. 17; not doing what he doth to be seen of men, but sitting alone, and when he is alone suppressing the mutinies of his spirit, and keeping his soul in subjection to God; because God hath humbled him by his rod, humbling himself to his will.

a Job 42. 6. 29 [a]He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.

If *that* may be supplied, or *when*, (as Pagnine translateth ב ver. 28,) the connexion of these words with the former is very fair and easy, for then those words, ver. 27, *It is good that* must be repeated in the beginning of ver. 28 and 29; however, both this and the former verses let us know the duty of persons under afflictions in order to their obtaining mercy at the hand of God, and admirably give us the character of persons under afflictions preparing for mercy. They *hope and quietly wait for God's salvation*, ver. 26; *they bear God's yoke*, ver. 27, because he hath laid it upon them; they *sit alone and keep silence*, ver. 28; and here, they *put their mouths in the dust*, that is, humble themselves to the feet of God, and to the will of God; not being too confident of deliverances in this life, but if peradventure *there may be hope*.

a Is. 50. 6. Matt. 5. 39. 30 [a]He giveth *his* cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.

According to our Saviour's precept, Matt. v. 39, he doth not take any private revenge; he is reproached and reviled, but when he is so he *revileth not again*, 1 Pet. ii. 23; he is filled with reproach from others, but his mouth is not filled with the reproachings of others.

b Ps. 94. 14. 31 [b]For the LORD will not cast off for ever:

This is that which beareth up his spirits, that though the Lord may for a time estrange himself from his people, yet he will not always forsake them.

32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

But though, as a prudent parent, he may see reason to cause grief in and to afflict his own people, yet as a tender good father, that pitieth his children in misery, he will have compassion upon them, having not only mercies, but a multitude or abundance of mercies.

c Ezek. 33. 11. Heb. 12. 10. † Heb. *from his heart.* 33 For [c]he doth not afflict †willingly nor grieve the children of men.

In the Hebrew it is, he doth not afflict *from his heart*, that is, with pleasure and delight; or (which seemeth the best sense to me) not from his own mere motion without a cause given him from the persons afflicted. Hence judgment is called God's *strange work*. Showing mercy is his proper natural work, which floweth from himself without any cause in the creature. Judgment is his *strange work*, to which he never proceedeth but when provoked, and as it were forced from the creature, whence it followeth that he cannot delight in it.

34 To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth,

35 To turn aside the right of a man before the face of ‖the most High,

‖ Or, *a superior.* d Hab. 1. 13. ‖ Or, *seeth not.* 36 To subvert a man in his cause, [d]the LORD ‖approveth not.

Here are three things mentioned, of all which it is said that God *approveth* them *not*, neither all, nor any of them. The first is, *to crush the prisoners of the earth:* he hath power to crush all men in the world, they are his prisoners, and cannot flee from him, but he delighteth not in it. Some think it spoken with special reference to the Jews, who now were all captives. A second thing which it is said God approveth not is, *turning away the right of a man before the face of the Most High.* Some by *the Most High* understand *God*, and make the sense to be, *in the sight of God.* Others think that a superior magistrate is understood, who, Eccles. v. 8, is called *the highest;* and that seemeth the most probable sense. The turning away the right of a man before them, signifieth the use of any arts to deprive them of their just right by misrepresenting their cause, asperising their persons, &c. The third thing mentioned is, the *subverting a man in his cause*, either by art and rhetoric, making it to appear bad when it is not so, or by mere will and power, overruling it contrary to right and justice.

e Ps. 33. 9. 37 ¶ Who *is* he [e]*that* saith, and it cometh to pass, *when* the LORD commandeth *it* not?

The sense of these words is doubted by none, that nothing cometh to pass in the world but by the disposal of Divine Providence, either effecting it by an immediate influence, or permitting it; but to what end these words are brought in in this place is not so generally agreed. Some think they are brought in to check the blasphemy of some that spake of what had befallen the Jews as a thing which God had no hand in. Others think they are brought in as expounding that term that went before, *The Lord seeth not.* Though God doth not approve of sinful actions, nor incline any man's heart or will to them, yet God hath a hand in the permission of the most cruel and unjust actions, which he could easily hinder. I should rather incline to interpret them as an argument brought by the prophet in the name of the people of God, arguing themselves into a quiet submission to the afflictive providences under which they laboured from the consideration of the superior hand of God in them; as Christ told Pilate, Thou couldst not have had any power against me, if it had not been given thee from above. *Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos iii. 6.

f Job 2. 10. Is. 45. 7. Amos 3. 6. 38 Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not [f]evil and good?

In the Hebrew the form of these words is interrogatory, as much as if he should say, Doth not evil come out of God's mouth from his direction and command, and from his providence, as well as good? He speaks of evils of punishment, judicial afflictive dispensations; so it agreeth with Job ii. 10; Amos iii. 6. It is no reproach unto God to make him the author of his own punishments, though we call them evil.

g Prov. 19. 3. ‖ Or, murmur. h Mic. 7. 9. 39 [g]Wherefore doth a living man ‖complain, [h]a man for the punishment of his sins?

This verse admits of various senses, caused from the various interpretation of the Hebrew word, which we translate *complain*, which also signifies to mourn or grieve; so some render it, Why doth a living man grieve or vex himself? But the word is noted most generally to signify *complaining* or murmuring. The word also which we translate *sin* sometimes signifieth that oblique act which we call sin; and those who interpret the former *grieve* or *vex*, thus understand the word translated *sin*, supplying some such words as these, *Let him mourn for his sin.* Why doth he mourn for his afflictions and plagues? let him rather spend his tears upon his sins. But the word also signifies the *guilt of sin*, or obligation to death, which it layeth men under: *Sin lieth at the door*, Gen. iv. 7; so also Gen. xx. 9; and also any punishment brought upon men for sin, Gen. iv. 13, where we translate it punishment. This sense our translators follow. The prophet then, in the person of the Jews, checks himself in his complaints for their punishments from the consideration, that nothing had befallen them but what was the just reward of their sins.

40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.

Seeing God doth not grieve us willingly, nor delight to crush us, though we be his prisoners, and seeing the hand of God is in these things upon us, and that justly, to recompense our iniquities into our bosoms, instead of murmuring and fretting against God, which is not reasonable, nor will be of any profit to us, let us examine our thoughts, words, and actions, and consider what they have been, and reform, and turn again to the Lord, by apostatizing from whom we have brought these evils upon us.

i Ps. 86. 4. 41 [i]Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens.

Let us apply ourselves unto God by prayer, often expressed under this notion in Scripture from that gesture

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ordinarily used in prayer; and let us not do it in hypocrisy, but joining our hearts with our hands, praying seriously and fervently.

k Dan. 9. 5. 42 [k]We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned.

The prophet doth not dictate words, but sense to them, teaching them the matter of their prayer; first, by way of *confession*. Sin is called a *transgression*, because it is going aside from the way of God's precepts; it is called *rebellion*, because it is an act contrary to that allegiance and duty which we owe unto God, and the covenant we have made with him. By *pardoning* here is meant the discharge of the guilty persons from the temporal punishment due for sin (as it is often taken in Scripture); so it signifies, thou hast plagued us according to the just desert of our sins.

l ch. 2. 2, 17, 21. 43 Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: [l]thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied.

Thou hast covered with anger; either thou hast covered thyself with anger, or covered thy own face with anger, so as not to look upon us to move thy pity; or (which is more probably the sense) thou hast covered, that is, *overwhelmed, us* with thy wrath. *Thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied;* thou hast pursued us to a fatal ruin, without showing us any pity.

m ver. 8. 44 Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, [m]that *our* prayer should not pass through.

God had covered them with wrath, overwhelming them with afflictions, so as they had no way to escape; and whereas in this distress they had nothing else to do but only to apply themselves to God, he had hid his face from them, so as they could get no comfortable sight of him; he was as one covered with a cloud, that could not be discerned through that opacous body. What is meant by this cloud, whether his fixed resolution to punish them, or his fresh remembrance of their sins, or his just will to be revenged on them, seems too curiously inquired. The phrase is a metaphor, and signifies no more than that God would not hear their prayers in their distress.

n 1 Cor. 4. 13. 45 Thou hast made us *as* the [n]off-scouring and refuse in the midst of the people.

That is, thou hast made us to all nations extremely contemptible, so as they value us no more than the sweepings of their houses, or the most vile, refuse, and contemptible things imaginable.

o ch. 2. 16. 46 [o]All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.

That is, to mock, scoff, and reproach us.

p Is. 24. 17. Jer. 48. 43. q Is. 51. 19. 47 [p]Fear and a snare is come upon us, [q]desolation and destruction.

All manner of misery was come upon them. They were seized first with fears and terrors; going to escape these they fell into a snare, or (as it is in the Hebrew) into a *pit*, out of which they could not get; they were wasted, made desolate, and destroyed.

r Jer. 4. 19. & 9. 1. & 14. 17. ch. 2. 11. 48 [r]Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

s Ps. 77. 2. ch. 1. 16. 49 [s]Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission,

The prophet was deeply affected upon the prospect of this evil before it came, Jer. ix. 1, and was now much more affected when he saw the judgment was come; he wept plentifully and constantly, as for their sins which had brought these judgments upon them, so for the judgments themselves, as indications of God's displeasure and wrath against them for their transgressions.

t Is. 63. 15. 50 Till the LORD [t]look down, and behold from heaven.

That is, until the Lord show me some favour. See the notes on chap. i. 9.

† Heb. my soul. 51 Mine eye affecteth †mine heart ‖ because of all the daughters of my city.

‖ Or, more than all.

The eye and the ear are those organs of the body, by which the soul exerciseth its senses to bring in all objects, whether pleasant or sad, to the understanding to judge of them, according to the judgment of which upon them it is affected with joy or sorrow, desire or aversation, &c.; and the eye is the chiefest of these, because its evidence is more certain, and less subject to deceit. The prophet and most of the Jews were eye-witnesses to the evils which had befallen the Jews, and which at present were upon them; so as their hearts were the more affected. The word translated *affect* is by some noted to signify to *waste* and *consume*, which are the effects of a deep affecting the heart with sad and miserable objects. *Because of all the daughters of my city:* our margin tells us that it may be also read *more than all the daughters of my city;* according to which the sense is, that he was more affected with the state of Jerusalem than the tenderest woman that had lived in it: but it is as well, if not better, in this place rendered causally, showing the reason of his deep affliction, viz. all those miseries he had seen fall upon all the Jewish nation, or upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

u Ps. 35. 7, 19. & 69. 4. & 109. 3. & 119. 161. 52 Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, [u]without cause.

As boys beat a bird from bush to bush, suffering it to rest no where, so mine enemies, to whom I gave no cause, pursued me.

x Jer. 37. 16. & 38. 6, 9, 10. y Dan. 6. 17. 53 They have cut off my life [x]in the dungeon, and [y]cast a stone upon me.

Dungeon seemeth not to be here taken literally, for the lowest and nastiest place in prisons, which probably was the portion but of a few of the Jews; but metaphorically, for the lowest and saddest condition of misery. Their enemies had brought them into the deepest miseries, to the cutting off of their lives; and as men use to roll great stones upon the mouths of dens and pits, where they have shut up persons, to make them sure from escaping out, so their enemies had dealt with them, doing what lay in them to make their condition remediless and desperate.

z Ps. 69. 2. & 124. 4, 5. a Ps. 31. 22. Is. 38. 10, 11. ver. 18. 54 [z]Waters flowed over mine head; *then* [a]I said, I am cut off.

Afflictions often in Scripture are called *waters*, Isa. xxviii. 17, 18; lix. 19. *I am cut off;* that is, I am utterly undone, there is no hope for me.

b Ps. 130. 1. Jonah 2. 2. 55 ¶ [b]I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of the low dungeon.

That is, out of my deepest affliction, as Jonah out of the *belly of hell*, Jonah ii. 2. I cried unto God, and called upon him for mercy.

c Ps. 3. 4. & 6. 8. & 18. 6. & 66. 19. & 116. 1. 56 [c]Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.

I in former great afflictions applied myself unto thee, and thou didst hear me; show me now the same favour. Our former experiences of God's goodness to us in hearing our prayers ought to hold up our hands in prayer, and beget a confidence in us that we, persisting in our duty, shall find God the same God, yesterday, this day, and for ever.

d Jam. 4. 8. 57 Thou [d]drewest near in the day *that* I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.

There was a time when I was in distress, and called upon thee, and thou didst draw near unto me. God is never far off from any of us, as to his essential presence; nor is it possible that he should, for he filleth all places. But he is said to be near us or far off from us, as he manifests, or doth not manifest, his goodness to us by acts of gracious providence: of that drawing near the text speaketh. God being infinite in goodness and mercy, is spoken of as absent from those persons and places where he is not showing mercy, and present only there where he showeth forth his goodness, and to be drawing nigh to them to whom he beginneth to show mercy. *Thou saidst, Fear not;* thou didst encourage me formerly upon my prayer.

e Ps. 35. 1. Jer. 51. 36. f Ps. 71. 23. 58 O LORD, thou hast [e]pleaded the causes of my soul; [f]thou hast redeemed my life.

Thou hast been wont to take my part against my ene-

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mies, not like a lawyer by word of mouth, but actually and really pleading my cause. *Thou hast redeemed my life;* thou hast saved me from many a danger which looked fatally upon me.

59 O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong:
g Ps. 9. 4. & 35. 23. [g]judge thou my cause.

Thou hast a perfect knowledge of men's perverse and unrighteous dealings with me at this time; do thou judge betwixt me and mine enemies, and deal with them according to what shall appear just to thee.

60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance
h Jer. 11. 19. *and* all their [h]imaginations against me.

Thou hast been a witness to all their fury and rage, and all their malicious and bloody contrivances against me.

61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O LORD, *and* all their imaginations against me;

Whatever knowledge men get of things done from their eye or ear, thou hast from thy omnisciency; thou knowest not only their malicious actions, but words and thoughts.

62 The lips of those that rose up against me, and their device against me all the day.

That is, thou hast observed and noted the motions or products of my enemies' lips, and their secret devices before they came out of their lips.

i Ps. 139. 2. 63 Behold their [i]sitting down, and
k ver. 14. their rising up; [k]I *am* their musick.

That is, at all times, when they sit down and rise up, I am their song. Though probably the words have a special reference to their sitting down at feasts, and at their merry meetings. I am all the subject of their discourse, they spend their time in mocking and scoffing at us, and at Jerusalem; we are they that make them sport.

l Ps. 28. 4. See Jer. 11. 20. 2 Tim. 4. 14. 64 ¶ [l]Render unto them a recompence, O LORD, according to the work of their hands.

These three last verses are all but the same general petition, though expressed in various phrases; the prophet had prayed, ver. 59, that God would judge his people's cause, here he prayeth that he would also judge his enemies, he only desireth justice against them, a recompence of the work of their hands.

‖ Or, *obstinacy of heart.* 65 Give them ‖sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them.

The word translated *sorrow of heart* is found no where else in holy writ, which makes a certain particular explication of it to be difficult, and hath given interpreters a strange liberty in translating it *shield, sorrow, and grief, obstinacy* or *hardness of heart, perplexity, abjection* or *breaking of heart;* the best guides we have to direct us in the sense of it are, 1. *The other things joined with it; persecution, destruction,* a recompence according to their works, so that some afflictive evil of a heavy nature is certainly signified by it. 2. *The analogy of faith,* which restraineth us from wishing or praying for spiritual or eternal evils against our worst enemies; it therefore probably signifies such perplexity and breakings of mind as commonly attend a state of great affliction.

66 Persecute and destroy them in
m Deut. 25. 19. Jer. 10. 11. n Ps. 8. 3. anger [m]from under the [n]heavens of the LORD.

Bring them to a temporal ruin and destruction. How far such petitions are lawful we have before showed, in our notes on Psal. lxix. 22—24, &c.; cix. 6—10, &c.; Jer. xi. 20; xv. 15: see also chap. i. 22. It is hard to interpret all passages of this nature which we meet with as prophecies, though some of them are so, and others may be both prophecies and prayers.

CHAP. IV.

Zion bewaileth her misery, confesseth her sins, 1—6. *Miseries of the chief ones; women who killed and dressed their own children,* 7—12. *The sin of the false prophets and priests; their vain hope,* 13—19. *Their king taken prisoner,* 20. *Edom is threatened, and Zion comforted,* 21, 22.

HOW is the gold become dim! *how* is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out [a]in the top of every street. a ch. 2. 19.

Though some take *gold* here metaphorically, as signifying the most precious things, yet the most and best interpreters take it in its native sense, for the gold which adorned the temple either in its ceiling or in its vessels; the house of the Lord being burnt by Nebuzar-adan, Jer. lii. 13, the gold in and about the temple must needs be discoloured. *How!* is here a note of admiration. *Are poured out in the top of every street;* that is, are tumbled down and scattered in the head of every street about the city.

2 The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed [b]as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter! b Is. 30. 14. Jer. 19. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 7.

Either the nobles and great men, or the priests, or the good men amongst the Jews, that for their intrinsic worth and value may be compared to gold, are looked upon no better than earthen vessels, the workmanship of an ordinary potter. God carrying Jeremiah down to the potter's house, Jer. xviii. 2; xix. 1, had taught them that they were no more in his hand; he now proveth it by his providence, they were indeed made so, and as miserably and irreparably broken in pieces.

‖ Or, *sea calves.* 3 Even the ‖sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people *is become* cruel, [c]like the ostriches in the wilderness. c Job 39. 14, 16.

The learned author of our English Annotations well observeth, that whatever creature is here intended by the word translated *sea-monsters,* yet our translation is not proper, the text speaking of creatures of God's making, monsters properly signifying such as have something beyond their natural bulk and proportion. What creatures are signified by the Hebrew term, whether sea-calves, or dragons, or serpents, or whales, is very hard to say, the Hebrew word signifying some creatures, occurring so rarely as it is not easy to determine the species, from the word used to express it. He certainly speaks of some brute beasts, and those that are most savage. He saith there are none such but by a natural instinct feed and nourish their young ones; but the Jewish women were *become cruel* to their children, either forced to appear so, having through the famine no milk to give them, nor any thing to relieve them, or were indeed so, killing them to make food for themselves, as chap. ii. 20. *Like the ostriches in the wilderness;* like *ostriches,* that lay their eggs and leave them in the sand, and are *hardened against their young ones,* as Job xxxix. 14—16. Some think a kind of *owls* are intended, which for want of meat eat up their young ones, as the Jewish women now did. See ver. 10.

4 [d]The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: [e]the young children ask bread, *and* no man breaketh *it* unto them. d Ps. 22. 15. e See ch. 2. 11, 12.

As the fatness of the mother's milk makes it instead of bread and flesh to the sucking child, so the moisture of it makes it to be as drink to allay its heat; the children wanting this moisture, their mouths were hot and dry. It was a time of famine; the little children, understanding not the case of the city, were importunate for something to eat, but none had enough for himself, much less for others. See chap. ii. 12, 13.

5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet [f]embrace dunghills. f Job 24. 8.

This judgment reached not only to the common people, but to persons of the highest rank and order, whose misery was now so much the greater, because so contrary to their former splendid state and way of living. They were wont to fare deliciously; now they wanted bread to eat, and were desolate in the streets. They were wont to eat upon

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scarlet carpets, or to lodge upon scarlet beds and couches; now they searched for their meat upon, or were glad to lie upon, dunghills.

‖ Or, iniquity.

6 For the ‖punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, g that was g overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.

g Gen. 19.25.

The word translated *punishment* signifies also *iniquity*, as was said in the notes on chap. iii. 39. The sins of the Jews are compared to the sins of Sodom, Isa. iii. 9; Ezek. xvi. 46, 48, 49; hence their rulers are called *rulers of Sodom*, Isa. i. 10; either their sins were specifically the same (as they were) as to many sins, Ezek. xvi. 49, or they were of an equal magnitude and provocative nature. The prophet here complains that they were punished like Sodom, Amos iv. 11; yea, and their punishment was greater, because more lingering and gradual, whereas Sodom was overthrown in a moment, and that by no human hands that abode upon her, causing her a continued torment, as there did upon the Jews. David said, It is better to fall into the immediate hand of God than into the hands of men.

7 Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing *was* of sapphire:

By *Nazarites* in this place the most and best interpreters do not understand persons who were of the religious order of Nazarites, the laws of which order are to be read Numb. vi., and of whom we read Amos ii. 11, 12, for here is a beauty described (under several metaphors) which could never agree to them; but persons that were nobly and ingenuously bred; the word *Nezer* signifying a crown, or ensign of honour, 2 Sam. i. 10; 2 Kings xi. 12. The name Nazarite was given to persons splendid for their breeding and education, or honour and dignity; it is given to Joseph, Gen. xlix. 26, we translate it *separate from his brethren*, Deut. xxxiii. 16; so Nah. iii. 17. *Her Nazarites* in this place signifieth her *separated ones*, who either in respect of birth, education, estate, places of magistracy, or the like, were distinguished from the rest of the people. He expresseth their former splendid estate by the metaphors of *snow*, *milk*, *rubies*, and *sapphires*.

† Heb. *darker than blackness.* h ch. 5. 10. Joel 2. 6. Nah. 2. 10. i Ps. 102. 5.

8 Their visage is †h blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: i their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

They that in the prosperity of the city were fair, plump, and ruddy, look now black for want of fit nourishment, and through sorrow and grief; insomuch that those who before knew them by their countenances, garbs, and habits, did not now know them. And by reason of the famine (for he speaketh with relation to the famine during the siege) they are almost starved, their skin is withered and hard, and even sticketh to their bones.

9 *They that be* slain with the sword are better than *they that be* slain with hunger: for these † pine away, stricken through for *want of* the fruits of the field.

† Heb. *flow out.*

During the siege many were killed by the enemies' sword, many more perished by famine; the prophet saith the condition of those who perished by the sword was much better than the condition of those who perished by famine, because they had a quicker death, and were sooner despatched and put out of their pain; whereas they who perished by hunger died a miserable, lingering death, gradually pining away, because they wanted corn and herbs, the fruits of the field, to uphold their souls in life.

k ch. 2. 20. l Is. 49. 15.

10 k The hands of the l pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their m meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.

m Deut. 28. 57. 2 Kings 6. 29.

This was according to what God had threatened in case of disobedience, Deut. xxviii. 57, and a thing which hath often happened in sieges, 2 Kings vi. 29. Such things did happen in the last destruction of Jerusalem, as we read in Josephus; and though we read of no such thing happening in the siege of it by Nebuchadnezzar, yet that there were some such sad instances appears from this text.

11 The Lord hath accomplished his fury; n he hath poured out his fierce anger, and o hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof.

n Jer. 7. 20. o Deut. 32. 22. Jer. 21. 14.

An unusual fire, which burns up not only the roof and superstructure, but the foundations, leaving no bottom for hopes of being restored. See Deut. xxxii. 22.

12 The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem was so naturally and artificially fortified, and so favoured by God, and taken notice of as a place which the Lord cared for, and watched over, that it could not have entered into the thoughts of any of those that were enemies to it, that they should ever have been able to make themselves masters of it.

13 ¶ p For the sins of her prophets, *and* the iniquities of her priests, q that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her,

p Jer. 5. 31. & 6. 13. & 14. 14. & 23. 11, 21. Ezek. 22. 26, 28. Zeph. 3. 4. q Matt. 23. 31, 37.

Not for their sins alone who were the *false prophets* and Baal's *priests*, but for their sins in an eminent degree; they were the ringleaders, either encouraging the people to the wickednesses they committed, or not restraining them, and denouncing the wrath of God against them. So though they were the corrupt magistrates that had shed the innocent blood, yet the priests and prophets became guilty of it, either encouraging the magistrates to it, or soothing them up in their bloody courses, or by burning the children that were burnt in the valley of Hinnom. The ecclesiastical men were a great cause of the first and last destruction of Jerusalem, and so they are of most other places that come to ruin, through their neglect of their duty, or encouraging others in their wicked courses; which both showeth us how great a blessing to a people a godly, conscientious ministry is, and how great a plague and curse a ministry is which is otherwise. See Jer. v. 31; xxiii. 21.

14 They have wandered *as* blind *men* in the streets, r they have polluted themselves with blood, ‖ s so that men could not touch their garments.

r Jer. 2. 34. ‖ Or, *in that they could not* but *touch.* s Num. 19. 16.

A variety of interpreters hath made this text much more difficult than it is. Certainly nothing can appear more reasonable than to interpret the pronoun in the front of the verse relatively, and to fetch the antecedent from the former verse. *They*, that is, the prophets and the priests, *wandered* up and down the streets *like blind men*, being spiritually blind, polluting themselves with blood, either the blood of the children which they slew, or the *just men* mentioned ver. 13, the slaughter of whom they either encouraged, or at least did not discourage; so as one could not touch a prophet or a priest but he must be legally polluted, and there were so many of them, that men could not walk in the streets but that he must touch some of them. Some thinking the discourse of the priests done with, interpret *they* of the blind men in the city who could not walk up and down the streets without touching the bodies of some that were slain. Others interpret the words of the common people, who, during the siege, could no more avoid touching bodies slain, and so polluting themselves with blood, than blind men could; so as they abhorred to touch their own garments. The first sense to me seemeth most natural and easy.

15 They cried unto them, Depart ye; ‖ *it is* t unclean; depart, depart, touch not: when they fled away and wandered, they said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn *there*.

‖ Or, *ye polluted.* t Lev. 13. 45.

The various application of the pronoun *they* by interpreters makes them as much divided in the sense of this as of the former verse. Either the Jews that made conscience of keeping to the law against *touching dead bodies* cried to the other Jews to leave the city as themselves did, the city

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being now so full of dead bodies that they could not stay in it without polluting themselves; or the priests called to them to that purpose; or their enemies spake in that language to them. For their enemies had resolved they should not stay in Jerusalem.

‖ Or, *face.*

16 The ‖anger of the LORD hath divided them; he will no more regard
[a] ch. 5. 12. them: [a]they respected not the persons of the priests, they favoured not the elders.

These words seem to be the language of their enemies triumphing over them, as discerning that their God was provoked against them, and would have no more regard or respect unto them; and that they had misused his prophets, which agreeth with 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. But others rather think these latter words (if not the former also) are the prophet's words, expressive of the cause of their miseries, viz. the Lord's anger, who had divided them, &c., and the effect of it. their enemies having no regard to the most grave and venerable persons amongst them.

[w] 2 Kings 24. 7. Is. 20. 5. & 30. 6, 7. Jer. 37. 7. Ezek. 29. 16.

17 As for us, [w]our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have watched for a nation *that* could not save *us.*

That is, in expectation of the Egyptians, whom they waited for to raise the siege; it was a long time before they came, and when they did come, they could do them no service at all, Jer. xxxvii. 5, 7, 8.

[x] 2 Kings 25. 4, 5.

18 [x]They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets: our end is near,
[y] Ezek. 7. 2, 3, 6. Amos 8. 2. our days are fulfilled; for [y]our end is come.

The Chaldeans employed in the siege are so close upon us, that we cannot stir a foot about our businesses, nor look out at our doors, nor walk safely in the streets; we are ruined, there is an end of our civil state; our period is come, and the time of our prosperity is elapsed.

[z] Deut. 28. 49. Jer. 4. 13.

19 Our persecutors are [z]swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.

Our enemies who pursued us to destroy us were very swift in their pursuit of us, (*As swift as an eagle*, was a proverbial expression,) we could no where be safe: if we sought refuge in the mountains, they followed us thither; if we fled from them into the wilderness, they laid wait for us there.

[a] Gen. 2. 7. ch. 2. 9. [b] Jer. 52. 9. Ezek. 12. 13. & 19. 4, 8.

20 The [a]breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, [b]was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.

That he calls some prince here *the breath of their nostrils*, that is, their life, Gen. ii. 7, is out of doubt; and though some of the Jews would have it understood of Josiah, yet whoso considereth that he was not taken, but slain, and that not by the Chaldeans, but by the Egyptians twenty-three years before the city was taken, will see reason to conclude that he meaneth Zedekiah, who though a bad man, yet was a king, and of David's line, and afforded some protection to the Jews. We promised ourselves that though the land of Judah was encompassed with pagan nations, yet through Zedekiah's valour and good conduct in government we should live comfortably, he being a covering and refreshing to us; but, saith the prophet, he also is fallen into the enemies' hands.

[c] Like Eccles. 11. 9.

21 ¶ [c]Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz;
[d] Jer. 25. 15, 16, 21. Obad. 10. [d]the cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.

The Edomites were descended from Esau the elder brother of Jacob, and dwelled in a part of Arabia that obtained the name of Uz, probably from Uz the son of Dishan, who descended from Seir, Gen. xxxvi. 20, 28: they, out of their old hatred to the Jews, rejoiced at their ruin, as we learn from the prophecy of Obadiah, who upon this account was sent to prophesy against them: the prophet here ironically saith, *Rejoice*, in the same sense as, Eccles. xi. 9, Solomon bids the young man *rejoice*. But their joy should be but for a little time, for God was dealing out the cup of his fury to more than the Jewish nation, and amongst others to the Edomites; and they should be filled and intoxicated with it, and *make themselves naked*, as drunken men sometimes do in their debauches.

[e] Is. 40. 2. ‖ Or, *Thine iniquity.*

22 ¶ [e]‖The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; he will no more carry thee away into captivity: [f]he will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom; he will ‖discover thy sins.

[f] Ps. 137. 7. ‖ Or, *carry thee captive for thy sins.*

O Judea, thy punishment is past, but the punishment of Edom is yet to come. The Jews were to abide many years in captivity, but they were now suffering their last punishment from the Chaldeans, they were only for some years to continue in that state of captives. *He will no more carry thee into captivity;* after thy term of captivity shall be expired, thou shalt not for thy old sins suffer any more punishment. Not that their present captivity should be all their punishment in case they went on in sinful courses, as they did in rejecting Christ, and causing him to be crucified; for those new wickednesses after many years they were destroyed by the Romans; but the prophet hints that there should at present, or for their past sins, no more wrath be poured out upon them, nor would God ever detain them in this captivity. But for the Edomites, their punishment was yet wholly to come, God was yet beginning to punish them, and would do it, *discovering their sins.* As the pardon of sin is in Scripture set out under the notion of covering it, Psal. xxxii. 1, so the punishment of sin may be expressed by *discovering it*, Job xx. 27; but the learned author of the Englih Annotations conceiveth the Hebrew may be better read, *he will discover thee for thy sins*, because of the particle ב set before *thy sins* (though our translation taketh no notice of it). *He will discover upon thy sins;* and so it answereth Jer. xlix. 10, (as he conceiveth,) *I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself.*

CHAP. V.

A humble prayer, presenting to the Lord their great misery, 1—15, *confessing their sins,* 16—18, *imploring deliverance,* 19—22.

[a] Ps. 89. 50, 51. [b] ch. 2. 15. Ps. 79. 4.

[a]REMEMBER, O LORD, what is come upon us: consider, and behold [b]our reproach.

It hath been before observed, that it is very frequent in Scripture to express those acts which are reasonably consequent to the exercise of our exterior or interior senses, by terms which signify the exercise of those senses. That which the prophet here prayeth for is God's freeing the Jews from those calamities which oppressed them; this he prayeth for under the notion of God's remembering them, and beholding their reproach.

[c] Ps. 79. 1.

2 [c]Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens.

What our fathers inherited as given them by thee, and we as left to us by them, is come into the hands of the Chaldeans.

3 We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers *are* as widows.

We are all of us without a king, (who is the common father of the country,) we are deprived of thy fatherly care and protection, many young children amongst us are left without an earthly parent. *Our mothers are as widows;* either our great cities are like widows, wanting magistrates; or, our women that were married are left widows.

† Heb *cometh for price.*

4 We have drunken our water for money; our wood †is sold unto us.

This seemeth to refer to the state of the Jews in Babylon, where it is probable their adversaries made them buy

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both water and wood, which in the land of Canaan they had plentifully, and without any further charge to them than fetching the one, and cutting down and bringing home the other.

d Deut. 28. 48. Jer. 28. 14.

5 d †Our necks *are* under persecution: we labour, *and* have no rest.

† Heb. *Our necks are we persecuted.*

As the generality of prisoners of war are made slaves, and put to hard and incessant labour, so in probability the most of the Jews were at first at least.

e Gen. 24. 2. Jer. 50. 15. f Hos. 12. 1.

6 e We have given the hand f *to* the Egyptians, *and to* the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.

The ten tribes were all carried captives into Assyria, many of the kingdom of Judah, as we have heard, fled into Egypt after the taking of Jerusalem. *Giving the hand* may either signify working with their hands, and labouring for them; or yielding up themselves to their power, or lifting up the hands as supplicants to them, or striking hands and making covenants with them, or lending them their hands to help them, and all to get any thing to live upon.

g Jer. 31. 29. Ezek. 18. 2. h Gen. 42. 13. Zech. 1. 5.

7 g Our fathers have sinned, *and* h *are* not; and we have borne their iniquities.

We must not understand this in the same sense as Ezek. xviii. 2, where God reflecteth upon them for using a proverb to this sense. It is the prophet who here speaketh, and in the name of the godly Jews, who would not excuse themselves as if they suffered merely for their forefathers' sins. But the prophet confesseth and bewaileth that God had punished their iniquities and the iniquities of their forefathers together; and it was better with their forefathers who had sinned, and were dead and gone, than with them, upon whom the punishment of their iniquity did abide, and was like so to do a long time.

i Neh. 5. 15.

8 i Servants have ruled over us: *there is* none that doth deliver *us* out of their hand.

Either those who sometimes were our servants, tributary to us, or the posterity of Ham, condemned of old to be servants to our forefather Shem, Gen. ix. 26; or the servants of those masters whom we serve in Babylon: and none will help us and give us more liberty.

9 We gat our bread with *the peril of* our lives because of the sword of the wilderness.

The enemies lay encamped in all the plains, so as they could stir out no way but the sword of the Chaldeans was upon them, and what victuals they got they adventured their lives for, during the time of the siege.

k Job 30. 30. Ps. 119. 83. ch. 4. 8. ‖ Or, *terrors*, or, *storms*

10 Our k skin was black like an oven because of the ‖ terrible famine.

The want of bread caused leanness, and paleness, and ill colours in their faces.

l Is. 13. 16. Zech. 14. 2.

11 l They ravished the women in Zion, *and* the maids in the cities of Judah.

Usual outrages of barbarous soldiers. The Hebrew is, They *humbled*, a modest term to express those actions by.

m Is. 47. 6. ch. 4. 16.

12 Princes are hanged up by their hand: m the faces of elders were not honoured.

Most probably by the enemies' hands, though some would have it by their hands, intimating a more sharp and lingering death. Hanging was an ancient way in the Eastern countries of putting malefactors to death, Gen. xl. 19.

n Judg. 16. 21.

13 They took the young men n to grind, and the children fell under the wood.

Their base, servile condition is expressed by the labour they were put to, which was either grinding in the mill, (an ordinary employment of slaves in those countries,) or carrying millstones; and the younger children, in carrying great burdens of wood, under which they fell, as being not able to stand under the burdens laid upon them.

14 The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their musick.

Our grave men were wont to sit and execute judgment in the gates, but now there is no such thing. Our young men were wont to play on music, and to have their merry meetings, but they are also ceased.

15 The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning.

Either our rejoicing at our solemn festivals, and dancings there, which were usual, as appeareth from many scriptures; or all our joy and dancings, as well at other times as in our solemn festivals.

o Job 19. 9. Ps. 89. 39. † Heb. *The crown of our head is fallen.*

16 o †The crown is fallen *from* our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned!

Or, *The crown of our head is fallen*, by which is not only to be understood the cessation of their kingdom, but all their honour, splendour, and dignity (*crown* being taken in a metaphorical notion). *Woe unto us, that we have sinned!* we must thank ourselves for all this, this woe is come upon us because of our sins.

p ch. 1. 22. q Ps. 6. 7. ch. 2. 11.

17 For this p our heart is faint; q for these *things* our eyes are dim.

Either for our sins these miseries are befallen us; or for these miseries our spirits fail us, and we are almost blinded with weeping.

18 Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.

Foxes and other wild beasts, which flee from places inhabited for fear of men inhabiting, and are much in desolate places. *The mountain of Zion*, where the temple once stood, and people met to worship God, was now a desolate, unfrequented place, so as will beasts ran up and down there.

r Ps. 9. 7. & 10. 16. & 29. 10. & 90. 2. & 102. 12, 26, 27. & 145. 13. Hab. 1. 12. s Ps. 45. 6.

19 Thou, O LORD, r remainest for ever; s thy throne from generation to generation.

That is, Lord, though for our sins thou sufferest these things to be done unto us, and our throne be through thy righteous providence thrown down, and thy throne in thy sanctuary amongst us be thrown down; yet thou art still the same God, thy power is not diminished, nor thy goodness abated. Thou rulest the world, and shalt rule it for ever and for ever.

t Ps. 13. 1. † Heb. *for length of days?*

20 t Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, *and* forsake us † so long time?

Wherefore dost thou, in the dispensations of thy providence, carry thyself as if thou hadst forgotten us, and forsaken us, and that for a long time.

u Ps. 80. 3, 7, 19. Jer. 31. 18.

21 u Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.

See the like expression Jer. xxxi. 18. Turn thou us unto thee by giving us repentance, and then our condition will be altered; or receive us into thy favour, and then it shall be well with us. *Renew our days as of old;* restore us to our former estate, that it may be with us as it hath formerly been.

‖ Or, *For wilt thou utterly reject us?*

22 ‖ But thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us.

Our translators have here so rendered the particle כי that the words seem to express some diffidence in the prophet of God's mercy in restoring the people to their former state, some expressions of which nature we find falling from the most eminent servants of God in an hour of great temptation; but where such a sense is not necessary, it is hard to put it upon a text. Some therefore expound כי אם in this place by *But if*. Others translate them, *Although thou hast*, &c. Mr. Calvin preferreth the translation of them by *Nisi, Unless thou hast utterly rejected us*, and thinks that by this expression the prophet confirmeth himself against temptations of diffidence, because it was impossible God should utterly cast off his people, Rom. xi. 2. Others read it interrogatively, *Hast thou utterly rejected us?* which doth not suppose that the prophet believed he had, though his present providence showed him very angry with them.

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THE BOOK

OF

THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

THE ARGUMENT.

EZEKIEL was by descent a priest, and by commission a prophet, and received it from heaven, as will appear from the first, second, and third chapters. He was, and had been, a captive in Babylon five years when first called to this office, and there he met with many things that were occasions of grief to himself, and occasion of this prophecy. For in Babylon there were many that did repine at their state, repented they had rendered themselves, called into question the truth and integrity of Jeremiah and himself, and were ready to do violence to him; and not only thus, but they continued so to sin, that the name of God was blasphemed because of them: and these things both grieved and weakened the hearts of the best, and hardened the worst. To redress these is Ezekiel both extraordinarily called, commissioned, qualified, and assisted in the prophetic office, in discharge of which he doth reprove and calm the discontented, that they might return to a right frame of patience and hope. He calls the profane and wicked to acknowledge God's just and equal, and their own unequal, ways. He directeth the honest-hearted, who inquire that they might do their duties. He encourages that handful of godly ones among them with many comfortable promises of good in their own land, and of more grace from heaven; and confirmeth what Jeremiah had preached, advised, and foretold in Jerusalem, exactly harmonizing with him, though the one at Babylon, the other at Jerusalem, destitute of all means of conferring with each other. In all these particulars he is sometimes very plain, sometimes speaks in riddles, in which kind he is more frequent than any other of the prophets, in them all deep and mysterious; to the quarrelling and froward these are dark, but to the humble and teachable more significant and clear. In his first three chapters he opens his commission. In the next one and twenty chapters he doth sharply preach against the sins of the Jews; which they dislike, and grow weary of, and violent against the preacher, who for some time is ordered to forbear, and leave them to that severe sermon which the king of Babylon's army should preach to them in the destruction of country, city, and temple, which should open the eyes of some, and wound the heart of all the Jews. So the prophet doth by order from the Lord preach against the heathen round about, through the 25th chapter and on to the end of the 32nd chapter; after which he is sent to preach repentance and pardon, with grace and favour, to Israel, to proclaim the Messiah's kingdom, and to assure them of the wonderful overthrow of their enemies, the rebuilding the city and temple in greatness beyond whatever it was, upon condition they become a reformed people, ashamed for former sins, loathe themselves, and love the Lord their God, and keep his ordinances; which they did not after their return, as is evident from the complaints, menaces, and reproofs which do every where sound in the mouths of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, who lived after the joyful return from captivity, and saw the sinful deportment of these returned captives. Much of the prophet's discourses in the 33rd, 34th, 36th, and so on to the end, are typical and mysterious, and refer to the return, as to the emblem of our spiritual deliverance out of spiritual captivity.

CHAP. I.

The time of Ezekiel's prophecy by the river Chebar, 1—3. *His vision of four cherubims and four wheels,* 4—25, *and of the glory of God above them,* 26—28.

B. C. cir. 595. NOW it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth *month*, in the fifth *day* of the month, as I *was* among the †captives [a]by the river of Chebar, *that* [b]the heavens were opened, and I saw [c]visions of God.

† Heb. *captivity.*
[a] ver. 3. ch. 3. 15, 23. & 10. 15, 20, 22. & 43. 3.
[b] So Matt. 3. 16. Acts 7. 56. & 10. 11. Rev. 19. 11.
[c] ch. 8. 3.

Now: this does not refer to any particular time before mentioned, though sometimes this English particle *now* connotes particular time, (the Hebrew is *and*, so the Greek and Latin,) but is a phrase in use on entering upon discourse. *It came to pass in the thirtieth year,* of the prophet's age, or from the finding the book of the law in the eighteenth year of Josiah, when the threats were read which now were executed on the Jews, according to 2 Kings xxii. 16, from which date to the fifth year of the captivity are thirty years; or in the thirtieth year of the Chaldean monarchy, founded by Nabopollassar. Other accounts omitted, you are left to your own thoughts which of these two latter are more probable; both have very weighty authority for them; and indeed they both concur and meet in the fifth year of the captivity, and so either computation may without mistake be followed. *In the fourth month;* the original hath only *in the fourth,* concisely, but it is certainly the month, but whether in account from Marchesvan, October with us, to Shebat, January, or from Nisan, March, unto Tamuz, July, is more questionable; the latter I guess to be the rightest account; so from Nisan, which is part of our March and April, to Tamuz, part of our June and July, will be the fourth month; and this account in church things best suits the prophet's design. *In the fifth day of the month;* it was the third day of our July, probably it was the sabbath day, when the Jews would be free from labour, and at leisure to hear the prophet; and indeed such declarations of the will of God are an entertainment suitable to the consecration of the seventh day to God. *As I was among the captives;* Heb. *and I,* &c. Though a priest and prophet, the first by birth and lineal descent, the other by extraordinary commission, yet I also found as little respect as my countrymen. *Among the captives;* in the midst of the captivity, so the Hebrew idiom; perhaps the prophet rather useth the abstract itself than the concrete, to express the grievousness of it: they were captive, nay, captivity rather, under extreme bondage; as darkness for dark. *By the river;* either there commanded to dwell, or thither retiring, that more freely they might lament their own sins, and Jerusalem's desolation: or what if it were to keep, as they might, their sabbath, in which the spiteful Babylonians interrupt them, and with scorn require them to sing a temple song, Psal. cxxxvii. 3. *Chebar;* a branch of Euphrates, or that part which Chobar advised should be made to divert the violence of Euphrates, lest it damnify the city Babylon. Or rather a river now called Giulap, arising out of the mountain Masius, and falls into Euphrates, somewhat below a city called by the same name, Giulap or Chaboras; as Ferrarius and Hotoman observe. *The heavens were opened;* the firmament or lower parts of the celestial arch either really did, or to appearance seemed to divide, and the contiguous parts

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withdrew as a curtain, to give the prophet the view of what was within; or as folding doors set open that he might look into that apartment where this unusual sight was prepared. *Were opened;* expressed thus in the passive to let us see that there was a supreme, sovereign, and Divine power and authority by which this was done; it is not said the heavens did open, but they were opened. It was no meteor, chasm, or yawning, which is naturally a figured semblance of a breach in the visible heavens, whence appears a gulf or deep and wide pit to the eye. It was not thus, but a supernatural and extraordinary aperture or opening, wrought by the immediate power of God, who was now appearing to the prophet, and commissioning him. It might probably be somewhat like that which appeared to the proto-martyr Stephen. Acts vii. 56. *I saw;* I had a distinct, full, and clear sight of what appeared, I was awake and with my eyes discerned what I shall now write, the things I am about to publish, how stupendous soever they are, what I am sure I saw, and am as sure they will be accomplished. *Visions;* in the plural, either because they were many distinct visions, or because it was made of many distinct parts, each part might seem to be one vision. *Of God;* excellent and wonderful. So by the name of God the Hebrew expresses any excellency, as, cedars of God, man of God. Or, *of God,* wherein I saw God, who appeared to the prophet; or else, *of God,* i. e. which God did make me to see. It was not a dream of man's brain, it was a Divine vision, either corporeal or intellectual.

2 In the fifth *day* of the month, which
[d] 2 Kings 24. 12, 15. *was* the fifth year of [d]king Jehoiachin's captivity,

In the fifth day; the Hebrew hath only *fifth,* according to its concise style; we do well to supply *day,* as in ver. 1. *Of the month* Tamuz, as ver. 1, answering to our June and July. *Which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity:* this account observed will guide us in computing the times this prophet referred to, ver. 1, these five of Jehoiachin, and the eleven of his predecessor, added to fourteen of Josiah's reign after he found the law, make up thirty years, ver. 1, which likely might be the jubilee, the most fit for so solemn a passover as Josiah kept. *Jehoiachin,* who is also called Jeconiah, and Coniah, whose father Jehoiakim was slain by the Chaldeans, and he, after three months' short reign, voluntarily yielded up himself to the Chaldees; of which rendition of himself and his we read 2 Kings xxiv. 12, &c. Though this man yielded up himself, yet the Babylonians made him prisoner, and carried him and his into captivity; and so the Hebrew, *avers;* though some distinguish this from captivity by calling it a transmigration, the Hebrew calls it *captivity.*

3 The word of the LORD came expressly unto †Ezekiel the priest, the son
† Heb. *Jehezkiel.* [e] 1 Kings 18. 46. 2 Kings 3. 15. ch. 3. 14, 22. & 8. 1. & 40. 1. of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and [e]the hand of the LORD was there upon him.

What was *visions,* ver. 1, is here *the word,* both as signifying and declaring the mind of God, what he would do, and as containing his commands to Ezekiel and to the people, to whom these visions spake by signs. *The word of the Lord:* lest the prophet should want his warrant, or the Jews except to his advice, it is plainly told them that Jehovah the sovereign Lord and eternal God, by Ezekiel, counsels, warns, commands, and threatens. *Came expressly unto;* emphatically translated as it is emphatically expressed in the Hebrew, *being with him, it was with him;* so long he might discern, so clear he might understand, so near he could not be deceived, or easily forget what he was to tell them. *Ezekiel* signifies either, the strength of God, or, strengthened by God, and in a few syllables contains what is more largely set forth, chap. iii. 8. 9. He speaks of himself in the third person. *The priest;* who therefore should be regarded as one whose interest among the priests at Jerusalem would be best promoted if better things might be hoped and shortly expected than he must now tell them; it was likely he dealt truly with them, when he must share so much in the sad things foretold. He was of the priests originally, he was a prophet by extraordinary call. *The son of Buzi;* of a contemned man, so the etymology of the Hebrew, which gave the rabbins occasion to apply it to Jeremiah, and to account the prophet either son or servant to Jeremiah; but it is a proper name. *In the land of the Chaldeans,* enemies to, and now masters of, poor captived Jews, the church of God: there God makes him a prophet, who was an ordinary priest in the land of Israel. *The river Chebar,* though a river of Mesopotamia, yet here seems placed in Chaldea, because Mesopotamia was part of the kingdom of the Chaldeans; so Chebar or Chobar was in the land, i. e. within the kingdom, of Chaldea, but particularly in Mesopotamia, a province of that kingdom. *The hand of the Lord;* the Divine impulse moving with power and efficacy on Ezekiel for the work, and clearly confirming and demonstrating to the captive Jews that he was the prophet of the Lord, and spake to them in his name; the Spirit of prophecy, as the Chaldee Paraphrase. *Was upon him there:* God is not confined; though most prophets were in the land of Israel, yet here in Chaldea also appears a great prophet, and should be hearkened unto.

4 ¶ And I looked, and, behold, [f]a whirlwind came [g]out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire †infolding itself, and a brightness *was* about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.
[f] Jer. 23. 19. & 25. 32.
[g] Jer. 1. 14. & 4. 6. & 6. 1.
† Heb. *catching itself.*

I looked; I did very diligently survey the things that were represented to me in the vision. *Behold:* this calls us to consider what he had seen and represented to us. *A whirlwind;* a mighty, stormy, and turbulent wind, a wind that bears away or bears down all before it; this denotes the indignation and judgments of God, a quick, impetuous, and irresistible vengeance. Most grievous judgments, represented as here, so 1 Kings xix. 11; Job xxxviii. 1; Psal. civ. 4. *Came;* came as if it knew its way, and, notwithstanding its impetuousness and irregularities, yet held its direct course. *Out of the north;* from Babylon, which in Scripture geography is laid northward from Judea, and the prophet, though now in Babylon, does speak of the Jews as if they were in Jerusalem; against which this *cloud,* on which an angry God did ride, hastening vengeance on them, which they should be as little able to divert or withstand as to stop the course of the clouds, or their breaking upon us: it was the army of the Chaldeans, made up of multitudes of people, (as the cloud is made by the concourse of multitudes of exhalations and vapours,) Jer. iv. 13. *A fire infolding itself;* burning in a dreadful manner, very fierce, fed by fuel within itself, breaking out and flashing with terror, though it had seemed to rebate, and encircling all things near it, and threatening to devour all. Such was the anger of God against this sinful nation. *And a brightness was about it;* though thus terrible, yet round about it was not smoke and darkness, but a clear light or splendour. The majesty, holiness, justice of God appeared to the prophet, and might be seen by the suffering Jews, to humble them, that they might seek him. *Out of the midst thereof;* either of the whirlwind or cloud, or the fire rather, as in the end of the verse. *As the colour;* Heb. *as the eye,* the aspect, or appearance. *Amber;* the Hebrew word is variously interpreted, and it is lost labour to search the rabbins here. Amber is either natural, which if in the fire loseth its brightness; or artificial, made of fine gold and fine brass mixed, which will brighten in the fire, and of equal value with gold, (as the DD. Bochart observes.) of which Josephus saith Solomon did make the sea of brass, and the sacred vessels; somewhat like the Corinthian brass, known now only by its name, exceeding splendid, and very hard, the one speaking the glorious majesty to be reverenced, the other speaking the invincible power of God to be feared; both advising this people and us to repent and amend, and return and meet him. *Out of the midst of the fire;* which the prophet saw, and in which the Jews were to be melted or consumed.

5 [h]Also out of the midst thereof *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And [i]this *was* their appearance; they had [k]the likeness of a man.
[h] Rev. 4. 6, &c.
[i] ch. 10. 8, &c.
[k] ver. 10. ch. 10. 14, 21.

Also out of the midst thereof; of the fire, or that amber which appeared, as having four wheels. *The likeness of four living creatures;* these were not indeed living creatures.

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but the appearance of them, and signify with some the four monarchies; with others, the four chief leaders in the four quarters of the camp of Israel; with others, the four evangelists; with others, more likely, the holy angels, whose attendance bespeaks the majesty of God, and the terribleness of judgments to be executed on the Jews: and they are four, either to denote the sufficient number of them, or to show God would use the four chief of his angels, or perhaps to let the Jews know he had as many ways to punish, and as many officers of his wrath, as they could find corners of the world to flee unto. Or, since the appearance of a chariot in the midst of this vision is supposed, it was fittest that four living creatures should answer to the wheels thereof. *And this was their appearance;* the form in which these four each appeared to the first view, or at some distance. *They had the likeness of a man;* the stature, the greater part of them appeared of human shape, for they had face, hands, and thighs, and the posture was erect in standing or motion, as man's is.

6 And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.

And every one of those four living creatures which appeared to the prophet *had four faces:* this hieroglyphic, though it seems to present us with a monstrous sight, yet does not unbecome the Divine Wisdom, nor doth it want like representations, as chap. x. 14; Rev. iv. 6; v. 6: and speaks either the full fitness of angels to do God's commands in all things and occasions, or the perfection of their nature and obedience; or the universal dominion of God, and the universal subjection of the creatures. *Faces;* some would have this not literally understood of that part of the body which is properly the face, though I see no cause for it; but as these living creatures had wings, so they had faces, and what those were the 10th verse does tell us. *And every one had four wings;* if it were every face had four wings, each living creature would have sixteen wings, but it is every one of the living creatures had four wings. With two they did fly, noting the speed of their obedience; and with two they cover their body, denoting the reverence of their mind, and obedience.

7 And their feet *were* † straight feet; the sole of their feet *was* like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled [l] like the colour of burnished brass.

† Heb. *a straight foot.*

[l] Dan. 10. 6. Rev. 1. 15.

Their feet; the Hebrew expresseth the parts below the belly by foot, their thighs, legs, and feet (as by hand is meant the whole arm) were of human shape. *Were straight feet;* not bowed to this or that part, which argues weakness: here is most elegantly described the unconquered firmness wherewith angels do the commands of God; their readiness and their wisdom also in doing it, nothing low or brutish in their actions. *The sole of their feet,* that which is properly the foot, *was like the sole of a calf's foot:* divided hoof spake the cleanness of the creature. The ox, patient of labour, a beast for sacrifice to God, in these things angels, servants of God, well resembled: what if we should add a slowness in pace; blessed angels are not over-forward to executions, yet ever go when bid. *They sparkled;* it may refer either to the living creatures or to their feet; it speaks either their anger against an obstinate, sinful people, or the terror of executing God's judgments, or the self-discovering light of his justice, or the zeal of angels in a speedy performing the will of God, in which their swiftness enkindles these sparks.

8 [m] And *they had* the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.

[m] ch. 10. 18, 21.

They; each of the four living creatures. *Had the hands:* hands in every language, especially in the Oriental, imply power; and being the chief instruments of action, are here ascribed to these active instruments that execute the commands of God. *Of a man:* this is added to denote the wisdom, dexterity, and vigilance wherewith they discharge their ministry. *Under their wings;* their power and manner of exerting it is secret and invisible, and it is put forth as God pleaseth to move them. *On their four sides;* on each side of the chariot one of these living creatures stood, and so on each side hands were ready to act as they were moved; and though it was to all parts of the world, yet were they most ready and prepared. *And they four had their faces and their wings;* it is doubled to confirm the truth and certainty of the thing, and to intimate the greatness of their power, agility, and wisdom.

9 [n] Their wings *were* joined one to another; [o] they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.

[n] ver. 11.

[o] ver. 12. ch. 10. 11.

Their wings were joined one to another; the wings of the living creatures, when stretched out to fly, were joined together; so the wings of those two cherubims which went foremost, and the wings of the two hindermost, were joined together when they moved. It seems to refer to that Exod. xxv. 20. It signifies, however, the equal and uniform readiness of angels, their concord and union with constancy to do the will of God, and it shows us the exact harmony that is between the works of God. These wings, and their being joined, is expressed, Heb. by the union of loving sisters with each other. *They turned not when they went;* they lost no time in a difficult or tedious turning, as we see in other chariots, for which way soever they were to go, thither they had faces directed, and so readily moved forward on their way, whether east or west, north or south, and held on till they had finished their course, but then were ready for further action, and returned as quick to their station, where they might receive new commands, as lightning does; so this and that ver. 14, there they did return, here they did not, are reconciled. *They went every one straight forward:* this explains the former, and confirms it to us, assuring us that every one of those living creatures are ready, faithful, and unwearied in doing the pleasure of their Creator, in his government of the world. See ver. 12.

10 As for [p] the likeness of their faces, they four [q] had the face of a man, [r] and the face of a lion, on the right side: [s] and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; [t] they four also had the face of an eagle.

[p] See Rev. 4. 7.

[q] Num. 2. 10.

[r] Num. 2. 3.

[s] Num. 2. 18.

[t] Num. 2. 25.

Here the prophet doth more expressly set forth what was more darkly mentioned in the 6th verse, and describeth their faces both by the proper resemblances, and by their respect to the local differences of east and west, or right and left hand. But since such differences are in themselves of little moment, and undeterminable, unless we were certain what prospect these living creatures stood in, whether looking to the prophet, or to Jerusalem, or toward Babylon, we shall say no more of it; what these signify is more material. Each face is compared to what is most excellent in its kind, man excels in wisdom, the lion in strength, the ox in patience and constancy of labour, the eagle in speed and high flight. So in the ministry of angels, and government of the world by the providence of God, what is most excellent may be observed.

11 Thus *were* their faces: and their wings *were* ‖ stretched upward; two *wings* of every one *were* joined one to another, and [u] two covered their bodies.

‖ Or, *divided above.*

[u] Is. 6. 2.

Thus were their faces: if you make a full point at *faces*, it should seem better joined with the former verse, and this text will be more easy, for it is somewhat harsh to speak of faces stretched as wings are; but if their faces as well as wings must be stretched upward, we must understand their faces looking upward to the great and glorious Governor of the world, who sat upon the throne above the firmament, which was over their heads, ver. 22, 23, 25, 26, admiring, and adoring, and waiting his pleasure to do it. *Their wings were stretched upward;* were divided above, so each face appeared distinct above the shoulders, and there the wings, divided from each other, were united to the body of the living creature. *Two wings of every one were joined one to another;* which stretching two upward joined them to the wings of that living creature which stood by its side, to testify their readiness, concord, and cheerfulness in their office. *And two covered their bodies;* see Isa. vi. 2; with twain they covered their feet, either in deep humility, and for

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decency, or because of infirmity of human nature, for whose relief they appear in what they do, but must not appear what they are, because they would be too glorious for our sight.

x ver. 9. ch. 10. 22. y ver. 20. z ver. 9, 17.

12 And [x]they went every one straight forward: [y]whither the spirit was to go, they went; *and* [z]they turned not when they went.

They went every one straight forward: see ver. 9. Which way soever they went, each living creature had one face looking straight forwards, and their other faces looking toward other coasts of the world; if the fore right were to the south, the other faces looked one to the east, one to the west, and the other to the north. Thus with rectitude, constancy, wisdom, and universal care Providence rules and guides affairs of the world, and especially of the church, to the glory of God. *Whither the spirit was to go;* the wind moved, say some; but if there were a gale of wind, which blowing gently on these living creatures stirred them in the sight of the prophet, it was emblematical, and represented to his view the power and influence of the Spirit of God, which moved and acted these admirable creatures. The will, command, and breathing of the Spirit of God both gave and guided their motions to ends he himself designed. Going is attributed here to the Spirit of God by allusion, and not properly, for who is ever in every place cannot properly be said to go from or to any place. *They went;* the living creatures readily observed the impressions of the Spirit of God, and obeyed. *They turned not when they went:* see ver. 9. They looked not back as unwilling, they turned not out of the way as froward, they gave not over till they had completed their course.

a Rev. 4. 5.

13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, [a]*and* like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

He further describeth what he had more briefly spoken of ver. 6. There you had their shape and make, here you have their colour. *The likeness;* in which they were seen by the prophet. *Their appearance was like burning coals of fire;* their aspect was of a fiery colour, to affright and alarm secure sinners. That God who had hitherto appeared most patient and long-suffering, now makes discoveries of himself in dreadful displeasure, which would burn, as Numb. xi. 1—3, or Isa. x. 17, or Jer. iv. 4; that would consume their glory, and there be none to quench it, Jer. vii. 20; xxi. 12. God doth by his prophet here forewarn them of very great miseries coming on them, wrath as fire, as coals, and burning, every word adding weight to the phrase. It notes also the zeal and fervent affection of these living creatures, doing the will of God. *And like the appearance of lamps:* it was not a furious and unbounded fire, it was as that which burneth in the lamp, limited, it should not devour but the wicked. Or it may note the care and wisdom wherewith these executions should be made, as if all were done in the light of lamps, as in dark places we take candles to light us in our work. Or it may intimate the hope for the good among the Jews, as lamps doth, Isa. lxii. 1, and destruction of enemies, as Zech. xii. 6. Or if it may be interpreted by Dan. x. 6, where the lamp that burneth expresseth the Divine wisdom and love, and possibly the knowledge and love of Christ, as Rev. i. 15, it will well suit with the whole vision, and with what next follows. *It went up and down;* this fire, or the burning lamp, or both, went up and down, stood not still, nor was carried, but, as the Hebrew, *made itself walk up and down.* It moved itself, which is too much to ascribe to creatures; God only is an unmoved mover: so it will lead our thoughts to God, who moved all these living creatures. *The fire was bright;* it was not the dark and sooty fire of malice and hell. It shined, as always God's zeal for his own glory, and as angels' zeal for the glory of their God, doth. Or it was so bright as to discover itself in more than ordinary glory. *Out of the fire went forth lightning:* with this God gave the law, Exod. xix. 16; contends with enemies, 2 Sam. xxii. 15; Zech. ix. 14. These lightnings, as they are terrible to sinners, and strike an awe upon saints; so they tell both that there is more than ordinary of God to be looked to in them. His judgments as lightning call upon us to fear, seek, and shelter ourselves with God.

b Zech. 4. 10. c Matt. 24. 27.

14 And the living creatures [b]ran and returned [c]as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

The living creatures; angels, ministers of the Divine pleasure, as above, ver. 5. *Ran;* were speedy in their motions; this signified by this expression figuratively applied to angels. *Returned;* yet, ver. 9. 12, it is said they returned not, where this seeming contradiction is reconciled; the 9th and 12th verse deny their turning aside from their work, this 14th affirms they returned, i. e. when they had done their work. *As the appearance of a flash of lightning;* very quick, with vehemency, splendour, and irresistible efficacy.

d ch. 10. 9.

15 ¶ Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold [d]one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces.

Now; or, *and;* it is a transition from the former to the latter part of the vision. *I beheld;* considered and observed. *Behold;* it calls for our attention. *One wheel;* or a certain wheel of spherical form, as some; of a circular form, as the wheels of chariots, say others. It is one wheel, intimating that all the different causes and motions, how many soever in themselves, yet work the same work, and are governed as easily in their various motions, as one single wheel might be, and that God doth so govern them. *Upon the earth;* not that we tread on, but that which in this vision was represented to the prophet; for it was here as it is in landscapes or pictures drawn, there is that which represents the earth, on which trees, men, or chariots seem to be upon. *By the living creatures;* by each of these living creatures stood one wheel, so that they were four in number, according to the number of the living creatures. *With his four faces:* by this it appears each wheel had its four faces, of which more in the 17th verse, where what is here called faces is there called sides.

e ch. 10. 9, 10. f Dan. 10. 6.

16 [e]The appearance of the wheels and their work *was* [f]like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work *was* as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

The appearance; the form in which these wheels were seen. *Their work;* all that was wrought, whether engraved or otherwise, was of one colour. *The colour of a beryl,* Heb. *tharshish,* a sea-green; some say this colour here was of a carbuncle, or chrysolite, or hyacinth, but it is better rendered a sea-green colour, which if it note the instability and changeableness of sublunary affairs, and of the outward concerns of the church, it may note also the inherent vigour and beauty of the church, and the frame of earthly things, when they are in a calm course, not disturbed first with sin, and then with punishment of sin. *They four,* by this it appears what was the number of the wheels, *had one likeness;* were exactly of the same make for dimensions, colour, frame, and motion, so that who sees and knows one sees and knows all, hereby noting the harmony and likeness which is in God's works, which are all framed, managed, and governed by the same wisdom, and consequently the same uncertainty in all things under the sun. *Their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel:* it is somewhat difficult to unfold this. It is probable the wheels were framed so as to be an exact sphere or globe, which is easily rolled to any side or quarter, since it toucheth the earth or basis on which it stands in a point, and is exactly orbicular. It is fitter we note, 1. The unsearchableness of Divine methods. 2. The curious frame of them. 3. The connexion of one part with other. 4. The seeming interfering and real harmony; what would seem to hinder shall further God's work. 5. How easily God can change affairs, and move for or against a people.

17 When they went, they went upon their four

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g ver. 12. sides: g *and* they turned not when they went.

When they went; the living creatures: indeed the wheels moved according to the motion of the living creatures, but it will as well agree with the truth, as it better agrees with the grammar of the words, to say this; *they,* i. e. the wheels. *They went upon their four sides;* the wheels being supposed spherical or round every way as a globe, by an exact and curious framing of two wheels one in the other, the four semicircles which are in two whole wheels may be well taken for these four sides on which these wheels do move, and such a wheel will readily be turned to all points of the compass, as a ball on a billiard table. *They turned not when they went;* they needed not go back to turn, as we see other chariots or coaches must do, putting back somewhat to alter their course; or, returned not till they came to their journey's end; or, nothing could divert them, or put them out of their course. So firm and sure are the methods, so unalterable and constant the purposes, of God, and so invariable the obedience and observance of holy angels; so subject to the just sovereign will of God are all second causes.

18 As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their ‖ rings *were* h full of eyes round about them four.

‖ Or, *strakes.* h ch. 10. 12. Zech. 4. 10.

Their rings; the circumference of the wheels, the whole compass of the wheels, or the felloes (as a carter calls the whole roundle of his wheels). *They were so high;* the two strakes, the thickness of hob and felloes, give us the height of a wheel from the earth on which it stands; *that they were dreadful;* their very height impressed a fear on the beholder, but if we may suppose one near these wheels which so readily changed course, so easily overbearing all that none could turn them aside, (which might possibly be the prophet's case in this vision,) it would increase the terror. *Their rings,* the whole circumference or circle of these wheels, *were full of eyes:* this added to the dreadfulness of their appearance: so unusual and supernatural a sight could not but affect the prophet, who in so mighty a wheel might expect multitudes of nails, but instead thereof discovers as great a multitude of eyes. One eye seen, or imagined to be seen, suddenly, and in the dark, hath amazed many a one, how much more so many as would fill up the circumference of these wheels! for they were round about. *Round about them four;* every one of the four wheels were thus filled with eyes. Now this is too narrowly confined by some interpreters, who would have the greatness and policy of the Chaldean set out hereby; whereas the wheels, their motion, their height and eyes, signify the height, unsearchableness, wisdom, and vigilance of the Divine providence, in governing the affairs of the world and the church.

i ch. 10. 16, 17. 19 And i when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.

When the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; the wheels' motion or standing depended on the motion and assistance of some higher agent which excited and guided them, when therefore the living creatures, the angels, ministers of God's will, moved, then did those affairs expressed by wheels move also. There was an exact accord between these, they were as well joined in motion as they were in station. *When the living creatures were lifted up;* moved higher above our ordinary reach. *From the earth;* that basis on which both the wheels seemed to stand, and from which sometimes they seemed to lift up themselves, as if to fetch a new commission and order from him that sat upon the throne.

k ver. 12. 20 k Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither *was their* spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them: l for the spirit ‖ of the living creature *was* in the wheels.

l ch. 10. 17. ‖ Or, *of life.*

Whithersoever the spirit; either the will and inclination of the living creatures, or rather the Spirit of God which moved the living creatures, gave them motion and guided it; these angels in their ministry punctually observed both the impulse and the conduct of God's Spirit. *Was to go:* of this phrase applied to the Spirit, see ver. 12. *They went;* the wheels, those inferior agents and second causes. *Thither was their spirit to go;* the inclination and will of the wheels concurred with the spirit of the living creatures, so that there was a hearty accord between those superior and inferior causes, they agreed in the same design. *And the wheels were lifted up over against them:* there seems to be an ellipsis here, the latter part of the speech expressed, and the former implied only; as it was in the progressive motion, so in the motion upward, they accorded, and kept the same order. *For the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels;* one and the same spirit was in both the wheels and living creatures, and so the same inclination and motion too. *Of the living,* Heb. *of life,* the quickening, enlivening Spirit; hence some will have the wheels to be living creatures, but without this it is enough to represent to the prophet what was the frame and course of Providence, and who did preside and manage all. An undiscerned, yet Divine, mighty, wise, just, and holy, and ever-living, Power, Spirit, and Being actuated all, and governed all, to the execution of justice on the wicked, and protection of the godly.

21 m When those went, *these* went; and when those stood, *these* stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit ‖ of the living creature *was* in the wheels.

m ver. 19, 20. ch. 10. 17. ‖ Or, *of life.*

This verse is a confirmation and further illustration of what is said in the 20th, and being almost word for word the same with the 20th, needs no distinct paraphrase. I shall only note how God doth fully assert his over-ruling and ever-ruling wise providence in the affairs of his church and the world, both against, 1. The profane thoughts of atheists and epicures, which ever abound in those times, when sinners of the world and church are ripe for harvest. 2. Against the distrust and fears of his own suffering people.

22 n And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature *was* as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.

n ch. 10. 1.

The likeness; the appearance or resemblance; of which word before, ver. 13, 16. *The firmament:* the living creatures, the wheels, and these upon the earth, our prophet had seen and mentioned; now he speaks of the firmament, which must be supposed to be stretched forth above the earth; as the prophet saw the one, so he saw the other. This firmament was not that we behold, it was emblematical and representative. It appeared, but much more august and wonderful than the natural. *Upon;* not resting upon, but over their heads stretched out, and the Hebrew were better read, *over,* in this place and on this occasion. *The colour,* Heb. *eye,* a word twice already here used, and in the same sense; the aspect, and shape or form, as ver. 8, 16. *Of the terrible crystal,* for splendour, purity, and solidity: all that was above these creatures and wheels was beautiful and very majestical, as indeed it was meet it should be; and it is therefore called terrible, because it impresseth a veneration upon the mind of the beholders, it dazzleth the eye, and overpowereth it: the same word is used concerning the name of God, holy and reverend, Psal. xcix. 3; cxi. 9.

23 And under the firmament *were* their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies.

Under; below at a great, which is but due, distance of angels, and creatures and servants to their God, Creator, and Lord, stood these living creatures, i. e. two of each living creature, as appeareth by the phrase, *one toward the other. Straight;* stretched forth, ready for motion if commanded, and with equal straightness and height, in close and affectionate union, joining in the work appointed them. *Every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies;* each of the four living creatures had two other wings with which they cover-

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ed their bodies; the two living creatures on the one side of the chariot, and two living creatures on the other side; so that in what position soever the prophet looked towards them, their lower wings covered them. *Bodies*, here ascribed to them representatively, and, as all the rest, visionally.

o ch. 10. 5.

24 °And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, ᵖlike the noise of great waters, as ᵍthe voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.

p ch. 43. 2. Dan. 10. 6. Rev. 1. 15. q Job 37. 4. & Ps. 29. 3, 4. & 68. 33.

And when they went; so soon and as often as they, i. e. the living creatures, moved, were on their work, executing God's commands. *I heard*, and attended to know what it was. *The noise of their wings:* though some of God's judgments are executed with silence, and are in the dark, yet here is an alarm, and they may be heard. *Like the noise of great waters:* when the sea rageth and swells as though it would overwhelm the earth, so when the just and dreadful judgments of God are executed, they threaten the overflowing of all. *As the voice of the Almighty;* thunder, called God's voice, Psal. xxix. 3. *The voice of speech;* the prophet heard the voice in an articulate manner declaring the will of God, as if the wings had tongues to speak as well as power to fly. *As the noise of an host:* this voice was not of friends saluting each other, or comforting, but it was the voice and noise of a host, a tumultuous voice of men, a confused noise of warlike weapons and instruments; some suppose it is meant of the army of the Chaldeans, which those winged living creatures had now fetched in to spoil the Jews, which they did with terrible outcries, as enraged, merciless adversaries use to do. *When they stood, they let down their wings;* having done their office, they present themselves before God, and let down their wings, not out of weariness, but out of a sense that they must never act but by commission. And now with wings let down and covering their bodies, they do humbly watch as servants for the commands of their lord.

25 And there was a voice from the firmament that *was* over their heads, when they stood, *and* had let down their wings.

And; or, *for;* so the Latin. Two senses may be of these words in this verse. Either, 1. These living creatures thus let down their wings and ceased from acting, because they were commanded so to do by the voice from above the firmament, which they readily obey. Or, 2. That they stood, let down their wings, and hushed the noise, that the prophet might hear what was spoken from above. The former comes nearest the sense of the Latin, the latter nearer to our English, and either may well enough suit the text and context.

r ch. 10. 1.

26 ¶ ʳAnd above the firmament that *was* over their heads *was* the likeness of

s Ex. 24. 10.

a throne, ˢas the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne *was* the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

Above the firmament; the crystalline firmament which appeared in the vision, not the vast expanse or firmament in which are sun, moon, and stars. *That was over their heads;* heads of the living creatures which moved the wheels, and stood by the chariot. *Was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone;* in view appeared a sapphire stone, like or in likeness of a throne; so the Hebrew, though we transpose the words somewhat in our version: the sapphire speaks splendour and preciousness; the throne speaks the authority and power of him who sitteth thereon. *As the appearance of a man;* Christ, God-man, who here appears as King and Judge to vindicate his own honour, to punish rebels, and to give warning by his prophet ere he execute his just but severe indignation.

t ch. 8. 2.

27 ᵗAnd I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.

I saw as the colour of amber: see ver. 4, and what is said there to this phrase. In this colour does Christ now appear against the rebellious Jews; he that would have been a Saviour to them, clothed with the garments of salvation, now puts on the garments of vengeance, and is clad with that zeal which is best, but not fully, expressed by such metaphors. *As the appearance of fire round about within it;* of most intense degree; as that fire which is shut up in oven or furnace, so this was the appearance of a fire which had a house to it round about (as the Hebrew). The just indignation of Christ, and his glorious majesty, are hereby set forth to us also, which appear within the amber. *From the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire;* as was his upward part, so the lower parts also, they appeared as fire. Provoked to wrath, and proceeding to judge, he comes in flames of fire taking vengeance, 2 Thess. i. 8. *And it had brightness round about:* see ver. 4, where the phrase is explained. Majesty, justice, and unstained holiness shine round about Christ, though he comes in greatest wrath against enemies.

28 ᵘAs the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so *was* the appearance of the brightness round about. ˣThis *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw *it*, ʸI fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

u Rev. 4. 3. & 10. 1.

x ch. 3. 23. & 8. 4.

y ch. 3. 23. Dan. 8. 17. Acts 9. 4. Rev. 1. 17.

Here more particularly is described the brightness before mentioned. A rainbow, the fire being resplendent and clear, cast its rays on the thick cloud below. And this is mentioned, no doubt, to assure the prophet, and those among the Jews that did tremble and wait for God, that God would not forget his covenant, though he came to execute severest judgments, Gen. ix. 13. A like appearance of Christ in a surrounding brightness, as of the rainbow, you have Rev. iv. 3. Mercy and truth, and both according to covenant and promise, are about the throne of Christ; this a brightness of mercy and grace that enlightens, that comforts. *This*, the conclusion of the vision, *was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord;* it was not the full glory of God, it was not the splendour of unveiled majesty, it was the likeness of his glory, such as the prophet might bear and tell to us: the fulness of his glory is inaccessible light, the prophet could not see it; and unspeakable majesty, and the prophet could not tell it to us. *When I saw it, I fell upon my face:* 1. Astonished at such a sight, as Gen. xvii. 3; Dan. vii. 15, 28. 2. With deep humility and reverence he cast himself down. 3. It is a posture of prayer, and possibly the prophet might sue to know the meaning of all this. *And I heard a voice of one that spake;* such was the voice and such the things spoken, that the prophet seems to confess he could not say whose voice it was; but it was Divine, powerful, astonishing, as being such as is described ver. 25, such the voice he hears.

CHAP. II.

Ezekiel's commission, 1—5; *his instructions,* 6—8. *The roll of heavy judgments spread before him,* 9, 10.

AND he said unto me, Son of man, ᵃstand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.

a Dan. 10. 11.

And he that sat upon the throne, Jesus Christ, whose messenger Ezekiel must be to the Jewish captives, now gone into captivity to Babylon. *Son of man;* a phrase very ‖ familiar with Ezekiel in this prophecy, and he useth it for distinction, being now among angels, perhaps to keep him humble, who had such great revelations, which might occasion him to think of himself above what was meet, as 2 Cor. xii. 7. *Stand upon thy feet;* arise, resume thy wonted strength of soul and body, which seem lost by thy fall to the ground. Fear not my coming to punish thee, I

‖ בן אדם is ninety-five times at least used in this prophecy.

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come to send thee forth a prophet; arise, therefore, and be as other prophets, ready to receive the Divine oracles, which usually came to prophets standing: and with this command God sent forth a power enabling him to arise and stand. *And I will speak unto thee;* get thyself into a fit posture and readiness, and I will speak: what that was appears in what followeth, ver. 3.

b ch. 3. 24.

2 And [b]the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

And; so soon as the encouraging command went forth, immediately. *The spirit;* the vital spirit or soul of the prophet, say some; but these suppose the vision had struck Ezekiel dead, which neither can be supposed, other prophetic visions did not prove deadly, nor did this; others will have it the spirit of courage, some an angel; but it is indeed the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, Ezek. iii. 24. The same Spirit which actuated the living creatures and wheels enters the heart of the prophet. *Entered into me;* gave the prophet special and suitable qualifications for his office. The Spirit entered that he might abide with the prophet as a constant assister and guide to him. *When he spake unto me;* while the words were speaking, or so soon as they were spoken. The efficacy of the Spirit, and his accompanying the word of Christ, here appears. *He;* either Christ, who from the throne spake to the prophet, or the Holy Spirit, newly entered into the prophet. *And set me upon my feet, that I heard him;* opened his ear, that he heard what was spoken. It is the Spirit which is the fountain of all our abilities, and which also actuates them; without it there is neither life, strength, or motion.

3 And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious †nation that hath rebelled against me: [c]they and their fathers have transgressed against me, *even* unto this very day.

† Heb. *nations.*
c Jer. 3. 25. ch. 20. 18, 21, 30.

And he: see ver. 2. *Said unto me;* either vocally, or by impression upon his mind. *Son of man:* the prophet had seen, ver. 26 of the former chapter, a very glorious person on a throne above the firmament, and now the prophet is called son of man, perhaps, as the Jews conjecture, to encourage the prophet in his prophetic work, and to assure him he should be owned by that glorious One, who appeared as a man, and calls Ezekiel son of man: it is certain he would never forget what he had seen, and it is likely this בן אדם as oft as it was spoken, would mind the prophet what relation it might have to the vision. *I send thee;* I am sending, or he that sendeth thee is whom thou sawest on the throne advanced above angels, who directs them in their course of ministry subserving the will of God, and who will give them charge of thee in thy way. *Children,* Heb. *sons;* God gives them still the name of sons and children, he is not hasty to abdicate, to disinherit, and cast off. *To the children of Israel,* now in the low estate of captives: the lessening name of Jacob had been too great, one might think; but God tells the prophet they were the children of Israel, that prince who wrestled with God, and prevailed, Hos. xii. 3—5. It is very likely they had some that feared and sought the God of Jacob, and did wrestle as he had done before them: it insinuateth some hope, however, that God would redeem them, Psal. xxv. 22, would be good unto them, Psal. lxxiii. 1; his dominion was over them, Psal. cxiv. 2, and they were a peculiar people, Psal. cxxxv. 4, 12. *To a rebellious nation,* Heb. *nations that are rebellious,* very disobedient: as rebellion is the highest crime against the supreme magistrate, so were Israel's sins against God. Hence some will have Ezekiel to be commissioned a prophet to denounce God's judgments against the heathen, who are in Scripture called by the word here used. But though Ezekiel did prophesy against the nations, as against Egypt, Babylon, Gog, and Magog, yet here these nations in this third verse are the Jews, who were like the nations in their idolatry and manners; they had degenerated from their father Israel, and rebelled against Israel's God. If the title *Israel* be comfort to the best, the appellation given to the rest, they were *a rebellious nation,* is terror and menace as well as rebuke to the worst, and God intimates they were what they accounted the Gentiles to be, polluted, profane, and hated of God. *That hath rebelled against me:* this was implied in the former word, but thus expressly added to ascertain the charge, and to aggravate the crime of this people, who were from their fathers' days to this very day rebelling against God. It was the glory of St. Paul, he served God with pure conscience; it is the shame of this nation, they have rebelled from their fathers. *They and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day;* their fathers before them, and they with their fathers, and all successively; God was provoked at once with two generations of rebels, fathers who gave example, and children which took it.

4 [d]For *they are* †impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD.

d ch. 3. 7.
† Heb. *hard of face.*

Impudent children; shameless, who cannot blush, else they could never have transgressed so highly, constantly, and obstinately. Sodom in her day did not hide her sin, nor blush; so did the Jews in Isaiah's times, so they did to the days of their captivity, and under the captivity. *Stiffhearted;* hard-hearted, resolute, and strongly bent to do whatever liked them. Of disposition that relenteth not, but rather more confidently going on in evil. *I,* who appeared in so much glory, and on the throne, *send thee unto them;* give thee authority that thou mayst, and I give thee charge that thou must, go to them, and say unto them what I shall say unto thee. They will scoff and persecute, but I command; and remember whom thou hast seen, who is with thee. *Thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God;* be sure to tell them who sends thee, read the commission, *Thus saith,* &c.

5 [e]And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they *are* a rebellious house,) yet [f]shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

e ch. 2. 11, 26, 27.
f ch. 33. 33.

Though the omniscient God knows which they will do, yet he lets not the prophet know, but enjoins him his duty, affords these sinners the mercy of warnings and calls, and expects that they act like men, hear and obey. *Hear;* they only hear that comply with God's counsel, and as for others, they hearing hear not. *Forbear;* either forbear their ways of sinning, and cease to do evil, or forbear to hear thee: be not too much dejected about it: some perhaps may hear and forbear to sin, others will forbear to hear thee but not forbear to sin, the greatest part will show themselves a rebellious house. *For they are a rebellious house;* family, *house* put for the whole nation; yet wait the event, do thy duty. *Shall know that there hath been a prophet among them;* all of them shall know; they that hear and obey shall know by the good that I will do to them, I will bless them and bring them back; those that will neither hear what they should do, nor forbear doing what they should not do, shall know by the evil which I will bring upon them. Thy truth and name will I vindicate, and prove thee a prophet, to the comfort of thyself and others who are obedient, but to the shame and confusion of the evil and wicked.

6 ¶ And thou, son of man, [g]be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though ‖[h]briers and thorns *be* with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: [i]be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, [k]though they *be* a rebellious house.

g Jer. 1. 8, 17. Luke 12. 4.
‖ Or, *rebels.*
h Is. 9. 18. Jer. 6. 28. Mic. 7. 4.
i ch. 3. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 14.
k ch. 3. 9, 26, 27.

Thou, son of man; thou a prophet, sent by him whose throne is highest, whom thou sawest as the appearance of a man in glory, and provided with power to protect thee. *Be not afraid of them;* cast away discouraging fear, be not dismayed at their persons; rulers, priests, and pretended prophets will oppose, but yet in the delivery of thy message fear none of them. *Words,* Heb. will bear *counsels,* or words, misreports, accusations, threats, flouts, or whatever else an envious and malicious heart can suggest to the

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tongue. *Briers:* here two words in the Hebrew are used, the first used only in this place, though frequently used in the Chaldee paraphrase, where it expresseth contumacy, as Exod. vii. 14, of Pharaoh refusing to let Israel go, and Jer. v. 3, obstinate refusing to learn. But our translators, guided by the proper signification of the other word, have rendered it *briers*, which usually run up among thorns, and are a very fit emblem of the frowardness and keenness of sinners against God and his prophet, and of the sure destruction which will befall these briers and thorns when God shall send his judgments like fire amongst them. *With thee;* against thee. *Scorpions:* some say this is an herb which, because it is every way armed with sharp, pricking stings, hath this name given it; but if we retain the more common interpretation, it speaks the rage and heat, the poisonous malice, and the sly lurking craft and irreconcilableness, of these apostate Jews, and of all other contemners of God and religion. These men, like scorpions, undiscerned, wound, torment, and kill. *Be not afraid;* the admonition against sinful fear is repeated; lest Ezekiel should forget, or we in like case should fail of our duty, it is four times given in charge.

l Jer. 1. 7, 17. m ver. 5. † Heb. rebellion.

7 [l]And thou shalt speak my words unto them, [m]whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they *are* †most rebellious.

Thou shalt speak my words unto them; declaring what I shall show thee, and in words which I will put into thy mouth. *Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear:* see ver. 5. *For they are most rebellious;* Heb. *rebellion* in the abstract, by which the Hebrew (as some other languages do) expresseth the superlative degree, as we have it rightly translated.

8 But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and [n]eat that I give thee.

n Rev. 10. 9.

Hear what I say unto thee; obey when thou hearest. Harden not thyself in a seeming modest declining the office of a prophet, wed not thine own resolution herein. *Rebellious house;* house of rebellion, as ver. 7. *Open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee:* some take this figuratively, as if here the prophet had been called to open the powers of his soul and mind, to receive, retain all that God speaks; but I rather think that the prophet is required to open his mouth to eat what was put into his hand, i. e. the book, insinuating his Divine call and inspiration, and the bitterness of the Jews' calamity. A visionary book and a visionary eating is here spoken of.

o ch. 8. 3. Jer. 1. 9. p ch. 3. 1.

9 ¶ And when I looked, behold, [o]an hand *was* sent unto me; and, lo, [p]a roll of a book *was* therein;

The prophet, newly come out of that astonishing trance wherein he lay, and gotten upon his feet, hearing what was spoken, and possibly looking if he might see who spake, he discovers *a hand;* either of one of those angels which ministered before the Lord, or the hand of God, or of Christ. This might fortify the prophet; when he saw a hand so soon with him as he was ready to hear and obey, power and skill to defend and guide him will ever be as ready. *Behold, an hand was sent unto me;* an Eastern idiom of speech. *A roll of a book;* their books were not of that fashion and make as ours now are, but written in parchment, and in the length of it, and so one piece fastened to other, till the whole would contain what was to be written, and then was it wrapped or rolled about a round piece of wood, fashioned for that purpose: hence books are called volumes.

10 And he spread it before me: and it *was* written within and without: and *there was* written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.

He: ver. 9 it was the hand, here it is the person, he who held out his hand. *Spread it before me;* unrolled it within that distance the prophet might read what was written therein. *Written within and without;* on both sides, on that side which was inward when rolled upon its roundle, and on that side also that was outward, and as it were the back side: a long roll, and full on both sides; so would the sorrows of the Jews be. *Lamentations, and mourning, and woe;* such things as would make the stoutest heart lament, inwardly grieve; and mourn, express it in visible tokens; and woe, sad thoughts and guesses at worse to come: so this prophet's message would be a most heavy burden to the Jews and other nations against which he prophesied.

CHAP. III.

Ezekiel is made to eat the roll, 1—3. *God encourageth him in the discharge of his office,* 4—14: *he is carried by the Spirit to Tel-abib; and is there admonished of his duty as a watchman to Israel,* 15—21. *God further instructeth him concerning his typical bands, and the shutting and opening of his mouth,* 22—27.

MOREOVER he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; [a]eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel.

a ch. 2. 8, 9.

He who sat on the throne and directed the chariot or cherubims, the Lord Jesus Christ, who also spake to him in the chapter before. *Eat:* this was done in a vision. *That thou findest,* in the hand which was sent to him, chap. ii. 9: this explains the former, and being ingeminated, doth require the prophet's greatest resolution and diligence. *Eat this roll;* read attentively, meditate thoroughly, impress the things upon thy soul deeply, for thou must declare them with very great affection and tenderness, with exact faithfulness and fearless courage. *And go,* for then art thou fitted for and commissioned to undertake the prophetic function, *speak unto the house of Israel;* publish to them of the captivity in Babylon what I have declared to them, tell them what they should do, and what I will do.

2 So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll.

So, Heb. *And;* so soon as he had heard he must eat it. *I opened my mouth;* not to discuss points, but to obey, to show my readiness indeed, and to do what lay on me to do. *He caused me to eat that roll;* not by a force compelling me, but by a concurrent help in what the prophet was ready to do.

3 And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I [b]eat *it;* and it was in my mouth [c]as honey for sweetness.

b Rev. 10. 9. See Jer. 15. 16. c Ps. 19. 10. & 119. 103.

In this verse is confirmed and explained what was spoken ver. 1, which see. *Cause thy belly to eat;* the mouth is the proper instrument of eating, but when meat is eaten and digested, the belly is said to eat; the prophet must not just taste, but he must chew, swallow down, retain, and fill his belly with God's word. *And fill thy bowels:* this is the same repeated, unless it add to the other the measure, the fulness of the measure wherewith we should read, meditate, and digest the word of God and his works. And since bowels are the seat of compassion, it is likely the Lord would have his prophet be affected with pity toward that captive people, whose miseries he must foretell, and he foresees they must suffer. *This roll that I give thee:* the roll and all that was in it came from God, and Ezekiel must remember this. *Then did I eat it,* Heb. *And I did eat it. It was in my mouth as honey for sweetness;* upon the palate it was sweet (this done in vision still) as honey. If you wonder that such bitter tidings could be sweet to the prophet, if it be doubted how this could be, since, chap. ii. 10, it was full of lamentation, &c. *Answ.* It was sweet to receive such things by revelation from God, and so to converse with God; it is sweet to foresee future events, and to foretell God's just judgments against sinners, and to have prospect of a vindication of the honour of God and credit of the prophet, who seeing all these things with a well-composed mind, and just zeal for God, could not but approve and be pleased therewith. Or, it was sweet, as usually the first part of the ministerial work is pleasant, but at last wicked men's opposition and persecution make it bitter, as ver. 14; Jer. xv. 16—18; Rev. x. 10.

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4 ¶ And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.

Son of man: see ver. 1, and chap. ii. 1. *Go;* either the first word, *go*, intimates the awakening and rousing him, and the latter, *get thee*, directs him whither to go when on his legs, or else it is an idiom of the Hebrew language, or a hendyadis, an ingemination of the same command. *The house of Israel:* see chap. ii. 3. *Speak with my words;* see ver. 1; in my name and authority, so some, but then it would have been in the singular number, not plural. Better and fuller it is by others thus, What things I shall show thee, and in what words I shall declare them to thee, these declare to the captives in Babylon. They perhaps do expect to hear somewhat else, and their flattering false prophets suggest other matters; but look to it, thou goest on my errand, speak therefore in my words, as the Hebrew.

† Heb. *deep of lip, and heavy of tongue;* and so ver. 6.

5 For thou *art* not sent to a people † of a strange speech and of an hard language, *but* to the house of Israel;

Though the Divine command is reason enough why we should obey readily, yet God is pleased to give the prophet arguments to persuade, and ushers them in here. *A people of a strange speech;* who cannot skill of thy speech, nor thou speak (without gift of tongues) to them. Shift not off thy work as if, with Jonah, sent to a people of barbarous tongue, in which are dark and profound idioms, but as horrid to thy ear as deep and dark precipices and gulfs to the eye, as the Hebrew, *deep of lip*, intimates. *Of an hard language;* the same repeated in other words; they will need no interpreter to tell them what thou sayest to them, nor wilt thou need an interpreter to tell thee what answer they give. Thy work will be the easier, neither difficult, as things that lie deep to be digged out, nor as things of great weight and heaviness to be lifted, as both metaphors imply: this is his first argument. Next, implied in it, I send thee to thine own countrymen, whose welfare thou shouldst readily seek, and in their own tongue thou mayst express thy care for them. *To the house of Israel;* they still are a family that God owneth he hath not broke up housekeeping, there is further encouragement; and they are Israel's seed, the posterity of Jacob, and under covenant mercy; go therefore readily, for Israel shall be gathered.

† Heb. *deep of lip, and heavy of language.* ‖ Or, *If I had sent thee, &c. would they not have hearkened unto thee?*

6 Not to many people † of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. ‖ Surely, [d] had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.

[d] Matt. 11. 21, 23.

This verse is much what the former, yet strengthens and illustrates what is laid down there. *Many people* here may be, according to the comprehensiveness of the Hebrew word, either numerous, whose multitudes would be their pride, and tempt them to deride thee; or, mighty in valour and feats of war and policy, whose might would harden them; or, far off, who would wonder a stranger should come to tell them their destiny; or, divers nations, that thou shouldst need divers tongues, to speak to them all in their own language. This difficult work is reserved to those whom Shiloh will send, it is kept to the times when the Spirit poured forth shall enrich with the gift of tongues in gospel days. *Strange speech;* deep lip, &c.: see ver. 5. *Whose words thou canst not understand:* words are articulate and significant, and when understood they are words to the hearer, but whilst not understood they are but empty and barbarous sounds, as the apostle observes in 1 Cor. xiv. *Surely:* in the Hebrew the words occasion difficulty and variety of translations, but all of no great moment. Some would refer it to the Jews, and make this sense, Hadst thou gone in any name but mine they would have heard; so parallel it with John v. 43; but it is better, and more agreeable with the text, to refer it to many nations mentioned, who would have heard what the house of Israel refused to hear, (of which Jonah's Ninevites are pregnant proofs,) and to them I would have sent thee, (say some,) but that they did not understand thee: this is but a very slender guess, and ill consists with the power of God, which can give the tongue, if he would have sent the message, as he intimated to Moses, unwilling to go. Our version hath well read and referred the words; with that asseveration, *surely*, they have expressed what some will have the Hebrew אִם כִּי to be, a form of an oath. God assures the prophet the message is such that any men in their wits would hear; go therefore to thy people, try whether they will act like men and hear, especially when their condition is quite otherwise than that I now suggest of the nations, for the Jews are few, weak, reduced to this by neglecting to hear; in reason, they should now hear, repent, seek me, do my word, and live.

7 But the house of Israel will not [e] hearken unto thee; [e] for they will not hearken unto me: [f] for all the house of Israel *are* † impudent and hardhearted.

[e] John 15. 20.
[f] Heb. 2. 4.
† Heb. *stiff of forehead, and hard of heart.*

But, Heb. *And*, put adversatively, is rightly rendered *but*. *Will not hearken unto thee;* have no mind or will. The original is not here, as mostly it is elsewhere, content to express it by the word in the tense which connoteth the event. But the original first points out their want of a will and inclination, they have no propensity to hear, they are obstinate in their refusal; next adds what it was their wills were obstinately averse to, i. e. hearing and obeying. *For they will not hearken unto me:* this passage confirms the prediction, and withal forearms the prophet that he stumble not at their scandalous refusal and abusing of him; so they have used their God and his, and no wonder if they consent as little to him as they have to God. *All the house of Israel*, i. e. the far greater part, not every particular person; there were of the captives some few like good figs, &c. *Are impudent;* have hardened their faces, they are not ashamed, nor can they blush now, as Jer. iii. 3. Brazen-faced is no new phrase or Anglicism, but as old as Isaiah, xlviii. 4, nay, as old as habitual sin. *Hard-hearted:* this the root whence the other springs; and what hope from such whose hearts are as far from relenting as their faces from blushing? How can it be expected they will hear, whose hearts are deafer than their ear?

8 Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.

This may be to remove the objection of the prophet, who might plead the softness of his own metal, and pretend shameless sinners will scoff a young prophet out of countenance. Behold, says God, consider. *I have made;* given. They have given themselves this impudent countenance; I have given thee true courage, constancy, and manly carriage. *Thy forehead strong;* the same answer in words very little varying. God will qualify and gift him for this work among this people, and edge his own tools to cut into the hardest metal. So Isa. l. 7; Jer. i. 18; Micah iii. 8.

9 [g] As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: [h] fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they *be* a rebellious house.

[g] Is. 50. 7. Jer. 1. 18. & 15. 20. Micah 3. 8.
[h] Jer. 1. 8, 17. ch. 2. 6.

If their foreheads be hard and cutting as the flint, if they wound the soft and tender, if they sparkle with fire against those of harder metal; yet be not afraid, I have made thee as the adamant, harder than flint, able to cut and to break it. But what if there should be allusion to the Talmudic rabbinical tradition about their supposed worm *schamir*, the word here used; if the tradition be as old as Ezekiel's time, it will carry some probability with it. This *schamir* they say was a worm, which by secret virtue would, when applied, cut or form hard stones, and divide the greatest; that Moses used it to prepare the precious stones for the breastplate, and Solomon, they say, used it to fit the stones without hammer for the temple. Well then, Ezekiel, fear not, thou shalt be a *schamir* to the Jews in captivity, and fit some of them to be either rich ornaments in the breastplate, or beautiful stones in the temple; go about thy work, it shall not be, though it seem, successless. *Fear them not;* let no prevailing fear take thee quite off from thy work; let not any lesser surprises and sudden discomposures of mind, when thou appearest before them, unfit thee for this work I set thee about. *A rebellious house;* as a house that is rebellion itself.

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10 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.

This verse is a repetition of the charge given to the prophet, to deal faithfully and undauntedly in the delivering his message, to deliver always what God should speak, to speak nothing else, and to speak all that. These repetitions in the abundance of the same words, are from the usage and custom of the people of those countries in which the Jews were now captive. *Receive in thine heart:* this explains the visionary eating, of which ver. 3. Hearing is first, and receiving into the heart follows; but with the Jews such transpositions are very usual.

11 And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, [i] Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

[i] ch. 2. 5, 7. ver. 27.

See ver. 4. *To them of the captivity;* of the first captivity under Jeconiah's reign, who succeeded his father Jehoiakim, slain for his conspiracy with Egypt against Nebuchadnezzar, as 2 Kings xxiv. 1, with 6, 7. These are those good figs, Jer. xxiv. 5—7, of whom such good is spoken, and to whom those promises are made. *Thy people;* Heb. *the sons of thy people.* Some will have God speaking here of this people as no more his, but I think it rather is to be interpreted of some that were amidst them who were disowned of God, and were now but children or sons of the people, the apostate idolaters and debauched sinners, which might possibly have embraced the conqueror's religion and manners. *Speak unto them:* here again the command is repeated and doubled. *Thus saith the Lord:* see ii. 4, 5.

12 Then [k] the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, *saying*, Blessed *be* the glory of the LORD from his place.

[k] ver. 14. ch. 8. 3. See 1 Kings 18. 12. 2 Kings 2. 16. Acts 8. 39.

The spirit; the Spirit of God, which governed the wheels and the living creatures, chap. viii. 3. *Took me up;* either raised him up to nearer approaches, to see and discern, to hear and learn; or carried him to his countrymen, to whom he was to speak. *Behind me;* his face toward the north while he saw the vision, now that he is carried south to his people the voice is behind him. *A voice of a great rushing;* an articulate sound, and intelligible, but with great commotion, for it was the voice of angels, attended with the rushing noise of the wheels added to the noise of their wings, and a mighty wind which might likely accompany all this. *Blessed be the glory of the Lord;* praised and magnified be the gloriously holy and just God, riding on the glorious chariot of his sovereignty in prescribing laws, appointing ordinances, threatening sin, and punishing sinners. *From his place;* either coming down from heaven, or departing from his temple. In brief, the glorious angels, and all the saints of God, bless, i. e. praise, admire, and justify God in all the ways of his judgments among the sons of men.

13 *I heard* also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that †touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing.

† Heb. *kissed.*

I heard, added to connect the verses and to make the reading full, hath I think somewhat perplexed the words, and occasioned inquiry after two different sounds or voices; whereas if we read them as in the Hebrew and as the Latin, *And the noise was of the wings, &c.,* so the 13th verse will explain the 12th, and tell you what was that great rushing which Ezekiel heard behind him. *Touched one another:* see chap. i. 9. *Over against them:* see chap. i. 19, 20.

14 So [l] the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went †in bitterness, in the †heat of my spirit; but [m] the hand of the LORD was strong upon me.

[l] ver. 12. ch. 8. 3. † Heb. *bitter.* † Heb. *hot anger.* [m] 2 Kings 3. 15. ch. 1. 3. & 8. 1. & 37. 1.

So, Heb. *And,* or then, at that very time. *The spirit,* the Spirit of God, as ver. 12, which see. *Lifted me up,* either from that prostration which the terrible vision had caused when he fell to the ground; or rather, caught him, who before was on his legs and well come to himself, up into the air. *Took me away;* carried me, (as was Philip when carried away from the eunuch,) and brought me to the place where I was to deliver my message, the place where the captive Jews were crowded together. *I went:* hitherto nothing appears of the prophet's concurrence, but the verse seems to speak constraint and force, but now you have his voluntary concurrence with the motion of the Spirit. He went when so moved and assisted. *In bitterness, in the heat of my spirit;* Heb. *bitter in the heat of my spirit;* grieved, sad, and my spirit within me was as all in a heat of anger: either, 1. Enkindled within by the sympathy he had with his countrymen in their sufferings and calamities; or, 2. Because of those wickednesses he saw and reproved in them; or, 3. Because he must be the unwelcome messenger of such unwelcome news; or, 4. Because of the danger he was exposed to among enraged desperadoes: which way soever you explain it, Ezekiel's weakness and distempered humour will appear in it; Jonas-like, he will be angry. *But; for,* as some others; *and,* as the Hebrew. *The hand of the Lord was strong upon me;* either in general the power of God, which cannot be resisted; or the Spirit of prophecy, which, as a fire shut up, will break forth, as in Jer. xx. 7—9; indeed both concur.

15 ¶ Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and [n] I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.

[n] Job 2. 13. Ps. 137. 1.

See ver. 11. *Tel-abib;* the name of a place in that part of Mesopotamia, which was shut up within Chebar westward, and Saocora eastward. This was divided into superior, called Gozan, and inferior, called here Tel-abib, a low country, and unprofitable, because spoiled by waters, and secure to keep captives in, and so it afforded matter of labour and toil to the captive Jews, and was as a prison to them lest they should escape, and in both pleased the Babylonians. *By the river;* on or near to that part of the river Chebar which runs westward of this Tel-abib. Here then is no more contradiction than is in this, if I should name a place between two rivers, and say the place is near one of those rivers. *I sat where they sat;* sat sad and astonished, where I found and saw them sitting astonished; for sitting sometimes is a posture of mourning and sadness, as in Lam. i. 1, and Job's friends, and Psa. cxxxvii. 1. *Remained there astonished;* either at the sight of that woeful change of the Jews from freedom and honour to servitude and shame; or astonished at foresight of that which the roll contained, or at the Jews' impenitence and unreformed manner of living under all these afflictions. *Seven days;* mourning no doubt all that while, and waiting till the Spirit of prophecy should open his mouth, and till he might know persons, their inclinations, vices, and temper in them, and till he might speak somewhat of personal knowledge against their wickednesses.

16 And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

This verse gives us sufficient account why the prophet staid these seven days; it was because the particular word he was to speak to them was not yet declared to him. He had a call and commission to be a prophet, and comes in this character to these Jews, but till seven days are ended he receives no particular word, when by his carriage among the Jews it appeared he was more than a common man, that he was full of matter more than ordinary; then came the word of the Lord, saying,

17 °Son of man, I have made thee [p] a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

° ch. 33. 7, 8, 9. [p] Is. 52. 8. & 56. 10. & 62. 6. Jer. 6. 17.

See chap. ii. 1. *I;* the person that appeared to him, chap. i. 26. It is the great and glorious One. *Made thee;* appointed by commission; I have qualified by gifts, I have

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actually sent thee forth, &c. *Watchman;* night and day to observe whether the enemy approach, and to give notice on pain of death. *Hear the word at my mouth:* see chap. ii. 8. *Give them warning;* I will give thee notice, thou art then to give warning unto them, and let them know it comes from me, and in mercy, to prevent their final ruin. Be not as a prognosticator, as one that consults the stars, and foretells from the conjunction of them, but own the things thou art to warn them of as from my mouth.

18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* [q] shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

[q] ch. 33. 8. John 8. 21, 24.

When I say, either by the menaces of my law, or by motion of my Spirit stirring thee up to reprove and warn. *The wicked;* any wicked one whatever, rich or poor, mean or mighty. *Thou shalt surely die;* such courses will certainly end in death, and in damnation if not left. *Givest him not warning;* frequently, and with repeated monitions, as the word signifies, and as the apostle, Acts xx. 31. This to those that will hearken. *Nor speakest;* some will profanely scoff and deride, yet speak to warn them, till it do appear they are such as will turn again and rent you. Or else it is the same thing repeated. *From his way;* men must be told of their own sins; these are their dangers. *To save his life;* that thou mayst preserve his life, his soul, and recall him at once from sin and death. *Shall die in his iniquity;* the man who is not warned by thee will certainly die in his sin, the sinner's ignorance will not be sufficient to prevent his death, but thy not admonishing him will involve thee also in guilt and death. I will punish thee, who possibly mightest have saved by warning, however oughtest to have warned.

19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; [r] but thou hast delivered thy soul.

[r] Is. 49. 4, 5. Acts 20. 26.

His wickedness: this may denote the sinfulness of his mind and heart, which is the spring of all. *His wicked way;* his actual sinful courses; the practices of sin and the habits of sin must be left. *He shall die in his iniquity;* the punishment of his unrepented sins shall be death, but there is no danger unto the watchman, the prophet and minister, who did his duty, and warned the sinner.

20 Again, When a [s] righteous *man* doth turn from his † righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

[s] ch. 18. 24. & 33. 12, 13. † Heb. *righteousnesses.*

What must be done to sinners is said, now for those that have been righteous take thy directions. *A righteous man;* either one that hath for some continuance of time professed the way of righteousness, but is now overcome of vices; or who is righteous only in appearance, as Prov. xviii. 17; Ezek. xviii. 24, 26; xxxiii. 13; Matt. ix. 13. *Doth turn from his righteousness;* gives just cause to fear he not only hath committed some particular sin, but that he hath changed the course of life, the thoughts and purposes from good to evil, hath forsaken the way of righteousness. *Commit iniquity;* gives himself up to a sinful life, wallows in sin. *I lay a stumbling-block;* dispose affairs so by a just and punishing providence that what did restrain is taken away, or what will be occasion of greater sinning is not removed, or any other way I give such a one up to his own heart's lust, so that he continue in sin. *He shall die;* shall perish in his sin. *His righteousness;* either external, and seeming; or his partial and temporary righteousness, which he himself or others ascribed to him, and thought to be in him; shall not be profitable to him: he that apostatizeth is the worst of men, because he falls from known ways of goodness and holiness. Yet such must be warned, else their blood will be required at the hand of those who were to warn them.

21 Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous *man*, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.

If thou warn; as often as need. *The righteous man;* the truly and really pious, the regenerate man. *Sin not;* deliberately, customarily, habitually. *And he doth not sin;* takes warning, and departs further from sin, and keeps better to the ways of God. *Live;* be accepted with God and happy; and both warner and warned have delivered their souls.

22 ¶ [t] And the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth [u] into the plain, and I will there talk with thee.

[t] ver. 14. ch. 1. 3.
[u] ch. 8. 4.

See ver. 14; chap. i. 3. *There;* at Tel-abib. *Go forth into the plain;* withdraw from the multitude, and retire into the opener place. Likely it was some spacious level in that low country which lay between the rivers. *Talk with thee;* to comfort, encourage, direct, and communicate further of the Divine will and counsels to the prophet.

23 Then I arose, and went forth into the plain: and, behold, [x] the glory of the LORD stood there, as the glory which I [y] saw by the river of Chebar: [z] and I fell on my face.

[x] ch. 1. 28.
[y] ch. 1. 1.
[z] ch. 1. 28.

Then; so soon as commanded. *The glory of the Lord:* see chap. i. 28, with foregoing verses. *Stood there;* in the plain whither he is now come. *As the glory which I saw by the river;* it overpowered him now as then, and he could bear it no more now than before he could.

24 Then [a] the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house.

[a] ch. 2. 2.

The spirit: see chap. ii. 2. *Shut thyself within thy house:* some say this is to be an interrogation, wilt thou, &c.? others add it is an irony, upbraiding him; but I see no ground for either. It is, as we read it, a plain command, which appears, in that with the command God giveth strength to do what is commanded; and he is to shut up himself, to learn of God what he must foretell, to foresignify the shutting up of Jews in Jerusalem.

25 But thou, O son of man, behold, [b] they shall put bands upon thee, and shall bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among them:

[b] ch. 4. 8.

Son of man: see chap. ii. 1. It is not said who shall do this, therefore interpreters guess variously at it. Some say it is figurative, noting the malice of the Jews, who would not suffer him quietly to converse with them, their malice was like bonds. Others understand the words as they sound, and refer, 1. To angels, as if they bound him. 2. To his friends and domestics, who would take his intenseness and earnestness in continued, retired thoughtfulness to be madness; so prophets were mistaken and misreported, 2 Kings ix.; Mark iii. 21. 3. To the ruder and more violent of the Jews, who on all occasions were ready thus to confine their prophets, when they foretold unwelcome tidings, and to stir up their governors hereto, as 1 Kings xxii. 27; Jer. xxxii. 2; xxxvii. 15; xxxviii. 6, 7. It is not improbable that the rabble should incense the αἰχμαλοτάρχαι, presidents of the captivity, to do this. *Put bands upon thee;* signifying the bonds and chains of their future captivity who were yet at Jerusalem. *Shall bind thee with them:* this I suppose denotes the severity with which the conqueror would treat them, he would bind their bonds fast, close, and this will be pain and grief to the bounden. *Thou shalt not go out among them;* a Hebraism, thou shalt be denied a free converse.

26 And [c] I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt

[c] ch. 24. 27. Luke 1. 20, 22.

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† Heb. a man reproving. d ch. 2. 5, 6, 7.

be dumb, and shalt not be to them † a reprover: [d] for they *are* a rebellious house.

Either by forbidding thee to speak, I will make thee as dumb as if thy tongue did cleave to the roof of thy mouth; or possibly God did suspend his influence, and leave the prophet dumb, as one who could not move his tongue, the use whereof is taken away. *A reprover;* a man to reprove (as Heb.); shalt tell them as little of their faults and danger as a dumb man can do. God hereby giving the prophet some respite, signifying the future state of the Jews would be such they should no more dare to mutter or whisper; and punishing the refractory deafness of the Jews with taking away their reprover, &c. *A rebellious house:* see chap. ii. 5, 7.

e ch. 24. 27. & 33. 22.

27 [e] But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto

f ver. 11.

them, [f] Thus saith the Lord GOD; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that for-

g ver. 9, 26. ch. 12. 2, 3.

beareth, let him forbear: [g] for they *are* a rebellious house.

When I speak with thee; whenever I shall reveal any thing to thee; or, when I shall have discovered all to thee which thy people should be informed in; then I will open thy lips, and loose thy tongue, and give thee power to speak. *Thou shalt say unto them;* in point of duty thou must tell them what I speak, and tell them as from me, who am eternal and sovereign Lord of heaven and earth: and in this style the Lord speaks above eighty times in this prophecy. *Let him hear;* it is his duty and safety, and I propose it to his consideration, let him think what he hath to do herein. *Let him forbear;* it is at his own peril, thou hast warned him, and now trouble not thyself, neither be grieved much at it. They, a rebellious house, act like themselves in sinning, and thou hast acted like thyself, a faithful admonisher; I will act like myself in punishing and giving them up into the hands of cruel, ravenous, and devouring enemies, who shall destroy them.

CHAP. IV.

The prophet is directed to represent a mock siege of Jerusalem for a sign to the Jews, 1—3; and to lie before it in one posture for a set number of days, in order to denote the time of their sins for which God did visit, 4—8. His allotted provisions, with design to prefigure the people's defilement among the Gentiles, 9—15, and the scarcity they should be reduced to by the siege, 16, 17.

THOU also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and pourtray upon it the city, *even* Jerusalem:

Hitherto the preface, containing the call and commission of the prophet; now he begins. This is the first prophecy, and it is against Jerusalem. *A tile,* or brick, or any square tablet on which he might engrave or carve. *Lay it before thee,* as carvers use to do, as engravers and painters do. *Portray upon it the city;* draw a map of Jerusalem, delineate or describe the city Jerusalem, whence they were come, who now are in Babylon, and probably repented that they had left Judea and Jerusalem, and murmured against them that advised to it: but let them know by this sign that Jerusalem should suffer much more than ever they suffered, that those who remained there sinning against God should bear a long siege, a very grievous famine, and cruel slaughters.

2 And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set ‖*battering* rams against it round about.

‖ Or, *chief leaders.* ch. 21. 22.

Draw the figure of a siege about the city; raise a tower and bulwarks which may annoy the besieged, and defend the besiegers, from which may be shot either darts against men, or mighty stones against the walls and towers of the city. *Cast a mount;* which made large, high, and strong, and near as they can, might thence by help of galleries get over the walls and enter the city. Lay out the ground also for the army of the Chaldeans to pitch their tents in, and to form their camp. *Rams;* the Chaldee paraphrast understands the captains and chief leaders among the soldiers, but it is better understood of those engines wherewith besiegers did batter the walls and towers of a besieged city; an engine of great use in days of old among all warlike nations, invented, say some, in the siege of Troy.

3 Moreover take thou unto thee ‖an iron pan, and set it *for* a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. [a] This *shall be* a sign to the house of Israel.

‖ Or, *a flat plate,* or, *slice.* a ch. 12. 6. 11. & 24. 24, 27.

An iron pan, to signify the hardness and obstinacy of the besiegers; probably a frying-pan, on the plain part of which the tile bearing the portrait of Jerusalem lying, the iron edges or brims compassed it round about, as a line drawn round a besieged city, out of which the distressed could not flee, into which no relief could be brought. It plainly noted the cruelty of the Chaldeans and future tortures of the Jews, who were like to be fried or broiled in this iron pan, as Jer. xxix. 22; 2 Macc. vii. 5. *Set it for a wall of iron;* that it may resemble a wall of iron; for as impregnable as such a wall should the courage, resolution, and patience of the Chaldeans be attacking it. *Set thy face against it;* fix thy displeased countenance against it, in token of my displeasure. *Thou shalt lay siege:* if the prophet do represent him that sent him, then it speaks God's appearing against these wicked ones. *This shall be a sign;* all these things are signs and emblems usual with all, most usual with this prophet, who in this hieroglyphic foreshows the state of those that lived at Jerusalem.

4 Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: *according* to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity.

Lie thou also; a posture which was to signify the settled resolution of the besiegers, who had taken up their abode till the siege were finished in taking Jerusalem. *Upon thy left side,* to note the less worthy part, the ten tribes, or Samaria, which was from Jerusalem toward the left hand, and was head of the ten tribes. *Lay the iniquity;* take upon thee in the representation thereof both guilt and punishment; bear both, not to expiate, but to exemplify what they should suffer. *The house of Israel,* distinguished from Judah; it is the ten tribes. *According to the number of the days;* by that proportion of time thou shalt know and intimate to them how long I have borne patiently with their sins, and how long they shall bear their own punishment. *Thou shalt bear their iniquity;* signifying that as the prophet in the sign, so God in very deed, had patiently borne with them.

5 For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: [b] so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.

cir. 975. Beginning from 1 Kings 12. 23. Ending cir. 585. b Num. 14. 34.

This verse explains the former. I have pointed out the number of years wherein apostate Israel sinned against me, and I did bear with them according to the number of days, wherein thou must lie on thy left side. *Three hundred and ninety days.* See ver. 4. There is some difference, though of no great moment, in fixing the periods of beginning and ending these prophetic days. These years some begin at Solomon's falling to idolatry, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, and end them in the fifth of Zedekiah's captivity. Others begin at the fourth year of Rehoboam, and end them in the twenty-first year of the captivity. Others begin them in the first of Rehoboam and Jeroboam, when the kingdom was divided, and then they must end about the seventeenth year of the captivity. The first supputation to me is much the likeliest, and agrees nearest with the year wherein this prophet begins his prophecy. It is not altogether unlikely that the prophet may intimate, though obscurely, the continuance of the siege of Jerusalem, which the Chaldeans began on the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah, and lasted the remaining two months of the ninth year, and the whole tenth year, except some five

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months, wherein the Babylonians retired to fight the Egyptians, beat them, spoiled them, and returned to the siege of Jerusalem, which lasted to the ninth day of the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year. So that one whole year, and three weeks, and four days, or thirteen months, at thirty days in each month, taking up three hundred and ninety days, and discounting the five months and odd days in the Egyptian expedition, you come to the continuance of three hundred and ninety days in the threatened siege, and possibly this may be the intent of the prophecy.

6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee †each day for a year.

† Heb. *a day for a year, a day for a year.*

When thou hast almost accomplished, or when about to accomplish them, i. e. forty days, before the three hundred and ninety do expire, at the end of three hundred and fifty days turn thou to thy right side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; and that this is the true account appears from this verse, compared with chap. i. 1, 2; viii. 1, say some, and those very learned men. Others will have the forty days distinct from the three hundred and ninety, and reckon them by themselves, and so the better and grammatical construction in the Hebrew seems to carry it, for it speaks in the perfect tense, and lying a second time. But be these numbers distinct or but one, is no great concern; either way they do plainly speak God's wonderful patience with Israel and Judah, and point out the time of the miseries of both for their sinfulness. *Again*, Heb. *a second time*. *Thou shalt bear the iniquity:* see ver. 4. *Of the house of Judah;* of the two tribes, say some; of the royal family, say others, and countenance it with Isa. xxii. 21; and then Israel distinguished is the whole body of the two tribes, and the remnant of the ten tribes that escaped, and embodied with the two tribes; as some did at the first division, others afterward in Asa's, Jehoshaphat's, Hezekiah's, and Josiah's time, leave their places and came to Jerusalem. *Forty days;* it is plain they are so many years, but not so plain where to begin them, whether from Manasseh, or more probably from Josiah's renewing covenant, until the destruction of the temple, which is forty years; during which time God deferred to punish, expecting whether they would keep covenant and walk with God, or retain their idolatries and wicked ways, which latter they did for thirteen years of Josiah's reign, for eleven of Jehoiakim, and eleven of Zedekiah's reign, and five of his captivity, which amount to just forty years; and they are mentioned, say some, apart from the three hundred and ninety, because they were more wickedly abused to promote sin.

7 Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm *shall be* uncovered, and thou shalt prophesy against it.

Therefore, Heb. *And*, while thou liest on thy side, thou shalt fix thy countenance on the portrait of besieged Jerusalem, with angry and menacing looks. *Jerusalem;* not which was in the land of Judah, but that described in the tile, the emblem of the other. *Thine arm*, thy right arm, the stronger and more ready to act, *shall be uncovered*, naked and stretched out, as being ready to strike and slay. *Thou shalt prophesy against it:* this very emblem doth threaten, which is a visional prediction, and no doubt Ezekiel unfolded these riddles on just occasions, and this was a prophesying to them, sometimes by signs, and sometimes by words.

c ch. 3. 25. 8 ᶜAnd, behold, I will lay bands upon thee, and thou shalt not turn thee †from one side to another, till thou hast ended the days of thy siege.

† Heb. *from thy side to thy side.*

Whoever were the persons that laid bonds on Ezekiel, in chap. iii. 25, here it is plain that the Lord doth it. If the prophet represent the besieged citizens who must be captives in bonds, then it is likely these bonds were visible and material, that they might be a teaching sign and admonition, that as they saw the prophet in them, so certainly he should see that come to pass which was signified by them. If he represent the Chaldeans, as those who were by Divine power as fast bound to this siege, till the city be taken, as he was tied to the place whence he could not stir a foot, then invisible bonds, which none feel or see but the prophet, may suffice these, assuring him that those could move no more from the siege than he from that side he lay on. And though the Egyptian army make some diversion, yet it is very like the siege was not quite raised, but they kept the city blocked up, whilst the gross of the army drew off to fight Pharaoh's army, according to that Jer. xxxvii. 9, the Chaldeans shall not depart. *Thy siege*, Heb. plural, *sieges*, either because it was like two sieges by that little interruption of three or four months, or else because of the length and soreness thereof.

9 ¶ Take thou also unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and ‖fitches, and put them in one vessel, and make thee bread thereof, *according* to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side, three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof.

‖ Or, *spelt.*

Provide thee corn enough; for a grievous famine will accompany the siege. And whereas all sorts of grain are to be provided, it assures us all would be little enough: wheat and barley would not outlast the siege, coarser and meaner must be provided, though less fit for bread. Mix the worst with the best to lengthen out the best, that the mixture may render them useful in such necessity. *Three hundred and ninety days;* he mentions only three hundred and ninety; the forty days either concur with them, or else because they refer to the time after the city was taken, whereby such as revived and got some liberty to go abroad found food for themselves; if they escaped the sword of the enemy, and were got into the country, they wanted not bread.

10 And thy meat which thou shalt eat *shall be* by weight, twenty shekels a day: from time to time shalt thou eat it.

Thy meat; the mean and coarse bread which thou must eat and be content with. *By weight;* not full, as once; not as much as you will, but a small pittance delivered by weight to all; which bespeaks the extreme penury the city should be brought to. *Twenty shekels;* some say five ounces, others say ten ounces, the greater of the two scarce enough to maintain life, and yet, it is probable enough, it was but five ounces of bread which was his allowance. A hard case, when the law of the twelve tables allowed a pound of bread to prisoners daily for their diet. But here the prophet hath but half that allowance, if the twenty shekels were shekels of the sanctuary; and he hath but a quarter of that allowance, if they were common shekels by which his allowance was weighed. *From time to time;* at set hours this was weighed out, and no more could be had at any other time, whether morning or evening; once in four and twenty hours, or once in twelve hours, still at the appointed hour; and possibly there might be different hours appointed to different persons, and every one must observe his own time.

11 Thou shalt drink also water by measure, the sixth part of an hin: from time to time shalt thou drink.

Water; not wine or cordial drinks, but cold and thin water, nor a bellyful of this. *The sixth part of an hin;* about six ounces of water, and that measured out by others to him that drinks it, scarce enough to keep the man alive. Such proportions of bread and water rather fed death than the man, yet more could not be had when the besiegers were masters of both fields and fountains, and cut off all from the city.

12 And thou shalt eat it *as* barley cakes, and thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of man, in their sight.

As barley cakes: these were delicacies with them when they could temper and make them right, but now these pitiful things should be to these half-starved bodies as delicates. Or rather, because they were greedy, and could not stay till they were baked. Or, lest any should take it from

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them. Or, because they never had enough to make a loaf with, they eat them as barley cakes. *With dung;* there would be no wood left for such necessary uses, nor yet dung of other creatures, they would be all consumed by the length of the siege too. What loathsome food was this! yet in this straitness of the siege they are brought to it. *In their sight;* openly, that any might see it. From this passage some conclude this was actually done, and not only represented in a vision.

d Hos. 9. 3. 13 And the LORD said, Even thus [d]shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them.

This verse is a key to the former. *Even thus;* scanty, mean, ill-dressed, and polluted in the very dressing, loathsome to any but starved bellies. *The children of Israel;* not only the house of Judah, but all the rest of the children of Israel; not in the siege only, but this misery should pursue them. *Among the Gentiles;* who would be ready enough to upbraid them, and twit them, as breaking the rules of their religion to fill their bellies: thus their sins would bring them to extremest want and shame.

e Acts 10. 14. 14 Then said I, [e]Ah Lord GOD! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth up even till now have

f Ex. 22. 31. Lev. 11. 40. & 17. 15. g Deut. 14. 3. Is. 65. 4. I not eaten of [f]that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there [g]abominable flesh into my mouth.

Ah Lord God! he deprecateth this, and entreats it may not be enjoined him. He proposeth his legal purity, as one argument; in obedience to ceremonial precepts, he had kept himself clean, and now prays that he may not have his obedience tried by enjoining to eat what is abominable. *From my youth up;* he took early care of this, and had persevered to this age; therefore prays mitigation, and some change in his diet or dressing of it. *That which dieth of itself;* forbidden as polluted, Exod. xxii. 31; Lev. xvii. 15; Ezek. xliv. 31. *Torn in pieces;* forbidden by the law also, as Exod. xxii. 31.

15 Then he said unto me, Lo, I have given thee cow's dung for man's dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith.

So soon as he prayed God answered, and condescends to Ezekiel that he should use what was less abominable than man's dung; but it was not granted to the Jews, who in the siege at Jerusalem did much worse things, and more detestable, reduced to it by straits, as chap. v. 10; Lam. i. 11; ii. 11, 12, 20.

16 Moreover he said unto me, Son of

h Lev. 26. 26. Ps. 105. 16. Is. 3. 1. ch. 5. 16. & 14. 13. i ver. 10. ch. 12. 19. k ver. 11. man, behold, I will break the [h]staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall [i]eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall [k]drink water by measure, and with astonishment:

Here the Lord confirms his threat of famine by a solemn protestation that he would break the staff of bread; either take their harvests away, and deny them bread, or withhold his blessing, the strength of bread, that it should not nourish and refresh, as Lev. xxvi. 26. *In Jerusalem,* that sinful city. *By weight:* see ver. 10. *With care;* afraid and doubtful whether or where they shall have any more. *By measure:* see ver. 11. *With astonishment;* amazed at the strangeness of their condition, and the wounds and death of many that fell by the enemies' hand, attempting to fetch a little water; or astonished, their very eyes failing for thirst.

17 That they may want bread and

l Lev. 26. 39. ch. 24. 23. water, and be astonied one with another, and [l]consume away for their iniquity.

The Lord will take away their provision, that they may die with want, punished for all their sins, and disappointed of all that their false prophets promised them; and under strangest disappointments, be filled with strangest amazements and horrors, at the woeful miseries of one another, and falling dead in each other's helpless sight.

CHAP. V.

Under the type of the prophet's hair, 1—4, *is showed God's judgment upon Jerusalem,* 5—11, *by pestilence, by famine, by the sword, and by dispersion,* 12—17.

AND thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, [a]and cause *it* to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the *hair.* 594.

a See Lev. 21. 5. Is. 7. 20. ch. 44. 20

It is not unlikely that this command was given to the prophet so soon as he had understood the former chapter's vision. *Son of man:* see chap. ii. 1. *Take thee;* procure it by any means. *A sharp knife;* a sword or knife very sharp, as the Hebrew; so the grievous judgment is expressed chap. xxi. 9—11, 14—16, and here the speedy, irresistible, and sweeping judgment against this people is aptly set forth. *A barber's razor:* this in different words is the same thing, and explains the former, and makes the emblem more exact, for by hair shaved and destroyed is the destruction of Jerusalem and its people represented to us. Now, that this may appear in the certainty of it, both a sword for strength, and sharp for cutting, nay, a razor much sharper, that shaves close, leaves nothing behind it, and cannot be resisted by the weak hair, so shall it be here with this people. *Cause it to pass;* a Hebraism, shave close with it. *Thy head;* the chief, as king and rulers, the city. *Thy beard;* the common citizens; or, the towns round about. *Balances;* just and exact scales, an emblem of Divine justice and equity. *To weigh:* the prophet's weighing represents God weighing these men and their ways. *The hair;* these light, vain, and worthless ones, inhabitants of this sinful city, 2 Sam. x. 4. 5; Jer. xli. 5; xlviii. 37. Thus foretell them their mourning, reproach, and deformity that is coming, for all this is signified by this shaving head and beard.

2 [b]Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of [c]the city, when [d]the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, *and* smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them. b ver. 12. c ch. 4. 1. d ch. 4. 8, 9.

This verse tells you into how many parts the hair was to be divided, and how to be disposed of, and so plain it needs little explication. *With fire;* so either pestilence, or famine, with the displeasure of God, and the burning of the city and of the citizens, is noted. *The city,* described on the tile, chap. iv. 1, a type of what should be done in Jerusalem. *When the days of the siege are fulfilled;* when the three hundred and ninety days of thy lying against the portrayed city shall be ended; for when Jerusalem shall be taken at the end of the siege, the city shall be burnt; and who can say that none of the inhabitants were burnt, as the two false prophets Ahab and Zedekiah? Jer. xxix. 22. To be sure many that hid themselves under ground, in vaults and cellars, were burnt with the burning of the city. *A third part;* it is not necessary this part should be equal to the former, if it be proportional it is enough; perhaps it might be somewhat less then the first third. *Smite about it with a knife;* for these were such as fell, in either defending the walls, or sallying out during the siege, or were found in arms when the city was taken, or were overtaken in their flight with their most unhappy king, or by law martial were adjudged to die by the conqueror. These many, yet weak ones, women and children, which died in the siege by famine and pestilence, might be a greater third. *A third part;* those that fell to the Chaldeans, or fled to Egypt, or other countries, though they escape somewhat longer, yet carrying like sins are at last overtaken with like evils. *Thou shalt scatter;* though these disposed of themselves, yet there was God's hand also in it; he scattered those that of their own accord did flee. *In the wind;* violent, uncertain, and troublesome should their enemies prove to them. *I will draw out;* God will pursue them. *A sword;* figuratively it is wasting punishment, literally it was fulfilled, Jer. xlii. 16, 17, 22; xliii. 10, 11; xliv. 27.

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e Jer. 40. 6. & 52. 16. †Heb. wings.

3 e Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy †skirts.

Thereof, i. e. of the last third which were to be dispersed. *A few*, or small quantity. *In number;* or, by number, as it may be read; tell out a small parcel of the hair. *Bind them in thy skirts;* as men tie up in a handkerchief, or in the skirt of their garment, what they would not lose. So some few shall be kept, God will not cut off the whole house of Israel, but reserves a remnant.

f Jer. 41. 1, 2, &c. & 44. 14.

4 Then take of them again, and f cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; *for* thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

Then take of them again; another division make of that little number, the preserved remnant. Throw some of them into the fire; they are not all to be saved who are delivered at the end of the siege. *Burn them;* literally burn the hair, but signify the burning them that are meant by it. *In the fire* of God's displeasure, and of civil war, or private conspiracy, as in Ishmael against Gedaliah, Jer. xli. *Thereof*, from their sin against God, their discontents at their state, and conspiracies against their governor, appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, evil like another fire shall break out, which shall devour the most, and be near consuming all the house of Israel, as happened to them after Gedaliah's death, and their going down to Egypt, as Jer. xl.—xliv., xlvi., under Johanan's revolt, which the Chaldean did revenge at last.

5 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; This *is* Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries *that are* round about her.

Thus saith the Lord God: this solemn declaration in God's name the prophet useth by express order, chap. iii. 11. *This* portrayed city *is* typically *Jerusalem*, and her inhabitants. *I have* placed her in a most delightful situation, chosen out the best part of the known world for her; in a neighbourhood to most rich and plenteous countries, with whom she might have conversed and spread forth my name, and which *are round about her*, either as servants about a mistress, or as meaner houses about the palace or manor of a lord, or as traders about an emporium, much to advantage of Jerusalem.

6 And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that *are* round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them.

She; Jerusalem, the metropolis, where the temple and the solemn feasts and sacrifices were, which in likelihood was forwardest, fullest, and most expensive on other invented modes of worship; she who was most obliged to me. *Hath changed:* the Hebrew includes a rebellion and contumacy; and these were cause of her changing, as rebels change the laws of a kingdom. *My judgments;* the laws of holy, righteous, and sober living; the exact rules of manners. *Into wickedness;* improbity and injustice toward each other, and impiety and irreligion against God himself. *More than the nations;* there is more honesty, truth, and righteousness among the nations than among the Jews. *My statutes;* the precepts and rules of religious observances which I gave them they have less valued, been less constant to, than the nations have been to theirs, received from men, and invented by man. So Jer. ii. 9—11. *They*, the Jews, *have refused*, with scorn and abhorrence, as what their mind abominated. So vile were they grown, that they loathed the excellent law of God, and were weary of it, as the Hebrew implieth. *My statutes;* as for my statutes in matters of religion, they have refused to walk in them, and have modelled religion to their own fancy, built altars, adopted new gods, and appointed new worship, more gay or easy, as their humour was.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that *are* round about you, *and* have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, g neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that *are* round about you;

g Jer. 2. 10. 11. ch. 16. 47.

Ye multiplied: there is some difficulty in assigning what it is they multiplied in, either numbers of people, benefits received from God, luxury, pride, tumultuousness, with increase of your riches; or in idols, superstitions, and appendant wickednesses. This last seems most agreeable with the text; the rest may not be excluded. *According to the judgments of the nations;* while you have exceeded the nations in superstition and idolatry, you have fallen short of them in the moralities of their life, and done less good than they, taught by a far more imperfect law than you, Rom. ii. 21—24.

8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, *am* against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations.

Therefore; it is very just what God doth, he hath cause more than enough given him to do so. *Behold;* take notice, and consider me, not as now for you, but against you. You look to the instruments, to the rod, but, behold, I am, even I am, against you, against thee, O Jerusalem. *Will execute judgments;* I will act in severities that shall convince you it is my hand that wields the sword. You despised my holy law, my judgments as a rule of life, but you shall now feel my judgments that you shall die under. The Chaldeans will kill you, but I condemn you. They will be cruel, but I will be just in the execution; and who can be for thee, when I will be against thee in this dreadful manner? *In the sight of the nations;* as notorious as thy sins, so shall thy punishment be. The very heathen shall see my hand in it, and own my justice.

9 h And I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thine abominations.

h Lam. 4. 6. Dan. 9. 12. Amos 3. 2.

Though the old world perished by water, and the judgment was greater in its extent, and Sodom was destroyed by fire, yet neither one or other was so lingering a death. These poor Jews were long dying, and felt themselves dying. Read the Lamentations as commentary on this text, or Josephus's Wars of the Jews. Though in the siege of Samaria women ate their children, yet the city was not taken, sacked, and burnt as Jerusalem was after a long siege. *Whereunto I will not do any more the like:* no doubt God keeps his word, though we should not be able to show how. And though the siege of Jerusalem under Vespasian was grievous, yet not in every thing equal with this, the Romans were not so cruel to the Jews. *Thine abominations;* their sins were abominations, and God delivers them into the hands of men that did hate, loathe, and abhor the Jews, so much that they thought they could not be cruel enough against them.

10 Therefore the fathers i shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I k scatter into all the winds.

i Lev. 26. 29. Deut. 28. 53. 2 Kin. 6. 29. Jer. 19. 9. Lam. 2. 20. & 4. 10. Bar. 2. 3. k ver. 12. Lev. 26. 33. Deut. 28. 64. ch. 12. 14. Zech. 2. 6.

And this explains what is above threatened. No history I know of that does mention any thing like this; barbarous Indians sell one another, and some report (as I take it) that children among them unnaturally murder aged parents, but they eat them not. *In the midst of thee;* it may intimate their doing this publicly. *The whole remnant will I scatter:* this was verified when they were fetched away who were left at the departure of the besiegers, and when the very small remnant with Johanan fled into Egypt.

11 Wherefore, *as* I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou hast l defiled my sanctuary with all thy m detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish *thee;*

l 2 Chron. 36. 14. ch. 7. 20. & 9. &c. & 23. 39. m ch. 11. 21.

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n ch. 7. 4, 9. & 8. 18. & 9. 10. n neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.

As I live; a form of an oath becoming none but the living God, used often in Scripture and in this prophet. *Defiled;* violated and profaned. *My sanctuary;* my temple. *With all thy detestable things;* not that all they did abominably was done in the temple; but either because they never heeded how they were polluted, but with legal pollutions on them came to the temple; or rather, brought in their idols, all their detestable counterfeit gods, as Jer. vii. 30, and, in 2 Kings xvi. 10; xxiii. 12. 13. their own altars, as Ahaz and Manasseh. All their idolatry and wickednesses, expressed by two words of like emphasis. *Diminish;* lessen, break to pieces, cut up by the roots such stinking weeds. *Neither shall mine eye spare;* there shall not be the least sign of pity in my eye, though I see all their misery. *Neither will I have pity;* nor yet will I retain any affection of kindness for them; my heart, as my eye, shall be far from all pity and commiseration towards them.

o See ver. 2. Jer. 15. 2. & 21. 9. ch. 6. 12. 12 ¶ oA third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and pI will scatter a third part into all the winds, and qI will draw out a sword after them.

p Jer. 9. 16. ver. 2, 10. ch. 6. 8. q Lev. 26. 33. ver. 2. ch. 12. 14

From this to the end of the chapter we have a particular and more express declaration how God would execute these severe judgments upon this people. *With pestilence;* no doubt, though it were not mentioned or threatened, as Jer. xxxiv. 17, we might conclude it could not but be in such a besieged city, where blood, putrifying carcasses, &c. annoy. *With famine;* signified by fire, for it parcheth and withereth men. *Shall fall by the sword round about thee;* as they did in their assailing the besiegers round about the walls, and as they did fall under the assault, when the enemy attempted to take the city, &c. See further ver. 2 of this chapter. *I will draw out a sword after them;* when the Babylonians' sword hath cut off all about Jerusalem, I will draw out my sword, and pursue the rest which Nebuchadnezzar could not reach.

r Lam. 4. 11. ch. 6. 12. & 7. 8. s ch. 21. 17. t Deu. 32. 36. Is. 1. 24. u ch. 36. 6. & 38. 19. 13 Thus shall mine anger rbe accomplished, and I will scause my fury to rest upon them, tand I will be comforted: uand they shall know that I the LORD have spoken *it* in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them.

Thus; in this terrible and relentless manner already declared. *Mine anger;* my provoked justice, not passion, shall be executed to the full of that I intend and have spoken. *My fury:* after the manner of man is this spoken, and implies the great and hot displeasure of the Lord. *To rest;* my bowels were troubled how to spare, and yet to punish, but now I will rest from such strugglings between my mercy and my justice; this shall be glorified, and I will be at ease. *I will be comforted;* I did what in reason they could expect, and more than I was bound to, for their preservation; but nothing would prevail. O Israel, thou art destroyed, but it is my satisfaction thou hast destroyed thyself, and canst not charge it on me. *They shall know;* these ruined ones by sad experience shall know. *In my zeal;* in that indignation against your sins which the love of my own glory stirred up within me. In my provoked jealousy I spake, and will act against a persisting, perfidious, and adulterous wife, and it shall be known when I have finished my work.

x Lev. 26. 31, 32. Neh. 2. 17. 14 Moreover xI will make thee waste, and a reproach among the nations that *are* round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by.

Judgments should empty the land of men that might till and manure it, and so your fruitful land shall be turned and continued a waste and desolate land. *A reproach.* Jer. xxiv. 9; xxix. 18. 22; a reproach or curse; men should taunt at them, and, in wishing the worst they can, wish their enemies like the Jews. So it was Lam. ii. 15, 16.

15 So it shall be a yreproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations that *are* round about thee, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury and in zfurious rebukes. I the LORD have spoken *it*.

y Deut. 28. 37. 1 Kings 9. 7. Is. 59. 4. Jer. 24. 9. Lam. 2. 15. z ch. 25. 17.

A reproach: see ver. 14. *A taunt;* a very proverb among men. *An instruction;* sinners like thee shall learn by thy miseries what they may expect from me, and they shall acknowledge Divine justice in all. *When I shall execute judgments,* in highest degrees of severity. *I the Lord;* I, who can do it, because almighty; who may do it, because provoked; who will do it, because they repented not; I have spoken, and will do it, as Jer. xxv. 9.

16 When I shall asend upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for *their* destruction, *and* which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your bstaff of bread:

a Deut. 32. 23, 24. b Lev. 26. 26. ch. 4. 16. & 14. 13.

I shall send; it is a messenger that goes not till God sends, and ever goes when he sendeth; he sends cleanness of teeth. *The evil arrows;* either because thunder, tempests, locusts, blastings, &c., which cause famine, are sent by him, and fly like arrows; or because, like arrows shot forth, they pierce deep and kill. *Shall be for their destruction;* is mortal and destructive in its nature. *To destroy you;* that it may be sure to destroy and attain that effect, I design it for that very end. To make sure work against such, *I will increase the famine,* either by sweeping away the little supplies expected, or continuing it longer than ordinary. Or, I will summon in penury as an army against you. *Break your staff of bread;* withdraw the strengthening property of your bread. See chap. iv. 16.

17 So will I send upon you famine and cevil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and dpestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken *it*.

c Lev. 26. 22. Deut. 32. 24. ch. 14. 21. & 33. 27. & 34. 25. d ch. 38. 22.

Evil beasts; Heb. *evil beast:* either the king of Babylon, which, like a ravenous and insatiable beast, tore and devoured all. Or, literally, lions, bears, &c., which are one of his four sore judgments, Ezek. xiv. 21. *Bereave thee,* of your children, friends, and your own life; when you flee to mountains and caves, for fear of the Chaldees, where you seek your safety you shall find your death, and be torn to pieces. Thy land shall be the common road and highway for pestilence and blood, as the Hebrew denotes, and they shall lodge in thy cities, in Jerusalem, as if they were the appointed receptacles for these guests. Here are the four sore plagues which God wastes nations with, all sent out against the Jews, and their commission signed from heaven with a witness, Ourself. I have spoken it, saith the Lord.

CHAP. VI.

The judgment of Israel for their idolatry, 1—7. *A remnant shall be saved,* 8—10. *The prophet is directed to lament their abominations and calamities,* 11—14.

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 594.

The word of the Lord, this revelation or prophecy, came in the sixth year of Jeconiah's captivity, on the twenty-first day (being the sabbath day) of the fifth month, a twelvemonth and fortnight after the first vision, chap. i. 2, and probably it came so soon as three hundred and ninety days were ended.

2 Son of man, aset thy face toward the bmountains of Israel, and prophesy against them,

a ch. 20. 46. & 21. 2. & 25. 2. b ch. 36. 1.

Son of man; see chap. ii. 1; put thyself towards the mountains, in a posture of one who is going to speak, look toward them; hereby (as Isaiah did, chap. xii.) upbraiding the deafness of the Jews, whom he now left to speak to

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mountains. Or rather, to the inhabitants of the mountains, who were secure in their fastnesses; and great idolaters, who chose the high hills, &c. for places of idolatrous worship. *Israel;* the common name to all that now remained since the ten tribes were captivated by Shalmaneser. *Prophesy against them;* declare my judgments against them.

3 And say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys; Behold, I, *even* I, will bring a
c Lev. 26.30. sword upon you, and [c] I will destroy your high places.

Ye mountains; ye that dwell in the mountains, ye secure, fearless, and rude mountaineers, hear and consider what God speaks against you, for thus saith the Lord God to you, on mountains and hills of Israel ye dwell and commit idolatry. *To the rivers;* to those who either by rivers' sides worshipped idols, or who accounted rivers among their gods. *To the valleys;* to those that worshipped their idols in low and shadowy valleys. In all these places the Jews had either their several gods, or performed a several kind of worship, or, contrary to command, worshipped their God and set up altars to him there. *A sword upon you;* that shall slay you inhabitants, waste your mountains and valleys, destroy your altars, and abolish your worship. *I,* by the enemy, will *destroy your high places;* places of your idolatrous or superstitious worship; by the sword of those that serve idols your idols shall be destroyed, and you with them, unless ye repent.

4 And your altars shall be desolate, and your ‖ images shall be broken: and
‖ Or, *sun images*, and so vers. 6.
d Lev. 26.30. [d] I will cast down your slain *men* before your idols.

Your altars; God's altar was only at Jerusalem, these were their altars. *Desolate;* no priest to attend, no sacrifice offered, nor a votary come to them. *Images;* statues, and perhaps the particular images made to the sun, as the Hebrew word including heat may signify. Or the open places on the tops of your houses, where you worshipped the sun, 2 Kings xxiii. 5; and Isaiah, xxvii. 9, mentions this piece of idolatry. *Broken;* either torn down from their places to be carried captives, which was a part of heathen conquerors' insolence, or torn in pieces in contempt, and to be destroyed. *I will cast down;* my hand shall guide the pursuing enemy, who shall slay your men before the altars of those idols they worshipped formerly, and to whom, as senseless as the idols, they flee for refuge, as perhaps Sennacherib did, Isa. xxxvii. 38.

† Heb. *give.* 5 And I will † lay the dead carcases of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars.

Lay before their idols; expose to open shame, while the carcasses of idolaters recall to mind their shameful folly and sin. *Carcasses;* either of such as are newly slain, or such as the Chaldeans did dig out of their graves, in spite, contempt, or covetousness, hoping to find some costly ornaments buried with them. So God fulfils that of Lev. xxvi. 30. *I will scatter your bones,* as unworthy to be laid up in earth, who had so highly provoked the God of heaven; they are made dung who served dunghill gods. You shall thus be a defilement to your supposed sacred altars and worship, and an abhorrence to beholders.

6 In all your dwellingplaces the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished.

Mountains and hills with their altars were doomed, now the cities that were of less note than Jerusalem seem particularly to be threatened, because they were idolatrous; according to the number of cities were there gods, Jer. xi. 13. High places and altars set up to the honour of those idols shall be laid waste, and the idols of those lesser cities shall be utterly destroyed. The images or statues that were usually fastened on some pedestal, somewhat high, shall be cut down; and all your costly works for idols, and your pompous preparation for them, shall, with your cities, be abolished for ever, as your sins and abominations deserve.

7 And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and [e] ye shall know that I *am* the
e ver. 13. ch. 7. 4, 9. & 11. 10, 12. & 12. 15.
LORD.

When the slain shall fall thus in your sight, you shall know two things you would not regard before. 1. That idols are vanity and snares. 2. That I am the Lord, who do avenge the quarrel of my covenant. Or, may it not be turned, And the profane shall fall, i. e. the idols, and altars; and other implements of idol-worship, made holy by unholy men, shall be profaned and cast down, defiled and trod under foot in the sight of the Jews, as God threatens; then they shall know God is the only Lord and God. I conjecture at this by Ezekiel's being among the Chaldeans some years, who had gotten somewhat of their tongue; and the word here used, which is rendered slain, and I render profane, doth in the Chaldee signify profane, and is so rendered, Ezek. xxi. 25. If so rendered here, it will better suit with the foregoing verse, and more fitly sum up that discourse and close it. See ver. 10, 12.

8 ¶ [f] Yet will I leave a remnant, that
f Jer. 44. 28. ch. 5. 2, 12. & 12. 16. & 14. 22.
ye may have *some* that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries.

It is the Lord that preserves a remnant, the enemies' rage would destroy all; and it is an act of deliberate and voluntary resolution, not by chance, but by choice. *A remnant;* some few in comparison with the great multitudes that are cut off. Though he promiseth a handful shall remain, yet it shall be in that condition that they are little more than escaped, a poor and small remnant left, as Zeph. iii. 12. *Ye shall be scattered;* either by your own choice, shifting from country to country; or else, dissipated by the order of the proud oppressing conqueror, who will scatter families, lest they should be a little comfort to one another, and great jealousy to him; he will scatter to prevent conspiracies.

9 And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because
g Ps. 78. 40. Is. 7. 13. & 43. 24. & 63. 10.
[g] I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and [h] with
h Num. 15. 39. ch. 20. 7, 24.
their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and [i] they shall lothe themselves
i Lev. 26. 39. Job 42. 6. ch. 20. 43. & 36. 31.
for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.

They that escape; some of them, not every one of them, for several of the escaped did not bethink themselves, as appears, Jer. xlii., xliii., xliv. *Shall remember me;* my precepts which they violated, my mercies which they abused, my threats which they despised, my promises which they refused, my prophets whom they persecuted, my judgments which I have executed; and shall consider and return, and seek me in their affliction. *Among the nations:* in their own land they forgot and sinned, in a strange land they shall remember and weep; so the remnant is bettered by afflictions. At liberty they were captives to sin and idols; when in captivity they shall shake off that bondage, and become my servants. *Because I am broken, &c.* Here we meet very different reading. The Chaldee paraphrase and Syriac version read it actively, so does the Latin Vulgate, because, or when, I have broken, &c.; and if this vary from the grammatical construction, yet it carrieth very good sense, and agreeable to the foregoing words. Their whorish hearts would still have forgotten God, if he had not broken their hearts with judgments; but they remembered when broken, and this breaking was the occasion or cause of their remembering God. Others read this passively, as our version, and as the Hebrew form most usually beareth, I am broken. It is an allusion to a misused husband whom a treacherous wife hath broken; either,

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1. His peace and content. 2. His love and tenderness. 3. His patience and forbearance. 4. His purposes. 5. His offers and promises. So that, as overcome with grief and anger, he doth, contrary to his natural disposition, lay aside his courting her love, and in his jealousy takes revenge, and then she bethinks herself. So here. *Their whorish heart; their heart of whoredom*, i. e. idolatrous heart, which was full of that sin, addicted to it, delighted in it, and wedded to it. *Hath departed from me:* idolatrous hearts do actually depart from God, as an adulterous wife actually departs from her husband. *With their eyes:* as it vexeth a husband to see his wife fixing her eyes with delight on the adulterer, and turning them with scorn from him, as this breaks the husband's patience; so in this case, Israel's eyes were to idols, and delighted in them, expected help from them, were ready to serve them; all which broke their Husband's, i. e. God's, patience, and provoked his severe revenges. *Loathe themselves;* with a mixture of grief towards God offended, of indignation against themselves offending, of abhorrence of the offence, and shame before all for it, shall they show their repentance. *For the evils; wickednesses*, or, as Psal. xxxii. 5, *iniquities of sin;* the deepest and darkest part of sin, the complicated evils that were in each act. *In all their abominations:* it is a hypocrite's repentance which is but for some; this of the reserved remnant shall be sound, it is for all abominations, for all kinds of their abominations.

10 And they shall know that I *am* the LORD, *and that* I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

They shall know; see, acknowledge, and believe it too. *The Lord;* the only one whom they should worship or depend on, who can claim their hearts, their fear, love, and trust, as rightfully due; just in my ways, true both to threats and promises. *In vain;* either, 1. Without cause; the sufferers gave him just cause to pronounce all that evil. Or, 2. Without effect, and to no purpose; I told them that the evils I would bring should make them know that I am the Lord, and these sufferers at last find this effect wrought in them. Their sins were the cause, and their instruction is the effects of their sufferings.

11 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite
k ch. 21. 14. [k]with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abomin-
l ch. 5. 12. ations of the house of Israel! [l]for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.

Here are two actions commanded, and both signify a mixture of affection in the person, as wonder and amazement, indignation and displeasure, grief and sorrow, pity and commiseration, all which are required in the prophet, to show both the evil of sin he did see, and the evil of sufferings which he did foresee, on Israel. *Say, Alas;* tell them what thou meanest by such unusual gestures, speak with grief; Alas! *Evil abominations;* sins in full growth, ripe to the harvest, make him cry out. *By the sword, &c.;* grievous miseries coming on his people and on his kindred. The house of Israel must fall, be ruined, laid desolate, and carried captive.

12 He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine:
m ch. 5. 13. [m]thus will I accomplish my fury upon them.

Far off; either by his early and voluntary flight from his own country; or, he that is carried away captive, and sent by the enemy into a far country. *Pestilence;* the arrow I will shoot after them. *He that is near;* who stays in his own country, or dwells near to Jerusalem, or would retire to it when the Babylonians approach, but is taken before he can get thither. *He that remaineth;* that surviveth those slain, but is shut up and besieged where he sought safety. *I will accomplish my fury;* I will satisfy my just displeasure, and give them full measures of punishment; I will fulfil my threats.

n ver. 7. 13 Then [n]shall ye know that I *am* the LORD, when their slain *men* shall be among their idols round about their altars, [o]upon every high hill, [p]in all the o Jer. 2. 20. p Hos. 4. 13. tops of the mountains, and [q]under every q Is. 57. 5. green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols.

Then shall ye know: see ver. 3—7, 10. *Upon every high hill, &c.;* each of which was accounted a fit place for such superstitious rites, and in all which some or other of you did commit idolatry, and, shame to speak it, burnt sweets, rich spices, which God had given them, to dunghill gods, stinking idols, which the devil had commended to them, Deut. xxxii. 17.

14 So will I [r]stretch out my hand r Is. 5. 25. upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, ‖more desolate than the wilderness ‖ Or, *desolate from the wilderness.* toward [s]Diblath, in all their habitations: s Numb. 33. 46. Jer. 48. 22. and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Stretch out my hand: this noteth the greatness of the blow, God striketh hard when he stretcheth out his hand, and therefore you find a mighty hand joined with outstretched arm. *Desolate;* a desolation, (a Hebraism,) for most desolate. *Yea, more desolate;* and a desolation greater or above the desolation of that most horrid wilderness of Moab, which is here called *Diblah*, mentioned in a *dual* form, Numb. xxxiii. 46; Jer. xlviii. 22, as some think; and described by Moses, Deut. viii. 15. It was that wherein the fiery serpents so much annoyed Israel. Or, I will lay their habitations waste and desolate, from Jerusalem unto Diblath, the borders of Moab, and the land all along shall be as desolate as that very wilderness. So the Lord will turn a most fruitful land into barrenness for the sins of the people. *They shall know;* some instructed and bettered shall own me and fear me, the rest convinced and astonished shall confess that God hath done this great thing against them.

CHAP. VII.

The final desolation of Israel, 1—15. *The mournful repentance of them that escape*, 16—19. *The enemies are permitted to defile the sanctuary, because of the abominations practised in it*, 20—22. *Under the type of a chain is showed the miserable captivity of all orders of men*, 23—27.

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

This introduceth a continuation and confirmation, with some illustration of what judgments were denounced in the former chapter.

2 Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel; [a]An end, the end is come upon the four a ver. 3, 6. Amos 8. 2. Matt. 24. 6, 13, 14. corners of the land.

Unto the land; the inhabitants who had sinned, and also to the land wherein they sinned. *An end*, end of God's patience, of the peace and welfare of the people, and of the plenty, beauty, and desirableness of the land itself, is come, or is near at hand. *The end;* that dreadful end I threatened against you, and which you will find in the execution of the menaces pronounced against you by the former and latter prophets. *Upon the four corners;* it is an overflowing misery, that spreads over all the land.

3 Now *is* the end *come* upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and [b]will judge thee according to thy ways, b ver. 8, 9. and will †recompense upon thee all thine † Heb. *give* abominations.

There shall be no more delays, mine anger is upon thee. It is I who send the Chaldeans, the pestilence, famine, &c.; these are commissioned by me. *Will judge*, punish, *thee according to thy ways*, as thou deservest. *Recompense*, Heb. *give*, unto thee as the wages of thy iniquities,

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or lay all the guilt and all the punishment of all thy sins upon thee.

c ver. 9. ch. 5. 11. & 8. 18. & 9. 10. 4 And [c]mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: [d]and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

d ver. 27. ch. 6. 7. & 12. 20.

Mine eye: see chap. v. 11. *Thine abominations,* not only the punishment and smart, but the vileness, loathsomeness, and hatefulness of thy sins, shall be, *in the midst of thee;* ever before thee, and openly known to others also, or shall reach thy very heart. See chap. vi. 10, 13.

5 Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come.

An evil and sore affliction, one misery enough to ruin the whole, so that there will be no need of another. Or, as the Chaldee paraphrase, one evil after another; and this bespeaks the extreme sadness of their condition who suffer under this evil. Open your eyes, you will see it is at the doors and breaking in upon you.

† Heb. *awaketh against thee.* 6 An end is come, the end is come: it †watcheth for thee; behold, it is come.

Thus frequently is it repeated to show the certainty of the thing, the heaviness of the judgment, the great apprehensions they should have of it, and yet the great security they are under. God's vengeance seems to slumber, and sinners dream it will never awake, but here the prophet assureth the sinners of Jerusalem, and its people, that God hath awakened his vengeance, which now watcheth to take the first opportunity, or rather to hasten it.

e ver. 10. 7 [e]The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: [f]the time is come, the day of trouble *is* near, and not the ‖ sounding again of the mountains.

f ver. 12. Zeph. 1. 14, 15.

‖ Or, *echo.*

The morning; the word is variously rendered, and accordingly variously applied. It is, say some, of a Chaldee original, and signifies to cry out, to encompass, and to rise betimes in the morning, very fitly applicable here. With the morning star, which ushers in the light, thine enemies and thy sorrows are risen, have compassed thee about, and the cry of their shoutings, and the cry of thy distressed people, is raised; a long day of sorrows threatens thee, is upon thee, upon every one that dwelleth in the land. *The day of trouble is near;* as the day near to the morning, so near are thy troubles, thy great, perplexed, and tumultuous troubles, as the word implies, like that Isa. xxii. 5; Zeph. i. 14—17. *The sounding again;* either it means the echo, which mountains make, and is an empty sound, makes great noise, and only startles children; the noise and report of your calamities are real, yea dreadful. Or else thus; on the mountains were your vineyards, and in vintage time your grape-gatherers were wont to shout for joy, and fill the neighbourhood with their joys, but no such soundings shall you hear now. Or it may allude to the music with which their idol worship was celebrated in mountains, high places, in valleys, &c., whence the sound was heard and echoed from hill to hill. Those soundings from the mountains shall cease, it is a long day of vengeance for those sins.

g ch. 20. 8, 21. 8 Now will I shortly [g]pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: [h]and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations.

h ver. 3.

Shortly; or from a near distance, as well as in a short time, that the flood of my wrath may bear all down before it. *Pour out my fury;* my wrath shall not be poured out as water from a cloud at mighty distance, but like the breaking out of the sea on the neighbouring villages, which swallows up houses, cattle, and men without remedy. See chap. v. 13, and ver. 3 of this chapter.

i ver. 4. 9 And [i]mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense † thee according to thy ways and thine abominations *that* are in the midst of thee; [k]and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD that smiteth.

† Heb. *upon thee.*

k ver. 4.

See chap. v. 11. *According to thy ways,* worse than the ways of heathens, and thy punishments shall be worse. *That are in the midst of thee;* still thou retainest the old, and addest new abominations; these to this day are in thee, not hidden, but openly. *I am the Lord that smiteth;* you look only to the hand and sword of the Chaldeans, but I will not cease till you feel and acknowledge my hand smiting, that you may accept punishment, repent, and return to me.

10 Behold the day, behold, it is come: [l]the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded.

l ver. 7.

If you will open your eyes, you may see the lowering day of vengeance: see ver. 7. *The rod hath blossomed:* this and what follows may refer either, 1. To Nebuchadnezzar and his Chaldeans, the rod of God's anger; they flourish, are strong and heavy, like to last too long in their strength to break Israel. *Pride hath budded;* as they flourish in strength, they exceed in pride and arrogance, which buddeth forth in the haughty designs they lay of raising themselves on the ruins of all countries.

11 [m]Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them *shall remain,* nor of their ‖ multitude, nor of any of ‖ their's: [n]neither *shall there be* wailing for them.

m Jer. 6. 7.

‖ Or, *tumult.*

‖ Or, *their tumultuous persons*

n Jer. 16. 5, 6. ch. 24. 16, 22.

Violence; with fierceness, which is their natural temper, *a bitter and hasty nation,* Hab. i. 6; with eagerness and impetuous vigour executing, and with injustice and violence oppressing all. *Is risen up;* is grown up to be, though a rod to punish bad men, yet to be worse than those it punisheth; in brief, you may expect the very worst from the power, pride, and violence of those I am now letting in upon you. Or. 2. It may refer to Israel; thus your tribe (or rod, the same word) blossometh, but it is in sin, and that in pride and violence, so grown that it is a most wicked rod of injustice and oppression to your neighbours, brethren, servants, &c., as Jeremiah, Hosea, and other prophets as well as Ezekiel complained; and now, your sins thus ripe, your sorrows must be very near, as it is not many months between the budding of the tree, and the ripening and gathering of the fruit. *None of them:* this also is fairly applicable to both Chaldeans and Jews; the Jews should be utterly wasted first for their sins, which God will punish by this violent, proud, mighty enemy, and afterwards he will destroy root and branch of that mighty oppressor; and so sad shall the sufferings of both be, that the living shall not bewail their dead friends, because they shall judge the dead in better case than the living. And though the words may have this double aspect, yet I take them to refer principally and first to the Jews, and their near approaching sorrows.

12 [o]The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath *is* upon all the multitude thereof.

o ver. 7.

The time is come: see ver. 2, 3, 6, 7. Though *the buyer* honestly possess what his money purchased, yet let him not hug himself in the thought of his riches. *Nor the seller mourn:* men usually part with their estates grieving that they must transmit their right to others, but let sellers now think how little a while they could have kept them, and how little time they shall keep them who have bought them. *Wrath;* such wrath from God, an offended Judge, and from insolent enemies, that buyer and seller shall find their state much alike.

13 For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, † although they were yet alive: for the vision *is* touching the whole multitude thereof, *which* shall not return; neither shall any strengthen himself ‖ in † the iniquity of his life.

† Heb. *though their life were yet among the living.*

‖ Or, *whose life is in his iniquity.*

† Heb. *his iniquity.*

He that now selleth is of that age that can scarce promise

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himself to live till the seventy years' captivity expire. *Shall not return;* either out of captivity, or at the year of jubilee; he shall never with grief behold another in possession of that he was forced to sell. Nor doth this contradict Jeremiah, who promiseth a return, for he foretelleth the return to children and posterity, Ezekiel denies the present generation shall return; Jeremiah speaks of a return to the land of Canaan, Ezekiel denieth a return to ancient particular rights, estates, and possessions. *Although they were yet alive;* for if any should survive the captivity, yet the conqueror wasting and destroying all would confound all distinct titles and ancient boundaries.

The evils foreseen and threatened are designed against all the multitude of Israel, whose sin and impenitence have involved them in these judgments and miseries, as I am assured by vision, which cannot fail of accomplishment, which shall not return vain and not performed. Nor shall any one man of them all be able to fortify himself and secure his state against these threats by his obstinacy and sin, or by any sinful contrivances.

14 They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle: for my wrath *is* upon all the multitude thereof.

The house of Israel have published their resolution for war, and summoned in all fit for arms, if the words be read as here. Or if in the imperative mood, *Blow ye*, &c., they are a smart irony against the preparations the Jews can possibly make for repelling the enemy, and defending their city. *To make all ready;* persons fit for the war and all warlike provisions, a thing necessary in case of invasions, but in their case a vain attempt. There is not a man going to the war, (as the Hebrew,) all are backward in this danger. *My wrath;* that displeasure which takes away their prudence and courage, that these men of might sleep, and none finds his hands or weapons, Isa. xxix. 14.

p Deut. 32. 25. Lam. 1. 20. ch. 5. 12.

15 [p]The sword *is* without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he that *is* in the field shall die with the sword; and he that *is* in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.

Without; in the countries. *Within;* in the besieged city. *With the sword* of the Chaldean soldier. *Shall devour him;* shall eat him up; you, O Jews! shall be food for unsatiable pestilence and famine. Heavy tidings to sinful Jerusalem!

q ch. 6. 8.

16 ¶ But [q]they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

As we read the words they are a prediction, some shall escape, and a promise of some mercy in the escape. But if we read them as we may, And *flee ye that are escaped of them*, in the imperative, they are a command to, or direction for, such as would escape, like that Jer. xxi. 9. *On the mountains;* wandering out of their proper place, and uneasy, *like doves* that are frighted out of their nests, and fly among the wilder sort of doves, which give them trouble and danger, such will be the state of escaped ones among savage idolaters. *Mourning;* bemoaning themselves, and making a mournful noise, Nah. ii. 7. *For his iniquity;* either for the punishment of their iniquity, so the worst of those that escape; or for their iniquity, cause of their punishment, so the best among them; or for both together: the mourning, though on different motives, yet should be universal, every one weeping.

r Is. 13. 7. Jer. 6. 24. ch. 21. 7. † Heb. *go into water.*

17 All [r]hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall † be weak *as* water.

All hands, with which they should hold the instruments of fortification, the weapons of war, the tools of working, and that should carry away their goods, that they shall not be able to work at the ramparts, nor fight in the battle, nor earn their bread, or carry away their substance on which they might subsist. *All knees*, which bowed to idols, shall now fall under the punishments of idolatry, shall be neither strong to stand in battle, or to flee from the drawn sword: and this weakness was on all, as it is twice repeated.

18 They shall also [s]gird *themselves* with sackcloth, and [t]horror shall cover them; and shame *shall be* upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

s Is. 3. 24. & 15. 3. Jer. 48. 37. Amos 8. 10. t Ps. 55. 5.

It is a very general usage in the Eastern parts in deepest sorrows and distresses to put sackcloth on, and to gird it close to their bodies. *Horror;* either dreadful apprehensions of growing evils, or continued shakings from impressions of what formerly they felt, according to Lev. xxvi. 16, 36. *Cover them;* be on every side, no side safety, or quiet, and confidence. *Shame* of disappointment, which breeds consternation; and shame of conscious guilt and unbecoming deportment, which fills the countenance as much with blushing as it fills the conscience with guilt and sin. *Baldness;* either by pulling off the hair amidst their sorrows, or cutting off their hair in token of greatest mourning, Isa. xv. 2; Jer. vii. 29; xlviii. 37; Amos viii. 10.

19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be † removed: their [u]silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: ‖ because it is [x]the stumblingblock of their iniquity.

† Heb. *for a separation*, or, *uncleanness.* u Prov. 11. 4. Zeph. 1. 18. Ezek. 5. 8. ‖ Or, *because their iniquity is their stumblingblock.* x ch. 14. 3, 4. & 44. 12.

They shall cast their silver; either, 1. The Jews themselves, that they be the lighter to flee, and might stop the pursuer, whom they hope silver may stop a while, and give them some space to get away; or, might occasion quarrels among soldiers of fortune, which might set them one against another till the distressed Jews could get away from them all. Or, 2. The Chaldeans, who in this day of their own rage and God's wrath against the Jews did (as the Medes and Persians shall, Isa. xiii. 17) not regard silver or gold, Prov. xi. 4. Or, 3. Because Nebuchadnezzar might possibly reserve it all to himself, having those vast thoughts of enlarging his empire by arms, which could not be done without great treasures. *Removed;* carried away into Babylon, to the royal treasury; or laid aside as despised, when offered a ransom of their life; or hid by the Jews in polluted places, which perhaps the Jew might think would be securest from searching, forasmuch as the Chaldean knew their law forbade them to touch any unclean thing. *Silver and gold shall not be able to deliver them:* this is the sum of it, these treasures shall stand them in no stead. If the self-flattering Jews should think much silver and gold might ransom their life when the city is taken, the prophet removes this confidence, and tells them they should not have enough to buy bread to fill their own bellies. *It is the stumbling-block of their iniquity;* this silver and gold they valued too much, coveted immeasurably, abused to pride, luxury, idolatry, and oppression; this that they stumbled at and fell into sin, this now they stumble at and fall into deepest misery and danger.

20 ¶ As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty: [y]but they made the images of their abominations *and* of their detestable things therein: therefore have I ‖ set it far from them.

y Jer. 7. 30. ‖ Or, *made it unto them an unclean thing.*

The beauty of his ornament; their riches, the ornament of a nation, their silver, gold, &c. Or rather the temple and ark, and all that pertained to it, which was the beauty and glory of that nation, and they accounted it so. *He set it in majesty;* God commanded it should be stately, beautiful, and rich; very magnificent, said Solomon, great, 2 Chron. ii. 5, and God gave the riches with which it was built, 1 Chron. xxix. 11—16. *They made the images;* either set up their idols which God so much abhorred in his temple, and provoked him with spiritual adulteries to his face, as if a wife should commit adultery before the eye of her husband; or, made their idols, those abominable images, those detestable things, of the silver and gold which I adorned them with. *I have set it far from them;* I have parted between them; sent them from the temple, and their gold and silver from them.

21 And I will give it into the hands of the

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strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they shall pollute it.

I will give it, my temple, *into the hands*, power and possession, *of the strangers*, foreigners, who by direction of my law were excluded coming to it, they now shall enter into it, and take the riches of it as lawful prey. *To the wicked:* this description of these men, strangers by their distance of place, and the worst of men on earth, by their proud, cruel, and fierce disposition. *Pollute it;* enter, spoil, tear down, and use the temple as a vile place, and make no difference between this and other places. This I think the proper sense; some say the text speaks of the rich idols which the idolaters accounted most holy, and on which they laid out their treasure, and which now the Chaldeans should plunder and pollute.

22 My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute my secret *place:* for the ‖robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.

‖ Or, *burglers.*

My face will I turn; either from the Jews, who cry under such violence and profaneness; or, from the Chaldeans who act it, neither relieving the one nor restraining the other. *My secret place;* either, 1. My enclosed land of Judea. Or, 2. My city Jerusalem. Or, 3. The temple. And, 4. The holy of holies: all which the Babylonian conquerors trampled under their conquering feet. *The robbers;* the soldiers, who in truth robbed the temple and here have their true style given them, are robbers that used the temple and its consecrated gifts without any reverence or respect. They should break all open, and rush into the places which Jews, Levites, and priests might not enter.

23 ¶ Make a chain: for [a]the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.

a 2 Kings 21. 16. ch. 9. 9. & 11. 6.

A chain; either to signify that like criminals they should be brought in chains before God their Judge; or, as guilty and condemned, should be led away in chains; or else, as captives in chains, carried away in triumph, because murders and oppressions abounded in them, or because the *crimes* which deserved death abounded among them.

24 Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and ‖their holy places shall be defiled.

‖ Or, *they shall inherit their holy places.*

The worst; the most violent, proud, and bloody men; such the Chaldeans showed themselves. *Possess;* not only dwell in their houses, but by right of conquest account them their own, and descending to theirs after them. *The pomp;* the excellency, magnificence, and glory, whatever they boasted of; either literally, the pride, or figuratively, the temple that the Jews gloried in. *Of the strong;* of the Jews, who thought Jerusalem too well fortified by art and nature, and the Divine presence, it being the city of God, ever to be overthrown. *Their holy places;* all that pertains to their religion, and exercise of it, persons, places, things, which now by their abuse of them are theirs, not mine, shall be polluted.

25 †Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and *there shall be* none.

† Heb. *cutting off.*

Destruction; such as an angry, provoked power makes when it cuts off all root and branch. *They shall seek peace;* either by inquiring of prophets; or rather, suing to Nebuchadnezzar, whom, after so many affronts, they will attempt to pacify. *There shall be none;* no such thing can be had: they should seek it elsewhere, and appease their God, who could give them peace; as for the Chaldean, he will not, because God doth not.

26 [a]Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; [b]then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.

a Deu. 32 23. Jer. 4. 20. b Ps. 74. 9. Lam. 2. 9. ch. 20. 1, 3.

Mischief upon mischief; loss upon loss, one sorrow on the neck of another. *Rumour upon rumour;* dreadful news one post after another of the enemies' threats, preparations, marches, successes, and cruelties, wounding the heart of the stoutest. In this multiplied perplexity they will inquire, it is likely, of their false prophets, hating the true, whom if they consult, they will not like their answer. Or rather, there shall be no prophet, as Psa. lxxiv. 9; no revelation from heaven for them. *But the law shall perish;* Heb. *and*, rather than *but*. When they consult the priest, their ordinary director by the law, alas! if any remain, they are ignorant of the law, nor have they sacrifices to bring to them to offer unto God. Religious men can afford them no comfort, nor shall their senators know what to advise.

27 The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and †according to their deserts will I judge them; [c]and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

† Heb. *with their judgments.* c ver. 4.

The king, Zedekiah, *shall mourn*, droop and despair, and every magistrate shall despond. *The hands of the people:* see ver. 17. *Shall be troubled;* hang down, and melt away. I will no more forbear what they have deserved, I will repay, and they shall know my vengeance.

CHAP. VIII.

Ezekiel is brought in a vision of God to Jerusalem, 1—4, *and showed the image of jealousy set up in the temple*, 5, 6, *the worship of the ancients in their chambers of imagery*, 7—12, *the mourners for Tammuz*, 13, 14, *and the worshippers of the sun*, 15, 16. *God's wrath for their idolatry*, 17, 18.

AND it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth *month*, in the fifth *day* of the month, *as* I sat in mine house, and [a]the elders of Judah sat before me, that [b]the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me. 594.

a ch. 14. 1. & 20. 1. & 33. 31. b ch. 1. 3. & 3. 22.

In the sixth year of Jeconiah's captivity. *In the sixth month;* they had been almost seven years in captivity, it was Elul, or our August. *In the fifth day of the month;* the sabbath day, as chap. i. 2. *As I sat in my house;* abode in my house, probably he lay on his side, the three hundred and ninety days not yet expired. *The elders of Judah*, the chief of those that were now in captivity, *sat before me;* they were come either to spend the sabbath in religious exercises, such as the present state of affairs permitted, to hear somewhat from the prophet's mouth, expounding the law or declaring their duty, or to inquire what would become of their brethren in Jerusalem, whether they should be subdued and captivated, or whether there were any good news for them from heaven, and how they should behave themselves in these sad times. *The hand of the Lord;* the Spirit of prophecy exerted itself with a mighty Divine power, which enlightened me at that very time, and in that very place: see chap. i. 3.

2 [c]Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, [d]as the colour of amber.

c ch. 1. 26, 27. d ch. 1. 4.

A likeness of a man; that man whom he had seen upon the throne, i. e. of Christ. *The appearance of fire:* see chap. i. 26—28. This fire denotes the wrath of God against Jerusalem, and it is observed it was fire downward, wrath already coming down upon the Jews. *The appearance of brightness*, to signify the majesty and glory of Christ. See more chap. i. 27.

3 And he [e]put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and [f]the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and [g]brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem,

e Dan. 5. 5. f ch. 3. 14. g ch. 11. 1, 24. & 40. 2.

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to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; [h]where *was* the seat of the image of jealousy, which [i]provoketh to jealousy.

h Jer. 7. 30. & 32. 34. ch. 5. 11. i Deut. 32. 16, 21.

He put forth a hand; Christ. This was acted visionally, not corporally or actually, and so all that is here spoken of to the end of the 16th verse. *The spirit;* which indeed is the hand which took him by the head, gently, but with mighty strength. *Lifted me up;* very probably in the sight of the elders who were with him. *Between the earth and the heaven;* he seemed to fly as a swift bird through the air. *Brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem;* carried me to see Jerusalem, where in visions strange and glorious I beheld what was done there. This was no delusion, but a revelation from heaven; though all was done in an ecstasy, yet he was fully assured of every particular he saw done in the temple, whither he was carried in his spirit, not body, by the hand or Spirit of Christ. *To the door of the inner gate;* to the door of the gate of the inner court, or court of the priests, 2 Chron. iv. 9. The temple courts had four gates towards the four quarters of the world, and this was the north gate, which opened into the great court, where Ahaz had set up his Damascene altar, 2 Kings xvi. 11, and where the idols were set up too. *The image,* Baal, which Manasseh had set up, 2 Kings xxi. 7, and Josiah had destroyed, and succeeding kings had again set up. *Of jealousy;* because it was so notorious an affront to God, who had married Israel to himself, that above all other it provoked him to anger against this people.

4 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel *was* there, according to the vision that I [k]saw in the plain.

k ch. 1. 28. & 3. 22, 23.

The glory of God: see chap. i. 28; iii. 23. *Was there;* whither he carried me, and there it showed me what I saw. *According to the vision that I saw;* like that; which gave further confirmation to the prophet, and encouraged him in his work and call.

5 ¶ Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry.

Then; when he had in vision brought me hither. *Lift up thine eyes;* observe diligently and exactly every thing which thou mayst see northward first. *The gate of the altar;* so called, because Ahaz had removed it from the middle of the court, where by God's command it was placed by Solomon; but now Ahaz setting it near this north gate, it gave name to the gate. Or possibly because of an altar erected there to some idol by Manasseh. *Image of jealousy:* see ver. 3, &c. *In the entry;* in the very midst of the court, in the very passage to the temple, to affront the worship of God.

6 He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? *even* the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, *and* thou shalt see greater abominations.

Seest thou? dost thou observe? *What they do;* the inhabitants, the generality of the Jews. *The great abominations;* the notorious idolatries. *Here;* in this court, in view of my temple, and where all that come, as most did, this way to worship me see it, so shameless is it! *That I should go;* not that they designed this, but eventually it was so, and in all reason could be no otherwise expected. *From my sanctuary;* that I chose, but am not confined to. That I shall leave not by local distance, but by rejecting and casting it off, and laying it desolate.

7 ¶ And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.

The door; the second door, for there were two in the north side. *The court;* ver. 3. Some say it was the court into which the Levites only, not the people, might enter, and round about which were the chambers of the priests. *When I looked;* probably being at the door of the court, he might espy such a hole in the opposite wall that was toward the temple, whereon were built the treasury chamber, and chambers for tithes, and for other necessaries about the temple worship, and for the priests' lodgings, in which these abominations were acted. *A hole in the wall,* or little blind window, through which he might see somewhat, though not much, of what was done within.

8 Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door.

The hole he saw in the wall was not quite through, it was not great enough for him to go through, therefore he is commanded to dig one large enough to come at the door mentioned in this verse. *A door;* some very private door by which the idolatrous priests entered into the chamber of their imagery, to perform idolatrous worship to their images; the door of the treasury.

9 And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

Go in: this was to secure him; he need fear neither the violence which idolaters usually show against those that discover them, nor yet any legal impurity by coming so near these abominable things. *Behold;* look diligently, that thou mayst particularly reprove these, and denounce my just judgments against them. *The wicked abominations;* the most abominable wickednesses; these are loathsome in their nature, and multiplied in number before me. *Do here,* Heb. *are doing here:* before the evil day appeared so near, they did, and under the approach of judgments they are still doing at this day, in this very place, under the walls of my temple.

10 So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about.

So I went in, according to the vision. *Of creeping things;* of such creatures as the Egyptians, or any others with whom the Jews had acquaintance, did worship. *Abominable beasts;* the beasts are here called abominable, because idolaters had abused them to unlawful uses, making idols of them. *The idols of the house of Israel;* the Jews had multiplied to themselves idols of their own, besides those borrowed from their neighbours. Or they are called *the idols of the house of Israel,* because they had adopted them, and because Israel's idolatry was so much more brutish and provoking than that of the other nations, who had not the law of God given to them as to the Jews. *Portrayed upon the wall:* possibly they did thus picture their idols on the wall, vainly thinking this was not a breach of the law, which forbade graven images, and molten images; but every likeness of any thing made for to worship is forbidden, and such pictures are to be destroyed, Numb. xxxiii. 52. Possibly they had the same set of idols, by different givers, and by different painters, drawn on the walls of the chamber or house of idols.

11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up.

There stood, offering incense before the idols. *Seventy men;* either the sanhedrim, or council of seventy, who should have preserved religion pure and untainted, to which their office bound them; or else seventy of the more aged heads of the tribes or families, who should have been examples by their pure and constant affection to true religion; but these are ringleaders in this idolatry. *Ancients,* by age or office, or both. *In the midst of them;* either accompanying them in their idolatry, or rather as chief of the council or sanhedrim; in the chair, the seat of the chief, prefect, or principal next to the high priest. *Shaphan,* mentioned 2 Kings xxii. 9, as most likely; a person that seems forward in reforming under Josiah, and his son as forward now in corrupting the worship of God. *Every man;* all were actors in this idolatry, and either priests to these idols, or very bigots in the service. *A thick cloud;*

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or abundance of a cloud, or rich (as the word among rabbinical senses) cloud; or, since the word whence this comes signifies to pray or supplicate, a cloud of incense offered with the prayers of these deluded idolaters, who were used to put both together. *Incense;* whether simple and uncompounded, or compound, it was always of sweets, and very costly too; indeed idolatry, as adultery, will be lavish.

12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they
[1] chap. 9. 9. say, [1]The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.

Hast thou seen? observed and thoroughly considered. *The ancients:* see ver. 11. *Do in the dark;* whether ashamed to act openly what was most absurd, or whether out of blindness doting in secret on what heathens secretly derided, though for interest they acted it openly; owning that religion which awed the people among them, and deriding it at home. But idolatrous Jews blush in public, and retire into corners to be idolaters, as thou seest in this chamber. *Every man;* every one of those ancients, for still God had his remnant that kept close to God. *In the chambers;* secret closet, or bed-chamber. *They say;* the most shameless would give a reason for their unreasonable practices. *The Lord,* Jehovah, the everlasting and almighty God, *seeth us not:* either they deny his providence, and act what they durst not if they thought the Lord knew and noted it, as if they accounted Jehovah no better than idols, that have eyes but see not; or else they deny God's care of them and their affairs, traduce him, as if he minded them not, and therefore they must choose some or other god for patron who would better help them than he had done. *The Lord hath forsaken the earth:* this seems to explain the meaning of that, *he seeth us not;* and so with atheism more than ordinary they would cast the blame of choosing other gods on God himself.

13 ¶ He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, *and* thou shalt see greater abominations that they do.

Thou shalt see, represented in this vision, *greater abominations;* either because added to all the rest, or because some circumstances in these make them more abominable than what before was represented. Or it may be taken for very great, as when the word is applied to cities, Deut. i. 28; vi. 10; ix. 1; to stones, Josh. x. 11, 27; 1 Kings vii. 10; David's wars, 1 Chron. xxii. 8; kingdoms, Jer. xxviii. 8; and to the marvellous works of God, Job v. 9; ix. 10; Psal. cxxxvi. 4; and generally our version keeps to the positive degree, though here they render it by the comparative, and in the 6th verse of this chapter the very self-same expression is rendered great (not greater) abominations. We need not then perplex our reader with a long discourse, to show wherein these latter sins are greater than the former mentioned; they are all very great. *They do;* now they are doing these things; instead of worshipping the true God on the sabbath, as he required all his people, the leaders of the people are on the sabbath of the Lord offering incense to their detestable idols.

14 Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD's house which *was* toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

He brought me, not by real and corporal change of place, but in vision and by representation. *Of the gate* of the outer court, or court of the women, so called because they were allowed to come into it, as were all the laity of the Jews: but it is more likely the gate of the inner court, the court of the priests, next to the house of God, whither none save priests might come; but in this very great corruption of the state others were admitted into it, which makes this sin the greater. *Towards the north;* he enters at first by the north gate, and so passeth on to what places were next to the temple on that side. *There sat women:* contrary to the law were they come thither, led by their blindest, because the vilest and most impudent, superstition, and waiting (expressed by *sitting*) ready to commit most lewd wickednesses, as part of their obscene and beastly rites. *Weeping:* this is the only part which is specified of their irreligious religion, commemorating with tears an infamously lustful and unclean whoremonger, or votary of Venus, snatched from her by an unhappy wound of a boar, say some; this weeping implieth all the beastly rites of that idol. *Tammuz;* a magician, say some; a handsome young man, but notorious for love of women, say others; an adulterer (say some) slain by his brother, king of Egypt, and mangled in pieces, whose torn members were thrown into the river, but gathered up by the fond adulteresses, and rites of worship fitted to so lewd an idol; whose adulteries, lascivious practices, and immodest gestures these she priests acted over before the idol with men of like lewdness, of whom what they received, as rewards of their prostituting themselves, was offered to Venus. By this means God's temple was turned into a lewd stews.

15 ¶ Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen *this,* O son of man? turn thee yet again, *and* thou shalt see greater abominations than these.

Besides these thou hast seen, thou shalt again see great abominations. Or if the expression be strictly comparative, then these latter wickednesses may be accounted greater, because acted in a more sacred place.

16 And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD,
[m] between the porch and the altar, [n] *were* about five and twenty men, [o] with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped [p] the sun toward the east.

[m] Joel 2. 17. [n] ch. 11. 1. [o] Jer. 2. 27. Acts 28. 26. [p] Deut. 4. 19. 2 Kings 23. 5, 11. Job 31. 26. Jer. 44. 17.

The inner court; the inmost, that which was next to the temple, called here the Lord's house. *At the door of the temple:* before he saw abominations in the gates of the courts, now he is come to the very house itself. *The porch;* that stately, large porch, beautified with the high, curious, and mighty brass pillars, Jachin and Boaz, of which see 1 Kings vi. 3; vii. 15, 21. *The altar;* the brazen altar for burnt-offerings, which was placed in the court before the front of the temple, and is here represented in its proper place, 2 Kings xvi. 14. This is not contradictory to ver. 5, which speaks of the place where Ahaz had wickedly placed the altar, but this, ver. 16, speaks of the same altar, as supposing it to be where it ought, as God commanded it should be, and Solomon placed it, 2 Chron. viii. 12. *About five and twenty;* an indefinite and undetermined number. *Five and twenty men;* either some principal men, or else some priests. If these, the greater sin in them to turn idolaters; if the other, the idolatry committed by them in a place they should not have entered appears presumptuous and greatly wicked. *With their backs toward the temple;* in contempt of God, with an open and designed abrenunciation of God and his worship. *Worshipped the sun:* though God had prohibited this, Deut. xvii. 3, with Deut. iv. 17—19; yet, in imitation of the Chaldees, Persians, Egyptians, Phœnicians, and the Eastern idolaters, these Jews turn their back on God, who created the sun, and worship the creature in contempt of the Creator.

17 ¶ Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen *this,* O son of man? ‖ Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have [q] filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.

‖ Or, *Is there any thing lighter than to commit.*

[q] ch. 9. 9.

Then; after the prophet had seen all, and had time to consider all he saw. *He said unto me;* God appeals to the prophet. Doth the house of Judah think these no sins, or but little sins, or that I account not those provocations to anger? Do they so sottishly undervalue me and my law and ordinances, &c.? These idolaters, as others of the same stamp, are great oppressors; every where their oppressions may be found in great and high degrees. *Violence;* all injustice is here meant towards all sorts of men, whom they first de-

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spise, and next destroy. *Have returned;* from injustice against man, they return to impiety against God. *They put the branch to their nose;* consecrate first these branches in the sun, and then next prize them, as what had touched the idol, and was bettered by it. Or, perhaps, took some branches out of the garland, wherewith they decked the idol, the altar, the victim, or themselves; and as the Orgyasts, i. e. worshippers of Bacchus, did wave their Thyrsus, the stalk or stem wreathed with ivy about it, carrying it in their hands whilst they danced, bowed their bodies, and often kissed the branches, so did these idolatrous Jews.

r ch. 5. 13. & 16. 42. & 24. 13.
a ch. 5. 11. & 7. 4, 9. & 9. 5, 10.
t Prov. 1. 28. Is. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11. & 14. 12. Mic. 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13.

18 r Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine a eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they t cry in mine ears with a loud voice, *yet* will I not hear them.

What I will do is greater than to be expressed; they with a furious heat for their idols provoked me, and I will with a just indignation provoke them, nay, destroy them. *Mine eye shall not spare:* see chap. vii. 4, 8, 9. *Though they cry:* the prophet doth not give it the name of praying, but it is a cry, a loud cry, after the manner of other idolaters, who think to be heard for the noise they make. *I will not hear them;* yet doth not this at all prejudice the truth or the mercy of God to those that pray, nor may it discourage from the duty, but it should awaken us that we pray with heart, and not only cry loud with voice.

CHAP. IX.

The prophet in the vision seeth a mark set upon some, 1—4, *and the destruction of all the rest,* 5—7. *God rejecteth his intercession,* 8—11.

cir. 594. HE cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man *with* his destroying weapon in his hand.

He cried; the man whom he had seen upon the throne, Christ, who is Lord and Sovereign. Or, the glory of God, or the God of glory, or an angel by order from God. *In mine ears;* either a Hebraism, he cried so that I distinctly heard; or rather to intimate that Ezekiel only heard what was spoken; the elders who were now with him hearing nothing of what was spoken. *Cause them to draw near;* Approach, ye visitations, i. e. ye sore, wasting, unparalleled judgments; so the concrete in the superlative degree is sometimes expressed in the abstract, as it is here: or, these judgments are already near at hand. It may point at the chief commanders in the Babylonish army, *them that have charge;* not those that were now officers under Zedekiah, and commissioned by him, but those whom God hath appointed to destroy the city; angels, say some; the Chaldean commanders, think others. *With his destroying weapon;* each of these had a weapon proper for that kind of destruction which he was to effect; and so, some to slay with sword, another with the pestilence, another with famine; each had his proper work herein, and it is called his destruction. *In his hand,* denoting both readiness unto, expedition in, and strength for the work.

2 And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, † which lieth toward the north, and every man † a slaughter weapon in his hand; a and one man among them *was* clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn † by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar.

† Heb. *which is turned.*
† Heb. *a weapon of his breaking in pieces.*
a Lev. 16. 4. ch. 10. 2, 6, 7. Rev. 15. 6.
† Heb. *upon his loins.*

So soon as command was given out, these minsiters of God's just displeasure appear ready to execute. *Six;* that was the precise number, neither more nor fewer. *Men.* In appearance and vision they were men, and the prophet calls them as he saw them; whether angels in the shape of men, or whether really men, needs not much inquiry; they come without delay. *From the way of the higher gate;* either because, being more inward, it is higher than the outward, as in all buildings upon ascents, where you go up by steps from the outward parts towards the inmost building; or because it was built more lofty than the other, enlarged likely by Jotham, 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. *Toward the north;* insinuating whence their destruction should come; from Babylon came that whirlwind, chap. i. 4, which was to overthrow Jerusalem. And this north gate was the weakest, both by their sins there committed, and by its situation, which invited Antiochus and Titus to pitch their tents on that side when they besieged it, and on this side the Chaldeans did first enter. *A slaughter weapon:* see ver. 1. *One man;* not companion, but as one of great authority over them, who are as officers waiting on him on every side. *Linen;* a garment proper to the priesthood, whether ordinary priest or high priest, Exod. xxviii. 42, 43; Lev. vi. 10: in this habit appeared the angel, Dan. x. 5; xii. 6, 7; and a very fit resemblance of Christ, who is the only Saviour of his elect, whose names he knows as if written by him. *They went in;* all the seven, both the six executioners, and the single man clothed in linen, went into the inner court, where they stand waiting till the word be given for execution. *Stood beside the brazen altar;* either showing that they were ready to offer up many sacrifices to the just revenge of God; or to show their value, zeal, and constancy to God's appointment, for they are not where Ahaz's altar was in the middle of the court, but near the brazen altar of God's own direction.

3 And b the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which *had* the writer's inkhorn by his side;

b See ch. 3. 23. & 8. 4. & 10. 4, 18. & 11. 22, 23.

The glory; either a glorious brightness, such as sometimes appeared above the cherubims in the most holy place, or the glorious God of Israel, who is the Lord that speaks, ver. 4, or that glory which the prophet saw, chap. i. 28; iii. 23; viii. 4, which see, and which brought him into the temple. *Gone up;* withdrawn in part, departing from the place he had so long dwelt in. *The cherub,* or cherubims; for it is here singular instead of plural. *Whereupon he was* either went to sit and appear, or else on which he was when he appeared unto Ezekiel, as chap. viii. 4. *The threshold of the house;* of the holy of holies, or of the temple, towards the brazen altar; in token either of his sudden departure from the Jews because of their sins; or that he might come nearer to those seven, to give them orders about wasting the city. *He called* with a plain and loud voice, declaring his purpose to proceed to judge and execute his righteous judgment; but yet first providing for the safety of the good.

4 And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and † set c a mark upon the foreheads of the men d that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

† Heb. *mark a mark.*
c Ex. 12. 7. Rev. 7. 3. & 9. 4. & 13. 16, 17. & 20. 4.
d Ps. 119. 53, 136. Jer. 13. 17. 2 Cor. 12. 21. 2 Pet. 2. 8.

The Lord said, spake from the midst of that glory, ver. 3. *Unto him,* the man clothed in linen, i. e. to Christ. *Go through;* pass through as men use to go who keep an even, steady pace. *The midst of the city;* the chief street of the city. *Set a mark:* it is too curious, and as useless, to inquire what mark this was. It is groundless to confine it to the sign of the cross, whatever some discourse of the antique form of the letter Thau. It is sufficient that, after the manner of man's speaking, the Lord assures us his remnant are safe, as what is under a seal, which none can or dare break open. *Upon the foreheads,* as the faithful servants of God, in allusion perhaps to the custom in the East, that servants wore their master's name in their foreheads, or to let us know that now this deliverance would be not as in Egypt by whole families, but by single and selected persons. *That sigh,* out of inward grief for other men's sins and sorrows. *That cry;* express their grief by vocal lamentations, who dare openly bewail the abominations of this wicked city, and so bear their testimony against it. *For all the abominations;* not as if these mourners knew every

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particular abomination, but they mourned for all the kinds of wickedness which they knew of.

† Heb. *mine ears.*

e ver. 10. ch. 5. 11.

5 ¶ And to the others he said in †mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: [e]let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity:

The others; the six slaughtermen. *He said;* the God of glory, or Christ, who appeared in great glory. *In my hearing;* a note of certainty of the thing. *Go ye after him;* linger not ere you set forward against the wicked, yet still go after, that you destroy none that are to be sealed; so also Rev. vii. 3. *Through the city;* this order must be observed through the whole city, and through the whole execution. *Smite;* strike each with his weapon of perdition, so let every one fall by the sword, or famine, &c. *Let not your eye spare;* do all with severity, act the Chaldeans' part indeed, and without remorse execute my just displeasure by your cruelty.

f 2 Chron. 36. 17. † Heb. *to destruction.* g Rev. 9. 4. h Jer. 25. 29. 1 Pet. 4. 17. i ch. 8. 11, 12, 16.

6 [f]Slay †utterly old *and* young, both maids, and little children, and women: but [g]come not near any man upon whom *is* the mark; and [h]begin at my sanctuary. [i]Then they began at the ancient men which *were* before the house.

Slay utterly; my purpose is to exterminate and make desolate, therefore slay all that are designed to destruction. *Old;* whose venerable age, if innocent, might have awed you, whose wisdom might preserve some and themselves. *Young;* who should be a seed-plot, or nursery, for posterity, cut them off too. Regard no state or sex, neither the loveliness of the virgin, nor the prettiness of the infant, nor the comeliness and gravity of the matron; spare none: yet in your fervours of revenge look you come not near to any sealed forehead; you may see them; though they blush for their own sins, and for the sins of others, yet they look up to me and wait for me in the way of my judgments, they will lift up their heads, and look you in the faces. *And begin,* both the execution and the distinction, *at my sanctuary;* there are the great sinners, and the abominable sins which have brought this on them; and that all Israel may know nothing but repentance can secure them. *The ancient men;* the seventy, or sanhedrim, chap. viii. 10, 11. *Which were before the house;* who were governors in the temple and house of God by office, but idolaters by practice and principles.

7 And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city.

Defile the house; regard not the holiness of the temple: idolaters, whom you are to slay, have defiled it with the blood of idols, sacrifices, do you defile it with the blood of the idolatrous sacrificers; slay them where you find them, for there they sinned against me. *Fill the courts with the slain;* make a great slaughter, let every place be stained with their blood. There were the priests', the Levites', and the women's courts, and there will be found persons of a different character; but unless my mark be upon them, forbear none of them. *Go ye forth;* make haste, do not ye, for I do not, delay, nor will I. *They went forth:* here, as before, they show their ready obedience. *Slew in the city:* this slaughter was visional in the eye of the prophet, and a preface to the saddest butcheries Israel ever bled and groaned under.

k Num. 14. 5. & 16. 4, 22, 45. Josh. 7. 6. l ch. 11. 13.

8 ¶ And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I [k]fell upon my face, and cried, and said, [l]Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?

And it came to pass: this is a most usual transition, and Scripture phrase. *While;* there was some space of time taken up in the execution. *They were slaying;* the six slaughtermen; not bodily and actually, but visionally, and in prophetic representation. *Slaying them;* those about the sanctuary, and in the city. *I was left;* either survived the slaughter, or left alone, now both the sealer and the slayers were gone; or alone sealed of all the priests, the rest being exposed to destruction. *I fell on my face,* in most humble and earnest manner addressing to God, as one that would entreat mercy for a ruined state; *and cried,* importunately prayed; and the prayer follows. *Ah!* an expression of the greatest compounded affection of pity, desire, and zeal for the afflicted; and what follows is a complex of arguments for pity and sparing mercy; from God himself, from his peculiar hand in this, from his people, the remnant of them, and from the sad and mournful state Jerusalem was already in. Must all Israel drink thus of the cup of thine indignation? *The residue of Israel;* so called, because many were already in captivity with Jeconiah, and had been so about six or seven years; or else in respect to the electing love of God, who ever reserved a remnant to himself.

m 2 Kings 21. 16. ch. 8. 17. † Heb. *filled with.* ‖ Or, *wresting of judgment.* n ch. 8. 12. o Ps. 10. 11. Is. 29. 15.

9 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah *is* exceeding great, and [m]the land is †full of blood, and the city full of ‖perverseness: for they say, [n]The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and [o]the LORD seeth not.

Then said he; God gives him a speedy answer. *Of the house of Israel;* of those who either joined themselves to the house of David when the ten tribes fell off, or those that escaped when Shalmaneser carried them captive. *Judah;* the two tribes; though only one is expressed the other is included. *Exceeding great;* grown beyond all measure, that my justice cannot, and my mercy must not, longer forbear. *Full of blood;* very much innocent blood is spilt, or there are many bloodshedders among them. *Full of perverseness;* all judgment is perverted; in judges, to injustice; in priests, to idolatry; in all, to scepticism, or atheism. *They say;* they argue and dispute against my concerning myself in the government of the world and the church. *The Lord hath* cast off the care of his people, and so they spoil him of his dominion, deny his omniscience, and make him as idols for ignorance, just as Psal. x. 11; xciv. 7.

p ch. 5. 11. & 7. 4. & 8. 18. q ch. 11. 21.

10 And as for me also, mine [p]eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, *but* [q]I will recompense their way upon their head.

As for me, my resolution is fixed. *Mine eye,* that eye they thought did not see to govern, shall see to punish. *I will recompense;* they shall find me a Sovereign to vindicate myself, and do justice against their injustice. See chap. v. 11; vii. 4.

† Heb. *returned the word.*

11 And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which *had* the inkhorn by his side, †reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me.

While God gave the prophet the account of the people's sins, and of his own resolutions, Christ, *clothed with linen,* the innocent one, and our Priest, *reported the matter,* as it were came in, or returned from doing that work most delightful to him. *As thou hast commanded me;* the Hebrew text is *according,* or *as;* but the reading is with *all* added, according to *all that which thou, O my Father, hast commanded me;* as John xiv. 31.

CHAP. X.

The vision of the coals of fire, which are ordered to be taken from between the cherubims, and scattered over the city. 1—7. *The vision of the cherubims and the glory of God removing from the temple,* 8—22.

a ch. 1. 22, 26.

THEN I looked, and, behold, in the [a]firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

Then, or *And,* which connecting this with the ninth chapter, will connote the time wherein he thus saw. *I looked,* in spirit or vision; and this vision is the same of chap. i., repeated, or very little differing from it, and with some par-

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ticular design, which that of chap. i. did not express, viz. a design of leaving the temple and city desolate. *In the firmament:* see chap. i. 22, 26. *The cherubims;* called living creatures chap. i. 5, which see. *A sapphire stone:* see chap. i. 26, 27, where these things are spoken to.

b ch. 9. 2, 3.

2 [b] And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, *even* under the cherub, and fill † thine hand with [c] coals of fire from between the cherubims, and [d] scatter *them* over the city. And he went in in my sight.

† Heb. *the hollow of thine hand.*
c ch. 1. 13.
d See Rev. 8. 5.

He spake that sat on the throne, i. e. God, who rules the world and church. *Unto the man;* to Christ, as before, chap. ix. 2. *Go in:* it is said, chap. i. 18, that the rings of the wheels were dreadful, but here is a Divine command which encourageth, and insureth, and lessens the dread and terror. *Between the wheels;* whether between the four, or between the two foremost, or hindermost, or either between the wheels that made up one wheel, is not material to inquire. *Fill thine hand:* this expresseth the fulness of vengeance which would overtake them, and the certainty and speediness of judgments; for such a quantity of coals in the hand ready to be scattered abroad will very soon set all in a flame. *From between the cherubims;* either to intimate to us that this fire was the vengeance of God upon them; for he sits between the cherubims, and is consuming fire to sin; or to intimate that the vengeance was for sins against the grace of God, who sat between the cherubims, and thence gave out his grace toward Israel, Exod. xxv. 20—22; Heb. ix. 5. But abused grace will kindle into fire. *Scatter them over the city,* that it may take fire in all parts, and none may escape; so cast the fire, that the coals may fall on every part. *He went in in my sight;* which assured the prophet of the certainty, and intimated too the speed of the effect, which will be within five years' space.

3 Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

Stood, as servants, and ready, waiting for orders. *On the right side;* the north side, i. e. say some, the side toward Babylon, from whence the desolation, that fire, came which consumed the city. *The man;* Christ, the Lord of angels, who now attend his coming and commands. *The cloud;* as the sign of God's presence, so an emblem of the troubles and darkness of afflictions coming upon Jerusalem. *The inner court;* the court of the priests, who were, as it appears, chief in the apostacy and idolatry, and shall now be chief in the misery and ruin which overwhelmed them about five years after.

e See ver. 18. ch. 1. 28. & 9. 3.
† Heb. *was lifted up.*
f 1 Kings 8. 10, 11. ch. 43. 5.

4 [e] Then the glory of the LORD † went up from the cherub, *and stood* over the threshold of the house; and [f] the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD's glory.

The glory of the Lord; either the visible token of the presence of the God of glory; as chap. i. 28; iii. 23; viii. 4; or Christ, who is the glory of the temple, and of his people, nay, is the brightness of his Father's glory. *Went up,* in displeasure, and in token of his departure from the temple. *Stood over the threshold of the house;* showing both his unwillingness to leave, and giving them time to bethink themselves, and return by repentance; and he stands where he might be seen both by priests and people, that both might be moved to repentance. *The house;* the temple, the most venerable and privileged place. *Was filled;* there had been a fulness of sin, there is now a fulness of sufferings. *With the cloud;* a very great darkness followed upon Christ's departure from the house. *The court was full of the brightness;* not to reside there, but when Christ did turn his back upon the temple, and was coming through the court, a light of majesty shines before him, Psal. xviii. 12, 13.

g ch. 1. 24.

5 And the [g] sound of the cherubims' wings was heard *even* to the outer court, as [h] the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh.

h Ps. 29. 3, &c.

There was a great and dreadful noise to awaken, or stop the mouths of sinners; whether this was an applause of Christ's righteous procedure, or any sound of alarm, or both, let your own judgment determine. See chap. i. 24. *Was heard;* such as might well be heard; and as the vision represented such a great sound to the prophet, he reports it to the Jews; not that the elders now with Ezekiel did hear this, or that such an audible sound was heard in Jerusalem, but it is all represented to the prophet, and by him to them. *The outer court;* this was the court of the women. *As the voice of the Almighty;* as a mighty and terrible thunder, which is, Psal. xxix. 3—5, the voice of the Lord. *When he speaketh;* as when he spake on Mount Sinai, which made them all fear, and the sight so terrible, that Moses himself trembled, Heb. xii.

6 And it came to pass, *that* when he had commanded the man clothed with linen, saying, Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubims; then he went in, and stood beside the wheels.

See ver. 2, which is the same in effect with this. What is said to be between the wheels is said also to be between the cherubims; which represent angels, the ministers of God's providence; and so what now is observed to be among the wheels, in the effects or order of God's providence, is among or between the angels, the ministerial causes thereof. *Then he went in,* readily obeyed, *and stood beside the wheels;* either as one that deferred execution, to try whether the city would repent, or as one that was to give some further order to angels, that were to be the ministers of his just displeasure; and whereas, ver. 3, the cherubims stood as servants waiting, here Christ stands as a Lord commanding; they obey him, he obeys his Father.

7 And *one* cherub † stretched forth his hand from between the cherubims unto the fire that *was* between the cherubims, and took *thereof,* and put *it* into the hands of *him that was* clothed with linen: who took *it,* and went out.

† Heb. *sent forth.*

One cherub; one of the four. *Stretched forth his hand;* which was under his wing, as chap. i. 8, which see. *From between the cherubims;* this that reached the fire to Christ stood among the cherubims, and putting forth his hand, or exerting his strength and power, serveth Christ, our Lord and his. *Unto the fire:* see ver. 2, and chap. i. 13. *Took thereof;* as a servant that reacheth what his master would have and use. *The hands;* both hands, for it is in the plural number. *Who took it;* received it of the angel, as one who might employ it when he would. *Went out,* from amidst the angels, and out of the temple; or from the threshold, where all this vision appeared as on its stage; and he goes into the city to prepare all, that nothing be done too soon, or too late.

i ch. 1. 8. ver. 21.

8 ¶ [i] And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings.

There appeared to the prophet. *The cherubims;* the ministering spirits. *The form of a man's hand;* shaped to speedy, accurate working; it is therefore a man's hand. One hand was put forth to reach the fire, and that one is mentioned, though the angels had hands under their wings. *Under their wings;* the manner of angels' working is hereby insinuated, for it is secret and speedy; secret, as hidden under wings; and speedy, as effected by the swiftest motion; the very speed hideth it.

k ch. 1. 15.

9 [k] And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubims, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub: and the appearance of the wheels *was* as the colour of a [l] beryl stone.

l ch. 1. 16.

Looked; attentively viewed. *The four wheels;* mentioned chap. i. 15, 16, and there explained. *By the che-*

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rubims; one wheel by one cherub, so four cherubims and four wheels. *The appearance of the wheels;* the revolutions and effects among worldly and sublunary affairs; as wheels unstable, yet governed by a sure wisdom. *As the colour of a beryl stone;* of sea-green, to note the instability in a more pregnant simile.

10 And *as for* their appearances, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel.

Though there might be various aspects and faces of things, yet in this great variety there was great harmony; all of one likeness; see chap. i. 16; and move to one great end. *They four;* wheels.

m ch. 1. 17. 11 [m]When they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked they followed it; they turned not as they went.

When they went; whensoever they did go, what occasion soever they had to go. *They went;* the wheels, moved by the cherubims, or that spirit of life which moved the living creatures. These wheels were so framed, that they could move on all four sides without the difficulty and delay of turning. See chap. i. 17. *The head* of the living creatures; the Spirit, as chap. i. 12, 20: an admirable wisdom did guide and manage all. *They followed it;* the wheels do certainly and orderly follow. *They turned not;* divert not from the designed course and work till finished.

† Heb. *flesh.* n ch. 1. 18. 12 And their whole †body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and [n]the wheels, *were* full of eyes round about, *even* the wheels that they four had.

Now he describes both cherubims and wheels as full of wisdom, and as governed by an excellent wisdom. *Their whole body:* angels have not bodies of flesh, but *body* here is figurative, as also *back*, and *wings*, and *hands*. The two latter are expressly ascribed to the cherubims, ver. 8; the two former not mentioned before, (as I think,) but all full of eyes, i. e. wisdom, foresight, watchfulness, and diligence. *That they four had;* the four cherubims had to move, govern, and direct.

§ Or, *they were called in my hearing, wheel.* or, *galgal.* 13 As for the wheels, ‖it was cried unto them in my hearing, O wheel.

As to their frame and motion, however it was, still there was one who guided as by vocal direction. *Unto them;* to each of them, as appears by that, *O wheel*, and the prophet is ear-witness of it.

o ch. 1. 6, 10. 14 [o]And every one had four faces: the first face *was* the face of a cherub, and the second face *was* the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

Every one, of the living creatures, chap. i. 6, the cherubims in this chapter. *The first face*, which each had. *The face of a cherub:* in Babylon, at the river Chebar, he saw somewhat a different face; in the temple he seeth a cherub, one of the faces, which leads us to look on angels employed in those revolutions. *The second face*, the second which each cherubim had, was a man's face, &c.: see chap. i. 6, 10.

15 And the cherubims were lifted up. This *is* [p]the living creature that I saw by the river of Chebar. p ch. 1. 5.

Were lifted up; or lifted up themselves, ready to attend on the Lord of glory, who was now departing from his polluted and impenitent people. *The living creature:* see chap. i. 13—15, 19—22.

q ch. 1. 19. 16 [q]And when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them.

r ch. 1. 12, 20, 21. 17 [r]When they stood, *these* stood; and when they were lifted up, *these* lifted up themselves *also:* for the spirit ‖of the living creature *was* in them. ‖ Or, *of life.*

These two verses are explained, chap. i. 20, which see. A perfect harmony between second causes in their dependence on and subjection to the one infinite, wise, good, holy, and just God.

s ver. 4. t Hos. 9. 12. 18 Then [s]the glory of the LORD [t]departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims.

The Jews dreamed that God could not depart from his temple; indeed, whilst it was his, and used as his, he did not, nor would he depart, but he will abandon it when profaned, and thereby made not his. *The house;* the temple; he had withdrawn out of the sanctuary, and stood awhile at the door. *Over the cherubims;* on the right side of the house, where the cherubims were in the inner court, ver. 3.

u ch. 11. 22. 19 And [u]the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also *were* beside them, and *every one* stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD's house; and the glory of the God of Israel *was* over them above.

The glory of the Lord, ver. 18, is said to have stood above the cherubims, and here the cherubims mount, get farther from the earth, and by nearer access declare their readiness to attend the Lord of glory. *In my sight;* that he might assure the Jews of the danger of their losing God's presence. *Every one stood;* the glory, the cherubims, the wheels all stood, respiting execution, and giving opportunity of preventing the approaching misery. *The door of the east gate;* the last court, the court of the people, or laity of Israel.

x ch. 1. 22. ver. 15. y ch. 1. 1. 20 [x]This *is* the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel [y]by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they *were* the cherubims.

The living creature; though four in number, but one in form, mind, and work. *The God of Israel;* appearing as he did, chap. i. 26—28, in form of a man, it leads us to conclude it meant of Christ. *I knew;* either by special assurance as a prophet, or by comparing them with those which he had often, as priest about the temple, seen there.

z ch. 1. 6. ver. 14. a ch. 1. 8. ver. 8. 21 [z]Every one had four faces apiece, and every one four wings; [a]and the likeness of the hands of a man *was* under their wings.

b ch. 1. 10. 22 And [b]the likeness of their faces *was* the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves: [c]they went every one straight forward. c ch. 1. 12.

See ver. 14, and chap. i. 10. These two verses are a full repeated attestation of the prophet's that God had appeared to him, foreshowed fiery judgments coming, and it is so repeated to awaken a stupid and senseless people. They have been already explained.

CHAP. XI.

Ezekiel is showed the presumption of the princes of Judah, 1—3. He declareth their sin, and the manner of their punishment, 4—12. He is terrified at the sudden death of Pelatiah, 13. God showeth him his purpose of restoring the captives with favour, and of punishing the idolaters, 14—21. The glory of God leaveth the city, 22, 23. Ezekiel, carried back by the Spirit, prophesieth to them of the captivity, 24, 25.

a ch. 3. 12, 14. & 8. 3. ver. 24. b ch. 10. 19. MOREOVER [a]the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto [b]the east gate of the LORD's house, which looketh east-

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e See ch. 8. 16.

ward: and behold [e]at the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

The spirit; the Spirit of God, as chap. ii. 2. *Lifted me up;* as at first, so still it supports him, and removes him from place to place. *The east gate:* either of the east gates, whether that which leads into the first court, or into the second court, or into the house of the Lord, may be here understood, though probably this last. For this number you find, chap. viii. 16. If you will suppose the prophet was brought to the east gate, where the glory of the Lord, now departing, was gone up from the temple, it is much the same. *Which looketh eastward:* a pleonasm, or redundance of expression. *Five and twenty men:* some inquire whether these were the same with those twenty-five chap. viii. 16. To me it is most likely they were, for in that same place we find them, and likely about the same work, worshipping eastward. Nor are the two arguments urged by some conclusive against it, nay, one of the two is plain for it, viz. that quoted from chap. viii. 16. *Among whom;* as forward ringleaders and chief among them. *Jaazaniah:* this man by his father's name added appears to be another, not he that is mentioned chap. viii. 11. *Pelatiah,* named here for no good quality, but for that dreadful sudden death whereby he became a warning to others. *Princes of the people;* either as public officers, or as heads of their families.

2 Then said he unto me, Son of man, these *are* the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city:

So soon as the prophet had seen and observed how many and who they were, the Lord, sitting on the cherub, spoke unto him, chap. x. 4. *The men;* not the only men, but indeed the most notorious. *Devise;* frame and contrive with craft and false reasonings. *Mischief;* vanity; so the thing was, and mischief the fruit of it. They persuade the people that the city shall not be burnt, but that they may safely build, and long dwell in their houses; this vain hope exhausts that money with which they might have provided for themselves, and this proves a mischief. *Give wicked counsel:* this may be an explication of that he last spake. Or possibly it may note their activity and diligence, going about the city and counselling their acquaintance to put off the evil day. Or perhaps they teach a compliance and coalition with the Chaldean superstitions to save themselves; it is not impossible they might give counsel to unhappy Zedekiah. The Chaldee paraphrast here useth a word whose first notation is to reign or be a king, the second sense to give counsel: whose counsellors soever they were, their counsel tended to shame and loss.

‖ Or, It is *not for us to build houses near.* d ch. 12. 22, 27. 2 Pet. 3. 4. e See Jer. 1. 13. ch. 24. 3, &c.

3 Which say, ‖ *It is* not [d]near; let us build houses: [e]this *city is* the caldron, and we *be* the flesh.

What counsel was by these men given appears by their words. *It is not near;* either the threatened danger and ruin by the Chaldeans; or else, build, but not in the suburbs, not near, but in the city, that your houses may not shelter the enemy. *This city is the caldron:* this is an impious scoff, yet mixed with some fear, of the prophets, Jer. i. 13; Ezek. xxiv. 6. They deride the prophets, yet secretly dread the thing. Jerusalem is the pot, we the flesh that are to be boiled therein; but this will take up some time however, we were better be so destroyed than to fall by the hands of the Chaldeans, who perhaps may roast what is not boiled here.

4 ¶ Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man.

For this their atheistical temper and words, tell them beforehand what they shall suffer. The charge and command is doubled, both to engage the prophet, and to intimate a doubled misery coming upon them, a misery they shall not have courage to laugh under, though they now dare contemptuously laugh at.

f ch. 2. 2. & 3. 24.

5 And [f]the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the Lord; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, *every one of* them.

The Spirit of prophecy again moved him, which is here called the Spirit of the Lord, or, the Spirit the Lord, as the Hebrew will bear. *Fell upon me;* descended, by its own act powerfully, sweetly, and prevailingly entered the man. *Said unto me;* inclined me, that I could not but speak. *Thus saith the Lord;* as thou goest by my appointment, so be sure to use my name and authority. *Thus have ye said;* profanely, with scoffs, as hath been reported, ver. 3. *I know the things that come into your mind;* ye may be assured all that ariseth up in your mind is known to me. I see each one of the imaginations of your mind so soon as ever they peep up in your heart. Your thoughts I know afar off, Psal. cxxxix. 2.

6 [g]Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain.

g ch. 7. 23. & 22. 3, 4.

Many murders, and great ones, (for the Hebrew includeth both,) have you committed, either with frauds or violence, and sometimes with colour and pretence of law. *Your slain;* so called because they were such as God had not commanded to be cut off, but the Jews did it without warrant from God. *Filled the streets;* either left them murdered in the streets; or rather, by an hyperbole, the streets are full, every where some or other in every street you have condemned and killed. It is an expression the Scripture much useth to set forth the bloody effects of the Jewish rage, and of others.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; [h]Your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they *are* the flesh, and this *city is* the caldron: [i]but I will bring you forth out of the midst of it.

h ch. 24. 3, 6, 10, 11. Mic. 3. 3. i ver. 9.

Therefore; your murders are the cause of my severity, and such sins first or last are surely punished. *Your slain:* see ver. 6. Or, *your slain,* because when they might and would have saved their life by a seasonable submission, you persuaded them to an obstinate opposition against the Chaldeans to their destruction. *Whom ye have laid,* or placed (as the word bears); it is not unlike that they who persuaded all to stay did provide, or at least help, as many as did stay, to habitations, and placed them in houses or lodgings. *The flesh;* the pieces which are to be cast into the caldron, and here be punished. *But I,* that is, the mighty, eternal, and just God, *will bring you forth,* not in mercy, but in wrath, by the conquering hand of Babylon; I will draw you out to greater torment.

8 Ye have feared the sword; and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord God.

Sinfully, and forgetting God, you would have escaped the sword of the Babylonians, and attempted it by an idolatrous compliance: for this very cause will I send that sword upon you, and it shall slay your wives, children, and fellow citizens.

9 And I will bring you out of the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and [k]will execute judgments among you.

k ch. 5. 8.

Though the Chaldeans are the means or instruments by which it is done, yet I will so appear against you that it shall be confessed that I did it rather than the Chaldeans. *And deliver you;* defeating all your projects for escape; so was Zedekiah when he secretly fled, and his company with him, delivered unto enemies and strangers. *Into the hands;* it denoteth a full power over them. *Strangers;* Babylonians and others who assisted in this war. *Will execute judgments among you;* strangers will use you hardly; but the most severe part of the judgment will be from a provoked God, who would have pardoned, but impenitence refused the pardon.

10 [l]Ye shall fall by the sword; I will judge you in [m]the border of Israel; [n]and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord.

l 2 Kings 25. 19, 20, 21. Jer. 39. 6. & 52. 10. m 1 Kings 8. 65. 2 Kings 14. 25. n Ps. 9. 16. ch. 6. 7. & 13. 9, 14, 21, 23.

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The enemies' sword shall slay you; my just judgments shall pursue you whithersoever you flee, and overtake some of you; *and ye shall know*, Zedekiah and others who were judged at Riblah, 2 Kings xxv. 20, *that I am the Lord.*

o See ver. 3.

11 °This *city* shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof; *but* I will judge you in the border of Israel:

This city, Jerusalem, though it suffered unparalleled hardships, *shall not be your caldron;* shall not be the place of your sufferings; greater are reserved for you, you shall be tortured in a strange land. *I will judge you;* do more against you, as at Riblah, 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7, where the captive king had his children and others with them first murdered before his eyes, and then his own eyes put out; and Riblah is called here *the border of Israel*, for that Syria was adjoining to Israel on the north, and Riblah or Antioch was a pleasant city towards the frontiers of Syria, upon the river Orontes, which arising in Antilibanus runs through part of Syria, and for the delicacy of the seats it had many cities built on it. And here Nebuchadnezzar in his royal state, and amidst the pleasures of the place, expects the issue of the siege.

p ver. 10. ‖ Or, *which have not walked.* q Lev. 18. 3, 24, &c. Deut. 12. 30, 31. ch. 8. 10, 14, 16.

12 And ᵖye shall know that I *am* the LORD: ‖ for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but ᵠhave done after the manners of the heathen that *are* round about you.

Ye shall know; though you would not believe my threats, nor fear them, you shall feel them, and then you shall know: thus the wicked learn. *I am the Lord*, whom you should have obeyed, feared, and returned to, and who now convinceth you of his and his prophet's truth in all that was foretold you. *Walked;* a Scripture phrase expressive of the course of man's life. *My statutes;* the rules for religious observances. *My judgments* refer to the political and civil state, where equity and justice should have been ministered. *After the manners of the heathen;* in matters of religion you have turned downright idolaters, and with the greatest contempt of your God, the only true God, you have changed him for gods of the heathen round about, and taken in their modes and abominations. And as to civil matters, you have been as unjust, oppressive, and perfidious as these nations that know not my law.

r ver. 1. Acts 5. 5. s ch. 9. 8.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, when I prophesied, that ʳPelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then ˢfell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?

Either this refers to some particular prediction of the death of this man; as Jeremiah did of Hananiah's death, Jer. xxviii. 17; though I do not remember that Ezekiel had spoken of it before, and therefore I take the words for a usual transition. If you suppose the first guess at the meaning of, *it came to pass*, then this will be best interpreted by *according to*, or *even as;* if you adhere to the latter, then this *when* is *whilst*, or *as*, *I was prophesying. Died;* and so was a pledge or presage of the following death of the other twenty-four. *Then;* immediately, in the most humble manner, as that people were used to do, Josh. vii. 10; 2 Chron. xx. 18. He fell down upon his face, in order to pray. *Cried;* with intense and earnest mind he prayed, as well as with a loud voice: see chap. ix. 8. Much like phrase is that in Esth. iv. 1. *Ah Lord God!* an expression of his tender compassions for them. *Wilt thou make, &c.?* a very usual way of interceding, and so common in Scripture, that it is a wonder any should find fault with it who know the Scripture. *Make a full end*, by slaying all as this man is cut off. This man's name implieth one that escaped, or was delivered by God's good hand; and perhaps the prophet alludes to it; however, he is very solicitous, as others were, for the remnant, which was ever least, 2 Kings xix. 30, 31; Isa. x. 21, 22; Jer. xxiii. 3; xxxi. 7; and in this manner does Ezekiel, chap. ix. 8, intercede for the Jews.

14 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

It was a seasonable word to stop the mouths of the insulting Jerusalemites, and to encourage the captives at Babylon.

15 Son of man, thy brethren, *even* thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly, *are* they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from the LORD: unto us is this land given in possession.

Son of man: see chap. ii. 1. *Thy brethren;* thy nearest kindred, which it seems were left in Jerusalem, and were grown as bad as the rest, though theirs were of a priestly lineage. Their degeneracy and unjust censure is more noted in the repetition of the word brethren. *Of thy kindred;* of the same parentage, to whom thou hadst right of redemption, if either their person or estate was to be sold; men who should have been as tender in affection as they were near in blood. *All the house of Israel;* all that are now in captivity, be they more or less, of whatsoever condition and rank, these are the men of whom the Jerusalemites speak. *Have said;* that is, censure and condemn as greatest sinners, and unworthy longer to dwell in the holy land, and tacitly infer that they were better, and should be safer now they were rid of them. *Get you far from the Lord;* ye, or they, are gone far from the Lord; you are apostates, or irreligious, a company of backsliders: much as the heathens accused the Christians of atheism. *Unto us;* who keep to the temple and holy city, and have not yielded to the Babylonish tyranny, who stand for our ancient privileges, are not, as you, betrayers of our country: thus you may suppose they boast. *This land;* promised, holy, blest land, Canaan, where our fathers dwelt. This land is ours. *Given in possession;* we shall never be put out of possession, but still it shall be our inheritance.

16 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, ᵗyet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.

t Ps. 90. 1. & 91. 9. Is. 8. 14.

Therefore; in apology and vindication of them, backed with excellent promises in the following verses. *Say;* say to them, and of them in Babylon. *Although I have cast them far off:* the obstinate Jews at Jerusalem will call them apostates and renegades; but let such false accusers know that they were sent thither, and that I the Lord sent them thither, and will own them there too. *Far off;* not from myself, but from you, your polluted land, and dreadful approaching judgments. *Among the heathen;* the Chaldeans, or such as the Chaldeans placed them among. *Scattered them;* dispersed and separated them from one another in many countries which were under the king of Babylon. Yet they are dear to me, and my purposes are for them more gracious than yours are for them, or than mine are for you. *As a little sanctuary;* for a little while, i. e. during the seventy years' captivity; or for a few of them, the remnant was ever little: or, as it refers to the sanctuary, a little one in opposition to that great, rich, splendid, and admired temple at Jerusalem, which when they need most, shall help least; but I, saith God, will be really to my captives what the proud self-deceiving Jews promise their temple shall be to them, both for glory, defence, and for worship, which shall with heart and love be given by these I have sent away; and wherever they are, their prayers, synagogue worship, and obedience shall be to me as well-pleasing as they shall desire. They at a distance weep on Chebar banks; you, O rebellious! pollute the temple by your idolatries. I will comfort the mourners; I will punish you polluters of my temple and worship.

17 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; ᵘI will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.

u Jer. 24. 5. ch. 28. 25. & 34. 13. & 36. 24.

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Say; add to the former apology this promise. *The Lord God;* the faithful and eternal God, the supreme and sovereign Lord. *I will gather;* by my advice and hand they were scattered, and by my hand they shall be gathered. *Assemble you;* and to confirm them, it is added in different words, and the promise is repeated, and thus it was punctually performed, Ezra i. 1—4, with chap. viii. 15. *I will give you the land of Israel;* though your brethren do say you are not to dwell at Jerusalem, nor inherit the land, yet my purpose is otherwise, and I do promise you, that you who followed my counsel, and now are in Babylon, you, or your seed, shall return and inherit Canaan. All this was so worded, that some have thought it no groundless inquiry whether any of those that went with Zedekiah into captivity, or only such as went with Jeconiah, did return out of captivity; and though it is most probable some did, yet of the returners the far greater part were of those that with Jeconiah were gone into captivity.

18 And they shall come thither, and [x] they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence.

[x] ch. 37. 23.

They; the gathered, who assembled upon Cyrus's proclamation first, and then again upon Darius's proclamation; of which Ezra i. and viii.: they met together some where in the land of their captivity, and had a long journey to Jerusalem. *Shall come thither;* they shall overcome all difficulties, and escape dangers, and despatch the long journey, and come safely to their own land. *They shall take away;* abolish superstition and idolatry from the temple, Jerusalem, and from the priests. *The detestable things:* see chap. xi. 18. *Thereof;* of the land and city; and who reads Ezra, Nehemiah, and the prophets Zechariah and Haggai, will see this reformation carried on with success.

19 And [y] I will give them one heart, and I will put [z] a new spirit within you; and I will take [a] the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:

[y] Jer. 32. 39. ch. 36. 26, 27. See Zeph. 3. 9. [z] Ps. 51. 10. Jer. 31. 33. & 32. 39. ch. 18. 31. [a] Zech. 7. 12.

And: this may be understood causally, and so gives an account how the reformation, mentioned ver. 18, should be effected. *I;* the Lord himself, and he assumeth it to himself thrice in this verse. *Will give:* of free grace it is that this renewed heart is in any one; length, soreness, and multiplicity of troubles will not, cannot work it, unless God frame and renew it. *Will give them one heart:* they were scattered abroad through the Babylonish kingdoms, were under various circumstances which might divide them, and keep them from each other, and from centring in a return; but I will stir up their heart, and with one heart they shall gather together, when the return shall be proclaimed. Cyrus shall first give them leave, and I will next give them a heart to return; and on their way shall there be great unity; and when come to Jerusalem, they shall own me, and my laws, &c.; they shall with one consent build Jerusalem, the temple, and restore true religion; as Jer. xxxii. 39; Ezek. xxxvi. 26. *One heart;* that is, judgment and understanding, mind and will, affections and conscience; all fixed only on God, and their obedience to him, as ver. 20. This one heart is called a new spirit. *A new spirit;* an excellent, regenerate, holy, and sincere soul; they were of a base, corrupt, and hypocritical spirit, dividing between God and idols; but when God brings them back, they shall be of another frame, quite changed, and made new. *The stony heart;* that hard, inflexible, undutiful, incorrigible disposition which was in their fathers, who refused to be amended; I will take that away. *Out of their flesh:* flesh in Scripture sometimes speaks an unrenewed, carnal, sinful state, as Rom. vii. 18, sometimes for the body, as Psal. xxxviii. 3, sometimes for the whole man; so Luke iii. 6; Rom. iii. 20; and thus in this place speaks the persons and whole man. *An heart of flesh;* not like the old, hard and stony, but counsellable, tractable, that will hear, consider, obey, do commanded good, and forbear forbidden evils, submit to my law, and reform on admonitions. All which in part, and so far as concerned those times, was fulfilled in the Jews that did return from Babylon, and is more fully made good to us in these gospel days.

20 [b] That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: [c] and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

[b] Ps. 105. 45 [c] Jer. 24. 7. ch. 14. 11. & 36. 28. & 37. 27.

This is the end grace aimeth at, converting us to God, that we may walk with God. *Walk:* see ver. 12. *My statutes;* the rule of religious worship. *Mine ordinances;* standards in civil affairs and matters of right and wrong with men. *They shall be my people;* they shall give themselves up to me for to be my people, to love me, trust me, and to worship and obey me, and I will take them to be mine; I will approve, encourage, bless, guide, and protect them, that it shall be seen they are my peculiar people. This contains all duty and privilege, as including both, and is again inculcated in the other part of the promise. *I will be their God,* to pardon sin, give grace, supply wants, guide their ways, accept their duties, defend their persons, and lead them to glory. See Ezek. xxxvi. 25—28; Jer. xxxi. 33, where Jeremiah, contemporary to Ezekiel, proposeth the same promise to this people.

21 But *as for them* whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, [d] I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD.

[d] ch. 9. 10. & 22. 31.

For all those promises, and in the best times, some there will be who will refuse to own God and obey him, whose state shall as much differ as their practices did from the people of God. *As for them,* whoever they be. *Heart,* soul and affections, whose choice and love, *walketh after;* either secretly adhereth to or provideth for the service of idols, called here detestable things, as ver. 18, chap. v. 11; and to express the obstinacy of this idolatry, it is called a *heart walking after a heart:* idolatry is a bewitching sin, and steals away the heart, and the promoters of idolatry propose the plausiblest arguments, as if idols had hearts and affections toward their worshippers to do them good; the expression in the Hebrew is somewhat unusual and harsh to our ear, but this I take to be the meaning. *Their abominations;* their idols, and idol worship, and dependences. *Recompense;* pay them in their own coin: they forsake me, I will forsake them; they profane my name and temple, I will give them up as common to be profaned by the Chaldeans. Their way tends to this, and shall end in this, and nothing more just. *Upon their heads,* i. e. on each man, and in such manner as shall destroy the contumacious. Or, on those that are as heads of the people and ringleaders in obstinacy of sinning, such as the twenty-five, ver. 1, and who shall be examples of my speedy and irresistible vengeance, as Pelatiah was.

22 ¶ Then did the cherubims [e] lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel *was* over them above.

[e] ch. 1. 19. & 10. 19.

The whole 22nd verse is in almost the same words you have in chap. x. 19, which see.

23 And [f] the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood [g] upon the mountain [h] which *is* on the east side of the city.

[f] ch. 8. 4. & 9. 3. & 10. 4, 18. & 43. 4. [g] See Zech. 14. 4. [h] ch. 43. 2.

See chap. iii. 23; viii. 4; ix. 3; x. 18, 19. The glory of the Lord removes now out of the city, over which it had stood some space of time waiting for their repentance; but no fruits of this, and God now departed from them. *Upon the mountain;* above it. It was Mount Olivet, as the description of it in this place and elsewhere doth clearly show.

24 ¶ Afterwards [i] the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.

[i] ch. 8. 3.

After all this, the same Spirit of God which carried him to Jerusalem, and to the temple, now brings him back in like manner to his captive brethren in Chaldea; not cor-

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porally, but in an ecstasy or rapture of his spirit, by the power of the Spirit of God. It was a vision from heaven, all that was represented to the prophet was as it were let down from heaven, and he having fully viewed it, it is taken up again to heaven.

25 Then I spake unto them of the captivity all the things that the LORD had shewed me.

When the ecstasy was past, *I spake unto them;* either the elders who came to him, chap. viii. 1, or to the body of the people, who were in those parts where Ezekiel was; for many were scattered into other parts of Chaldea. *All the things that the Lord had showed me:* here is his faithfulness, both to God and the people, who were concerned to know, for God had showed them to the prophet that he might show them to the people, and, that this might surely be done, God had commanded him to speak to them plainly and fully.

CHAP. XII.

Under the type of Ezekiel's removing of his household stuff is showed the captivity of Zedekiah and his people, 1—16. *Under another type of his eating and drinking with trembling and anxiety is signified the consternation of the people and desolation of the land,* 17—20. *The prophet reproveth the presumptuous proverb of the Jews,* 21—25. *He repeateth the reproof,* 26—28.

694. THE word of the LORD also came unto me, saying,

A Divine prediction of what was both sure and near to come to pass. *Came unto me,* in the sixth and seventh years of Jeconiah's captivity, and of Zedekiah's reign; in the latter end of the three hundred and eighty-seven of Ezekiel's lying on his side, three years before the fatal siege began.

2 Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of [a] a rebellious house, which [b] have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: [c] for they *are* a rebellious house.

a ch. 2. 3, 6, 7, 8, & 3. 26, 27.
b Is. 6. 9. & 42. 20. Jer. 5. 21. Matt. 13. 13, 14.
c ch. 2. 6.

Thou dwellest; the prophet knowing the captivity would be long, had settled his habitation, and probably found some favour with the enemy, that he might be accommodated for his abode. The Jews who gave up to the Chaldeans found that kindness mentioned Jer. xxix. 4—7, with xxiv. 5, 6, and so were indifferently well placed together, and the prophet dwells among them, in the land of Chaldea. *A rebellious house;* in their captivity too many of them retained their stubborn murmuring and rebellious humour, and blamed, quarrelled, and condemned them who gave them counsel to yield, and themselves for yielding, and it is likely stirred up them at Jerusalem to hold out, and save themselves, and rescue their brethren. These will ridicule thy words, yet speak them; for they are mine, and shall be accomplished. *Eyes to see;* they have wit enough, they are of a capacity well enough fitted, if they would, to understand and consider what thou speakest; expressed by a double phrase, which signifies one and the same thing; eyes and ears. *See not;* they contemptuously refuse to see and hear, they will not consider, lay to heart, repent, and reform. *They are a rebellious house;* they have conspired together, and all they will resolve or design is to do whatever is good in their own eyes, and whatever their wild imaginations, raised by false prophets, suggest.

3 Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee ‖stuff for removing, and remove by day in their sight; and thou shalt remove from thy place to another place in their sight: it may be they will consider, though they *be* a rebellious house.

‖ Or, instruments.

Therefore; and. *Prepare thee;* make ready in the sight of some of those which live about thee, that they may tell others. *Stuff for removing;* vessels or instruments, wherein thou mayst put what is portable, and you, with leave from the conqueror, may carry for your conveniencies; pack up what thou canst that may be of use in thy captivity. *Remove;* go thy way, leave that place wherein thou now art, and go to another, with thy pack upon thy back, not on horses or asses. *By day;* at noon-tide, when the most may see what thou doest, and be instructed. *It may be;* it is not impossible that some may inquire what is the import and meaning of all this uncouth and obscure matter.

4 Then shalt thou bring forth thy stuff by day in their sight, as stuff for removing: and thou shalt go forth at even in their sight, †as they that go forth into captivity.

† Heb. *as the goings forth of captivity.*

Having made all ready, as ver. 3, thou shalt proceed to bear it away; not employ servants and labourers to do it, but thou thyself shalt do it. *By day:* see ver. 3. *As stuff for removing:* see ver. 3. *At even:* this circumstance, added to what was ver. 3, speaks the secrecy and shame, with the danger of their coming out; in the evening, in the dark, when night may soon conceal them, and they gain a night's journey before the enemy hath notice to pursue. *In their sight;* before it is quite night, that they, who should learn by this sign, may see it and consider it.

5 †Dig thou through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby.

† Heb. *Dig for thee.*

Come not through the door, but, as one who knows there is a watch and guard upon the door, get to some back part of thy house, and dig there, ver. 7, thyself, either to make the greater haste, or to keep all secret; for all will be little enough for them that must act what thou dost represent. *Thereby;* through the hole thou hast dug.

6 In their sight shalt thou bear *it* upon *thy* shoulders, *and* carry *it* forth in the twilight: thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground: [d] for I have set thee *for* a sign unto the house of Israel.

d Is. 8. 18. ch. 4. 3. & 24. 24. ver. 11.

Upon thy shoulders; in testimony of the servitude they shall be reduced to, who then must do what servants or beasts were wont to be employed in. *Carry it forth;* either the stuff or thyself; thou shalt go forth in the twilight, when there is a little light to guide thy way, but more darkness to conceal thy person and thy flight. *Cover thy face;* as full of shame, and exceeding unwilling to be seen or known. *For I have set thee:* there is good reason why thou shouldst do this, how strange, unmanly, or ridiculous soever this may seem; the moral concerns the house of Israel and its king; I have set thee for a sign to them, and thou shalt tell them the meaning of these hieroglyphics in due time.

7 And I did so as I was commanded: I brought forth my stuff by day, as stuff for captivity, and in the even I †digged through the wall with mine hand; I brought *it* forth in the twilight, *and* I bare *it* upon *my* shoulder in their sight.

† Heb. *digged for me.*

Forth; either out of the house into some court or yard, through the wall whereof he digged; or else here is a transposing of his actions, and rehearsal of that in the first place which was acted in the second place. *Digged through the wall:* see ver. 5.

8 ¶ And in the morning came the word of the LORD unto me, saying,

In the evening he packed, digged through the wall, and removed in the sight of the people; next morning inquiry is made how the people resent it.

9 Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, [e] the rebellious house, said unto thee, [f] What doest thou?

e ch. 2. 5. f ch. 17. 12. & 24. 19.

What! are none come to thee, are they all so stupid, and regardless of my word and judgments? Do none inquire that they may know and do what is necessary in their circumstances? Do not thy fellow captives think these actions are significative? Do they not ask whether they in Babylon, or their fellow citizens at Jerusalem, are concerned in what thou doest?

10 Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; This [g] burden *concerneth* the

g Mal. 1. 1.

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prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel that *are* among them.

Though they regard not to inquire, yet give them to know what I mean hereby. *Thus saith the Lord God:* this to add weight and authority to the word. *This burden;* this dreadful prognostic; this prophecy is a burden which the kingdom shall groan under, and your king and the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him. *The prince;* Zedekiah. *All the house;* none may be excepted.

h ver. 6. † Heb. *by removing go into captivity.* 2 Kings 25. 4, 5, 7.

11 Say, [h]I *am* your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: [†]they shall remove *and* go into captivity.

My person is the emblem of yours, and my actions in these cases are signs of that you shall do; and where you do not actively the like, yet the like shall be done to you, O inhabitants of Jerusalem. *Remove;* change their habitations, and carry away their goods, such as the clemency of a conqueror will permit. *Go into captivity;* you to whom I tell these things shall see them come from Jerusalem unto Babylon, as dejected, spoiled, and naked captives.

k Jer. 39. 4.

12 And [k]the prince that *is* among them shall bear upon *his* shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with *his* eyes.

The prince; Zedekiah. *Among them;* in Jerusalem. *Shall bear upon his shoulder;* disguised no doubt as a common ordinary servant, in hope so to escape; but to conceal himself he flees in a disguise, and chooseth the twilight as the time that would best favour his design; so 2 Kings xxv. 4. *They shall dig through the wall;* fulfilled when they broke down the wall to flee, as Jer. xxxix. 4: probably they had built up some slight wall to blind the enemy, which now they break to flee through. *He shall cover his face;* partly out of grief, partly out of shame, partly prefiguring Zedekiah's future loss of his eyes, and his blindness which the insolency of Nebuchadnezzar afflicted him with; but Zedekiah did by this chiefly aim at concealing himself in disguise and covering his face.

l Job 19. 6. Lam. 1. 13. Jer. 52. 9. ch. 17. 20. m 2 Kings 25. 7. Jer. 52. 11. ch. 17. 16.

13 My [l]net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and [m]I will bring him to Babylon *to* the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.

In the disguise this fugitive might possibly escape from the net of Nebuchadnezzar, and of his captains. But, poor Zedekiah, dost thou not at last see that the Babylonians are employed of God, and that God will bring thee into his own and into Nebuchadnezzar's net. *Will I spread upon him;* in allusion to those that take birds or fish in nets, they spread it to its full extent, so will God spread his net that it shall cover Zedekiah and his followers. *He shall be taken;* mentioned as the principal, though he was not taken alone, many were taken with him. *I will bring him;* the Chaldeans carried him, and God brought him to Babylon, so second causes co-work with the first. *To Babylon;* which was the metropolis of the kingdom. *The land of the Chaldeans;* that strange land where they were captives whom God sent before, and whither obstinate Jerusalemites must now go. *Yet shall he not see it;* neither the land nor the city, though he shall spend the rest of his days there, and there die, but the Babylonish tyrant will put out his eyes at Riblah, 2 Kings xxv. 6; Jer. xxxix. 5.

n 2 Kings 25. 4, 5. ch. 5. 10. o ch. 5. 2, 12.

14 And [n]I will scatter toward every wind all that *are* about him to help him, and all his bands; and [o]I will draw out the sword after them.

All that are about him; either the Egyptians who came to help him; or rather, those that did flee with him, as the choice and flower of his valiant and trusty servants, who would guard him through all dangers in the flight, till he might rest some where in safety. This was verified, 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5; Jer. xxxix. 5. *All his bands;* whether auxiliaries or his own trained soldiers. *Draw out the sword after them;* send the enemy after them with drawn swords, wherewith they shall be slain, Jer. xlii. 22; xliii. 10, 11.

15 [p]And they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries.

p Ps. 9. 16. ch. 6. 7, 14. & 11. 10. ver. 16, 20.

They shall know; they shall see, confess, and be sensible of my power, justice, and truth, who make good my threats against obdurate sinners as well as my promises to believers. *Scatter and distress;* two expressions of the same thing, which is frequent in Scripture; and as it usually magnifieth the good or evil, so insures either.

q ch. 6. 8, 9, 10. † Heb. *men of number.*

16 [q]But I will leave †a few men of them from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that they may declare all their abominations among the heathen whither they come; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

But I will restrain the rage of the Chaldeans, and move them to some compassion towards some of the Jews, so that some, yet but few, shall remain; the sword shall not slay them, for I commission it, and it will not exceed its commission. I send the famine, but some I will feed; and the pestilence is my arrow, and hits but where I direct it. *A few men;* including the women also. *That they may declare;* either by relating those sins which were committed among them in Jerusalem, for which God was justly angry, and for which he punished them, though they were his own people. Or else, that though they should be silent, yet the very thing should speak itself, and their miseries should proclaim the wickednesses they had acted against God in their own land. Or, by their wicked practices which in captivity, and under the eye of the heathen, they commit, they will manifestly show to the heathen that God was just in all his severity. *They shall know;* either the Jews, or rather here the Chaldean heathens.

17 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

He was a sign to them in digging and bearing his stuff, now he must be a sign to them in another manner.

r ch. 4. 16.

18 Son of man, [r]eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and with carefulness;

With quaking; with commotion or shakings, as one whose apprehension of danger brings as it were an earthquake upon him; and this trembling is the same thing, but in other words. *Thy water:* here is no mention of delicious and generous wines, but water; so low should they be reduced, and yet not enjoy this very little, because of the great inward fears that shake them.

s Zech. 7. 14. † Heb. *the fulness thereof.* t Ps. 104. 37.

19 And say unto the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord GOD of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *and* of the land of Israel; They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may [s]be desolate from †all that is therein, [t]because of the violence of all them that dwell therein.

Explain the meaning of this unusual and uncomfortable manner of eating and drinking *unto the people;* the common sort of people, distinguished from rulers, of the land of Chaldea, in which the Jews were captives. Tell thy fellow captives who grudge and repent their coming hither, where they have much sorrow, yet some safety, plenty, and rest. *Of the inhabitants of Jerusalem,* who are not yet captivated; their sorrows are coming, and their state will be worse than yours. *Of the land of Israel;* nor will it be better with those that dwell in the countries round about Jerusalem, they will flee for refuge into Jerusalem, and there perish. *Eat their bread with carefulness;* their very comforts shall be uncomfortable to them. *Her land;* Jerusalem's land, so called because it was the head city thereof. *May be desolate;* because that it is already, or shortly shall be, waste, emptied, though it was full of inhabitants, wealth, and

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plenty. *Violence;* injustice, oppression, and tyranny of the Jews toward one another, Jer. vi. 7; xx. 8; Ezek. vii. 23; and this grown an epidemical sin, chap. xxii. 9, 12, from highest to lowest.

20 And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be desolate; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

The cities, the lesser cities up and down the land, which now are and will be inhabited when Jerusalem is destroyed, *shall be* wasted with the sword, as the word seems to imply. Then shall you, who are now in Chaldea, know how the goodness of God brought you hither, that you had no real cause to complain that your condition was worse than your brethren's in Judea. You shall know the truth and severity of God against sinners.

21 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

22 Son of man, what *is* that proverb *that* ye have in the land of Israel, saying, [u] The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?

u ver. 27. ch. 11. 3. Amos 6. 3. 2 Pet. 3. 4.

After the manner of man God speaks with man, *What is?* or it is a comely transition to a new subject of discourse. *That proverb;* that short saying taken up as undoubted truth, and in a very common manner used by all. *That ye have:* he seems to include the prophet, as being one of the body of the people, though he used it not, nay, showed the falsehood and impiety of it. *In the land of Israel; in*, so the prophet and those with him are reckoned as if they were in the land of Israel, for that is their country. Or rather, *concerning*, as the Hebrew ב here used. *The days* of severe punishments, of wrath and vengeance, are to come a great while hence; let them fear who are like to feel them, these prophecies cannot be imagined to look to our times: thus atheists, and contemners of the prophets, hardened one another into sin and security. *Every vision*, threatening vision, which Jeremiah at Jerusalem, and Ezekiel here in Chaldea, do dream of and would fright us with, comes to nothing, it is perished or dead in the nest.

23 Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, [x] The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.

x Joel 2. 1. Zeph. 1. 14.

Tell them; either who use the proverb, or are stumbled at it; tell the one to convince, the other to instruct them. *I will make this proverb to cease:* thus they abuse my patience, and affront my truth, and deride my justice; but when my patience at its period calls in my justice to vindicate it, and when calamities felt prove my truth and the presence of these sorrows, there can be no more place for such a proverb, the groundlessness of it being discovered to all. *Say unto them;* assure them. *The days are at hand:* see ver. 22: they draw near indeed, when within some three years Jerusalem shall see the enemy besieging it, and feel his sword cutting down her chosen men. All that which the vision contained shall, ere few years are over, clearly appear accomplished, according to what my prophets foretold.

y ch. 13. 23. z Lam. 2. 14.

24 For [y] there shall be no more any [z] vain vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel.

These proverbializing scoffers compared the true prophets with the false. These predict prosperity and return of the captives from Babylon within few years, and before Jerusalem be destroyed; so they flattered the people. The true prophets foretell long captivity, bloody slaughters, strait siege, a burnt city and temple. Now these scoffers bear up themselves on these flatteries, and argue against the Divine menaces, and are ready to inquire, Why may not Ezekiel's vision be as vain as he saith theirs is? and if one, why not both? Well, these fools are capable of no better answer than that which will destroy at once their doubts and their hopes. Judgment executed shall convince the false prophets of their lying divination, and these atheists of their illogical inferences. *No more;* for this many years, for seventy years to come, and till wickedness shall again take root with the prosperity of the returned captivity.

25 For I *am* the LORD: I will speak, and [a] the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD.

a Is. 55. 11. ver. 28. Dan. 9. 12. Luke 21. 33.

I can discover the vanity of flattering prophets, and will do it, by making good what my true prophets have foretold. No length of time shall make me forget it, no pretences of self-flattering prophets or people shall divert it, no power can hinder me, nor counsel defeat me. What Jeremiah and Ezekiel have foretold, I will now accomplish in these days, and defer no longer. I will not preach to you by my prophets the fatal sorrows of your children's children, who should cry out of calamities when you are past feeling them, but the same age that hears the threat shall feel the execution; the enemy I raise against you shall burn your city and temple, spoil your goods, famish you in the siege, and lead you captives after the siege, and all this and a thousand times more shall come upon you in your days, O rebellious house! When all this comes to pass, your proverb will be sure to cease indeed. Hitherto he answers the ungodly users and abettors of this proverb.

26 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Again; for instructing some that were seduced by those scoffers forementioned.

27 [b] Son of man, behold, *they of* the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth *is* [c] for many days *to come*, and he prophesieth of the times *that are* far off.

b ver. 22. c 2 Pet. 3. 4.

Some of the less judicious and the more credulous are abused by these sort of men. *Say;* think, and hope, and so discourse it, that the prophet is a good man and true prophet, but surely his visions look to after-times; we do not think his visions vain, but we hope they are not to come on us, and in our days. Now these God will have his prophet to instruct in this matter, which he doth in the next verse.

28 [d] Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.

d ver. 23, 25.

Since it is an erroneous opinion they are brought into, it is not from contempt of my truth, but from weakness, warn them mildly, tell them the days are very near indeed, and there will be no adjournment. Now it will be done as soon as spoken almost, and God will make a short work with them in righteousness, and a very few days will bring his judgments to light.

CHAP. XIII.

False prophets reproved, and their daubing with untempered mortar, 1—16. *The prophetesses also reproved with their impostures under the title of pillows and kerchiefs,* 17—23.

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

This first verse is the commission, by virtue whereof Ezekiel acteth as a prophet, and it is in the usual style near forty times in Ezekiel.

2 Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto [a] † them that prophesy out of their own [b] hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD;

a ver. 17. † Heb. *them that are prophets out of their own hearts.* b Jer. 14. 14. & 23. 16, 26.

Prophesy; declare aforehand what I will do. *Against the prophets;* against prince and people first, next against

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prophets and prophetesses; against the former in the foregoing chapters, against the latter in this chapter. *Of Israel*, because approved of Israel, encouraged by Israel, and followed; but not prophets of the Lord, he sent them not. Whether these were in Babylon, or in Jerusalem, some inquiry is made; probably these false prophets were in both places. *That prophesy;* foretell what is pleasing to the Jews, a sudden return out of captivity, with the vessels of the Lord's house, and prosperity in their own land. *Out of their own hearts;* but all their promising words are of themselves, out of their own deceiving hearts, not from God, and so all will be lies. *Hear ye the word of the Lord;* cease to deceive my people, and attend now to what God speaks of you.

† Heb. *walk after.* ‖ Or, *and things which they have not seen.*

3 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that † follow their own spirit, ‖ and have seen nothing!

They shall be doubly miserable, suffering with the deceived, and suffering by the enraged, when their lies are detected. *Foolish prophets;* either in a moral sense, i. e. wicked; or in a literal sense, unwise. It is both foolishly wicked and imprudent to pretend revelations, and yet have none from God. *Their own spirit;* in contradistinction to the Spirit of God, the true Spirit of prophecy, they strongly fancy what they would have, and then presumptuously prophesy that it shall come to pass. *Have seen nothing;* God hath showed them no vision, nothing of all they pretend to is from God.

e Cant. 2. 15.

4 O Israel, thy prophets are e like the foxes in the deserts.

O Israel; a pathetical exclamation to awake Israel, both the dwellers at Jerusalem and those at Babylon. *Thy prophets*, not mine, as ver. 2. *Like the foxes;* hungry and ravening, crafty and guileful, and living by their wits, but not one whit helpful to those they deceive. Such are false prophets. *In the deserts*, where want of prey makes them more eager of their prey, and where other devouring beasts endanger travellers, but no defence to them from foxes; these flee into their holes betimes, and leave the endangered ones. Or thus, O Israel, thou art like the desert, spoiled and robbed, and thy false prophets, like foxes hungry and hunting for some prey, live upon what they can catch, but will be no more profitable to thee than foxes are to the wilderness.

d Ps. 106. 23, 30. ch. 22. 30. ‖ Or, *breaches.* † Heb. *hedged the hedge.*

5 Ye d have not gone up into the ‖ gaps, neither † made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD.

Ye, vulpine prophets. As in a besieged city whose wall is broken down and the enemy ready to enter, a valiant, faithful, and vigilant soldier would run up into the breach to repel the enemy; so true prophets do partly by prayer, and partly by doctrine, and partly by personal reformation, labour to preserve God's people. But, fox-like, they have shifted out of harm's way. *Neither made up the hedge:* the house of Israel is the Lord's vineyard, through the hedge whereof many breaches are made, through which wild and wasting beasts come in and devour the grapes, and spoil the vines; but you have not stopped those breaches, but, fox-like, come in and pulled off the tender grapes, and done the most mischief; you have increased sin and danger thereby. And when the Lord's wrath shall give up the city, you will not stand to oppose the enemy breaking in; so useless will these be at last. *To stand;* not with arms, but with fasting, prayers, repentance, laying hold on the arm of the Lord, and interceding for his people. *In the battle*, which God will by the Chaldeans fight against the house of Israel. In that day of the Lord the weapons of war will not prevail against the Chaldeans, unless prayers, tears, and amendment prevail with the Lord to withdraw the battle, and be at peace with Israel.

e ver. 23. ch. 12. 24. & 22. 28.

6 e They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The LORD saith: and the LORD hath not sent them: and they have made *others* to hope that they would confirm the word.

They have seen; they pretend to have seen, but still they see nothing, as ver. 2. The prophet speaks as if indeed they had seen, but the very censure of the things they said they saw clears it, that all was but pretence. *Vanity and lying divination;* things that have no ground or foundation, and which will never be, and are therefore called vanity and lying divinations. *The Lord saith;* foretelleth and promiseth. *Hath not sent them;* never revealed any such thing to them, or bade them tell the Jews any such thing. *They have made others;* by their pretences and arguments they have wheedled some into a belief of their word, and into a hope of that they promise; and so the credulous Jew is undone by his prophet, who tells him all is well, and needs no alteration, and all will be well, and they need fear no desolation.

7 Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith *it;* albeit I have not spoken?

Consider with your own consciences; do they not tell you that all is vain pretence which you make? Can you think Jerusalem can escape, or the first captives be returned, and all this so soon? Is not this vain to be imagined, and they vainer that imagine and believe it? If it should come to pass, which it never shall, yet herein you are convicted liars; you say the Lord saith, whereas he hath said no such thing, nay, the contrary hath God spoken to what you speak, and the event shall be as contrary to your expectation, which is of good; but behold evil cometh out of the north, and great destruction.

8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I *am* against you, saith the Lord GOD.

The whole verse speaks the dreadful anger of God against those false prophets. It is unspeakable wrath, and we are left to guess at it by the manner of speech here used, which is minatory, Ezek. xxi. 3; xxvi. 3, concealing the greater part intended; an aposiopesis. *I am against you:* this is more particularly exemplified in the next verse.

‖ Or, *secret, or, council.* f Ezra 2. 59, 62. Neh. 7. 5. Ps. 69. 28. g ch. 20. 38. h ch. 11. 10, 12.

9 And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the ‖ assembly of my people, f neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, g neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; h and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

Mine hand; my power striking them; so that it shall be evident they fall under Divine revenge, as Pelatiah, chap. xi. 13, and Hananiah, Jer. xxviii. 15, 16. Or if they escape this stroke, *they shall not be in the assembly of my people;* have no seat among the rulers, nor voice among the counsellors, nor credit among the judges of my people; but, as false fellows, teachers of lies, be branded with infamy after the return from captivity. Or, they shall not be among those that return, dead before, or rejected as dangerous seducers and blasphemous abusers of the name of God. It may also refer to the excluding them out of the assembly of glorified ones in heaven. *Neither shall they be written;* registered among those that return, of which registry Ezra ii. 1, 2, but blotted out for their impiety; this literally: mystically, it may be an obliterating or blotting them out of the book of life; they shall not be written with such as shall escape spiritually, they shall not be found among the elect that shall live for ever. *Neither shall they* ever more come into the land of Israel, not survive the captivity. Or, with disgrace cast off, shall die in strange lands. In brief, the approaching prosperity which they promise the people none shall see, Jer. xxix. 21, 32; but the prosperity after seventy years' captivity, which I promise, my people shall see, but these false prophets never shall see, my hand shall be so against them. They shall not be written in the book of eternal life, which is written for the just ones of the house of Israel, saith the Chaldee paraphrast. See chap. xii. 15.

10 ¶ Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, i Peace; and i Jer. 6. 14. & 8. 11.

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‖ Or, a slight wall.
k ch. 22. 8.

there was no peace; and one built up ‖a wall, and, lo, others [k] daubed it with untempered *morter*:

The verse is a transition to a new subject, or rather to a new manner of discovering and condemning the sin of the false prophets. *They have seduced my people;* made my people to err, both in their apprehension of their sin and danger, and of my displeasure and threats, as if all were less than it was, and there needed no repentance, or submission to the Babylonish king. *Peace;* all will be well; no war, or else victory; no more going into captivity, but a speedy return of those that are in captivity: when nothing of all this, but the contrary, was to be told them; universal calamity was at the door, and these varlets promise universal tranquillity and plenty. *One;* some one or other chief among the false prophets, as Hananiah, Jer. xxviii. 15, and Shemaiah, Jer. xxix. 31, or Ahab son of Kolaiah, Jer. xxix. 21, 22. When the state of the church was shattered and ready to fall, these chief false prophets would undertake to repair and build it, but indeed all was a mere contrived cheat, like as if a pretended architect should promise to build a wall substantial and sound, but a pack of deceitful builders in confederacy with this one set to laying the stones, and then with dirt instead of mortar, with melting and dissolving mire instead of holding and well-tempered cement, daub the wall. So the chief seducers cry, Peace, peace, and all the kennel of lesser cheats follow full cry, Peace, peace. Within two years shall the king of Babylon cease, saith one, Jer. xxviii. 11, and all the inferior prophets applaud the conjecture, and persuade the people to believe it; but the end will evince them liars, as in the following verse.

11 Say unto them which daub *it* with untempered *morter*, that it shall fall: [l] there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend *it*.

l ch. 38. 22. Ecclus. 49. 9.

Unto them; the meaner and less noted, who follow the arch false prophets, and are as under-workers in this wall. *It shall fall;* most certainly its fall shall be the shame and loss of the builders, and those that hoped its duration. *An overflowing shower;* abundant, violent, and continued showers shall soak into your wall and dissolve the cement; and this shower is the Babylonish invasion, which all your provision shall be no more able to withstand, than mire in a wall can keep the stones together when drenched with showers. I will summon in the storms of hail, which with mighty stones shall beat upon the ruinous wall. *A stormy wind;* a whirlwind, to shake the tumbling stones, which without much shaking would ere long drop down; but, to hasten the downfal, soaking showers, storms of hail and violent winds, shall meet; so shall your crazy state, O deceived Jews, come down to ruin.

12 Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where *is* the daubing wherewith ye have daubed *it?*

Will not men thenceforth laugh you to scorn? you that built, you that daubed, you that applauded the wall, will they not upbraid you with your folly?

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even rend *it* with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in *my* fury to consume *it*.

This confirms what was said ver. 11, where it is explained. This verse addeth that God will do this by his hand, and in anger and fury, taking vengeance on this scoffing, atheistical, and secure generation in his just displeasure; he will execute the fierceness of his anger upon prince, prophets, people, city, and all their confederates.

14 So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered *morter*, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: [m] and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

m ver. 9, 21, 23. ch. 14. 8.

This verse with very little variation repeats the same dreadful procedure of God against this people, and these false prophets, and their false, ill-grounded confidences. And this repeating these things is to give us to know the certainty of the thing, the terror wherewith God will do it, and the stupidity of the Jews bewitched by the flatteries of their false prophets. *I will break down the wall;* pull it down stone by stone; level it with the ground. The unsoundness of the foundation, whatever it may seem to be, *shall be discovered* to every one that will look on it, and this to the utter shame of the builders. *And ye,* who deceive and are deceived by it, shall perish in the midst thereof. So all that hearkened to these false prophets, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, fortified the city, and obstinately stood it out, fell with the ruins of the city, and perished, and then felt the stroke of God's hand, and truth of his prophet.

15 Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered *morter*, and will say unto you, The wall *is* no *more*, neither they that daubed it;

Thus, in this dreadful manner, by my hand visible in doing it, *will I* fulfil what my prophets foretold, and perform my word and theirs, and fully pour out my wrath, so that it shall be fully according to the just displeasure they have provoked in me. *Will say unto you;* I will deride them in their ruin, as Psal. ii. 4; Prov. i. 26. God curseth confidences in an arm of flesh, and will destroy them, for they are set up in direct opposition to his justice and sovereignty, to his threats and truth of them.

16 *To wit,* the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which [n] see visions of peace for her, and *there is* no peace, saith the Lord GOD.

n Jer. 6. 14. & 28. 9.

The prophets of Israel: see ver. 2, 4. *Which see visions:* see ver. 7.

17 ¶ Likewise, thou son of man, [o] set thy face against the daughters of thy people, [p] which prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against them,

o ch. 20. 46. & 21. 2.
p ver. 2.

Now turn thyself and discourse against the prophetesses, fear them not: see the phrase, chap. iv. 3. Some would have the prophet's words to be intended against the effeminate men, who were of no value, and by contempt called the daughters of his people; but I see no cause why the prophet's words should not be directed against the women who pretended to be prophetesses. *Of thy people,* that were with him in Babylon. Or rather, because they were Jews, they are called daughters of his people. Or might they not be daughters of priests, and so more nearly of kin to Ezekiel? *Which prophesy;* there were women who had the gift of prophecy, Exod. xv. 20; Judg. iv. 4; 2 Kings xxii. 14; Joel ii. 28, and brought messages from God, but these in the text pretend themselves to be prophetesses, and speak their own imaginations, and fasten their lies on the God of truth.

18 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the *women* that sew pillows to all ‖armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls! Will ye [q] hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive *that come* unto you?

‖ Or, elbows.
q 2 Pet. 2. 14.

Woe; calamities of all sorts shall fall upon them. *That sew pillows;* a figurative speech, expressing their flatteries and security, which the women promised to every one that came to them to know the fate of themselves and others; in token of which safety and ease, either these women did put them for these inquirers to sleep on; or else to lean on as they lay on their side at meat; or else these gypsies, fortune-tellers, did sleep or pretend to sleep on those pillows, and thereby signify the peace, safety, and ease which this people should have. *To all arm-holes;* all comers had the same answer, these women made not any difference. *Kerchiefs;* either veils, or triumphal hats or caps, which were made by these

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prophetesses, and these were put upon the head of every one who consulted them; and by these habits the deceived inquirer was either persuaded he was made fit to receive the oracle, or was to interpret the sign as promise of victory over the Babylonian, and a triumphant rest in Judea. Perhaps they might use both; the veils were put on to signify the shame with which their enemies' faces should be covered, the triumphant caps to note the joys of the Jews; but the event showed which belonged to the one and other. *Of every stature*, i. e. of every age, whether younger or elder, which usually is somewhat seen by their stature or growth. *To hunt:* all this is a pretence, while really it is spreading a net, as hunters do, to catch the prey and devour it. *Souls;* the persons, life, estate; and all to enrich or maintain themselves. *Will ye hunt the souls of my people?* dare you promise they shall live when I do promise no such thing? Or can you preserve them alive whom you deceive by your promises? Are you no whit afraid thus to profane my name, and to insnare my people?

19 And will ye pollute me among my people [r]for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear *your* lies?

[r] See Prov. 28. 21. Mic. 3. 5.

Will ye pollute me? profanely contradicting what is indeed spoken in my name; and pretending my name for that I never spake, nor will do. *Among my people;* who are my peculiar, who have my word and true prophets, by which your lies are discovered, and further will be. What shameless impudence is this, to abuse my name, counterfeit my hand and seal, to them that do or might know both! *For handfuls of barley;* for a mean reward, tell fortunes for a penny! but there may be herein a provision made against the famine which was threatened and would come; this grain might be kept. *For pieces of bread;* bread and morsels of bread. Mercenary sorceresses! that thus make sale of their predictions to feed their hungry bellies. *To slay the souls that should not die;* you denounce evil to the best, perhaps threatened those in Babylon with death, whom God will keep alive there. *To save the souls alive that should not live;* declaring safety, plenty, prosperity, peace, without war, or victory in the war, included in that they live. *By your lying;* most falsely flattering those that come to you, and most maliciously threatening those that come not, because they know you speak your own lies. You save whom I will kill, and kill whom I will save.

20 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against your pillows, wherewith ye there hunt the souls ‖to make *them* fly, and I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go, *even* the souls that ye hunt to make *them* fly.

‖ Or, *into gardens.*

I am against (the same phrase ver. 8) *your pillows;* the rite, and its signification too. *There hunt the souls;* either at Jerusalem, or wherever you give out answers. *To make them fly:* in this sense the word is no where else used, and thus used here renders the interpretation obscure. Elsewhere it is, to bud, as Numb. xvii. 8; Ezek. vii. 10; to blossom, Isa. xxvii. 6; to spring up as a flower or vine, Psal. xcii. 7; Cant. vi. 11; to grow, as Hos. xiv. 8. Thus the sense is obvious; by these lying ceremonies thus applied you promise a flourishing, growing state to all inquirers, and this is, the net with which you hunt souls. It is possible these prophetesses might bring their deceived ones into pleasant gardens, and (if well paid for it) entertain with all the pleasures of flowers and fruits; and might not these prophetesses be the priests of Flora, and seduce young, fair, wanton ones to the idolatry and brutish pleasures of the Floralia? *I will tear them,* with some violence and suddenness, that may express an indignation; as, 2 Kings v. 7, when the king of Israel rent his clothes at the hearing the letter of Benhadad king of Syria, so in wrath will God suddenly tear your enchanting and divining habits. *From your arms;* either from the arms of such as put them on when they consulted with these seducers; or may be the seducers might ordinarily wear them, to be known what they were. *Will let the souls go:* you held the souls of those that heard you as captives, or as bewitched with your enchantments and pleasures; but I will set them free, some I will enlighten to discover your frauds, others I will undeceive by sending them into captivity.

21 Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted; [s]and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

[s] ver. 9.

Kerchiefs: see ver. 18. *My people;* God owns them, at least some among them; though all were not his, yet he had a people among them. *Your hand;* power of their seductions.

22 Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and [t]strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, ‖†by promising him life:

[t] Jer. 23. 14. ‖ Or, *that I should save his life.* † Heb. *by quickening him.*

With lies; diametrically opposing what my prophets told to my people in my name. *The heart;* the soul, which in weak ones received some saddening impressions from your lies; in the strongest and wisest it was matter of grief, to see so many contradict the Lord to their own ruin. *The righteous;* who keep my law, and have respect to all my precepts, though none can fulfil the law; the upright and just, against whom you do thunder out your woes; but I know better how to distribute my orders. I never commissioned, nor ever will commission, any prophet to sadden the heart of a just one, who needs and is fit for encouragement, or to threaten where they should promise. *By promising him life;* your flatteries persuade the worst to think they are in a good way, need not repent and return, and so, their hearts hardened in wickedness, their hands do work it. God would convince and turn the wicked, but you confirm them that they return not from sin; you assure them, but it is with lying words, that they shall not die by pestilence, nor famine, nor sword, but live and prosper.

23 Therefore [u]ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: [x]and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

[u] ver. 6, &c. ch. 12. 24. Mic. 3. 6. [x] ver. 9. ch. 14. 8. & 15. 7.

See chap. xii. 24. Either these prophetesses with the prophets of the same stamp shall perish in the day of calamity, and of the miseries that they persuaded others to slight and contemn. Or else, if they live, they shall live to see all their predictions of prosperity vanish, to see the righteous, whom they threatened, escape, and the wicked, whom they spake good of, fall under miseries; this shall so confound them, they shall cease for ever, and pretend no more visions. Your credit shall be gone, and you found false dreamers, you shall never more be able to keep up any power over or interest in my people. Not one just, righteous soul shall ever grieve, or apprehend cause of fear, from what you threaten, and the unrighteous shall no more joy in the expectation of these lying promises. All shall know that I am the Lord, who fulfil promises to the just, and execute threats on the bad.

CHAP. XIV.

God reproveth those hypocrites, who came to inquire of him with idolatry in their hearts, 1—5. *They are exhorted to repent, for fear of his judgments,* 6—11. *No intercession shall save the guilty land from God's judgment of famine,* 12—14, *noisome beasts,* 15, 16, *the sword,* 17, 18, *the pestilence,* 19, *or from the four judgments together,* 20, 21. *A remnant shall be left for the instruction and consolation of others,* 22, 23.

THEN [a]came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.

[a] cir. 594. ch. 8. 1. & 20. 1. & 33. 31.

Then, Heb. *And,* that we need not inquire the precise time of this prophecy. *Certain of the elders;* men of note, that were in office and power among the Jews, called here elders, &c. *Of Israel;* who were yet in Jerusalem; not

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the elders who were now, and had been some time, in Babylon. *Sat before me:* see chap. viii. 1.

2 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

3 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put [b] the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: [c] should I be enquired of at all by them?

[b] ch. 7. 19. ver. 4, 7.

[c] 2 Kings 3. 13.

These men; who probably were come from Jerusalem, sent by Zedekiah, and mentioned by Jeremiah, chap. li. 59; some of the courtiers, who, more out of curiosity than religion, give a visit to this famous prophet. *Have set up their idols in their heart;* resolved idolaters, their heart was totally addicted to their idolatrous worship and ceremonies, immersed in it. *The stumbling-block of their iniquity;* their idols, so expressed, because they were both the object of their sin, and occasion of their ruin. They account these idols to be gods, and worship, fear, trust in, and plead for them; this is their sin, and ere long this shall bring ruin on them. Can these men seriously consult me? Is it fit I should give counsel to obstinate, resolved sinners, who come to inquire, but will not hearken? Should I help them in their distress, who depend on idols which I hate?

4 Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

Mince not the matter, lessen not, neither vary, what I say unto thee, but declare fully and undauntedly *unto them*, though great men, and who will compliment with thee. *Every man*, without exception, whoever be the man among the Israelites, that hath his heart riveted to idols, and yet comes to the prophet, as if it were to know what were best to be done, and what will be the issue of these times and things, I will answer him but little to his satisfaction or safety; such answer shall such receive, as in seeing they shall not see, &c. I will declare the greatness of their sin and punishment; they multiplied idols, this their sin, I will multiply their sorrows; they first run into darkness of idolatry, I will leave them to the darkness of misery. I will give answer, but in just judgment, and with severe reproofs, and menaces, and commands.

5 That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.

That I may convince and pierce their very hearts, or lay open what is in their heart, and discover their hypocrisy and impiety; *because they* have shamefully followed idols, which now in their distress neither know the cause, or can frame a remedy; and what folly is it to choose such gods! what greater impiety than this, to adhere to idols, and forsake God, the only true God and Saviour? *Estranged from me;* minds that increase their averseness to God. Idolatry draws the man more and more from the Lord.

6 ¶ Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn ‖*yourselves* from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.

‖ Or, others.

Unto the house of Israel; to these men the elders, whoever they are, give charge that they repent, and by them send word to the residue of the house of Jacob that they do so too. *Repent;* be sorry and testify your sorrow for such sins. *And turn yourselves;* renounce them for future, cease to be idolaters, let your visible carriage in reforming all be seen too. Amend heart and ways, let not your heart be towards idols in point of religion, nor your practice in point of outward deportment be vicious and immoral.

7 For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:

For every Jew of the seed of Abraham, and every proselyte, who withdraws himself from me, and worships idols, keeps them in his heart to the increase of their own sin and my displeasure, yet forsooth comes to the prophet to inquire how his God resenteth what they do, and what God will do with them, what they should do, what they may expect, yet all this while dote on idols, and resolutely hold on in unjust practices, they shall find by the answer it was not the prophet, but the God of the prophet, that answered them, so dreadful, searching, and astonishing shall my answer be.

8 And [d] I will set my face against that man, and will make him a [e] sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; [f] and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

[d] Lev. 17 10. & 20. 3, 5, 6. Jer 44. 11. ch. 15. 7.

[e] Num. 26. 10 Deut. 28. 37. ch. 5. 15.

[f] ch. 6. 7.

My face; my displeased face, my wrath, which none can bear; the phrase Lev. xvii. 10; xx. 3; chap. xv. 7. *A sign* of Divine vengeance, provoked by sin and executed on the sinner. *A proverb;* of whom every body shall speak with taunt and curse, Deut. xxviii. 37. *I will cut him off;* either by an immediate stroke from heaven, or else in an undeniably vindictive way, Lev. xx. 3. *From the midst of my people;* openly, as what is done in the sight of all, or as one separated from God's people by this dreadful excommunication, and who shall have no portion with them in this or the next life.

9 And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD [g] have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.

[g] 1 Kin. 22. 23 Job 12. 16 Jer. 4. 10. 2 Thess. 2. 11.

The prophet, viz. the prophet who makes this his trade and gain, the false prophet, who speaks all serene and quiet, in hope of reward for his kind answer to those that desired to hear what might please them more than what God commanded, promised, or threatened. *Have deceived;* permitted him to err, or justly left him in his blindness, that he shall not discern his own self-deceivings; or else when such prophet promiseth good, and thinks concurrence of all second causes tend to it, yet I will disappoint and frustrate, as Isa. xliv. 25, if the confederacies to save were in likelihood sufficient, and it were no presumption to hope the best; and if your prophets on this ground promised you success, yet they shall deceive you, for I would defeat and disappoint them and you; so the sense would not carry a moral and culpable deceiving, but a just defeating and disappointing, or disabling, second causes, on which disappointment of hopes will follow. If Egypt's arms had so weakened the Babylonians, that none but wounded men remained, yet the promise of your escape should fail you, O Israelites, for, Jer. xxxvii. 10, these should rise up and burn your city. *Stretch out my hand upon him;* remarkably punish his falsehood, and in severity destroy him.

10 And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh *unto him;*

There is so great parity in the folly and impiety of both seducing prophets and the seduced people, that it is hard to say whose sin is greatest. Their punishment shall be by the Lord made as like as they made their sin, and both shall be cut off and destroyed.

11 That the house of Israel may [h] go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; [i] but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord GOD.

[h] 2 Pet. 2. 18.

[i] ch. 11. 20. & 37. 27.

Afflictions ever tend to a good and necessary effect or end, for God's glory, and his people's good, and so it is here.

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The house of Israel; which are the seed of Jacob, and my people. *May go no more astray;* they have wandered as sheep, which naturally are apt to go out of the way, and much more when seduced and drawn out of the way, but afflictions tend to reduce them from sheepish wanderings. *From me,* their only God and Saviour. *Neither be polluted:* idolatry is a great pollution, and ever attended with other transgressions and immoralities, which defile also; now by their present calamities God will open their eyes to see and abhor them. *That they may be my people;* in name and external profession they were God's people, but they had forgotten their relation, and the duty of it to Godward; now by these present corrections they shall be disposed to own and love, to obey and walk with, him, as he is their God, and they his people. This effect the rod will have on my own people.

12 ¶ The word of the LORD came again to me, saying,

13 Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the [k]staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:

k Lev. 26. 26. Is. 3. 1. ch. 4. 16. & 5. 16.

When; at what time soever. *The land,* put for the men that dwell in the land. *By trespassing grievously;* as a hypocritical, backsliding people, that give fair promises, but perform them not, rather act contrary to their professions, as the Hebrew intimateth. *Upon it;* against it. *Break the staff of the bread:* scarcity and famine are effects of the power of God, which makes that barren for the sins of a people which otherwise would be fruitful. *Will cut off man and beast from it;* make the land utterly desolate by famishing the cattle as well as their owners.

14 [l]Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *but* their own souls [m]by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.

l Jer. 15. 1. ver. 16, 18, 20. See Jer. 7. 16. & 11. 14. & 14. 11. m Prov. 11. 4.

These three men; most eminent for holy and upright walking with God, very dear to God, exceedingly desirous of the welfare of others, powerful in prayer. *Noah,* who it is probable prevailed with God to spare the world for some years, and saved his near relations when the flood came; *Daniel,* who prevailed for the life of the wise men of Chaldea; and *Job,* who daily offered sacrifice for his children, and at last reconciled God to those that had offended. These should not prevail for any one of this wicked generation; it should suffice them that their righteousness saveth themselves, this contumacious generation of sinners I would not be entreated for.

15 ¶ If I cause [n]noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they ‖spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts:

n Lev. 26. 22. ch. 5. 17. ‖ Or, bereave.

Noisome beasts are one of the great plagues or armies that God hath always at his command. *To pass through the land;* to range over the land, and spoil their cattle, devour their servants and children, and destroy travellers, and make it as a wilderness. *No man may pass through* without much danger, and great guards that may repel the wild ravening beasts.

16 [o]*Though* these three men *were* †in it, *as* I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate.

o ver. 14, 18, 20. † Heb. *in the midst of it.*

As I live; a form of speech in which God by oath confirms what he speaketh, and it is such an oath as becomes him only, who is life, and cannot die. *Neither sons nor daughters;* neither sons that should perpetuate their families, and are the support of houses, nor daughters, the tenderness of whose sex and age does make and keep parents' affections fervent towards them. No near relation should escape on their account. *Desolate,* i. e. most desolate, as the Hebrew use by an abstract to express the superlative degree, Isa. i. 7; lxiv. 10.

17 ¶ Or *if* [p]I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land; so that I [q]cut off man and beast from it:

p Lev. 26. 25. ch. 5. 12. & 21. 3, 4. & 29. 8. & 38. 21. q ch. 25. 13. Zeph. 1. 3.

He is Lord of hosts, and hath the militia of all the world in his hand, the sword is the right of the King of kings. *Bring a sword;* raise war, and send enemies to invade it. *That land;* what land soever it be. *Go through the land:* though inanimate things have not ears to hear, yet God speaks of them sometimes as if they had ears to hear, and understanding to discern; hereby intimating to us his overruling power, wisdom, justice, and sovereignty. *So that I cut off man:* men cut off men in war, yet here God takes it to himself, he doth it by men. *And beast:* though wars chiefly destroy men, yet the beasts of the field go to wreck too, the beasts that are serviceable in wars are waste, as horses and beasts of burden. The Eastern nations have brought store of camels and many elephants into the wars; beside the slaughter of these in fight, the spoiler wasting his enemy doth often destroy whole herds and flocks.

18 [r]Though these three men *were* in it, *as* I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves.

r ver. 14.

19 ¶ Or *if* I send [s]a pestilence into that land, and [t]pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast:

s 2 Sam. 24. 15. ch. 38. 22. t ch. 7. 8.

Diseases are sent whenever they come, especially wasting diseases, which empty nations and cities apace. *Pestilence;* God's arrow that flies from God's bow. *Pour out;* not drop or distil on a people in small measures, and by leisure, but in great measures, and hastily, as waters are poured out of a vessel all at once almost. *In blood:* sometimes blood does denote war, but here, and in many other places, it denotes death and destruction of men, though not by the sword. *Man and beast;* not that beasts die of the same pestilential disease which kills man, but either death of men by pestilence emptieth the nation, that there are not men to take care and provide for the beasts; or rather, because when pestilence wasteth men, murrains and plague of cattle, from the same infected air, and from the hand of God, waste the beasts also.

20 [u]Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, *were* in it, *as* I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall *but* deliver their own souls by their righteousness.

u ver. 14.

Their own souls; their person, their life. *By their righteousness;* not meriting the deliverance, but yet the justice and mercy of God shall surely keep them from falling in the punishment who were kept from the sin.

21 For thus saith the Lord GOD; ‖How much more when [x]I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?

‖ Or, *Also when.* x ch. 5. 17. & 33. 27.

Those three men, with their best interest, should not be able to keep off one of the four, much less able to keep off all four when I commission them all to go at once, as I will, nay, have done, against Jerusalem, to cut off the obstinate, incorrigible ones amidst it.

22 ¶ [y]Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, *both* sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and [z]ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, *even* concerning all that I have brought upon it.

y ch. 6. 8. z ch. 20. 43.

Therein; in Jerusalem itself, and in the land. *A remnant;* some that escape, for though none could prevail with God to prevent the emptying the city and the land, and

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cutting off the most, yet this was not to extend to the utter cutting off and destruction of all. *Brought forth;* by the proud, cruel, and barbarous conqueror bringing them in nakedness, chains, and in contempt more grievous than death itself. *Unto you;* those naked, hunger-starved, derided captives, through heats and colds, through sands and tedious travels, shall come, though with great regret to you, to Babylon, whose condition they will either envy, or wish it their own. *Ye shall see;* see them, and consider and know *their way;* what it hath brought them, how sinfully evil it was against God in their own land, and how miserably evil it is and must be with them in the enemies' land. *Ye shall be comforted;* not rejoice in your brethren's misery, but comforted in remembrance of the good hour you resolved to obey God, in yielding up to the Chaldeans; comforted in the sense of your state much better then theirs, and in the vindication of you from the black aspersions the false prophets and their followers cast on you; and finally, comforted, in that your return, at set time promised, shall in its time be as surely made good as you see the threats are made good. God will be as true in his mercies as he hath been in his judgments; this is matter of great affliction and grief, that of comfort and hope.

23 And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and
a Jer. 22. 8, 9. ye shall know that I have not done [a] without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD.

They that survive the siege, famine, and ruin of Jerusalem, and are brought to Babylon, *shall comfort you;* either confessing their faults in not doing as you had done, justifying the wise course they took who yielded, condemning the folly of hardening themselves against God, his judgments, and his prophets; or be matter of comfort, affording to you just ground of comforting yourselves. *When ye see their ways:* understand it in the effects of it upon the ruined Jews; or, in the relation which they will make both of their sins and sufferings in the land of Canaan. *Ye,* you of the first captivity, you that obeyed my voice, and submitted to the Babylonian yoke, *shall know,* be fully satisfied, that I have had but too much cause, and most just reason, for all that I have done against Jerusalem and its land, and inhabitants of both; you shall know my hand, and as you feel the weight, so you shall see the justice of it too against them, and the mercy of it towards you.

CHAP. XV.

By the unfitness of the vine branch for any work, 1—5, *is showed the utter rejection of Jerusalem,* 6—8.

cir. 594. AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, *or than* a branch which is among the trees of the forest?

The house of Israel is often compared to a vine, which when barren or fruitless is very contemptible and unprofitable. This the prophet minds them of to humble them, and awaken them to fruitfulness; Will you boast yourselves of this? *Than a branch which is among the trees of the forest;* one single branch of a tree in the forest is of more use and worth than the whole vine tree is, except for its fruit.

3 Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will *men* take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?

Is there one good piece of timber in the whole vine fit for building a house, or ship, as there is in the oak, elm, or other wild forest trees? Will it furnish the husbandman, or soldier, or seaman with fit materials for their use, in peace, war, or sea? Will it afford a pin to drive into a wall or post, on which you may safely fasten any weight? It is so weak that it is useless as to this.

a John 15. 6. 4 Behold, [a] it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of
† Heb. *Will it prosper?* it, and the midst of it is burned. † Is it meet for *any* work?

When for its barrenness it is cut down, it is fit only to be burnt. Nor is it a choice fuel neither, a little branch of a tree of the forest is better, and affords more fuel.

5 Behold, when it was whole, it was † meet for no work: how much less shall
† Heb. *made fit.* it be meet yet for *any* work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned?

6 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Either thus, When the vine is, as the wild trees of the forest, barren and fruitless, it is less worth than the forest tree; so are you, O house of Israel, in my account: or else, As trees of the forest are for the fire in all the less valuable parts of them, so are all the branches and body of the barren vine, which you are, O Jerusalemites. *I have given;* designed and doomed for food to the fire. *So will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* for by their sins they have kindled a fire, which shall burn every barren branch in the degenerate and fruitless vine.

7 And [b] I will set my face against them; [c] they shall go out from *one* fire, and
b Lev. 17. 10. ch. 14. 8. c Is. 24. 18. *another* fire shall devour them; [d] and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I
d ch. 6. 7. & 7. 4. & 11. 10. & 20. 38, 42, 44. set my face against them.

I will look upon them with an angry and displeased countenance, which is enough to destroy them, or to fill them with terrors. This phrase occurs chap. xiv. 8, which see. My wrath shall kindle a fire among them. *They shall go out from one fire;* either shift themselves, and flee from one evil, which as fire consumed them; or else be cast by others, by their enemies, out of one evil into another; from a less which troubled them to a greater which devours them, 1 Kings xix. 17; Jer. xlviii. 43, 44; Amos v. 19. *Ye shall know;* you that are in Babylon, and hear what mischiefs are heaped on Jerusalem one after another, shall know it is my anger and fury poured out upon them.

8 And I will make the land desolate, because they have † committed a trespass,
† Heb. *trespassed a trespass.* saith the Lord GOD.

Desolate: see chap. vi. 14. *A trespass;* not one single trespass, but they have been so perpetually trespassing that it seemed a continued act, and all done with greatest aggravation.

CHAP. XVI.

Under the similitude of a helpless exposed infant is represented the original state of Jerusalem, 1—5; *whom God is described to have bred up, married, and treated with kind indulgence,* 6—14. *Her unnatural whoredoms,* 15—34. *God threateneth her with severe judgment,* 35—43. *Her sin, equal to her mother's, the Hittite, and exceeding that of her sisters', Sodom and Samaria, shall not go unpunished,* 44—59. *A promise of mercy in the end,* 60—63.

AGAIN the word of the LORD came unto 594.
me, saying,

Again, Heb. *And,* frequently and properly enough rendered as here, *again,* not pointing out any particular time wherein it came to the prophet. *The word of the Lord came unto me;* both commanding and directing him what to speak; and it is a very elegant description of God's dealing with the Jews, and their carriage toward God; his dealing was kindness and tender compassion in the most unparalleled expressions of it toward the Jews, theirs to God was the most unthankful, undutiful, and rebellious.

2 Son of man, [a] cause Jerusalem to
a ch. 20. 4. & 22. 2. & 23. 7, 8, 9. know her abominations,

Declare to them that are with thee, and to them that are at Jerusalem, to these declare by letter, to those by word of mouth, what state theirs was in their infancy, what I did for them, for the whole nation of the Jews, for so I take Jerusalem here to signify. Make them know: it was not in

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his power to give them understandings, and to enlighten their minds, but his declaring to them is here called making them to know, because it was sufficient to have brought it to their knowledge. *Her abominations;* her multiplied transgressions, which were increased beyond number, and her great, foul sins, called here abominations, her idolatries, spiritual adulteries, and unexemplified folly in her lewdness, changing her God and Husband, Jer. ii. 10—13.

3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; Thy † birth [b] and thy nativity *is* of the land of Canaan; [c] thy father *was* an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite.

† Heb. *cutting out*, or, *habitation.*
b ch. 21. 30.
c ver. 45.

The proud and blinded Jews thought their original more pure than that of the heathen; this was an old tradition among them: now that the prophet is to acquaint them with the truth of their polluted original, which they will storm and fret at, he comes thus prefacing his discourse with a Divine commission. *The Lord God;* who is omniscient, knows all we are and do, who is so just and true, speaks not any thing but the very truth, who is supreme Judge and determiner of controversies. He tells the prophet what they were, and commands him to tell them. *Unto Jerusalem,* i. e. the whole race of the Jews, as ver. 2. Or, perhaps, in more special manner the inhabitants and natives of that proud city, who thought it a singular privilege to be born there, which the Jews counted more holy than the rest of the land of Canaan. *Thy birth;* thine *habitation* and thy *kindred,* so our English of the time of 2 Elizabeth. Thy root whence thou didst spring, the rock whence thou wast cut, the place where thou grewest up, the company and commerce thou didst use, all were of the land of Canaan, and thou hast a fulness of their vicious nature, manners, and practices, both in civil and religious things, as vile and obnoxious to my curse as Canaan itself. *Thy father:* if the prophet refer to Abraham, it must be understood of his state and religion before God called him, when he, as his father and kindred, worshipped strange gods beyond the river, Josh. xxiv. 14, with ver. 2. If the prophet refer to those that were in Egypt, the Jews' ancestors that dwelt there, it is certain that many of them forgot Abraham's God, closed with the Egyptian idolatry, and were polluted with idols, Josh. xxiv. 2. If you refer it as a figurative speech, and call them fathers whom we reverence, consult, obey, and imitate, as well we may call such fathers, these were not the best and holiest of men, Matt. iii. 7; xii. 34; xxiii. 33. O ye Jews, be it known to you, whatever you think, you have no cause to boast of your nobler or purer descent, your fountain was corrupt and poisonous. *Was;* might have been, for likeness of manners. *An Amorite;* either because this comprehended all the rest of the cursed nations; or because the Amorites, as the most powerful and mighty, so were the most wicked among them; it was the Amorites which were filling up their sins, Gen. xv. 16. *Thy mother:* sometimes the ill nature of a father is corrected in the child by the sweetness of the mother, but you Jews were not so happy, your mother was as bad every whit as your father; both prodigiously vile in their inclination, civil converse, and choice of their religion, and in the practice of it. The daughters of Heth were women of ill fame and worse manners, Gen. xxvii. 46, enough to make a good soul weary of life. Such is your race, O ye Jews.

4 And *as for* thy nativity, [d] in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water ‖ to supple *thee;* thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all.

d Hos. 2. 3.
‖ Or, *when I looked upon thee.*

In the day thou wast born; either in the day I called Abraham to leave his idolatry; or when in Egypt you began to multiply into a nation; or when you were brought out of Egyptian bondage. Or whether you fix any other time, it was a helpless and miserable state they were in. *Thy navel was not cut:* as the new-born infant cannot do this for its own preservation, and as there is great danger if not carefully and skilfully done, as it is the early care of the hand that delivers the child, so was the care and love of God towards this people when they could not, and others would not, help them, and this will be declared in a continued allegory. The preventing mercy of God was showed in this. *Washed in water.* Born in blood, unpleasant to behold, thou must have weltered therein, and perished; none washed thee, that thou mightest be handled, but I; I purged away the blood and uncleanness of thy birth, took thee up, nursed, provided for, and disposed of thee. *Thou wast not salted:* salt is of a drying, abstersive, and cleansing nature, and was used to purge, dry, and strengthen the new-born child, to make it the more lovely and lively. *Nor swaddled:* this usage for the continued preservation of the infant, for strengthening it, setting its limbs, and keeping them in their right and orderly posture, is most necessary to be observed, and yet there was none that would do this for this infant: so forlorn was the state of the Jews in their birth, without beauty, weltering in blood, without strength, new-born, without friend that might act the mother's or midwife's office.

5 None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born.

A confirmation of what was said ver. 4; no hand helped, because no eye pitied them; neither Terah's family to Abraham, nor the Egyptians to sojourning or departing Israel, showed any bowels of pity to help. *To do any of these:* though all those particulars toward an infant had not been done, if the more needful were done it might be well enough, but, poor infant, it hears of nobody to do any one of them for its health and life. *To have compassion;* to show any tenderness of heart toward it. *Cast out;* put out of doors, exposed to perish and starve with hunger and cold. *In the open field;* as far from likelihood of relief as from the sight of men; not laid in the street of city or town, not at some man's door, but in the open wide field, where devouring wild beasts are likely to come first and tear the helpless wretch to pieces. *To the loathing of thy person;* in contempt of thee, as unlovely and worthless; and in abhorrence of thee, as loathsome, putrifying, and offensive to the beholder.

6 ¶ And when I passed by thee, and saw thee ‖ polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee *when thou wast* in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee *when thou wast* in thy blood, Live.

‖ Or, *trodden under foot.*

After the manner of man God here speaks, alluding to some traveller or walker abroad, like Pharaoh's daughter, or the good Samaritan, that lighted on this poor forlorn infant. *Saw thee,* in such manner as to pity and consider how to relieve. To Omniscience every thing is seen, but here compassion is included in this seeing, this was the only eye that pitied. *Polluted in thine own blood;* most exact emblem of man's sinful and miserable state, his filthiness and death arising from himself, as the death and filthiness of one wallowing in his own blood. *I said unto thee;* I purposed to save thy life, I declared my purpose, and wrought the effect; I took care of thee, that thou mightest not die. *Yea, I said:* this is repeated, both to set forth the freeness and abundance of God's love, and to work our heart to a suitable resentment thereof, and to intimate the stability and stedfastness of the purposes and effects of grace. *Live;* it sounds like a command, but it is such a command as sends forth a power accompanying it to effect what is commanded; he gave that life; he spake, and it was done.

7 [e] I have † caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to † excellent ornaments: *thy* breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou *wast* naked and bare.

e Ex. 1. 7.
† Heb. *made thee a million.*
† Heb. *ornament of ornaments.*

The Lord, who chose Abraham and his seed; by his blessing this people were increased as by millions. How inconsiderable is a clan of seventy-five persons! So many went with Jacob into Egypt, where in two hundred and fifty years they grew to six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty, beside women, and children under twenty years, and old men above sixty years old. So the

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promise, Gen. xii. 2; xv. 5; xvii. 2, 4, was fulfilled. *As the bud of the field:* for multitude, they are compared to the numberless buds of the herb; for flourishing, they are like the bud in the beauty of its spring; and both include the goodness and richness of the land they dwelt in. *Increased;* grown up to maturity or full age. *Waxen great;* and in stature thou hast come to full, just proportions, or grown strong, mighty, and terrible to thy neighbours who were enemies, but honourable and a defence to thy friends. *Come to excellent ornaments:* as jewels and rich vestments set off a beautiful person, so the successes in enterprises, rich returns in merchandise, fruitfulness of the country itself, were the lustre of thy beauty, which all thy neighbours courted; thou wast adorned with the choicest blessings of Divine Providence. *Thy breasts are fashioned:* the prophet further describes the beauty and glory of the Jewish nation, grown up and fashioned under God's own hand, in order to be solemnly affianced to God. *Thine hair,* which is an ornament when well set, whereas baldness is a deformity. *Thou wast naked and bare,* i. e. when in Egypt, poor, and oppressed, and despised.

8 Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time *was* the time of love; [f]and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and [g]thou becamest mine.

f Ruth 3. 9.

g Ex. 19. 5. Jer. 2. 2.

When I passed by thee: see ver. 6. of the phrase. This second passing by may well be understood of God's visiting them and calling them out of Egypt. *Looked upon thee:* see the phrase ver. 6. *Thy time was the time of love;* the time of thy misery was the time of love and pity in me towards thee, and the time of thy grown beautified state was the time of my love of delight, when I rejoiced in thee, and espoused thee to be my wife. Thy time, i. e. the season fittest for the discovery of my purposes towards thee, was the time of love, which is expressed in what follows in the verse, *I spread my skirt over thee,* i. e. betrothed thee, as Ruth iii. 9; Deut. xxii. 30, engaged by marriage to love, cherish, protect, and safeguard. *Covered thy nakedness;* what was and would be thy reproach my love and bounty covered, I clothed thee with spoils of Egypt, and gave thee flocks, with the wool whereof thou mightest clothe thyself. If you take it figuratively, I covered all thy filthiness, and washed it away. *I sware unto thee;* gave thee the greatest, most inviolable, and solemn assurance of my conjugal love, care, and faithfulness. *Entered into a covenant with thee:* this was done at Mount Sinai, Exod. xix. 5. *Saith the Lord God:* the truth of all which the Lord doth avow in this form of asseveration. *Thou becamest mine;* by the obligations of my kindness thou couldst be no less, by thy own voluntary act and consent, by promise and profession, Exod. xix. 7, 8.

9 Then washed I thee with water; yea, I throughly washed away thy †blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil.

† Heb. bloods.

Then, Heb. *And:* this continueth the allegory, and declareth what more was done to prepare this virgin for advancement by this marriage covenant. *Washed I thee:* it was a very ancient custom among those Eastern people, as appears Ruth iii. 3; Esth. ii. 12, to purify virgins who were to be espoused ere long; and it is likely the prophet alludes to that, Exod. xix. 10. *I throughly washed away:* the same thing, by a very usual figure, repeated to confirm and illustrate what is spoken; the word in Hebrew notes an abundant washing, a rinsing of what was washed to make it cleaner; it includes a bathing, as Lev. xv. 10. *Thy blood;* thy original and birth pollution, which rendered thee displeasing to the eye, and unfit for the familiar and loving entertainment of a husband. *I anointed thee;* not to royal sovereign dignity, this is expressed by another word in the Hebrew; but anointed as they that were to be married, as Ruth iii. 3; Esth. ii. 12; or as those who were to come into the presence of great and noble personages, as Dan. x. 3; or as such who would look with cheerfuller countenances, and change their sad and mournful deportment, as 2 Sam. xii. 20: it is not improbable it may allude to the bounty of God toward the Jews in a land flowing with oil. Spiritually these refer to our cleansing by the blood of Christ, and by his sanctifying Spirit.

10 I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk.

So miserably poor was this creature, that she had not clothes to her back; he gave them who married her. *Broidered work;* rich and beautiful needle-work of divers colours, much above the state of an abject infant, and suited to the bounty and riches of him who gave them. *Badgers' skin;* those Eastern people had an art of curiously dressing and colouring the skins of those beasts, of which they made their neatest festival shoes, and these were for the richest and greatest personages to use. *I girded thee,* both for strength, activity, and ornament. *With fine linen;* both soft, warm, and comely. Such soft raiment, used in kings' courts, intimate the advancement of this abject to royal state, as well as delicately clothed. *I covered thee;* either covered, as the upper garment covers all the rest, or as curtains of the bed cover one who is laid to rest within them. The veil this virgin was covered with when she appeared abroad, and her furniture at home, were very rich, and proportioned to her Lord's grandeur and riches.

11 I decked thee also with ornaments, and I [h]put bracelets upon thy hands, [i]and a chain on thy neck.

h Gen. 24. 22, 47.

i Prov. 1. 9.

If the inventory of this virgin's goods given to her were hitherto of such things as were needful for her comfort, now follows a particular of what served for state and magnificence, as the phrase Job xl. 10: it also expresseth the bravery of a bridegroom, Isa. lxi. 10; the curiosity and exactness wherewith such do dress themselves. *I put,* Heb. *I gave,* i. e. freely. *Bracelets;* which usually were of gold, as appears, Gen. xxiv. 22, and presents made of these bespeak greatest respects. *A chain* of gold, in token of honour and authority, Gen. xli. 42; Dan. v. 16.

12 And I put a jewel on thy †forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.

† Heb. *nose;* See Is. 3. 21.

A jewel; it was many times of silver, but most commonly of gold, and was of circular figure, hanging by a string fastened above the forehead in such a manner that it lay or rested on the nose, much esteemed among the Eastern people, though of no account with us. *Earrings;* golden ornaments hanging in the fleshy part of the ear. *A beautiful crown;* a very rich and beautiful crown; as virgins espoused and married had crowns set on their heads, Cant. iii. 11, so, to complete the solemnity, and make the magnificence of these nuptials full, a crown of beauty is set on the head of this Jewish nation now married to God.

13 Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment *was of* fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; [k]thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding [l]beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom.

k Deut. 32. 13, 14.

l Ps. 45. 2.

The prophet sums up all again, partly to aver the truth thereof, partly to bring it to her remembrance, and partly to affect her with thankfulness for what she had received, and with shame for what she had done. *Thou didst eat fine flour;* it was the constant course of thy diet, to be provided thus with the choicest food, which thou didst not by scanty allowance taste of, but wast filled with: these were royal dainties, as Gen. xlix. 20. *Thou wast exceeding beautiful;* such diet, with the additional ornaments, would surely render a perfect beauty, and to such perfection did this espoused virgin grow. *Thou didst prosper;* all affairs succeeded well, and events added to thy greatness. *A kingdom,* not only compact in itself, but victorious over others; and so she was a mistress over kingdoms, as in David's, Solomon's, Jehoshaphat's, and Hezekiah's time.

14 And [m]thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it *was*

m Lam. 2. 15.

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perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD.

Thy renown; thy name was great and honoured. *Among the heathen;* not only next neighbours, but the uttermost ends of the earth, as it is said of the queen of Sheba, heard thereof. *For thy beauty;* the excellent order of thy government, prosperity of thy country, riches of thy merchants, and abundance of thy peace. *Perfect;* the best of any upon earth, no nations had such laws as they had, or God so near them; it was perfect in its kind. *My comeliness which I had put upon thee;* the form of the civil government and its laws, the wisdom, justice, and courage of the governors, the due compliance of the governed, and the holiness, purity, and truth of their religion; all which concurred to make up this beauty, and it was that God put upon them, or set before them, Deut. iv. 7, 8. The visible, outward, emblematic part of all was beautiful; the invisible, inward, and spiritual part was much more beautiful, and ought to be duly considered. Thus far what God did for her.

n See Deut. 32. 15. Jer. 7. 4. Mic. 3. 11. o Is. 1. 21. & 57. 8. Jer. 2. 20. & 3. 2, 6, 20. ch. 23. 3, 8, 11, 12. Hos. 1. 2.

15 ¶ [n]But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, [o]and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was.

Hear, O heavens, and be astonished at the complaint God doth make against this unthankful, forgetful, and perfidious woman! *Thou didst trust;* grew proud, laid aside humility, which became one raised from a most abject state, cast off the modesty, chastity, and fidelity which became a wife. *Thine own beauty;* it was not her own, but put upon her; she owed it to the love, bounty, and care of God; but, forgetting this, she accounts it her own, and then disposeth of it as she lists. *Playedst the harlot;* no doubt with the increase of wealth and honour the lewdness of harlots and adulteresses increased too, but here spiritual harlotry, i. e. idolatry, is meant; and to this course did the wanton, unstable, and ungodly Jews betake themselves from the days of the judges, and, especially in the latter days of their kingdom, this people went a whoring after idols. *Because of thy renown;* some would read it, against *thy renown*, to the blasting of thy honour; but rather her renown abroad drew to her idolatrous strangers, who brought their idols with them, and acquainted the Jews with the pomps of their idolatrous worship. *Pouredst out thy fornications;* didst readily and profusely lavish thy wealth, and prostitute thyself to them, thy land, thy cities; Jerusalem itself was full of the idols which the nations far and near did worship. Every stranger who passed through thee might find room for his idol and idolatry, and very like it was thou didst infect every one with somewhat of thine, as well as wast infected with their idolatry. *His it was;* thy person, affection, riches, religion, all was at the command and service of every adulterer, so impudently vile and false was she to God.

p 2 Kings 23. 7. ch. 7. 20. Hos. 2. 8.

16 [p]And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon: *the like things* shall not come, neither shall it be *so*.

Of thy garments; hers they were for use, by gift of God, but she looked on them as hers, without respect to either the giver or use intended. Those costly, royal robes, the very wedding clothes and furniture, *thou didst take;* as an adulteress that parts with the rich gifts of her husband to oblige an adulterer. *Deckedst:* by this it appears how shameless she was grown, that blushed not to be known, one that had turned her Husband's bounty, that had abused the unparalleled kindness of her God, to the open and public service of her adulterer, her idol; thus she turned her glory into shame. *Thy high places*, where both the idol's altar and worship were fixed. *With divers colours*, with those beautiful clothes and furniture I put upon thee to adorn thee; these hast thou made the carpets and hangings for the honour and service of idols. *The like things shall not come;* so matchless is this adulteress, that none shall be so impudent, and do like her; as there was none before her that hath done so to be her example, so shall there be none to follow her in these things wherein she hath exceeded.

17 Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images †of men, and didst commit whoredom with them,

† Heb. *of a male.*

Thy fair jewels; she forgot the property was in God, she reckoned them her own. The word in Hebrew is of larger extent, and includes vessels, instruments, furniture of all sorts, with which she was abundantly stored, even from their departure out of Egypt, when they spoiled the Egyptians, Exod. xi. 2, where the selfsame phrase is used, and more since Solomon made gold and silver so common in Jerusalem, with which they made vessels for use, and furniture of all sorts for ornament. *My gold:* the greater was the sin of this harlot, her ingratitude, and her injustice, that she robbed God, committed sacrilege, that she might have idols with which to defile herself by her idolatry. *I had given thee:* had she received them of any other hand, the wrong had been the less; but she received them, every one of them, of the hand of God: he gave her what the Egyptians lent, what David won from enemies, and what Solomon brought in by traffic; so Hos. ii. aggravates Israel's idolatry. *Madest;* brutish stupidity! to make an idol, and account it a god! *Images;* statues, molten and graven images; not one single image, but many; so idolatry, as adultery, is boundless. *Of men:* idolaters had male and female idols; and this idolatress here, as mostly they did, doted on male idols. It is not unlike to that chap. viii. 14, which see. And possibly the Egyptian idolatry with Osiris or Adonis may be noted, or some more lewd image or portrait of Priapus, which might be confirmed from ver. 26; chap. xxiii. 19, 20. *Didst commit whoredom with them;* provoked by such representations to speculative uncleanness, and prepared for bodily uncleanness also, and proceeding to spiritual adultery with these shameful images.

18 And tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them.

Thy broidered garments, mentioned ver. 10, given by him who espoused this woman. *Coveredst them;* didst clothe the adulterers with whom thou didst commit lewdness, or didst clothe the images which thou hadst made, as was the custom of idolaters to suit clothing to their idols. *Mine oil;* either in lamps to burn before them, or used in their sacrificing to their idols; or literally, didst in thy feast with thine adulterous lovers entertain them with the oil I gave thee. *Mine incense;* burnt before the idol incense, being one part of what they offered to idols; or burnt in the private house, to make it the more grateful to the adulterer, as Prov. vii. 16, 17.

q Hos. 2. 8.

19 [q]My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, *wherewith* I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for †a sweet savour: and *thus* it was, saith the Lord GOD.

† Heb. *a savour of rest.*

My meat also; the bread, all that was necessary and proper for thy sustentation in general, which I gave thee, thou hast fed thy paramours withal. *Fine flour, &c.:* here are particularly recounted the things God gave, and this adulteress misemployed, both literally and mystically; for I doubt not the Jews were lavish of the fruits of the Divine bounty, bestowing them both on adulterers and on idols. *For a sweet savour;* to reconcile the idol, or to prolong the favour of the idol, or to give a pleasing entertainment to their adulterers, or to provide for the idolatrous priests and their families, which could spend all this, though the idol knew not of it. *Thus it was;* all which is self-evident, plain, and needs no proof; it is undeniable.

r 2 Kings 16. 3. Ps. 106. 37, 38. Is. 57. 5. Jer. 7. 31. & 32. 35. ch. 20. 26. & 23. 37.

20 [r]Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them †to be devoured. *Is this* of thy whoredoms a small matter,

† Heb. *to devour.*

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Thy sons; they were hers by birth, and should have been hers in affection, care, and preservation; but as idolatry is from the father of lies, the old murderer, it is even cruel, and spares neither sons or daughters. *Sons,* that are usually the father's darlings, are always the strength and glory of the family, without respect to him that begat them, were by this adulteress designed to please the idol. *Thy daughters,* usually the mother's great delight, whose tender sex required better usage, unregarded, are by a cruel mother in idolatrous abominations destroyed. *Whom thou hast borne unto me;* which were mine, born within covenant, before the lewd mother was divorced, born to be of my family, and to serve and love me. *And these;* these very children of mine, to my dishonour and grief, to provoke me to utmost anger, hast thou destroyed. *Sacrificed;* not only consecrating them to be priests to dumb idols, dunghill gods, as chap. xx. 26; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6; or idolatrously purifying them, called lustration; or, which is most inhumanly cruel, burning them in sacrifice to Molech, which cruelty the Jews themselves did barbarously imitate, 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. *To be devoured;* to be consumed to ashes, being made a burnt-offering to the devil, as Psal. cvi. 37. *Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter?* were thy whoredoms a small matter with thee, that thou hast proceeded to this height of unnatural cruelty? Or, is both face and heart so hardened by an impudent course of adulteries, that thou canst do this as if it were no great matter? Will spiritual adulteresses as well as bodily thus hunt the precious life? Could such commit the worst who were forbid to commit any murder?

21 That thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through *the fire* for them?

Thy blind superstition called this religion, and accounted it sacrifice, but truth is it was unnatural murder; it is as if thou hadst cut their throat, nay, worse, because it put them to greater torture. The word is used Isa. lvii. 5; Hos. v. 2. *My children;* sons here are first-born, which peculiarly were devoted to God, he reserved a special right in these, and yet this cruel mother, this perfidious wife, this sacrilegious adulteress, sacrificeth these to her idols. *Delivered them;* either gave them to the idol's priests, or rather with her own hands gave them, i. e. led them through the fire, if lustrated, or put them into the idol's arms of brass or iron, which grasped them fast whilst they were consumed with fire that made the idol red hot. *For them;* for the idol's worship, or possibly for the parents, who did wickedly imagine this a way to preserve and prosper the rest of their children.

22 And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy [s]youth, [t]when thou wast naked and bare, *and* wast polluted in thy blood.

[s] Jer. 2. 2. ver. 43, 60. Hos. 11. 1. [t] ver. 4, 5, 6.

Thou wast so intent upon and delighted in thy lewd courses, thou never thoughtest what once thou wast, or what again thou mightest be. *In all thine abominations,* both corporal and spiritual. *Thy whoredoms:* this is the same thing charged thus on her, because she would not consider, or lay it to heart. *Thou hast not remembered;* thou hast utterly forgotten; it is a form of speech that contains more than the words seem to have in them, she had forgotten herself and her God. *Thy youth;* the misery and loathsomeness of thy birth, which is expressed very elegantly. 1. Naked, as contemptible as poverty could make her. 2. Nay, she was nakedness itself, as the word will bear, exposed to all the suffering that can befall such poor helpless wretches. 3. Bleeding to death in a most loathsome, defiled condition, that none would come near her: but, ungrateful, she forgot all.

23 And it came to pass after all thy wickedness, (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord GOD;)

It came to pass; it shall come to pass; so the Hebrew may be read, and then this verse will be a dreadful threat of misery to come upon the Jews for all their wickednesses; when they have filled up the measure of their sins, God will fill them with his judgments, and bring one woe after another upon them, as they proceeded from one wickedness to another. But as we read the words, they are an introduction to a further declaring of this people's multiplied wickedness, with a dreadful menace introduced somewhat abruptly to express God's great displeasure against them: the threat is doubled, because it is certainly coming, and will be great when come.

24 *That* [u]thou hast also built unto thee an ‖eminent place, and [x]hast made thee an high place in every street.

[u] ver. 31. ‖ Or, *brothel house.* [x] Is. 57. 5, 7. Jer. 2. 20. & 3. 2.

Hast also built, with great charge and pains, as those do who build, hereby declaring thy purposes of continuing thy lewdness. *Unto thee;* for thyself, grown so prodigiously public, and followed with such numbers, and such great ones, that no common place was thought great enough, or stately enough. *An eminent place;* not only eminent for its situation, but for its structure, that it might invite men in, and have room to treat them, unless you will refer the words that follow to the manner of the building, and the former words to the height of the situation. *An high place in every street;* idol temples and brothel-houses were in every street; so common were these sins with the Jews; in every large street capable of and frequented with much company. This in Jerusalem and her cities.

25 Thou hast built thy high place [y]at every head of the way, and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms.

[y] Prov. 9. 14.

Not content with what was done in the city, she built her idol temples and shows in the country, in places where many ways or roads met, wheresoever it was likely passengers would come. *Hast made thy beauty to be abhorred,* as the beauty of a shameless whore is abhorred by them to whom she offers herself. In her high places every passenger might meet his own god, and worship his own idol, and then satisfy his lust with lewd women, common as the street; and this made men abhor that beauty they would have admired, dressed in modesty, and dwelling retired. *Hast opened thy feet;* a modest expressing of the most immodest practice of lewd and insatiable adulteresses and whores, which are ready for every comer, and tempt such as tempt not them, ver. 32, 33.

26 Thou hast also committed fornication with [z]the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger.

[z] ch. 8. 10, 14. & 20. 7, 8. & 23. 19, 20, 21.

Committed fornication; both figuratively and literally understood; worshipped Egypt's gods, made covenants with them, kept up a commerce of trade with them, and prostituted themselves to their lusts too, by cohabitation, while the servitude lasted, and by nearness of place, when in Canaan. The Jewish nation retained too much inclination to those idolatrous and lustful neighbours. *Great of flesh;* politically they were great in power, and like to defend and help the Jews; naturally of big make, and men of great stature, and such as insatiable adulteresses would covet; and these considerations induced adulterous and idolatrous Israel to unite with them in leagues and religion. *To anger;* to a fierceness of anger for its degree, and to an abhorring and contemning of the person against whom this anger is stirred.

27 Behold, therefore I have stretched out my hand over thee, and have diminished thine ordinary *food,* and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee, [a]the ‖daughters of the Philistines, which are ashamed of thy lewd way.

[a] 2 Chron. 28. 18, 19. ver. 57. ‖ Or, *cities.*

Behold; open thine eyes, thou secure and foolish adulteress, see what hath been done against thee, and consider it is for thy lewdness. *I have stretched out my hand;* I have chastised and punished already in some measure. *Over thee;* it may be read, against thee. In like phrase Isaiah, v. 25; ix. 12, 17, 21; x. 4, expresseth the punishing of this people. *Diminished thine ordinary food;* abated of that plentiful allowance a kind Husband made, and an unfaithful wife abused: it refers to scarcity and penury, with which God did punish idolatrous Israel, and this more than

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once. *Delivered thee;* stirred up first such to fight against them, and then gave victory to their arms, yet they might use the conquered as they pleased; sent them into captivity into an enemy's land, where they that hated them ruled over them, and no doubt such would satisfy their own lusts on these captives. *The daughters of the Philistines:* either it is a Hebraism, the daughters of the Philistines for the whole nation, or else some particular cities and principalities of the Philistines, which quarrelled with and prevailed against the Jews, when God had been so provoked by the sins of the Jews. Idolaters, but in this honester than the Jews; they were constant to their own god, and did not, as the Jews, lewdly go a whoring with every idol they saw. *Which are ashamed of thy lewd way;* will therefore reprove, and teach thee some modesty and chastity.

[b] 2 Kin. 16. 7, 10. 2 Chr. 28. 23. Jer. 2. 18, 36. ch. 23. 12, &c.

28 [b]Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians, because thou wast unsatiable; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldest not be satisfied.

Thou hast courted their friendship and alliance, and to obtain it hast entertained their religion, manners, and impieties, been an idolatress with them, and committed adulteries with them, though they were far from thee. When thou didst wickedly with thy neighbours, it might admit some little colour of excuse, but it is inexcusable to run to remotest nations. *Because thou wast unsatiable;* without satisfying thyself (and so the Hebrew may be read); but our interpreters refer it to the boundless lusts of this lewd adulteress, and not to the issue and event of her practices; and in the endless lustings of a wicked heart idolaters and adulterers do agree. *Yea, thou hast played the harlot;* it is repeated to shame her, and make her blush and repent. *Couldst not be satisfied;* or, wast not satisfied. Assyrian gods proved, as other idols, a snare and a lie to the Jews, 2 Kings xvi. 9, 10; Jer. ii. 18, 36; Hos. vii. 11, 12; xiv. 3.

[c] ch. 23. 14, &c.

29 Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan [c]unto Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith.

Multiplied; both increased the number of thy idolatries, and made them greater, in that thou hast adopted the idols of Canaan, and all that between them and the Chaldeans are owned or worshipped. *In the land;* the Hebrew may be read *towards* as well as *in*. The idolatry of the Jews worshipping Canaan's idols was most intolerable, because God had so fully declared the vileness of it, and his abhorrence thereof, and so strictly charged the Jews to keep themselves from it. How monstrously wicked is it, that in prosperity, and possessing the houses and wealth which thy God gave thee out of the hands of the Canaanites and their idols, thou forgettest God, and worshippest their idols; and in adversity and captivity doest the like, and dotest on the idols of thine enemies!

30 How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord GOD, seeing thou doest all these *things*, the work of an imperious whorish woman;

Weak; unstable, like water that melts away. Neither hast strength of judgment to discern the truth and purity of religion, nor hast strength of resolution to hold fast to it. *Doest all these things;* changest thy God and religion, or dotest on all the gaudy, pompous religions and idols thou hearest of. *Imperious whorish woman;* a woman who thinks herself her own, that knows no superior, nor will be either guided and governed to do good, nor reproved and reclaimed from evil; a woman whose lust is her law, and her husband her contempt and burden. Such will be boundless in her disorders, and shameless too.

‖ Or, *In thy daughters in thine, &c.*

[d] ver. 24, 39.

31 ‖In that [d]thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way, and makest thine high place in every street; and hast not been as an harlot, in that thou scornest hire;

Thou buildest; see ver. 24; whereas the paramours of other lewd women build for them, as it is reported of Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 7, 8. Here, on the contrary, this unfaithful nation forsake their God, commit fornication with strange gods, and bear the charges both of building their temples, and furnishing them with sacrifices, and maintaining the priests. *Thine eminent place:* see ver. 24. *Every way:* see ver. 25. *In every street:* see ver. 24. *Hast not been as an harlot;* common harlots make gain of their looseness, and live by that gain, they make a prey of the men that come in to them; thou doest worse, thou lavishest out thy credit, wealth, and all, to maintain and please thine adulterers. *Scornest;* the Hebrew word is of two significations, and opposite to each other, for it bears, as our translation renders it, contempt, slighting, or disregarding; and so it suiteth with what follows, ver. 32—34. It signifieth also to praise, value, and regard, as Buxtorf observes; and it will as well, if not better, be so rendered here, and be the character of a common harlot, which wandereth after her lovers with a design of receiving the rewards of her lewdness; and thus the Chaldee paraphrase reads it; so we shall need no parenthesis, nor begin the antithesis till the 32nd verse.

32 *But as* a wife that committeth adultery, *which* taketh strangers instead of her husband!

Here begins the antithesis. A wife, adulteress, such as the prophet compareth this nation to, which hath a most rich, bountiful, and kind husband, she differs from common harlots in this point, she hunts not rewards, but forbidden pleasures.

[e] Is. 30. 3. Hos. 8. 9. † Heb. *bribest.*

33 They give gifts to all whores: but [e]thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and †hirest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom.

They, unclean fornicators and adulterers, *give gifts;* the word is of a restrictive sense, speaks not any kind of gifts in general, but peculiarly such gifts as are presented by a wooer, or espouser of a woman, with which she is enriched and adorned; and may perhaps imply the arts, pretences, and arguments which are used by loose men to seduce and corrupt virgins; they pretend marriage designed, make presents, and deceive. *To all whores,* i. e. to the most of them, it is usually so. *Thy gifts;* thy nuptial gifts, which thy generous and bountiful Husband gave thee at the espousals, or on the wedding day. Those gifts which are most highly valued, most carefully preserved, and most unwillingly parted with by all virtuous women, thou most unparalleled adulteress hast given to thy Husband's greatest enemies, to thy beastly adulterers. *To all thy lovers;* thou makest little difference, but, as it happens, any one of thy lewd companions may easily have these gifts of thy hand. *Hirest them,* by large gifts, as bribes usually are; and the word used here signifieth, they slight thee, and have no desire after thee. Like despised adulteresses, they would hate thee, but thy bribes change their behaviour, though not their minds and thoughts of thee. *On every side;* women have somewhat of modesty remaining amidst their lewdness for the most part, and if adulteresses, yet have their lovers in some corner or other; but thou, as unsatiable, hast them every where round about thee.

34 And the contrary is in thee from *other* women in thy whoredoms, whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms: and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary.

That which subverts the order of nature, is contrary to the innate modesty of thy sex. Thou followest them, treatest, importunest, promisest, payest, and caressest them. Thus, as a shameless adulteress, Israel had carried it toward her God, who espoused, enriched, beautified, and delighted in her; but she hired the nations round about her to enter covenant with her; entertained and maintained all their idolatrous worship, gave the nuptial gifts to hateful idols.

35 ¶ Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD:

Her indictment and notoriety of all the charge against her we have heard; her crimes she was guilty of, with the aggravations of them; now follows sentence of condemnation against her. *Hear the word* of just condemnation which thou must submit to, though thou refusedst the word of counsel and precept.

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36 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thy filthiness was poured out, and thy nakedness discovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers, and with all the idols of thy abominations, and by [f]the blood of thy children, which thou didst give unto them;

[f] ver. 20. Jer. 2. 34.

Thus saith the Lord God: this august title is a preface to give weight to the sentence, and to affect her heart with fear. *Thy filthiness;* it might be rendered money, with which she hired and bribed her lovers, which she spent upon Baal, as Hos. ii. 8. Her sorcery, with which she bewitched and enchanted them: her poison, infused into them she conversed with: the impudence of her carriage, as a whore with a forehead of brass, Jer. iii. 3. *Poured out:* it includes her eagerness, constancy, and abounding in her wickedness, and most modestly upbraids her with her most immodest lasciviousness, and discovery of it. *Thy nakedness discovered:* sometimes it is figuratively taken, so it may be here, though I rather think she is charged with such prostitution as the discovering the parts nature hath concealed, and modesty should keep secret. *Through thy whoredoms;* in thy playing the harlot thou hast shamelessly incited thy lovers by discovery of thy secret parts. *With all the idols:* as before was observed, she doted on all the idols of her neighbours and acquaintance, which become her abominations by her loving them, when she should have abhorred them. *The blood of thy children:* see ver. 20, 21. Adultery, idolatry, murder of her children, is the sum of this charge drawn up against her.

37 Behold, therefore [g]I will gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all *them* that thou hast loved, with all *them* that thou hast hated; I will even gather them round about against thee, and will discover thy nakedness unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness.

[g] Jer. 13. 22, 26. Lam. 1. 8. ch. 23. 9, 10, 22, 29. Hos. 2. 10. & 8. 10. Nah. 3. 5.

Behold: God calls her to consider what heavy judgment he pronounceth and will execute. *Gather* whole herds and droves, for the word implieth such a gathering together. *All thy lovers;* Chaldeans, Assyrians, Egyptians. *Pleasure;* unlawful pleasures of body, commerce, and idolatrous feasts in their idolatrous sacrifices. Old pretended friends, now turned into vehement enemies; and old enemies, who have earnestly longed for such an opportunity to vent their malice; their hatred will heap on thee mischiefs, under which real friendship might somewhat relieve, but counterfeited friendship never will; thou shalt not have a friend to pity or help thee. *Them that thou hast hated;* so shall my threats be fulfilled, Lev. xxvi. 17, when I give thee up into their hands, who remember thy hatred against them, and renew the old hatred they had against thee. *I will even gather them;* it shall be very certain, and my hand, saith God, shall be seen doing it, I will do this. *Round about;* all the nations that are on every side, that there may be numbers enough to do this, and that there may be no escape for thee, when, which way soever thou fleest, still thou fleest into the mouth of thy enemies, and who hate thee. *Discover thy nakedness;* lay open to view all thy shameless doings; thou didst discover thy nakedness to allure, and then to satisfy thy prodigious lust; now it shall be discovered to nauseate them, and to provoke them to contemn thee, and to use thee as so vile a person deserveth. So God retaliateth, and punisheth sinners, that their sin may be seen in the punishment. *May see,* with upbraiding, scorning, and hating of it and them. *All thy nakedness;* the odiousness of thy sinful courses, and the weakness of thy state.

38 And I will judge thee, †as [h]women that break wedlock and [i]shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy.

† Heb. *with judgments of.*
[h] Lev. 20. 10. Deut. 22. 22. ch. 23. 45.
[i] Gen. 9. 6. Ex. 21. 12. See ver. 20, 36.

And I, who am thy Lord and Husband, whose authority and kindness thou hast so contemned and abused, *will judge thee;* both condemn thee to suffer what thou deservest, and execute what thou art condemned to; *as women that break wedlock,* who were sometimes strangled, sometimes stoned, sometimes burnt, were put to death to be sure, Lev. xx. 10; Deut. xxii. 22. It may intimate the future destruction of her adulterous lovers, for both the adulterer and adulteress were to die. She was guilty of the unnatural murder of her children, and God will, according to his own law, Gen. ix. 5, 6; Numb. xxxv. 31, 32, cause her blood to be shed. *Will give thee blood;* the like phrase you have Rev. xvi. 6, and elsewhere; the like judgment is expressed by watering the land with blood, as chap. xxxii. 6, and by preparing one for blood, chap. xxxv. 6: Thou gavest the blood of thy children to idols in sacrifice, I will give thee thine own blood to drink; thou didst it in contempt of my law, I will do it in vindication of my law. *In fury and jealousy;* passions that do usually appear in the revenges that abused husbands take on their wives which have intolerably dishonoured and wronged them; and God expresseth his great indignation, and the severity of his just displeasure, by allusion hereunto.

39 And I will also give thee into their hand, and they shall throw down [k]thine eminent place, and shall break down thy high places: [l]they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take †thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare.

[k] ver. 24, 31.
[l] ch. 23. 26. Hos. 2. 3.
† Heb. *instruments of thine ornament.*

This particularly describes the manner in which God will do what he threatens. *I will give thee,* as a judge delivers the condemned into the hand of the executioner. *Their hand;* power and exasperated rage. *Throw down,* undermine and utterly ruin, *thine eminent place;* thy idol temples, and thy stews: see ver. 24, 31. *Shall break down;* the same in other terms. *They shall strip thee:* it is opprobrium to a man to be stripped, more to a woman; this Jewish adulteress shall be stripped, that her nakedness appear. God's undeserved love covered her nakedness, ver. 8, his just displeasure will now discover her nakedness. *Thy fair jewels:* see ver. 17.

40 [m]They shall also bring up a company against thee, [n]and they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with their swords.

[m] ch. 23. 10, 47.
[n] John 8. 5, 7.

They; the king of Babylon, and his counsellors, and captains. *A company;* an assembled army. You had your assemblies for your idol worship, and I will have also an assembly, but it shall be of Chaldeans, Hab. i. 6, and others, to destroy you for your idolatry. *They shall stone thee:* the punishment by stoning was not inflicted on the condemned, but in the sight of the congregation; so here is a congregation of many nations, before whom this just judgment of God shall be executed on this adulteress. It intimates the manner of battering of the walls of Jerusalem, with stones cast out of their engines. *Thrust thee through with their swords;* when the enemy shall assault and take the battered city, he will in his fury slay and destroy with the sword. It is called *their sword,* because it might mind the Israelites that the destruction would be with the sword of a cruel one, of either an old professed enemy, or a new revolted friend.

41 And they shall [o]burn thine houses with fire, and [p]execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women: and I will cause thee to [q]cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more.

[o] Deut. 13. 16. 2 Kings 25. 9. Jer. 39. 8. & 52. 13.
[p] ch. 5. 8. & 23. 10, 48.
[q] ch. 23. 27.

They; that company mentioned ver. 40. *Shall burn thine houses;* as harlots and idolaters were to be punished; intimating also the burning Jerusalem, the temple and houses in it, as 2 Kings xxv. 9; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19. *Execute,* as God's instruments to do his will, and also as men that satisfy their own rage, *judgments,* all kind of cruelty, *upon thee,* O Jerusalem, and thine inhabitants, *in the sight of many women;* the people that were gathered to besiege, take, and spoil Jerusalem, and the daughters thereof. *I will cause thee:* it is not said how this shall be done, whether by changing their minds, or by utterly ruining them; but this shall be done: this is the effect of the Divine judgments. *From playing the harlot;* from idolatry, and adul-

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teries, which attend it. *Thou also*, who hast been so lavish, and inclined to this course, *shalt give no hire any more;* so poor, thou canst not, or so changed, that thou wilt no more, hire paramours to come in to thee.

r ch. 5. 13. 42 So [r]will I make my fury toward thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry.

It may admit a doubt, whether this be spoken in way of promise and kindness, or of menace and wrath. This latter seems intended, as if God said, The jealousy whereto you have provoked me will never cease till these judgments have utterly destroyed you, and cut you off, as the anger of an abused husband ceaseth in the divorce and public punishment of the adulteress. *My jealousy shall depart from thee;* I will no more concern myself for thee, nor be troubled at thy carriage, whatever it be, since thou art no more mine. *Will be no more angry*, with the anger which is in the breast of a husband troubled for and angry at the miscarriages of a wife he loved.

s ver. 22. Ps. 78. 42. 43 Because [s]thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, but hast fretted me

t ch. 9. 10. & 11. 21. & 22. 31. in all these *things:* behold, therefore [t]I also will recompense thy way upon *thine* head, saith the Lord GOD: and thou shalt not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations.

This verse recapitulates the causes of God's great displeasure against Jerusalem. *Thou hast not remembered:* see ver. 22. *Hast fretted me;* a mixed passion, in which is grief as well as anger, such as moves in the heart of a jealous husband, or such as is the passion of one that is grieved and angered at the rebukes of her folly, breaks out into disorderly carriage against the reprover, and tumultuating within her own breast, holds on her course. *All these things*, already mentioned and charged against thee. *Behold;* lay it now before thine eyes, and consider it. *Will recompense;* or, have recompensed; for the prophet speaks of the times when all he threatened from God should be executed upon this people. *Thou shalt not commit this lewdness, &c.:* this passage is somewhat intricate, and is read by some thus, I have not done according to what all thine abominations deserve, or I have not executed such thoughts as all thy lewdness calls for. Some read, as we, in the second person, Thou hast not, &c., i. e. made account, or thought with thyself what would become of thee, or what thou shouldst do after all thine abominations, therefore these sore judgments have overtaken and ruined thee. As our version renders the words, they seem to be the same with that ver. 41. After all God's judgments poured forth, such should be their condition and state, they should be so poor and despised, they neither should have opportunity nor ability to please their idolatrous and adulterous companions.

44 ¶ Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use *this* proverb against thee, saying, As *is* the mother, *so is* her daughter.

That useth proverbs; that delights to make parables, and useth to taunt at the vices of notorious sinners. *Shall use this proverb against thee:* this might be read with the former phrase, and render us this sense, Every one that would speak against thee, O Jerusalem, and tartly upbraid thee, shall use this proverb. *The mother;* old Jerusalem, when the seat of the Jebusites; or the land of Canaan, when full of the idolatrous, bloody, barbarous nations. *Her daughter;* Jerusalem, or synagogue of the Jews, which is more like in the wickednesses of those accursed nations, than near them in places of abode. See more ver. 3.

45 Thou *art* thy mother's daughter, that lotheth her husband and her children; and thou *art* the sister of thy sisters, which lothed their husbands and

u ver. 3. their children: [u]your mother *was* an Hittite, and your father an Amorite.

Thou, the nation of the Jews. *art thy mother's daughter;* as much for her vicious inclinations, as for thy original derived from her, the most wicked daughter of as wicked a mother. *That loatheth;* that was weary of the best Husband, that while she doted on abominable adulterers, did most contemptuously disregard her Husband, and forsake him. Other lewd women have had some love for their children, because born of them, bred by them, and resembling them; so much of the mother was in the children, that some adulteresses have loved themselves in the children; but here is a loose woman, an unnatural beast, that loathes her own flesh, persecuting such as are constant to the law of God their Father, and murdering others in sacrifice to devils. *The sister of thy sisters:* it runs in the blood; as the mother, so the sisters, loved and doted on strange flesh, were as inordinate in their affections to others, as they were in their disaffection to their own husbands and children. *Your mother:* see ver. 3. He speaks of them collectively, and as the greatest part were.

46 And thine elder sister *is* Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and [x]†thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, *is* Sodom and her daughters.

x Deut. 32. 32. Is. 1. 10. † Heb. *lesser than thou.*

Thine elder sister, i. e. the greater for power, riches, and numbers of people, not the elder for years. *Samaria;* metropolis, or mother city, of the revolted and idolatrous ten tribes. *Her daughters;* lesser cities of the kingdom of Israel, or the people who dwelt in them. *At thy left hand;* northward, as you look toward the east. *Thy younger sister;* or lesser, so the Hebrew; which consists of fewer people, is of less power. *At thy right hand;* southward from Jerusalem. *Sodom*, as chief city. *Her daughters;* either the cities near in place, and joined in affinity, idolatry, and other sins like Sodom, or the inhabitants of those cities.

47 Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, ‖ as *if that were* a very little *thing*, [y]thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways.

‖ Or, *that was loathed as a small thing.* y 2 Kin. 21. 9. ch. 5. 6. 7. ver. 48, 51.

Yet, Heb. *And. Walked;* lived and behaved thyself as they did, for they, all things considered, were less sinners than thou. *Nor done, &c.;* the same in other words; their doings were abominable, but thine have been worse. *Thou*, O Jerusalem! *wast corrupted more than they;* art deeper dyed in sin. These deep sins were more universal, if not as to the actors, for number, yet as to extent of the wickednesses those actors committed.

48 *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, [z]Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.

z Matt. 10. 15. & 11. 24.

As I live; an oath which God often confirms his word by, and certainly that may be believed which the God of truth confirms by his own oath. See this oath explained, chap. v. 11. *Hath not done;* hath not equalled thy sins, how little soever thou believest this: the disparity lieth in this, she the less, thou the greater sinner.

49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, [a]fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

a Gen. 13. 10.

The iniquity; iniquity, either for iniquities, or the fountain and occasion of all amongst the Sodomites. *Pride;* a haughty mind, swelled with the excellency, beauty, and grandeur of their state, and vaunting of it above their neighbours. *Fulness of bread*, i. e. luxury, and riotous excess in eating and drinking: their plenty was not their sin, but they made it occasion of sin to themselves; they were very intemperate in their diet. *Abundance of idleness;* every thing so plentiful, that they little regarded to employ themselves, but were idle and slothful, or deeply secure in their peace, plenty, and honour, neither feared God's wrath or man's sword; the first was the fault of particular sinners, the latter was the sin and fault of the

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community. *Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy;* she refused to help strangers, as appeareth in the history of the angels' entertainment, Gen. xix.; nor was she mindful of helping the poor with counsel and defence; they were unmerciful and hard-hearted toward the poor amongst them. This was a great sin to those that abounded in wealth, as the Sodomites did.

b Gen. 13. 13. & 18. 20. & 19. 5. c Gen. 19. 24.

50 And they were haughty, and [b] committed abomination before me: therefore [c] I took them away as I saw *good*.

Haughty; insufferably arrogant in their deportment towards good men, they vexed the soul of righteous Lot; and towards the angels, whom they assaulted in Lot's house; and towards God himself, as both in this verse, and in Gen. xiii. 13. *Committed;* worked, as if it were their trade. *Abomination;* the whole of these men's life was as one continued act of the highest wickedness. *Before me;* either against God, or openly and publicly, as Isa. iii. 9. *I took them away;* destroyed their state, cities, people, and country, turned them into a lake of dead and deadly water, or rather bitumen and sulphur. *As I saw good;* in a way none could have suspected, and, for aught I know, none ever saw before or since. If you inquire how Jerusalem's sins were greater than Sodom's, I would answer, if not in the things done, yet in the aggravating circumstances of them; against redeeming mercy, against the law of God, which forbade what they did, and told them what they should do, against admonitions by the mouth of prophets, and against examples of God's vengeance on Sodom and the cities of the plain.

51 Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and

d Jer. 3. 11. Matt. 12. 41, 42.

[d] hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done.

Samaria; the ten tribes, or kingdom of Israel, founded in rebellion and idolatry. *Committed half of thy sins;* a proverbial speech, usual in comparison to set forth the lesser part, as 1 Kings x. 7. *But thou hast multiplied:* this explains the former. *More;* more, or greater, the Hebrew word signifieth both. *Justified;* not made them righteous, but declared them less unrighteous than thou in thy abominations; of the two they are less faulty.

52 Thou also, which hast judged thy sisters, bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they: they are more righteous than thou: yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters.

Thou also; Jerusalem, and all the Jews with her. *Hast judged;* hast pretended it was wonder a people should sin as Samaria; or hast once condemned their apostacy, whilst thou stoodest; or hast judged their punishment just, that they deserved all they suffered. *Bear;* shalt surely be loaded with punishment. *Thine own shame;* that shall be thy shame as well as smart. *More abominable:* see ver. 47, 48, 51.

e See Is. 1. 9. & ver. 60, 61. f Jer. 20. 16.

53 [e] When I shall bring again their captivity, [f] the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then *will I bring again* the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them:

It is disputed whether this be a promise or menace; it is most likely to be a threat; and if you consider the difference between a temporal and spiritual restitution, and the difference between an entire and partial restitution, it will be evident. Sodom and Samaria never were restored to that state they had been in, nor were the two tribes ever made so rich, mighty, and renowned, though God brought some of them out of Babylon; and yet were these words promissory, both Sodom, Samaria, and the two tribes would have been restored. The words seem to confirm irrecoverably a low, afflicted, despised state, as the future condition of the Jews for ever in their temporals. *Then;* then, not before: this doth not preclude a future full restitution, but is an argument that concludes against the consequence, but a negation of the antecedent, as if it were said, If ever Sodom and Samaria may hope, then thou mayst hope for a restoring to thy former glory; but Sodom and Samaria never shall, therefore neither thou, O Jerusalem, and deluded Jews. And this may have respect to the false prophets, who deceived this people with promises of deliverance from being made captives, or of sudden restitution of all to them.

54 That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art [g] a comfort unto them.

g ch. 14. 22, 23.

Thou mayest; thou shalt, so the Hebrew, as well as *mayest. Shame;* punishment for offences is ever reproachful, and some punishments are more so than others. Such shall the Jews' punishments be. *Confounded;* some offenders are hardened to an insensibleness of shame, but God will make these Jews to feel the smart, and blush under the shame of their punishments. *In all that thou hast done;* for all the wickednesses from which the punishments of Sodom and Samaria should have deterred them, for imitating and outdoing them. *A comfort;* encouraging sinners like those of Sodom and Samaria, and being fellow sufferers with them in as great, or greater, judgments.

55 When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.

This verse is explained in ver. 53, and needs not a repeated explication; it threatens a perpetual continuance of their low, abject, and miserable state in their outward concerns.

56 For thy sister Sodom was not †mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy †pride,

† Heb. *for a report, or, hearing.* † Heb. *pride, or, excellencies.*

This is the reason why their state should be hopeless as that of Sodom. The sins of Sodom and her plagues were not minded by thee, though thou didst worse in thy prosperity, didst not fear like misery, nor wouldst forbear like sins. Thou shouldst have told thy children what Sodom did against the Lord, and what the Lord did against them, that thou and thy daughters might have repented, and returned; but no such things were told them.

57 Before thy wickedness was discovered, as at the time of *thy* [h] reproach of the daughters of †Syria, and all *that are* round about her, [i] the daughters of the Philistines, which ‖ despise thee round about.

h 2 Kin. 16. 5. 2 Chron. 28. 18. Is. 7. 1. & 14. 29. † Heb. *Aram.* i Ver. 27. ‖ Or, *spoil.*

The time of her pride, security, and sin was when they were not afflicted, and despised by the Syrians. *Thy wickedness;* thy abominable doings were made known to thyself, to thy friends and enemies too, by the execution of the severe menaces and sad predictions of my prophets, who foretold what punishments and what shame this sinful people should suffer by the hands of the Syrians, who should waste the Jews, and deride them, burn their cities, and carry citizens captives, as in the time of Ahaz over Judah, and Rezin over Syria. *All that are round about;* the nations that were round about in vicinity, and combined in league against the house of David. *Her;* either Jerusalem or Syria; rather this latter, the chief whereof were the Philistines, called here *the daughters of the Philistines,* as Isa. ix. 12. *Despise thee;* contemn thee, as an impotent as well as wicked people, a people which had deserved to be enslaved, and over whom they might at pleasure make a king.

58 [k] Thou hast †borne thy lewdness and thine abominations, saith the LORD.

k ch. 23. 49. † Heb. *borne them.*

What thou hast done I have imputed to thee; thou wilt not repent, therefore I account thee guilty, and I have in part punished thee; and though what I have done seem grievous, yet worse is behind, as ver. 59.

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59 For thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which hast [l]despised [m]the oath in breaking the covenant.

l ch. 17. 13, 16. m Deut. 29. 12, 14.

This is ushered in with a most solemn and sacred asseveration. *I will even deal with thee;* either thus: Thou hast despised the laws and privileges of my covenant with thee, and I will despise all thy pretensions to my favour by virtue of my covenant; it is mutual, and who breaks it forfeits all benefit by it. Or, deal with thee according as thou hast done to other punished sinners, over which thou hast insulted and condemned. *Hast despised the oath;* by wilful and contemptuous despite hast perjured thyself, which is a sin the nations about thee could not be guilty of, for they were not, thou only wast, in covenant with me. Or else, Thou hast contemptuously slighted my bounty and grace, and my faithfulness and truth, and bound thyself by covenant with idols and idolaters, though I had so expressly forbidden them. *The covenant,* made in Horeb.

n Ps. 106. 45. 60 ¶ Nevertheless I will [n]remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee [o]an everlasting covenant.

o Jer. 32. 40. & 50. 5.

The Lord having denounced a perpetual punishment to the stubborn, impenitent body of the Jewish nation, he doth now promise to the remnant that they shall be remembered and obtain covenanted mercy, which makes up the last part of the chapter. *I will remember:* properly neither remembering nor forgetting is in God, who is omniscient; but after the manner of man this is spoken of God, who is said to remember when he makes it appear that he hath regard to us, as Psal. xx. 3, and blesseth us. *My covenant;* in which I promised I would not utterly cast off the seed of Israel, nor fail to send the Messiah, the Redeemer, who should turn away iniquity from Jacob. *With thee;* in the loins of Abraham, and solemnly renewed after their coming out of Egypt, which is the time called the days of thy youth, Isa. xliv. 2; xlvi. 3; Ezek. xvi. 43. *Establish;* confirm and ratify, it shall be sure and unfailing. *Everlasting,* i. e. of a very long continuance, as to that part of the covenant which respecteth their condition in the Land of Promise, or Canaan; but in what is spiritual, and containeth heavenly things, it shall be absolutely everlasting, Jer. xxxi. 31—34.

p ch. 20. 43. & 36. 31. 61 Then [p]thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for [q]daughters, [r]but not by my covenant.

q Is. 54. 1. & 60. 4. Gal. 4. 26, &c. r Jer. 31. 31, &c.

Then; when that new covenant, made and confirmed, shall operate and take effect. *Remember;* consider and lay to heart, repent of, mourn for, loathe and abhor, and turn from all thy wicked ways, all thy evil practices and doings. *Be ashamed;* though whilst thou wast an adulteress, and false to thy Husband, thou didst not blush, now thou shalt with a deep shame remember and detest thy lewdness. *Receive;* admit into church communion, own them as members of the church of God. *Thy sisters;* the Gentiles, now strangers, but then sisters. *Thine elder;* or those that are greater and mightier than thou, or that by their power, wealth, and honour are as much above thee as the elder children are above the younger. *Thy younger;* thy lesser or meaner sister. *I will give them unto thee;* they shall be to thee as a gift bestowed in love. *For daughters:* as daughters in duty hearken to and obey, so shall the Gentiles brought into the church hearken to the word of God, which sounded out from the Jews from Jerusalem. *By thy covenant;* not by that old covenant which was violated, not by external ceremonies, which were a great part of the first covenant, but by that covenant which writes the law in the heart, and puts the fear of God into the inward parts.

s Hos. 2. 19, 20. 62 [s]And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD:

This promise you have ver. 60. *My covenant,* in distinction from that is called thy covenant, ver. 61. *With thee,* O Israel, first, and then with the Gentiles, as thy children, with all the genuine children of Abraham, father of the faithful. *Thou shalt know that I am the Lord:* this short sentence contains the sum of all our duty and privileges; it is summarily a promise of grace and glory; it is a sanctifying knowledge to fit us for obedience, and it is a justifying knowledge to deliver us from punishment; it is evangelical knowledge of God, a knowledge which is unto eternal life.

63 That thou mayest [t]remember, and be confounded, [u]and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.

t ver. 61. u Rom. 3. 19.

Mayest remember: see ver. 61. *Confounded:* see ver. 61. *Never open thy mouth,* neither to justify thyself, or to condemn others, or to quarrel with thy God, but, as a true penitent, be silent under the judgments sins have deserved, and God hath inflicted, to draw away from sin, and to bring a people to submit to God, and to give him glory. *Because of thy shame;* such a confusion for thy sin will cover thee, that thou wilt readily justify God, and blush in remembrance of all thine own wickednesses. *When I am pacified;* when I have pardoned, when I have covered all thy sins, and am reconciled to thee, thou wilt ingenuously acknowledge, remember, and hate what thy God hath graciously pardoned, will no more remember against thee, or punish any more upon thee.

CHAP. XVII.

Under the parable of two eagles and a vine, 1—10, *is showed God's judgment upon Zedekiah, for revolting from Babylon to Egypt,* 11—21. *A promise of Christ's kingdom,* 22—24.

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, cir. 594.

2 Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel;

These two verses are preface to what follows in the chapter. *A riddle;* a dark saying, which calls for thorough consideration to understand and apply it, because the meaning is different to the sound of the words. *A parable;* the same thing redoubled in different words. And it is likely the prophet is commanded to use a parable, because those Eastern people were much used to and taken with this kind of discourse. *The house of Israel,* i. e. the remainders of the house of Israel, whether of the ten tribes, or of the two tribes.

3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; [a]A great eagle with great wings, long-winged, full of feathers, which had †divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and [b]took the highest branch of the cedar:

a See ver. 12, &c. † Heb. *embroidering.* b 2 Kings 24. 12.

A great eagle; Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, as ver. 12, compared to a great eagle, king of birds, swift, strong, rapacious, and of a lofty flight. *With great wings;* mighty provinces on each side of his kingdom. *Long-winged;* his kingdom was vastly extended, as Dan. iii. 3; iv. 1; the greatest king then living. *Full of feathers;* his kingdom was very full of people. *Which had divers colours;* were of divers nations, languages, and manners, so that this eagle may be well thought to be that sort which is greatest in the kind, and best resembleth him, who was the greatest monarch in the world at that time. *Came;* invaded with a mighty army; he came not as a traveller to please his curiosity, but as an invader to enlarge his dominion. *Unto Lebanon;* either the temple built with cedars of Lebanon; or Jerusalem, the chief city of the country where this great, fruitful, and pleasant hill was; or the whole country set forth by its chiefest hill, which runs about a hundred and twenty-five miles in length, and encloseth the land of Judea on the north side. *Took;* took captive and carried away with him. *The highest branch;* the king of Judah, Jehoiachin. *Of the cedar;* either the royal family, or rather, the whole nation of the Jews.

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4 He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants.

Cropped off; as a gardener crops off the goodliest scions, and carrieth them away to graft on some other stock. *The top;* both the king of Judah, now eighteen years old, and the nobles and chief of the land. *Into a land of traffic;* into Babylon, which was a city of mighty trade, explained further by being a city of merchants, and peculiarly of merchants that traded in sweet spices and odoriferous gums.

5 He took also of the seed of the land, and †planted it in [c]a fruitful field; he placed *it* by great waters, *and* set it [d]*as* a willow tree.

† Heb. *put it in a field of seed.*
c Deut. 8. 7, 8, 9.
d Is. 44. 4.

Took; chose out one to be king instead of Jehoiachin. *Of the seed of the land;* a native, and, which is more, one of the royal family, Mattaniah, whom he called Zedekiah. *Planted it;* settled him on the throne of Judah. *A fruitful field;* a field fit for such a design, in the land of Judea. The prophet goeth on in his allusion, and explains what he meant, compares this new-made king to a willow, which grows no where so well as in a wet soil, and on banks of great waters.

6 And it grew, and became a spreading vine [e]of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.

e ver. 14.

It grew; both the king and kingdom. *Became a spreading vine;* took root, grew up to a tolerable condition of riches, plenty, and prosperity. *Of low stature;* but never reached the height of the cedar. Nebuchadnezzar, though he made Zedekiah king, yet kept him subject and dependent. *Turned;* they grew and flourished, while they owned their state tributary to Babylon. *Toward him;* Nebuchadnezzar, as their protector, benefactor, and sovereign lord. *The roots thereof;* all the firmness, fruitfulness, and life of this state was in a subjection to the king of Babylon. . *So;* thus, in this order and manner of dependence, both the Jews and their king had life, growth, and verdure. *Branches;* greater and stronger boughs for present strength, beauty, and fruit. *Sprigs;* younger and tenderer springles, as children, the hope of future times.

7 There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, [f]this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation.

f ver. 15.

This is the second part of the parable. *Another great eagle,* i. e. the king of Egypt, whether Apries, or Hophra, or what other was his name we need not curiously inquire, it was king of Egypt, ver. 15. *Great wings:* see ver. 3. *This vine;* Zedekiah, his nobles and people. *Did bend her roots towards him;* sought the friendship and help of the king of Egypt. *Shot forth her branches;* sent ambassadors, made a covenant, and trusted to the power of Egypt to defend her branches. *That he might water it;* that they might add to their greatness and prosperous condition, as trees grow by due and seasonable watering them. *By the furrows;* alluding to the manner of irrigation used in Egypt, by furrows or trenches to convey the water unto their plantations from the river Nile.

8 It was planted in a good †soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.

† Heb. *field.*

It was planted by Nebuchadnezzar, in a very hopeful condition, where it might have thrived, been fruitful, and flourished. But they, both king and people, were unthankful, and discontented, and by sinful courses sought to better themselves; they had no great or just cause to complain of Nebuchadnezzar's usage towards them, but out of pride, ambition, and ingratitude, joined with perjury, they revolt, and provoke God's wrath and Nebuchadnezzar's rage against them.

9 Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Shall it prosper? [g]shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof.

g 2 Kings 25. 7.

Say thou; tell them what will be the issue of all this, and tell it to them in my name. *Shall it prosper?* this vine, shall Zedekiah and his people thrive by this? it is a question that must be resolved negatively, and with vehemency. *Shall he,* Nebuchadnezzar, *not pull up,* utterly overthrow this kingdom which he had set up, destroy the king thereof? *Cut off the fruit;* put to the sword and slay the children of Zedekiah and of the nobles. *Wither;* never be in possibility of springing, so much is threatened by the withering of the branches. *All the leaves of her spring;* all the promising hope they had shall vanish as the hope of a tree vanisheth, when all its buds and leaves wither in its spring. *Without great power;* the king of Babylon shall do this easily, and never need to employ all his power and people to do this, utterly to root up this vine.

10 Yea, behold, *being* planted, shall it prosper? [h]shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the furrows where it grew.

h ch. 19. 12. Hos. 13. 15.

Nay, suppose this contrivance were successful, suppose this vine were planted by the help of Egypt, could it possibly prosper? No, no. *When the east wind;* when the king of Babylon, which like the blasting wind comes from the north-east, shall but touch it, it will utterly wither. *In the furrows;* even amidst its greatest and best helps to make it flourish. This discontent, ingratitude, and treachery will occasion the utter ruin of this people.

11 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

12 Say now to [i]the rebellious house, Know ye not what these *things mean?* tell *them,* Behold, [k]the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;

i ch. 2. 5. & 12. 9.
k ver. 3. 2 Kings 24. 11,—16.

Say now: this is the order God gives to his prophet to explain the riddle. *To the rebellious house;* to the house of Judah, which have been, and still are, rebellious against me, and are now entering into rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar. *Know ye not?* are ye so blockish that you do not know what is meant? or are you so secure that you will not consider it, but run on your own ruin? *The king of Babylon,* Nebuchadnezzar, is that first great eagle with part of his power. *Jerusalem* is the Lebanon which he is come to. *The king thereof;* the king of Israel, and his seed, and nobles are the branches and twigs cropped off, these are taken, conquered, made captives. *Led them with him;* judging them unfit to be trusted any more, he will, though in chains, carry them to Babylon.

13 [l]And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, [m]and hath †taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land:

l 2 Kings 24. 17.
m 2 Chron. 36. 13.
† Heb. *brought him to an oath.*

Hath taken of the king's seed; first taken Jehoiachin and his princes captives, and next taken out from amidst the royal seed Mattaniah, and advanced him to the throne in Jerusalem. *Made a covenant with him,* by solemn agreement, and on terms approved and accepted by Mattaniah, for performance of which terms he hath obliged himself by public promise. *An oath;* because Nebuchadnezzar would be secure, he made Mattaniah enter into an oath, changed his name into Zedekiah, as a fit memorial who should avenge the crime, if this captive restored should perjure himself. *The mighty;* the rich, honourable, valiant, wise, and who might (if rebellion ever arose among the Jews) be

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able to make head and do **mischief** against the Babylonian king. *Of the land;* of Judea.

n ver. 6. ch. 29. 14.

14 That the kingdom might be [n]base, that it might not lift itself up, [†]*but* that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.

† Heb. *to keep his covenant, to stand to it.*

So plainly and openly did Nebuchadnezzar deal with the Jews. *The kingdom;* the tributary kingdom, whereof Zedekiah is roitelet. *Base;* low in power. *Lift itself up;* rise up into rebellion, or be so considerable as to encourage any neighbour king to assist and confederate with them against Babylon. *That by* continuing faithful, and performing the conditions of *his covenant*, either Nebuchadnezzar's, by imposing, or Zedekiah's, by submitting to it, and obliging himself by it, the kingdom of the Jews might continue and flourish.

o 2 Kings 24. 20. 2 Chron. 36. 13. p Deut. 17. 16. Is. 31. 1, 3. & 36. 6, 9. q ver. 9.

15 But [o]he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, [p]that they might give him horses and much people. [q]Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such *things?* or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?

But Zedekiah *rebelled;* endeavoured to cast off the dominion of the conqueror Nebuchadnezzar, who had advanced him and obliged him. *Sending his ambassadors* is called bending his roots toward the second eagle. *Egypt;* an old bitter enemy, and an impotent and false friend. *That they might give him horses:* beside the perjury, here was a cursed trusting to an arm of flesh, of which Isa. xxxi. 1. *Much people;* Zedekiah had not men to set upon his hired horses; Egypt must help here too. How sottishly doth this unhappy Zedekiah act to run himself on the charge and hazard of a new war, in which, whoever is the gainer, he and his are sure to be the losers! *Shall he prosper?* see ver. 9, 10. Can it be likely vengeance should not overtake such ingratitude? Can perjury be the way for any man's deliverance? Can such notorious sinning end in any thing but misery?

r Jer. 32. 5. & 34. 3. & 52. 11. ch. 12. 13.

16 *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely [r]in the place *where* the king *dwelleth* that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, *even* with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.

As sure as I am God, and live, I will punish this perjury: and here is a particular account of the punishment. *In the place;* Babylon. *The king;* Nebuchadnezzar. *Made him king;* Zedekiah. *Whose oath;* the oath Nebuchadnezzar imposed. *He despised;* contemptuously, without any just cause given; and therefore this perfidious prince could never expect more favour, but must in reason fear the greatest severities. Under this fear Zedekiah shall spend the rest of his days. He shall rather be always dying, for though he lived a natural life, yet it was in such sadness, it is more properly styled a dying; in blindness, under the memorial of the most afflictive sight, the murder of his children, which was the last thing his eye ever beheld.

s Jer. 37. 7. t Jer. 32. 4. ch. 4. 2.

17 [s]Neither shall Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company make for him in the war, [t]by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons:

Let his army be made up of ever so many well-disciplined soldiers, if as many as the Egyptian can vainly promise, or the Jews more vainly hope. *Great company* possibly may refer to the multitudes which usually attended the march of armies, or else it is a doubling the thing in doubled words. *Make for him:* if Zedekiah be the person, as our version carrieth it, it foretells the unprofitableness of the Egyptian army, that shall not do him any kindness. If Nebuchadnezzar be intended, as the version which renders the Hebrew particle *against*, then it foretells the little hurt that the Egyptians shall do to Nebuchadnezzar. *By casting up mounts;* when Nebuchadnezzar shall with so much speed and skill cast up forts and build mounts, wooden castles, to annoy Jerusalem, secure his own forces, and terrify the Egyptian king from the difficulty of raising the siege, which could not be done without expense of much blood. *To cut off many persons*, of the besieged in Jerusalem, and of the Egyptians, if they attempt to raise the siege; this sense it bears in the French version.

18 Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had [u]given his hand, and hath done all these *things*, he shall not escape.

u 1 Chro. 29. 24. Lam. 5. 6.

This verse gives us the reason of this unhappy enterprise, which is summed up in wilful, presumptuous, and most unparalleled perjury. Zedekiah *had given his hand;* a solemn confirming of the oath, or covenant, and it implies the voluntary act of Zedekiah in swearing, which makes the perjury so much the fouler. *All these things;* too bad to be named, and most unbecoming any one that was a beneficiary, and had so much from the bounty of one that was not obliged to do any thing for him.

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; *As* I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head.

As I live: see chap. xvi. 48. *Mine oath;* made in my name, and of which I am both witness and avenger. *Hath despised:* see chap. xvi. 59; xvii. 18. *I will recompense;* I will punish, as it deserveth, and it shall appear by the punishment that my hand doth execute it. *Upon his own head;* it is probable some courtiers might advise to it, but this will not excuse Zedekiah, his perjury was his own act; and on his own head, as I charge, so I will punish it.

20 And I will [x]spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and [y]will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me.

x ch. 12. 13. & 32. 3. y ch. 20. 36.

See chap. xii. 13, where the former part of this verse is word for word. *Plead with him;* or, be judged with him, i. e. the heathen shall both see what I do against this man, they shall consider why I do so, and be judge whether I do more than this perjured king deserves; or, I will punish him with continued punishments from my own hand, or by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, suitable to the greatness of his trespass against me. *Against me:* falsehoods to men in breaking oaths and covenants are in a high degree trespasses against God.

21 And [z]all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken *it*.

z ch. 12. 14.

All his fugitives; not strictly, but in large sense; all, i. e. the greatest part, as Jer. xiii. 19; xliv. 22; Matt. ii. 3; iii. 5, of those who, at the taking of Jerusalem, attempt to flee with their king. *His bands;* his guards, probably of stoutest men, reserved to convey him in safety from the pursuing enemy. *Shall fall by the sword;* the enemy shall overtake, and cut in pieces. The few that do escape shall be scattered abroad among strangers, who will show them very little kindness. The miseries these people shall fall under shall be of such weight and continuance, that all shall know it is the execution of an extraordinary wrath from Heaven against them.

22 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest [a]branch of the high cedar, and will set *it;* I will crop off from the top of his young twigs [b]a tender one, and will [c]plant *it* upon an high mountain and eminent.

a Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. Zech. 3. 8. b Is. 53. 2. c Ps. 2. 6.

Whereas the judgments threatened might seem to threaten the utter extirpation of the seed of David, now the Lord is pleased to assure its continuance, and the raising of the Messiah from that house according to promise. Nebuchadnezzar took and planted, and I will also take and plant, saith the Lord, of the royal seed of the house of David, of the highest branch that is heir to the throne, in the type Zorobabel, in the antitype Messiah. *And will set it;* both

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set or plant, and give increase to his kingdom, that from a tender one he should grow up to great strength, victory, and glory. *Upon an high mountain;* upon Mount Zion, Psal. ii. 6, or as Isa. ii. 2, 3. *Eminent,* not for outward splendour, but for spiritual advantages above other nations in the church.

d Is. 2. 2, 3. ch. 20. 40. Mic. 4. 1.

23 [d] In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and [e] under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.

e See ch. 31. 6. Dan. 4. 12.

In the mountain; either the church or Jerusalem, whence the law of Christ was to be published, and where the preachers of the gospel were to continue till furnished with abilities for that work. Like a tree that taketh root, and spreadeth forth into branches, so the kingdom of Christ should grow, and be fruitful in good works, not flourishing in boughs and leaves only, but much more in excellent fruits of holiness, justice, and temperance, and in joy, peace, and love. *A goodly cedar;* the goodliest that ever grew, most excellent and most durable. *All fowl,* all nations, the Gentiles as well as the Jews, shall build, breed, and multiply under the kingdom of Christ; it shall be no more confined to the Jews, but extend to the Gentiles also. There they shall find peace and safety; and this repeated confirms the certainty of the promise.

24 And all the trees of the field shall

f Luke 1. 52.

know that I the LORD [f] have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have

g ch. 22. 14. & 24. 14.

made the dry tree to flourish: [g] I the LORD have spoken and have done *it.*

The trees of the field; the great ones on earth, all considering persons. *Shall know;* see and confess. *The high tree;* Zedekiah, that would neither hearken to me, my prophets, or to Nebuchadnezzar; or the kingdom of Babylon, which was brought low indeed, when overthrown by Darius and Cyrus. *The low tree;* either Jehoiachin's lineage, or the church, which, from being low, was exalted by the Lord, bending Cyrus to that work of restoring the captivity from Babylon, and building the city and house of God: its meaning is, the advancing the kingdom of Christ, and suppressing the enemies thereof. *Dried up the green tree;* the same thing expressed in somewhat different words. *I the Lord have spoken;* the power, goodness, and faithfulness of God, who can do what he pleaseth, and will do what he promiseth, is the assurance of the future accomplishment of his word.

CHAP. XVIII.

God disalloweth the parable of sour grapes, 1—4. *He showeth his dealing with a just man,* 5—9, *with the wicked son of a just father,* 10—13, *and with the just son of a wicked father,* 14—18. *He declareth that the treatment of both son and father shall be according to their respective deserts,* 19, 20; *and that the wicked, if he repent, shall live,* 21—23; *but he that revolteth from his righteousness shall die,* 24. *He defendeth the equity of his dealings,* 25—30, *and exhorteth to repentance,* 31, 32.

594. THE word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

He did not entertain them with a dream of his own head, but the Holy Spirit of prophecy suggests this to him, which now he speaketh on God's behalf, and against the Jews. He had often before spoke God's word in his name, as chap. vi. vii., xiii.; xii. 25, and now once more he is commanded so to do.

2 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying,

a Jer. 31. 29. Lam. 5. 7.

The [a] fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

What cause have you, or what would you have men think of your carriage to me, and of mine towards you, *that ye* who are now in Babylon openly, unjustly, and impudently justify yourselves, and condemn your God? *Israel;* the two tribes, not the ten. *The fathers;* our forefathers have sinned, and we their children, who were unborn, do suffer now for their sins: and this was grown common, both in Babylon, and also in Jerusalem, Jer. xxxi. 29: you would be thought innocent, and my proceedings against you unjust and cruel.

3 *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have *occasion* any more to use this proverb in Israel.

Either you who use it shall die for it, or because I will vindicate my proceedings so that all who consider your punishments shall see you deserve all that you suffer.

4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: [b] the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

b ver. 20. Rom. 6. 23.

There can be no colour of partial judgment in the proceedings of God, who is equally God to all; who hath as great interest in the son as in the father, and as kindly would deal with the son as with the father: and how can it be thought likely I should punish the son for the father's offence, or the father for the son's offence? *All souls;* all persons, which are frequently called souls, Lev. vii. 18, 20, 21; Josh. xx. 3; and so it is ver. 20, and Jer. xxxi. 30. *The soul;* the person, whether father or son, shall die, shall bear his own punishment: this text gives no colour for the opinion of the mortality of man's soul. *That sinneth,* i. e. obstinately, and yet will pretend his own innocency; whoso sinneth shall suffer for his own sin. You querulous Jews suffer then for your own sins, and had you been, as you say you are, innocent, the sins of your fathers should not have hurt you; and for the future know I will keep to that rule of equity; no innocent person shall be prejudiced by the guilt of guilty ones. And if one that is, for aught we can discern, absolutely innocent, yet suffers for another man's sin, it is most certain such a sufferer is not absolutely innocent, but some way or other is guilty of the sin for which he suffers.

5 ¶ But if a man be just, and do † that which is lawful and right,

† Heb. *judgment and justice.*

So far is God from perverse and froward partiality in his judgments, that none ever had cause to complain hereof. *If a man,* without respect of persons, every one, whoever he be, *be just;* faultless and unstained, which may refer to his temper and disposition of mind; and if his conversation hath agreed with the law of God and rule of justice in all points, in private and public affairs among men.

6 [c] *And* hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath [d] defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to [e] a menstruous woman,

c ch. 22. 9.
d Lev. 18. 20. & 20. 10.
e Lev. 18. 19. & 20. 18.

Hath not committed idolatry, first offering sacrifice, and eating of the things sacrificed to idols, whose temples and altars were on mountains, chap. xx. 28; Hos. iv. 13, and where the idolaters did use to feed one another in honour of the idol; neither hath adored, nor expected help from the idols: this is a religious posture, as Psal. cxxi. 1. *The idols of the house of Israel;* they had idols of their own; and some that despised the heathens' idols yet were polluted with their own idolatry, which was a great sin, whatever the blind idolater thought of it. *His neighbour's wife;* hath not broken out into adultery, and defiled another man's wife, for every man is here included in neighbour, as Luke x. 36. And abstained from both familiar converse and from conjugal acts with such a one, observing the law of God herein, Lev. xv. 19; xviii. 19.

7 And hath not [f] oppressed any, *but* hath restored to the debtor his [g] pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath [h] given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment;

f Ex. 22. 21. Lev. 19. 13. & 25. 14.
g Ex. 22. 26. Deut. 24. 12, 13.
h Deu. 15. 7, 8. Is. 58. 7. Matt. 25. 35, 36.

Hath not oppressed; by rigorous dealing grieve, injure,

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or damnify, and cause them to cry out, chap. xxii. 9; Zech. vii. 10, which is done many ways; and how slily soever it is done, yet it is a crying sin, Exod. xxii. 21—24. Much of oppression is in detaining what was laid in pawn, which was always of greater value than the thing that was taken upon it; and the poor often pawned their most necessary utensils, and oftentimes needed them ere they could redeem them; in such cases God will not that the pledge be detained; as Exod. xxii. 26; Deut. xxiv. 6, 10—13, 17; but here mercy ought to be preferred above profit; nor might the pledge be any way lessened by embezzling it. *Hath spoiled none by violence;* nor by force robbed any one, and taken out of the hand of the owner, as the thief doth; whoso hath forborne these courses of inhumanity and injustice. *Hath given his bread;* with compassion hath given to the necessitous, communicating to them as their case required, and our ability will reach. *Bread* here is largely to be taken, Isa. lviii. 7. *To the hungry;* such as truly want, are not able to help themselves, and, we may with reason think, have none to help them if we do not. *Hath covered the naked;* clothed the naked, who else are like to perish for want of clothing, as Job xxxi. 19. Who are such, and live so just, so holy, so inoffensive, so beneficent a life among men, shall not suffer for the sins others commit.

8 He *that* hath not given forth upon [i]usury, neither hath taken any increase, *that* hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, [k]hath executed true judgment between man and man,

[i] Ex. 22. 25. Lev. 25. 36, 37. Deut. 23. 19. Neh. 5. 7. Ps. 15. 5. [k] Deut. 1. 16. Zech. 8. 16.

Given forth; lent or put into another's hand, on condition of returning not the same, or equal value, but much more. *Upon usury;* biting usury, (as the word implieth,) which no doubt is prohibited because of the injury it doth to the borrower, and the undue gain it brings to the lender. A rigorous imposing conditions of gain for the loan of money or goods, and exacting them without respect to the condition of the borrower, whether he gain or lose; whether poverty occasioned his borrowing, or whether visible likelihood of gain by employing the borrowed goods; which sort of usury is against both the law of charity, as well as against the express will of God, who prohibits it, Exod. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 35—37; Deut. xxiii. 19, 20. *Any* is not in the Hebrew, though interpreters here insert it for the greater emphasis and weight. This *increase* here mentioned is by the critics in the Hebrew said to be either a receiving of the borrower some gratuity for lending that, for which the borrower must pay use also; a kind of oppression too common among us, called procuration, or continuation; or else when the buyer is required to increase the price, or return the thing he bought, which growing dearer than at the time he received it, proves an oppression to him. And this I suppose was usual among the covetous traders, who sold and gave day for payment; but if the commodity grew dearer, they exacted the thing again, or the increased price. *That hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity:* this I think is not here to be taken in the larger sense, as if it referred to all iniquity, but in a restrictive sense, and as it refers to the iniquity and injustice of lenders and sellers; he that with care and conscience hath withdrawn his hand from all indirect or direct ways of forbidden usury. *Hath executed true judgment between man and man:* this refers to this particular case of usury and taking increase; as if the prophet would make every man judge of the case ere he takes any thing, and requires him to judge according to truth, whether any, or how much, may be expected and received, whether no wrong be to the lender or borrower in the case. And so the whole will amount to this, he that in his lending hath truly weighed the borrower's case, and used him with kindness as he would be used himself, this man is no usurer.

9 Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he *is* just, he shall surely [l]live, saith the Lord GOD.

[l] ch. 20. 11. Amos 5. 4.

Walked; framed his life, and managed his conversation, conformed to the good, just, and holy ordinances of God. *In my statutes;* in matters of religion, hath kept to the direction of God's law. *Kept my judgments,* in matters of civil concern between man and man. *To deal truly;* to act sincerely, with an honest heart, according to the best of his knowledge and judgment. *He is just;* is just comparatively, so far righteous that he shall not feel, nor needs he fear, to suffer what others' sins bring upon them, he shall not suffer what he hath not deserved. *Shall surely live;* shall be delivered from famine, pestilence, and sword, shall see good days, as Psal. xxxiv. 12, 13; his teeth shall not be set on edge, whatever quarrelling sinners say or think, but the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him.

10 ¶ If he beget a son *that is* a ‖robber, [m]a shedder of blood, and ‖*that* doeth the like to *any* one of these *things*,

‖ Or, *breaker up of an house.* [m] Gen. 9. 6. Ex. 21. 12. Num. 35. 31.

‖ Or, *that doeth to his brother besides any of these.*

If he beget a son; the just man before described, who transmits his nature, but cannot transmit his virtues, to his son. *That is a robber;* that by force and violence breaks over the law of God and man, takes away what is another man's; such a thief as sticks not to destroy that he may rob. *A shedder of blood;* that is, a murderer; for shedding of blood here is not less than murder, as by the phrase, Gen. ix. 6; Deut. xxi. 7; 1 Sam. xxv. 33; Psal. lxxix. 10. *That doeth the like;* the *thing that is brother* to one of these, as the Hebrew may bear; there are things like these, which destroy either the life or estates of our neighbour; for there are many methods and artifices which such violent ones use. *To any one of these things;* it might seem to speak one such single act unpardonable; but I refer this text to that, Gen. ix. 6; Numb. xxxv. 31. The law doth condemn such to death; man must not, though God may, pardon such a one.

11 And that doeth not any of those *duties*, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife,

In the former verse sins which are violations of the law by a man's doing the evil which was forbidden, in the former part of this verse the sins which are omissions of good required, are mentioned. *Doeth not any;* neglects all, frames not to do them. *Of those duties:* see ver. 6—8. *Hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife:* see ver. 6.

12 Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath [n]committed abomination,

[n] ch. 8. 6, 17.

See on ver. 7. In the seventh verse the words are more large, condemning the oppressing of any one; here they do more particularly condemn oppressing *the poor,* which have little to maintain and less to defend themselves; and *needy* is added, to render us more sensible of the greatness of this sin, which takes away right where we should show charity. *Hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge:* see ver. 7. *Hath lifted up his eyes to the idols:* see ver. 6. *Hath committed abomination,* i. e. come near to a menstruous woman, which is expressly named ver. 6, and here pointed at; or else idolatry.

13 Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; [o]his † blood shall be upon him.

[o] Lev. 20. 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 27. ch. 3. 18. & 33. 4. Acts 18. 6. † Heb. *bloods.*

See ver. 8. *Shall he then live?* Do you think his father's righteousness shall preserve him from the punishment his own unrighteousness deserveth, my law threateneth, and my justice inflicteth? Shall he not with other sinners be spoiled, besieged, die by the sword or famine, or languish in a long captivity, and there die? *He shall not live;* a decisive answer to the former question; such a one shall not prosper, nor long escape the strokes of my justice; and the answer is parallel with that chap. xvii. 10. *He hath done all these abominations;* is personally involved in the sins which are worthy of death, and which are so expressly threatened by law and prophets. *Done;* not only winked at, or not hindered, but hath been a forward, voluntary, active doer of them. *All these* that are here, and elsewhere in this prophet, and in others, charged on the Jews as the

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cause of their calamities at this day. *Abominations;* great enormities, sins to be abominated and hated, not practised and justified by shameless sinners. *He shall surely die;* most certainly die; or if you suppose such a one finally impenitent, he shall surely die under temporal judgments, and so by the first death fall under the second death also: *dying he shall die;* a Hebrew phrase, and very full. *His blood shall be upon him;* Heb. it is plural, *bloods:* both the blood of the innocent which he murdered, and his own blood, which thereby he forfeited, the blood of his own soul and life, that is, the whole blame of his misery in time and eternity, shall lie upon himself, who brought all those sorrows on himself by his own wickednesses.

14 ¶ Now, lo, *if* he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like,

A third instance in a supposed son's son to clear the case fully. The just father lives, his unjust son dieth; but the grandson of the just, seeing his father's sins, and fleeing them, lives. It is rare that the children of debauched parents do think or discern evil in their parents' courses, but blindly follow them, without putting difference between what is good and what is bad in that the father doth; such suffer for their own sins more than for their fathers: but if it be so that the son of a wicked father act like a man, bring his father's doings to the rule, and thereby discover the wickedness and danger of them, and do not the like, he shall not suffer for his father's sins. *Seeth all his father's sins;* the kinds, or many of the several sorts, of his sins, for it is not possible the son should see all the particular acts of sin done by his father. *Considereth;* looks thoroughly into these things, and weighs the importance of them; considers God is our Sovereign, ought to be obeyed, will bless the obedient, will punish the disobedient; that his blessing is the life and welfare, his curse is the death and misery, of souls; that every man should look particularly to his own duty and happiness; that it is better to be happy with God, obeying him, than to perish with a father by imitating his vices; that God will be gracious to the obedient, according to his rich grace, though they be the children of irreligious idolaters and adulterers, &c.; on which or such-like considerations, if the son choose holiness, and walk in it, he shall live, his end shall not be, because his doings were not, like his father's.

p ver. 6, &c.

15 [p] *That* hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife,

† Heb. *hath not pledged the pledge, or, taken to pledge.*

16 Neither hath oppressed any, † hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, *but* hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,

These two verses are explained already in the same words: see ver. 6, 7.

17 *That* hath taken off his hand from the poor, *that* hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.

Taken off his hand from the poor; withdrawn his hand from hurting or wronging the poor, though he had power and might to do it securely. *That hath not received usury, &c.:* see ver. 8, 9, where these particulars are explained.

18 *As for* his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did *that* which *is* not good among his people, lo, even [q] he shall die in his iniquity.

q ch. 3. 18.

Oppressing, he oppressed; and spoiling, spoiled; did all the mischief he could: he shall die.

r Ex. 20. 5. Deut. 5. 9. 2 Kings 23. 26. & 24. 3, 4.

19 ¶ Yet say ye, Why? [r] doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, *and* hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

Notwithstanding this method of the Divine justice, which renders to every one his own work, and gives to every one the fruit of his own doings, *ye*, proud, quarrelling, self-justifying debauchees, idolaters, adulterers, murderers, usurers, oppressors, will not see your own sins, for which you are punished, but cry you are innocent, that your fathers sinned and you suffer. *Doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?* The prophet here brings in what he met with among them; still every where they insist on it that they deserved not by any sin of their own what they now suffered, and so would cast the sin and guilt on their fathers, and the rigour and severity on God, and clear themselves to all; which the prophet answers by a recapitulation of what he had more largely spoken, and avows it, that the righteous son of an unrighteous father shall live, and not die. *Kept all my statutes;* as Psal. cxix. 44.

20 [s] The soul that sinneth, it shall die. [t] The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: [u] the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, [x] and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

s ver. 4.
t Deu. 24. 16. 2 Kings 14. 6. 2 Chron. 25. 4. Jer. 31. 29, 30.
u Is. 3. 10, 11.
x Rom. 2. 9.

See ver. 4. *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son:* this is a most unquestionable truth, and though perhaps it may seem otherwise in some cases, yet could we see perfectly the connexion between persons and persons, and how they are one, could we see the connexion of sins and sins, and how easily, secretly, and undiscerned men become guilty of the same sins, we should, it is likely, see father and son, though perhaps one of them might not do the evil, both guilty, and neither punished for the sin further than the sin was his own; nor do the scriptures, Exod. xx. 5; Deut. xxviii. 18, menace innocent children, nor doom persons to punishment, for sins from which they are fully and wholly free; but if children shall follow their fathers in sin, or justify them in it, or not mourn for it, or not deprecate, or whatever way there is by which children may make the sins of progenitors become their own; then if they die for those sins, it is for them as they are their own sins, not as they are their fathers'. *The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him:* Isa. iii. 10 will fully explain this passage; it shall be well with the righteous, for he shall eat the fruit of his doing, he shall be rewarded as a righteous one. *The wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him;* the reward of wickedness, i. e. woeful punishment, shall be executed upon the wicked, as Isa. iii. 11.

21 But [y] if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

y ver. 27. ch. 33. 12, 19.

So far is God from punishing the sins of guilty parents on innocent children, as in the last instance, ver. 14 to the end of ver. 20, appears, that he doth not punish the guilty for their own sins which they repent of and forsake. Our God, who mercifully pardoneth the penitent all their own sins, will not, cannot be supposed to charge innocent ones with the sins which are not their own. *The wicked;* or a wicked man, any wicked man among you, O Jews! who charge me with such severity, if the most notorious sinner. *Turn,* i. e. repent, for it is expressed by that word which implies repentance, and by the subsequent fruits of repentance. *From all;* it must be a total renouncing of sin. *His sins that he hath committed;* the penitent are most afflicted with the remembrance of their own sin, that which they committed, and watch most against it for the future. *Keep all my statutes;* resolve to endeavour seriously and diligently, for in God's merciful judgment a gracious penitent soul keeps what he would keep, keeps all his statutes, in that he would transgress none of them. *He shall surely live;* he shall be pardoned, escape punishments, it shall be well with him: and this is the constant method of God's proceedings with his people; he calls them to himself by

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promises of pardon, he never frights them from him by threatening to punish others' faults on their backs. Leave your own, and you shall never suffer for others' sins.

z ch. 33. 16. 22 [z]All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

All; not one of all, so the Hebraism is; every one shall be forgiven. *His transgressions;* personal, actual sins, in which he was not accessary, but principal; though great sins. *That he hath committed;* formerly did commit, but now repenteth for. *They shall not be mentioned unto him;* not remembered, i. e. imputed to or punished on him. They shall be as forgotten. So when God promiseth to pardon, he promiseth that he will not remember our sins. *In his righteousness that he hath done he shall live;* this penitent, whose last works are righteousness, proper fruits of repentance, shall live, be rewarded and blessed for his righteousness, yet without merit: life should be the fruit of his repentance and righteousness.

a ver. 32. ch. 33. 11. 1 Tim. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9. 23 [a]Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: *and* not that he should return from his ways, and live?

Now, O ye perverse Jews! if by these truths you will judge of me, could it enter the thoughts of any one of you, that I should, as delighting in the death of sinners, impute other men's sins to you, that you might die for them, when I could not slay you for your own? Think not thus of the God of mercy, who pities, forbears, and though at last hath punished obstinate sinners, yet never delighted in their death. Is it not my command that you and other sinners repent? Have not you and others found mercy upon seeming repentance? And as for that repentance which is sound, it ever had a full pardon; and the promise of life and pardon hath been repeated and confirmed to you again and again; so that it is the most unjust, unreasonable, and impious quarrel you, O Jews, have taken up against your God, who would have you repent of your own sins, and you should live, but if you repent not, you shall die, but for your own sins, not your fathers'. Since therefore I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God, turn yourselves, and live ye, as it is ver. 32; for this 23rd verse equally declares God's mercy and our duty, the one in his pleasure at our return, the other in our pleasing him herein.

b ch. 3. 20. & 33. 12, 13, 18. 24 ¶ But [b]when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, *and* doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked *man* doeth, shall he live? [c]All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

c 2 Pet. 2. 20.

After the stating the equity of God's ways in his dealings with parents and children, and his mercy in dealing with sinners that return according to his own promise, he proceeds to vindicate the equity of his ways in another case. *When*, or *if;* should it so happen at any time. *The righteous;* one who really had observed the commands of the law, not done the abominations the wicked do, but done the good which the righteous doth, and in the sight of man appears as righteous, and as good as any one; whose apostacy is first full proof of his unsoundness and hypocrisy. *Turneth;* changeth his course into sinful practices, like the wicked. *His righteousness;* there is a righteousness which is of God, and there is a righteousness which is a man's own, such as does arise from a man's own reason and will, improved by common grace, or education, or awed by fears, or swayed by interest, or maintained by some failing spring which may easily dry up; these righteous ones easily fall away, and of such the prophet speaks. *Committeth iniquity;* makes sin his work and business, John viii. 34; 1 John iii. 8, 9. *Doeth according to all the abominations;* forgets all better rules, derides his own former preciseness, and shakes off all restraints, that he may run to the excess of sin. *Abominations;* recounted ver. 10—13. *That the wicked man doeth:* see ver. 21. *Shall he live?* do you think I will be so partial as to acquit him from real wickedness, committed with his whole heart, from his last works, which are abominable? Do you think his first heartless, partial, temporary righteousness will counterbalance his last and final apostacy? I tell you nay, but he shall die in it. *All his righteousness that he hath done;* though he could produce his own righteousnesses, (as the Hebrew,) and these multiplied to many, *all*, and that they were really done, yet these should not avail before a just judge; who by a law that requires man should ever be and do what he was and did at best, is to determine his rewards or punishments according to what the man is at last, not according to what he was or seemed to be at first. *Shall not be mentioned;* the parable tells us, Matt. xxv. 44, 45, some will plead that they did what they had opportunity of doing, and others, Matt. vii. 22, will mention what they have done. But though they may mention these, the just judge will not, nor the law by which they are to be judged will not, allow it for a good and sufficient plea: see the phrase ver. 22. *In his trespass that he hath trespassed:* this expression shows that this man's heart was on his sin; in his transgression he transgressed with full bent of mind, with delight and consent he did what he did, and could not say, I do what I would not; or, *So then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*, as Rom. vii. 17. Lest any stumble at sight of infirmities in all, or needlessly disquiet themselves with fears of wrath at last, because they cannot be sinless, yet they do not fall under the character of such as are here threatened. *In them;* in these great, wilful, continued, and multiplied sins. *Shall he die;* every such obdurate and final apostate shall be condemned and punished temporally and eternally, and therefore look to it, ye wicked Jews, and consider, ye sinful Christians.

d ver. 29. ch. 33. 17, 20. 25 ¶ Yet ye say, [d]The way of the LORD is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?

Yet ye say; you persist in your hard, unjust, and ungodly sentiments of an inequality in my ways, and are not afraid to speak as much. *The way:* it were too much for sinners to charge God with inequality in a single act, but here are some dare censure the way, the whole management of affairs. *Of the Lord:* strange frowardness! own him for Lord, yet condemn his government; grant his sovereign authority, and yet arraign the exercise of it! *Is not equal;* not right, steady, or consistent with his own declaration and law; so the Hebrew. This prodigiously wicked assertion they build upon a most gross ignorance, and intolerably proud conceit of their own righteousness: We, say they, are righteous, not wicked, yet punished. Unheard-of pride, to condemn God, with whom is no iniquity, and acquit themselves, in whom is all iniquity! *Hear now;* consider what I have proposed to clear my justice, hear me and my defence ere you condemn me, weigh well my defence. *O house of Israel;* both you that are in Jerusalem, and you also that are in Babylon at Telabib. *Is not my way equal?* Do you speak what you think, does your judgment thus conclude, when you know, or might know, that this is the general rule I proceed by, The righteousness of the righteous is upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked is upon him? Can there be inequality here? *Your ways* which you choose, keep, plead for, and obstinately hold to, these are the crooked, unsteady, and unjust ways: for the question is to be resolved into a vehement asseveration.

e ver. 24. 26 [e]When a righteous *man* turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

See ver. 24, where the whole of this verse is explained.

f ver. 21. 27 Again, [f]when the wicked *man* turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

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See ver. 21, 22, where this verse is interpreted.

g ver. 14. 28 Because he [g]considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

God's promise is to pardon, spare, and preserve the penitent, such therefore shall not die. *Considereth:* see ver. 14. *Turneth;* converteth: see ver. 21. *He shall surely live, he shall not die:* secure, self-justifying sinners misapprehend the justice of God, as we have heard, and repenting sinners are apt to mistrust the mercy of God, and therefore it is doubly assured in this promise.

h ver. 25. 29 [h]Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the LORD is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

This is the third or fourth appeal to the very consciences of Israel, on whose side the injustice lieth: the words are already unfolded ver. 25, and the justice of God and the wickedness of such quarrellers declared.

i ch. 7. 3. & 33. 20. 30 [i]Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to

k Matt. 3. 2. Rev. 2. 5. ‖ Or, others. his ways, saith the Lord GOD. [k]Repent, and turn ‖*yourselves* from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Since you persist to implead me of iniquity in my judgments, after all I have said to clear myself, there is nothing left by which I may be cleared but this, to proceed with you according to your doings. *I will judge you;* I will debate, determine with you. *O house of Israel;* who do keep up this opinion of me, the proud contemners of God, and justifiers of themselves. *Every one;* none shall be overlooked or excused, every one shall be judged. *According to his ways;* your ways shall be the standard and measure; if they are good, you shall receive good; if evil, you shall suffer evil; and then there can be no colour of complaint. *Repent;* it will be safest for you that are proud quarrellers; be therefore advised, repent, and venture not your life and welfare on self-justification. Some others there were of better temper; they are exhorted by repentance to prevent wrath, and prepare for the mercy which the Lord ever showeth to the penitent, as ver. 21, 22. *Turn yourselves;* or, return yourselves; persuade others also. (*Yourselves* is not in the Hebrew.) *Iniquity;* neither your ungodly practices, nor your unjust opinions of me and my ways, saith the Lord. *Shall not be your ruin,* the cause of your temporal and eternal misery. Or thus, Cease from sin, then you will judge aright, and not be stumbled at the supposed inequality of my judgments: who leave sin, can see what mercy spared, pardoned, saved them; but who live in sin, will have soft thoughts for sin, and hard thoughts of God.

l Eph. 4. 22, 23. 31 ¶ [l]Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have trans-

m Jer. 32 39. ch. 11. 19. & 36. 26. gressed; and make you a [m]new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Not only cease from sin, but with indignation throw it away, as a loathsome, pernicious thing, or as a burden that will sink you. *Your transgressions;* as God requires, so it is the property of true repentance, that it does frame the heart against its own sins. *Make you a new heart;* open your eyes, and let the clear, convincing light of my words, arguments, and proceedings shine upon you; do not obstinately harden your hearts, that you should retain your old prejudices against my justice and mercy, but receive new opinions and tenets concerning the things I have been clearing to you, that new judgment may produce a renewed and reformed course of life. Your old heart is made up of strange notions of your innocence, and the inequality of the ways of your God, and this influenceth your spirit to pride, quarrelling with God, who might have convinced you by severer methods, which should have put you as far out of doubt about the cause of your punishment, as out of hope of deliverance from it. Or else thus, I have proposed enough to change a considering heart, to renew the spirit of any thinking man; co-operate with me. See your sin, guilt, punishment, all yours, and from yourselves repent of sin, confess your guilt, deprecate your punishment. *Why will ye die?* there is no other way for you to be delivered; your old ways and heart will end in death. This is an argument taken from their danger by old sins.

n Lam. 3. 33. ver. 23. ch. 33. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 9. ‖ Or, others. 32 For [n]I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn ‖*yourselves*, and live ye.

Another argument to persuade to conversion, taken from the gracious nature of God, who taketh pleasure in the return of a sinner; for that is the meaning of the words: sinners displease God when they undo themselves, they please him when they return. *Turn yourselves;* do what you can, leave what sins you have loved. *Live ye;* it is a promise.

CHAP. XIX.

A lamentation for the princes of Israel, under the parable of lions' whelps taken in a pit, 1—9; *and for Jerusalem, under the parable of a wasted vine,* 10—14.

MOREOVER [a]take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel, 594. a ch. 26. 17. & 27. 2.

Moreover, Heb. *And. Take thou up a lamentation;* son of man, Ezekiel, declare what a lamentable state the princes of Israel are falling into, propound it by parable. It was usually expressed in verse, as Jeremiah did in his lamentations, and as appears 2 Chron. xxxv. 25; but the prophet is here directed to a hieroglyphic, as ver. 2. *The princes of Israel;* though they were kings, yet, because subject to Babylon or Egypt, they are, by a diminutive, lessening term, called *princes*, and these were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Though they had but the two tribes under them, yet because some of Israel that escaped the captivating power of Shalmaneser were joined with the two tribes, they are called by the name of Israel.

2 And say, What *is* thy mother? A lioness: she lay down among lions, she nourished her whelps among young lions.

What resemblance shall I use to set out the nature, deportment, and state of the mother of these princes? an unhappy mother of unhappy children! Or, Alas! thy mother, &c. *Thy;* one of these was upon the throne at once, and therefore the prophet speaks to one at a time, in the singular number. *Mother;* the land of Judea and Jerusalem, the chief city of it, the royal family of David. *A lioness;* though chosen of God to execute justice, defend the poor, to be his vicegerents, and to delight in mercy; yet once advanced, they soon degenerated into the fierce and ravening nature of the lioness, and as violently seized the prey. *She lay down;* associated, couched, and grew familiar with, by leagues, commerce, and intermixture of marriages with neighbour kings, called here *lions:* thou didst learn their manners, and grewest fierce and bloody, as they. *She nourished:* the Hebrew includes both her bringing forth many, and her advancing them to greatness: the royal family of that nation had many kings, and some very great, but the time the prophet points now at in particular was after Josiah, whose character, given Jer. xxii. 16. is, that he judged the poor and needy, but his successors were of another temper, as Jer. xxii. 13—15, 17. *Her whelps,* i. e. her sons, successors to the crown, which could be called nothing else, to keep the decorum of the parable. *Among young lions;* either foreign princes and kings, or else some of the fiercer, unjuster, aspiring, and tyrannizing princes at home; for such there were in these, as well as in Rehoboam's times, who would have the son's finger thicker than the father's loins.

3 And she brought up one of her whelps: [b]it became a young lion, and it learned to catch the prey; it devoured men.

b ver. 6. 2 Kings 23. 31, 32.

See ver. 3. *Brought up;* not as a nurse, the word is of other import, but advanced, promoted, or caused him to take the throne after the slaughter of Josiah. *One of her*

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whelps; this was Jehoahaz, the second son of Josiah, of whom it is said, 2 Kings xxiii. 30; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1, the people made him king; for God had not made him so by primogeniture, and right of succession. They looked upon him as a warlike prince, fitter for sustaining the troubles of those martial times than his eldest brother, and therefore strain a point of law and right. *It became a young lion;* soon showed his fierce, haughty, cruel, and bloody disposition, as appears 2 Kings xxiii. 30—32, though he continued but three months, and some odd days, wherein to play his pranks. *Learned;* had tutors and counsellors that showed him the method; and he, an apt scholar in an evil school, learnt apace. *To catch the prey;* to seize first, and then to tear the prey, by frauds and violence to hunt, take, and devour that he took, as lions use. *Devoured;* eat up, as the word notes, lived upon. *Men;* man, *Adam*, the weaker sort; or it may be in those divided times *Adam* may imply such as were crushed because they were not of the tyrannizing faction: at that time Pharaoh had some that inclined to him, and perhaps these were used hardly by Jehoahaz.

4 The nations also heard of him; he was taken in their pit, and they brought him with chains unto the land of [c] Egypt.

[c] 2 Kings 23. 33. 2 Chron. 36. 4. Jer. 22. 11, 12.

The Egyptians heard and considered what he did, they had intelligence of Jehoahaz's rigours against them, and all that abetted their interest; this made them (as neighbours do when a lion is reported to waste their flocks) gather together against him. *He was taken in their pit;* or, in their net, as hunters in those parts dig pits and spread nets, into which they drive the hunted lion, or bear: so here. Or else thus, This lion was taken at last, though he did some mischief first to the Egyptians; so the word may bear. *They brought him with chains unto the land of Egypt;* the story of it you have 2 Kings xxiii. 33; these barbarous conquerors used him as men use a lion, put and keep him in chains; carried him captive into Egypt, where he died, Jer. xxii. 10—12, with 2 Kings xxiii. 34.

5 Now when she saw that she had waited, *and* her hope was lost, then she took [d] another of her whelps, *and* made him a young lion.

[d] 2 Kings 23. 34.

Upon the ill success of Jehoahaz, Jerusalem and the Jews in the land fell from their hopes under great disappointments, for Jehoahaz is taken, deposed, carried captive by the Egyptians, instead of shaking off the Egyptian yoke. *She took another;* yet it is said, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 4; 2 Kings xxiii. 34, that the king of Egypt made the next king: both true; the Jews with Pharaoh's liking, or Pharaoh with the Jews' consent, advance him, whether it were Jehoiakim or Jehoiachin. *Made him a young lion;* king, and infused the lion-like maxims for his rules.

6 [e] And he went up and down among the lions, [f] he became a young lion, and learned to catch the prey, *and* devoured men.

[e] Jer. 22. 13,—17. [f] ver. 3.

He, Jehoiakim, *went up and down:* this is said of him, because he continued eleven years on the throne, and so many years, as a lion, tore and devoured; whereas Jehoahaz was taken as soon almost as he first ventured out to hunt the prey. *Among the lions;* carried it after the manners and usages of the heathen kings, those barbarous tyrants, with whom he entered leagues, as he saw good, and laid aside the law of God, which was to guide king and people. *Became a young lion;* grew strong, fierce, ravenous, unsatiable: see ver. 3, where the rest is explained. *Devoured men;* either his neighbours the Ammonites and Moabites, or he devoured his own subjects, impoverished and eat out their estates, spared not the prophets, or their prophecy, and Urijah he slew, Jer. xxvi. 23: what Jehoiakim was appears Jer. xxii. 13—15, 17.

7 And he knew ‖ their desolate palaces, and he laid waste their cities; and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring.

‖ Or, *their widows.*

He, Jehoiakim, *knew their desolate palaces*, on view; not only heard of them, but setting on them violently, and taking them, he came to know their palaces, which are here called, what he made them, desolate; so the word Isa. xiii. 22. *Palaces;* or it may be rendered widows, and then it will refer to such whose husbands this lion devoured, and thereby occasioned their petitioning to him, and thus he knew them, whom he made desolate; but the former best suits what follows. *Laid waste their cities;* pilling, polling, and by exactions driving the inhabitants out by his cruelty and tyranny. *The land was desolate;* the whole land, or the country, sped as ill as the cities, and so it was emptied of men, riches, and strength. *By the noise of his roaring;* by the perpetual violent threats of this cruel king, which are called his roaring, and so Prov. xix. 12, which terrified his neighbours in the three years' revolt which are mentioned 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2.

8 [g] Then the nations set against him on every side from the provinces, and spread their net over him: [h] he was taken in their pit.

[g] 2 Kings 24. 2. [h] ver. 4.

The nations which were feudatory to Nebuchadnezzar, and were bound to assist him in his wars. *Set against him;* by order of the king of Babylon gathered together to hunt this lion, to make war on this revolting king. *On every side;* surrounded him, that he might not escape. *The provinces* which belonged to the Babylonish kingdom, and were governed by presidents, or petty kings, vassals to Nebuchadnezzar. *Spread their net over him;* soon got him into their toils, as huntsmen get a lion, or other wild beast, into their net. *He was taken in their pit:* see ver. 4.

9 [i] And they put him in ward ‖ in chains, and brought him to the king of Babylon: they brought him into holds, that his voice should no more be heard upon [k] the mountains of Israel.

[i] 2 Chr. 36 6. Jer. 22. 18. ‖ Or, *in hooks.* [k] Ezek. 6. 2.

They, the armies of the several nations, or the chief commanders of those armies, *put him in ward*, in grates, or a great cage, as wild beasts are conveyed. *In chains;* it is reported they put an iron collar on his neck, and fastened an iron chain to it. *And brought him;* he was carried that long journey in chains, enough to change his roaring lion-like into the roarings of a desperate, miserable captive. *To the king of Babylon*, wherever he was, for some dispute it whether now in Babylon, or elsewhere with some of his armies; however, this unhappy king was carried to Nebuchadnezzar, or died on the way perhaps, by command of Nebuchadnezzar so used that hard usage killed him, and then they cast him out unburied, as Jeremiah, chap. xxii. 18, 19, foretold. *Brought him into holds;* kept him safe that he should not escape, or brought him to Babylon, which, though one city, yet so large, and had so great and many forts about it, that it seemed to be made up of many strong holds. *That his voice should no more be heard;* that he might never more either affright, or kill, or devour any of his people and subjects in the land of Israel. *On the mountains of Israel:* in a comely observance of the parable the kingdom is the mountains, when the king is the lion that rangeth and roareth on them. Two more lions of the same temper, and alike miserable in their end, I doubt not, are included in this emblem; and by these the Jews might know what would become of Jeconiah, called also Jehoiachin, and of Zedekiah, who was called Mattaniah.

10 ¶ Thy mother *is* [l] like a vine ‖ in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was [m] fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters.

[l] Ch. 17. 6. ‖ Or, *in thy quietness*, or, *in thy likeness.* [m] Deut. 8. 7, 8, 9.

The 10th verse begins the second part of the chapter. *Thy mother*, O thou prince of Israel: see ver. 2. *Is like a vine;* frequently so compared, Psal. lxxx. 8, 14, 15; Isa. iii. 14; v. 2; xxvii. 2. *In thy blood;* either when thou wast first born, as Ezek. xvi. 6; or, the royal line, thy kingly race; or, in the vigour of thy strength. *Planted by the waters*, in a very fruitful soil. *She was fruitful*, and accordingly she did thrive, and brought forth much fruit: see chap. xvii. 8. Though she lost many thousands carried away, yet more were born, bred up, and trained up to useful arts and employments, say some; but this too general. The royal family did spring like a vine well watered. *Full of branches;* full of children; when Josiah died he left four behind him, beside other branches of the royal line.

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11 And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, and her
n So ch. 31. 3. Dan. 4. 11. [n]stature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches.

Strong rods; many excellent persons endowed with qualifications befitting kings, that they might sway the sceptre, and rule the people with equity. *Her stature;* the grandeur of the kings and kingdom. *Exalted among the thick branches;* exalted above the ordinary majesty of other kingdoms. *The thick branches;* the goodly cedars and their thick branches; i. e. this kingdom equalled, if not excelled, the greatest neighbour kingdoms, and her kings, as David, Solomon, &c. exceeded all their neighbour kings in riches and power. *She appeared in her height;* like a mighty tree, that overtops all the forest, so did this goodly kingdom over all kingdoms, and it was seen and noted, according to God's promise that it should be the head, and not the tail, and to that Deut. iv. 6—8.

12 But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the
o ch. 17. 10. Hos. 13. 15. [o]east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire consumed them.

This flourishing vine first degenerated, brought forth fruit to itself, not to God, and grew proud, abused God's mercies to all manner of sin. *She was plucked up in fury;* was violently, suddenly, and totally rooted out, tore up by the roots; so was the once flourishing kingdom of the Jews overthrown. *She was cast down to the ground;* had she been again set, there might have been some hope, but plucked up root and branch together it is perished for ever. To hasten the utter destruction hereof, an *east wind*, that blasting, piercing wind, blows upon her; the king of Babylon with all his power, raised of God to pull up this sinful kingdom. *Dried up her fruit;* blasted all her fruit; deposed her king, captivated him, his family, and the whole kingdom. *Her strong rods,* all the choice men, the counsellors, warriors, artificers, all that were like to be the strength of the kingdom, *were broken;* by Nebuchadnezzar's hand plucked away, and removed into Babylon, where they lay as withered branches. *The fire consumed them;* called fury in the former part of the verse. God's displeasure for their sins, their adversaries' rage, and their own animosities, burnt them up; their houses and palaces, their city and temple, all burnt, yea, and some persons with this fire were consumed also, beside some that the conqueror roasted.

13 And now she *is* planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground.

And now; at this present time. *She is planted;* but, alas! how unlike what she was! a brand pulled out of the burnings, a few of the branches of the last pruning, or a few smaller roots taken up by the provident hand of the Lord of the vineyard, a remnant that might be a nursery, a seed-plot; but the much greater part of the vine is, as said, destroyed. It is not said who planted them, but it is easy to conjecture Nebuchadnezzar planted them in policy and for his advantage, they planted themselves out of necessity, and God planted them there in just correcting mercy, and will give them root, and make them thrive, and transplant them after seventy years, and set them on the mountains of Israel again. *In the wilderness;* so it was to the Jews, a forlorn, dangerous, and necessitous state: though Babylon was in a very fruitful place, yet the savage cruelty and the insulting pride of the Babylonians made it to the Jews as terrible as a wilderness; besides, there were some barren places of this kingdom, to which some of the Jews might be carried and confined. *Dry:* this and the other expression are a description of the nature of a wilderness, and illustrate what the prophet had spoken, or may be paraphrased by that of David, Psal. lxiii. 1; it was dry and thirsty, where no one stream ran from that river which made glad the city of God, Psal. xlvi. 4.

p Judg. 9. 15. 2 Kings 24. 20. ch. 17. 18. 14 [p]And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, *which* hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod *to be* a sceptre to rule. [q]This *is* a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation. q Lam. 4. 20.

This verse gives you account of the immediate cause of this hasty, furious, total pulling up of this vine. *And fire,* of rebellion, will be kindled by *a rod of her branches,* Zedekiah, who is of the blood royal, made king by Nebuchadnezzar, and who swore allegiance to him. *Hath devoured her fruit;* brought the land, city, king's palaces, and God's temple to utter desolation. *She hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule;* the regal dignity is ceased, and shall no more rise, you shall never have a crowned head to rule you more. *This is a lamentation;* this I have told you is the subject of my mournful thoughts. *And shall be for a lamentation;* and the execution of these things, which shall be much more terrible, shall make you lament at sight of them, and at remembrance of them, as long as you live.

CHAP. XX.

God refuseth to be consulted by the elders of Israel, 1—3. *He rehearseth the rebellions of their ancestors in Egypt,* 4—9; *in the wilderness,* 10—26; *and in the Promised Land,* 27—29. *He reproacheth the present generation with the like corrupt manners,* 30—32. *He threateneth to rule over them with rigour, but with promise to gather them, to purge out the rebels, and accept the services of the faithful in his church,* 33—44. *The destruction of Jerusalem prophesied under the name of a forest,* 45—19.

AND it came to pass in the seventh year, cir. 593.
in the fifth *month*, the tenth *day* of the month, *that* [a]certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and sat before me. a ch. 8. 1. & 14. 1.

The seventh year of Jeconiah's captivity and Zedekiah's reign, two years and five months before Nebuchadnezzar did besiege Jerusalem. *The fifth month;* August. *The tenth day;* which answers to our twenty-seventh. *Certain,* Heb. *men.* Some of note among the elders and rulers of Israel. Either some of the captives in Babylon, as most likely they were who, chap. viii. 1, came to him, or some of those who were sent from Zedekiah to compliment or carry tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, as most likely they were, chap. xiv. 1. *Of the elders;* not of the priests or Levites, but of the laity, civil magistrates and officers, who might be sent to view the state of Babylon, and to observe what posture things were in, the better to resolve on that Zedekiah and his councils were forming, whether it will be advisable to shake off the yoke of the king of Babylon by a rebellion, or patiently bear it: and I conjecture this might be the main inquiry they made now, which was two years and five months before the siege began, during which two years and five months I suppose the design was resolved on, framed, provision made of all sorts, and at last a rebellion raised. *Came to inquire of the Lord;* yet resolved beforehand what they would do, as will appear. Prophets neither did pretend to, nor could they, resolve such inquiries, but the Lord whom the prophets did consult. *Sat before me:* whether it speak the quality of the persons, that did not stand as mean persons, or their resolution to wait for answer, or be a phrase proper with the Jews to express the common deportment of the country, I leave you to guess.

2 Then came the word of the LORD unto me, saying,

While these men were with Ezekiel God gives him instruction what to say to them.

3 Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye come to enquire of me? *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, [b]I will not be enquired of by you. b ver. 31. ch. 14. 3.

Son of man: see chap. ii. 3. *Speak unto the elders of Israel;* speak plainly, boldly, and to their faces, fear not their frowns; if they are deputies from Zedekiah, yet let not that character make thee mealymouthed. *Thus saith the Lord God:* this expression carries enough to encourage

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him. *Are ye come to inquire of me?* are ye in good earnest? Nay, but you act a deep hypocrisy, being already resolved on your own course, and yet now pretend you would know my counsel. It is a sharp reproof of their wickedness, and God utterly refuseth to be inquired of by such. *As I live:* see chap. xiv. 16. *I will not be inquired of by you,* profane hypocrites, that abuse my prophet, and tempt his God. They are, as all politicians who have less of religion than worldly wisdom, willing to hear whether the prophet will flatter, and fawn, and encourage them; if so, then he is a wise, able, honest man; else a sot to be slighted.

‖ Or, *plead for them.*
c ch. 22. 2. & 23. 36.
d ch. 16. 2.

4 Wilt thou ‖ [c]judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge *them?* [d]cause them to know the abominations of their fathers:

Wilt thou judge them? either, Wilt thou judge charitably, and, supposing they are upright and teachable, wilt thou plead with me for them? as chap. xiv. 3, or as Jer. xiv. 9. Or else thus, Wilt thou argue with them, convince them, and reprove them? This is fittest to be done, and do this, handle them severely as they deserve. It is repeated, to whet the prophet, and quicken him to this work, and to intimate to us the great contumacy of the people. *Cause them to know the abominations of their fathers:* tell them somewhat that they may go away wiser than they came. They expect to know what will be their fate, tell them what hath been their fathers' carriage towards me, which they imitate, nay exceed. Their curiosity and perplexity would be informed what is to come, but their consciences need more to be informed: what their fathers have done they approved, and have outdone; by that let them know what to do, what to expect.

e Ex. 6. 7. Deut. 7. 6.
‖ Or, *sware:* and so ver. 6, &c. Ex. 6. 8.
f Ex. 3. 8. & 4. 31. Deut. 4. 34.
g Ex. 20. 2.

5 ¶ And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when [e]I chose Israel, and ‖ lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself [f]known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, [g]I *am* the LORD your God;

In the day; at the time, the season; it speaks not of that precise portion of hours which make up the natural day, but of the time wherein God began to show them his great mercy. *When I chose;* it includes mercy without merit in them, and it refers to God's declaring by his kindness to them that he had chosen them; it supposeth the free eternal election, but it expressly refers to a temporal and seasonable selecting them from others; chosen, as Isa. xiv. 1; again Deut. vii. 6, 7: or possibly thus, when I went to make them a choice people by refining them from their dross and idolatries contracted in Egypt, so the word Isa. xlviii. 10, and selecting them. *Israel;* not personally considered, but nationally. *Lifted up mine hand;* either assuring them by oath that he would now make good his promise, and bring them out of bondage; it is the gesture of one that solemnly sweareth, and scriptures frequently mention it, as ver. 15; Deut. xxxii. 40: or else, stretched out and made bare my arm, i. e. magnified my power for your deliverance. *The seed of the house of Jacob:* this explaineth and tells us who Israel was. *Made myself known unto them,* by the miracles which he wrought; for it is not to be understood of making known or discovering his essence and incomprehensible being. It is not unlikely that many of them either were ignorant or forgot God; now by his wonders wrought for their deliverance he brings them to remember him, and look to him. Moses's question in Exod. iii. 13 seems to intimate this ignorance of this people. *In the land of Egypt;* as this expressly directs us to the place, so it points out the time too when Israel was chosen, selected. *When I lifted up mine hand unto them;* showed my power in performing my oath and promise in what was now to be done, and assuring them of doing what was further promised by him, and expected by them; and to assure them the more, it is doubled. *I am the Lord your God:* so Exod. iii. 13, 16, 17. Yours from your progenitors, yours by promise, by covenant, and now am come to be your God by actual and punctual performing my word to you, bringing you out of the land of Egypt by a lifted-up hand and arm.

h Ex. 3. 8, 17. Deut. 8. 7, 8, 9. Jer. 32. 22.
i Ps. 48. 2. ver. 15. Dan. 8. 9. & 11. 16, 41. Zech. 7. 14.

6 In the day *that* I lifted up mine hand unto them, [h]to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, [i]which *is* the glory of all lands:

After the manner of man God speaks, as if he had been the spy to go from place to place to search out the best, and to appoint it for them; it was his wise and good providence which assigned this land to them. Literally, *milk and honey* in abundance were in the land of Canaan, and continued till this fruitful land was turned into barrenness, for the sins of its inhabitants. Proverbially, it speaks the choicest, best, the most useful and pleasant, and the plenty and abundance of all these blessings for life, and so to be here taken; and though the whole country in the utmost extent of it, as proposed for Israel, (whose sins kept them out of much of it,) were naturally a fruitful land, yet this great plenty was more from the special favour and blessing of God. *Which is the glory of all lands;* makes every country desirable.

k ch. 18. 31. 2 Chr. 15. 8.
m Lev. 17. 7. & 18. 3. Deut. 29. 16, 17, 18. Josh. 24. 14.

7 Then said I unto them, [k]Cast ye away every man [l]the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with [m]the idols of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.

Then, Heb. *And,* which connects the words; and though we read it *then,* this doth not point out the time when God spake thus, though it is certain, when he had brought them out of Egypt he gave them his ordinances and laws of worship; nay, it is sufficiently included, in that they were to go out that they might serve the Lord. *Cast ye away every man;* let every one of you, man by man, and family by family, cast away with abhorrence and indignation; the word is used chap. xviii. 31. *The abominations of his eyes;* which your eyes should have abhorred, but you rather lifted up your eyes to them, and looked for help from them; and it includes their own voluntary act in this idolatry. *Defile not yourselves with the idols:* this explains the former passage. *Of Egypt;* which were in veneration among the Egyptians, and with whose worship too many of them had been insnared and polluted while they were in Egypt. *I am the Lord your God;* the only true God, and therefore you should worship none other. See ver. 6. You are my covenant people, and therefore ought to have no other God as Exod. xx. 3. Thus God prepared them, by his mercies and by his law, for himself.

n ch. 7. 8. ver. 13, 21.

8 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will [n]pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

They rebelled against me; so great a sin is idolatry, it is against God, as open hostility is against a sovereign whom subjects fight against. All sin is against God, but idolatry is much more so. *And would not hearken unto me;* their wills were alienated from God, they refused to hear and obey in this. *They did not forsake the idols of Egypt;* it is probable there were some among them that carried with them (as Rachel did her father's) the idols of Egypt. *Then I said;* I was just upon resolving, I was very near saying. *I will pour out,* as a storm or mighty shower, *my fury;* just and severe wrath. *To accomplish my anger against them;* to make an end of them. *In the midst of the land of Egypt;* that they should have perished in Egypt, and never come out.

o See Ex 32. 12. Num. 14. 13, &c. Deut. 9. 28. ver. 14, 22. ch. 36. 21, 22.

9 [o]But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they *were,* in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.

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I wrought, according to my promise, my infinite mercy, and the hopes of those few that heard and obeyed. *For my name's sake;* for my glory: had you been used as you deserved, you had died slaves in Egypt, and there had been your graves; but the glory of God's mercy and faithfulness is the motive of his sparing them. *Polluted;* reproached, blasphemed, and lessened among the heathen. *The heathen, among whom they were;* the Egyptians, amongst whom Israel had sojourned two hundred and fifteen years, in which time many of the children of Israel, no doubt, had discoursed of their hopes of going out of Egypt to the land promised to Abraham for them, and were apt to boast of their God, and that country; and, to render the thing credible in the eyes of the Egyptians, would speak of the mercy, power, faithfulness, and wisdom of the Lord to effect this, the glory of which would have been eclipsed, and the heathen blasphemed, if God had not brought them out; when it was thus God wrought for his name's sake.

p Ex. 13. 18.

10 ¶ Wherefore I [p]caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.

Wherefore, Heb. *And. I caused them to go forth;* removed all obstacles, furnished them with all necessaries, went before them, and showed them the way they should go, as is expressed, Exod. xiii. 17. *And brought them;* I brought; it was not Moses's error, though Pharaoh thought so, Exod. xiv. 3, 4, but the peculiar conduct of God, Exod. xiv. 2. *Into the wilderness;* a barren, sandy part of the country, the borders of Egypt towards the Red Sea; yet having mountains which shut them in on both sides, and frontier garrisons near them: and as he brought them in, so he conducted them out of these straits, though here it is not mentioned.

q Deut. 4. 8. Neh. 9. 13, 14. Ps. 147. 19, 20.

† Heb. *made them to know.*

r Lev. 18. 5. ver. 13, 21. Rom. 10. 5. Gal. 3. 12.

11 [q]And I gave them my statutes, and [†]shewed them my judgments, [r]which *if* a man do, he shall even live in them.

I, who spared them in Egypt, had brought them forth, and owned them as the children of Abraham my friend: God gave his law by Moses, and now Israel's laws are really of Divine origin, when others did but pretend it. *Gave them;* appointed and commanded by my authority, and communicated out of my love and kindness to them. *My statutes;* the law on Mount Sinai, containing their duty. *Showed them;* plainly declared, spake so that they might know. *My judgments;* not the terrible executions of his wrath, but judgments here are the rules that God gave them to walk by. *If a man do;* if any one, without partiality, whosoever should keep these statutes and judgments, for with God is no respect of persons. *He shall live:* not that any ever did or could by sinless keeping the law attain the eternal blessedness; grace gives that; but it surely points out a future prosperity and flourishing state in this life to all that are careful to keep these statutes and judgments as they can; such should not be cut off, nor brought into captivity, but live and rejoice in their own land. *In them;* both in the fruit of them already obeyed, and in the continuance to do them for the future.

s Ex. 20. 8. & 31. 13, &c. & 35. 2. Deut. 5. 12. Neh. 9. 14.

12 Moreover also I gave them my [s]sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I *am* the LORD that sanctify them.

I gave; both commanded, and also sanctified, those portions of time to be holy rests. *My sabbaths;* either the weekly sabbath, which, recurring every seventh day, soon multiplied into many, and was to be the commemoration of God's rest from his labour, Israel's delivery out of Egypt, Deut. v. 15, and an awakening of their hopes of the eternal rest with God; or it may, as most like it doth, include all the solemn days of God's worship, every of which was a sabbath, and no work to be done in it. *To be a sign* of their being peculiarly my people, select from all other, to walk with me, to rest in me, and receive more grace from me. *That they might know:* this was a teaching sign, they might by other ways know, and by this also. *I am the Lord;* in this see my authority, and my holiness, who by such means do promote and attain such holy purposes and ends. *That sanctify them;* that have withdrawn them from the profane and common herd of the heathen, and made them by this relatively holy; or else, that have changed the heart, and filled it with holy, pure, and gracious inclinations, and so made them really holy.

t Num. 14. 22. Ps. 78. 40. & 95. 8, 9, 10.

u ver. 16, 24. Prov. 1. 25.

x Ex. 16. 27.

y Num. 14. 29. & 26. 65. Ps. 106. 23.

13 But the house of Israel [t]rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they [u]despised my judgments, which *if* a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly [x]polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the [y]wilderness, to consume them.

The house of Israel; not a few, this I might have borne in silence, but most of them; they were, as we are, a rebellious house. *Rebelled against me;* provoked me bitterly to indignation by their contumacies, and that frequently, as Exod. xvii. 7; Numb. xx. 24; Deut. i. 26, 43; a stubborn and rebellious generation, Psal. lxxviii. 8, with ver. 40. *In the wilderness;* where they most needed my care and favour, where the preserving their life from destruction by the noxious creatures, and from famine by the barrenness of the wilderness, was a continued miracle, which required their obedience and dependence. *Walked not in my statutes;* made not them the only rule of their religion, and exercise of it, as they should have done, but framed religion to their own or their neighbours' idolatrous inclinations. *Despised my judgments;* slighted first, as of little excellency, refused next, and cast off with disdain and loathing. *Which*, the equitable and necessary rules for government of their civil affairs, which were framed to the safety and welfare of a people, *if a man do, he shall even live in them:* see ver. 11. *Polluted;* profaned with working what was prohibited, misemploying those days on idols, or on any common ordinary business, as Exod. xvi. 27; Numb. xv. 32; Jer. xvii. 22, 23. *Then I said:* see ver. 8. *To consume them;* to cut them off from being a people, as Numb. xvi. 21.

z ver. 9, 22.

14 [z]But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out.

See ver. 9, where these words are paraphrased.

a Num. 14. 28. Ps. 95. 11. & 106. 26.

b ver. 6.

15 Yet also [a]I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given *them*, flowing with milk and honey, [b]which *is* the glory of all lands;

Yet also; moreover also, as the same particles are rendered, ver. 12. *I lifted up my hand unto them;* see ver. 5; sware in his wrath against them, Psal. xcv. 11. *In the wilderness* of Paran, where the Israelites pitched and abode in several parts of it many days, during which time they lust for flesh, Numb. xi. 4, 5, and murmur against the Lord, Moses, and the two faithful spies, who had searched out the land: here it was they would make them a captain and return to Egypt, Numb. xiv. 4. *That I would not bring them, &c.:* so it is recorded, Numb. xiv. 11, 12, 22, 23, 28—32; so all the murmuring, disobedient, unbelieving generation was excluded, and their children were brought in; which, well noted, reconcileth the seeming contrariety between the oaths of God. *Them;* those rebellious and murmuring ones. *Given them;* promised to the seed of Abraham, but not confined to that generation; the promise was made good, though to the next generation. *Flowing with milk and honey:* see ver. 6.

c ver. 13, 24.

d Num. 15. 39. Ps. 78. 37. Amos 5. 25, 26. Acts 7. 42, 43.

16 [c]Because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths: for [d]their heart went after their idols.

See the whole former part of this verse explained already, ver. 13. *Their heart went after their idols;* their will and affections, their zeal and resolution, were for their idols which they served in Egypt, and which they had brought with them out of Egypt.

e Ps. 78. 38.

17 [e]Nevertheless mine eye spared

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them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness.

Nevertheless mine eye spared them; though they did highly provoke God, and deserved to be cut off, yet his eye pitied them: they provoked his wrath, he stirred up his compassions. *Them;* not all of them, for many did die in the wilderness, and, among these, some by immediate wrath; but how many soever they were, yet the growing generation was spared, and the nation was not extirpated.

18 But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols:

But, and, or *then I said.* The fathers were refractory, and deaf, would not hearken, therefore God turns his advice to children. Though the particular place is not specified, yet among the calamities of that mournful age, and at the funerals of so many as then died, there were some that had piety, zeal, and courage enough to warn the survivors, and Psal. xc. 7—11 affords us ground enough to believe Moses did warn and advise. *In the wilderness;* in that part of it where their fathers murmured, and where some were cut off by the hand of God, and in other parts through which they travelled and suffered. *Walk ye not:* it is both counsel, as from love, and a command, as from power; Live not as your fathers, for they walked contrary to reason, religion, and their own good, as much as they walked contrary to me. *Your fathers;* though fathers, they may not command contrary to God's command, nor be imitated in what they do contrary to God's law. *Their judgments;* it is observable, the prophet forbids them to imitate the customs, rites, and usages of their fathers, included in judgments, and thence passeth to forbid their imitating their fathers in their idolatry. Idolatry is fruitful, when it so multiplied in Egyptian bondage, and in the desolate state of a people in the wilderness.

f Deu. 5. 32, 33. & 6. & 7. & 8. & 10. & 11. & 12.

19 I *am* the LORD your God; [f]walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them;

The Lord; the only God; idols, though your fathers' idols, are no gods, therefore let them never be that to you which they are not, cannot be in themselves, the objects of worship, and trust, and love. *Your God,* by covenant, by redemption out of Egypt, by adoption, and giving you the law; therefore own me as such, by keeping mine ordinances and judgments to do them; I am most your Father.

g ver. 12. Jer. 17. 22.

20 [g]And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I *am* the LORD your God.

Hallow my sabbaths; remember to keep them holy, employ them on holy works of God's solemn and public worship, and cease from servile and worldly businesses. *A sign:* see ver. 12. As the Friday observed a rest is the sign of a Turk, the seventh day observed is the sign of a Jew, and distinguisheth: so it was of old, so it is now: the Christian sabbath is a sign between Christ and us. *May know* more fully, acknowledge it more openly, and in waiting on mine ordinances may know by experience what the almighty grace of your God can do.

h Num. 25. 1, 2. Deut. 9. 23, 24. & 31. 27.

21 Notwithstanding [h]the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments

i ver. 11, 13.

to do them, [i]which *if* a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sab-

k ver. 8, 13.

baths: then I said, [k]I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.

These unhappy children do even as their fathers in all points of disobediences to God; are as deaf to his counsel, and as averse to his law, which here is point by point recounted, and is the same with ver. 13, where see it explained.

l Ps. 78. 38. ver. 17. m ver. 9, 14.

22 [l]Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and [m]wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth.

Nevertheless, Heb. *And.* God seems to take to himself the posture of one that was just going to smite, yet draws back that he might spare, and act like his own infinite goodness, not suitable to the sin of this generation. *Wrought:* this is explained ver. 9.

23 I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that [n]I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries;

n Lev. 26. 33. Deut. 28. 64. Ps. 106. 27. Jer. 15. 4.

On this solemn gesture and signification, see ver. 5. Here it is an oath added to a threat, to make it more dreadful to them, and to make it successful in keeping them from the sin threatened. *That I would scatter them;* foretold them of a captivity which should come upon them for their sins, which it is probable was often inculcated in their hearing before Moses penned it for them, Deut. xxxii. 15—42; Lev. xxvi. 31—33, and it is ingeminated to make it pierce the deeper, and affect them the more.

24 [o]Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and [p]their eyes were after their fathers' idols.

o ver. 13, 16.

p See ch. 6 9.

The whole 24th verse is already explained ver. 16, which see. *They,* that travelled through the wilderness, *had not executed my judgments,* in all that forty years, wherein their fathers were to be wasted, and by which their children should have learned, kept, and done God's judgments, but did them not. *Their fathers' idols;* which their fathers chose in Egypt, and retained with them, and now their children serve the same, even the Egyptian idols.

25 Wherefore [q]I gave them also statutes *that were* not good, and judgments whereby they should not live;

q See Ps. 81. 12. ver. 39. Rom. 1. 24. 2 Thess. 2. 11.

Because they did by such perverse obstinacy reject the statutes I did in mercy give them; my good laws and judgments, saith God, they despised; for this cause God proceeds to punish them in a dreadful kind and manner. *Gave them;* not by appointing or enjoining, but by permitting them to make such for themselves, much like that Rom. i. 24, giving *up to a reprobate sense,* or that 2 Thess. ii. 11; Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12, as a governor or father, after long and fruitless strivings with an obstinate and unruly youth, gives him up at last as hopeless, and casts off the care and guidance of him. *Statutes;* orders and rules about their religious worship, which they first invented, next approved, and lastly made their established religion, where all they could love in it was, that it was their own. *Were not good;* had nothing in them that was morally good, pious, or suited to the spiritual nature of God; that were unprofitable, and ministered nothing to the edifying and bettering of men, nor could commend the users of them to God; that were indeed pernicious to the users, and increased their sins, being superstitious and idolatrous: so the *not good* is very bad, inconvenient, and hurtful. *Whereby they should not live:* if it be not explicatory of the former, it may, it is possible, refer distinctly to the inconvenient, oppressive, and unsafe courses, decrees, and edicts about civil matters, which were such as they could never thrive under; for however some heathen nations have thrived under an evident blessing from Heaven, though their religion were idolatrous, yet I do not remember that an apostate nation ever retained their good government and civil prosperity under their apostacy from God; thus the judgments given were such they could not live in them; they made grievous and destructive laws for themselves and theirs.

26 And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass [r]through *the fire* all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they [s]might know that I *am* the LORD.

r 2 Kings 17. 17. & 21. 6. 2 Chron. 28. 3. & 33. 6. Jer. 32. 35. ch. 16. 20, 21.

s ch. 6. 7.

Polluted them; either I permitted them to pollute themselves, or discovered that they had polluted themselves, or

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treated them with loathing and abhorrence, as polluted persons. *In their own gifts;* either in their gifts which they pretended to bring to me, or rather in their sacrifices they offered to whom, or at least in what manner, they, not I, had chosen; or, which is most likely, gifts are here their first-born, which are more than other children accounted gifts. *Through the fire:* see chap. xvi. 20, 21. Most insufferable affront to God, to see those children inhumanly offered to the devil, which, in remembrance of his redeeming the fathers, were consecrated to God! Exod. xiii. 2; and possibly this was first done when they offered to Baal-peor, Numb. xxv. 3. *To the end, &c.;* to provoke God so to afflict, weaken, and waste by his judgment, till it should undeniably appear that God had by signal displeasure against them for their sins brought them to desolation. *Might know;* be convinced, and forced to own, that the Lord is a mighty King in punishing those that might, but would not, have him a gracious King in governing and guiding them.

27 ¶ Therefore, son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Yet in this your fathers have [t]blasphemed me, in that they have [†]committed a trespass against me.

[t] Rom. 2. 24.

[†] Heb. *trespassed a trespass.*

Since all this evil and wicked carriage in Egypt and in the wilderness is too true, and cause of a Divine wrath against them, go on; tell what the deportment of those was whom I brought into the land. *Unto the house of Israel;* to those elders that were now come to him, that they might tell others at Jerusalem. *Yet;* or further yet, beside all the rest, this is added by them. *Blasphemed me;* profanely and frowardly lessened my mercy, my law, my worship, cast a reproach upon it all, as less desirable than that of their own; theirs more august and stately, more taking and pleasing: or thus reproached my wisdom, as if it needed their additions to complete religion and Divine worship; or reproached my bounty, as if not I, but their idols, gave them what they enjoyed, as Hos. ii. 5, 7, 8: the word speaks a reproach and blasphemy that comes from a heart full of enmity, as where it is used, Numb. xv. 30; 2 Kings xix. 22; Psal. xliv. 16; Isa. xxxvii. 23; xliii. 28; they spitefully reproached. *Committed a trespass against me;* grievously sinned, as the phrase is rendered, chap. xiv. 13: what this was in particular the next verse will account to us.

28 *For* when I had brought them into the land, *for* the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to them, then [u]they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees, and they offered there their sacrifices, and there they presented the provocation of their offering: there also they made their [x]sweet savour, and poured out there their drink offerings.

[u] Is. 57. 5, &c. ch. 6. 13.

[x] ch. 16. 19.

When; so soon as settled in the land promised to Abraham and his seed. *Lifted up mine hand:* see ver. 5, 23. *Saw;* lookest after them, and, when seen, liked and prepared after the manner of the heathen; though this was forbidden, yet this thou didst, buildedst thy high places, and thou settest up thy groves every where. *There;* not where God appointed, but where they listed. *Their sacrifices;* either to God, as sometimes some did, or to their own idols, as the most did, which is here called the presenting the provocation of their offering. *Their offering;* which being presented to their idol, was a provocation unto God. *Sweet savour;* burnt sweet odours to their idols, which did stink in the nostrils of God. *Their drink-offerings;* wine was a part of the offering that sacrificers offered, and so did these idolatrous Jews here, they violated the whole law of sacrifice, and did all that to idols they should have done only to God.

29 Then ‖I said unto them, What *is* the high place whereunto ye go? And the name thereof is called Bamah unto this day.

‖ Or, *I told them what the high place was, or, Bamah.*

Then; when they were intent upon this horrid course of sin, God pleaded by his messengers, and prophets, and law, and some faithful priests, What mean you, that ye go to the high place? should you not go to the altar of God, and bring your sacrifices to the temple? Or what God better than Abraham's do you expect there? What profit by attending upon those sacrifices offered daily? How often have you by such-like means poured contempt on God and his law! *Whereunto ye go;* leaving my temple, and the service I prescribed, and in other places, unrequired, doing their supposed duties. *Bamah;* high place: the very word tells them their wickedness, that they acted against the express will of God, and framed themselves to idolaters of the nation. *Unto this day;* and this they did with obstinacy continue in to the days of Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. Thus far the narrative of their great wickednesses.

30 Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and commit ye whoredom after their abominations?

The house of Israel; those elders that were come to him, as ver. 1, which see. They come to make inquiry, and now the prophet inquires of them, that their own conscience might make answer, and tell them what to expect: Your fathers, where are they? What became of some, that bore their iniquity? And what had become of the rest, if God had not withdrawn his hand? And all this hath been no warning to you, but, as they, so you, have polluted yourselves, and been idolaters.

31 For when ye offer [y]your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day: and [z]shall I be enquired of by you, O house of Israel? *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you.

[y] ver. 26.

[z] ver. 3.

Your gifts: see ver. 26. *All your idols;* it seems they took a compendious way to increase sin and wrath; they worshipped many idols at once; and this they did still to Ezekiel's time, to that very day. Are you fit to come and ask counsel of me, whom you have so shamelessly, so obstinately forsaken and reproached? Can you expect I should answer you? My prophet knew you not to be hypocrites, but his God, who knows you, and all your abominations, hath put the answer into his mouth, which you must be content with. I will answer you as little as you regard me. So God refuseth them.

32 And that [a]which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.

[a] ch. 11. 5.

God by his prophet, to convince and recover them, tells them what they think and have purposed. *Shall not be at all;* shall be quite frustrated. *Ye say;* you have consulted and come to a resolution herein. *As the heathen;* unite in habitation, covenants, marriages, commerce, and religion too; and then ye shall be more safe among them, thrive with them, and all the displeasure they have against you will cease: these are your imaginations and contrivances of you at the court of Zedekiah in Jerusalem. But I tell you that this shall not be at all. This designed apostacy to Gentilism, if you do act it, shall not prosper with you, or help you, ye blind, hardened, senseless atheists.

33 ¶ *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and [b]with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you:

[b] Jer. 21. 5.

As I live: see ver. 3. *A mighty hand;* so mighty, that you shall never wrest yourselves out of it: you think to revolt, and get out of my hand, but you shall hereby discover your own folly, malice, and weakness. *A stretched-out arm,* which reacheth every where, whence you can never flee, which shall be most visible. *With fury;* in hot, but just indignation. *Poured out;* as an inundation from a mighty river, or like a violent storm poured from the clouds, or as a full vessel emptied all at once. *Rule over you;* retain my right over you, and exercise it on you, as

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on combined rebels, since you will refuse my rule, as over-loyal subjects. If you will not be my free subjects, you shall be fettered slaves; the chains of affliction, the restraints of providence crossing you, the execution of my menaces, shall be too sharp and thick a hedge for you to break through; I will make every place where you are a prison for strength to confine you, and I will make it a prison for the sorrows and hardships you shall there endure, and all this in my fury.

34 And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.

From the people; Sidonians, Ammonites, Moabites, &c., whoever they were to whom the house of the apostate Jews betook themselves; where they thought to lurk, God will bring them thence into Babylonish captivity. *Will gather you;* the same thing doubled for greater emphasis. *Are scattered;* you dispersed yourselves for your supposed safety and welfare. *With a mighty hand:* see ver. 33. My power and arm shall execute my just displeasure on you.

35 And I will bring you into the wil-
[c] Jer. 2. 9, 35. ch. 17. 20. derness of the people, and there [c] will I plead with you face to face.

Bring you; drive you; and since you think of such a course of ease to yourselves by casting me off among the nations, I will bring you among such as you shall be soon weary of. *Into the wilderness;* into the most horrid, barbarous, and savage parts of the inhabited world; into the mountainous barren parts of Media, Hyrcania, Iberia, Caspia, and Albania, and Scythia, inhospitable nations, and mortal enemies to strangers. *Plead;* debate, pass sentence, and execute it also on you. *Face to face;* not, as the rabbins dream, to conceal the dishonour of the Jews, but indeed plainly, openly, and so as my hand shall be seen.

[d] See Num. 14. 21, 22, 23, 28, 29. 36 [d] Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD.

With your fathers, who died there, and never entered Canaan. *In the wilderness;* which lay on the further side of the Red Sea, over against the land of Egypt, and is from it called, as here, though it be *Arabia Deserta;* in which, within the space of less than forty years, all the rebellious murmurers died.

[e] Lev. 27. 32. Jer. 33. 13. ‖ Or, *a delivering.* 37 And I will cause you to [e] pass under the rod, and I will bring you into ‖ the bond of the covenant:

I will bring you out by number, yet so as you shall either by a voluntary submission own my sceptre and government, or by a conquered subjection yield to my sword and power. *Under the rod;* either referring to the manner of shepherds in that country, which did tell their sheep in and out of the fold; or rather, as a king, whose sceptre protects some, and dasheth others, and maintains his own right. I will difference persons and persons, that I may deal with each suitably to their state and carriage. *Will bring you,* i. e. the voluntary and obedient, into covenant with myself.

[f] ch. 34. 17, 20. Matt. 25. 32, 33. 38 And [f] I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and
[g] Jer. 44. 14. [g] they shall not enter into the land of Is-
[h] ch. 6. 7. & 15. 7. & 23. 49. rael: [h] and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Purge out; cull, and pick out, that they may be rejected, as they deserve, or brought forth to shame and punishment. *The rebels,* the contumacious sinners, who harden themselves against God; his severe wasting judgments shall find them out in their hiding-places, and drag them out, but not to return them to Canaan, they shall no more return thither. *Ye shall know that I am the Lord;* by which it shall appear, that though apostates may change their religion, and deny their God, yet he hath not less power to restrain, nor less right to govern, nor less sovereignty to dispose of them.

39 As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; [i] Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter *also,* if ye will not hearken unto me: [k] but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.

[i] Judg. 10. 14. 1 Ki. 18. 21, 12. Amos 4. 4. [k] Is. 1. 13. ch. 23. 38, 39.

In short, you have done wickedly as you could, and I have done what was sufficient to reclaim you, I have foretold you what will be the final event, O house of Israel, and further I will not strive with you. *Go ye;* ironically spoken, or, as is usually said to unreclaimable ones, Take your course, which allows not, nor commands, but threatens the evil course of such a one; or it is a divorce of this adulterous house, an utter casting them off for their idolatry. *Hereafter also:* it seems an abrupt, vehement speech, which includes some heavy sentence, but it is suppressed, as too great to be uttered, or to leave room for doing more than the offender expected, Eccles. xi. 9; Amos iv. 4; Matt. xxiii. 23. You take yours, I will take my course, and see whose word shall stand. But while ye are such idolaters and notorious sinners, forbear to take my name into your lips, bring me none of your gifts and sacrifices to your idols, and pretend you bring them ultimately to me.

40 For [l] in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there [m] will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the ‖ first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.

[l] Is. 2. 2, 3. ch. 17. 23. Micah 4. 1. [m] Is. 56. 7 & 60. 7. Zech. 8. 20, &c. Mal. 3. 4. Rom. 12. 1. ‖ Or, *chief.*

The gifts of idolaters, and all their painted stuff, God rejected in the former verse; now he encourageth the upright, those that feared, and obeyed, and waited on him. *Mine holy mountain;* Zion, holy hill, Psal. ii. 6; holy by designation, and God's own appointing it for his temple and presence. *The height of Israel:* the hypocrites, you have your high places, I abhor them; my church hath its high place, but it is the Mount Zion I have loved and chosen, called the height: it was the glory of Israel, and though lower than many other hills, yet it was above them all for God's peculiar presence there. *All the house of Israel;* redeemed by me, whom I have brought out of Babylon according to promise, the returned captivity. *All of them:* it is doubled to insure them. *In the land;* their own land, and their fathers' land. *Serve me;* not idols, but the God of their fathers. *Accept them;* delight in them, and in their sacrifices. *Require your offerings:* when I have brought you into, and blest you in, the land, then I will require your offerings as formerly; your first-fruits, your tithes, in a word, all your holy gifts: you shall see my temple built, Jerusalem filled with inhabitants, the land of Israel planted with seed of man and beast, my worship restored, and you shall go up with joy, carrying your holy things, and I will there accept them.

41 I will accept you with your †[n] sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen.

† Heb. *savour of rest.* [n] Eph. 5. 2. Phil. 4. 18.

The same gracious promise for substance repeated. *Sweet savour;* incense of a pure and obedient heart. *From the people;* from Babylon, and the parts of that kingdom, where they had been scattered these seventy years. *Gather you,* by Cyrus's proclamation, and my secret impulse on the spirits of the faithful and constant Jews, while apostates stay behind. *Sanctified;* magnified and praised for the good I do to my people, and on occasion of their love, fear, and obedience to me. *Before the heathen;* heathens shall see, and say, as Psal. cxxvi. 2, God hath done great things for them; their God is the great, the merciful, and faithful God, who hath remembered his servants.

42 [o] And ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, [p] when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country *for* the

[o] ver. 38, 44. ch. 3. 23. & 35. 27. [p] ch. 11. 17. & 34. 13. & 36. 24.

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which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers.

Ye shall know more fully by experience that he is your God, who is the great, good, wise, and faithful God, who performs his word; you shall know, and love, fear, obey, and worship him alone, and according to his will. Of the rest of the verse, see ver. 5, 23, 28, where these passages are spoken to.

q ch. 16. 61. 43 And [q] there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye
r Lev. 26. 39. ch. 6. 9. Hos. 5. 15. have been defiled; and [r] ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed.

In your restored state, and in your prosperity, in the land whither you are returned, ye shall review your former ways with sorrow; remember, and grieve. *Your ways* of your folly, explained by their doings, which defiled them, i. e. all their more notorious sins. *Loathe:* see chap. vi. 9. *In your own sight;* your own heart and conscience shall see what you have done, and they shall take shame, and be humbled, though none else see it.

s ver. 38. ch. 24. 24. 44 [s] And ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have wrought with you
t ch. 36. 22. [t] for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

This 44th verse doth summarily acquaint us that all God did for this people was of free, mere mercy, and for his own sake, not theirs. *Ye shall know;* experimentally, with affection and obedience. The hypocrite secretly thinks somewhat in himself and works that God had regard to, but an honest, good heart, when God hath wrought, owneth the mercy wrought to be free and undeserved.

45 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

A new prophecy, and which pertains, say some, to the next chapter, which is a large comment on this short prophecy in the three last verses, for the 45th and 46th are introductory.

u ch. 6. 2. & 21. 2. 46 [u] Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop *thy word* toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field;

He was now in Babylon, north from Jerusalem, and being commanded to look toward the south, it is toward Jerusalem, and the land of Canaan. *Thy face;* thy courage and undaunted mind, manifest in prophesying as thou art commissioned. *Drop;* let thy word distil, begin with softer words ere thou shower down with the vehemency of a storm; prophesy so, Amos vii. 16; Micah ii. 6. *The forest of the south field,* i. e. Jerusalem, which was become like a forest for multitude of inhabitants, for barrenness, wildness, degeneracy, and sheltering wild beasts; murderers lodged in her.

47 And say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith
x Jer. 21. 14. the Lord GOD; Behold, [x] I will kindle a
y Luke 23. 31. fire in thee, and it shall devour [y] every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched,
z ch. 21. 4. and all faces [z] from the south to the north shall be burned therein.

Hear; hearken diligently, and consider. *The word of the Lord;* what God foretells shall be done. *I will kindle a fire,* I will bring an evil like fire, the Chaldean forces, *in thee,* in the midst of the land. *Every green tree, &c.;* all that flourish, and all that are poor. *The flaming flame;* it will be a raging and swift fire. *Shall not be quenched;* all means that can be used will not avail to quench this fire, till it hath burnt up all. *Faces;* persons and orders of men, expressed by faces. *From the south to the north;* from one end of the land to the other; the length of Judea did so lie from south to north. *Shall be burnt:* with terrors, labours, flight, famine, and sickness, occasioned by this mighty invasion, all persons shall wither, and be as parched, or burnt.

48 And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be quenched.

That is, all the nations round about, near to them, shall clearly see, openly own it, as God's own work, both kindling this fire, and continuing it till it hath consumed all which God would destroy by it.

49 Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?

When the prophet had done his duty, and prophesied, and they should have heard and understood, he returns with a complaint of their quarrelling, censuring, flouting, and reproaching him for it: one while they account him mad, out of his wits, taken up with raptures and ecstasies, or else doting and dreaming; thus they fortify themselves in their atheism, infidelity, idolatry, and all other sins, and fear not thy word, but contemn thy servant.

CHAP. XXI.

Ezekiel prophesieth the sword of the Lord against all flesh in the land of Israel, sighing bitterly for a sign, 1—7. *Another prophecy of a bright and sharp sword, commissioned to destroy,* 8—17. *The sword of the king of Babylon, in suspense which of two ways to take, by divination is directed the way to Jerusalem,* 18—24. *The fall of the profane prince of Israel and of his kingdom for a time,* 25—27. *The destruction of the Ammonites,* 28—32.

AND the word of the LORD came unto 553.
me, saying,

A command or direction to speak plainly, that none might quarrel with his obscurity.

2 [a] Son of man, set thy face toward a ch. 20. 46.
Jerusalem, and [b] drop *thy word* toward b Deut. 32. 2. Amos 7. 16. Mic. 2. 6, 11.
the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel,

Set thy face; put thyself in a posture may bespeak thy going to prophesy. *Toward Jerusalem,* or against Jerusalem, called, chap. xx. 46, *forest of the south field. Drop thy word;* of the phrase see chap. xx. 46; as rain from heaven, so distil my word. *The holy places;* either the temple, and all the parts of it, which were three, the porch, the holy, and holy of holies; or their synagogues, in which they met to worship and read the law, which were burnt up by this fire, Psal. lxxiv. 8. *Against the land of Israel;* not only against Jerusalem, but the whole land of Israel, from the south thereof to the north; as chap. xx. 47.

3 And say to the land of Israel, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I *am* against thee, and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, and will cut off from thee
c Job 9. 22. [c] the righteous and the wicked.

Publish it to all the people of the land, if any will consider it; it is not the severe and morose conjecture of a disturbed and injured man, let them know God the Lord speaks it. Weigh this, I say it is of great importance. You think yourselves more righteous than those that come against you, that they are heathen, you my peculiar people, that my temple is with you, and that I will be on your side; but be not deceived, for *I am,* and I will be, *against you. Will draw forth,* as an enemy resolved to slay, *my sword,* the Chaldean army under captains that are skilful to destroy, *out of his sheath;* I will bring them out of their land, where they are now quiet and at rest. This army shall not vanish, but effect what it is raised for, it shall make a general havoc. *Will cut off,* or take away out of the midst of thee, partly by the sword, and partly by captivity, or by famine. *The righteous;* some say here is meant such as seemed to be, but were not, just; but it is no unusual thing that in outward troubles and public calamities those who are indeed righteous should be involved with others, nor does this contradict any places

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which seem to promise a security to them; they may be chastised, but shall not be condemned. *And the wicked;* profane, ungodly, and vicious ones, who shall be cut off with double destruction.

4 Seeing then that I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked, therefore shall my sword go forth out of his
d ch. 20. 47. sheath against all flesh [d]from the south to the north:

I will cut off; it is both my purpose and threat, to do that by the Chaldeans in such manner as that it shall appear I did it. *The righteous,* signified by the green tree, chap. xx. 47. *The wicked;* the dry tree, chap. xx. 47. *Go forth;* have a commission, such as I gave Nebuchadnezzar, as large as is necessary for this work. *All flesh;* all the Jews that dwell in the land; it may somewhat reflect upon the nations near about the Jews, as Moab and Ammon. *From the south;* as it doth certainly denote the whole of the land of Judea, it may intimate the rise and spring of this evil from the south, i. e. Babylon, and its progress northward.

5 That all flesh may know that I the LORD have drawn forth my sword out of
e So Is. 45. 23. & 55. 11. his sheath: it [e]shall not return any more.

That they that smart and suffer may see and own God in their just sufferings, they that see and hear it may confess God's doings herein. *It shall not return any more:* in chap. xx. 48 it is expressed thus, *it shall not be quenched,* for there it was a fire; here, it shall not return into the scabbard till it hath done full execution.

f Is. 22. 4. 6 [f]Sigh therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of *thy* loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes.

Sigh; thereby express to them deepest sorrows for what is present, and most piercing fears of what is to come. *With the breaking of thy loins;* like a woman in travail, or as one whose griefs are ready to break his heart, Isa. xxi. 3. *With bitterness;* with all sorts of the most bitter cries and tears. *Before their eyes* who were now with him in Babylon, and who, as they easily could, so surely would, send word to them in Jerusalem and Judea.

7 And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt answer, For the tidings; because it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and
g ch. 7. 17. [g]all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit
† Heb. *shall go into water.* shall faint, and all knees †shall be weak *as* water: behold, it cometh, and shall be brought to pass, saith the Lord GOD.

This directs the prophet what account to give them, when they shall, as they certainly will, inquire what he meaneth by such unusual sorrows. Is it any private misery that makes thee sigh thus, or does it bode evil to others, or to us? *For the tidings;* the news that is told me from Heaven, for the certain rumour of Nebuchadnezzar's preparations, and march against you. The saddest news you ever heard is coming, it will most assuredly come. The courage of the stoutest heart shall fail, which shall appear in the feebleness of their hands, dejectedness of their spirit, and their knees not able to support the body; such terrors shall seize them as shall make them unable to shift from, or to make head against, the evils that come against them. *It cometh;* none can prevent it. *Shall be brought to pass;* it shall have its full effect, nothing shall be wanting to your complete undoing, and then, as I do for a sign to you, so you and yours shall do under the sorrows signified, sigh, and weep, to the breaking your very heart.

8 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

This I suppose is a further explication of what was said already of the sword God draweth out against them; with a further direction or command how the prophet should note out the nearness of the evil; he is bade to speak plainly, and tell them they may see it.

9 Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD; Say, [h]A sword, a sword is h Deut. 32. 41. ver. 15, 28.
sharpened, and also furbished:

As if he pointed to it, crying out as one that suddenly seeth some dreadful sight. A mighty sword, or many; so the ingemination may imply the forces of Nebuchadnezzar and his confederates. *Sharpened;* prepared to wound, slay, and that with greater speed and sureness. *Furbished;* to terrify the weaker courage, to dazzle the eyes of such as encounter it: in a word, the danger is as near as if an army come up in array, and their swords in their hands ready to go on and fight.

10 It is sharpened to make a sore slaughter; it is furbished that it may glitter: should we then make mirth? ‖it contemneth the rod of my son, *as* every tree.

‖ Or, it is *the rod of my son, it despiseth every tree.*

To make a sore slaughter; to slay many, and with as little regard as men kill beasts, or to offer whole herds of wicked men in sacrifice to the offended justice of God; much after this style both David, Psal. xliv. 22, and Isaiah, chap. xxxiv. 6. *May glitter,* and strike a terror into the enemy. *Should we then make mirth?* shall we allow ourselves in jollity, in feasts, or dances, or songs? This would be very uncomely. *It contemneth;* this great, sharp, and glittering sword, appointed to cut off, slights and despiseth all the resistance that can be made against it, and reckons all former chastisements were but as the rod wherewith a son is corrected; but now the sword of an enemy is drawn out, and will cut off all. Or, Nebuchadnezzar despiseth your king, the royal family, and nobles, which are compared to gods, chap. xix. 10, 11; and would use them as he would every common tree of the wood, as it appears he did, when he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him in chains as a slave.

11 And he hath given it to be furbished, that it may be handled: this sword is sharpened, and it is furbished, to give it into the hand of [i]the slayer.

i ver. 19.

He hath given it; either God, whose sword it is; or Nebuchadnezzar, God's servant herein. Some refer it to Christ, who is Lord and Sovereign of his church, and Governor of the world. *That it may be handled;* be the fitter for use in the hand of the slayer, i. e. the Chaldean.

12 Cry and howl, son of man: for it shall be upon my people, it *shall be* upon all the princes of Israel: ‖terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people: [k]smite therefore upon *thy* thigh.

‖ Or, *they are thrust down to the sword with my people.*
k Jer. 31. 19.

Cry, as one in great distress; nay, how unseemly soever it may appear, *howl,* that they may by this know what sorrows are coming on them, and how they, like wild beasts taken in the toils and gins, shall howl. For the devouring sword of Babylon shall certainly be upon all, high and low. *Terrors;* surrounding terrors, out of which no way to escape. *The sword;* that sword God will draw against them. *Smite upon thy thigh,* in token of thy sense of what they must suffer, and to presignify what their sorrows shall be, when they must express them by signs, because too great for words.

13 ‖Because *it is* [l]a trial, and what if *the sword* contemn even the rod? [m]it shall be no *more,* saith the Lord GOD.

‖ Or, *When the trial* hath been, *what then? shall they not also belong to the despising rod.* l Job 9. 23. 2 Cor. 8. 2. m ver. 27.

It is a sore trial, therefore show all the signs of grief and sorrow; or it may refer to what follows in the verse; thus, since this is the exploration, or trial, which I make in so severe manner to bring them to repentance, mourn for them, lest they should harden themselves. *What if the sword?* the addition of sword, which is not in the original, hath perplexed the words in my thoughts. I would read them thus, *and what if the rod contemn?* It shall be no more. Then the sense runs thus: But if the king and kingdom of Judah despise this trial, and harden themselves against this sword, both shall be destroyed, and be no more, for nothing but a right use of this last trial could help them Or else, if we must adhere to our version, what if it amount to this: All this is for probation and trial, not for utterly

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extirpating Israel, saith God to his prophet; who might propose this, What if the sword contemn those bounds, and despise the king and kingdom, and resolve to destroy them from being a nation? as Isa. x. 6, 7. To this God gives answer thus; This he shall never effect, and in due time this sword shall be no more; Babylon shall be destroyed. In so perplexed a place I rather conjecture than affirm.

14 Thou therefore, son of man, prophesy, and [n]smite *thine* †hands together, and let the sword be doubled the third time, the sword of the slain: it *is* the sword of the great *men that are* slain, which entereth into their [o]privy chambers.

n Num. 24. 10. ver. 17. ch. 6. 11. † Heb. *hand to hand.*

o 1 Kin. 20. 30. & 22. 25.

Smite thine hands together; either in token of amazement and sorrow, or else to signify what pleasure it should be to see justice executed on obstinate rebels; or rather, as ver. 17, clap thy hands, to awaken and hearten the Babylonians on to the slaughter. *Let the sword be doubled the third time:* perhaps it is too curious to search out what particular calamities are pointed out by this trebled sword; whether, 1. Zedekiah's captivity with many of the princes. And, 2. Taking of the city. 3. Killing of Gedaliah and those with him: to be sure it speaks both the certainty of the thing, and the greatness of the affliction. *Sword of the slain;* wherewith many shall be slain. *The great men;* which were princes, and captains, and rulers. *Entereth into their privy chambers;* searcheth the most secret rooms, where they slew such as they found hidden in hope to escape.

15 I have set the ‖point of the sword against all their gates, that *their* heart may faint, and *their* ruins be multiplied: ah! [p]*it is* made bright, *it is* ‖wrapped up for the slaughter.

‖ Or, *glittering, or, fear.*

p ver. 10, 28. ‖ Or, *sharpened.*

The Lord hath gathered them together round about Jerusalem, with their swords sharpened and drawn at every gate to slay whosoever attempt to come out, or to slay all they meet with when they take the city. *All their gates;* both of meaner cities, of their palaces, and private houses. *That their heart may faint;* as what heart can be thought able to retain its courage, when beset with death by an enemy's sword, which killeth all that come out, and entereth to kill all that stay within? *Multiplied;* for number made many, for nature made very great. *Made bright;* prepared, brightened, and sharpened. *Wrapped up;* and hath been carefully kept in the scabbard, that it might keep its edge, and not be blunted.

16 [q]Go thee one way or other, *either* on the right hand, †*or* on the left, whithersoever thy face *is* set.

q ch. 14. 17. † Heb, *set thyself, take the left hand.*

O sword, take thy own course; O ye slaughtermen, ye Babylonian soldiers, all is open before you, go which way you will; I have brought you to waste the land from south to north, begin where you will, and proceed as you will, none shall be able to resist you.

17 I will also [r]smite mine hands together, and [s]I will cause my fury to rest: I the LORD have said *it.*

r ver. 14. ch. 22. 13. s ch. 5. 13.

Smite mine hands together, in token of my approbation and well-pleasedness in those executions which the Chaldeans shall finish against you; those hands, that were used to restrain and check, shall excite and encourage your enemies. *My fury:* see chap. v. 13.

18 ¶ The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

19 Also, thou son of man, appoint thee two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come: both twain shall come forth out of one land: and choose thou a place, choose *it* at the head of the way to the city.

Appoint; paint, mark out, or describe on tile or tablet, as chap. iv. 1, two roads, and set it before thy countrymen in Babylon, and let them know that the arms and sword of Nebuchadnezzar are designed for exploits, where those ways lead them. Thus typically Ezekiel foretells the invasion the king of Babylon would make. *Both twain;* the ways, though two in the course they lead, as streams that divide and multiply, yet must take their rise from one and the same land, that is, Babylon; there the prophet must begin to mark out the way which is to be drawn out, till it divide into two. And pitch on some convenient place, where thou mayst place Nebuchadnezzar's army, he and his council of war consulting where this one way divides into two, which was on the edge of the desert of Arabia, as Nebuchadnezzar pursued his march from Babylon. *At the head of the way;* either where the way begins at Babylon; or rather at the head where each distinct way runs out, toward either Rabbath of the Ammonites, or Jerusalem; for there Nebuchadnezzar will cast lots.

20 Appoint a way, that the sword may come to [t]Rabbath of the Ammonites, and to Judah in Jerusalem the defenced.

t Jer. 49. 2. ch. 25. 5. Amos 1. 14.

This royal city of the Ammonites, it seems, the king of Babylon had a quarrel with, as well as with Jerusalem, and he was resolved, when he came out of Babylon, to set upon one of them. There were two or three cities of this name Rabba, or Rabbath; one in the tribe of Judah, one in Issachar, one in Moab; but this in the text is distinguished by Rabbath of the Ammonites. *The Ammonites* were the children of Lot's daughter by incestuous mixture. *To Judah,* i. e. the Jews, the land for the people of the land. *In Jerusalem;* particularly against Jerusalem, whose fortifications do now as little discourage as they shall ere long hinder Nebuchadnezzar from taking the city and destroying it.

21 For the king of Babylon stood at the †parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made *his* ‖arrows bright, he consulted with †images, he looked in the liver.

† Heb. *marker of the way.*

‖ Or, *knives*

† Heb. *teraphim.*

The prophet, by reason of the certainty of the thing, speaketh of what shall be as if it were already; he *stood,* i. e. he will make a halt, pitch his camp, and consult, on the borders of Arabia the Desert, to which one road brings travellers from Babylon, but henceforward it divides, and becomes two, one leading to Jerusalem, the other to Rabbath. *To use divination;* to consult with his gods, and to cast lots; and here the prophet foretells what divination he useth. *Made his arrows bright:* this, the first kind of divination, he used by arrows, (βελομαντεία,) either writing on them the names of the cities and countries, then putting them into a quiver, and there mixing them, and thence drawing them out, and concluding according as the names were which were on the arrows, or perhaps by shooting the arrows and judging by the flight, or casting them up in the air and divining by their fall, as beggars are said to go as their staff falls. So then if Jerusalem were on the first arrow drawn out of the quiver, or if the arrows best flew or most fell that way, toward Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar will take that way. The next way of divining was by asking counsel of his idol, or image, which being made artificially by the skill of their juggling priests and conjurers, with little help they could give answers, and the image spake aloud what the sorcerer spake more softly, somewhat like the artificial whispering places which convey the voice from unseen persons. Or by a Divine permission the devil gave them answers from those images. The third divination is by sacrifice, and judging of future prosperous or unprosperous events by the entrails, and more especially by the liver, its position and colour. All these he used, that with greater confidence of success he might proceed.

22 At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, to appoint ‖†captains, to open the mouth in the slaughter, to [u]lift up the voice with shouting, [x]to appoint *battering* rams against the gates, to cast a mount, *and* to build a fort.

‖ Or, *battering rams,* ch. 4. 2. † Heb. *rams.* u Jer. 51. 14. x ch. 4. 2.

Either the divination which concerned Jerusalem was managed on his right hand, that way the arrows were thrown, the images stood, and sacrifices were offered; or else the lot drawn with the right hand of the priest came forth for Jerusalem. The promising lot, encouraging tokens, were those which directed this superstitious, idolatrous king to attack Jerusalem first, and this by the overruling provi-

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dence of God, who determined by infinite wisdom what seemed to blind men to be the event designed by their divinations. *To appoint;* now Nebuchadnezzar sets all in order pursuant to his observance of the diviners. *Captains;* the commanders of his forces, and their particular charges in the march and siege; he did, it is probable, assign them by lot, as is ordinary where greatest dangers attend the charges. *To open the mouth;* to assault the city where breaches were made, and storm the battered walls, to slay the defenders, and to run the hazard of being slain by them. *With shouting;* so all the barbarous, fierce nations did with shouts and hideous noises assault and fight their enemies, and with this they hoped to terrify and amaze them, and so more easily master them; and so these Babylonians did, as may be collected from Psal. cxxxvii. 7; Jer. li. 14, where Babylon shall be repaid her shouts. *Battering rams;* engines made to beat down walls; and they had this name from the iron or brass head, which usually was at the end of it, like unto the head of a ram. *Against the gates,* which might more easily be broken and beat down. *To cast a mount:* in a siege of some length mounts must be raised to offend the besieged by shooting from the tops of them into the city, and to defend the besiegers; and the toil and danger hereof seems here to be cast on both overseers and labourers too by lot. *To build a fort;* wooden towers; now all these works being thus by lot disposed, the wary tyrant prevents the murmurs of his commanders and soldiers, and insinuates a courage into them by the pretences of assured success, and his idols approving them.

23 And it shall be unto them as a false divination in their sight, ‖to them that [y]have sworn oaths: but he will call to remembrance the iniquity, that they may be taken.

‖ Or, *for the oaths made unto them.*
[y] ch. 17. 13, 15, 16, 18.

Unto them; the Jews, who shall either not believe that Nebuchadnezzar did so consult, or else that it is a vain, false, and lying divination, which will delude him that believes it, but never hurt them who deride it. *Them that have sworn oaths;* Zedekiah, his princes, and nobles, who swore allegiance to the king of Babylon first, and afterward conspired with Egypt, and by new and contrary oaths perjured themselves, provoked as well as dishonoured God, and enraged Nebuchadnezzar to revenge their perfidiousness; these perjured persons will contemn all predictions of the prophet, and all the preparations of the king of Babylon. But Nebuchadnezzar will think on, and thoroughly weigh, and impart also to his council, as the ground of his war, the great wickedness of their perjury and rebellion; that both Zedekiah, and the Jews with him, may be subdued, taken captives, and the kingdom overthrown, the city burnt, and they sent into Babylon.

24 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear; because, *I say,* that ye are come to remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand.

Either referring to God, who saw still their wicked perjuries, and other sins which they persisted in, or rather referring to Nebuchadnezzar, and his ministers of state and war, to whose memory all the falsehood of the Jews was still kept fresh by repeated disloyalty, with reproach to God, whose oath the king and inhabitants of Jerusalem had violated. *Your transgressions* against God, and against the king of Babylon, whose yoke you submitted to with promised obedience. *Discovered;* visibly to all in court, city, and country. *All your doings;* public management of matters of the kingdom, and private too; you add sin to sin, and that without blushing for them, or hiding them. *Because;* the whole summed up for confirming the threats. *Taken with the hand;* as birds or beasts taken in the net, encompassed therein that they cannot get away, are taken with the hand, so shall you, and be carried into Babylon.

25 ¶ And thou, [z]profane wicked prince of Israel, [a]whose day is come, when iniquity *shall have* an end,

[z] 2 Chron. 36. 13. Jer. 52. 2. ch. 17. 19.
[a] ver. 29. ch. 35. 5.

Thou; Zedekiah. *Profane;* tainted with secret deep irreligious opinions, whence he despised God and his oath, and profaned the name of God. *Prince:* so much was his royal dignity lessened, that indeed he was rather a prince subject and dependent than a king. *Whose day,* day of sorrows, and sufferings, and punishment, is at hand. *Iniquity;* the irreligion which is spread by thee among thy courtiers shall cease to spread itself, because of thy low estate. Or, when iniquity shall bring the fatal ruin of king and kingdom, and both shall be destroyed, and with the overthrow of your state the opportunities and means of sinning shall end too.

26 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this *shall* not *be* the same: [b]exalt *him that is* low, and abase *him that is* high.

[b] ch. 17. 24. Luke 1. 52.

Either God speaks to the prophet to declare the thing, or to Nebuchadnezzar to do the thing, to take away the diadem, the royal tire of the head, which the king did ordinarily and daily wear. *The crown;* which was a royal ornament used on solemnities, and more than ordinary occasions; or it may be one thing in doubled expressions of the deposing of Zedekiah. *The same;* the kingdom and crown shall never be what it hath been; as we say of one greatly altered, He is not himself, so here, This shall not be the same; it was great, glorious, and flourishing, but hereafter small, dependent, ignoble, and withering. *Exalt him;* Jeconiah; it is probable the prophet foretells the advance of this captive king, which came to pass in the 37th year of Jeconiah's captivity, in the first year of Merodach, 2 Kings xxv. 27—29; Jer. lii. 31, who exalted his seat above all the captive kings in Babylon. *That is low;* now in captivity in Babylon. *Abase him;* Zedekiah. *That is high;* not now on the throne of Judah, strengthened with the confederacy of Egypt, on which he relieth, and exalteth himself, and bears himself high against the prophet, the king of Babylon, and, which is most insolent, against the God of heaven.

27 †I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: [c]and it shall be no *more,* until he come whose right it is; and I will give it *him.*

† Heb. *Perverted, perverted, perverted, will I make it.*
[c] Gen. 49. 10. ver. 13. Luke 1. 32, 33. John 1. 49.

This triplication of the threat speaks the certainty of the event, and also the gradual, successive troubles and overthrows that this kingdom should ever after be afflicted with. *It shall be no more;* never recover its former glory and strength, but consume, till the sceptre be quite taken away from Judah, and way be made for the Messiah, who is he that is to come, whose is the dominion, and to whom the Father will give it. So the final desolation of the temporal kingdom of the seed of David, which was most heavy tidings to the carnal Jews, is threatened, and the eternal kingdom of the Messiah, most joyful tidings to the believing Jews, is promised.

28 ¶ And thou, son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD [d]concerning the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach; even say thou, [e]The sword, the sword *is* drawn: for the slaughter *it is* furbished, to consume because of the glittering:

[d] Jer. 49. 1. ch. 25. 2, 3, 6. Zeph. 2. 8, 9, 10.
[e] ver. 9, 10.

In ver. 19 and 20 you had the mention of Rabbath, chief city of the Ammonites, in equal danger with Jerusalem; but while Jerusalem is threatened, Rabbath is no further minded, till now God directs the prophet to declare the ruin thereof. *The Ammonites;* a stout, but proud, injurious, and insulting people. *Their reproach,* wherewith they reproached Israel in the day of Israel's afflictions, as Jer. xlix. 1, and chap. xxv. 3, 5, 6, and blasphemed the God of Israel. *The sword;* all warlike preparations are made against you. *The sword is drawn;* the war is declared, and your enemy hath drawn the sword: see ver. 9—11. *For the slaughter;* to make waste, by avenging former quarrels and affronts. The Babylonish king comes out with bloody mind against you, O Ammonites! You countenanced Ishmael, who slew Gedaliah, viceroy by Nebuchadnezzar's appointment, and you would have set Ishmael on

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the throne; this affront you shall satisfy for with your blood. *Because of the glittering:* see ver. 9, 10.

f ch. 12. 24. & 22. 28.

29 Whiles they [f]see vanity unto thee, whiles they divine a lie unto thee, to bring thee upon the necks of *them that are* slain, of the wicked, [g]whose day is come, when their iniquity *shall have* an end.

g ver. 25. Job 18. 20. Ps. 37. 13.

War and desolation indeed hasten on thee, though in the mean while thy astrologers and soothsayers promise peace and prosperity, and deceive thee with fair but false divinations, of which Jeremiah warns them, Jer. xxvii. 9. *Upon the necks of them that are slain;* to bring thee under the sword of the Chaldeans, and to destroy thee as the Jews are, who already are fallen under the destroying sword; to make thee stumble and fall on their necks, as men that fall among a multitude of slain. *Of the wicked,* i. e. both Jews and their king, as ver. 25. *Their iniquity shall have an end:* see ver. 25.

‖ Or, *Cause it to return.* h Jer. 47. 6, 7. i Gen. 13. 14. ch. 16. 38. k ch. 16. 3.

30 ‖ [h]Shall I cause *it* to return into his sheath? [i]I will judge thee in the place where thou wast created, [k]in the land of thy nativity.

Some read it without interrogation, as an advice to the Ammonites to put up the sword they had drawn for their defence, as being to no purpose to resist. If it be an interrogation, it is such as more vehemently denieth, God will by no means suffer the sword to be sheathed; in this sense it refers to the sword of the Chaldeans. *Will judge thee;* plead, condemn, and execute too. *Where thou wast created;* explained by that which follows; though they might boast of their ancient original, and their safe and impregnable strengths, yet God will bring a sword into those very places, and there they should perish.

l ch. 7. 8. & 14. 19. & 22. 22. m ch. 22. 20, 21.

31 And I will [l]pour out mine indignation upon thee, I will [m]blow against thee in the fire of my wrath, and deliver thee into the hand of ‖ brutish men, *and* skilful to destroy.

‖ Or, *burning.*

Pour out; as a flood sweeps all away, so God will let out his indignation to overwhelm the Ammonites. *I will blow against thee;* as those who melt down metals blow upon the metal in the fire, that the fire might burn the fiercer, and consume the dross. *Deliver thee;* or, as there is no hope to one delivered up to barbarous, merciless ruffians, whose trade is to destroy, so will God deal with these Ammonites.

32 Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; [n]thou shalt be no *more* remembered: for I the LORD have spoken *it*.

n ch. 25. 10.

Thou; Rabbath, and thy people. *For fuel;* which is soon and unavoidably consumed in such a furnace. *Thy blood shall be in the midst of the land;* thou shalt no where be safe, or thy blood shall not be covered, nor thou buried. *Thou shalt be no more remembered;* thy name shall perish.

CHAP. XXII.

A catalogue of sins committed in Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews because of them, 1—16. *God will burn them as dross in the furnace* 17—22. *The general corruption of all orders of men, for which God's wrath is poured out upon them,* 23—31.

893. MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

a ch. 20. 4. & 23. 36. ‖ Or, *plead for.* b ch. 24. 6, 9. Nah. 3. 1. † Heb. *city of bloods.*

2 Now, thou son of man, [a]wilt thou ‖judge, wilt thou judge [b]the †bloody city? yea, thou shalt †shew her all her abominations.

† Heb. *make her know,* ch. 16. 2.

Some would have the prophet here to be questioned, whether he would, and why he would, plead for such a city. Others, that God doth forbid him to plead for it, or be solicitous about it. I rather think God doth awaken him to more vigorous reproving of this sinful people, and threatening them for sin. The question is doubled to awaken the prophet more fully, and to quicken him to his work. *The bloody city;* Jerusalem, which is guilty of the murders of innocent ones, of prophets and holy men. *Show her;* make her know, at least tell her by writing; for the prophet was at Babylon now, and could not speak to them at Jerusalem, but he might and must send word to them what their abominations were. *All her abominations;* all the kinds, not all individual acts of them.

3 Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself.

The city, Jerusalem, *sheddeth,* is shedding, *blood;* it is her present practice as well as her former, murders are committed by her, and it is said the city did it; it was done with public consent, and probably under pretext of judiciary process to colour it, as in Naboth's case, and as they would have done to Jeremiah. *In the midst of it:* this aggravates their murders, and makes them more bloody, in that it was done where so many were, that should have been safety to the innocent; it was not done in a wilderness. *Her time;* the time of ripeness in her sins, and of execution of judgments on her for them. *May come:* this they did not design, they rather took away innocents, whom they surmised were dangerous to their state, to prevent, but this hastened the punishment. *Maketh idols;* either maketh new images of their old idols, or repaireth the decayed beauty of them. Or, taketh in new gods of their neighbours, who might help them; but all this is against themselves, for this doth more defile them, and provoke God to wrath against them.

4 Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast [c]shed; and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come *even* unto thy years: [d]therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries.

c 2 Kings 21. 16.

d Deut. 28. 37. 1 Kings 9. 7. ch. 5. 14. Dan. 9. 16.

Guilty in thy blood; greatly or deeply guilty. *Thou hast shed,* in abundance, cruelly and perfidiously. *Defiled thyself;* as a polluted thing, loathsome to be seen or touched. *Thine idols;* dunghill gods. *Caused thy days to draw near;* hastened the days of thy sorrows and punishment, of thy desolation in Judea, and of thy captivity in Babylon; thou hast shortened thine own peace and my patience. *Come even unto thy years;* grown up now to the eldest years in sin, beyond which thou wert not to go: it is the same in effect with that went before. *Therefore;* for thy old sins thou art given up to be a reproach. *A reproach;* to be scorned by them, to be branded as a most perfidious, irreligious, unconscionable sort of people, not worthy to live. Or else to be a taunt and by-word among all nations; thus it was Psal. xliv. 13; Jer. xxiv. 9. *To all countries* that were round about them, or, farther off, had heard of them.

5 *Those that be* near, and *those that be* far from thee, shall mock thee, *which art* †infamous *and* much vexed.

† Heb. *polluted of name, much in vexation.*

Those that be near; as the Idumeans or Edomites, who insulted over Jerusalem when it was taken, Ammonites, and Moabites, and Philistines. *Those that be far from thee;* the barbarous Medes, Iberians, Hyrcanians, &c., to whom thou shalt be carried captive, whose land is far off. *Infamous;* of a most infamous name. *Much vexed;* afflicted, impoverished, and ruinated above what was ever done to any city.

6 Behold, [e]the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their †power to shed blood.

e Is. 1. 23. Mic. 3. 1, 2, 3. Zeph. 3. 3. † Heb. *arm.*

He was in ver. 2 commanded to show the Jews all their abominations. Now he is directed to begin with the greatest first, either those of the royal family, or else such as adhered close to the interest of them, and were advanced to places of great trust; or, who were heads of families. *Every one;* not one to be found of a juster or more merci-

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ful temper. *To their power;* according to their ability and opportunity. *To shed blood;* for murdering all they hated, or that stood in their way.

f Deut. 27. 16.
7 In thee have they [f]set light by father and mother: in the midst of thee have
g Ex. 22. 21, 22.
‖ Or, *deceit.*
they [g]dealt by ‖oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow.

In thee; in Jerusalem. *Have they:* it is plural, and agrees with princes, they whose better disposition, whose education and greatness, (beside the command of God,) should have advanced their venerable thoughts and deportment towards parents. *Set light by,* have contemned, *father and mother,* though God threatens to curse such as do so, Deut. xxvii. 16. *They;* the princes still, as the construction in the original carrieth it. *By oppression;* by force and fraud, for the oppression here mentioned is made up of both; where either the fox or lion could apart, or else both joined, they have oppressed the stranger, expressly against God's command, Exod. xxii. 21. *They;* still the same great men, and rulers, who should, as Isa. i. 17, have defended, pleaded for, relieved, and comforted the fatherless and widow, but contrariwise they oppress, disquiet, and make a prey of them.

h ver. 26.
i Lev. 19. 30. ch. 23. 38.
8 Thou hast [h]despised mine holy things, and hast [i]profaned my sabbaths.

Thou, all the land, or thou, O Jerusalem, or thou, O Zedekiah, the chief of the princes; or else, having spoken of them all in the plural, he now changeth number, and so speaks to each in particular. *Hast despised;* hast had very low esteem of them, as if mean and ridiculous. *Mine holy things;* all my institutions, temple sacrifices, feasts, and priests, &c. *Profaned my sabbaths;* spent them in profane work, or bestowed them upon idols and their service.

† Heb. *men of slanders.*
k Ex. 23. 1. Lev. 19. 16. l ch. 18. 6, 11.
9 In thee are †[k]men that carry tales to shed blood: [l]and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness.

Men that carry tales; informers and trepanners, or persons that, corrupted with money, give in false witness against the innocent; and the princes of Israel had hand in it. *They eat,* offer sacrifice, *on the mountains,* and feast there, celebrating the honour of their idols: see chap. xviii. 6, 11, 15. *Lewdness;* enormous, contrived mischiefs, as the word imports.

m Lev. 18. 7, 8. & 20. 11. 1 Cor. 5. 1.
n Lev. 18. 19. & 20. 18. ch. 18. 6.
10 In thee have they [m]discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was [n]set apart for pollution.

Like wild Arabians, the worst of heathens, there have been and are some that incestuously defile their fathers' bed. *Humbled;* it seems to imply a force and violence offered to the persons, whether virgins or married, whom at unseasonable time they forced to satisfy their lusts: forbidden Lev. xviii. 19; xx. 18, and that on very just reasons, and for preventing many mischiefs, which follow such unseasonable commixtures.

‖ Or, *every one.*
o Lev. 18. 20. & 20. 10. Deut. 22. 22. Jer. 5. 8. ch. 18. 11.
‖ Or, *every one.*
p Lev. 18. 15. & 20. 12.
‖ Or, *by lewdness.*
11 And ‖one hath committed abomination [o]with his neighbour's wife; and ‖another [p]hath ‖lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his [q]sister, his father's daughter.

q Lev. 18. 9. & 20. 17.

One, i. e. some, or the man of quality, state, and such as were of high degree, as the word is translated Psal. lxii. 9. Or what if it were translated as ver. 6, every one; it was grown a most general vice, as Jer. v. 8. *Abomination with his neighbour's wife;* adultery, which God doth, and man should, abhor. *Another, &c.:* horrible, shameless doings! the father-in-law committing incest with the wife's daughter, and brothers defile their own sisters; all this against the light of nature, the law of civilized nations, and the law of God. And, if our conjecture be right, all this done in their lewd, idolatrous feasts kept to the honour of Tammuz, and in the very temple, or near to it. Compare this with ver. 9, and with chap. viii. 14.

r Ex. 23. 8. Deut. 16. 19. & 27. 25.
s Ex. 22. 25. Lev. 25. 36. Deut. 23. 19. ch. 18. 13.
t Deut. 32. 18. Jer. 3. 21. ch. 23. 35.
12 In thee [r]have they taken gifts to shed blood; [s]thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and [t]hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD.

Judges, who should have saved, have sold the life of innocents; they who sat on God's tribunal have acted the devil there, and murdered innocents, contrary to Exod. xxiii. 8. *Taken usury:* see chap. xviii. 8. *Greedily gained of thy neighbours;* with unsatiable thirst of gain torn to pieces and devoured thy neighbour: so hast thou been an oppressing extortioner where thou shouldst not have been a moderate usurer, and thus forgottest thy God.

u ch. 21. 17.
13 ¶ Behold, therefore I have [u]smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.

Behold; hear therefore, and mark, ye wicked Jews. *I have smitten mine hand,* in testimony of my abhorrence of your ways, as threatening to punish you, and setting on the fierce Babylonian upon you to execute my just displeasure. *At thy dishonest gain;* thy covetousness, the root of all the evils in thee; thy cursed, unsatiable hunger for wealth. *Thy blood,* which thou didst shed, that thou mightest then seize their estates; kill Naboths, and take possession.

x See ch. 21. 7.
y ch. 17. 24.
14 [x]Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? [y]I the LORD have spoken *it,* and will do *it.*

Can thine heart endure? this question is a vehement negation, thou canst by no means endure, withstand and repel the evils that are coming, or bear them when come. Will thy courage hold out, and conquer? Nay, it will be with thee as chap. xxi. 7, your hearts shall melt. *Can thine hands be strong,* to hold the sword, and manage the warlike provisions against Nebuchadnezzar and his army? Your hands shall be exceeding feeble, chap. xxi. 7, your weapons fall out of your hands, your hearts first melting with fear. *The days;* the times of long and multiplied sorrows, and furious indignation. *That I shall deal with thee;* the Babylonians are but men, but I the Lord your God, whom you have provoked, am with them; they are my weapons of war, and I strike by them, and thou shalt never be able to subsist under it. Flatter not thyself, the Lord will do it as he hath spoken it.

z Deut. 4. 27. & 28. 25, 64. ch. 12. 14, 15.
a ch. 23. 27, 48.
15 And [z]I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and [a]will consume thy filthiness out of thee.

I will scatter thee, as the wind scatters chaff, *among the heathen,* the worst of the Babylonish vassals. *And disperse thee in the countries;* doubled for certainty of the thing. *Consume thy filthiness out of thee:* some take it for a threat by a fire, that shall consume the filthy sinners, and the filthy sins will cease; or else, that by removing them out of Jerusalem into captivity, and reducing them to a very low condition, they should not any more commit, but for ever loathe, their wickedness: some take it for a promise of purging mercy to better them, i. e. the remnant of them, when the rest are destroyed and wasted.

‖ Or, *shalt be profaned.*
b Ps. 9. 16. ch. 6. 7.
16 And thou ‖shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the heathen, and [b]thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

Whereas I was thine inheritance, and thou enjoyedst all riches, delight, safety, peace, and honour in me, so long as thou wert a holy, obedient people; now that you are polluted, a very sink of all filthiness, for which I have cast thee off, and sent thee into captivity, there be to thyself what thou canst be, for I will not be thine inheritance. And this forlorn, abject, helpless state shall be so visible, that the very heathen shall discern, and know, that you are rejected of your God, and he very just in doing so.

17 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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c Is. 1. 22. Jer. 6. 28, &c. See Ps. 119. 119.

18 Son of man, c the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they *are* brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are *even* the † dross of silver.

† Heb. drosses.

Not a few among many, but universally the whole *house of Israel*, the seed of him that was a prince with God, the covenant people of God, are strangely degenerate and corrupted, as if purer and richer metals should by worse and worse turn to dross. *All they*, from the king to the peasant, the priests, and prophets, and people, *are brass;* impudent in sin; *and tin;* hypocrites, and mixed as tin; *and iron;* hard, cruel, and oppressive as iron; *and lead;* stupid and senseless as lead. Though I rather think this particular accommodating these metals somewhat too curious, I judge the prophet chargeth them with a continued degeneracy from bad to worse, by this gradation. *In the midst of the furnace;* the afflictions I have laid upon them have not bettered them, they retain their corruptions and vices. While they kept covenant, adhered to my law, kept my worship pure, and loved mercy, did justly, walked humbly with their God, they were as silver; now they are degenerated, and are but *the dross of silver*, vile of price, and of little use.

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

Ye are all, from one end of the land to the other. *I will gather you;* from all parts thereof I will by a secret overruling providence bring you together into Jerusalem, as into a furnace where you may be melted and consumed.

† Heb. According to the gathering.

20 † *As* they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt *it:* so will I gather *you* in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave *you there*, and melt you.

They; founders, who melt down metals to prove them. *Gather silver, &c.:* if these different kinds of metals be to be gathered into one and the same furnace, it speaks the involving all promiscuously in the same afflictions; if it be meant as each distinct metal is tried by the fire in the furnace, but by fire proportioned to the stubbornness of the metal, then it bespeaks the future affliction shall be such as shall melt down the hardest of the degenerate idolaters and sinners. *To blow the fire;* to raise the fierceness of the fire. *To melt it;* till it be melted. *So will I gather you:* see ver. 19. *In mine anger;* in great but just displeasure, called fury too here, and elsewhere: such were the sins of this people, that they had kindled a fire against them which should surely consume them. *I will leave you there;* or, I will sit down and rest me, as the founder, when he hath taken pains to gather in the metal, heaped up the wood, kindled fire, and blown it to its full height, rests himself, observing how the metal melts down: God will so rest himself; after the manner of man it is spoken; the like phrase chap. v. 13; xvi. 42, which see. *And melt you;* he will take care the fire go not out till you are melted, either to the purging away, or consuming you with, your dross.

d ch. 22. 20, 21, 22.

21 Yea, I will gather you, and d blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.

22 As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have e poured out my fury upon you.

e ch. 20. 8, 33. ver. 31.

These verses are an ingeminating of the same menaces, the more to affect the Jews with fear, and due apprehensions of their danger, and make them think of returning to God. *As silver is melted:* this seems to intimate the Divine care over some few, that in the midst of the rest were precious, and God would purify, not destroy them. *Ye shall know;* see, own, and submit to God's afflicting hand, and comply with him, putting away your dross. *Have poured out my fury upon you*, promiscuously with others, among which you have suffered the same outward troubles, though the end be different, which intimates the escape of a remnant.

23 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

24 Son of man, say unto her, Thou *art* the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.

Thou; the land of Israel. *Is not cleansed, nor rained upon;* though God's judgments have been as violent storms and floods, though they have been as hottest fires, yet neither thy filth hath been carried away, nor thy dross melted out of thee by them, still thou retainest both. Therefore is *indignation* kindled against thee, and thou shalt be deprived of the dews of heaven, the rain that should cool thy thirsty land shall be withholden, that rain that should make the ground fruitful shall not descend.

25 f *There is* a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they g have devoured souls; h they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof.

f Hos. 6. 9.
g Matt. 23. 14.
h Mic. 3. 11. Zeph. 3. 3, 4.

A conspiracy; a contrivance, or framing among themselves a design, to speak all alike flattering, smooth words, and give out promises of peace and safety, when there was no peace; they would have the Jews believe in little time the vessels of the Lord's house, and the Lord's people in Babylon, should be brought back, as Jer. xxviii. 1—4: and whereas Jeremiah faithfully told them that it would be no such thing, but that the rest of the vessels, and Zedekiah, and the people should be carried away into Babylon, they conspire against him, and such as he was, Jer. xx. 2; xxvi. 8; xxix. 25, 26, and persecute them with one consent and mind. *Of her prophets;* hers, not God's prophets, the false prophets, such as Hananiah, Jer. xxviii. 1, 2. *In the midst thereof;* of the land, but principally in Jerusalem, the metropolis, and residence of the court, where were such as loved to be flattered, and of whom flatterers might make gain. *Like a roaring lion*, whom hunger enrageth, and maketh roar in most dreadful manner, as some observe of them, when they hunt their prey, and when they have seized and are tearing it; so did these false prophets with cruelty and fierceness pursue the true prophets, and such as believed their word, feared the judgments, and mourned for the sins of a self-ruining people. *They have devoured souls;* have eat up, impoverished, and sucked dry, men that relieved and maintained them, the guise of all false prophets; or they have taken, in their complotting, and swallowed down whole the persons that disbelieved and opposed their lies. *Taken the treasure;* they did not without reward tell their lies, nor would prophesy without a reward out of the treasures of those that advised with them; so they drained the people of their riches. *And precious things;* either it is a further explication of what he had said, or possibly it may tell us, that where money was not to be had, these false prophets would demand something of value; and, if it were money's worth, they were then for bartering the prophecies: so they gulled these sots. *Made her many widows;* one while by raising persecutions, and cutting off husbands from their wives; another while, and which most agrees with the place, persuading, encouraging, and bewitching Zedekiah, and the princes, and people to hold out the war, and run all hazards and extremities of that siege, which filled Jerusalem with dead husbands and forlorn widows.

26 i Her priests have † violated my law, and have k profaned mine holy things: they have put no l difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed *difference* between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

i Mal. 2. 8.
† Heb. offered violence to.
k Lev. 22. 2, &c. 1 Sam. 2. 29.
l Lev. 10. 10. Jer. 15. 19. ch. 44. 23.

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Her priests; God owns them not as his, they were priests that suited such a people. *Priests;* men by office bound to reverence the law, to study it, and to preserve it from men's corruptions. *Violated my law;* wrested it to oppression and impiety, and to maintain errors, and made it speak what they would, not what it did. *Profaned;* lightly esteemed, as if they had been but common things, and accordingly use them. *My holy things;* sacrifices and oblations, which were consecrated to holy uses, should be offered with holy hearts and hands, and be eaten by holy persons in due time and place. All this neglected with profane spirits. *They have put no difference between the holy and profane:* this and the following clause may be an exegesis, explication of the former, or else thus; Neither have they in their own practice differenced holy, and profane, nor in their teaching acquainted the people with the difference, nor in the exercise of their authority separated the profane from the holy, either persons or things, but with promiscuous intermixtures of every thing, and all persons have been alike to them, whether holy or profane, i. e. of common and ordinary use. *Neither have they showed difference;* have not made the people know, so the word. *Between the unclean and the clean;* things and persons, what things might be touched or eaten, or what might not, what persons might not be approached to and conversed with, and what might; all which was the duty of the priests, the neglect whereof spread the uncleanness of the Jews over the whole land. *Hid their eyes;* despised, and would not see the holiness of the sabbaths, nor would look on such as observed them aright to encourage them, or on those that profaned them to reprove them; so they did not see what they would not see. *From my sabbaths;* though they are expressly commanded to be kept holy, and with great care and exactness, Isa. lviii. 13; Jer. xvii. 21, 22; though the portion of time I consecrated to my service, they sacrilegiously direct to other uses, and grudge it me, nay, rob me of it. *I am profaned;* contemned, dishonoured, disobeyed, and all my laws represented as trivial and light things.

m Is. 1. 23. ch. 22. 6. Mic. 3. 2, 3, 9, 10, 11. Zeph. 3. 3.

27 Her [m]princes in the midst thereof *are* like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, *and* to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.

Her princes, as before, ver. 25, 26. *Princes;* rulers of all sorts, who should have crushed oppressors and defended the oppressed. *Wolves;* creatures greedy, bloody, and crafty, resembling dogs that men make use of to defend their folds; so the authority which God had given to defend is by these hypocrites perverted to satisfy the bloody and greedy appetite of tyrannical governors among the Jews: possibly the prophet may tax the degeneracy and baseness of these rulers hereby. *Shed blood;* innocent blood; a crying sin in princes, who have God's power committed to them to preserve the innocent. *Destroy souls;* undo and ruin families, cutting off the fathers, and impoverishing the widow and fatherless. *Get dishonest gain;* confiscating estates not forfeited.

n ch. 13. 10. o ch. 13. 6, 7. & 21. 29.

28 And [n]her prophets have daubed them with untempered *morter*, [o]seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.

Prophets; false prophets. *Have daubed them;* flattered their oppressing bloody princes in their ways of sin and violence. *With untempered mortar;* with promises and encouragements that, like ill tempered mortar, will deceive them, though all seems for the present smooth and safe. *Divining lies;* pretending they had by vision from God all the good they promised, whereas it was all a notorious lie and falsehood. God never spake to those prophets, and what by his own prophets he spake was of quite another tenure, it was evil, not good.

p Jer. 5. 26, 27, 28. ch. 18. 12. ‖ Or, *deceit.* ‡ Ex. 22. 21. & 23. 9. Lev. 19. 33. ch. 22. 7. † Heb. *without right.*

29 [p]The people of the land have used ‖ oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have [q]oppressed the stranger †wrongfully.

The people of the land, the common people, *have used oppression;* greatly, continuedly, and cruelly oppressed one another, wronged each other by frauds and violence. *Exercised robbery;* on every occasion turned downright thieves and robbers. *Have vexed,* by these oppressions, *the poor and needy:* see chap. xviii. 7. *Wrongfully;* without any colour of justice, reason, or so much as hearing him, as the phrase seems to import.

r Jer. 5. 1. s ch. 13. 5. t Ps. 106. 23.

30 [r]And I sought for a man among them, that should [s]make up the hedge, and [t]stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

I sought, very earnestly and diligently; spoken of God after the manner of man. *A man;* any one. *Amongst them;* among princes, prophets, priests, or people. *That should make up the hedge;* to repair the breach, and prevent further mischief. *Stand in the gap;* that might interpose between a sinful, suffering people and their offended God, and entreat for mercy, that the land might not be destroyed. *But I found none;* all were corrupted, not one but obstinately went on to sin and provoke me.

u ver. 22.

31 Therefore have I [u]poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: [x]their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.

x ch. 9. 10. & 11. 21. & 16. 43.

Therefore, thus provoked by all, *have I poured out mine indignation,* as a flood to sweep them away. *I have consumed them;* kindled a fire against them, that will destroy them. *Their own way,* sinful abominable ways, *have I recompensed upon their heads;* brought these as a net on them, when as wild beasts taken in the pit to be destroyed.

CHAP. XXIII.

The whoredoms of Aholah and Aholibah, 1—21. *Aholibah shall be punished by her own lovers,* 22—35. *Their adulteries reproved,* 36—44, *and their judgments declared,* 45—49.

THE word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, 593.

a Jer. 3. 7, 8, 10. ch. 16. 46.

2 Son of man, there were [a]two women, the daughters of one mother:

Two women; Judah and Israel, the two kingdoms. *Daughters of one mother;* sprung from Sarah; or, as some, daughters of the synagogue. They rose from one family; these two were daughters, that is parts, and the mother is the whole posterity of the twelve tribes.

b Lev. 17. 7. Josh. 24. 14. ch. 20. 8. c ch. 16. 22.

3 And [b]they committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredoms in [c]their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity.

They committed whoredoms in Egypt; when they came down into Egypt, and sojourned there: possibly they might commit bodily whoredoms, but spiritual whoredoms, i. e. idolatry, they did certainly commit, as appears Josh. xxiv. 14; Ezek. xx. 7, 8, which see; in a low condition, by converse with the idolatrous Egyptians they fell in with their idolatry. *In their youth;* early; though it is no where said when they began, yet by this it appears that it was not long after their coming down into Egypt. *There were their breasts pressed:* this and what follows is an allusion, which illustrates what was before spoken; while they were constant to God and his worship, they were as beautiful, chaste, and lovely virgins; when seduced to idolatry, they became as loathsome harlots or strumpets.

d ch. 16. 8, 20. ‖ That is, *His tent,* or, *tabernacle.* ‡ That is, *My tabernacle in her.* 1 Kings 8. 29.

4 And the names of them *were* Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and [d]they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus *were* their names; Samaria *is* ‖ Aholah, and Jerusalem ‡ Aholibah.

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That we might know them, they are described. *Aholah;* which, rendered in English, is, His own tabernacle; for Israel, falling off from the house of David, also fell off from the tabernacle or temple of God, so that all the temple and worship they had amongst them was of their own making. *The elder;* greater for number of tribes, being ten of twelve; and greater for power, wealth, and multitudes of people. *Aholibah:* this, rendered in English, is, My tabernacle in her: the two tribes had the temple and worship of God with them; God's own tent was pitched there, and his solemn services. *They were mine,* by solemn marriage covenant. Ezek. xvi. 18. *They bare sons and daughters;* were fruitful, and brought forth children to me, saith God; they increased in numbers of people, and among these, some there were that were children of God by faith, love, and obedience. *Samaria;* the chief city of the apostate ten tribes. *Jerusalem;* the chief city of the two tribes.

5 And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine; and she doted on her lovers, on [e] the Assyrians *her* neighbours,

e 2 Kings 15. 19. & 16. 7. & 17. 3. Hos. 8. 9.

Aholah, the kingdom of Israel, or the ten tribes, *played the harlot;* united in confederacy in civil concerns, and in idolatry as to religious concerns, with the Assyrians. *When she was mine;* when under my government and protection, or in my presence, or before I had abdicated and cast her off. *Doted;* were madly enamoured with the Assyrian idols, temples, and manner of worship. *Her lovers;* whom she loved, not that I find they so much loved her. *The Assyrians;* so often mentioned, nothing needs be said of them. *Her neighbours;* so they were now by their seizing of Syria, and possessing it as their own 2 Kings xv. 19.

6 *Which were* clothed with blue, captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding upon horses.

Clothed with blue; richly apparelled, and, as the humour of that nation, in rich and beautiful blue, very magnificent to the eye. *Captains;* daring, valiant men, and fit for wars, who might defend the Jews in time of danger. *Rulers;* worthy of authority, and fit to govern in times of peace. *Desirable young men;* young and vigorous, full of beauty and strength to commend them to the desire and choice. *Horsemen riding upon horses;* skilful in riding, and well furnished with choice horses, on which these deluded apostatizing Israelites relied for help, as appears, Hos. xiv. 3.

7 Thus she † committed her whoredoms with them, with all them *that were* † the chosen men of Assyria, and with all on whom she doted: with all their idols she defiled herself.

† Heb. *bestowed her whoredoms upon them.* † Heb. *the choice of the children of Asshur.*

Thus, by the eye and familiar converse, she fell to idolatry. *Committed her whoredoms:* see ver. 3. *With all them;* she embraced the friendship and religion of all of them, and relied on the Assyrian's idols for deliverance and peace. *And with all,* i. e. other nations with whom she had commerce and made leagues, *on whom she doted;* like an adulterous wife, she was mad in her love to them, to their persons, customs, idols, and religion, with all which she polluted herself.

8 Neither left she her whoredoms *brought* [f] from Egypt: for in her youth they lay with her, and they bruised the breasts of her virginity, and poured their whoredom upon her.

f ver. 3.

Neither left she her whoredoms brought from Egypt; though she took in so many gods of the Assyrians, yet she did not renounce or cast off the gods of Egypt, but kept them too. It is plain the Israelites learnt idolatry in Egypt, carried it with them out of Egypt, and retained it to the last. *In her youth, &c.:* see ver. 3.

9 Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the [g] Assyrians, upon whom she doted.

g 2 Kings 17. 3, 4, 5, 6, 23. & 18. 9, 10, 11.

Wherefore, for this boundless idolatry and lewdness *I have delivered her;* long ago I have delivered the ten tribes: first, Pul put them under tribute, 2 Kings xv. 19, 20, about two hundred years before our prophet's time; then Tiglath-pileser, 2 Kings xv. 29; and finally into Shalmaneser's hand, who destroyed the kingdom, 2 Kings xvii. 6. *Into the hand of the Assyrians, upon whom she doted;* punished them for their sins by those who were fellow sinners with her.

10 These [h] discovered her nakedness: they took her sons and her daughters, and slew her with the sword: and she became † famous among women; for they had executed judgment upon her.

h ch. 16. 37, 41. † Heb. a name.

These used her as lewd women deserve, stripped her naked, and exposed her to shame, as ver. 26. God her Husband had clothed her, and covered her nakedness, but she lightly esteemed her God, doted on idols, and idolaters strip her. *They took her sons and her daughters;* made them captives, and carried them away as slaves, to serve the lusts of barbarous conquerors; so both sexes were used. *Slew her with the sword:* as a person slain with the sword ceaseth to be, so this kingdom of Israel under Hoshea was by the sword of Shalmaneser utterly destroyed. *She became famous;* her lewdness made her infamous, and God's judgments for it made her more known in the world. *For they,* the Assyrians, a proud, bitter, and violent enemy, *had executed judgment upon her;* had executed their own malicious revenges, but God's just displeasure, upon her.

11 And [i] when her sister Aholibah saw *this,* [k] † she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she, and in her whoredoms † more than her sister in *her* whoredoms.

i Jer. 3. 8. k Jer. 3. 11. ch. 16. 47, 51. † Heb. *she corrupted her inordinate love more than, &c.* † Heb. *more than the whoredoms of her sister.*

Aholibah; Judah, yet two tribes. *Saw this;* both the sins and punishments of the kingdom of Israel, which should have been her admonition. *She was more corrupt,* ran more violently into both friendship, confederacies, and idolatries with the Assyrians, *than her sister,* Samaria; Jerusalem had more idols in it, and more abominable idolatry, than any we read of in Samaria that, at present, I can remember.

12 She doted upon the [l] Assyrians *her* neighbours, [m] captains and rulers clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men.

l 2 Kings 16. 7, 10. 2 Chron. 28. 16,—21. m ch. 16. 28. m ver. 6, 23.

This verse is the same with ver. 6, which see; only the clothing of blue there is here clothing of beauty, i. e. most beautiful.

13 Then I saw that she was defiled, *that* they *took* both one way,

Then; when she took not warning, neither feared. *She was defiled;* her heart was already on her idols. *Both* Samaria and Jerusalem *took one way;* chose the same idols and idolatry.

14 And *that* she increased her whoredoms: for when she saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans pourtrayed with vermilion,

Increased her whoredoms; added to the number of her idolatries. *When she saw men portrayed upon the wall:* wherever it was the Jews saw, there it was they doted on their persons and habits: it is probable enough they might see them in the idol temples, or in the house of the king of Judah, or of the great men, who promoted the friendships and leagues with these nations. *The images;* the counterfeits of strangers, and such as were far off, as the Chaldeans were. *With vermilion;* which, as it is a very glossy and shining colour, so, duly mixed with ceruse, doth lively express the colour of man's flesh.

15 Girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity:

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With girdles upon their loins; with soldiers' belts about their loins, which includes the rest of the garb, dress, or habit of soldiers. *Exceeding in dyed attire;* both rich, comely, large, and of divers colours, and those of the choicest that art or money could prepare. *Princes to look to;* of princely aspect and majesty. *After the manner,* agreeable to the garments, of the rich and proud Babylonians. *Of Chaldea;* which probably was the most fruitful part of that kingdom, and most pleasant, and where the pride and luxury of the inhabitants exceeded others.

n 2 Kings 24. 1. ch. 16. 29.
† Heb. *at the sight of her eyes.*

16 [n]And †as soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted upon them, and sent messengers unto them into Chaldea.

Saw them; the portraits of them. *She doted upon them;* like an unsatiable and most impudent adulteress, she fell into most inordinate affection for their persons on sight of their pictures. *Sent messengers unto them;* courted the love of those strangers, and wooed their embraces, sent to make alliances with them, prostituted herself to them. *Into Chaldea:* though it was a long journey, troublesome and costly, all this hinders not this extravagant, lewd woman, she sends to these remote parts, and forgets her God.

† Heb. *children of Babel.*

17 And the †Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their whoredom, and she was polluted with them, and [o]her mind was †alienated from them.

o ver. 22, 28.
† Heb. *loosed, or, disjointed.*

The Babylonians came: the prophet prosecuteth the allegory; the adulteress sent, and invited, and here the Chaldeans comply with it, they came, ambassadors no doubt first to make a confederacy, and then free intercourse in trade, and religion too. *The bed of love;* so the impudently lascivious call the polluted, forbidden bed, as the harlot, Prov. vii. 18. It is like with this commerce and confederacy the lustful Babylonians did spread that disease, the Jewish nation were too much inclined to corporal adulteries and fornications; but metaphorically it is a delightful communicating with them in their idolatry in their idol temples and feasts. *Defiled her;* made her unclean and loathsome. *Whoredom;* spiritual and corporal. *Polluted;* greatly defiled, as the doubling the expression imports. *Her mind was alienated from them;* like an arrant adulteress, wearied, but not satisfied with her adulterers, she changeth mind and friendships, and seeks new ones. So did this people, weary of the Chaldeans, seek new confederates.

18 So she discovered her whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness: then [p]my mind was alienated from her, like as my mind was alienated from her sister.

p Jer. 6. 8.

So, by this unsatiableness and change of lovers, *she discovered her whoredoms;* made it appear to all, far and near, that she was a most notorious and infamous strumpet. *Her nakedness;* her weakness, and her shame. *Then,* when I saw the lewdness, impudence, and boundlessness of her adulteries, *my mind was alienated;* turned from her with abhorrency, I could no longer endure it. *From her;* Jerusalem, the land of Judea, the kingdom of the two tribes. *As from her sister;* Samaria, the ten tribes; and I resolved to destroy them both alike by their lovers.

19 Yet she multiplied her whoredoms, in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, [q]wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt.

q ver. 3.

Yet, Heb. *And. Multiplied;* added more and greater to her former sins of idolatry and whoredoms, and persisted in them. *In calling to remembrance:* this may refer either to the Jewish nation remembering their idolatries in Egypt, their alliances with and reliance upon it in days past, which she now resolves to act over again; or it may refer to God, who, by these continued courses of Judah's lewdness, is provoked to remember and punish old perfidious and idolatrous practices. *The days of her youth:* see ver. 3.

20 For she doted upon their paramours, [r]whose flesh *is as* the flesh of asses, and whose issue *is like* the issue of horses.

r ch. 16. 26.

Doted: see ver. 5. *Upon their paramours;* Egyptians, and the nations that were confederate with the Egyptians; looking on them as able to defend by their power, enrich by their trade, and make prosperous by their friendship. *Whose flesh, &c.:* in these terms the prophet expresseth the vehement desire of the Jews to Egyptian idolatry, compared to whoredom, and may, for aught I know, tax the lustful impudence of some of the Jewish women in their corporal uncleannesses with the Egyptians, who were it seems (by report of authors) naturally disposed for that vice, and fittest for unsatiable, lustful women: see chap. xvi. 26.

21 Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, in bruising thy teats by the Egyptians for the paps of thy youth.

Calledst to remembrance: see ver. 19. *The lewdness of thy youth:* see ver. 3. *The paps of thy youth;* the beauty and loveliness of them, when God had formed them, allured the Egyptians: this may be understood both politically, of the growing state of the Jewish commonwealth, or literally, of the beauty of their young women.

22 ¶ Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD; [s]Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated, and I will bring them against thee on every side;

s ch. 16. 37. ver. 28.

Thy lovers; thy confederates. *From whom thy mind is alienated;* whom thou hast first loathed and forsaken, and thereby enraged them against thee. *Bring them against thee;* be not only an exciter to stir them up against thee, but I will be a guide and conducter of them. *On every side;* so no way left for thy escape.

23 The Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, [t]Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, *and* all the Assyrians with them: [u]all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned, all of them riding upon horses.

t Jer. 50. 21.
u ver. 12.

The Babylonians and Chaldeans; these are known. *Pekod, &c.:* some reckon these the titles of some of the great commanders in this army, which come against Jerusalem, but they are names of distinct countries or provinces under the Babylonish government; and so Pekod is the province between Tigris and Lycus rivers, in this was old Nineveh, and was the principal province of the kingdom; though some others think Pekod was Bactriana, now called Usbeck, and Corassan, fierce, thievish, and barbarous of old. *Shoa;* either Sia in Armenia, or the Sohai, among which were the Adiabeni; and this contained the middle part of the kingdom of Babylon, and was Assyria Mediana. *Koa* bordered on Media; the inhabitants were called Kohai, and dwelt about Arbel, or Arbelis, or Arbela, and comprehended Ganyamela, where a fortress Ganga looks like this Koa, being easily changed from Koa to Ganga by change of the original letters ק into G, and ע into G; a people too like enough to be cruel and barbarous by their very situation. *And all;* all these sons or subjects of the Assyrian monarchy, or confederates. *Desirable young men, &c.:* most of these are already explained ver. 6, where they were objects of love, now they are objects of terror; so God turns the occasions of men's sins into occasions of greater terror and punishment. *Renowned,* Heb. *called,* or invited, first by the Jews to sin with them, ver. 16, now called of God to punish their fellow sinners.

24 And they shall come against thee with chariots, wagons, and wheels, and with an assembly of people, *which* shall set against thee buckler and shield and helmet round about: and I will set judgment before them, and they shall judge thee according to their judgments.

They, mentioned before, ver. 23, *shall come against thee,* or upon thee, surprise thee with a speedy march, for they were swift in their course. *With chariots;* the Hebrew is of larger sense, and more properly speaks all kind of arms for the war, a thorough furniture; so the Chaldee

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paraphrase, with instruments of war, or arms. *Wagons,* Heb. *chariots,* and is oftener so rendered; for expedition, for ease of their commanders on their march, and for strength against the enemy in the battle. *Wheels;* whether distinct from all other, or whether prepared lest in their march the carriage wheels should break, and they be at a stand, therefore beforehand store of these were provided. *An assembly;* a mighty confluence of people, and a mixture, where the worst and cruellest are the most numerous. *Which shall set against thee buckler, and shield, and helmet;* yet for their own defence well armed, and with armature fitted to defeat the arrows and offensive weapons of their enemy, and to maintain a siege, such as they should weary Jerusalem with. *I will set judgment before them;* give them a power by their victory, and in right of conquest over their rebels, as well as mine; and I will give them a spirit of judgment to discern the greatness of this people's sins. *They shall judge thee;* plead with thee, convince, condemn, and execute sentence upon thee. *According to their judgments;* to their will, power, wrath, and custom against rebels, for these are their rules of judgment; all which appeared when the chief of all the people were condemned to slavery, the wise counsellors and valiant commanders sentenced to die, Zedekiah's children slain, his own eyes put out, and city and temple to be burnt.

25 And I will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal furiously with thee: they shall take away thy nose and thine ears; and thy remnant shall fall by the sword: they shall take thy sons and thy daughters; and thy residue shall be devoured by the fire.

I will set my jealousy against thee; as a jealous provoked husband, I will be as much against thee as they are, their fury shall avenge my quarrel. *They shall deal furiously with thee;* their disposition naturally is to furious wrath, my jealousy shall enkindle it more. *They shall take away thy nose and thine ears;* as thou hast prostituted thy beauty like a harlot, so they shall use thee as such, and mar thy beauty, and brand thee for ever, as thou deservest, and that thou mayst be as loathsome in thy deformity as ever thou wast thought lovely in thy beauty. This punishment of adulteresses is known to have been used, and is yet in use. *Thy remnant shall fall by the sword;* or else, at last thy latter end shall be to fall by the sword, those that do not live under such reproach shall die by the sword of the enemy. *They shall take thy sons and thy daughters* for captives and slaves for work, and somewhat a thousand times worse. *Thy residue;* either the people who did hide themselves in vaults and cellars, and came not out; or else what remains of that the Chaldeans cannot carry away; all this shall be devoured by fire, as when the city was burnt.

x ch. 16. 39. 26 [x]They shall also strip thee out of † Heb. instruments of thy decking. thy clothes, and take away thy †fair jewels.

Strip thee out of thy clothes; both as lewd, disgraced harlots and as captives are used: see chap. xvi. 39. *Thy fair jewels;* all thy rich, beautiful ornaments: see chap. xvi. 17. They shall be prey and plunder to the enemy.

y ch. 16. 41. & 22. 15. z ver. 3, 19. 27 Thus [y]will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee, and [z]thy whoredom *brought* from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them, nor remember Egypt any more.

By these destroying judgments, which shall make thee cease to be a people, I will put an end to the lewdness thou wouldst never have put end to, thou shalt never have opportunity, if thou hadst heart, to do the like. *Thy whoredom,* idolatries, *brought from the land of Egypt,* when thou camest out under my hand. *Thou shalt not lift up thine eyes* with desire and affection toward them, as once, when thou dotedst on them; *nor remember Egypt any more,* with love, trust, imitation, and desire of commerce with her, but all thy remembrance of Egypt shall be with deep shame and loathing.

28 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will deliver thee into the hand *of them* [a]whom thou hatest, into the hand *of them* [b]from whom thy mind is alienated: a ch. 16. 37. b ver. 17.

Deliver thee, give thee up, *into the hand,* to the power and will, *of them whom thou hatest:* those shall be thy masters, and domineer over thee, whom of all men thou didst most desire might not. It is doubled for certainty of the thing, and to make deeper impression; they shall certainly lord it over thee, whom of all men thou dost most loathe.

29 And they shall deal with thee hatefully, and shall take away all thy labour, and [c]shall leave thee naked and bare: and the nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both thy lewdness and thy whoredoms. c ch. 16. 39. ver. 26.

Deal with thee, use thee, and ever demean themselves toward thee, *hatefully;* in hatred; whatever drudgery, hardship, base and vile employment, their spite and hatred can invent, they shall cast on thee. *Take away all thy labour;* spoil thee of all thou hadst got in Judea, as they did when they conquered and plundered; and deprive thee of all the right and comfortable use of all thy labour, which they will exact of thee in captivity, and make thee know a slave hath no right to any thing. *Naked;* both literally, thou shalt not have clothes to cover thy nakedness; and figuratively, thou shalt be left in a most disgraced state, and the shame of all thy sins shall cover thee: all this, as this prophet usually doth, is doubled to affect the more.

30 I will do these *things* unto thee, because thou hast [d]gone a whoring after the heathen, *and* because thou art polluted with their idols. d ch. 6. 9.

This verse gives the same reason which hath been often given, why the Lord proceeds in this severity, because, as an obstinate, lewd, untractable adulteress abuseth the best husband, till none can forbear, so had the Jews dealt with God, and God will deal with them.

31 Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister; therefore will I give her [e]cup into thine hand. e Jer. 25. 15, &c.

Thou, O Jerusalem and Judah, *hast walked;* hast run into the same sinful enormities. *Thy sister;* Samaria and the ten tribes, both great idolatresses. *Her cup* of judgments and sorrow, expressed frequently by a cup, Psal. lxxv. 8; Jer. xxv. 15: I will punish thee with punishments like hers, since thou hast made thyself in sins like her.

32 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup deep and large: [f]thou shalt be laughed to scorn and had in derision; it containeth much. f ch. 22. 4, 5.

Thou shalt drink; thou shalt not put it by, and shift it off. *Deep;* towards the dregs, where the bitterest poison of it lieth. *And large;* in great quantity; thy punishment shall be most grievous who must drink so deep of this cup of astonishment. *Thou shalt be laughed to scorn;* when sick as heart can hold, and needest pity and help to relieve, instead hereof thou shalt be derided and abused: these will be cruel mockings. *It,* the cup, *containeth much;* is large, and contains what will last many years, till the seventy years be expired; and of this cup thou shalt still drink, and be derided.

33 Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of astonishment and desolation, with the cup of thy sister Samaria.

Thy afflictions shall be as great as thou canst hold, as a vessel filled with liquor. Thou shalt stagger with sorrows, that shall intoxicate and astonish. In the verse each part explains the other, sorrow explains drunkenness, astonishment explains sorrow, desolation explains astonishment, and the cup of Samaria, elsewhere called the line of Samaria, explains all: Samaria was made a heap, Micah i. 6; so shall Jerusalem be.

34 Thou shalt [g]even drink it and suck it out, and thou shalt break the sherds g Ps. 75. 8. Is. 51. 17.

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thereof, and pluck off thine own breasts: for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord GOD.

Thou shalt even drink it; nothing shall divert the punishment. *And suck it out;* the dregs shalt thou drink, and multiply thine own sorrows. *Break the sherds;* either out of indignation, or to suck out what was imbibed. *Pluck off thine own breasts;* which tempted others, and undid thyself, for which cause thou now revengest thyself upon thyself.

35 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou [h]hast forgotten me, and [i]cast me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

h Jer. 2. 32. & 3. 21. & 13. 25. ch. 22. 12.
i 1 Kin. 14. 9. Neh. 9. 26.

Thou hast forgotten me, chap. xxii. 12, which is here explained by what follows; it was a wilful forgetting of God, and voluntary despising his law, ordinances, worship, favour, and presence; so God is cast behind a sinner's back. *Bear thou* the guilt, I will impute it; the punishment, I will not pardon it; and the shame, for I will pour out contempt upon thee: bear both sorrow and reproach for thy sins.

36 ¶ The LORD said moreover unto me; Son of man, wilt thou [k]‖ judge Aholah and Aholibah? yea, [l]declare unto them their abominations;

k ch. 20. 4. & 22. 2.
‖ Or, *plead for.*
l Is. 58. 1.

Wilt thou judge, excuse or plead for such adulteresses? so chap. xxii. 2. *Declare unto them* plainly, fully tell them, what they have been, and what they must expect for all their abominations.

37 That they have committed adultery, and [m]blood *is* in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, [n]whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through *the fire*, to devour *them*.

m ch. 16. 38. ver. 45.
n ch. 16. 20, 21, 36, 45. & 20. 26, 31.

They have committed adultery: this seems to refer to corporal uncleannesses. *Blood is in their hands;* innocent blood of the murdered prophets and just men. *Committed adultery;* spiritual adultery, i. e. idolatry. *Caused their sons to pass through the fire;* most unheard-of cruelty, and unnatural murders, under pretext of religion! thus chap. xvi. 20. *To devour them;* they destroyed, took away the life of their sons in a barbarous manner.

38 Moreover this they have done unto me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and [o]have profaned my sabbaths.

o ch. 22. 8.

This; which is declared in the following words, it was some great injury or affront done to God. *Defiled my sanctuary;* my holy things, house, altar, sacrifices, and oblations; one part of the temple put for all parts of the holy things of God. *In the same day;* when they had newly polluted themselves with most horrid crimes, idolatry and murder, they thrust into the temple; whereas by the law, if they had been but unclean by touch of a dead body, they must have been cleansed by sacrifices before they ought to come into company with the Jews. *Profaned my sabbaths,* by offering sacrifices to idols, and doing that on those days which God, nature, and all civil nations abhor, only the devil is pleased with, who is a murderer from the beginning, and promotes such bloody cruelties.

39 For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo, [p]thus have they done in the midst of mine house.

p 2 Kings 21. 4.

Slain their children: see chap. xvi. 20. *To profane it;* using my holy temple as if it were a common and unclean place. *Thus have they done in the midst of my house;* nay, these things have been done in my house, they have offered to their idols in the house where my name alone should be called upon.

40 And furthermore, that ye have sent for men †to come from far, [q]unto whom a messenger *was* sent; and, lo, they came: for whom thou didst [r]wash thyself, [s]paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments,

† Heb. *coming.*
q Is. 57. 9.
r Ruth 3. 3.
s 2 Kings 9. 30. Jer. 4. 30.

Sent for men: see ver. 16. *From far;* from Chaldea. *A messenger was sent;* an embassy from the king of Judah, with advice of his princes, no doubt. *They came:* see ver. 17. *Wash thyself;* after the manner of harlots, gottest all fine, clean, and delicate against thy paramours came; so idol temples built, altars beautified, sacrifices prepared, all to commend thyself to their alliance and help. *Paintedst thy eyes;* like a decayed harlot, madest up thy defects with paint. *Deckedst thyself with ornaments;* puttest on the rich clothing I gave thee, and with thy Husband's bounty allured adulterers to thy bed; so chap. xvi. 13, 14: thus was God abused and provoked.

41 And satest upon a †stately [t]bed, and a table prepared before it, [u]whereupon thou hast set mine incense and mine oil.

† Heb. *honourable.*
t Esth. 1. 6. Is. 57. 7. Amos 2. 8. & 6. 4.
u Prov. 7. 17. ch. 16. 18, 19. Hos. 2. 8.

Satest; it is a table gesture, as appears, she was prepared to feast them. *Upon a stately bed;* a magnificent, rich bed, on which women sat to feast, when men leant on their sides, which would not have been a comely posture to a woman. *Table prepared;* table furnished with choicest provision, such as made for feasts, when solemn sacrifices were offered, or when vows were paid, as the harlot, Prov. vii. 14, 15. *Set mine incense:* this assures us that idolatrous worship was acted by her in compliance with the Chaldeans, offered to their idols, and then feasted the idolaters, with what God had given her, when they confirmed their leagues, and swore by false gods.

42 And a voice of a multitude being at ease *was* with her: and with the men †of the common sort *were* brought ‖Sabeans from the wilderness, which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful crowns upon their heads.

† Heb. *of the multitude of men.*
‖ Or, *drunkards.*

A voice of a multitude; a shout for joy, that there was a treaty of peace between the Jews and the Chaldeans, or songs of gladness for the peace made, and confirmed, not in God's name, but in the name of the idols. *Being at ease;* free now from the fears of any wars to disquiet them. *Was with her;* about the altar first, where the peace was sworn; about her bed next, where she feasted her new allies, that were great princes and nobles. *And with the men;* and to these worthy the name of men, or beside these great and famous ones. *Et avec ces hommes,* as the French version. *Were brought Sabeans;* messengers were sent to, or received, or entertained and caressed, from the roaring Sabeans, who lived on robberies, and spoiling the merchants; these were brought to Jerusalem from the wilderness, deserts of Arabia, a rude, barbarous, and idolatrous scum of men, described by their ill properties in geographers: of these were they that destroyed Job's servants: in the verse described by their ornaments, bracelets about necks and arms, and crowns on their heads, which some think they bestowed upon this harlot.

43 Then said I unto *her that was* old in adulteries, Will they now commit †whoredoms with her, and she *with them?*

† Heb. *her whoredoms.*

Then said I; after the manner of man God seems to stand musing, or saying to himself, or it may be supposed that God speaks to his prophet, asking him. *Unto her;* or rather, of her, concerning her. *Old in adulteries;* such usually are out of request with adulterers; and now Samaria and Jerusalem had been long spiritual adulteresses, and one would think her lovers would be weary of her, if she were not weary of them.

44 Yet they went in unto her, as they go in unto a woman that playeth the harlot: so went they in unto Aholah and unto Aholibah, the lewd women.

This resolves the doubt of the former verse. In this

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metaphor the prophet expresseth the confederacy of the Jews, against God's express command, with the nations round about them. The Jews enter league with these robbers, and admit their idols, and so commit whoredom with them; and these Sabeans probably admit some of the Jews' idols too, and so commit whoredom with her, expressed in the last words of the 43rd verse.

45 ¶ And the righteous men, they
x ch. 16. 38. shall [x]judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women that shed blood; because they
y ver. 37. *are* adulteresses, and [y]blood *is* in their hands.

Righteous men; men that kept the law of their God, for some such there were about Aholibah herself; or prophets, such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and some few more: or else the Babylonians, who in the present controversy between Jerusalem and its king on the one part, and Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians on the other part, were comparatively the righteous men. *After the manner of adulteresses;* which was, to be put to death by stoning, Lev. xx. 10; and murder was punished with death.

z ch. 16. 40. 46 For thus saith the Lord GOD; [z]I will bring up a company upon them, and
† Heb. *for a removing and spoil.* will give them †to be removed and spoiled.

A company; the Babylonian army. *Upon them;* against the Jews, the children of this Aholibah. *Give them;* the inhabitants of Judea, the citizens of Jerusalem, with princes and royal family. *To be removed;* to be carried away captive into the land of Chaldea. *And spoiled,* by the rapine of the soldiers in their own land, and by the cruelty of their masters to whom they shall be slaves in a strange land: this is the plain sense of the verse, though possibly there may be an allusion to the solemn proceedings of a court of judicature couched in the proper import of many of the Hebrew words.

a ch. 16. 41. 47 [a]And the company shall stone them
‖ Or, *single them out.* with stones, and ‖dispatch them with their swords; [b]they shall slay their sons and
b 2 Chron. 36. 17, 19. ch. 24. 21. their daughters, and burn up their houses with fire.

The company, Heb. *congregation,* the Babylonian army. *Stone them;* the punishment of an adulteress; and this was in a manner done when the engines, which cast mighty stones into the besieged city, dashed out the brains of some, and when chimneys, or walls, or towers, beat down by those stones cast out of the engines, fell on others, and buried them alive. *Despatch them with their swords:* some of them who escaped the stones fell under the sword of the Babylonian soldier. *Slay their sons;* either in fight, or when they break into the city, or light on them wandering on mountains, or hiding in dens and caves. *And their daughters;* either in sacking the city, when they regard no sex, or because they choose to die rather than yield to the lust of those vile ones. *Burn up their houses;* as the cities, and houses abroad in the country; so the Babylonish army destroyed what they could not carry away with them, as ver. 25.

c ch. 22. 15. ver. 27. d Deut. 13. 11. 2 Pet. 2. 6. 48 Thus [c]will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, [d]that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness.

Cause lewdness to cease: see ver. 27. Hereafter in this land such-like abominations shall never be committed more, as indeed we do not read of any such after their return out of this captivity. *That all women,* countries, kingdoms, and cities, may be warned by your examples of sorrows and destruction, to fear God, do justly, love mercy, and hate violence.

49 And they shall recompense your
e ver. 35. lewdness upon you, and ye shall [e]bear
f ch. 20. 38, 42, 44. & 25. 5. the sins of your idols: [f]and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

They; the Babylonians, and their confederates. *Shall recompense;* as God's ministers of just vengeance, shall judge you worthy, and execute on you what you are worthy of, all that may make you desolate, a derision, and scorn. *Shall bear the sins of your idols;* the guilt of the sins you committed in worshipping of and relying upon idols; and you shall bear the punishment of idolaters, which by the law of God is death without mercy, Deut. xiii. 6—10. *Ye shall know that I am the Lord God;* by what you suffer you shall know that I am justly displeased with your sins, am true to my threats, and have made good my word: Deut. viii. 19, *If thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them,* &c., *ye shall surely perish.*

CHAP. XXIV.

By the parable of a boiling pot is showed the destruction of Jerusalem, the bloody city, 1—14. *Ezekiel is forbidden to mourn for the death of his wife,* 15—18, *to denote that the calamity of the Jews shall be beyond all expressions of sorrow,* 19—24. *In that day of affliction the prophet's mouth shall be opened to their conviction,* 25—27.

AGAIN in the ninth year, in the tenth 590.
month, in the tenth *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

In the ninth year of the captivity of Jeconiah, and those that were carried away with him; it falls in also with the year of Zedekiah's reign, though the prophet, and the captives now in Babylon, reckon not by this, but by the former. *The tenth month;* which answers to part of December and January. *The tenth day;* about our 29th of December, when the winter was well over with them. *Came unto me;* the prophet was now in Babylon many leagues from Jerusalem.

2 Son of man, write thee the name of the day, *even* of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem a 2 Kin. 25. 1. Jer. 39. 1. & 52. 4.
[a]this same day.

Write; set it down, and in such manner, with such witness, that it may be proved. *The name of the day,* most punctually, set it down. *The king of Babylon;* Nebuchadnezzar, who in person it is like was there at first to encourage, direct, and settle the siege, though he withdrew from it for his delights when he perceived it would be a long siege, as on chap. xi. 11, the issue whereof he expected at Antioch on the banks of Orontes. *Set himself against;* sat down to besiege.

3 [b]And utter a parable unto the rebel- b ch. 17. 12.
lious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; [c]Set on a pot, set c See Jer. 1. 13. ch. 11. 3.
it on, and also pour water into it:

Utter a parable; in somewhat a dark, yet apt similitude, or in an allegory, declare what they should know and consider. *Rebellious house:* see chap. ii. 3, 6. *Set on a pot;* set upon the fire a pot, or caldron. *Set it on;* do it quickly, be sure to do it: this *pot* is Jerusalem. *Pour water into it;* fill it with water; for as the pot full of water on the fire till the water be thoroughly heated, so shall Jerusalem be filled with the judgments of God.

4 Gather the pieces thereof into it, *even* every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill *it* with the choice bones.

The pieces; which are to put into this pot. *Every good piece,* i. e. all the chief of the inhabitants of the land, the wealthiest, who in the time of this invasion will flee from their country-houses to live in safety in Jerusalem. The most warlike, who will betake themselves to Jerusalem for its defence. *The thigh, and the shoulder;* as these are the principal parts for support, motion, defence, and strength; so those citizens, soldiers, rulers, that are the strength, defence, and glory of this people, are here signified by those parts. *Fill it;* fill the pot, Jerusalem, let no place be empty. *With the choice bones;* with those pieces that are biggest, fattest, fullest of marrow, and which are divided according to the bones; these are the principal members of this Jewish state, king, princes, priests, magistrates, and wealthy citizens.

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5 Take the choice of the flock, and
1 Or, heap. ‖ burn also the bones under it, *and* make
it boil well, and let them seethe the bones
of it therein.

Take the choice; pick out the very best in the flock, that is, the greatest, richest, most powerful for authority and interest in the nation and city. *Burn;* or, heap together in order to burn, to make a fire with. *The bones;* not of the pieces to be boiled, but the bones of the many innocents murdered in Jerusalem and in the land; for their blood crieth for vengeance, and their bones, scattered on the face of the earth, will both make and maintain this fire. *Make it boil well;* let the fire be so great, and the pot so long over, till all within it be boiled thoroughly, till all the strength and marrow be wasted, and the very flesh drop to pieces; so shall this people be wasted by this judgment. *Seethe the bones:* see ver. 4: this is doubled to assure us, however the meaner sort did, the more considerable part of the Jews should not escape. In this allegory there may lie couched an exact correspondence between the sins and punishments of this people; their sin was the slaying the best, or by oppressing them broke their bones, boiled out the marrow, sucked them dry; and now God will retaliate to these men.

6 ¶ Wherefore thus saith the Lord
d ch. 22. 3. & 23. 37. ver. 9. e See 2 Sam. 8. 2. Joel 3. 3. Obad. 11. Nah. 3. 10. GOD; Woe to [d]the bloody city, to the
pot whose scum *is* therein, and whose
scum is not gone out of it! bring it out
piece by piece; let no [e]lot fall upon it.

All this allegory contains woeful and heavy tidings, misery and desolation to them that are represented by it. *The bloody city;* see chap. xxii. 2, 3; Jerusalem, which is this pot. *Whose scum is therein;* filthiness, her abominations, all her lewdness, are still within her; they have not been punished, restrained, or cast out by the execution of just and good laws; but the citizens have with obstinacy, impenitence, and with impudence continued in them. *Whose scum is not gone out of it;* the same thing repeated for confirming what was said. *Bring it out piece by piece;* let them know it shall be a lingering destruction to them, yet a total, one piece after another, till all be consumed. *Let no lot fall upon it;* lots are for saving some, and determining who they shall be; but here shall no such discrimination be made, no sparing any and slaying others by lot, who do not die shall go into captivity.

7 For her blood is in the midst of her;
f Lev. 17. 13. Deut. 12. 16, 24. she set it upon the top of a rock; [f]she
poured it not upon the ground, to cover
it with dust;

Her blood, innocent blood which she hath shed, *is in the midst of her;* openly and publicly, without fear, or shame, or reluctance. *Set it upon the top of a rock,* where it might be long seen, cared not to hide her murders, as the next words clear it. *Poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust:* with cruelty and inhumanity they did murder, for when the law directed that the blood of beast or fowl killed should be poured on the earth, and covered with dust, Lev. xvii. 13, these butchers of innocent ones leave their blood uncovered, whether in a boasting manner, or for terror, I will not say, but this aggravates the sin.

8 That it might cause fury to come up
g Matt. 7. 2. to take vengeance; [g]I have set her
blood upon the top of a rock, that it
should not be covered.

This provoked the anger of the Lord, and raised his fury against them. *To come up,* into the face of God, (after the manner of man,) as Ezek. xxxviii. 18. *To take vengeance;* to God it appertains to take vengeance, to punish such sinners according to the nature of their sin. *I have set her blood upon the top of a rock;* God will openly punish, and in such manner as shall not be soon forgotten; they set it on a rock when they shed it with cruelty, God will set it on a rock when he punisheth it with severity. *That it should not be covered;* that it be not forgotten, or go unpunished; nor yet punished in a corner; all this inquisition and execution shall be public in the sight of many nations.

9 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD;
h ver. 6. Nah. 3. 1. Hab. 2. 12. [h]Woe to the bloody city! I will even
make the pile for fire great.

Woe to the bloody city! see ver. 6. *I will even make the pile for fire great;* God's hand shall be seen inflicting all those sore afflictions on them. Judgments are a fire, the fuel whereof is to be great; for it is a fire to consume the wicked, and God will make it sufficiently great to do this. I will bring the mighty army of the Chaldeans, which, as a pile of wood set on fire, shall burn them up.

10 Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the
flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned.

This is God's word, either what he will do pursuant of the 8th verse; or his word to the prophet, to typify to the people what should be done, or to the Chaldean army, to hasten what they were to do in destroying the city. *Heap on wood;* make full preparations. *Kindle the fire;* begin the execution of judgment. *Consume the flesh:* it is a fire, not gently to dress or prepare meat, but to destroy, and burn up. *Spice it well;* either to take away the noisome smell, or to express the pleasing savour of this justice to God, and men whom he appointed to this work. *Let the bones be burned:* in such fires the bones hold out longest, but this fire shall at last consume these also, that the destruction may be universal; the greatest, strongest, and firmest of these Jews shall perish in this fiery indignation.

11 Then set it empty upon the coals
thereof, that the brass of it may be hot,
and may burn, and *that* [i]the filthiness
of it may be molten in it, *that* the scum
of it may be consumed.
i ch. 22. 15.

Set it, the hieroglyphic pot, *empty;* the water, flesh, bones, all consumed, i. e. the citizens all wasted with sword, famine, or pestilence, the city left as an empty, overboiled pot. *Upon the coals thereof;* signifying the burning of the city itself, after the emptying of its inhabitants. *That the brass of it;* perhaps he alludes to the impudence of their sins, in that the city is likened to a pot of brass. *May be hot;* God's judgments would increase upon them, as heat doth in a pot set on coals. *And may burn;* which is the highest degree; so should these miseries increase. *That the filthiness,* type of the sinfulness, the unreformed sinfulness of the city, *may be molten in it;* that their wickedness may be taken away with their persons and city: they should have been purged by gentler meltings which God used; since they were not, nor would be purified, now they shall be melted to the utter destruction of them. *The scum:* see ver. 6.

12 She hath wearied *herself* with lies, and her
great scum went not forth out of her: her scum
shall be in the fire.

She; the nation of the Jews, and the city Jerusalem. *Hath wearied;* either her God, (so the French translation,) by her repeated sins, and pertinacy in them, as elsewhere, Isa. i. 14; vii. 13; xliii. 24; or wearied others, by injuries done against them; or, as we read it, herself, spent much time and taken great pains, laid out much treasure in making alliances for her security. *With lies:* her allies, their promises, their forces, and their idols, on which these unhappy Jews relied, all prove a lie to the house of Judah. *Her great scum went not forth;* she repented not, nor did she reform her ways. *Her scum,* her unrepented sins, *shall be in the fire,* shall be punished in the fire that burns their city.

13 In thy filthiness *is* lewdness: be-
cause I have purged thee, and thou wast
not purged, thou shalt not be purged
from thy filthiness any more, [k]till I have
caused my fury to rest upon thee.
k ch. 5. 13. & 8. 18. & 16. 42.

In thy filthiness, in thy sinning, *is lewdness;* deliberate resolution grown up to obstinacy and boldness, with impudence that will not be corrected. *I have purged thee;* used all sorts of proper means to purge, advice, reproof, chastisements, threats of sorer sufferings, by prophets, by the rod, sometimes gentler, sometimes rougher, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15; Jer. xviii. 11, 12. *Thou wast not purged;*

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wouldst not part from thy sins, and purify thy heart and ways, Jer. xxv. 3—7. *Thou shalt not be purged;* all further use of means shall be forborne; I will preach no more by prophets to call thee to repentance, but to condemn thee for not repenting: God will from henceforth refer them to his sore destroying judgments, which are his fury, and which shall cease when this sinful kingdom, destroyed, can no longer provoke God as they had done formerly. *Till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee:* see chap. v. 13; vi. 12; xvi. 42; xxi. 17.

[l] 1 Sam. 15. 29. 14 [l] I the LORD have spoken *it:* it shall come to pass, and I will do *it;* I
[m] ch. 5. 11. will not go back, [m] neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord GOD.

This verse scarce hath its like I think in the book of God, so fully doth it ratify and confirm all, and prevents all their evasions. *I the Lord have spoken it:* this is Ezekiel's saying, Nay, it is the Lord that hath spoken it. *It shall come to pass.* But perhaps it may not be. Yea, but it shall; for I will do it, who have spoken it. *I will not go back.* But God hath relaxed, as in Nineveh's case. But he will not go back from this word. *Neither will I spare.* But he will be merciful in the midst of judgment. Nay, but God will not spare, or mitigate his wrath. *Neither will I repent.* Yet, ere all are consumed with Le not, as Amos vii. 3? No, he will not repent, your burnt flesh and city shall be a spiced sacrifice pleasing to his justice. Finally, as thou deservest, God will use thee. But then we shall be in his hand. Nay, *they,* thy inveterate enemies, *shall judge thee.*

15 ¶ Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

16 Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn
† Heb. *go.* nor weep, neither shall thy tears †run down.

Behold; consider what I tell, and will do. *I take away from thee;* by death I take from thee, but it is I the Lord, and I take her to myself, though from thee. *The desire of thine eyes:* whether it refer to the beauty of her person or no, it certainly refers to the amiableness of her disposition, and the agreeableness of her to the prophet. *With a stroke;* a sudden stroke, whether pestilence or what else is not so much as hinted at; I think it was God's own immediate hand. *Neither shalt thou mourn;* make no solemn mourning for her, though it will look only in the sight of thy people. *Nor weep;* let no lamenting voice be heard from thee, cry not out in bewailing thy loss. *Neither shall thy tears run down;* neither let thy eyes pay any tribute to her, forbear even tears also, at least, let them not run down; if one chance to drop, check the rest.

† Heb. *Be silent.* [n] Jer. 16. 5, 6, 7. [o] See Lev. 10. 6. & 21. 10. [p] 2 Sam. 15. 30. [q] Mic. 3. 7. † Heb. *upper lip:* And so ver. 22. Lev. 13. 45. 17 †Forbear to cry, [n] make no mourning for the dead, [o] bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and [p] put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and [q] cover not *thy* †lips, and eat not the bread of men.

Forbear to cry; restrain and curb thy sorrows, neither sigh nor lament. *Make no mourning for the dead;* when thou carriest her out to burial, make no mourning for her. *Bind the tire of thine head;* adorn and trim up thy head, as thou wast used to do; go not bare-headed, as Lev. x. 6; xxi. 10, a mourner. *Put on thy shoes upon thy feet:* in great mournings the Jews went bare-footed, 2 Sam. xv. 30; Isa. xlvii. 2, but do not thou so, put on thy shoes. *Cover not thy lips:* it was a custom among them to cover either the upper lip, or mustachoes, as the leper did, Lev. xiii. 45, and as Micah iii. 7; and this also is forbidden the prophet. *Eat not the bread of men;* either of mourners, or rather of thy neighbours and friends, who were wont to visit and feast their mourning friends, and sent in both choice and abundance of provision to their houses, Jer. xvi. 7; and this was a custom with Scythians, Grecians, Athenians, and Romans. Eat thou thine own, as if no mourning occasion in thy family.

18 So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.

I spake unto the people; told them what God had told me, and which I expected would be. *In the morning;* it is likely he had this revelation in the night, or evening before, and he tells them betimes in the morning, what God would do in taking away his wife, and what he must not do when she is dead, and to be buried. The next morning after her death he observed God's command, and without any sign of sorrow or mourning for his great loss.

19 ¶ And the people said unto me, [r] Wilt thou not tell us what these *things* [r] ch. 12. 9. & 37. 18. *are* to us, that thou doest *so?*

The people said; some of the ordinary sort, the people, not rulers or priests. *Tell us;* explain, and declare whether there be not, and what it is that we are to learn by this. These are types, but what do they mean?

20 Then I answered them, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21 Speak unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, [s] I will [s] Jer. 7. 14. ch. 7. 20, 21, 22. profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, [t] the desire of your eyes, [t] Ps. 27. 4. and †that which your soul pitieth; [u] and † Heb. *the pity of your soul.* your sons and your daughters whom ye [u] ch. 23. 47. have left shall fall by the sword.

Now he is commissioned to declare the meaning of that he did. *Speak unto the house of Israel;* to them at Babylon by word of mouth, but to them at Jerusalem by letter, or messenger. *Profane my sanctuary;* cast off, and put into the hands of heathens, who will regard it no more than any other common building, though it is and hath been long my sanctuary; but you, O Jews, first profaned it with your sins, and now, in my just displeasure against you, I will suffer it to be profaned by the Chaldeans. *The excellency of your strength;* so it was whilst God's presence was there, and whilst the Jews kept it undefiled; it was their confidence, and they trusted in it, though they were fallen from God, Jer. vii. *The desire of your eyes;* as much your desire as my wife was mine, saith the prophet, most dear to you, as she to me, but this shall be burnt. *Your sons and your daughters;* the children which survive to you after these grievous calamities, and in whom you hoped for comfort and posterity, shall die by the conqueror's sword too, chap. xxiii. 47.

22 And ye shall do as I have done: [x] ye shall not cover *your* lips, nor eat the [x] Jer. 16. 6, 7. ver. 17. bread of men.

Ye shall do as I have done, when you are in captivity, where you cannot, may not use your own customs and rites on these or any other occasions. *Ye shall not cover your lips:* see ver. 17. *Nor eat the bread of men:* see ver. 17.

23 And your tires *shall be* upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: [y] ye shall not mourn nor weep; but [y] ye [y] Job 27. 15. Ps. 78. 64. shall pine away for your iniquities, and [z] Lev. 26. 39. ch. 33. 10. mourn one toward another.

See ver. 16, 17. *Ye shall pine away;* you shall languish with grief and secret sorrow, when you shall not dare to show it openly, lest you irritate your tyrannical masters, who will expect that nothing grieve you that rejoiceth them. *For your iniquities;* the punishment of your iniquities, which have made your land, city, temple, and families desolate and miserable. *And mourn one toward another;* in secret, Jew with Jew, you shall bewail what you durst not openly.

24 Thus [a] Ezekiel is unto you a sign: [a] Is. 20. 3. ch. 4. 3. & 12. 6, 11. according to all that he hath done shall [b] Jer. 17. 15. ye do: [b] and when this cometh, [c] ye shall John 13. 19. & 14. 29. know that I *am* the Lord GOD. [c] ch. 6. 7. & 25. 5.

Ezekiel is unto you a sign; in what he doth you may see what you shall do; so chap. iv. 3; xii. 6. And so was Isaiah, chap. viii. 18. *When this cometh;* when your ne-

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cessities and enemies shall force you to do as I have done, make you write after this copy. *Ye shall know that I am the Lord;* confess the justice, power, wisdom, and truth of God in all threatened and executed against you.

25 Also, thou son of man, *shall it* not *be* in the day when I take from them [d] their strength, the joy of their glory, the [†] desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters,

d ver. 21.

† Heb. *the lifting up of their soul.*

Shall it not be? the question is to be resolved affirmatively, it shall be. *In the day;* in the day of the taking the city of Jerusalem. *When I take from them;* though Nebuchadnezzar was the means or instrument, God did act by him, who did God's work more than his own. *Their strength, &c.;* the kingdom dissolved, the king taken, city sacked, the temple burnt, which is by the following characters described, as the only thing they valued; though those particulars may be applied to sons and daughters in the close of the verse: however, it amounts to this, In that day, wherein all their public and private joys and hopes shall be destroyed in the destruction of the kingdom and their children, one that escapeth shall bring the news to the prophet.

26 *That* [e] he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause *thee* to hear *it* with *thine* ears?

e ch. 33. 21, 22.

He; so few escape, that the prophet seems to confine it to one. *That escapeth* the common destruction when Jerusalem was sacked. *Shall come unto thee,* purposely to declare how God hath made good his threats. *To cause thee to hear it;* to give thee a narrative of all he had seen and observed: and this particular prediction, which I doubt not Ezekiel imparted to many who might see it fulfilled, was accomplished in the twelfth year, tenth month, and fifth day of the month, Ezek. xxxiii. 21, with Jer. lii. 6, after the city was taken (which happened in the eleventh year, fourth month, and ninth day of Zedekiah's reign, and Jeconiah's captivity) one whole year, five months, and twenty-four days.

27 [f] In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and [g] thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

f ch. 3. 26, 27. & 29. 21. & 33. 22.

g ver. 24.

Shall thy mouth be opened, to speak freely to him that brings the news, and to the Jews afterward. *And thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb;* from this prophecy for eighteen months during the siege he doth not prophesy of Israel, but of other nations. *Thou shalt be a sign;* until the event, confirmed by eye-witness, shall convince the Jews, thou shalt by sign signify to them what is coming; and when it is come to pass according to thy word, they shall confess thou wert a true prophet sent of me, and they shall see that I am the Lord.

CHAP. XXV.

God's vengeance upon the Ammonites, 1—7, upon Moab and Seir, 7—11, upon Edom, 12—14, and upon the Philistines, for their declared malevolence to the Jews, 15—17.

THE word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

Though he had order no more yet awhile to prophesy against the Jews, he was to be dumb as to them, yet he hath commission to foretell sad tidings to other nations round about the Jews.

2 Son of man, [a] set thy face [b] against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them;

a ch. 6. 2. & 35. 2.

b Jer. 49. 1, &c. ch. 21. 28. Amos i. 13. Zeph. 2. 9.

Set thy face against: the phrase you have chap. xx. 46. It includeth anger, menaces, and intention of mind. *The Ammonites;* the posterity of Lot by the younger daughter, near neighbours, but bitter enemies to the Jews. *Prophesy against them;* leave recorded what heavy things shall befall them in after-days.

3 And say unto the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; [c] Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity;

c Prov. 17. 5. ch. 26. 2.

Say unto the Ammonites; either tell Ammonite merchants or travellers, of which some might likely be in Babylon for trade or to see its state; or else, send by letter to them of their nation who may serve in Nebuchadnezzar's camp, which was in that time a school of arms, that they may tell others; or else, so plainly declare it that in time they may know this. *Hear the word of the Lord God;* it is not the ambiguous or delusive oracle of your idols, but the plain, and true, and unfailing word of the only true God, the God of Israel, as Zeph. ii. 9. *Because thou saidst, Aha;* when thou shouldst have pitied, and been sorry, thou didst rejoice, and proudly didst insult, magnified thyself, and reproachedst my people, wert glad that so great calamities were come upon them. *Against my sanctuary;* both the temple and the worship of God: it is like, in their pride, they boasted their idols' power to preserve their temples, and blasphemed God as unable to preserve his sacred rites and worship. *When it was profaned;* when the heathen entered into, and when they burnt it. *Against the land of Israel;* they insulted on the ten tribes, the kingdom of Israel, when afflicted. *When it was desolate;* wasted by Pul and Tiglath-pileser, and captivated by Shalmaneser. *Against the land of Judah;* the two tribes, the kingdom of Judah. *When it went into captivity;* first with Jehoiakim, then with Jeconiah, and, which was worse than both these, when it was captivated with Zedekiah, and the city burnt; a most mournful sight, and at which none but inhuman, barbarous men could do less than weep, but these rejoice, and cry, Aha.

4 Behold, therefore I will deliver thee to the [†] men of the east for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee: they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk.

† Heb. *children.*

I, the God whom thou hast despised, whose people thou hast reproached, whose worship thou hast vilified, I will avenge myself, and deliver thee up. *To the men of the East;* the Medes and Persians, say some; the Babylonians, say others, but this suits not well with geography; Arabians, say others, associates of Nebuchadnezzar, who, it is likely, recompensed their labour and service with giving them this country when it was conquered, as it was five years after the desolation of Jerusalem. *For a possession;* they shall settle on it, as a very convenient country for their sheep and camels, and possess it, as their inheritance. *Set their palaces in thee:* the word *palaces* seems little to agree with Arabians, who dwelt in tents, but this manner of dwelling many of them would be ready to change, where they might to so great advantage, as in that country, which was fruitful, as this was; besides, the word signifieth, what is fenced, as Isa. ii. 15, and is paraphrased by camp, and Arabians had their munitions and fortified camps, and these they shall set here while they stay. And I add this also, that the next words explain these. *Make their dwellings in thee;* they shall set up their tents, as the word properly; their tents and habitations they would fortify in some manner or other, that in their camp they might be safe, if they did not build cities in the country. *Eat thy fruit;* the fruit of that land was once thine, of the trees thou plantedst. *Drink thy milk;* which in so fruitful land and rich pastures they had in abundance from the multitude of their kine, and it was a drink that well suited with those hot regions.

5 And I will make [d] Rabbah [e] a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couchingplace for flocks: [f] and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

d ch. 21. 20. e Is. 17. 2. & 32. 14. Zeph. 2. 14, 15

f ch. 24. 24. & 26. 6. & 35. 9.

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Rabbah; the royal city, and seat of the kings of Ammon, called since Philadelphia, from Ptolemæus Philadelphus, king of Egypt, who built it. *A stable;* turn it from a royal palace to be a receptacle of camels, and their drivers. *Camels;* wherewith not the Chaldeans and Bactrians, but the Arabians also, were well stored; all the men of the East, as appears in Job, using them for conveying merchandise, and for travels. *The Ammonites;* the people, for the land they dwelt in. *Ye shall know;* then shall you know I was as able to have defended my own people, house, and worship, as I was able to destroy your gods, your cities, and your people.

g Job 27. 23. Lam. 2. 15. Zeph. 2. 15. † Heb. *hand.* † Heb. *foot.* h ch. 36. 5. Zeph. 2. 8, 10. † Heb. *soul.*

6 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou [g]hast clapped *thine* †hands, and stamped with the †feet, and [h]rejoiced in †heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel;

Clapped thine hands; expressed thy joy in that insolent manner. *And stamped with the feet;* and added this sign of more than ordinary joy at this. *Rejoiced in heart;* it was that which affected thy heart with gladness, thy soul and mind were in this thy rejoicing. *Despite;* hatred and contempt; thou wast heartily glad such vile people, as thou countedst them, were made, what thou thoughtest they best deserved, slaves, beggars, and captives. *The land,* for the people. *Israel;* either the ten tribes, or rather the two tribes, with the small remnant of the others that kept to the house of David.

i ch. 35. 3. ‖ Or, *meat.*

7 Behold, therefore I will [i]stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for ‖a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

Thou stretchedst out thy hand in joy, *I will stretch out mine* in wrath; thou, against my people, I, against thee. *For a spoil;* for a prey, or for meat, so the word will bear. The greedy, covetous soldier shall make thy wealth his prey; the hungry enemy shall eat thee up. *The heathen;* Babylonians, and their confederates. *I will cut thee off;* explained by that follows; Ammon, thou shalt no more be accounted among the nations, but cease from being a people. *I will destroy thee;* so shalt thou be destroyed. *Thou shalt know:* see ver. 5.

k Is. 15, & 16. Jer. 48. 1, &c. Amos 2. 1. l ch. 35. 2, 5, 12.

8 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that [k]Moab and [l]Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah *is* like unto all the heathen;

Moab; the children of Lot by the elder daughter, the whole nation going under the name of the first father of them, near but evil neighbours to Israel and Judah. *Seir;* the seed of Esau, who are, Edom, Idumeans, or Seir, from the mountain where they first planted themselves; near of kin in blood, but bitter enemies to the Jews: though both here joined, yet Moab is first doomed, ver. 9—11, and Seir next, ver. 12—14. *The house of Judah;* the peculiar people of God, who had his law, temple, worship of his own appointment, among them. *Is like unto all the heathen;* are no more a select people than others; their religion no better, nor their god but as the gods of their neighbours, and they no more benefited by their worshipping of him. Thus, atheist-like, they dethrone God, and debase him to an equality with their own idols. More particularly Moab's sin is set out, Jer. xlviii.

† Heb. *shoulder of Moab.*

9 Therefore, behold, I will open the †side of Moab from the cities, from his cities *which are* on his frontiers, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim,

I will open; when the Lord will open the gates of iron, and say, The gates shall not be shut, as Isa. xlv. 1, 2, every attempt shall be easy, and his soldiers shall break through the defences, that were vainly boasted impregnable. *The side of Moab;* that part of his country, which was best fortified for the safeguard of the whole. *From the cities;* from the cities of strength, called here his, because he gloried and trusted in them, such as Har and Aroer, seated on Arnon, very strong garrisons. *On his frontiers;* or, from his frontiers, (for it is the same construction, Hebrew,) or from his outmost bounds, I will lay all open to the Chaldeans, they shall overrun it, as if it were an open country, as easily as if no fortresses to impede them. *The glory;* so the great, strong, and beautiful, or regularly built and fortified cities are ever accounted the glory of the country, and these are reckoned beside Ar and Aroer. *Beth-jeshimoth;* an ancient city, and formerly Reuben's lot, Josh. xiii. 20: its name tells you it was a fortress toward the desert, which watched, lest any should, through those wastes, make an inroad on the country. *Baal-meon;* called also Meon, and Baiith, and Beth-baal-meon, mansion-house of Baal, word for word; it was situate on the north coast of Moab, as the other on the west. *Kiriathaim;* a city, which probably consisted of two cities, or principal parts; a very strong frontier town, but not able to keep out those that God would lead in.

m ver. 4. ‖ Or, *against the children of Ammon.* n ch. 21. 32.

10 [m]Unto the men of the east ‖with the Ammonites, and will give them in possession, that the Ammonites [n]may not be remembered among the nations.

The men of the East: see ver. 4. *With;* rather *against,* and so the Hebrew, and the sense is plain; or, as our translation reads it, *with,* i. e. as I have given Ammon, so I will with them give Moab to the Chaldeans first, who will give Moab to the Arabians. *Possession:* see ver. 4. *That the Ammonites;* I suppose here is either an ellipsis, thus, that as the Ammonites should so perish, as not to be remembered, so should Moab also; or else Ammon is appellative here, and speaks the numerousness of Moab, which yet should so cease as to be forgotten.

11 And I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

I will execute; though the Chaldeans do it, it is by God's direction, and he is principal therein. *Judgments;* the judgment passed by my prophet. *They,* those brutish nations, shall know this is my hand.

o 2 Chron. 28. 17. Ps. 137. 7. Jer. 49. 7, 8, &c. ch. 35. 2, &c. Amos 1. 11. Obad. 10, &c. 1 Esd. 4. 45. † Heb. *by revenging revengement.*

12 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; [o]Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah †by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;

Edom; the Idumeans, children of Esau. *The house of Judah;* the kingdom of David after the division of the tribes, when but two remained constant to the house of David. *By taking vengeance* for the old quarrel, because Jacob got the blessing from Esau, or rather in revenging a later quarrel, which they had against Judah for the slaughter, spoil, and captivity they suffered by David's conquering sword. *Hath greatly offended;* both in the thing itself, for vengeance belongs to God; and in the manner and measures of executing it, as appears both from Psal. cxxxvii. 7, and the prophecy of Obadiah 10—15, which see, and consider.

‖ Or, *they shall fall by the sword unto Dedan.*

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; and ‖they of Dedan shall fall by the sword.

Stretch out mine hand: see ver. 7, and chap. xvi. 27. *Cut off man,* by the sword of the Chaldeans, and by other wasting evils which accompany wars, as famine, pestilence, and other diseases. *And beast;* either their cattle should be driven away by the plundering soldier, or devoured by the mighty numerous army of Nebuchadnezzar, or wasted with murrain, or all should concur to unstock their pastures. *Desolate;* a desolation, i. e. most desolate. *From Teman;* from the south, so the Chaldee paraphrase; but it is rather the name of the region, called by the name of Esau's grandson Teman, who also gave name to the metropolis of Idumea, and probably it was in the southern coast of Edom's country. *Dedan;* the Dedanites, who

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were of Abraham by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 3; and these were neighbours to Edom, on the side of Arabia, or else intermixed with the Edomites in habitation and commerce, so that it might be a city reckoned either to Edom or Arabia. From Teman to Dedan the Chaldean sword should waste all.

p See Is. 11. 14. Jer 49. 2. 1 Mac. 5. 3. 2 Mac. 10. 16, 17.

14 And [p]I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord GOD.

I will lay my vengeance upon Edom; which as it is great, so just, sure, and opportune, their foot slideth in due time, Deut. xxxii. 35. *By the hand of my people Israel:* no history mentions the fulfilling of this, as it sounds in the letter of it, unless 1 Macc. v. 3, and 2 Macc. x. 16, 17; some therefore interpret, *by the hand*, by *the same hand*, that I used in punishing my people Israel; others refer it to a spiritual meaning, as Isa. xi. 14; Jer. xlix. 2; Obad. 21. *They;* the instruments God used, whether Maccabees in after-times, or the Chaldeans in that present age. *Shall do in Edom according to my anger;* my just displeasure, as it set them on work, shall give them their strength and measures; they shall do as much as I intended against Edom. *And according to my fury;* redoubled to affect the more, and confirm the prediction. *They shall know my vengeance;* both Edom, my people, and those I employ, shall see this was my quarrel, which I threatened to revenge, and now have done it, and Edom shall know I am not like their gods, though they said so, ver. 8.

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q Jer. 25. 20. & 47. 1, &c. Joel 3. 4, &c. Amos 1. 6. r 2 Chron. 28. 18. ‖ Or, with perpetual hatred.

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; [q]Because [r]the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy *it* ‖ for the old hatred;

The Philistines; next neighbours to the Jews, between whom many quarrels, wars, and mutual spoil, slaughter, and injuries happened, as ever among borderers, who make all their own they can catch. *Have dealt by revenge;* took the opportunity to revenge themselves when the Jews were weak and low. *With a despiteful heart;* with hatred to them, and contempt of them. *To destroy it for the old hatred:* this tells us what their hatred appeared in, it was a hatred to the name and being of Israel, they would cut them off, as Psal. lxxxiii. 7, with a perpetuated, endless enmity pursuing them.

16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, [s]I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the [t]Cherethims, [u]and destroy the remnant of the ‖ sea coasts.

s Zeph. 2. 4, &c. t 1 Sam. 30. 14. u Jer. 47. 4. ‖ Or, haven of the sea.

The Cherethims; either a name for all the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxx. 14, or else the principal soldiers, expert bowmen, the strength of Philistia. *The remnant*, which had escaped the sword of Samuel, David, Hezekiah, and of Psammeticus king of Egypt. *Of the sea-coast;* the Mediterranean about Azotus.

x ch. 5. 15. † Heb. vengeances. y Ps. 9. 16.

17 And I will [x]execute great †vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; [y]and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

This verse is a confirmation of all spoken against the Philistines, and is in all the particulars explained in what went before. *Vengeance;* great for measure, and many for number, *vengeances*, as the Hebrew. *With furious rebukes;* in fierceness of anger, and without pity. They, as other stupid nations, will not see till they feel, and then they shall confess it is the hand of an angry, but just, and mighty God.

CHAP. XXVI.

Tyrus, for insulting over the distress of Jerusalem, is threatened with destruction, 1—6: *of which Nebuchadrezzar shall be made the instrument,* 7—14. *The consternation and mourning of the isles and princes of the sea for her fall,* 15—21.

AND it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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The eleventh year of Jeconiah's captivity, the year wherein Jerusalem was taken. *The first day of the month;* that month which followed the taking of Jerusalem, i. e. the fifth month; for Jerusalem was taken on the fourth month, ninth day, and in twenty days after the news was brought to Tyrus, which behaved herself as the prophet will declare.

2 Son of man, [a]because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, [b]Aha, she is broken *that was* the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, *now* she is laid waste:

a Is. 23. Jer. 25. 22. & 47. 4. Amos 1. 9. Zech. 9. 2. b ch. 25. 3. & 36. 2.

Tyrus; the city for the people; it is probable it was a universal joy, therefore ascribed to the whole city, built on a rock and island of the same name, not far distant from the continent, a very great traded port and city. *Hath said;* either God revealed this to the prophet so soon as these insulting Tyrians spoke it, or else Ezekiel speaks of it prophetically, and as if it were done. *Said against Jerusalem, Aha;* showed great joy at the fall of Jerusalem, and triumphed over her. *She is broken* by Nebuchadnezzar's army. *The gates of the people;* near to the gates of the cities were usually the great merchants, and so here Jerusalem is called the great mart of nations and people from all parts resorting to her for trade or religion. *She is turned unto me;* trading interest will turn to me, they that did carry merchandise to Jerusalem will now bring it to me. *I shall be replenished;* have full trade, my haven full of ships, streets full of buyers and sellers, shops full of wares, houses full of lodgers, and purses full of money. *She is laid waste;* she reflected on wasted Jerusalem with joy, which was impious, injurious, and inhuman, to rejoice in the ruin of her neighbour.

3 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.

I am against thee; and if God be against them, they will soon have enemies enough too against them: God purposeth, threateneth, and assureth them he is and will be against them. *Many nations*, for number, and mighty for strength, riches, authority, and feats of war already done. *As the sea causeth his waves to come up*, with such violence, constancy, swelling in height, and making thee fear the issue, so shall the Babylonians come.

4 And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and [c]make her like the top of a rock.

c ver. 14.

Destroy; batter and demolish with their mighty engines, which shall shake, disjoint, and beat down the strongest parts of their walls. *Break down;* undermine, that they may tumble at once, or employ hands to take them down, as men pull down buildings. *Towers;* watch-towers, and those that were for defence and safety of their city, which from their greatness have their name, Migdol. *I will also scrape her dust from her;* I will leave thee nothing, thou shalt be scraped, and brushed, and swept, that not so much as dust shall remain to thee. *And make her like the top of a rock;* as bare as was the rock on which thy city is built before wealth, beauty, buildings, and strength was brought to it by man's industry.

5 It shall be *a place for* the spreading of nets [d]in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord GOD: and it shall become a spoil to the nations.

d ch. 27. 32.

As barren sandy islets in the midst of the sea, good for nothing but to dry fishermen's nets, shalt thou be. *A*

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spoil; a prey: though the contexture of the words place this after its being made so bare and poor, yet we are to observe, that these last words give us account how this poverty and barrenness shall come upon thy rich city; the nations shall spoil her with thirteen years' long siege, interruption of trade, living on the quick stock, and finally taken on surrender. *To the nations;* Babylonians, and their confederates, who made the Tyrians pay the reckoning.

6 And her daughters which *are* in the
e ch. 25. 5. field shall be slain by the sword; [e]and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Her daughters; either the lesser cities, which were as daughters to Tyre, a phrase most familiar to the Scriptures; or else their virgins, and daughters of the family. *In the field;* on the firm land, if you mean cities; or surprised in the fields, whether taking the air, or seeking to escape, if you mean *daughters* in the latter sense. *Shall be slain by the sword;* barbarous soldiers shall spare none. *They shall know that I am the Lord:* see chap. xxv. 17.

7 ¶ For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchad-
f Ezra 7. 12. Dan. 2. 37. rezzar king of Babylon, [f]a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people.

I will bring: see chap. xxiii. 46. *A king of kings;* so he styled himself, according to the vaunting manner of those countries, and indeed, by the right of conquest, he was king of kings, having many tributary kings under him, and many captive kings with him in Babylon, 2 Kings xviii. 28; Jer. lii. 32. *From the north;* so was Babylon accounted to lie, as observed, chap. i. 4, though it did not lie full north, but had some points of the north from Tyre. *With horses;* those Eastern kings had store of horses, and used many in their wars: see ver. 11. *With chariots:* see chap. xxiii. 24. *With horsemen:* see chap. xxiii. 12. *And companies;* an assembly of all sorts, from all parts of the large kingdom of Babylon. *And much people;* a mighty army for fighting, and mighty train of hangers-on, who were ready enough to do mischief to the country, though not very fit to assist the army; if need required, these would sweep all before them wherever they came.

8 He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall
g ch. 21. 22. ‖ Or, pour out the engine of shot. [g]make a fort against thee, and ‖ cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee.

See ver. 6. *Make a fort against thee:* see chap. iv. 2; xvii. 17. *Cast a mount against thee:* he shall draw a line round about thee, and build bastions, raise sconces to defend the lines, to keep in the besieged, and secure the besiegers; or he shall pour out the shot, mighty stones or the like, out of the engines framed and placed on the forts before mentioned; for so did they of old build mighty wooden towers, and there placed engines, out of which they could fling mighty stones or darts against the besieged, who were much annoyed from these high towers, overlooking their walls and streets that none could stir out. *Lift up the buckler:* see chap. xxiii. 24.

9 And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers.

Engines of war: these were mighty engines, whatever form made of, and had their description here from the irresistible force wherewith they cast stones, and beat down all before them. *Axes;* whatever made of iron, and framed to demolish buildings: see chap. xvi. 39.

10 By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the
† Heb. according to the entrings of a city broken up. chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, †as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach.

Their dust; the dust they raise in marching, or in their exercising, in riding to and fro; but whether while on the land, or when they entered the city, may be doubted. *Shall cover thee;* as a cloud it shall cover the city. *Shall shake,* as buildings do with great noise, motion, or beating on the ground. *The wheels,* of their engines, or wagons, or chariots. *He shall enter into thy gates;* Nebuchadnezzar, without fear, shall enter and possess his conquest, which Tyre at last yielded to him after thirteen years' hard siege. *Wherein is made a breach;* whose walls battered and levelled, there is nothing left to defend the citizens, who therefore yield, or defend the besieger, who therefore fearless entereth.

11 With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground.

In proud, stately, and menacing posture shall the king of Babylon ride through all the streets of thy city, to the grief and sorrow of the Tyrians; and so shall his troops do too. *He shall slay thy people;* in the wars some of thy people shall fall by his sword; but that is no wonder; I rather think that it is meant of giving judgment against some of the most valiant, constant, and active citizens, which were the cause of the city's holding out so long against Nebuchadnezzar, as he did with some of the nobles of Jerusalem. *Strong garrisons;* bastions, or forts about the city, or triumphal arches built by Tyrians, or statues erected in honour to some eminent citizens, or to the kings of Egypt, their ancient allies, enemies to the Chaldeans; or the statues of their gods Hercules and Apollo chained, that neither in ill nature and angry, nor yet charmed with other men's songs, should depart, and leave their pupils without a guard. *Shall go down to the ground;* shall be all cast down together.

12 And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy †thy pleasant houses: † Heb. houses of thy desire. and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.

They; Chaldean soldiers. *Make a spoil;* hinder thy trade during the war, and plunder thee in the end of the war. *Make a prey of thy merchandise;* intercepting much, as it is coming to thee whilst besieged, and taking what they find, when they conquer. *Break down thy walls:* see ver. 4, 9; there he speaks of the walls of the city, here of the walls of private houses, as appears by that which follows. *Pleasant houses,* that the Tyrians dwelt in with delight, or diverted themselves in as houses of pleasure; summer-houses. *Lay thy stones, &c. in the midst of the water:* it had been a quicker and easier way to have burnt all, but it is like the greedy soldier might dream of treasure hid in walls or under the timber, and therefore they take the pains to pull all down, and throw it into the sea; the very dust too. Thus God fulfils his word, and scraped Tyrus.

13 [h]And I will cause the noise of [i]thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. h Is. 14. 11. & 24. 8. Jer. 7. 34. & 16. 9. & 25. 10. i Is. 23. 16. ch. 28. 13. Rev. 18. 22.

A populous, wealthy, ancient, and much frequented city, in the midst of great security, no doubt, had all sorts of music, and loud music on the water especially, and songs to their music; but God will dash it all. *The sound of thy harps:* this particular music mentioned as one of the noblest, and most in request, but no more shall be heard in Tyre after it is taken by Nebuchadnezzar.

14 And [k]I will make thee like the top k ver. 4, 5. of a rock: thou shalt be *a place* to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken *it,* saith the Lord GOD.

See ver. 4, 5. *Thou shalt be built no more;* either not this long time, or else not built in greatness and glory, or not raised to be a kingdom, or not by the inhabitants of old Tyre, or not with the same laws, customs, and usages; indeed, though there was a city of that name built, yet it was

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built on the continent, and in propriety of speech was another city, not old Tyre.

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD to Tyrus; Shall not the isles [l]shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee?

[l] Jer. 49. 21. ver. 18. ch. 27. 28. & 31. 16.

Isles, which are places freest from the danger of invasions, and in those days thought themselves safe, will think themselves in danger, and shake with fear, when they hear that Tyre is fallen; it will amaze and fright them all, when they hear thy men were wounded and slain in the midst of thee who dwellest in the sea.

16 Then all the [m]princes of the sea shall [n]come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with † trembling; [o]they shall sit upon the ground, and [p]shall tremble at *every* moment, and [q]be astonished at thee.

m Is. 23. 8.
n Jonah 3. 6.
† Heb. *tremblings.*
o Job 2. 13.
p ch. 32. 10.
q ch. 27. 35.

The princes of the sea; who were lords of the islands in that sea, and who traded with Tyrus, and there were many such; or sea commanders, who, in their wooden world, are so many petty princes; but rather the former, the crowned heads whose kingdoms were so many islands. *Come down from their thrones*, in token of sadness and condolence. *Lay away their robes*, as further sign of grief. *Put off their broidered garments:* this is added also to show how greatly they were affected with sorrow at this sad fall of their ally and friend. *Clothe themselves with trembling:* this laying aside of their gallantry shall not be in compliment, as now in such cases of condolence, but they shall be heartily afraid of their own concerns, and astonished in the midst of their fears.

17 And they shall take up a [r]lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, *that wast* inhabited † of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast [s]strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror *to be* on all that haunt it!

r ch. 27. 32. Rev. 18. 9.
† Heb. *of the seas.*
s Is. 23. 4.

They; the princes of the sea, ver. 16. *Take up a lamentation for thee;* solemnly, heartily, and for many days bewail thee. *Say to thee*, by a prosopopœia, or fiction of persons, personate a dismal, sorrowful congress with fallen Tyre. *How art thou destroyed!* Alas, is it so? Can it be true? How is it that thou art destroyed, who hadst so many friends, so much riches, &c.? *The renowned city;* for thy strength, wealth, and wisdom. *Wast strong;* strong indeed, and thought impregnable. *Cause their terror to be on all that haunt it:* who durst set on thee, who overawedst all the bold adventurers at sea?

18 Now shall [t]the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that *are* in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.

t ver. 15.

The isles; or ships; so it might be rendered; whether one or other, it is the thing for the men, as *isles* for islanders, or *ships* for mariners. *Tremble in the day of thy fall;* apprehending that nothing can stand if Tyre fall, and that they are in danger too. *In the sea;* at great distance, and farther from land. *Troubled;* grieved and perplexed. *At thy departure;* leaving thy ancient dwelling, which from eldest ages thy people had enjoyed with liberty, to go into captivity.

19 For thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee;

Shall make thee a desolate city; have made thee what now I threaten I will make thee. *Like the cities that are not inhabited;* in the same state with cities that have not any to dwell in them, whose walls are broken down, and into whose streets all solitary wild beasts may come at pleasure. *The deep;* figuratively, Nebuchadnezzar's army; literally, when thy walls and ramparts are so broken down by the Chaldeans, that the sea, at high tides, and in stormy swelling seas, overflows part of thine ancient seat. *Great waters;* either literally, as the deep coming up; or metaphorically, great afflictions shall flow over thee.

20 When I shall bring thee down [u]with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory [x]in the land of the living;

u ch. 32. 18, 24.
x ch. 32. 23, 26, 27, 32.

Bring thee down; destroy thee, slay thee, and bury thee, throw thee into the grave. *The people of old time;* who are long since dead, and gone to eternity, the people of eternity. *In the low parts of the earth;* another description of the grave, from the situation, and from the solitudes or desolation of it. In brief, when Tyre, as a dead man, shall be buried, forgotten and perish utterly, and my hand hath done it, then it shall be known my hand hath avenged and punished all her insolence, inhumanity, and covetousness that she discovered when she rejoiced at Jerusalem's fall. *Shall set glory;* restore the beauty, strength, wealth of Israel, bring them back to Jerusalem, to worship in a rebuilt temple, where they shall enjoy me. *The land of the living;* the land of Judea, called *land of the living*, because a land where God will bless and give life by his word, ordinances, and Spirit: thus different shall Tyre's captivity and Jerusalem's be.

21 [y]I will make thee †a terror, and thou *shalt be* no *more:* [z]though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord GOD.

y ch. 27. 36. & 28. 19.
† Heb. *terrors.*
z Ps. 37. 36.

A terror, or consumption; I will utterly consume thee; with more than one kind of destruction will I destroy thee, and make thee thereby a terror to all that hear the bruit of thee. *Thou shalt be no more:* see ver. 14. If any will be so curious as to inquire, if they come to seek out the footsteps of this ancient Tyre, they shall lose their labour, no signs of it on the rock where once it stood. Rich, populous, potent, wise, renowned Tyre, as once thou wast, shalt never more be found; and, alas, that which is now on the continent is not fit to bear its name, much less to be counted the same city.

CHAP. XXVII.

The riches and large commerce of Tyre, 1—25. *Her great and irrecoverable fall,* 26—36.

THE word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

2 Now, thou son of man, [a]take up a lamentation for Tyrus;

a ch. 19. 1. & 26. 17. & 28. 12. & 32. 2.

Pen a mournful narrative of Tyre's fall, tell the world what she was, and what she is come to; both city and citizens too.

3 And say unto Tyrus, [b]O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, *which art* [c]a merchant of the people for many isles, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O Tyrus, thou hast said, [d]I *am* †of perfect beauty.

b ch. 26. 2.
c Is. 23. 3.
d ch. 28. 12.
† Heb. *perfect of beauty.*

Personate Tyre as near thee, and hearing what thou sayest unto or of her; describe her, that she may know thou speakest to her. *That art situate;* that dwellest, so the Hebrew. *The entry*, Heb. *entrances*, she was but four furlongs, or five hundred paces, or half our English mile, from the continent, as it were in the very door of the sea, far enough off to have convenient harbours between her and the continent, and to be out of danger of sudden or easy surprises. *A merchant;* a rich and populous emporium or mart for all commodities, either to vend or buy to islanders, or those that dwell on firm land. *Thou hast said;* in thy riches, strength, alliances, and trade, thou art grown proud, thou hast thought and said too a great deal more than becomes a changeable state.

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I am of perfect beauty: thou hast boasted of the excellency of thy government, the strength of thy city, the inaccessibleness of thy situation, nearness, strength, and obligations of thy allies, and as if nothing were wanting to perpetuate thy glory and happiness, poor self-flattering Tyre! But let us view particulars.

† Heb. *heart.*

4 Thy borders *are* in the †midst of the seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty.

Weak borders, which an enemy easily breaks through, are a great defect in a state; well, Tyre, thou art well secured here, thine are in the sea that surrounds and secureth thee. *Thy builders;* thy first founders, whoever they were; Agenor king of Phœnice chose wisely to build a city in safety: or by builders may be meant those who in after-times did add to the first foundation: these were masters of their art, and added this to the natural strength and beauty of the place; thus thou art perfected at home.

† Heb. *built.*

e Deut. 3. 9.

5 They have †made all thy *ship* boards of fir trees of eSenir: they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make masts for thee.

They; thy shipwrights. *Ship-boards;* the planks, and benches, or transoms, for their ships. *Of fir trees;* of the best and finest fir trees *of Senir*, i. e. Hermon, Deut. iii. 9. *Cedars*, for height, strength, durableness, and pleasing smell, beside smoothness of grain, and fitness for curious carvings, the best of trees. *From Lebanon*, whose cedars excelled others.

‖ Or, *they have made thy hatches of ivory well trodden.* † Heb. *the daughter.* f Jer. 2. 10.

6 *Of* the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars; ‖†the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches *of* ivory, *brought* out of fthe isles of Chittim.

Oaks; of pines, say some; of chesnut-trees, say others: but, since oaks, and those of Bashan, are famous in sacred dendrology, I know not why we should not keep to our own version, since the primary notation of the Hebrew leads us to it. *The company of the Ashurites:* as we read these words, there arise many difficulties in the expounding them. If the conjecture of the learned Bochart be well considered, it will seem very probable the words would be better rendered thus; Thy benches they have made of ivory, with box brought out, &c. For the isles of Chittim afforded many and large box trees, whereas ivory, or the elephant's tooth, we know, is the merchandise of other countries, and the elephant a foreigner to all the parts of Europe; nor are the teeth of elephants of that largeness to afford breadth for seats and benches; nor shall we find any such company of Ashurites, if we inquire for them. I shall therefore subscribe to that learned man in the opinion, that here are two words read divided, and by mistake translated as divided words, which ought to have been read in one word, and so translated as it is in Isa. xli. 19, where we translate תאשרים *box;* then all is plain, and the sense this, That from the isles, and parts about the Ionian, Ægean, and other seas of the Mediterranean, where this box tree is a native, as in Corsica, Apulia, &c., and of great growth and firmness, fit to saw into boards for benches, they were conveyed to Tyrus, where their artists inlaid these box boards with ivory, and made them beautiful seats in their galleys and ships.

בת אשרים vox hæc una est, quamvis divisim scribatur, ut alibi non nullæ. Jer. 46. 20. et alibi legendum בתאשרים ex buxis.

7 Fine linen with broidered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail; ‖blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee.

‖ Or, *purple and scarlet.*

Fine linen; whereas thrift teaches us to use the coarse linen for like purposes, these prodigal Tyrians used the finest silken sails, as we may render the words. *With broidered work;* divers figures, curiously drawn with the needle in this fine linen, which made exceeding costly sails; yet pride and wantonness in some of them went to the charges of it. *From Egypt;* where was much of this fine linen, and many of these neat embroiderers. *Blue*, or violet colour, and purple; both rich and noble colours: the garments of great men and princes were made hereof, Gen. xli. 42; Prov. xxxi. 22; see chap. xvi. 10. *From the isles of Elishah;* either from the sea-coast of Æolis in the Lesser Asia, the inhabitants whereof were excellent in the skill of dying wool; or from Peloponnesus, in which is one country called Elis, famous for fine linen, and about the mouth of the river Eurotas. The fishing for the purple fish was famously known, so that it might be this place beside the isles of the Ægean and Cretian seas, as Coa, Nysirus, (called from its purples Porphyris,) Cythera, and the Cyclades, which are many; some twelve of better note we might name, as now called Andro, Pario, Zea, Sdilli, Micoli, &c. *That which covered thee:* he speaks not here of garments, but of the coverings they used in their ships or galleys. Their tilts, as our boatmen call them, the clothes they spread over their heads on ship-board, to keep them from sun and weather, were such as befitted kings and princes for costliness and beauty.

8 The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners: thy wise *men*, O Tyrus, *that* were in thee, were thy pilots.

Zidon; an ancient town and haven of Phœnicia, not far from Tyre. *Arvad;* better known by its other name Aradus, an island belonging to Phœnicia, some say twenty, others say seven, furlongs from the continent. *Thy mariners;* rowers in thy galleys: the rich Tyrians would not employ their own in such servile works, they hired strangers. These Zidonians and Arvadeans, or Aradins, once thy equals, thou hast now outstripped, and makest thy servants, with pride enough. *Thy wise men;* thy learned men; for navigation was the great study of the Tyrians, and who were best skilled in this were the learned or wise men among them, whom they had of their own, and trusted to be pilots, which employment carried honour in it to suit the proud humour of the Tyrians.

g 1 Kings 5. 18. Ps. 83. 7.

9 The ancients of gGebal and the wise *men* thereof were in thee thy ‖†calkers: all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to occupy thy merchandise.

‖ Or, *stoppers of chinks.* † Heb. *strengthener*

The ancients; old experienced workmen. *Of Gebal;* a town of Phœnicia near the sea, one of the four principal towns, to which belonged a jurisdiction over a fourth part of Phœnicia, mentioned Psal. lxxxiii. 7, among the conspirators against Israel and the Giblites, 1 Kings v. 18. Natives of Gebal are called stone-squarers, people fitted for hard and servile works. *The wise men;* skilful in their trades. *Were in thee;* hired and dwelt in Tyre for gain's sake, that they might be still employed. *Calkers;* shipwrights, to build no doubt, as well as repair and strengthen, their ships. *All the ships of the sea;* ships from all parts of the sea, full of mariners, not only to manage the ships at sea, but to offer their service to the Tyrians for bringing in or carrying out of their wares, so that they might reap the profit, whilst others did undergo trouble and danger of trafficking by sea; factors, and warehouse-keepers, and brokers.

h Jer. 46. 9. ch. 30. 5. & 38. 5.

10 They of Persia and of Lud and of hPhut were in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield and helmet in thee; they set forth thy comeliness.

They of Persia; Persians, excellent archers. *Of Lud;* Lydians; not those Crœsus was king over, but those that dwelt in Egypt about the lake Marcotis, or higher towards Ethiopia, if they were not of that country, Ethiopians themselves. *Of Phut;* Libyans, a people of Africa; these were the hired soldiers, and ever served in their army under Tyrian commanders. *Men of war;* stationary soldiers in time of peace, and who were sent out by sea or land as occasion required in a time of war. *They hanged the shield*, in time of peace; or might they not, so often as they came off the guard, bring each man his armour, and hang it up in the public armoury? *The shield*, which defended the body, *and helmet*, which covered the head. *They set forth thy comeliness;* these stout, expert, well-armed guards were an honour to the state they served, and their arsenal especially did prove the gallantry of this Tyrian state.

11 The men of Arvad with thine army *were* upon thy walls round about, and the Gammadims

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were in thy towers: they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about; they
i ver. 3. have made [i]thy beauty perfect.

Arvad: see ver. 8. *With thine army;* mixed with other hired soldiers, made up these military forces. *Upon thy walls round about;* kept guard upon the walls. *The Gammadims;* some say pigmies or dwarfs, because the Hebrew word is a cubit; but the whole story of such cubit-men is fabulous. Others think it is men bold and courageous, and the word of Syriac origin and sense, and so fitly expressing the temper of Syrian or Syrophœnician soldiers. Or else, the men who came from Gammade, a town of Phœnicia. Or possibly, such as came from Ancon, another town of Phœnice; and this town had its name from its situation on a piece of land that resembles the cubit, Greek, Ἀγκών, and in the Hebrew, גומד *In thy towers;* which were many, erected for strength and defence. *Hanged their shields upon thy walls:* by this it appears these towers were also public armories, whence they fetched arms when needful, and where they laid them up when no further use of them. *Made thy beauty perfect;* added much to her beauty, a well-armed state being among states as beautiful as a proper well-armed soldier among men.

k Gen. 10. 4. 2 Chron. 20. 36. 12 [k]Tarshish *was* thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all *kind of* riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs.

Tarshish; the city or country for the inhabitants; some say Carthaginians, others Tarsus in Cilicia; others with more probability say it is Tartessus, an ancient town on the mouth of the river Bætis; or rather, over against it, in an island, (where Gades, now Cadiz,) a convenient port to export the rich metals that were brought down the Bætis from the country abounding with them, and through which their Bætis ran, and the inhabitants of this Tartessus furnished the Tyrians with them. Spain was full of *silver* and *iron;* these were the product of the country. *Tin;* it is probable they fetched this from some islands over against the Spanish coast, called Cassiterides, one of which a late geographer names Zigarga. *Lead* they had from the same place, and carried all to Tyre, and sold it to them; for they kept market, and traded in the fairs of Tyre. At this day our own country is most noted for tin and lead, which some say was fetched by the Phœnicians; if so, for aught I see to the contrary, the Tartessians, who were a people before ever the Tyrians came into those parts, might first trade here, and fetch it hence, and carry it to Tyre, the voyage being neither long or dangerous enough between that island and our Cornwall, to render the thing difficult or the conjecture improbable.

Joh. Jacobus Hofmannus in Lexico. Univ. in verbo Cassiterides.

l Gen. 10. 2. 13 [l]Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they
m Rev. 18. 13. *were* thy merchants: they traded [m]the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy
‖ Or, *merchandise.* ‖market.

Javan; the Grecians, particularly the Ionians. *Tubal;* the Asiatic Iberians, &c.; the Albanians toward the Caspian Sea. *Meshech;* the Cappadocians, with the Moschi, who dwelt about Cholcis, the country now called Mingrelia. *Traded the persons of men;* brought men to sell for slaves, so the Greeks did; the (Mancipia Ionica) Ionian slaves were known and valued in the East, especially the handsome girls to wait on great ladies. The too great desire hereof in Atossa, Darius's queen, is said to be the chief cause of his war on Greece. And as to the other, beside their servile inclinations, they were so barbarous and inhuman, and had opportunities to seize men, women, and children to sell them, that no doubt the market of Tyre was full of them. *Brass;* of which metal there was great store, they say, in Cappadocia and Iberia, which they brought with them.

n Gen. 10. 3. ch. 38. 6. 14 They of the house of [n]Togarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and mules.

Of the house; of the country. *Togarmah;* Armenia the Lesser, or Phrygia, Galatia, or Cappadocia, or Paphlagonia; all which countries, as they are neighbours to each other, so they abounded in horses; and as they had many for number, so they had good for quality, and furnished their neighbours; it is reported the Cappadocians paid two thousand horses yearly tribute to the Persians. And as they bordered on each other, it is likely they might be reckoned thus together. *Horsemen;* it is like with either many horses, or some choice ones, which they sold, they might sell their grooms, as best able to manage and keep those horses. *Mules;* the countries above mentioned, especially Cappadocia, had many mules, which they sold to their neighbours. *Mules,* which are a mixed creature of a mare and he-ass.

15 The men of [o]Dedan *were* thy mer- o Gen. 10. 7.
chants; many isles *were* the merchandise of thine hand: they brought thee *for* a present horns of ivory and ebony.

Dedan: see chap. xxv. 13. This Dedan was in Arabia, built by Dedan the son of Regma, not far from the Persian Gulf, and now called Daden, whence through the Red Sea they might convey their own merchandise. *Many isles,* in the Indian Seas and in the Red Sea, traded with thee. *For a present;* knowing how acceptable they were to get thy favour, they either made presents, and gave these things, or brought them to sell. *Horns;* elks' horns, or wild goats'; some think it is meant of the unicorn, but the first is likeliest. *Ivory;* ivory, not *of,* the Hebrew is not in *regimen,* but in *apposition,* and should be read, They brought thee presents, horns, ivory, and ebony, which is a very solid, heavy, shining, and black wood, fit for many choice works.

16 Syria *was* thy merchant by reason of the multitude of †the wares of thy + Heb. *thy works.*
making: they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds, purple, and broidered work, and fine linen, and coral, and †agate. + Heb. *chrysoprase.*

The multitude of the wares of thy making; the abundance of the Tyrian manufacture for all uses, which the Syrians could have no where else. *With emeralds;* rather, for emeralds, a rich and lovely stone; or carbuncles, as others have it. *Purple,* or violet-coloured, clothes. *Broidered work:* see ver. 7. *Fine linen:* see. ver. 7. *Coral;* men guess this may be rubies, carbuncles, or chalcedonies; or crystal, with which they made looking-glasses. *Agate;* a stone well known to us, but not so well known whether it exactly translate the Hebrew כרכד here used; some say it is the chrysoprase, a stone mixed with gold colour and green, and some such mixture may be seen in some agates.

17 Judah, and the land of Israel, they p 1 Kings 5. 9, 11. Ezra 3. 7. Acts 12. 20.
were thy merchants: they traded in thy market [p]wheat of [q]Minnith, and Pannag, q Judg. 11. 33.
and honey, and oil, and [r]‖balm. r Jer. 8. 22. ‖ Or, *rosin.*

Judah; the two tribes, or kingdom of Judah. *The land of Israel;* the kingdom of Israel, or the ten tribes until their dispersion. *Minnith;* the name of some rich and excellent wheat country; it is mentioned in Judg. xi. 33, on occasion of Jephthah's slaying the Ammonites, as lying on their borders, and it is said there is a town of that name still in being about four miles from Esbus, (or Sabasant as now called,) in the way toward Philadelphia, formerly Rabbath. *Pannag:* some doubt whether this be a proper name of any country or region, but if it is, they conclude it must be Phœnicia, but do not tell us how Judah and Israel should trade their wheat in Tyre market; it may be it was some more obscure place, which now is forgotten. *Honey;* with which Canaan flowed. *Oil;* in making and selling whereof the labour, care, and profit of that country did lie. *Balm;* the choicest balms were those of Gilead, whence it is probable it was carried to Tyre; or it may be it was *rosin,* of which they had great use. The Chaldee paraphrast interprets it by the word that denotes wax, and so it may possibly be a good commodity in Tyre.

18 Damascus *was* thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, for the multitude of all riches; in the wine of Helbon, and white wool.

Damascus; a very ancient and wealthy city of Syria, and the royal city. *The wares of thy making:* see the

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phrase ver. 16. *For the multitude of all riches:* though the Tyrians had many rich and lovely commodities, yet it pleased the Damascenes to bring chiefly two of their commodities in exchange, richest wines to please the palate of the luxurious Tyrians, and finest wool to clothe their pride. *Helbon:* this place I meet no where else; Ptolemy hath Chalibonis in Syria, perhaps that may be it. Others, to save trouble, make it a common name; sweet, or smooth, or fat wine; for *Helbon* comes from a word that signifies fat.

‖ Or, *Meuzal.*

19 Dan also and Javan ‖going to and fro occupied in thy fairs: bright iron, cassia, and calamus, were in thy market.

If it were the tribe of Dan, it must be understood of a time before the captivity of the ten tribes; but there is a learned man tells us of Dana a city of Taprobana, or the island Zeilan mentioned by Ptolemy, and this learned man will have this meant. *Javan;* not Javan or Greece, saith that learned man, but another Javan in the isle Meroe in remote parts of Egypt, where is a principal town Uzal, or Asel, from whence these merchants came, and therefore styled Javan of Uzal, or Javan Meuzal. And if the cassia or calamus, mentioned in the verse, were the wares brought in by the Danites and Javanites, I should go as far as Meroe and Taprobana to send them; but if the cassia and calamus were brought up at Tyre, I would believe they lived nearer, that they were Grecian pedlars, or in a northern dialect merchants, that bought them, and were meant in the text. *Bright iron;* polished, as we see now an art, which so much betters the common sort of iron, and refines it, that it is of great value. *Cassia and calamus* are sweet drugs.

[a] Gen. 25. 3. † Heb. *clothes of freedom.*

20 [a] Dedan *was* thy merchant in † precious clothes for chariots.

Dedan, the posterity of Abraham by Keturah, who dwelt in Arabia, and were sheep-masters, and no doubt knew how to make fine clothes of their wool. *Precious clothes*, with which they lined their chariots, and covered them; also they used them for saddle-cloths, &c.

[t] Gen. 25. 13. Is. 60. 7. † Heb. *they were the merchants of thy hand.*

21 Arabia, and all the princes of [t] Kedar, † they occupied with thee in lambs, and rams, and goats: in these *were they* thy merchants.

Arabia; a large country, and distinguished into Desert, or sandy, which cannot keep an honest man, but affords thieves enough; next the Stony, or Petræa, which afforded good pasturage for sheep and goats; and the third Felix, or happy, most remote from Tyre. *The princes;* for there were many such among those Kedarens, or Scenites, who dwelt in tents, bred and fed cattle, and carried them to Tyre market; furnished the shambles at Tyre, and their altars too for sacrifices.

[u] Gen. 10. 7. 1 Kin. 10. 1, 2. Ps. 72. 10, 15. Is. 60. 6.

22 The merchants of [u] Sheba and Raamah, they *were* thy merchants: they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold.

Sheba; a country in Arabia Felix, whence the queen came that visited Solomon. *Raamah;* it is read Rhegma by change of ר into G, as in Gomorrah, another people of the same Arabia. This Rhegma, brother to Sheba, settled near him in that fruitful land, and built towns there, and grew to fame. *Chief of all spices:* this country affords all sorts of the best aromatics, or spices, which were carried to Tyre. *All precious stones*, rich jewels of all sorts, *and gold* too.

[x] Gen. 11. 31. 2 Kin. 19. 12. [y] Gen. 25. 3.

23 [x] Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of [y] Sheba, Asshur, *and* Chilmad, *were* thy merchants.

Haran; Haran or Charran in Mesopotamia, where Abraham dwelt. *Canneh;* no where else mentioned, supposed to be the same with Calneh, Gen. x. 10, afterwards Ctesiphon, a pleasant city on Tigris, some three miles from Seleucia. It was built by the Parthians, whose king resided there in the winter, because of the mildness of the air. *Eden;* a pleasant country, part of Babylonia. The Chaldee paraphrase calls it Hadiab, and leads us to Adiabene, which Trajan conquered in his expedition against Babylon. *Sheba;* whether the same mentioned ver. 22, (which see,) or some other, is not certain; perhaps it may be Saba, whence Sabeans. *Asshur;* Asshur, the name of the father of the nation, for Assyria. *Chilmad;* a country or part of Media, between Assyria and Parthia, most likely to be Gaala of Media.

‖ Or, *excellent things.* † Heb. *foldings.*

24 These *were* thy merchants in ‖all sorts *of things*, in blue † clothes, and broidered work, and in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise.

These, either last named, or all that have been mentioned, though I conjecture the first is the true meaning, those rich, stately, and sumptuous nations traded with Tyre. *All sorts of things*, of rich, precious things. *Blue clothes*, which those nations delighted in, especially the Chaldeans and Assyrians, chap. xxiii. 6. *Broidered work;* bought of Egyptians, sold to Assyrians, &c. *Chests* of cedar, curious yet strong, made on purpose to carry sumptuous apparel, bought up at Tyre, and in those chests conveyed to all parts of the Assyrian empire, and to the northern nations. *Bound with cords;* it may refer to the chests mentioned, or to other sort of rich wares neatly made up, and bound for security with cords. *Among thy merchandise:* by this it should seem these chests were not like our ordinary boxes, but as choice cabinets, and good merchandise.

[z] Ps. 48. 7. Is. 2. 16. & 23. 14.

25 [z] The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious [a] in the midst of the seas.

[a] ver. 4.

Ships of Tarshish; the ships from all parts of the sea, which came to thee, and traded with thee, praised thee, boasted of thee. *Did sing of thee;* had their songs of praise, which were made to commend thy state. *In thy market;* as mariners, in the ports where they arrive, usually do with mirth and songs entertain one another, so at Tyre. *Thou wast replenished;* all trading came to thee, none like thee in thy warehouses or public stores. *Made very glorious;* and, to do thee right, thou wert very glorious, magnificent, and beautiful, none like thee. Hitherto the prophet hath recounted Tyre's greatness, now cometh her fall, foretold as if already come.

[b] Ps. 48. 7. † Heb. *heart.*

26 ¶ Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters: [b] the east wind hath broken thee in the † midst of the seas.

Thy rowers, governors and counsellors, *have brought thee*, unadvisedly, *into great waters*, dangers and difficulties, in which thou art like to be shipwrecked, in which thou wilt perish. *The east wind*, which is very tempestuous, and dangerous to ships in those seas: by this is meant the king of Babylon with his army, whose march was somewhat by east to Tyre. *Hath broken thee;* as surely will as if he had already done it; he hath broken; it is the prophetic style. *In the midst of the seas;* where thou art far from shore, and must therefore sink and drown, or where thou thoughtest thyself impregnable. Where many seas meet, it is impossible for a half-starved creature to swim out; so shall Tyre perish in the violent currents of many seas; many nations, fierce and cruel, under Nebuchadnezzar shall swallow thee up.

[c] Prov. 11. 4. ver. 34. Rev. 18. 9, &c. ‖ Or, *even with all.* † Heb. *heart.*

27 Thy [c] riches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that *are* in thee, ‖and in all thy company which *is* in the midst of thee, shall fall into the † midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin.

Thy riches; not the vast treasures of the public, nor the great wealth of private citizens, shall purchase Tyre a continued prosperity. *Thy fairs;* these shall be interrupted by the siege, and none that frequented them shall prevail for access to them. *Thy merchandise;* the stock of goods of

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all sorts now in thy warehouses, and what thou hast trusted out. *Thy mariners, &c.*: see ver. 8—11. *All thy company;* all that are men fit for war in the multitudes of people that are in thee, or all thy own citizens that are thy militia, trained bands, or artillery company. *Shall fall:* it is plural, these all shall at once fall together. *The midst of the seas:* see ver. 26. *In the day;* the time indeed was long preparing for the fall, but a day finished it. *Ruin;* utter desolation.

‖ Or, waves. d ch. 26. 15, 18.

28 The ‖suburbs [d]shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.

The lesser cities on *terra firma* shall be alarmed with summons of their governors to put themselves in a posture of defence. Or, the waves, an elegant hyperbole, thus read; The very waves, which roar and terrify, shall hear and tremble at a stranger and more doleful cry than their own. Or, as our version, The suburbs, which are nearest the sea, shall first hear the outcries of pilots and mariners despairing of escape, when, their ship broken to pieces, all at once shriek out. So shall thy citizens cry and fall.

e Rev. 18. 17, &c.

29 And [e]all that handle the oar, the mariners, *and* all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land;

In the allegory of a miserable shipwreck, the prophet sets forth Tyre's fall, and in this verse he represents them all shifting out of the shattered sinking ship, in great confusion, and greater fear; the slaves quit the oars, the mariners throw up the tacklings, pilots leave the helm, all make for the long boat and the land, where they bewail their undone condition. Or it may be more literally understood thus; All sea-faring men, who got their living by service done for Tyre at sea, seeing her utterly broken, shall leave the ships, get to land, that elsewhere they may get employment, or by a timely flight save themselves, and bewail their old masters' fall.

30 And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall [f]cast up dust upon their heads, they [g]shall wallow themselves in the ashes:

f Job 2. 12. Rev. 18. 19. g Esth. 4. 1. Jer. 6. 26.

Shall cause their voice to be heard; with greatest cries they shall make the country echo forth their sorrows. *Against thee;* either standing on higher ground over against the shipwrecked city; or rather, *for thee,* those Eastern people did use to lift up their voice in mourning, Job ii. 12; Jer. xxxi. 15; Lam. ii. 18, 19; Zech. xi. 3. *Shall cry bitterly;* their weeping shall be from a deep sense of the misery of their friends. and this expressed by bitter cries; so such sorrow is expressed, Zeph. i. 14; Isa. xxii. 4; xxxiii. 7. *Shall cast up dust upon their heads;* another expression of great distress and sorrow, proper to those countries, Josh. vii. 6; Job ii. 12; Lam. ii. 10; Jer. vi. 26. *Wallow themselves in the ashes;* which they used to do in their greatest mournings, as Micah i. 10; Jer. vi. 26. As every country hath its peculiar manners and customs in mourning, so had these customs that expressed most vehement sorrows in gestures which we are not accustomed to.

h Jer. 16. 6. & 47. 5. Mic. i. 16.

31 And they shall [h]make themselves utterly bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart *and* bitter wailing.

It was the custom of the heathen, to either pull off with their hands, or cut off, the hair of their heads in great mournings, which God forbade to his people, Lev. xxi. 5; Deut. xiv. 1. Thus do Tyre's mourners in baldness express their sorrow and despair. *Gird them with sackcloth;* another usual ceremony of mourners, well known to all. *With bitterness of heart;* it shall be a hearty mourning, not a counterfeit one; this referring to the inward grief, the next bitter wailing refers to the outward expressing it.

i ch. 26. 17. ver. 2. k Rev. 18. 18.

32 And in their wailing they shall [i]take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, *saying,* [k]What *city is* like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?

In their wailing; in their sorrowful speeches of Tyre. *Shall take up* into their mouths, or with a composed, significant, and comprehensive form of speech, to show much grief in few words. *What city is like Tyrus?* a few years since no city like her in beauty, riches, glory, and joy, now none like her in all the contraries. *The destroyed;* now no more Tyre the flourishing, the renowned, the mart of nations, and the stately built; but now the destroyed, the silent, overwhelmed with grief, which was full of songs. *In the midst of the sea:* alas! what was once her safeguard is now her grave, what enriched her once hath now swallowed all up at once.

33 [l]When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise.

l Rev. 18. 19.

Thy wares, brought home from all coasts. *Went forth out of the seas;* were landed, brought on shore for the mart. *Thou filledst;* there was enough to supply to the full. *Many people;* numerous, stately, sumptuous nations, though their prodigality was great, thou furnishedst them, hadst wares rich and stately enough for all of them. Such influence had thy vast trade, that not only meaner men and subjects, but kings themselves, were made more wealthy by it. *Of the earth,* i. e. all kings of the known world, or kings of nations far off as well as neighbouring kings. *The multitude of thy riches;* the greatness of thy trade, the variety of thy wares brought from all parts, were thy own riches, and enriched all thou didst trade with; kings were enriched by customs and tolls paid to them, by the enriching their subjects, who thereby were fitter to pay taxes, or by furnishing their treasuries with all the peculiar treasures of kings, the rare and precious jewels which they esteem; and since we know some kings did trade too, by this Tyre increased their wealth.

34 In the time *when* [m]thou shalt be broken by the seas in the depths of the waters [n]thy merchandise and all thy company in the midst of thee shall fall.

m ch. 26. 19. n ver. 27.

In the time; so soon as, or ever after the unhappy day. *Broken;* shattered to pieces. *The seas;* the powers of the Babylonians, that, like seas, shall swell, roar, and break in upon thee. *In the depths of the waters;* in the deepest afflictions, and by sorest oppressions and violence. *Thy merchandise;* all thy trade. *All thy company;* the multitude of thy citizens, of thy hired soldiers, of thy allies abroad, and of those that came into thy markets for trade, shall cease, wither, and perish too.

35 [o]All the inhabitants of the isles shall be astonished at thee, and their kings shall be sore afraid, they shall be troubled in *their* countenance.

o ch. 26. 15, 16.

The isles; strictly and in a larger sense the sea-coasts. *Astonished;* wondering it ever should be effected that Tyre should fall. *Sore afraid:* knowing how they are much less able to resist and defend themselves, and not knowing where that mighty conqueror would next try his arms and fortune. *They shall be troubled;* shall not be able to conceal the discomposure of their mind; but in their countenance a trouble made up of grief, fear, and indignation, grief for their friends, fear for themselves, against that cruelty and inhumanity which, without respect to any thing dear to mankind, ruined the glory of the world, destroyed what could not be repaired by all the riches, and wisdom, and bounty of the Babylonish kingdom.

36 The merchants among the people [p]shall hiss at thee; [q]thou shalt be † a terror, and †never *shall be* any more.

p Jer. 18. 16. q ch. 26. 21. † Heb. *terrors.* † Heb. *shalt not be for ever.*

Hiss: this usually is an expression of scorn and contempt poured forth on the person hissed at; if thus understood, the meaning is, there should be some among Tyre's customers that would rejoice at her fall, and flout at her, either perhaps wronged by her in their trade, chap. xxviii. 16, or else with envy, and expectation of her trade to turn to them, return to her the wicked carriage she showed to Jeru-

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salem fallen and sacked: if it be a sign of aught else, it is of wonder, as 1 Kings ix. 8. *A terror;* matter of many fears, and to many people, who do or shall hear how terribly thine enemies have raged against thee and prevailed. *Never shalt be any more:* see chap. xxvi. 14.

CHAP. XXVIII.

God's judgment upon the prince of Tyre for his impious pride, 1—10. *A lamentation of his great glory corrupted and fallen through sin,* 11—19. *The judgment of Zidon,* 20—23. *The restoration of Israel,* 24—26.

588. THE word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart *is* lifted up, and [a] thou hast said, I *am* a god, I sit *in* the seat of God, [b] in the † midst of the seas; [c] yet thou *art* a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:

[a] ver. 9.
[b] ch. 27. 3, 4.
† Heb. *heart.*
[c] Is. 31. 3.

Unto; of. *The prince;* king, whose name was either Ethbaal, or Ithobaal. *Thine heart is lifted up;* thou art waxen proud, and aspirest above all reason, and boastest extravagantly in thyself, state policy, and power. *Hast said;* thought, imagined, or flattered thyself. *A god;* or the mighty and strong one, for so the Hebrew is, and perhaps were better so rendered; he gloried in his strength, as if he were a god. The like you have Isa. xiv. 14. *In the seat of God:* as a magistrate he did bear the name and authority of God; but he thought not of this; he dreams of the stateliness, strength, convenience, safety, and inaccessibleness of his seat, as if he were safe and impregnable as heaven itself. *A man,* subject to all the casualties, sorrows, and distresses of man's state and life, thou art Adam, of earth, not El, nor like unto the Mighty One in heaven. *Thou set thine heart as the heart of God;* thou hast entertained thoughts which become none but God, thou hast projected things which none but God can effect, thou hast promised thyself perpetual peace, safety, riches, and happiness in thyself, and from thyself.

[d] Zech. 9. 2.

3 Behold, [d] thou *art* wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:

Thou art wiser, in thy own thoughts of thyself, *than Daniel,* who was then famous for his wisdom, which was imparted to him from Heaven, chap. xiv. 20; Dan. i. 20; ii. 20, 48. *That they can hide from thee;* that any sort of men can conceal, that thine adversaries shall contrive against thee to thy danger or hurt: all this ironically said.

4 With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures:

With thy wisdom; by thy policy in government, and by thy skill in trading, for he speaks of that kind of prudence to which these names are given. *Gotten,* or *made,* so the word. *Riches;* power and might, so the Hebrew, as well as wealth and riches, and so the Gallic version reads *puissance;* the princes of Tyre had been prudent, and so increased their power and interest. *Into thy treasures;* into both his own private purse, and into the public treasuries too.

† Heb. *By the great wisdom of thy wisdom.*
[e] Ps. 62. 10. Zech. 9. 3.

5 † [e] By thy great wisdom *and* by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches:

Thy great wisdom: here the eminent degree of this prince's wisdom is owned. *And by thy traffic: and* might as well be spared, for as it is not in the Hebrew, so it rather obscures than clears the text; let it be read, By thy great wisdom in thy traffic, and it is very plain, and so the French reads it. *Increased;* made great or enlarged. *Thy riches;* thy power, as ver. 4. *Is lifted up;* exalts itself, carrieth it loftily and proudly above thy neighbours, which is not good; above thyself, which is worse; and above God too, which is worst of all, as ver. 2. *Thy riches;* thy puissance at home and abroad, by nature and art.

6 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God;

Hast set thine heart: see ver. 2. *As the heart of God,* who doth, as justly he may, design himself, his own glory, in all he designeth and worketh, and take the glory to himself; thou hast done so too, designed thy own greatness, and gloried in it.

7 Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, [f] the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.

[f] ch. 30. 11. & 31. 12. & 32. 12.

Will bring; cause to come. *Strangers;* a foreign people, called strangers for their multitude, and to intimate how little regard they would have to the Tyrian glory; these strangers were the Babylonian forces. *The terrible of the nations;* a fierce, violent, and cruel nation, Hab. i. 7, 8. *The beauty of thy wisdom;* those beautiful things, in which thy wisdom appeared; either thy noble, regular, and strong buildings, or thy beautiful well-stored arsenal and army, or the unparalleled rarities, which all but rudest soldiers would esteem, and spare these monuments of thy wisdom. *Defile;* pour contempt and stain. *Thy brightness;* thy royal dignity, depose thee from thy throne, and kill thy authority and thy person.

8 They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of *them that are* slain in the midst of the seas.

These strangers shall slay thee, which is a blemish to the honour of a king thus to be brought to the pit. *The pit;* a usual periphrasis of death and the grave. *The deaths;* in the plural, because of the many terrors, dangers, and wounds such meet with, the successive deaths, slain, drowned, eat of fish, cast upon shore, and become meat to sea fowl. *In the midst of the seas;* if literally understood, thou shalt die as other common mariners, and be cast overboard; if figuratively, seas for great distresses, then amidst multitude of deep distresses thou shalt meet with more than one death, be often dying.

9 Wilt thou yet [g] say before him that slayeth thee, I *am* God? but thou *shalt be* a man, and no God, in the hand of him that ‖ slayeth thee.

[g] ver. 2.
‖ Or, *woundeth.*

A cutting taunt, or sarcasm: What will become of thy godship then? Wilt thou then dream of immortality and almighty power, when thine enemy is cutting thy throat? *Thou shalt be a man;* appear then to thyself and others to be a mortal, weak, conquered man, who dieth a sacrifice to the conqueror's pride and cruelty.

10 Thou shalt die the deaths of [h] the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken *it,* saith the Lord GOD.

[h] ch. 31. 18. & 32. 19, 21, 25, 27.

The deaths: see ver. 8. A twofold death, temporal and eternal. *Of the uncircumcised;* of the wicked, or an accursed death: the Jews do express a vile and miserable death thus. Or, the uncircumcised, i. e. heathens, cruel and merciless men, shall slay thee; and this suits with what follows in the verse, and this was ignominious with the Jews, 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. *I have spoken it, saith the Lord God;* O thou proud, self-admiring prince! slight not what is threatened, for God, the God of truth, hath spoken it.

11 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

12 Son of man, [i] take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; [k] Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

[i] ch. 27. 2.
[k] ch. 27. 3. ver. 3.

A lamentation: see chap. xxvii. 2. *The king;* called prince, ver. 2. *Thou sealest up the sum;* in the search into the frame of thy government, the management of it, the prosperity thereof, and its glory, power, riches, and confederacies, thou dost think thyself but just to thy kingdom to

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account it the perfect idea of a good government, that in the Tyrian state nothing is wanting that might be required in a good government, in the best government, and so sealest to the premises; thus vainly puffed up, thou wilt have it that fulness of wisdom and perfection of beauty are in thee, but neither thy wisdom shall prevent or defeat the attempts of thine enemies, nor thy beauty charm their rage; thou shalt fall by them.

1 ch. 31. 8, 9.

13 Thou hast been in [1]Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the ‖sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the ‖beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the ‖emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of [m]thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

‖ Or, ruby.
‖ Or, chrysolite.
‖ Or, chrysoprase.
m ch. 26. 13.

Thou hast been; thou hast dwelt and reigned. *In Eden;* in the midst of all delights; and though nature made thy lot a very barren rock, thy art and industry, added to that of thy progenitors, have made it as pleasant, rich, and beautiful as Eden, that place of all desirable enjoyments. *The garden of God:* this is explicative of the former; a garden is a place of delight, and men have made some delightful to a wonder, but none ever like that God planted: this of Tyre came as near as any, and yet ungrateful and atheistical Tyre dreams of Divine power and stability, forgetting human frailty and uncertainty. *Every precious stone;* every sort of rich stones. *Thy covering,* bought to adorn thy crown, thy robes, thy bed, &c. *The sardius;* of a red, and by some said to be the ruby. *Topaz;* of a yellowish green. *The diamond;* of clear, waterish, sparkling colour. *The beryl;* of a sea-green colour, the best. *The onyx* resembles the whiteness of the nail of a man's hand. *The jasper;* of divers colours, but the best green. *The sapphire;* of sky colour, or blue. *The emerald;* green interspersed with golden spots. *The carbuncle;* of flame colour. *Gold;* beside the abundance of which in their public treasures, much was used about the clothes and robes of this proud prince; it is like these precious stones were set in gold, that they might the safer be put upon his garments. This was the accoutrement of solemnities, especially of the coronation, as appears in the close of the verse. *The workmanship of thy tabrets, &c:* now the prophet notes their joys, music and songs, both to wind or loud music, and to softer music, as the lute and tabret, in the day of their king's coronation, and all this music on instruments of most exquisite make, and of their own artists' work too; in this they exceeded as in the other. *Wast created;* either born, for the birth of princes hath been celebrated with great joys; or rather in the day of this king's coronation, or investiture in the kingdom and royal dignity.

n See Ex. 25. 20. ver. 16.
o ch. 20. 40.

14 Thou *art* the anointed [n]cherub that covereth; and I have set thee *so:* thou wast upon [o]the holy mountain on God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

Thou art the anointed cherub: I would rather keep the order of the words in the Hebrew, which the French also keep, Thou art a cherub, anointed, a protector, or one who covereth for defence. For thy wisdom, power, and excellency, like a cherub or angel; for the sacredness of thy person and office, as the anointed of God; for the exercise of thy power and office, as a shield or a protector of the weak; thus thou art, or thinkest thyself to be, and pridest thyself herein. *I have set thee so;* I, whom thou forgettest, I have made thee so, set thee above others; this should have been matter of thanks and humility, not of pride and atheism. Thus the sarcasm is continued, and he is upbraided for his insolence. *Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God;* or thus, in the holy mountain a god thou hast been; so it is an irony, and suits the rest; or else, in pursuance of our version, thou wast advanced to kingly dignity, (which David calls a mountain, Psal. xxx. 7; Jer. li. 25; Dan. ii. 35,) a sacred office, and of Divine institution and consecration, and thou hast in pride exalted thyself above me, as well as above men. *Walked up and down,* in proud and stately manner, surrounded every way in thy chambers and beds and clothes with stones that sparkle like fire, thy crown, thy throne, thy chariots, thy umbrellas or canopies, glistering and dazzling beholders; as if thus also thou wouldst contend with God, who is clothed with light.

15 Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

I think the prophet continues his irony: The prince of Tyre would be a god. Yes. Now God is perfect in all his ways or works; and thou, O prince, wert so too. Wert thou, and from thy original? But remember what a god is he, that hath a beginning, that was created, that at last was found full of iniquity! And this reproof and taunt leads us to look with the prophet from the proud claim of this prince to his great miscarriages. If any else will think all these things in the 14th and 15th verses to be asserters of God's bounty to this prince, and of his great magnificence and state, in hyperboles and allusions, nothing I have said shall contradict them, for they have their liberty, as I have mine, to think what seems most like the truth.

16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, [p]O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

p ver. 14.

By the multitude; by, or *in,* or *according* to (as the Gallic version) the multitude or greatness of thy trading: in Tyre were merchants that traded in very great adventures, with vast stocks, and in mighty cargoes. *With violence;* thy merchants have by craft, where that would, and by violence where craft would not, compassed their unjust designs, as noted, chap. xxvii. 36. This injustice and violence grew as their trade did, and filled the city with guilt as fast as that did with wealth. *Thou hast sinned:* either as one trading among them, thou hast violated justice to promote thine own and their gain, or hast connived at thy merchants when they oppressed all they could; or hast, contrary to justice and equity, supported them in their violence, and judged for them against oppressed strangers. Thou who wert a king, and wouldst be thought a god, is this like to God, who hates violence, loves justice, relieveth the stranger, and righteth the oppressed? *I will cast thee out:* these abominable things hast thou done, and now, as an abominable thing, I will throw thee out, either of thy throne and kingly dignity, see ver. 14, or thy fancied and imagined heaven, where thou wouldst be a god, for such gods of violence and injustice deserve to be cast out with the aspiring angels. *Destroy thee;* utterly destroy. *O covering cherub:* see ver. 14.

17 [q]Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

q ver. 2, 5.

Thine heart was lifted up: see ver. 2, 5. *Thy beauty:* see ver. 12. *Corrupted thy wisdom;* depraved or lost thy wisdom, by reflecting and gazing on thy own glory, state, wealth, and magnificence, and hast forgotten thou art a man; thou exaltest thyself above man, above thy neighbour kings. *I will cast thee to the ground;* I will bring down thy pride, dethrone thee, and make thee sit in the dust; sully and darken all thy brightness. *Lay thee before kings;* or, set thee before men of thy quality, who are, as thou, apt to forget men, themselves, and God, as he who, though he said not, I am God, yet, atheist-like, asked, *Who is God, that I should obey him? That they may behold thee;* or, that thou mayst be a spectacle, an example and warning to them; or, that they see thee in chains, or an abused captive, and despise thee.

18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire

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from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

Thou who shouldst have kept all pure in religion, as thou art king, pretending to Divinity, hast polluted it. *Thy sanctuaries:* still there is, as all along from the 14th verse I think there hath been, much of an irony deriding this proud prince, an allusion to his pretended godship. A god hath his sanctuaries, and thou thine, but they nasty, polluted ones. *By the multitude*, by the greatness as well as number. *of thine iniquities. The iniquity of thy traffic;* impieties, irreligion, and atheism of thy merchants, as well as by their injustice, falsehood, and oppressions, by their perjuries, breaking covenants confirmed in the temples at the altars, or in the name of their gods; when thy trade thrived by these, thou and they have thought there was nothing sacred, nor any god above thee. *I will bring forth a fire;* some civil dissension or occasion of thy injustice shall, like a fire, rise *from the midst of thee*, among thy injured malcontents. *It shall devour thee;* which, like fire in the house, shall burn all up, and waste all, thou shalt never quench it: thy discontented subjects applying themselves to Nebuchadnezzar with addresses for his favour, power, and royal justice to relieve them, and to right his own subjects oppressed by Tyre in their trade, shall enkindle Nebuchadnezzar's rage, and he shall never be appeased but in thy ruin. *I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth;* thou shalt be burnt to ashes, and these cast on the earth to be scattered abroad, and trampled under feet. *In the sight of all them that behold thee;* all this done, that all about thee may see, fear, and reverence the justice, power, and holiness of the God of heaven, who ruleth among men, and knows how to abase proud atheists.

19 All they that know thee among the
r ch. 26. 21. & 27. 36. † Heb. *terrors.* people shall be astonished at thee: [r]thou shalt be †a terror, and never *shalt* thou *be* any more.

All that have heard, seen, or formerly known thy riches, power, allies, wisdom, and vigilance, *shall be astonished at thee;* be amazed at the certain news of thy great fall, from greatest glory to greatest reproach. *Thou shalt be a terror* to all that hear the bruit hereof: *though thou hast been a terror*, so the Hebrew, to others by thy puissance and arms, thou shalt never be so again for ever: and this word hath been made good; Tyre never rose to that greatness as to be feared by her neighbours.

s ch. 6. 2. & 25. 2. & 29. 2. t Is. 23. 4, 12. Jer. 25. 22. & 27. 3. ch. 32. 30. 20 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21 Son of man, [s]set thy face [t]against Zidon, and prophesy against it,

Set thy face: see chap. xx. 46; xxi. 2. *Against Zidon;* neighbour and confederate of Tyre. *Prophesy against it;* declare her sins, approaching sorrows, and my judgments against her.

22 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD;
u Ex. 14. 4, 17. ch. 39. 13. x Ps. 9. 16. [u]Behold, I *am* against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee: and [x]they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall have executed judg-
y ch. 20. 41. & 36. 23. ver. 25. ments in her, and shall be [y]sanctified in her.

To these heathen, yet neighbours of the Jews, the prophet might well suppose the name and greatness of the God of Israel was so known, as to command their attention when he speaketh. *I am against thee;* provoked by thy sins, I am an adversary to thee, and as such determined to proceed with thee. *Zidon;* a city in the north-west from Canaan, at the foot of Mount Libanus; a king's seat of old, and from which Tyre descended, as a swarm cast out of that hive, Isa. xxiii. 2; for it was a great city in Joshua's time, Josh. xi. 8; xix. 28, and built by Sidon, Canaan's son, Gen. x. 15; 1 Chron. i. 13; a famous mart full of merchants, like Tyre, and as full of sin as riches. *I will be glorified;* when my judgments make my justice, power, holiness, sovereignty, and truth appear, both you Sidonians, and others about, shall confess my glory, and ascribe honour to me. I will vindicate my honour and glory, which by thy sins thou hast eclipsed, and I by judgments will illustrate, as Exod. xiv. 4, 17. *They* that dwell in thee, and round about thee, all that are concerned for thee, *shall know that I am the Lord:* see chap. vi. 10. *When I shall have executed judgments in her;* so late do sinners come to any due sense of God's power, justice, and majesty. The hardened sinners learn not by any other way but this, and by this too in the rigours and repeated executions of it. *Sanctified;* owned as holy, reverenced as just, obeyed as sovereign, and submitted to as wise, and mighty, and a hater of violence.

23 [z]For I will send into her pestilence, z ch. 38. 22. and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

I will send; the pestilence is one of God's arrows, and he sends it wheresoever it walks; it is one of his sore judgments, and wasteth where it cometh. *Pestilence;* the most dreadful of diseases, because most deadly, swift, and comes so immediately from the wrath of God offended with men; this pestilence attends on war, and seldom faileth to make havoc in besieged towns or cities. *Blood;* bloody war by an enemy, that shall bring the war to the gates, nay, into the streets of Zidon. *Be judged;* fall, be cast down, punished, in the midst of the city. *By the sword;* by her enemy's sword prevailing and conquering.. *On every side;* a description either of the siege that Zidon should suffer by, or pointing out the multitude of her enemies on every side agreeing against her.

24 ¶ And there shall be no more [a]a a Num. 33. 55. Josh. 23. 13. pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor *any* grieving thorn of all *that are* round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

No more; the time intended here is, when, after seventy years' captivity, loathing themselves for their iniquities, and repenting, they return and settle in their own land. *Pricking brier, grieving thorn:* by these two metaphors the prophet points out the troublesome neighbours of the Jews. *Of all that are round about them;* such as Moab, Ammon, Edom, Tyre, and this Zidon, which on all occasions did grieve, wound, and reproach the Jews, and triumph in the fall of the Jews, and were ever ready, being near. *That despised them;* contemning both in word and carriage the Jews, their religion, manners, laws, and their God. *They shall know that I am the Lord:* see ver. 22.

25 Thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall have [b]gathered the house of Israel b Is. 11. 12. ch. 11. 17. & 20. 41. & 34. 13. & 37. 21. from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be [c]sanctified in them c ver. 22. in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob.

When seventy years is expired, which is the term of their captive state. *I shall have gathered;* moved the hearts of my people to come together upon Cyrus's proclamation, and from all parts of that vast kingdom, to prepare for a return to the country most of them never saw: it was God who moved Cyrus to give them leave; it was as much God's work to stir up the people to return. *The house of Israel;* the generality of them, those that were Israelites indeed. *From the people;* several nations subjects to the king of Babylon. *Scattered*, by the Babylonish king at first, and afterward by incident, necessity, or their own choice. *Shall be sanctified;* have vindicated my name, which by them was blasphemed. *In the sight of the heathen:* I was dishonoured by the Jews in the sight of the heathen, and I will be honoured by the Jews in their sight, they shall be witnesses of my vindication. *Dwell;* settle in peace, and for continuance. *In their land;* in a land that is theirs, *their own*, as it is often called. *That I have given;* their title is of me by deed of gift, not of late, but to one that was long since *my servant; to Jacob*, father to these returning captives. The Hebrew repeats the preposition, *to my servant, to Jacob*, with an emphasis, to mind them of God's faithfulness.

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d Jer. 23. 6. ch. 36. 28.
‖ Or, with confidence.
e Is. 65. 21. Amos 9. 14.
f Jer. 31. 5.
‖ Or, spoil.

26 And they shall [d]dwell ‖safely therein, and shall [e]build houses, and [f]plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that ‖despise them round about them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God.

Safely; which is to be understood comparatively, safer than before; it must be accommodated to the circumstances of human condition; in such safety as excludes continual inward cares, and fears, and perplexities, as it is said of Laish, Judg. xviii. 7; or as in the days of Solomon, 1 Kings iv. 25; or as Job xi. 18, 19. *When I have executed judgments:* that seems to intimate, that there might be some attempts, as by Sanballat and Tobias, but God blasted these; or it may refer more properly to the destruction of Babylon, and the nations confederate with them, who ruined and despised the Jews. *And they,* the returned captives, shall own, and know by experience, that I am not only the Lord, but *their God* too.

CHAP. XXIX.

The judgment upon Pharaoh for his treachery to Israel, 1—7. *The desolation of Egypt, and restoration of it after forty years,* 8—16. *Egypt the reward of Nebuchadrezzar's service against Tyre,* 17—20. *Israel shall flourish again,* 21.

569. IN the tenth year, in the tenth *month,* in the twelfth *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

The tenth year of Jeconiah's captivity. *The tenth month,* which answers to part of our December and part of January.

a ch. 28. 21.
b Is. 19. 1. Jer. 25. 19. & 46. 2, 25.

2 Son of man, [a]set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and [b]against all Egypt:

Set thy face: see chap. xx. 46; xxi. 2. *Pharaoh;* Hophra, as the Scripture styles him, Jer. xliv. 30; the Greek authors call him Apries, and Vaphres: most like he was grandson to Necho, who slew Josiah in fight, 2 Chron. xxxv. 23, 24. *Prophesy against him;* in prophetic style and authority declare what shall be done to him in his person. *All Egypt;* the whole multitude of Egyptians; for it is the place for the people dwelling in it.

c Jer. 44. 30. ch. 28. 22. ver. 10.
d Ps. 74. 13, 14. Is. 27. 1. & 51. 9. ch. 32. 2.
e See ch. 28. 2.

3 Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; [c]Behold, I *am* against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great [d]dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, [e]which hath said, My river *is* mine own, and I have made *it* for myself.

Thus saith the Lord God; that God that drowned one of thy predecessors with his army, horsemen, and horses in the Red Sea, at whose name thou shouldst tremble, who ever fulfilled his word, and is the same, it is he foretells thee by my mouth what is to be. *I am against thee:* see chap. xxviii. 22. *Pharaoh:* see ver. 2. *Great;* it may refer either to the grandeur of this king, as if he had been Pharaoh the Great, or to the largeness of this creature, to which he is by this hieroglyphic compared. *Dragon:* some would have it the whale, but that lies not in rivers, as in his own place: it is surely the crocodile, of which Nilus hath many; and chap. xxxii. 2, our prophet doth, and so Isa. li. 9, compare the Egyptian king to that devouring serpent, or dragon. *That lieth;* not only at rest, but waiting for a prey, which never escapes, if this devourer lay any considerable hold of it. *In the midst of his rivers:* Nilus was the chief river of Egypt; but either there were some less rivers that run into Nilus, or some divisions of it, where it made some islands, or the seven mouths of it, where it falls into the sea, which may give the name of rivers to it, or those channels that were cut large and deep, to convey water into the country; in all which these crocodiles bred, and rested, and waited for their prey. *Which hath said;* which hath thought, accounted, and boasted; by which it appears the prophet speaks of a dragon in a figurative sense. *My river;* kingdom, power, riches, and forces, signified here by a river. All the strength and glory of Egypt are mine, saith this proud king. *Is mine own;* at my dispose and will. It is probable that this king of Egypt was an aspiring king, who aimed at absolute power, and thought he had secured it to himself; for the river, the emblem of the kingdom, is mine, saith he. *I have made it:* this seems to give some credit to the conjecture, that this king had raised the prerogative royal, and done what others before him would, but could not, and therefore assumes it to himself, as his own work, forgetting God, who gives kingdoms, and whose they are. *I have made it for myself;* somewhat like the proud boast, *I have built for the glory of my name,* Dan. iv. 30, and like to meet as sad an end.

f Is. 37. 29. ch. 38. 4.

4 But [f]I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales.

Thou art secure against all, but God will draw thee out of thy river to thy ruin. *Hooks;* the allegory is continued; fish are drawn out with hooks and lines, and God hath hooks for this proud dragon, first Amasis, and next the Babylonian king. The expedition of Amasis at the head of the Cyreneans and Grecians, and the event of it, is exactly represented in this hieroglyphic in the text. Amasis with those forces mastered Libya, the king thereof applies for help to this Pharaoh, he gathers all the power of Egypt out of Egypt with him into Cyrene, where he was defeated, lost all but a few that fled with him, and on this occasion the Egyptians rebelled against him: now this short history opens the parable. The first hook you see in the jaws of this dragon, this drew him out of his river, i. e. his kingdom. *The fish;* these are the people of Egypt, the subjects of this kingdom. *To stick unto thy scales;* to adhere to their king in this war. *I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers;* both the king and his subjects, which made up his army, go out of the rivers, leave Egypt, and march into Cyrene (which was part of that kingdom now called Barca) with their king, as if they had been little fishes on the back of a mighty one. Thus far the emblem; the rest follows.

† Heb. *face of the field.*
g Jer. 8. 2. & 16. 4. & 25. 33.
h Jer. 7. 33. & 34. 20.

5 And I will leave thee *thrown* into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers: thou shalt fall upon the †open fields; [g]thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered: [h]I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven.

When thus brought out, as a fish out of the water, *I will leave thee.* God left this king. *The wilderness;* the deserts of Libya and Cyrene. *All the fish;* the whole army of Egyptians. *Thou shalt fall upon the open fields;* there was this king and his army ruined. *Thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered,* as usually the slain are to be buried; these were not buried, but left in the wilderness, where they fell to be a prey to wild beasts, and birds of prey which haunted the wilderness, and would soon gather to their prey.

i 2 Kings 18. 21. Is. 36. 6.

6 And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I *am* the LORD, because they have been a [i]staff of reed to the house of Israel.

This mighty overthrow shall be known through all Egypt, and as it shall fill them with fears and troubles, so it should be a convincing argument to them that God had done this, and punished them, and their proud king, who used to say, as Herodotus reports, that God could not turn him out of his kingdom. *Because they,* both king, princes, counsellors, and people of Egypt, *have been a staff of reed;* treacherously, as next verse, dealt with the Jews, whom they seduced to trust and depend on them, and then perfidiously broke promise with them. It was the sin of the Jews to

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trust Egypt; it was Egypt's great sin to falsify promise with the Jews, and for this God now punisheth Egypt.

k Jer. 37. 5, 7, 11. ch. 17. 17.

7 k When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand.

When they, the Jews, unable to stand on their own legs, as men ready to fall, *took hold of thee by thy hand;* caught thine hand to lean on, as when besieged by the Chaldeans. *Thou didst break:* it includes a designed and voluntary failure; Egypt would not support. *And rend all their shoulder;* didst tear, and pierce, and wound arm and shoulder, didst them much mischief instead of benefiting them, as thou hadst promised, Jer. xxxvii. 7; xlii. 17. *When they leaned, &c.;* the same thing in words little different. The *loins* are the strength of a man: thou hast put them to use all their strength to repel the enemy, thou hast been chief occasion of their engaging against.

8 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring l a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee.

l ch. 14. 17. & 32. 11, 12, 13.

Therefore, for thy atheistical pride, and thy perfidious mischief to the house of Israel, and other thy sins, *I will bring a sword upon thee;* war, and the effects of it. First, a civil war arose against this king Hophra, who, weak and contemned, and fallen under the jealousies and disgusts of his subjects after his overthrow in the deserts of Libya and Cyrene, was again overthrown by his rebel subjects in a bloody battle at Memphis, was taken in his flight towards Sain, his royal seat, and some time after strangled by the enraged rout. The next sword, brought on Hophra's successor, and on the land of Egypt, was the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, in the same year after the overthrow of Tyre; the civil war of Egypt inviting him to take the occasion, and some few requests, it is likely, from the rebellious to assist them. *Cut off man*, by the sword in battle and sieges, and by famine. *And beast;* eaten up by a numerous army invading and prevailing, and which will drive away what they eat not. The same phrase you have chap. xiv. 13, 17.

9 And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD: because he hath said, The river *is* mine, and I have made *it*.

The land of Egypt; that part here intended, say some, and in the 10th verse, bounded from Syene to the borders of Ethiopia; nor is this inconsistent with that ver. 2, *against all Egypt*, for all Egypt suffered much, though all were not equally wasted, and turned into a desolation, as these parts shall be. *Desolate;* a desolation, i. e. most desolate, and wasteness by the sword of the enemy, and by drought, as the word imports both: and this latter part of the judgment was executed by the folly of the twelve Egyptian roitelets, who made a mighty lake, Mœris, to fill which they much drained and weakened Nilus, that it could not, as before it did, water and fertilize the land; suitable to Isa. xix. 5. *He hath said, &c.:* see ver. 3.

m ch. 30. 12. † Heb. *wastes of waste.* ‖ Or, *from Migdol to Syene.* Ex. 14. 2. Jer. 44. 1. n ch. 30. 6. † Heb. *Seveneh.*

10 Behold, therefore I *am* against thee, and against thy rivers, m and I will make the land of Egypt †utterly waste *and* desolate, ‖n from the tower of †Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia.

I am against thee: see chap. xxviii. 22. *Thy rivers:* see ver. 4. *Waste:* see ver. 9. *The tower;* thus, as a common name, we, and the French, and others read it; but some account it a proper name of a town or city, called Magdalum, for aught I know the old Migdol, Exod. xiv. 2; Numb. xxxiii. 7, 8; it was on the Red Sea side, northeast of Egypt: from this part unto Syene. *Syene;* a city on the east of Nilus over against Arabia, saith one; a city that is just below the great cataract or fall of Nilus toward Ethiopia, and such a boundary between Ethiopia and Egypt as admits dispute to which it belongs. *Ethiopia:* now, to dispute nothing of this geography, it seems likely to me, that what we render Ethiopia is not so well and plainly rendered; for Syene being so near to Ethiopia, we must look some place of Egypt at some greater distance from Syene than this Ethiopia is; if then it were translated, the border of Cush, to whom Moses assigns Arabia, Gen. x. 7. Let us suppose then Magdalum, instead of *the tower*, as one term; Syene on the edge of Ethiopia, as another; and the oppo site point on the Red Sea towards Arabia; and then almost all Egypt is comprised herein, from north-east to south-east, down the Red Sea, thence to the westward as far as Ethiopia, and thence up the Nile as high northward as Magdalum.

11 o No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years.

o ch. 32. 13.

No foot of man; not strictly to be taken, but in an accommodated sense, or comparatively to what once was, or so little traffic and passing to and fro, that no footsteps or tracks of men were found. It is a Scripture hyperbole, as Luke xix. 44; Isa. xiv. 31; Ezek. xxvi. 14, 21. *Nor foot of beast;* of profitable, useful, and tractable, as sheep, oxen, and horses; but of wild beasts too many are in the desolate places of that part of the world. *Neither shall it be inhabited forty years:* accounting these years from the first wastings of Egypt by their civil dissensions and wars, some nine or ten years before Nebuchadnezzar subdued and wasted it, which he did in the thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth, and thirty-seventh years of his reign, or thereabout. So that these forty years will fall in about the thirtieth year of Jeconiah's captivity, and end with the seventieth year of the captivity, which was the first of Cyrus.

12 p And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries *that are* desolate, and her cities among the cities *that are* laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

p ch. 30. 7, 26.

This verse is a further repeated confirmation of what was said before, and needs no new explication, every thing in it being already spoken to in the former verses. *Among the nations;* some into captivity, others by a timely retirement dispersed themselves, and got among their neighbours, who escaped, and where they kept, till the forty years expired.

13 ¶ Yet thus saith the Lord GOD; At the q end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered:

q Is. 19. 23. Jer. 46. 26.

Forty years: see ver. 11. *Gather*, by some eminent acts of Providence toward them, perhaps inclining the generous mind of Cyrus to favour them, and proclaim liberty to them, and under the government of old Amasis, that reigned fifty-five years, saith Diodorus, some ten or twelve of which might be under Cyrus, who had a kindness for the old man; and he, to repair the wastes, obtained and published great privileges for the new replanters. *The people;* Babylon, Ethiopia, Libya, and other countries, that can be but conjectured to have been receptacles for them.

14 And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return *into* the land of Pathros, into the land of their ‖habitation; and they shall be there a †r base kingdom.

‖ Or, *birth.* † Heb. *low.* r ch. 17. 6, 14.

The captivity; which Nebuchadnezzar led away into Babylon. *The land of Pathros;* one province or country of Egypt; it was a southern part of Egypt, in which was the famous city Thebæ or Thebais, known for its hundred gates. *The land of their habitation;* the ancient habitation of the fathers of the most of those that did return, forty years having eaten up almost all that had lived there before. *A base kingdom;* a low, tributary, dependent kingdom, subject to the Persian kingdom as Amasis was to Cyrus; and though it did at length grow great, yet was it always dependent on Greeks or Romans.

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15 It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.

The basest; the most abject, debased, and most underling. It is likely the kings to whom Egypt was tributary kept them lowest, as knowing how dangerous that kingdom might be, as it recovered its ancient greatness; and the word seems to intimate this, for it is more than the kingdoms it shall be depressed. *Neither shall it exalt itself;* its masters would so watch and check it. *I will diminish them;* beside the hard and cruel usages of the Persian kings, which might be unjust enough, God's most just judgment should follow them to lessen their numbers, power, wealth, and honour. *They shall no more rule over the nations;* though once they had subdued and ruled, yet should they not any more. In the times of the Ptolemies, though it was considerable, yet then it was not a kingdom that ruled the nations about her, though she made war upon them.

s Is. 30. 2, 3. & 36. 4, 6.

16 And it shall be no more s the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth *their* iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

The confidence: on every occasion the Jews were wont, against express prohibition, to renew friendship with Egypt, and make leagues for defence by them, and here they sinfully rested, as Isa. xxx. 2; xxxi. 1; xxxvi. 6, 9: see ver. 7. *Which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance;* which sinful reliance on the arm of flesh provoked God to call to mind other their iniquities which accompanied this, viz. their idolatry, and going a whoring with these their confederates. God never forgets, but when he visits, punisheth, and judgeth a nation for their sin, then their sin is come up into remembrance. *When they shall look after them;* or, in their, i. e. the house of Israel's, looking after, i. e. with a desire that the Egyptians would, with hope they will, and with confidence that they can, relieve, rescue, and save them; when they forgot God, and respected Egypt. *They shall know;* the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord, and whoso knows him will put their trust in him, Psal. ix. 10.

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17 ¶ And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year, in the first *month*, in the first *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

The seven and twentieth year of Jeconiah's captivity, the year after the conquest of Tyre, and the thirty-fifth of Nebuchadnezzar. *The first month;* part of our March and April.

t Jer. 27. 6. ch. 26. 7, 8.

18 Son of man, t Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head *was* made bald, and every shoulder *was* peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it:

His army: the army, the inferior officers, and principal commanders, it is like, were weary of the siege, and might advise the raising it; but the authority, presence, and immovable resolution of the king kept them on still, and made them hold out. *A great service;* it was service to the justice of God in punishing the Tyrians by the ambition of Nebuchadnezzar, who would not endure any thing to stand against him. It was great service, both for hardness of work, heaviness of burdens, and unreasonable length of the siege, thirteen years together. *Every head was made bald;* either age, or sicknesses, (which often make men bald,) or continued wearing of the helmets, spoiled the best heads of hair amongst them; or perhaps it noteth the weeping bargain they had, though they mastered Tyre, where they got no booty; and both Nebuchadnezzar and his army might shave their heads, in token of mourning for their loss, rather than crown their heads with garlands of joy for gaining of the city. *Every shoulder was peeled;* either clothes wore out, they had scarce any to their backs in so long a siege, or galled and blistered with carrying burdens, stones, timber, iron, and earth for fortifications, and to make a passage from the continent to Tyre; which sores, when healed, left scabs or dead skin that peeled off. *He had no wages;* for though Tyre was very rich when first besieged, no doubt very much wealth was carried away by shipping at the beginning and during the siege, which none could prevent, very much spent and wasted in the siege, and what was left preserved by articles of surrender; for most conclude that it was delivered on composition, and the conqueror had only victory for his pains and charge.

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall take her multitude, and † take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army.

† Heb. *spoil her spoil, and prey her prey.*

I will give the land of Egypt: yet it is certain that the discontents of Egypt gave occasion, and the revolts of some of the subjects from Hophra, or Apries, and their inviting Nebuchadnezzar, gave him Egypt; but these were the irregularities of men, which God did wisely and justly manage to effect what he designed, and God gave, and men gave too; as the ten tribes gave, so God gave, the kingdom to Jeroboam; so the first cause and second causes produce the same effect. *Her multitude;* common people, who shall be made captives by the power of the conqueror, and servants or slaves next by the will of those that buy them of the soldier. *Her spoil:* much of the Egyptian riches were the spoil of other nations, or the spoils of one another in the late civil wars between Pharaoh-hophra and Amasis; and now their dishonest gains shall be a prey to Babylonians. *Her prey;* that which was once another's possession, whilst right prevailed; but became a prey when Egypt's power mastered the possessors. *The wages for his army:* his army could not have plunder of Tyre, because it was surrendered on terms, but now they shall, and this shall be their prey.

20 I have given him the land of Egypt ‖*for* his labour wherewith he u served against it, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord GOD.

‖ Or, *for his hire.*
u Jer. 25. 9.

I have given him; it is as sure as in his possession; thought he must fight for it, and it will cost blood, yet he shall surely have success. *Against it;* Tyre. *They wrought for me;* the proud, revengeful, covetous, and cruel Babylonians designed themselves, and did work for themselves, but God had further, higher, and more excellent ends, his work was doing by them who thought nothing less.

21 ¶ In that day x will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth, and I will give thee y the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

x Ps. 132. 17.
y ch. 24. 27.

In that day; about that time, when Egypt was spoiled, Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon, his wars first, and soon after his life, ended, about four or five years after his return out of Egypt into Babylon; for about the thirty-seventh or thirty-eighth of his reign he finished his conquest of Egypt, and in the forty-third year he died at Babylon. *The horn;* Jehoiachin by Evil-merodach was advanced, Jer. lii. 31—33; beside dignities given to Daniel, the three children, and many others, under whose authority and favour the affairs of the Jews began, as a root that hath life in it, to spring and flourish; and whatever was the more immediate visible cause that prevailed with Evil-merodach, we are sure the principal cause was this, God's mercy and veracity, who had promised he would do it, and foretold the time when he would begin to do it. *The opening of the mouth;* thou shalt with greater authority be heard speaking, when the sorrows thou foretoldest, and the joys thou promisedst, both come to pass; and both Jews and Babylonians shall see and own it; or, thou shalt have liberty and freedom, as well as will and cause to speak, to open thy mouth in comforting the good among them, and to give praise to God, who

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revived their hopes, and made them know him as the Lord their God.

CHAP. XXX.

The desolation of Egypt and her helpers, 1—19. *The arm of Babylon shall be strengthened to break the arm of Egypt,* 20—26.

572. THE word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus
a Is. 13. 6. saith the Lord GOD; [a]Howl ye, Woe worth the day!

Howl ye, inhabitants of Egypt, and whoso are near enough in friendship and alliances to fall under the like calamities. *Woe worth the day!* Ah the day! O sad and miserable times!

b ch. 7. 7, 12. Joel 2. 1. Zeph. 1. 7. 3 For [b]the day *is* near, even the day of the LORD *is* near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen.

The day; the time of such distresses, as never the like known by you. *Near;* it will begin in your overthrow in the Cyrenian and Libyan deserts in very little time, next it will continue in your civil war, and finally end in the Babylonish conquest: some two years, and you shall be miserably routed in the deserts of Libya; immediately after the civil war for eleven years together shall waste you; and then Nebuchadrezzar's forces will be upon you; so that, whereas there may be about sixteen or eighteen years between the prophecy and its fulfilling, here is thirteen or fourteen of them taken up with sorrows and afflictions, forerunners of the last. *The day of the Lord;* of the Lord's sore displeasure against Egypt and its allies. *Near;* within two years, as is said. *A cloudy day;* a dark day, so times of trouble are called, whereas prosperity is a day of light. Troubles, like violent storms, are black. *Of the heathen;* of the Egyptians to be wasted, and of the Babylonians to waste them; the day of pride, cruelty, and revenges to the one, the day of falling, spoil, and destruction to the other.

4 And the sword shall come upon
‖ Or, *fear.* Egypt, and great ‖ pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt,
c ch. 29. 19. and they [c]shall take away her multitude,
d Jer. 50. 15. and [d]her foundations shall be broken down.

The sword: see chap. xxix. 8. *In Ethiopia;* next neighbour and ally to Egypt; they shall tremble at so great danger, so near, and they uncertain whether it will come on them, but very certain to be ruined if it does come, and as certain that they have cause to suspect it will come on them. *When the slain shall fall in Egypt;* when the Egyptians, under the eye of the Ethiopians, shall fall in battle, and at the taking of their towns. *They shall take away her multitude;* in miserable captivity carry them to Babylon, by whole droves. *Her foundations,* their government, laws, counsellors, strong holds, which are to a nation as foundations to a house, are destroyed.

† Heb. *Phut,* ch. 27. 10.
e Jer. 25. 20, 24.
† Heb. *children.*
5 Ethiopia, and †Libya, and Lydia, and [e]all the mingled people, and Chub, and the †men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

Ethiopia, Heb. *Cush,* which are commonly thought to be the Ethiopians in Africa, but some more inquisitive geographers have found them originally and chiefly in Arabia, which was either subject or ally to Egypt in its prosperity; and these were, as ver 4, in a panic fear, lest the Babylonian should pass the sea, and take them in his way home. *Libya,* Heb. *Phut;* hence the Puteans or Phutaans, who afterwards were better known by Libyans, a part of whose country was near to Egypt. *Lydia;* Lydians, not the Asiatic, but the Africans, placed between some part of Cyrene and Egypt. *All the mingled people;* the hired soldiers from all parts, a confused mixture of nations, such as the Libyans had got together; or all Arabia, so the word 2 Chron. ix. 14; Isa. xiii. 20; or all that ravenous sort of people, that like crows fly to slaughters; so soldiers of fortune follow the wars, and the Hebrew word is *crow,* Lev. xi. 15; Deut. xiv. 14; Psal. cxlvii. 9, as well as mixed. *Chub;* Ethiopians beyond Egypt south, the inhabitants of the inmost Libya, which reached to the Nigritæ; perhaps they may be the Nubians at this day, a letter easily changed. *The men of the land that is in league;* the *sons of the land of the covenant:* some refer to the Jews, children of the covenant, but this is forced; it is all the people of Egypt's league, all the allies of the Egyptian kingdom. *With them;* with the Egyptians. *By the sword;* in war by the sword of Babylon.

6 Thus saith the LORD; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: ‖ [f]from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.
‖ Or, *from Migdol to Syene.* f ch. 29. 10.

They also that uphold Egypt; either the princes, counsellors, and martial men in Egypt, or those abroad, that favour her and help her. *The pride of her power;* the glory of all her strength, of which she was proud. *Shall come down;* be trodden under foot. *From the tower;* from Magdalum in the north-east part of Egypt, toward the Red Sea, to Syene in the most south-west part of Egypt. See chap. xxix. 10.

7 [g]And they shall be desolate in the g ch. 29. 12.
midst of the countries *that are* desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities *that are* wasted.

They, all those before mentioned, *shall be desolate;* as much wasted as any of them that are most wasted. *Her cities,* of Egypt, equally wasted with other cities that have been sacked, as Jerusalem, Tyre, Zidon, Rabbath, &c.

8 And they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and *when* all her helpers shall be †de- † Heb. *broken.*
stroyed.

They shall know; all that act, and all that suffer, in this tragedy, shall by the evidence of the things be enforced to own God's hand, and ascribe justice, and truth, and glory to him. *A fire;* that war, which like increasing fire consumeth all. *Shall be destroyed;* the destruction of so many and powerful aids shall prove that it was God's hand did it.

9 In that day [h]shall messengers go h Is. 18. 1, 2.
forth from me in ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid, and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt: for, lo, it cometh.

In that day; the day of God's severe but just judgments, and Egypt's fatal desolation. *Messengers;* such as having seen and escaped the sword, shall tell the dismal news. *From me;* by my permission and providence they shall go, as if sent by me. *In ships;* ships that either carried them over into Pentapolis, crossing the river Nilus, or rather going down the river into the Mediterranean, and so to any part of those north parts of Africa, and others by ship through the Red Sea to Arabia Felix, which is that Ethiopia which is here meant; though it is possible in those days the African Ethiopia might, as once it did, extend quite to the mouth of the Red Sea, on whose shore their ancestors must needs first land out of Arabia, whence the Abyssinians, who are our present Ethiopians, do own their descent. So messengers by ships might carry the news to both the Ethiopian, Asian, and African, by the Red Sea. *The careless Ethiopians;* in much security they had hitherto lived, the most potent and formidable neighbour having been their ancient ally, till the news of so mighty an enemy at their very doors. *Great pain;* apprehensions of danger, that puzzles their wisdom, weakens their courage, makes them in perplexity, both sick and astonished. *As in the day of Egypt;* either like that which, when their host was drowned in the Red Sea, seized all Egypt, or rather like this latter fear, which arose from the mighty havoc made by the Chaldean. *It cometh;* a storm like that certainly cometh against you.

10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; [i]I will i ch. 29. 19.
also make the multitude of Egypt to

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cease by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon.

The multitude; the numerous families and tribes. *To cease;* to dwindle and decrease. *By the hand;* by the army, power, and conduct of Nebuchadrezzar.

k ch. 28. 7. 11 He and his people with him, k the terrible of the nations, shall be brought to destroy the land: and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain.

He; Nebuchadrezzar. *His people;* his own subjects, not hired soldiers. *The terrible:* this is the description of them, Hab. i. 7, a fierce and cruel people, as Psal. cxxxvii. 8, 9. *Shall be brought,* by the hand of God, using means for that end, as before noted, chap. xxix. 4. *Draw their swords against Egypt;* readily, and with resolution not to sheath them till Egypt be filled with slain.

l Is. 19. 5, 6. † Heb. *drought.* m Is. 19. 4. 12 And l I will make the rivers † dry, and m sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and † all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the LORD have spoken *it.*

† Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

I will make the rivers dry; either by some extraordinary drought, or rather by means of that mighty lake, which drew so much water from Nilus, that all their canals were ever after shallow, and the lake, as the oracle foretold, helped their enemy, and hurt their friends; or the Chaldeans might divert them, and so their fortified towns would want one great defence. *Sell the land:* God gave it, here he sells; the one is proper, the other a borrowed expression; indeed God seems to pay wages with it, chap. xxix. 19, 20; but hereby is intimated, that as sellers deliver into the hand of the buyer, so God would deliver Egypt into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, as surely as if he had bought it, and we may conclude the Chaldean as a buyer will make the most of all he buys. *Of the wicked;* not of just and compassionate, but of injurious and merciless men. *Strangers,* who leave nothing they can carry away, eat up, or spoil. *I the Lord have spoken it;* it is the decree and edict of Heaven, which cannot be broken.

n Is. 19. 1. Jer. 43. 12. & 46. 25. Zech. 13. 2. o Zech. 10. 11. p Is. 19. 16. 13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also n destroy the idols, and I will cause *their* images to cease out of Noph; o and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: p and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt.

I will also destroy; God did it by the Babylonians; those proud and impious nations did triumph over the gods of the conquered, and out of contempt of them burnt them or broke them, as is well known; so Sennacherib threatened, 2 Chron. xxxii. 19; Isa. xxxvii. 19, 24, against the true God, as he did to idol gods. *The idols;* dunghill gods, as the words, fitter to be trod under foot than to be decked and respected. *Their images;* these nothings, as the word imports; whoever destroyed the image destroyed the god, for it was nothing but an image. *Noph;* Memphis, now Grand Cairo, the chief city of the country, the seat of their kings first, of their priests by consequence, and of all their several gods too; but the Chaldeans destroyed the nest and birds too. *A prince;* either an Egyptian born, or independent, or over all Egypt, or that shall have the power, wealth, or honour like a former brave Egyptian king. *A fear* of consternation and cowardice, that should disable them for counsel and action in their most urgent affairs.

q ch. 29. 14. r Ps. 78. 12, 43. ‖ Or, *Tanis.* s Nah. 3. 8, 9, 10. 14 And I will make q Pathros desolate, and will set fire in r ‖ Zoan, s and will execute judgments in No.

Pathros: see chap. xxix. 14. *Set fire in Zoan:* it may be literally understood, that Zoan, Tanis, for that is its name, should be burnt down to ashes; or metaphorically, of war, and civil dissensions. *No;* a very great and populous city, situate on one of the mouths of Nilus, and on the sea, Nahum iii. 8. Now Alexandria stands where that did. But it was greater in sin than in people, and it was visited with very great and dreadful judgments, Nahum iii. 8—11, which see.

15 And I will pour my fury upon ‖ Sin, the strength of Egypt; and ‖ t I will cut off the multitude of No. ‖ Or, *Pelusium.* ‖ Or, *when I have cut off.* t Jer. 46. 25.

Will pour my fury: see chap. xxi. 31. *Sin;* either Sain, or more likely Pelusium, which was a frontier, and secured the entrance of Egypt from the desert of Sin, was the key of Egypt, and therefore always well fortified and strongly garrisoned; it was called Damiata. *The strength of Egypt;* one of the principal munitions of Egypt; for it was a good and large haven, and was strengthened with all needful fortifications. *The multitude,* or the riches and tumultuous noise which the multitudes thereof made. If we read as the margin, it is plain, God does threaten Pelusium after No is cut off; if we retain our own translation, we must think of another city of that name, which God threatens with Sin. Now this may be Thebæ Egyptiacæ, or this city may be Hamon No, called Diospolis, the city of Jupiter; possibly it may be the same mentioned already, and the threat repeated to confirm it.

16 And I will u set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph *shall have* distresses daily. u ver. 8.

Will set fire: see ver. 14, and chap. xx. 47. *Sin:* see ver. 15. *Great pain:* see ver. 9. *No:* see ver. 14, 15. *Rent asunder;* her walls, and towers, and fortresses battered, torn, and broken through by the continued violence of engines, and by the assaults of the soldiers. *Noph:* see ver. 13. *Distresses:* being the chief city where king and councils sat, whence orders should be given, whither all intelligences were brought, all should be so bad abroad, that nothing but fears and distresses fill their ears, mouths, and hearts, beside the wants that would increase daily on them.

17 The young men of ‖ Aven and of ‖ Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword: and these *cities* shall go into captivity. ‖ Or, *Heliopolis.* ‖ Or, *Pubastum.*

The young men: it is probable these might be a select army of valiant youths in one body, collected out of these two cities, that resolved to break the Chaldean army, or fall in the enterprise; or else that they did to the utmost defend the walls, and were put to the sword when the city was taken by assault. *Aven;* Bethshemesh and Heliopolis, an idolatrous city, that worshipped the sun, and in which was a stately temple built to the sun. Its size was one hundred and fifty furlongs, six miles and three quarters, in compass, a very vain and sinful city, as its name Aven intimates. *Pi-beseth;* Bubastus, and sometimes called Hæphestus, no inconsiderable place, and I believe not far from Aven. It should seem to be some convenient pass, as I conjecture. *These cities;* the citizens, cities put for citizens. *Go into captivity;* some of the first, it may be the very first; which put Memphis, at report of it, into a sick fit, with great pain; this being the first-fruits of the sad coming harvest.

x Jer. 2. 16. ‖ Or, *restrained.* 18 x At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be ‖ darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt: and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her: as for her, a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity.

Tehaphnehes; a great and goodly city of Egypt. Tachapanes, Tachpanes, Tahapanes, Tahpanes, Chanes, and Hanes, Isa. xxx. 4, are names given it, and this from a queen of Egypt of that name in Solomon's time, I Kings xi. 19, 20. It stood not far from Sin or Pelusium, and by the Greeks, a little softening the name, called Daphne Pelusiaca. It was a royal city, in it Pharaoh had a house; to it many Jews fled, when forbidden of the Lord by the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xliv. It was one of the first cities you come to out of the desert of Sin, and was one of the keys of Egypt. *The day shall be darkened;* a night shall come upon it, and such a night of sorrow as shall grow darker and darker till the day, i. e. their day, be *darkness;* or else, word for word, *darkness shall be the day,* and may bear this sense, shall be more welcome, more useful, more desired, than the day, whose light would discover their

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flight, which the night concealed. *I shall break*, as into shivers. *The yokes;* the sceptres; for there was one of Pharaoh's houses, and probably some sceptre and other regal ornaments: or, the bars, which kept enemies out, and secured the citizens and country; such was this frontier town. Or, when, by giving this strong place into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, I shall break the kingdom of Egypt, that it no more oppress with yokes, i. e. burdens. *The pomp;* the beauty and goodliness with which the strength of this city was set out in her buildings, towers, forts. *Shall cease in her;* shall be buried in her own ruins. *A cloud;* sorrow at the success of the Chaldeans against her, compared often to a cloud. *Her daughters;* either metaphorically, i. e. the towns and villages about her, or literally, her children; her daughters only mentioned, because her sons were destroyed and slain.

19 Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

568. 20 ¶ And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first *month*, in the seventh *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

The eleventh year of Jeconiah's captivity, three months and two days before Jerusalem was taken. Jer. lii. 4. *In the first month;* the fourth day of our April.

y Jer. 48. 25. 21 Son of man, I have [y] broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, lo,

z Jer. 46. 11. [z] it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it, to make it strong to hold the sword.

I have often told thee I would break, now I tell thee *I have broken*, partly by the victory of the Chaldean over Pharaoh-necho, partly by the victory the Cyreneans got over Pharaoh-hophra to raise the siege, from which attempt he fell with shame and loss, but more by civil wars. *Pharaoh;* Hophra or Apries. *It shall not be bound up to be healed;* and this wound is incurable, it shall never be bound up to be healed, his arm shall never be strong and fit to encounter a potent enemy, as once it was.

22 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against Pharaoh king of

a Ps. 37. 17. Egypt, and will [a] break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken; and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand.

In the former verse God had broken the arm, in this he will break the arms of Pharaoh, he will show he is still against Pharaoh, and will break him more and more. *The strong;* that part of his kingdom which remains entire. *That which was broken;* that which was shattered before, that part of his kingdom in Syria, taken from him, from Euphrates to the river of Egypt; that once was a strong arm, but now is broken and useless to him: and Egypt, whatever strength it now hath, shall be as weak and useless too; thus all his power and strength shall be destroyed.

b ver. 26. ch. 29. 12. 23 [b] And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

See chap. xxix. 12, and xx. 23, where are the same expressions.

24 And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand: but I will break Pharaoh's arms, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded *man*.

25 But I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of

c Ps. 9. 16. Pharaoh shall fall down; and [c] they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out upon the land of Egypt.

These two foregoing verses are a repetition of God's threats against Pharaoh, and of his promises to assist Nebuchadnezzar in the war, and every thing plain in them.

Will strengthen; give the first strength, and continue it with new supplies, so that with strength from God he shall proceed. *Put my sword in his hand;* his strength shall have a weapon suited and proportioned to it; and what will be hard, where God's sword and his strength are engaged to effect it? *He*, Hophra, *shall groan;* not only as the stoutest must when nature breaks, but cry out and sigh, or howl, not becoming a brave man. *Before him*, king of Babylon, *with the groanings of a deadly wounded man;* who hath given him his deadly wound, under which he roars while he hath any strength, and groans when his voice fails him. It speaks sore griefs, and deep sense of them, as Exod. ii. 24; Judg. ii. 18; Job xxiv. 12.

26 [d] And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

d ver. 21. ch. 29. 12.

See ver. 23.

CHAP. XXXI.

A recital to Pharaoh of the Assyrian's greatness, and of his fall for pride, 1—17. *The like destruction shall be to Pharaoh,* 18.

AND it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third *month*, in the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

In the eleventh year; as chap. xxx. 20. *In the third month;* our June 26th old style, the 16th new style; just one month and eight days before the taking of the city on the 27th of July old style, but 17th of July new style. *The first day of the month* Tamuz. Calvisius. Usserius.

2 Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude; [a] Whom art thou like in thy greatness?

a ver. 18.

Pharaoh; Apries or Hophra. *To his multitude:* his numerous subjects, with the power and riches they glory in. *Whom art thou like in thy greatness?* bethink thyself, what king of all before thee art thou equal with, or else greater? On what surer and more immovable foundation doth thy greatness stand, that thou dreamest of a perpetual quiet and flourishing state, in the midst of all thy sins and wickednesses?

3 ¶ [b] Behold, the Assyrian *was* a cedar in Lebanon †with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs.

b Dan. 4. 10. † Heb. *fair of branches.*

The Assyrian kingdom and its kings were the greatest the world ever knew before thee, they had longest time of growth, through 1340 or 1360 years, from Belus who was Nimrod, or Belus Assyrius, to Sardanapalus, from 1719, or 1717, or 1718, to 3059, of the world. And they had as fair advantages, as reaching a foresight, and as unwearied diligence to advance the kingdom; yet I brought it down. *A cedar;* like a cedar; kings and kingdoms oft compared to trees, both in profane and sacred emblems; or like the most goodly cedar for strength and beauty. *In Lebanon;* a great mountainous tract from east to west, one hundred and twenty five miles in length, encloseth Canaan on the north. *With fair branches*, which are the beauty, greatness, strength of the tree; so had this mighty kingdom fair provinces, as branches springing from it. *With a shadowing shroud:* what we render *shadowing* in the Hebrew may signify either *silent* and *quiet*, or *framing* and *modelling*, intimating that this kingdom, like a shady tree, gave shelter to the weak, as if framed artificially to this, and it was a silent quiet repose its subjects had; as weak creatures find shelter in a mighty wood, so these. *Of an high stature:* this kingdom grew to great height, while its branches were so beneficial. *Among the thick boughs*, or clouds; for so the word will without violence bear, clouds being called so

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from their thickness; however, the head among the thick boughs speaks the magnificence and greatness of this king, compassed about with tributary kings and princes and mighty men.

c Jer. 51. 36.
‖ Or, nourished.
‖ Or, brought him up.
‖ Or, conduits.

4 c The waters ‖ made him great, the deep ‖ set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her ‖ little rivers unto all the trees of the field.

As cedars grow great by the watercourses, so did this kingdom by multitudes of people and convenience of trade; or by the plenty of the country, if no trade, for it was first planted in the fruitful fields among the sweet rivers, Euphrates, Tigris, Lycus, Diava, and others. *The deep set him up on high;* the sea sent out her waters, which gave being to the rivers that watered him and improved him; whereas, Egypt, thy rivers rise out of a lake, which, though great, is not to be compared with the deep. *His plants;* the provinces of this mighty kingdom, that are like plants about a great tree. *Little rivers;* beneficence, justice, protection, encouragements, that subjects need, and good princes disperse among them; so the deep filled this king, and he sent out his streams to all his subjects in his kingdom.

d Dan. 4. 11.
‖ Or, when it sent them forth.

5 Therefore d his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long because of the multitude of waters, ‖ when he shot forth.

His height was exalted; his power, glory, and his pride too ran up on high: a just administration of laws for the benefit of the public, and a kind usage of the subject, while it was here, made the king great and his kingdom famous. *Above all the trees of the field;* above all his neighbour kings, among whom oppressed weaklings still came to this kingdom, while just, for shelter. *His boughs were multiplied;* many became his subjects by voluntary choice, and his native subjects increased in numbers and wealth. *His branches became long;* the provinces reached far and wide by the conquest of his arms, or attractives of his kindness brought to unite with him. *The multitude of waters;* the many streams of royal justice and beneficence sent forth from the throne of this kingdom; so his throne was advanced and established.

e ch. 17. 23. Dan. 4. 12.

6 All the e fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations.

All the fowls; not every individual, but all sorts and kinds of men and people, nobles, merchants, husbandmen, likened to *fowls. Made their nests;* did settle their habitations and families, expecting what they found, safety and rest, and hoping what did ensue, an increase of their children and posterity, as birds do in a quiet and safe nest. *In his boughs;* in his kingdom, in the cities or towns of it. *Under his branches;* the very same thing expressed by a new hieroglyphic. Beasts here are people, the field is the countries round about, their bringing forth their young includes their making their dens, that is, men's building, begetting children, and breeding them under his branches, under his government and protection. *Under his shadow dwelt all great nations:* this gives some light to the riddle. No nation, that was great at that time in the world, but either owned the dominion, or sought the alliance and friendship, of this king and kingdom.

7 Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by great waters.

Fair; beautiful, lovely, and desirable. *In his greatness;* not exerted in tyranny and oppression, but exercised in the royal art of imitating the greatest and best Being who is King over all, for he doth good to all. *In the length of his branches;* how far soever remote, yet the justice and goodness of the government appeared the beauty of those provinces, as well as of the whole kingdom. *His root,* whence he sprung, which supported and supplied the kingdom, was right, the laws, punishments, rewards, and encouragements neither founded in cruelty, nor maintained by violence. *By great waters;* not by blood, which is no proper kindly nourishment for such cedars, but by waters, which are kindly and proper, and these great enough for his own growth and to nourish others too.

f Gen. 2. 8. & 13. 10. ch. 28. 13.

8 The cedars in the f garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chesnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty.

The cedars; kings, the greatest and most magnificent. *In the garden of God;* either in the most fruitful gardens, or in Judah and Israel; not David, not Solomon, Jehoshaphat, or Hezekiah, could top and shade him. *The fir trees;* a meaner sort of trees, emblem of lesser kings and kingdoms; these were but like his boughs, though they grow to great height and bulk. *The chesnut trees;* the same in another allusion. Kings, like chesnut trees, great when by themselves, yet, compared with this Assyrian, were but as branches of his boughs; all which see in Isaiah's words, chap. x. 7, 8. There was some truth, though more pride, in this speech of the Assyrian, which the prophet reports. *Nor any tree in the garden of God;* all summed up, none like him in all the kingdoms of the world.

9 I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that *were* in the garden of God, envied him.

I have made him fair; all this greatness, wealth, and glory I have given him. *By the multitude of his branches;* the numbers of his provinces, and multitude of his subjects, high and low, great and small. *Envied him;* either did when they saw his greatness, or would have envied if they had seen it; or if there may be a seeming justifiableness in wondering at another's glory, and wishing it our own, here it might be found.

g Dan. 5. 20.

10 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast lifted up thyself in height, and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs, and g his heart is lifted up in his height;

Now you shall hear the sin and the fall of this great kingdom of Assyria. His mind could not longer bear so great prosperity, he lifts up himself, and in his pride forgets God who lifted him up and will cast him down. You have a specimen of it in that of Isa. x. 7—20; xxxvi. 9, 15, 18. This, as other best framed polities, degenerated into pride and violence against neighbours, subjects, friends, as well as against enemies; though it was too much to despise man, yet it was intolerably more insolent to reproach God. It is but time to lop, nay, cut down this cedar, as Isa. x. 33, with xxxvii. 36, 38.

† Heb. *in doing he shall do unto him.*

11 I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; † he shall surely deal with him: I have driven him out for his wickedness.

I have therefore delivered: no prophetic style, as some think, I have because I will, for most certainly God would deliver. *Him;* the proud king of Assyria, who inherited all the vices of his progenitors more than their kingdoms, infamous Sardanapalus. *The mighty one:* some say Cyrus, or rather Arbaces, who first struck at the root of this cedar, and cut him down; and well might this man, though no king when he attempted this, be styled the mighty one of the heathen, who could bring together four hundred thousand of Medes, Persians, Babylonians, and Arabians, a power sufficient to besiege the Assyrian king two years in his own city and palace. *He shall surely deal with him;* so he did, for he held him besieged without hope of relief, till at two years' end this vicious king burned himself with his palace. *Driven him out,* with disgrace, for his lewd, shameless courses, as a wife is cast out by divorce for adultery, Lev. xxi. 7. *For his wickedness;* so Sardanapalus was cast out for his effeminacy and lewdness; for it is reported this gave Arbaces first encouragement to lay a design against him. He was driven out, as the prophet words it, by the

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breach two miles and a half wide, made by the mighty floods from continual rains, which the walls of Nineveh could not withstand: so God rather than man did drive this beast out.

h ch. 28. 7.

12 And strangers, [h]the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: [i]upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him.

i ch. 32. 5. & 35. 8.

Strangers; foreigners, who regard neither justice nor mercy, such were those who made up this army of Arbaces the Mede. *The terrible;* so these were for their strength and valour much, but for their numbers and barbarity more, to be dreaded. *Have cut him off;* not *shall*, for it was done before Ezekiel's time, about the time Hezekiah was born, and about two hundred and forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonish captivity. *Left him;* revolted or forsaken Sardanapalus. *Upon the mountains:* as a tree, growing on the mountains which hang over the valleys, when it falls breaks, and its branches are scattered in the lower ground, on the banks of rivers that run in the bottom; so is this mighty cedar, this king and kingdom, fallen from highest power and honour into deepest contempt and impotence, not able to repel his adversaries, or escape out of their hands. *Have left him;* all that were tributary to him have withdrawn their tribute, and rejected his dominion; and such as were his allies, and depended on his patronage, have quit their leagues and dependences, and left his shadow.

k Is. 18. 6. ch. 32. 4.

13 [k]Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain, and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches:

His ruin; his broken state. *All the fowls*, which built and bred there, shall now despise the tree, and triumph over it. *All the beasts;* the same in another emblem, as ver. 6. Beasts, fowls, people, and nations, that were sheltered under the shadow of this tree, shall all, as is their custom, get from under it, and with the first insult and trample upon the body, boughs, and branches, fowls get on it, and both pick and defile, beasts rustle through it, and browse on the broken branches.

14 To the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs, neither their trees ‖ stand up in their height, all that drink water: for [l]they are all delivered unto death, [m]to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.

‖ Or, *stand upon themselves for their height.*
l Ps. 82. 7.
m ch. 32. 18.

To the end; all this is designed to be a warning to mortals. *All the trees*, i. e. the emperors, potentates, kings, or rich flourishing states. *By the waters;* planted most commodiously, and furnished most abundantly with power and wealth. *Exalt themselves;* grow proud, because they are high, shoot out tops above all the thick boughs, their neighbours. This caution against pride and self-exalting is three times repeated, that all, especially great men, and this proud king of Egypt, to whom this parable is propounded, should be humble. *For they are all delivered unto death;* for if by office they are gods, yet by nature they are men, and by the decree of God, who cannot die, these gods must, as men, die, be laid in the grave, forgotten like other men, like the children of mean men, for death and the grave make no distinction. Be not proud, God will pull down such; be humble, you must die.

15 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon †to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him.

Heb. *to be black.*

When he, the king of Assyria, the tall cedar, or the kingdom of Assyria, *went down to the grave;* was a man in grave; buried in its own ruins. *I caused a mourning;* there was much lamentation. *I covered the deep;* I put the sea, i. e. either neighbouring states, or the body of his people, or the trading part of the world, into mourning for him. *The floods thereof;* all public affairs; commerce and friendly intelligences were at a great stand. *The great waters were stayed;* the great traffic and wealth by it, which did flow as great waters, were stayed, and living rivers were as void of motion as the Dead Sea, all was out of course. *Lebanon;* the field in which this cedar grew, i. e. the whole kingdom of Assyria. *All the trees of the field;* all the lesser kings and princes about him. *Fainted;* fell into a swoon at the news of this great and unparalleled downfal of this mighty king and kingdom, which hath been here in sacred hyperbole set forth to warn Egypt, and convince it; none can stand whom God will cast down. Whether there were any portentous signs in the sea and great waters, and the rivers, and among the trees, presages of this fall, and pointed at here, I inquire not.

16 I made the nations to [n]shake at the sound of his fall, when I [o]cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and [p]all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, [q]shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth.

n ch. 26. 15.
o Is. 14. 15.
p Is. 14. 8.
q ch. 32. 31.

To shake; all that heard the noise of his fall trembled at it, it was as God intended it should be, an astonishment to them all. *Cast him down to hell;* brought the king and kingdom, as a dead man, to the grave, among them that before were dead and buried. *All the trees of Eden;* all kings, and particularly the greatest and richest, called here *the choice and best of Lebanon. All that drink water;* did enjoy great power, riches, and worldly glory. *Shall be comforted:* it is a prosopopœia, and he speaks of the dead with allusion to the manner of the living, who rejoice to see the proud brought as low as the lowest; thus the prophet, Isa. xiv. 9, 10.

17 They also went down into hell with him unto *them that be* slain with the sword; and *they that were* his arm, *that* [r]dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen.

r Lam. 4. 20.

They also; either his neighbour kings and princes, or those that were his own subjects, but rich and mighty. *Went down into hell;* were broken and perished with him, and went to those God had slain for their pride and wickedness. *They that were his arm;* his loyal and faithful subjects and friends abroad, who having been protected by him, remembered it, and adhered to him to support him; but all fell, are extinct, and gone down to the pit, where are many proud, but no pride; where all know themselves dust and ashes, and God glorious, holy, and just.

18 ¶ [s]To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: [t]thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with *them that be* slain by the sword. This *is* Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

s ver. 2. ch. 32. 19.
t ch. 28. 10. & 32. 19, 21, 24, &c.

The mightiest, richest, and longest-lived kingdom I have represented, saith God, overthrown and destroyed; a kingdom thou canst not pretend to equal; and if not like this, what king or kingdom art thou like, that thou shouldst be invincible? Whoever thou art like in height and power, thou shalt be like them in thy fall and ruin. *Shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised;* as unclean, despised, and loathsome in thy blood, like the slain with the sword, not to be known without an upbraiding inscription; *This is Pharaoh*

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CHAP. XXXII.

A lamentation for the fearful fall of Egypt, 1—10. *The sword of Babylon shall destroy it,* 11—16. *It shall be brought down to hell among all the uncircumcised nations,* 17—32.

867. AND it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, in the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

In the twelfth year of the captivity of Jeconiah. *In the twelfth month,* answering to part of our February and part of March, and called Sabat. *In the first day;* and was the 15th of February old style, and the 5th new style.

a ch. 27. 2. ver. 16.

2 Son of man, [a]take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, [b]Thou art like a young lion of the nations, [c]and thou *art* as a ‖whale in the seas: and thou camest forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, and [d]fouledst their rivers.

b ch. 19. 3, 6. & 38. 13.
c ch. 29. 3.
‖ Or, *dragon.*
d ch. 34. 18.

Take up a lamentation: see chap. xix. 1; xxvii. 2. *Pharaoh;* Hophra. *Like a young lion:* of this hieroglyphic see chap. xix. 3, 6. *Of the nations;* among, or to, the nations round about thee, spoiling all thou canst, a cruel devourer abroad. *A whale;* a crocodile, a devouring dragon in thy rivers at home, for there the crocodiles lay and did mischief, though sometimes they went down the river to the sea. *In the seas;* that comes forth to seek prey and devour, so a lion at land, a whale, or crocodile rather, at sea, ravenous every where. *Camest forth with thy rivers;* raisedst mighty armies, and didst lead them out against thy neighbours, as in particular, chap. xxix. 3, 4. *The waters;* the people, kingdoms, and kings near thee. *With thy feet;* with thy soldiers. *Fouledst their rivers;* disturbed and muddied their pleasant clearness, and made them unfit to drink, i. e. did spoil all the pleasant and useful conveniences of thy neighbours.

3 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will therefore [e]spread out my net over thee with a company of many people; and they shall bring thee up in my net.

e ch. 12. 13. & 17. 20. Hos. 7. 12.

My net; a large, long, and wide net, drawn out to full extent. *Over thee;* with which both lions and crocodiles might be taken, and in which this lion and crocodile should certainly be taken; for God, whose hand never erreth, will spread the net. *With a company of many people:* in the countries where these creatures were hunted, they went in mighty companies to the game, as they accounted it. *Bring thee up in my net;* drag thee along to destroy thee, pull thee up out of the pit, in which the net was laid to take the lion to kill him, and draw this crocodile up out of the water for the same end; in brief, war by land and sea by a confederacy of many people against Hophra shall be God's net, wherein he shall be taken, kept a prisoner, as he was, and at last strangled: see chap. xxix. 4.

f ch. 29. 5.
g ch. 31. 13.

4 Then [f]will I leave thee upon the land, I will cast thee forth upon the open field, and [g]will cause all the fowls of the heaven to remain upon thee, and I will fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee.

Leave thee upon the land; thy beaten army shall be slain: see chap. xxix. 5: it was literally fulfilled in the deserts of Libya, where the slain of Hophra's army were left to be devoured by fowls and beasts. Metaphorically it is gathering a mixture of people, soldiers, like ravenous birds and beasts, from all parts to spoil Egypt. *To remain upon thee;* they should not be removed till filled with the spoils of Egypt. *The beasts of the whole earth;* the foreign and mercenary soldiers shall be enriched by the slaughter and plunder of the Egyptians.

h ch. 31. 12.

5 And I will lay thy flesh [h]upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy height.

Will lay; throw or cast. *Thy flesh;* the carcasses of thy slain men and soldiers. *Upon the mountains;* whither they retired for safety. *Fill the valleys;* not so fill them as to equal them in height with hills, but we say a man fills a place who scatters much or many things though but on the surface; so here valleys filled. *With thy height;* with the carcasses of thy princes, as the Chaldee paraphrast I think hits right; and so the French, *et remplirai les vallées de tes glorieux qu' on aura abbatus.*

6 I will also water with thy blood ‖the land wherein thou swimmest, *even* to the mountains; and the rivers shall be full of thee.

‖ Or, *the land of thy swimming.*

Water with thy blood; most plentifully pour out thy blood, as water is poured out to water land, when men float their grounds. *Wherein thou swimmest;* either because of the plenty thereof, wherein they swimmed, as we say; or else because this king was a whale or crocodile, his dwelling must be the waters, and in them he swimmeth. *To the mountains;* an hyperbole; blood shall be poured forth, as if it were to rise to the very mountains and cover them; or thy blood shall be shed through all thy plain country, to the very mountains, which I think are toward the south-west parts toward Ethiopia; so they should be slain from Migdol or Magdalum to Syene, as chap. xxix. 10. *Full of thee;* of thy blood, and of thy carcasses cast into the rivers by thine enemies, or drowned in attempting flight by water from the drawn sword.

7 And when I shall ‖put thee out, [i]I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.

‖ Or, *extinguish.*
i Is. 13. 10. Joel 2. 31. & 3. 15. Amos 8. 9. Rev. 6. 12, 13. Matt. 24. 29.

Put thee out; as a torch is extinguished, Isa. xliii. 17, so I will put out thy light, and turn thee into darkness. *Cover the heaven;* either by dark vapours that arise from blood and putrefying carcasses, which darken the heavens; or it is a description of great sorrows, fears, troubles, and perplexities; or else it may intimate particularly the total ruin of the whole kingdom, in which the best, greatest, and noblest parts are; as heaven suppose the government, the sun the king, the moon the queen, the stars the princes and nobles, bright lights the most eminent of the subjects for wisdom and understanding, and then the land the common people: all shall be covered with clouds, and darkness of misery first, and sorrow next. Or it is possible that some unusual darknesses might be seen in the heavens and on the earth about that time.

8 All the † bright lights of heaven will I make † dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord GOD.

† Heb. *lights of the light in heaven.*
† Heb. *them dark.*

These two foregoing verses contain the same thing four times with a little variation, repeated to affect the hearers, and to impress it the more deeply on their minds.

9 I will also † vex the hearts of many people, when I shall bring thy destruction among the nations, into the countries which thou hast not known.

† Heb. *provoke to anger,* or, *grief.*

Vex; it speaks a passion mixed and made up with grief for what is done, fear of the consequence of it, anger against him that did it, and an astonishment at the report, and it seizeth the heart and spirits of the hearers. *Many people,* and great nations. *Thy destruction;* either the fame of it, or the remainders that fled timely from thy destruction, or thy captives who after thou art destroyed are carried away, and the news of thy fall with them, or when the like ruin and destruction shall fall upon them. *Which thou hast not known;* such as were strangers to Egypt, and which Egypt had no commerce with, shall be troubled with apprehension what mischief may come upon the world from so mighty a conqueror, and by the accession of so great a kingdom and power as that of Egypt.

10 Yea, I will make many people [k]amazed at thee, and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee, when I shall brandish my sword before them; and

k ch. 27. 35.

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l ch. 26. 16. [l]they shall tremble at *every* moment, every man for his own life, in the day of thy fall.

Many people, and mighty people too. *Amazed;* astonished and puzzled, not knowing what resolutions to take, what advices to follow, or what to do. *Their kings*, who usually are, and in reason should be, undaunted, and discover no signs of fear, shall discover mighty disorders of fear and doubt, both for Egypt and themselves. *Horribly afraid:* see chap. xxvii. 35. *Brandish my sword;* or, make my sword pass with such speed, as if it did fly along their borders, or hover near them, and so threaten them. *They shall tremble;* be greatly afraid, lest Nebuchadnezzar, who here is God's sword, should smite them. *Every man;* every one of the kings, whose kingdoms are near to Egypt, and by whose borders the Babylonish army must pass in their marches. *For his own life;* they should be solicitous, not for the outmost parts of their kingdoms, or for their subjects, but for their own life. *In the day of thy fall;* when they shall hear of Hophra beaten, taken, imprisoned, his kingdom taken from him, and he dead by a shameful death, and all his people slain, captivated, spoiled, or fled.

m Jer. 46. 26. ch. 30. 4. 11 ¶ [m]For thus saith the Lord GOD; The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee.

See chap. xxx. 24, 25. *Upon thee;* both king and kingdom of Egypt.

n ch. 28. 7. o ch. 29. 19. 12 By the swords of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall, [n]the terrible of the nations, all of them: and [o]they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt, and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed.

By the swords of the mighty; the soldiers of Nebuchadnezzar, helped also by Amasis, and the rebellious Egyptians that joined with Amasis and Nebuchadnezzar against their own king. *The multitude;* the people of the land, which were numerous before they were wasted by these wars. *The terrible of the nations:* see chap. xxxi. 12. *Spoil the pomp;* break her strength, rob her treasures, sack her cities, captivate her people, and make the kingdom tributary, and so stain all her glory. *All the multitude thereof*, from high to low, the great and the mean promiscuously, shall perish.

p ch. 29. 11. 13 I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters; [p]neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them.

All the beasts thereof; the sheep and oxen devoured by hungry Chaldean soldiers, or else driven away; the horses taken up to mount the horsemen of the Chaldee army, whose own horses were tired or spoiled. *Beside the great waters;* the pastures lying along the river's side, and along their canals, should be emptied of all cattle, with which once they were full. *Neither shall the foot of man trouble them;* there should be so few men left in Egypt, that they should not, as formerly, disturb the waters by digging, swimming, or rowing on them; or, no more trouble the waters with the passing of mighty armies over them to invade their neighbours. *Nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them;* so few horses or cows, that they should not at watering times, or in the heat of the day, foul the waters by running into them, and stamping or trampling in them; but the waters shall continue pure and undisturbed.

14 Then will I make their waters deep, and cause their rivers to run like oil, saith the Lord GOD.

Make their waters deep: the sense literally this, the waters undisturbed shall be clear, the mud settled at the bottom, and the waters above it of good depth. *To run like oil;* smooth and softly, as oil glides along, which will be when neither men nor cattle disturb the rivers: but figuratively, waters and rivers are people and nations, and those near to, and once disturbed, and put into confusion by Egypt, at whose fall all those troubles shall cease, the people shall settle in quiet state, and affairs shall, like a quieted river, run smoothly and in great peace.

15 When I shall make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be † destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein, [q]then shall they know that I *am* the LORD.

† Heb. *desolate from the fulness thereof.*
q Ex. 7. 5. & 14. 4, 18. Ps. 9. 16. ch. 6. 7.

The former verse assures us of what it foretold, and the assurance is the word and truth of God; this verse tells us when this shall be. *Shall be destitute:* this phrase is chap. xii. 19. *That whereof it was full;* men and women, cattle, food, wealth, and peace. *When I shall smite* by the sword, the destroying sword of the Chaldeans. *Then shall they know that I am the Lord;* then shall they confess it to the glory of God's power and justice.

r ver. 2. 2 Sam. 1. 17. 2 Chr. 35. 25. ch. 26. 17. 16 This *is* the [r]lamentation wherewith they shall lament her: the daughters of the nations shall lament her: they shall lament for her, *even* for Egypt, and for all her multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

This heavy, mournful, and sad account, which the prophet hath given of the state of Egypt, *is the lamentation*, the funeral speech of this kingdom; for this, as a funeral oration, tells us what was their ancient glory, and what is now their miserable reproach and loss. *They shall lament;* her friends, or the Egyptians themselves rather. *The daughters of the nations:* this may be expository of the former, and tell us who they are that shall lament Egypt, the provinces and cities of their neighbouring nations; or literally, the daughters, the tender-hearted virgins and women abroad. *Even for Egypt;* ruined Egypt. *All her multitude;* the common people, many of whom suffered for what they could not prevent; a sort of people that were fitter to be pitied and spared, than to be robbed and slain, a sort of people none but unrelenting hearts could be harsh to or hasty with.

567. 17 ¶ It came to pass also in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

In the twelfth year: see ver. 1. *The fifteenth day;* about the 19th of February new style, or the 1st of March old style.

s ch. 26. 20. & 31. 14. 18 Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and [s]cast them down, *even* her, and the daughters of the famous nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down into the pit.

Prepare the funeral ceremonies at the burial of Egypt, compose a suitable song or speech, utter it with a like suitableness to the sad occasion. Jeremiah, chap. ix. 17—19, and Amos, chap. v. 16, use the word, and the places read will explain this. *Cast them down;* either declare that they shall be cast down from their height and glory; or rather, because this was done already, lay them down as dead in the grave, bring him to his grave, as the word is used, with addition of *sheol*, 1 Kings ii. 9, and much like are chap. xxvi. 20; xxxi. 16. *The daughters of the famous nations;* and celebrate the funerals of other cities and kingdoms, that lie buried in their own ruins and other men's oblivion. *The nether parts of the earth;* a well-known description of the state of the dead and the grave. *Go down into the pit:* usually this is no more than a common description of men's going to the dust in their burial, but here it includes more. The Egyptians affected to be buried either in the isle Chemnis, or in the pyramids, their kings and great ones thus would be laid by themselves; but Ezekiel provides them their grave among common people, buries them where they fall; for they shall not have what they account so much of in their funeral.

t ch. 31. 2, 18. u ver. 21, 24, &c. ch. 28. 10. 19 [t]Whom dost thou pass in beauty? [u]go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised.

The whole, from this verse, is a most elegant personating of the dead, as if sensible, and acquainted, and discoursing with, and rejoicing at the fall of proud tyrants, who took

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not warning by their fall. Such a prosopopœia you have Isa. xiv. In this chapter the actors are the prophet, the king of Egypt and his people, and their auxiliaries. *Whom dost thou pass in beauty?* the prophet begins with this question dialogue-wise, Art thou better than others, that thou shouldst not die and be laid in dust, as well as all others? speak, Hophra, if thou hast any privilege to plead, what hast thou to say why thou shouldst not go down to the pit as a despised mortal? *Go down:* the prophet, hearing no plea of privilege, adjudgeth him to the grave, or lays him down with somewhat a sarcasm, Go down like others. *Be thou laid;* take up thy lodging, thy long, dark, and dismal recess, where thy dust and bones shall never be known by any royal figure. *With the uncircumcised;* among profane and loathed carcasses; such the uncircumcised were in the opinion of the circumcised, and Herodotus in Euterpe saith the Egyptians were circumcised. However, in Scripture, a burial with the uncircumcised is a note of dishonour and contempt; thus for the king and princes.

20 They shall fall in the midst of *them that are* slain by the sword: ‖ she is delivered to the sword: draw her and all her multitudes.

‖ Or, *the sword is laid.*

Now the prophet determines concerning the people, which die as others, fall undistinguished, and, as undistinguished, must be laid in the pit. *They;* the Egyptians. *In the midst;* in battle shall die. *By the sword;* either of one another in civil war, or of their neighbours they invaded, or of Babylonians that invaded them. *She is delivered;* the whole Egyptian kingdom is given up of God. *To the sword* of wasting enemies, especially of the Chaldean. *Draw her;* make no ceremony more than usually is made, when common soldiers, slain in the field where the battle is fought, are dragged by scores into mighty pits, and thrown into them promiscuously; or, as the interlude will bear it, suppose any of them unwilling to stoop, draw them to it against their will. *All her multitudes,* of soldiers and people, subjects, allies, and helpers of Egypt.

21 [x]The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are [y]gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword.

x Is. 1. 31. & 14. 9, 10. ver. 27.

y ver. 19, 25, &c.

The prophet seems in this verse to introduce the next speakers in this parley, and bringing them in, gives their character. *The strong;* the powerful, the valiant, whose natural strength of body was great, and their courage greater, those that were strongest. *Among the mighty;* for feats they did, by which it appeared they might, compared with others, pass for giants, mighty warriors, conquerors, and rulers. *Shall speak to him,* the king of Egypt. *Hell;* or rather, the grave, where they lie without strength, as dead mortals, though while they lived they bore themselves as if gods and immortal. *Them that help him;* either these great ones shall speak to Hophra's helpers, or else these his friends, slain in his quarrel and dead before him, shall speak to him. *Gone down* to the grave: see ver. 18. *Uncircumcised;* neglected and forgotten, or remembered with contempt: see ver. 19.

22 [z]Asshur *is* there and all her company: his graves *are* about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword:

z ver. 24, 26, 29, 30.

Asshur, the famous, warlike, victorious kings of Assyria, *is there;* in the state of the dead, in the land of darkness and oblivion; *and all her company;* princes, captains, soldiers, subjects, and confederates. *His graves are about him;* perhaps his the greater, yet a grave, and they about him who were slain with him. *All of them slain;* some in wars, whilst the kingdom began, grew, and flourished; others, when the kingdom was destroyed; these fell by the sword. Awhile their sword was longest; at last a longer sword, that of Arbaces the Mede, with his accomplices, wounds Asshur to the heart, and he is brought to the grave.

23 [a]Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, and her company is round about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which [b]caused ‖ terror in the land of the living.

a Is. 14. 15.

b ch. 26. 17, 20. ver. 24, 25, 26, 27, 32.

‖ Or, *dismaying.*

At least for decorum here is supposed a spacious vault, or pit, in midst whereof the king of Asshur in a stately tomb lies buried, and round about the vault are places to lay others dead with him, and in his cause, some of his more famous captains and commanders. *Her company;* the common subjects and soldiers of the Assyrian empire, all buried undistinguished about her: see ver. 22. *Her grave:* the ruins of an empire are its grave, and so all the subjects of this empire lie buried with it. *Caused terror;* were a terror to all they would be enemies to, and proudly boasted of and inhumanly used their power, now lie quiet, their dust little regarded, less feared, and least of all pitied. *In the land of the living;* while they were in the land of the living, a periphrasis of life.

24 There *is* [c]Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are [d]gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, [e]which caused their terror in the land of the living; yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit.

c Jer. 49. 34, &c.

d ver. 21.

e ver. 23

Elam; the Persians, and their great, famous kings, who lived in former days. *All her multitude:* see ver. 22, 23. *All of them slain:* see ver. 22. *Gone down:* see ver. 21. *Uncircumcised:* see ver. 21. *The nether parts of the earth:* see ver. 18. *Their terror:* see ver. 23. *Their shame;* God and man poured contempt upon them, and punished them for their pride, and turned their glory into shame, whose vices and miscarriages are more remembered than their noble facts and glorious achievements.

25 They have set her a bed in the midst of the slain with all her multitude: her graves *are* round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword: though their terror was caused in the land of the living, yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit: he is put in the midst of *them that be* slain.

Some conceive the prophet may allude to the manner of burying with the Persians, who had their coffins, or sepulchral chests, in which with balms and spices the dead were kept, and these chests placed in midst of places provided for them; in such is the king of Elam here placed with his slaughtered captains about him: see ver. 23.

26 There *is* [f]Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude: her graves *are* round about him: all of them [g]uncircumcised, slain by the sword, though they caused their terror in the land of the living.

f Gen. 10. 2. ch. 27. 13. & 38. 2.

g ver. 19, 20, &c.

Meshech: see chap. xxvii. 13. *Tubal:* see chap. xxvii. 13; to which interpretation I still adhere, adding that in the full extent of these Moschi and Tibareni, these Cappadocians and Albanians, the Scythians may be included, many of which were next neighbours to them. Junius is of opinion that the Scythians are here meant, and so am I. But it will be said they never had such a settled kingdom worth noting. It is true of that barbarous people, there is no account that ever they were lords of the world; yet *they caused their terror in the land of the living,* and were slain by the sword under the command and in the expeditions of their kings into Asia, who were accompanied with her multitudes. Velleius reports they wasted Asia 360 years before Rome was thought of, and that is about 1082 years before Christ's birth. Again, we find them in arms, (no doubt in numbers much like what they appeared in when Tomyris their queen destroyed Cyrus, or when they have moved against their neighbours in later days,) and with those arms wasted the Cimmerii, a people seated near them on the Euxine Sea and the Mæotis Palus; and about that time they did under their chieftains waste Asia, they forced Cyaxares from the siege of Nineveh, such considerable strength they had then; this was 634 before Christ's birth,

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about 117 after Rome was built; about this time, or in this expedition, they took Sardis, the royal seat of Crœsus, to which Ovid gave the title of Great, only the castle held out. These Scythians in those days were a terror to the nations. Nay, Helvicus tells me from Herodotus, that they had the imperial power, were lords of Asia for twenty-eight years, and it seems that their power was such, Cyaxares was glad to decline plain dealing, and to overthrow them by a wile, as Calvisius tells us, *ad* A. M. 3344, and the help of Halyattes, king of the Lydians. These things were fresh in memory when Ezekiel prophesied thus against Egypt, for they fell out about the eighth or ninth year of Pharaoh-necho, some fourteen years before Pharaoh-hophra came to the crown; now about the sixth year of his reign came this word of the Lord to Ezekiel; so that the prophet might well mention these as instances of God's power abating the pride and destroying the kingdoms of the mighty, and these are with reason brought in among the Persians and Assyrians.

Magnis vicinum Sardibus amnem. Ad A. M. 3340.

h ver. 21. Is. 14. 18, 19.

27 [h]And they shall not lie with the mighty *that are* fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell †with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads, but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though *they were* the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.

† Heb. *with weapons of their war.*

They shall not lie with the mighty; the leaders of these Scythians were not buried with a pomp like that of Asshur or Elam, but, surprised by the fraud of Halyattes and Cyaxares, were cut off with all their multitude, and tumbled into pits with the rabble. *With their weapons;* a ceremony observed in pompous funerals of great captains, to have their weapons and their armour carried before the hearse. *Laid their swords under their heads;* either when carried out to be buried, or laid under their head in their graves; or perhaps under the statues of them placed on the tops of their tombs: these barbarous Scythians were not so buried. *Their iniquity,* the exemplary punishment of their iniquity, *shall be upon their bones;* shall be seen upon their bones unburied, and cast out on the earth by the just judgment of God. *Though they were the terror;* because they were cruel, bloody, ravenous, and mischievously tyrannical while they lived. *The mighty;* Cyaxares and the Persians, that durst not again attempt Nineveh, till the Scythians were fallen.

28 Yea, thou shalt be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, and shalt lie with *them that are* slain with the sword.

Thou; chief of Meshech and Tubal, though not named. *Shalt be broken;* shalt be killed with the rest of wicked followers. *Shalt lie with them;* without regard hurled into the pit with the common soldiers, as thou fallest with them. *That are slain;* whose throats were cut after they were taken. *With the sword* of Halyattes and his Lydians, in revenge it is like of the spoil done to Sardis; and by Cyaxares, in revenge of the affront they gave him, forcing him to quit the siege of Nineveh, and by giving him child's flesh to eat, pretending it was venison taken by them in hunting.

i ch. 25. 12, &c.

29 There *is* [i]Edom, her kings, and all her princes, which with their might are †laid by *them that were* slain by the sword: they shall lie with the uncircumcised, and with them that go down to the pit.

† Heb. *given, or, put.*

Edom; the posterity of Esau, the name of the country too in which they dwelt. *Her kings;* which had been many, and some great warriors. *Her princes,* or dukes, as Gen. xxxvi. 20, 21. *With their might;* showed in the assistance they gave the Assyrians. *Are laid by them;* are slain, and laid aside to be buried, as commanders are usually after their death regarded, and their bodies kept for a funeral. *With the uncircumcised;* yet, as the uncircumcised, so these must to the pit, though no mention is made of their being a terror to the nations.

k ch. 38. 6, 15. & 39. 2.

30 [k]There *be* the princes of the north, all of them, and all the [l]Zidonians, which are gone down with the slain; with their terror they are ashamed of their might; and they lie uncircumcised with *them that be* slain by the sword, and bear their shame with them that go down to the pit.

l ch. 28. 21.

Of the north; of all those countries, Tyrians, Zidonians, Assyrians, and Syrians, &c., which lay northward from Judea, now swallowed up by the Babylonian. *With the slain;* conquered and slain. *With their terror;* their terror is buried with them. *Ashamed of their might;* when it appeared a vain confidence, and too weak to resist the enemy and save themselves. *Uncircumcised;* scorned and cast out, as profane and loathsome. *By the sword* of their conquering enemy. *Bear their shame;* they lie under a shameful fall, from a seeming glory to a real ignominy.

31 Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be [m]comforted over all his multitude, *even* Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.

m ch. 31. 16.

Hophra shall go to them by a like destruction, and, as if he saw them all ruined as he was, should *be comforted,* or rejoice that others before him met with the same fatal end; and whatever comfort this might be, it is all he shall ever have, did he know all those things and persons that are here represented and personated to us.

32 For I have caused my terror in the land of the living: and he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised with *them that are* slain with the sword, *even* Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

It is God that speaketh, who had punished former tyrants, and by a retaliation, that the world might see his just judgments. They were a terror to the world by their cruelty, oppression, and continued violence, by their covetousness, ambition, and pride; and God hath made them a terror by his just severities in their punishments. And so, saith God, will I do with Pharaoh; *he shall be laid;* that is, Pharaoh-hophra shall suffer as they did; since he sinned as they, he made himself like them by choice of their vices, I will make him like them by like miseries and just recompences, and these shall be to his subjects as well as to himself. To Hophra, who was strangled, and likely cast out without burial; to Amasis, who was taken out of his tomb and burnt to ashes: so unlike the condition of the dead, which usually is rest to the body, was their condition after death, who in life made it unlike, and imagined it was above, the condition of mortal men.

CHAP. XXXIII.

According to the duty of a watchman in warning the people, Ezekiel is admonished of his duty in warning sinners, 1—9. *God showeth the manner of his dealings with the righteous that revolteth, and with the returning sinner,* 10—16. *He maintaineth the equity of his proceeding,* 17—20. *Upon the news of the taking of Jerusalem, Ezekiel prophesieth the desolation of the land,* 21—29. *The hypocrisy of the captive Jews reproved,* 30—33.

AGAIN the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

587.

2 Son of man, speak to [a]the children of thy people, and say unto them, [b]† When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their [c]watchman:

a ch. 3. 11.
b ch. 14. 17.
† Heb. *A land when I bring a sword upon her.*
c 2 Sam. 18. 24, 25. 2 Kin. 9. 17. ver. 7. Hos. 9. 8.

The prophet, after three years' silence enjoined him, now hath his mouth opened by new commission. *To the children of thy people;* to the Jews in general, to whom he had not spoken since what he spake in the 24th chapter. *Say unto them;* propound a parable unto them. *When;* if at any time. *The sword;* war, or any sore judgment. *Take a man;* choose out a man who lives on the borders, and knows the avenues and the ways the

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enemy will most likely come to assault them. *Set him for their watchman;* appoint him to watch the coasts, that they may not be surprised.

3 If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

The sword of the enemy, or any other danger which he may foresee in any of the causes or forerunners of it. *Come,* i. e. coming, approaching to the land. *Blow the trumpet;* sound the alarm: the sound of the trumpet is a warning, yet to this sometimes it is necessary to add a warning by word of mouth, and tell the people brought together by the trumpet what he seeth.

† Heb. *he that hearing heareth.*

4 Then † whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away,

d ch. 18. 13. [d]his blood shall be upon his own head.

Whosoever considers not and minds not what he hears, who hears and does not consider, he turns a deaf ear to the meaning, though not to the sound of the trumpet. *Taketh not warning;* apprehends not, nor will be made apprehensive of, the danger, to provide for resisting or fleeing the sword. *Take him away;* destroy him. *His blood;* the guilt and blame of his blood, of his death. *Shall be upon his own head;* shall never be charged on any but himself.

5 He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

He heard, as well as others who escaped, and he might have delivered himself, as they did who took warning. He is the only cause of his own death. *Shall deliver his soul;* shall save his life, preserve his own person.

6 But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take *any* person from among them,

e ver. 8. [e]he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

Blow not the trumpet; neglect his charge, which is to give the alarm. *Be not warned;* but, unwarned, are surprised by the enemy. *Taken away in his iniquity;* punished by the Lord for his sins and trespasses formerly done, and he is destroyed under the present fault of not watching, which is a fault in every one that is so secure in time of war. *His blood;* the guilt of that blood. *Require at the watchman's hand;* charge upon and for it punish the watchman, who sinned in not giving warning.

f ch. 3. 17, &c. 7 ¶ [f]So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked *man,* thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

9 Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

These three verses are the same with the 17th, 18th, 19th verses of the third chapter, where see them explained.

10 Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and

g ch. 24. 23. h So Is. 49. 14. ch. 37. 11. our sins *be* upon us, and we [g]pine away in them, [h]how should we then live?

Speak, declare from me, *unto the house of Israel;* the residue of the two tribes, which are brought to Babylon; or else to those already there, and here their brethren are on the way thitherward, since Jerusalem was taken. *Thus ye speak;* thus ye discourse among themselves, object against God, and his prophet, and your own duty, some of you out of infirmity, others out of perverseness. *If our transgressions and our sins be upon us;* the unpardoned guilt and the unsupportable punishment of our sins, who were warned and took not warning, do thus, as in the wasting our country, burning our city, abolishing the public worship of God, come upon us, we shall pine away, consume: it is too late to hope it will be better with us now, we should have heard and followed the counsel earlier, if we would have delivered our own souls. If the prophet spake true at first, there is no hope, say the weaker; if there be hope now after so peremptory menaces and so great execution, the prophet did not speak truth, say the perverse, and so concluded they would as they were run the hazard. *How should we then live?* how can it be better with us? if the threats be true and sure, it will be worse; if not true, how are his promises to be rested on, that it will be better.

11 Say unto them, *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, [i]I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for [k]why will ye die, O house of Israel?

i 2 Sam. 14. 14. ch. 18. 23, 32. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

k ch. 18. 31.

As I live, saith the Lord God: see chap. v. 11; xvi. 48; xvii. 16. *I have no pleasure:* see chap. xviii. 23, 32. *But that the wicked:* here is an ellipsis; but I have pleasure in the seasonable return the sinner makes from sin to holiness, and from death to life. *Turn ye;* O leave sin, cease to do evil, be persuaded to repent; it will please me to pardon your faults, and to throw away the rod, and to save your persons. *Why will ye die?* death is your choice, not mine, so long as you go on in the way that is not good; whoso sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul, and love to sin is interpretatively a love and choosing of death. It is your culpable will, not my severe resolution, that you die.

12 Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The [l]righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, [m]he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his *righteousness* in the day that he sinneth.

l ch. 3. 20. & 18. 24, 26, 27.

m 2 Chron. 7. 14.

As for the wickedness of the wicked, &c.: see chap. iii. 20; xviii. 20—22, 24, where the same things are explained.

13 When I shall say to the righteous, *that* he shall surely live; [n]if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

n ch. 3. 20. & 18. 24.

The righteous; who hath in his life that is past kept the law and forborne evil, hath done what is right and good, and not done what is evil, both which parts of this righteousness are described in chap. xviii. 5—9. *He shall surely live;* make him promise of doing him good, and giving him life, peace, every blessing, and happiness. *If he trust to his own righteousness;* if he conclude former righteousness is sufficient, and therefore turn to ways of sin, pleasing to an evil heart. *Commit iniquity;* give himself to doing evil, as it were his work. *Shall not be remembered;* no regard shall be had to what he had done, he doth himself practically renounce it, and interpretatively recant his doing it. *His iniquity that he hath committed;* in his apostacy and backslidden state. *He shall die;* shall be punished, his comforts shall be taken away or die in his hand, he shall live and die miserably. *For it;* his iniquity and punishment of it, and this is emphatically repeated, as chap. xviii. 26.

14 Again, [o]when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do † that which is lawful and right;

o ch. 3. 18, 19. & 18. 27.

† Heb. *judgment and justice.*

See chap. xviii. 21.

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p ch. 18. 7. q Ex. 22. 1, 4. Lev. 6. 2, 4, 5. Num. 5. 6, 7. Luke 19. 8. r Lev. 18. 5. ch. 20. 11, 13, 21.

15 *If* the wicked [p]restore the pledge, [q]give again that he had robbed, walk in [r]the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

See chap. xviii. 7, 9. *Without committing iniquity:* it is not a sinless life here required or supposed, but a life in which a man doth not habitually and wilfully work iniquity.

s ch. 18. 22.

16 [s]None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

See chap. xviii. 22.

As the threat against a righteous man that proves a presumptuous apostate was stated in the former part of the 12th, and in the whole 13th verse, so in these three verses the case of a repenting and reforming sinner is stated and determined to his encouragement and comfort, and they are the same with chap. xviii. 21, 22, 27, 28, which see.

t ver. 20. ch. 18. 25, 29.

17 ¶ [t]Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal.

These impious, obstinate quarrellers will accuse and do condemn the just and holy God, that they may acquit themselves. See this verse explained, chap. xviii. 25, 29.

u ch. 18. 26, 27.

18 [u]When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

19 But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

In these two verses the cases are so clearly stated, that it is as clear as the sun the ways of God are very just, and that none but ignorant atheists would think or surmise otherwise.

x ver. 17. ch. 18. 25, 29.

20 ¶ Yet ye say, [x]The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways.

Still blinded prejudice quarrels. *Judge;* call you to account, plead with you, and pass sentence. *Every one:* this is added to rouse every one up to repent of all sins, and of this particularly. *After his ways;* a terrible threat, and I know not how a greater could be denounced against sinners than this. God, infinitely holy and perfectly just, will judge them according to their unequal, unrighteous, sinful ways, and according to his inflexible justice. And if God enter thus into judgment, who can stand in his sight?

y ch. 1. 2. z ch. 24. 26. a 2 Kings 25. 4.

21 ¶ And it came to pass in the twelfth year [y]of our captivity, in the tenth *month*, in the fifth *day* of the month, [z]*that* one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, [a]The city is smitten.

In the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month; that is, one year and five months after the thing was done, and temple burnt, and the city sacked. *One that had escaped;* one whose own care, but God's wonderful providence had much more, befriended him; perhaps it might be one of those that yielded to the Babylonians before, but was resolved to see the upshot of all. *Saying;* likely giving a particular account of the whole. *The city;* Jerusalem. *Smitten;* taken and plundered, the inhabitants slain or captives, and the city sacked, razed, and burnt.

b ch. 1. 3. c ch. 24. 27.

22 Now [b]the hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came; and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; [c]and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb.

The hand of the Lord was upon me; the powerful influence of the prophetic Spirit inspired me, and prepared me for what followed. *Had opened my mouth;* not that the prophet was dumb through impotence and inability to speak, for he had prophesied against many nations, but he was forbidden to say any thing of the Jews, to threaten, warn, counsel, or command, chap. xxiv. 25—27; xxix. 21; but now the Spirit moved me to speak, and continued his motion till the messenger came, and ever after, for God did not command him silence any more.

23 Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

d ch. 34. 2. e ver. 27. ch. 36. 4. f Is. 51. 2. Acts 7. 5. g See Mic. 3. 11. Matt. 3. 9. John 8. 39.

24 Son of man, [d]they that inhabit those [e]wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, [f]Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: [g]but we *are* many; the land is given us for inheritance.

They that inhabit; who were left behind, having either hid themselves, but now come out of their holes, or returned from neighbour countries, whither they fled, or permitted by the conqueror to stay and plant vineyards. *Wastes;* places once very fruitful and abounding with people, but now by the spoil of the soldiers emptied of inhabitants, and made as a desolate wilderness. *Speak, saying;* thus think and speak; thus with vain reasonings they deceive themselves. *He inherited the land;* our father had hereditary right to all this land when but one, and he multiplied to a great company, and so they possessed the land; we children of Abraham, though diminished, are many, and the Divine goodness will surely appear then, and continue to us both right and possession, and we shall fill the land, and recover our former state and privileges. *Is given us;* it was given by promise to us the seed, as well as to our progenitor; nay more, it is given us in possession, we dwell in it, when Abraham had not one foot of it in his possession. *For inheritance;* the perpetual inheritance is ours. Thus with vain, fallacious arguments they cheat one another.

h Gen. 9. 4. Lev. 3. 17. & 7. 26. & 17. 10. & 19. 26. Deut. 12. 16. i ch. 18. 6. k ch. 22. 6, 9.

25 Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; [h]Ye eat with the blood, and [i]lift up your eyes toward your idols, and [k]shed blood: and shall ye possess the land?

Say unto them; remove them from this dangerous carnal confidence, and show them what they do, and by that what they are, how far from Abraham's seed, his genuine seed. *Ye eat with the blood:* whatever might be the reason why, it is most certain this was forbidden, Gen. ix. 4; Lev. xvii. 14; xix. 26: they sinned by violating this law. *Lift up your eyes;* honouring, praying, depending on, and committing yourselves to the protection and guidance of those dumb idols: see chap. xviii. 6. *Shed blood,* innocent blood, ye are murderers. *Shall ye possess the land,* polluted with such and many other heinous sins? and what colour of hope can you have, that you shall possess the land? The question includes a peremptory denial.

l Wisd. 2. 11. m ch. 18. 6. & 22. 11.

26 [l]Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye [m]defile every one his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land?

Ye stand upon your sword; you trust to your sword, and stand with it as it were drawn ready to kill and slay, you do all with violence and force, not regarding what is right and equal, and fear no restraints or punishments. *Abomination;* idolatry, or other wickedness not to be named. *Ye defile every one his neighbour's wife:* adultery is so common among you, that it is no bold hyperbole to say every one defiles his neighbour's wife. *Shall ye possess the land?* Can such sinners flatter themselves that they shall inherit the land promised to a holy and good father, and to the like seed? Will not the land spew Jewish sinners out, as it did spew out such Canaanitish sinners?

n ver. 24. o ch. 39. 4. † Heb. to devour him. p Judg. 6. 2. 1 Sam. 13. 6.

27 Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; *As* I live, surely [n]they that *are* in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that *is* in the open field [o]will I give to the beasts † to be devoured, and they that *be* in the forts and [p]in the caves shall die of the pestilence.

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The wastes; the ruinous heaps of cities or towns, in which some sorry habitations might possibly be found by them. *Shall fall;* the Chaldean soldier ransacking all places, and either expecting or by chance finding them there, shall kill in revenge of Gedaliah's death. and Ishmael with others shall destroy some of them. *That is in the open field;* that wanders in the fields, shall be a prey to lions, or other ravenous beasts, that will multiply in that ruined country. *In the forts;* out of the reach of men and beasts my hand shall reach, I will send the pestilence, that shall sweep them away.

q Jer. 44. 2, 6, 22. ch. 36. 34, 35. † Heb. *desolation and desolations.* r ch. 7. 24. & 24. 21. & 30. 6, 7. s ch. 6. 2, 3, 6.

28 qFor I will lay the land † most desolate, and the rpomp of her strength shall cease; and sthe mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through.

I will lay the land; I do purpose to destroy utterly all in this land; and what can escape, when savage beasts, cruel men, and a pestilential air all concur to ruin the land? *The pomp of her strength;* the stately and pompous shows of her strength, and her former riches and power. *The mountains of Israel,* on which were vineyards and oliveyards, where the joyful sounds of the vintage and harvests did glad the heart, there shall be utter desolation. *None shall pass through;* no man daring to venture for fear of wild beasts, or pestilential air, or famine in those wasted mountains.

29 Then shall they know that I *am* the LORD, when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed.

I would have had them acknowledge me to be the Lord by my blessings which beautified the land, by my holy precepts which directed to piety and justice, by my mercy and kindness towards them; but they despised my mercy, broke my law, abused my bounty; and now by the punishment of their sins, as I threatened, and by laying the land most waste, they shall be constrained to own and submit to me as the Lord.

‖ Or, *of thee.* t Is. 29. 13.

30 ¶ Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking ‖against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and tspeak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD.

The children; captives in Babylon. *Thy people; thy,* not my people; God doth debase, degrade, and disown them. *By the walls;* as men now do in cities or towns, so then they stood up to the wall, when, meeting in the streets, they would talk together. *In the doors of the houses;* others got into the porches or doors of their houses, this they did to tell each other what news of their country. *Speak one to another:* and all ends in this at last: Come, I pray, let us go up to the prophet, the true prophet, and inquire what God hath revealed to him, and what he may reveal unto us, whether any, or when will that end of our sorrows be.

u ch. 14. 1. & 20. 1, &c. † Heb. *according to the coming of the people.* ‖ Or, *my people sit before thee.* x ch. 8. 1. y Ps. 78. 36, 37. Is. 29. 13. † Heb. *they make loves,* or, *jests.* z Matt. 13. 22.

31 And u they come unto thee † as the people cometh, and ‖ they xsit before thee *as* my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: yfor with their mouth † they shew much love, *but* ztheir heart goeth after their covetousness.

Flocking to the school of some famous doctor, or as men and women flock to hear some famous preacher, or as they were wont to the synagogues to hear their learned scribes. So we find the elders of Judah, chap. viii. 1, which see; so the disciples of the great rabbies sat at their feet; so is Saul said to be brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. By their outward deportments, you might judge them to be my people, and hear seemingly very attentive. They do only hear what thou sayest, but they will not do it. All their love is but from teeth outward, either to me, my word, or my prophet, saith God. *Their heart goeth after their covetousness;* their desire, love, and care is about their gain, how to make thriving bargains, how to place out and secure their money with excessive and intolerable usury and increase.

† Heb. *a song of loves.*

32 And, lo, thou *art* unto them as † a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

These Jews esteem and regard thee and what thou sayest, as men regard a skilful musician, who to a well-tuned instrument hath sung the praises of virtue or of virtuous men; it pleaseth their ear, but it doth not frame their hearts and life to virtue. They loved him for his eloquent lamentation, and reproof of their enemies, and for foretelling that they should fall, and saying nothing against them and their sins for these three years past; but when he exhorts them to duty, or dissuades from sin, they will hear, not do.

a 1 Sam. 3. 20. b ch. 2. 5.

33 aAnd when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then bshall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

When all thou hast prophesied against the Jews shall, as that thou prophesiedst against the nations, come to pass to their ruin, they shall know thou wast no musician, but a prophet sent of God, to forewarn them to flee from wrath; not employed by men, to please their wanton ear and fancy.

CHAP. XXXIV.

A reproof of the shepherds of Israel, 1—6. *God's judgment against them,* 7—10. *His providence over his flock,* 11—19. *The blessings of Christ's kingdom,* 20—31.

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 567.

a ch. 33. 24. b Jer. 23. 1. Zech. 11. 17.

2 Son of man, prophesy against the ashepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; bWoe *be* to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

The shepherds; the rulers of the people, both political, as kings, magicians, and princes, and also ecclesiastical, priests and prophets. *Israel;* the two tribes, and the few that out of the ten did adhere to the house of David. *Prophesy;* the command is repeated to encourage and engage the prophet to his work. *Thus saith the Lord God:* Ezekiel speaks, but these rulers must know it is God that speaks by him. *Woe be to the shepherds!* they have been principal causes of many sins, and exemplary actors in other sins, for which many woes were threatened; many already are come, and the rest will come, in which woes these rulers shall have more than ordinary share. *Feed themselves;* contrive their own ease, advantage, honour, and ambitious projects. Let the consciences of these rulers, ecclesiastical and political, speak, ought they not, as shepherds, to take care of the sheep committed to their care? *The flocks;* the sheep, both whole flocks and the single sheep, whole societies and particular members of them.

c Is. 56. 11. Zech. 11. 16. d ch. 33. 25, 26. Mic. 3. 1, 2, 3. Zech. 11. 5.

3 cYe eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, dye kill them that are fed: *but* ye feed not the flock.

The fat; rather the milk, which insatiably and without measure you devour; you exhaust their purses and weaken their estates by tributes, exacted by extortions: so the temporal rulers and the spiritual rulers had their methods and arts to milk them dry, these lived on the sins of the people. *With the wool;* with best and finest, as best suiting with your pride and luxury, on which you force the people to bestow so much that they have not to clothe themselves and theirs; this was mighty oppression. *Ye kill them;* contrive methods for a seeming legal course to forfeit first the life, and next the estate, of the well-fed, the rich, and wealthy, and then make merry and feast, as

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voluptuous, unfaithful shepherds feast on the fattest of the sheep in their masters' fold. *Ye feed not the flock;* take no care to lead, protect, provide for, and watch over them, but, as idle shepherds feasted with the fattest, let the rest starve for any thing they care.

e ver. 16. Zech. 11. 16.

4 [e]The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up *that which was* broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye [f]sought that which was lost; but with [g]force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.

f Luke 15. 4.

g 1 Pet. 5. 3.

The weak and languishing, (such there are in the church and state,) with your hand, countenance, and counsel; so these metaphorical shepherds should as the other strengthen their sheep, with carrying them into good and quiet pastures. The sheep in our pastures are subject to many sicknesses, the sheep in church and state to more, and shepherds in both should be as physicians to heal them; but here these did not so. Sometimes violent and ravenous beasts break their bones, sometimes the stronger and fatter sheep bruise or break them, these should the shepherds bind up; violent oppressors in the state and in the church broke many of them, but these shepherds bound them not up. Sheep are often driven out of the pasture, frighted, hunted, and pursued by dogs, or other mischievous creatures; these the shepherd should find out, and bring back: in church and state there were many such, frighted and driven by fierce men like dogs running upon them, but the Jewish rulers took no care to inquire for them, or to bring them back to their own country. Sheep wander and lose themselves, shepherds should seek such and bring them home; many political sheep among the Jews wandered from their country, their king, religion, and God, and these careless rulers never sought them, but *ruled them* with hard hand, that held fast all that should look like royal power and privilege, and rigorously executed all their grievous laws and edicts. *With cruelty*, such as the Egyptians used toward the Jews, Exod. i. 13, 14; instead of acting like shepherds, these tyrants in the Jewish polity acted like merciless butchers in church and state.

h ch. 33. 21, 28.

i 1 Kings 22. 17. Matt. 9. 36.

‖ Or, *without a shepherd*, and so ver. 8.

k Is. 56. 9. Jer. 12. 9. ver. 8.

5 [h]And they were [i]scattered, ‖because *there is* no shepherd: [k]and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

They, my neglected sheep, *were scattered*, by the inroads and invasions of their enemies, that broke in like devouring beasts. *No shepherd;* no vigilant, faithful, good shepherd that loved the flock, and of love studied its welfare. *Became meat;* were made a prey of, and devoured by Syrians, Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, &c., all their neighbours might then devour them. *The beasts*, signify men, troops of robbers, and spoilers. *When they were scattered;* as sheep scattered are easily devoured by every hungry wolf or fox.

6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek *after them.*

My sheep: these shepherds forgot the flock was not their property, but God will not lose his property in them, nor shall shepherds find at last they were more than God's stewards, and accountable. *Through all the mountains;* when endangered, affrighted, pursued, they got upon the mountains by their own choice, or carried away by enemies; or it may refer to their wandering after idols worshipped in high places, or perhaps to kingdoms and states and great cities, compared to mountains, that there they might find what they could not at home, quiet and safety. *Upon every high hill;* the same thing in like words. *My flock;* they were, if any among the Jews could be called so, my flock that were so used; not the swine, and goats, and unclean beasts, that by whole herds rested undisturbed. It was Baruch and Jeremiah were fain to hide. *Scattered upon all the face of the earth;* they were dispersed through maladministration to all parts of the known world; it is an hyperbole that speaks a mighty scattering. *None did search;* the shepherds were contented, nay, glad they were rid of them, neither principal officers searched nor inferior sought after them.

7 ¶ Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

Ye shepherds; the rulers, king of Israel, princes, high priest and priests, and pretended prophets, hear ye. God speaks in the style and manner of one greatly incensed.

8 *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock [l]became meat to every beast of the field, because *there was* no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, [m]but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

l ver. 5, 6.

m ver. 2, 10.

See ver. 2, 3, 5, 6. *My shepherds:* government and governors are by God's appointment, and here he owns the careless, worst of rulers as his shepherds.

9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

See ver. 7.

10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against the shepherds; and [n]I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds [o]feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

n ch. 3. 18. Heb. 13. 17.

o ver. 2, 8.

I am against; they have provoked me to displeasure to be their enemy, and I will appear and act so. They are enemies to my sheep, yet pretended to be shepherds, I will be an open enemy to them. *The shepherds;* to Zedekiah, his princes, the priests, and prophets, all the ruling part in Jerusalem. *I will require my flock;* I will require both account first, and next by severe punishing, as Zedekiah, his children, &c., found. *Cause them to cease from feeding the flock;* turn them out of my service, that honourable employment; so was the king and princes of Judah turned out of all by the king of Babylon, by whom God made good this his word. *Feed themselves any more;* their profit ceased with the ceasing of their authority, and they could no more milk, fleece, or slay the flock, when it was taken out of their hand. *I will deliver my flock;* they should have delivered them out of the hands of violence; since they did not, I will deliver, save, and rescue this flock which is mine. *From their mouth:* this speaks that these shepherds had been lions, or bears, or wolves, more than shepherds, and therefore out of their mouths, not hands, God will deliver. *That they may not be meat for them;* so the flock shall no more be devoured by them.

11 ¶ For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, *even* I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.

I, even I: the construction is emphatical in the Hebrew, and well expressed here; I, the Owner, the Lover, the Maker, the great Shepherd, even I, who committed them to your care, never submitted them to your rapine and cruelty, am as angry with you for devouring them as I am zealous for their welfare. *Search;* will demand them of you. I know how many I delivered to your keeping, and I expect an account of so many again; I will see in what state and condition they are too. *Seek them out:* see ver. 5, 6: under your hand many are, but under my hand not one shall be, lost.

12 †As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in [p]the cloudy and dark day.

† Heb. *According to the seeking.*

p ch. 30. 3. Joel 2. 2.

As a shepherd doth gently gather them together, counteth

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them, brings them to the fold, views what they have suffered, whether lame or torn, and binds up, and healeth; if any are wanting, he looks till he findeth them, and brings them back; so will I, saith the Lord. If the shepherd find the wolf or lion among them or near them, he will either kill or drive him away; so will God. If under-servants have been careless, they shall be warned or turned away; so here, &c. *Will deliver them;* they are wronged in all places where they were scattered, the places in which they are and should not be are part of that danger I will free them from. *The cloudy day;* when the storm first began to arise from abroad or at home; here in persecutions, there in warlike preparations. *Dark day;* that the land was invaded till the desolation of Jerusalem, the times of maladministration of their own governors, and violent irruption of their enemies.

q Is. 65. 9, 10. Jer. 23. 3. ch. 28. 25. & 36. 24. & 37. 21, 22.

13 And [q]I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

When Cyrus's proclamation came forth that the Jews might return, this prophecy was literally fulfilled, God did incline the minds of the Jews to retire from the people amidst whom they had dwelt seventy years: see Ezra i. 5, 6; vii. 13. *Gather them;* assemble them together; so they did in a place appointed without the country, where they were, (as appears, Ezra viii. 15,) in their assembling at Ahava or Diava, near where it falls into Euphrates, in the country Adiabene, which was from the more inward recesses of the Babylonian kingdom onwards of their journey to Jerusalem. *Will bring them;* lead, conduct, and as a shepherd go before them, till I have put them into possession again of their own land. *Their own land;* Canaan, their own by grant from the crown of heaven, anciently possessed by their fathers, and out of which violence cast them. *Feed them;* God will provide, maintain, and nourish them. *The mountains of Israel;* places proper for sheep, where now they shall once more be kept. *The rivers;* water-brooks, as Psal. xlii. 1; which run down from the spring-heads in the sides and tops of the mountains, with some impetuousness and noise; or if greater rivers, they are those that run by the foot of the mountains, on which these sheep shall feed. *The inhabited places:* this may explain the former. On such hills by rivers the returned captives would first settle their habitations, and here these sheep would be safest; thus literally: spiritually, it refers to the gathering the elect by the gospel out of the world, &c.

r Ps. 23. 2.
s Jer. 33. 12.

14 [r]I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: [s]there shall they lie in a good fold, and *in* a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

In a good pasture; in fat, sweet, plentiful pastures. *Their fold be;* to rest in there for safety; they shall settle their habitations upon their return: or there my flock, my people, my church shall dwell and rest, where idolaters once had their high places; thus spiritually. *There they shall lie, &c.:* this and what follows is a confirmation of what before was promised, and it is assured to them by the Lord, who himself will see all this be done.

15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God.

t See ver. 4. Is. 40. 11. Micah 4. 6. Matt. 18. 11. Mark 2. 17. Luke 5. 32.
u Is. 10. 16. Amos 4. 1.
x Jer. 10. 24.

16 [t]I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up *that which was* broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy [u]the fat and the strong; I will feed them [x]with judgment.

In the former part of the 16th verse, God promiseth to his people that he will do all the offices of a good, watchful, tender, and faithful shepherd, which those shepherds did neglect. See also ver. 4. *I will destroy;* severely punish; which is threatened, and was fulfilled in the ruin of the rulers of this people. *The fat;* the powerful and rich, who by oppressing and devouring my people grew fat, proud, troublesome, and dangerous to the poor sheep. *The strong;* by their authority I gave, and by the encroachments they have made to increase their power. *I will feed them with judgment:* it is an irony; I will feed them, but with wormwood and gall, my sore but just judgments and displeasure, so some: but others refer judgment here to reason, decency, and fitness, the most convenient, beneficial, and safe way; as a wise shepherd will I feed these my sheep. And either may consist with the context.

y ch. 20. 37, 38. ver. 20, 22. Zech. 10. 3. Matt. 25. 32, 33.
+ Heb. *small cattle of lambs and kids.* + Heb. *great he goats.*

17 And *as for* you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; [y]Behold, I judge between †cattle and cattle, between the rams and the †he goats.

I judge between cattle and cattle; make a different estimate and judgment between men and men, between the smaller and weaker that need more tenderness, and the greater and stronger whose violence is to be restrained; and as becomes me, and their different state requires, I will do. *Rams;* the hieroglyphic of rulers in their authority, humours, and carriage towards their subjects, who are also observed and shall be dealt with accordingly, when God makes good all this his word.

18 *Seemeth it* a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet?

God awakens them by this interrogatory to think first, and then speak what this is. When you are full fed, and others hungry and ready to starve, who might live on that you leave if you did not spoil it, do you think such killing is no crime? Is it not a very great cruelty, and a most barbarous inhumanity? You great ones, who have much more than others, partly by the bounty of the Lord of the sheep, and partly by your injustice and rapine, you eat the fat and sweet, and what you cannot eat you waste and spoil; and what would you say, if your proud, fat, and spiteful servants in your houses should do so to their weaker, leaner, and modester servants? *The deep waters;* which are clear to the eye and pleasant, which are sweet to their palate, which are wholesome to the drinker. *Ye must foul the residue with your feet;* in spite as much as wantonness you stamp in them, raise all the mud from the bottom, that makes the waters unfit to be drunk: is this a trivial thing thus to starve and choke those you should feed and refresh? Such hath been the carriage of you rich, powerful, ruling, and governing part of my people, who have been forced either to live on what you made unwholesome and noxious, or to starve at home, or seek somewhat abroad; this hath destroyed many and dispersed more, but I will not always wink at and bear this.

19 And *as for* my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.

20 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them; [z]Behold, I, *even* I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle.

z ver. 17.

I, even I: see ver. 11, 17. I am judge by office, and I will vindicate and right the poor by judgment. *The fat cattle;* the rich, voluptuous, and wanton ones. *The lean cattle;* the poor and indigent, that are despised, oppressed, and injured; thus the Chaldee paraphrase, between the rich man and the poor man.

21 Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad;

22 Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and [a]I will judge between cattle and cattle.

a ver. 17

In the 21st verse those metaphors and allusions do express the unmercifulness, injustice, pride, cruelty, and wanton tyranny of the rulers in church and state against the

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meaner people, that as you see the greater cattle run against the lesser, and overturning, or laming, some way or other hurting them, by shouldering against them; or as horned cattle wound and tear the weaker, and make them run for it; so had these rulers used their power to the hurt and scattering of the people. Because I see they destroy who should defend, I will interpose; they will not, but I will, be kind, just, and faithful to my people and promise; I will save from foreign violence and home oppressions. See ver. 5, 10, 17, and 2.

b Is. 40. 11. Jer. 23. 4, 5. John 10. 11. Heb. 13. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 25. & 5. 4. c Jer. 30. 9. ch. 37. 24, 25. Hos. 3. 5.

23 And I will set up one [b] shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, [c] *even* my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

I will set; advance, establish, and make great; thus I will appoint and set up. *One shepherd:* formerly their many shepherds destroyed, as Jer. xii. 10; now this one shall save. Literally and historically Zerubbabel may be somewhat intended, but principally and plenarily, as Christ is intended here, so in him it was accomplished; for he is the great, good, chief, only Shepherd, that laid down his life for his sheep. *Feed them;* give them best, most abundant, and most seasonable food, he also shall govern them in righteousness, and with equity. *My servant David;* Messiah, (as Kimchi on the place,) of the seed of David, the beloved One, who was typified by David, and in other places called by this name, as Isa. xxxvii. 35; Jer. xxx. 9; chap. xxxvii. 24; Hos. iii. 5. *He shall* do all the office of a good and faithful shepherd, and that for ever. I will trust them in his hands, for he will keep them, that not one of them shall be lost, but shall go in and out under his hand, and find pasture.

d ver. 30. Ex. 29. 45. ch. 37. 27. e ch. 37. 22. Luke 1. 32, 33.

24 And [d] I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David [e] a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken *it*.

The Lord; the glorious, gracious, eternal One. *Will be their God;* I so put them into Christ's hand, that still I am and will be their God; yea, I will, through this my servant David, be their God. *My servant;* Christ was in this great work his Father's servant, Isa. xlii. 1; lii. 13; Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25. *David;* as ver. 23; Christ, called David there as well as here. *Prince;* so Christ is Prince and Saviour to his church, Acts v. 31. *I the Lord have spoken it;* God seals it with this as his oath unchangeable.

f ch. 37. 26. g Lev. 26. 6. Is. 11. 6, —9. & 35. 9. Hos. 2. 18. h ver. 28. Jer. 23. 6.

25 And [f] I will make with them a covenant of peace, and [g] will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they [h] shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.

Will make; renew and confirm to them. *A covenant of peace;* a covenant of promises, which contain and shall bring peace; in the Hebrew dialect, *all good.* This, as it refers to the state of this people after their return, comprehends that outward peace and prosperity that God gave them, but it hath a higher and more excellent import, better mercies of this covenant established on better promises, i. e. best, because spiritual and eternal. *Evil beasts:* during the Babylonish captivity evil beasts had exceedingly increased, through seventy years' desolation in Judea, but on the replanting and increasing of men these were diminished, and destroyed at last; thus literally. But mystically, under the bondage of Satan, worse beasts destroyed men; these Christ, who turns back that captivity, will destroy. *Safely;* without danger and without fear: see chap. xxviii. 26. *In the wilderness;* in which both wild and hurtful beasts, and wilder, more hurtful robbers, did haunt. There is somewhat of an hyperbole here; after the temporal redemption from Babylon, they should have such safety as they should account very great after such long and great troubles; in the spiritual redemption they should have greater safety, when, delivered from the hand of enemies, they serve God in holiness before him all their days. *In the woods,* places where venomous and devouring creatures usually lurk, yet there shall ye venture confidently to sleep, and without much danger.

i Is. 56. 7. ch. 20. 40. k Gen. 12. 2.

26 And I will make them and the places round about [i] my hill [k] a blessing; and I will [l] cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be [m] showers of blessing.

Is. 19. 26. Zech. 8. 12. l Lev. 26. 4. & m Ps. 65. 9. Mal. 3. 10.

I will make them, my returned captives, who were looked upon as cursed, reproached, and hated. *The places round about;* all the country. *My hill;* Jerusalem, or the temple, Zion, which is called a holy hill, Psal. ii. 6. *A blessing;* very prosperous, that men shall report them to be in a blessed condition, or a blessing to others among whom they dwell, or a pattern of blessing others, whom we shall wish like to them, whom we wish greatest good to. *I will cause the shower to come down in his season;* their land shall be most fruitful in the products of it, corn, wine, oil, &c., and all these blessed to them; whereas formerly their blessings were so cursed that they were no blessings, now they shall be blessed, and so be double blessings to them.

n Lev. 26. 4. Ps. 85. 12. Is. 4. 2. o Lev. 26. 13. Jer. 2. 20. p Jer. 25. 14.

27 And [n] the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have [o] broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that [p] served themselves of them.

The tree of the field; either those that are planted by man's industry in the field, or those that grow wild in the field, and yield fruit, as the oak, pine, &c. *The earth,* tilled by man. *Her increase;* great increase, as formerly, when I blessed it. *Safe:* see ver. 25, and chap. xxviii. 26. *The bands;* the power and tyranny of Babylon. *Their yoke,* which my people groaned under in captivity. *Served themselves of them;* made them slaves, and used them so.

q See ver. 8. ch. 36. 4. r ver. 25. Jer. 30. 10. & 46. 27.

28 And they shall no more [q] be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but [r] they shall dwell safely, and none shall make *them* afraid.

See ver. 5, 10, 25, and chap. xxviii. 26. *None shall make them afraid;* neither beasts nor men, for these shall be restrained if they would, those be destroyed and cease that they cannot, endanger them.

s Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. ‖ Or, *for renown.* † Heb. *taken away.* t ch. 36. 3, 6, 15.

29 And I will raise up for them a [s] plant ‖ of renown, and they shall be no more †consumed with hunger in the land, [t] neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.

Raise; establish and settle. *A plant;* or plantation, so the word, so the Chaldee paraphrast, and so it best suits new planters as they now were; however, as we read it, it is a promise of honour and fame to their posterity, as in the Maccabees' time, and, which is more, it is a promise of the Messiah to be raised for them. *With hunger in the land;* by barrenness of a land cursed, or by wastes made by enemies, or by long siege, as formerly. *The shame of the heathen;* who reproached them; cast away, rejected of God, and accursed, so that they were a taunt and proverb among the heathen.

u ver. 24. ch. 37. 27.

30 Thus shall they know that [u] I the LORD their God *am* with them, and *that* they, *even* the house of Israel, *are* my people, saith the Lord GOD.

Thus, by these many and great blessings I give them. *shall they know,* the very heathen shall be convinced. *The Lord,* who can do what I promise and my people expect. *Their God,* by covenant from their forefathers. *With them;* present with them, and reconciled to them, and do bless them. *That they,* whom they despised and injured, and ere while did make slaves, and used so. *My people;* my peculiar people above all people in the world; and that though he seemed to have cast him off, and they feared it, and the enemies boasted he had, yet he owns them for his, and will not break his covenant.

x Ps. 100. 3. John 10. 11.

31 And ye my [x] flock, the flock of my pasture, *are* men, *and* I *am* your God, saith the Lord GOD.

Now, that neither you nor any else mistake the allegory,

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note, saith God, this flock of my pasture are not sheep literally, but they are men expressed by this emblem, and these men are those I am a God to, and will be so for ever.

CHAP. XXXV.

The judgment of Mount Seir, for their hatred of Israel, and insulting over their distress.

587. MOREOVER the word of the LORD came
a ch. 6. 2. b Deut. 2. 5. c Jer. 49. 7, 8. ch. 25. 12. Amos 1. 11. Obad. 10, &c. unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, [a]set thy face against [b]mount Seir, and [c]prophesy against it,

Put thyself in a posture looking towards Mount Seir, but with a stern and menacing countenance; the phrase you meet chap. xx. 46; xxi. 2; xxv. 2. *Mount Seir;* the country for the inhabitants of it, as is usual in Scripture. This was a mountainous country, yet fruitful. It was so called from the old lord of it, Seir the Horite, or mountaineer from Hor, whose posterity were ousted of it by Esau's posterity, Deut. ii. 12. *Prophesy against it;* foretell what sad things are coming on them.

3 And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord
d ch. 6. 14. † Heb. *desolation and desolation: So ver. 7.* GOD; Behold, O mount Seir, I *am* against thee, and [d]I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee †most desolate.

Say unto it; by a prosopopœia, or personating a discourse with them; speak of them as if thou wert speaking to them. *Against thee:* see chap. xxviii. 22; xxxiv. 10. *Stretch out mine hand:* see chap. vi. 14; xxv. 7. *Against,* or *over,* denoting how inevitable the stroke will be which God gives from above. *Most desolate;* wasted, forsaken, and nothing but solitariness left in thee.

e ver. 9. 4 [e]I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

God doth what he stirs up his servants to do; it was Nebuchadnezzar who was appointed to do this, and who did it, as Jer. xxvii. 6; xxviii. 14. *Thy cities,* in the plural; there were many and strong cities in Edom, yet all should be wasted, as chap. xxv. 12—14, where he in like manner is threatened.

f ch. 25. 12. Obad. 10. ‖ Or, *hatred of old.* ch. 25. 15. † Heb. *poured out the children.* † Heb. *hands.* 5 [f]Because thou hast had a ‖ perpetual hatred, and hast †shed *the blood of* the children of Israel by the †force of the sword in the time of their calamity, [g]in the time *that their* iniquity *had* an end:
g Ps. 137. 7. ch. 21. 25, 29. Dan. 9. 24. Obad. 11.

A perpetual hatred: Edom was of the same stock, brother to Jacob, and it was sin to disgust or envy, but greater to hate, and greatest to retain a perpetual hatred, an hereditary enmity from Esau's time, the father of the Edomites, till now: near one thousand two hundred years had the seed of Esau hated Jacob's seed for inheriting the blessing, which yet I have some cause to think they as little valued as their father did before them. *Hast shed the blood,* by sudden incursions sometimes, by a formed war at other times, and by taking side with those who warred upon him at all times; thus the sword of Edom was ever drawn or ready against Jacob's seed. *By the force of the sword;* with fierceness, cruelty, and burning hatred, as appears, Obad. 11—14, which see. *Their calamity;* deepest calamity; when all was lost, and their city taken, and none to pity or help, then did Edom cruelly execute his hatred, Psal. cxxxvii. 7. *In the time that their iniquity had an end;* when their iniquity was charged and punished on them, which brought them to final ruin. See chap. xxi. 25.

6 Therefore, *as* I live, saith the Lord
h Ps. 109. 17. GOD, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: [h]sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee.

As I live: God is true and constant to his threats against hardened sinners, and will be so as sure as he lives. *Prepare thee unto blood;* I will dispose all things for war against thee, for a bloody war, in which thy blood shall be shed. *Blood,* thy guilt and my just revenges of innocent blood, *shall pursue thee,* never leave till thou die for it. *Hast not hated blood;* hast loved, rather than hated, bloodshed; therefore vengeance for it follows thee.

7 Thus will I make mount Seir †most desolate, and cut off from it [i]him that passeth out and him that returneth.
† Heb. *desolation and desolation,* ver. 3. i Judg. 5. 6. ch. 29. 11.

All travellers that go to or from Edom's country, or his cities; or possibly it may intimate the close sieges with which his cities should be so begirt, that none should attempt to go out or go in, but it should cost them their life: so Jericho close besieged, none went in or out, Josh. vi. 1.

8 [k]And I will fill his mountains with his slain *men:* in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword.
k ch. 31. 12. & 32. 5.

His mountains; there they will fortify, or thither they will flee, and there the enemy shall take and slay his men every where, as it follows in the words; slaughter shall be made of his men, pursued by the eager Chaldean, but more by the vengeance of God. See this phrase chap. xxx. 11, but explained chap. xxxii. 5.

l Jer. 49. 17, 18. ver. 4. ch. 25. 13. Mal. 1. 3, 4. m ch. 6. 7. & 7. 4, 9. & 36. 11. 9 [l]I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: [m]and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Edom's sin was perpetual hatred, and Edom's punishment shall be *perpetual desolations.* Edomites would never return into friendship with the Israelites, but still hate, and molest, and waste them; now for just recompence Edom's cities shall be wasted, and never return to their former glory.

n Ps. 83. 4, 12. ch. 36. 5. Obad. 13. ‖ Or, *though the LORD was there.* o Ps. 48. 1, 3. & 132. 13, 14. ch. 48. 35. 10 Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will [n]possess it; ‖whereas [o]the LORD was there:

Covetousness is here charged upon these Edomites. *These two;* Israel and Judah, two ever after the revolt of the ten tribes. *We will possess it;* with arrogance they determine what they will do; they reckon the right was theirs, as being the descendants of the elder brother, and now the possession they say shall be theirs too. *The Lord was there:* either thus, though God was with Israel, their patron and their right; this is blasphemous pride, to resolve thus against God himself; or though he was present among them, heard their resolutions, and would disappoint them.

11 Therefore, *as* I live, saith the Lord
p Matt. 7. 2. Jam. 2. 13. GOD, I will even do [p]according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them; and I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee.

I will even do, deal with thee, O Mount Seir, *according to thine anger;* I will take my measures from thy using of Israel. Thou wast angry, and that very fiercely, in which anger thou didst smite: in fierce anger against thee I will smite thee. Thou thoughtest with an envious heart all Israel had was too good for him, and wouldst spoil him of all; and I know thee unworthy of all thou hast, and I will take it from thee. Thy hatred edged both thine anger and thine envy to extirpate and root them out; and in my hatred against such sins and obstinate sinners I will utterly destroy thee and root thee out. *When I have judged thee:* so God is known by the judgments that he executeth, when such wicked ones are taken in their own works, as snares which themselves have laid.

q ch. 6. 7. Ps. 9. 16. 12 [q]And thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD, *and that* I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us †to consume.
† Heb. *to devour.*

Thou didst reproach, scoff, and vilify my people, as if they had been the people of some deaf idol; but I will make

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thee know I am the Lord, who heard all thy blasphemies, and can, for I have punished them. *Which thou hast spoken;* not speaking this without insulting and rejoicing, as Tyre did, chap. xxvi. *Saying,* Their God hath left them, either unable to rescue them, or changed in his kindness, and gone back from his word; or some such-like impious thoughts and discourses they had against God, whose city and temple they saw the Babylonians ruin, and which Edomites helped in doing. *Given us;* either by the Chaldeans, or else by God. *To consume;* utterly to consume, and to satisfy our hatred against them in the destruction of them.

r 1 Sam. 2. 3. Rev. 13. 6. + Heb. *magnified.*

13 Thus r with your mouth ye have †boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me: I have heard *them.*

Though the very words be not reported, yet it is certain, from this passage, that they spake proudly against the God of Israel, boasting what they would do, will he nill he. And these blasphemous words or discourses were not once or twice, they multiplied them, it is probable, not much unlike the words of Sennacherib; but they shall smart for all this, and know it is for this, when God acts against them, who durst proudly speak against him. I have heard your words, you shall feel my sword.

s Is. 65. 13, 14.

14 Thus saith the Lord GOD; s When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate.

The whole earth; the inhabitants of the countries round about thee, the whole that thou knowest. *Rejoiceth;* is in peace and plenty, and enjoy both, thou shalt want all; and then envy at the welfare of others shall break thy heart. Envy was thy sin, and now what is the object of envy shall be thy grief, viz. the prosperity of others.

t Obad. 12, 15.

15 t As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee:

u ver. 3, 4.

u thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, *even* all of it: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Thou didst rejoice; thou tookest pleasure in the ruin of my people; for this thy sin I will ruin thee, and then do to thee as thou didst, I will retaliate, and rejoice in thy ruin: thou helpedst to make Jerusalem desolate, I will make thee so: thou criedst to ruin them all, to destroy all the land; all thy land shall be ruined, and by these judgments I will be known to be the Lord.

CHAP. XXXVI.

The land of Israel is comforted with a prospect of the ruin of its spiteful neighbours, and of its own blessings promised by God, 1—15. *Israel was rejected for their sin, and shall be restored with blessings for the sake of God's name only,* 16—38.

587.

a ch. 6. 2, 3.

ALSO, thou son of man, prophesy unto the a mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD:

Also, Heb. *And. Prophesy,* declare from me, and in my word, *unto the mountains of Israel;* the inhabitants wasted or in captivity, speak concerning the mountains, that is, the land of Judah and Israel, which was a country full of mountains, which were now horrid, unplanted. *Hear* what further revenge I will take on Edom, and on other nations that wasted you: this continued to the end of the 6th verse. And hear what good I will do to you: this from the 7th to the end of the chapter. *The word of the Lord;* the severe judgments against your enemies, his gracious promises to you.

b ch. 25. 3. A. 26. 2. c Deut. 32. 13. d ch. 35. 10.

2 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because b the enemy hath said against you, Aha, c even the ancient high places d are our's in possession:

Many were the enemies of God's people, but they so conspired in one design, with one consent, and were so one in their humours, and enmity, and carriage, that the prophet speaks of them as one, and particularly of Edom. *Aha;* rejoicingly and with insulting pride, as Ammon did. chap. xxv. 3, and Tyre did, chap. xxvi. 2, which see. *The ancient high places;* the everlasting hills; but this is common with other hills, whose foundations, as these of Israel, are from the beginning, and shall be to the end. What they aim at is a deriding of Israel, who by promise from God claimed these mountains as a perpetual inheritance, but were now cast out of it, and they hereby tax the God of Israel as not keeping his promise. So they blaspheme God and insult over his people. *Ours;* our right, as of the elder house, now conquerors and feudatories to him that hath subdued them; thus they pretend right to justify their injustice. *In possession;* we are now where we should have been these one thousand one hundred and sixty years or more, where we thought we would be one time or other, in spite of them and all their boasts of their God; we are where we will keep, and none shall put us out. Such impious brags were their ruin, and are implied in the words.

+ Heb. *Because for because.* e Deut. 28. 37. 1 Kings 9. 7. Lam. 2. 15. Dan. 9. 16. ‖ Or, *ye are made to come up on the lip of the tongue.*

3 Therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; † Because they have made *you* desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, e and ‖ ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and *are* an infamy of the people:

Because they, Edomites, and others with them, *have made you desolate;* first broken your strength, wasted your cities, and burnt the temple, and waylaid you, to cut off them that were escaped at last. *Swallowed you up;* devoured you, as hungry beasts devour the prey. *On every side;* from all coasts of the land, through the whole. *That ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen;* that such of the heathen as remained here might have, what they no where else could have, being the scum and worst of men, an inheritance and possession; so unnatural was Edom, that cast out his own kindred, to bring in the vilest of men and the most barbarous strangers. *Ye are taken up in the lips of talkers;* you are the subject on which wild and foul mouths discourse, which is explained, in that the people ever talked of them with reproach, and branding them as infamous. This was foretold to Israel, Jer. xxiv. 9, and they were advised to prevent it.

‖ Or, *bottoms, or, dales.* f ch. 34. 28. g Ps. 79. 4.

4 Therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the ‖ rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which f became a prey and g derision to the residue of the heathen that *are* round about;

To the hills: now is added a particular of hills, valleys, &c., whereas before only the mountains were mentioned, but by them the whole land was understood; and to assure them thereof, all parts are here particularly mentioned: all that the enemy wasted shall be repaired, all that he took away shall be restored in kind, and those he derided shall be vindicated; their estates repaired, cities rebuilt and filled, their credit and honour cleared and vindicated. Their deliverance should be complete and full.

h Deut. 4. 24. ch. 38. 19. i ch. 35. 10, 12.

5 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; h Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, i which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all *their* heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey.

Surely; in the Hebrew it is in the form of an oath. *In the fire;* in my hot displeasure. *Spoken against;* threatened ruin and desolation to all the nations that are and have been enemies to Israel. *Idumea;* the land in which the Edomites dwelt; the Hebrew is Edom. *Have appointed my land;* have given or delivered, helped to take the land

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from my people, and then left it in the hand of the Chaldeans, in hope it should be given back to them for their possession. *With the joy of all their heart;* transported with joy; Jacob's children put out, the heathen came in to possess the land, with rancorous minds, swelling with hatred, and from that acting with the utmost vigour to slay the inhabitants, that there might be no pretenders to the land, but that they might inherit it.

6 Prophesy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye have [k]borne the shame of the heathen:

[k] Ps. 123. 3, 4. ch. 34. 29. ver. 15.

Say unto the mountains: see ver. 4. *In my fury:* see ver. 5, where is no difference in the thing expressed, though a little difference in the expressing of it; there it was *the fire of my jealousy*, here *in my jealousy and in my fury. Have borne the shame of the heathen;* which in ver. 5 is, being a *derision to the residue of the heathen;* these loaded them with reproaches, and exposed them to contempt, and Israel could not prevent it, they were forced to bear it.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I have [l]lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that *are* about you, they shall bear their shame.

[l] ch. 20. 5.

Lifted up mine hand; sworn in my wrath, but in my truth also, Deut. xxxii. 40; and when men did swear solemnly, they did heretofore use this rite, Gen. xiv. 22. *The heathen that are about you;* Moabites, Ammonites, and Idumeans shall be repaid in their own coin; I will, as sure as I am God, as sure as I can, so surely make them a taunt, a proverb, and a curse among men.

8 ¶ But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.

Shall shoot; shall be fruitful, and send forth the branches, trees, plants, herbs, and grass, that are proper for you, and these branches shall not have leaves only, but they shall bring forth their fruit. *They are at hand;* the time will come, yea is near, when my people shall come out of Babylonish captivity to resettle in their own land. I will perform my word, and give them assured peace, and this will not be long ere it is begun at least.

9 For, behold, I *am* for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown:

I am for you; favour you, and am pacified towards you, or I come towards you with redemption, that your old inhabitants may return to you with singing. *Turn unto you;* look towards you, with regard to what hath been and is your estate, your sufferings, which were less than you deserved, yet were the greater because ye are mine. Your inhabitants gave me the back and sinned against me, and I turned the back on you and regarded you not; then all darkness covered you, now my face shall be towards you, and you shall prosper and be fruitful, to the comfort of those that shall dwell in you, and plough and sow you.

10 And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, *even* all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and [m]the wastes shall be builded:

[m] ver. 33. Is. 58. 12. & 61. 4. Amos 9. 14.

11 And [n]I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better *unto you* than at your beginnings: [o]and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

[n] Jer. 31. 27. & 33. 12.

[o] ch. 38. 9. & 37. 6, 13.

These verses contain much the same promise of future good which God engageth to do for Israel after their return out of Babylon. He will multiply men upon the mountains of Israel, he will increase them; now, lest any should reply there had been too many men on the mountains, even all the heathen, God addeth, they shall be all of them of the house of Israel, Jews, and they should settle and build the wasted cities, not Jerusalem only, but other cities also; even wasted houses shall be built, you shall have large stocks of cattle, that your condition shall be as in days of old. *Will do better unto you;* I will give spiritual blessings instead of temporal, and Messiah's kingdom shall hasten to you instead of that which was abolished: in whatsoever this better consisted, it is certain God performed his word.

12 Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, *even* my people Israel; [p]and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth [q]bereave them *of men.*

[p] Obad. 17, &c.

[q] See Jer. 15. 7.

For years past since your captivity wild devouring beasts ranged up and down, but now, instead of such, men shall walk up and down in the mountains of Israel; I will take away the beasts from off you, and bring men upon you. *My people Israel;* a people that are mine by covenant, whom I will own, my Israel. *They shall possess thee;* Edom boasted he would possess you, O mountains; not Edom, or heathens, but your own ancient dwellers shall possess you, even Abraham's seed. *Their inheritance,* for perpetuity, as inheritances are. *Thou,* O land of Canaan. *Bereave them;* consume and destroy thine inhabitants.

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they say unto you, [r]Thou *land* devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations;

[r] Num. 13. 32.

They say; the heathen round about, the enemies of Israel, accuse the land of destroying its natives, and bring an evil report on it. *Devourest up men;* either by intestine wars, or foreign invasions, or by unhealthful air, or by multitude of wild beasts, or by barrenness and famine, thou killest them, art like a womb that conceives often, but almost as often miscarrieth, as the word implieth. *Hast bereaved;* consumed thy nations, so the French; deprived them of their hope of increasing in numbers of men, as a miscarrying womb deprives a family of hoped children.

14 Therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither ‖bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord GOD.

‖ Or, *cause to fall.*

I will so bless thee, O land, that thou shalt bring forth and breed up many sons and daughters, thou shalt see thy children's children increase, and this reproach shall cease for ever.

15 [s]Neither will I cause *men* to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord GOD.

[s] ch. 34. 29.

This verse is a confirmation of what was promised in ver. 12—14, all which is doubled for more assurance, and each part already explicated. See ver. 6.

16 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

17 Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, [t]they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as [u]the uncleanness of a removed woman.

[t] Lev. 18. 25, 27, 28. Jer. 2. 7.

[u] Lev. 15. 19, &c.

In their own land; in fulness, ease, and security, as in days past they did. *They defiled it;* brought in much sin and great guilt upon the land, i. e. on themselves who dwelt there, and sinned greatly. *By their own way;* leaving my law, despising my counsel, forsaking my worship and temple. *By their doings;* by their carriage and practices in their whole conversation. *As the uncleanness, &c.;* or as one excommunicate, and cut off from the congregation, because of some great sin. Or, since idolatry is so often compared to fornication and whoredom, possibly it may be here the filthiness of spiritual whoredom. I hated and loathed the filthiness of their ways, as I would the impurity of a whorish woman prostituting herself for gain. The word may include the reward of a whore, as it doth Ezek. xvi. 33.

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18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them [x] for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols *wherewith* they had polluted it:

[x] ch. 16. 36, 38. & 23. 37.

Wherefore; these and other sins were the true cause that the land was emptied of men, there was no ground for the heathen's calumny. *I poured my fury;* I was angry with them, and the effects of my anger were such as made the land and cities desolate. *For the blood that they had shed;* for murders committed in the land, and frequently charged on them, Ezek. xxii. 3, 6, 9, 12, 27; xxiii. 45. *For their idols:* idolatry was another of their sins, which brought desolation on them.

19 And I [y] scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: [z] according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.

[y] ch. 22. 15.

[z] ch. 7. 3. & 18. 30. & 39. 24.

My hand scattered them, and what hand can retain the inhabitants that God will fling out? *They were* driven away, as chaff before the wind. As their ways and doings provoked me, and deserved what I brought on them, so I judged them, and punished them with desolation.

20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they [a] profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These *are* the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.

[a] Is. 52. 5. Rom. 2. 24.

When they entered; when they were come into Babylon, and entered into familiarity with the inhabitants as neighbours. *Profaned my holy name;* did profanely sin against those precepts of my law, which heathens did know, venerate, and observe better than the Jews; or it may include the misery their sins had brought them to, which misery reflected upon their God in the opinion of the heathen. *They said,* their heathen neighbours, *to them,* the miserable and profane Jews, *These are the people of the Lord;* with taunt and cutting reprimand. These, these captive slaves, that are most forlorn of men, will have it that their God is the Lord, the mighty and the good God, the true and faithful One, that gave them the land out of which they are driven. If he be good, as they boast, how comes it to pass his people are in such ill state? Or is he not able to better their state? Was he weak, and could not keep them in their own land? or doth he falsify his word? You miserable Jews, say what this meaneth. But by their impure life they opened the mouths of the heathen more to blaspheme, and call the holiness of God into question; when they saw his people so unholy, they concluded, As is the people so is their God; and this, as it was a great offence and scandal to the heathen, so it was a great dishonour to God.

21 ¶ But I had pity [b] for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

[b] ch. 20. 9, 14.

I had pity; I spared them, who in captivity continued to sin greatly against me, and for which sins I had just cause to cut them off; but I had pity. *For mine holy name;* for my own sake, and for the glory of my name: had I destroyed them, the heathen would have concluded against my omnipotence and my truth. I preserved, I reduced, I re-established them for the honour of my mercy, truth, and power.

22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not *this* for your sakes, O house of Israel, [c] but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.

[c] Ps. 106. 8.

I do not this, which I have done, sparing you and preserving you, and giving you favour in the sight of the heathen; nor do I that I am about to do for you, returning you to Judea, planting you, increasing you, and establishing you, and making you a blessing; I do not this for your sake, you deserve no such kindness from me. *For mine holy name's sake;* my infinite mercy is the spring and fountain; the vindicating my name from all imputation of weakness or unfaithfulness, and the magnifying the glory of my goodness, wisdom, truth, and power, are the reasons on which I do what I do for Israel. *Which ye have profaned;* brought under suspicion with the heathen, who think that the only and almighty God should do better for his own and only people!

23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I *am* the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be [d] sanctified in you before ‖ their eyes.

[d] ch. 20. 41. & 28. 22.

‖ Or, *your.*

Will sanctify, by clearing it up, and removing the objection that the Jews' sufferings and sins among the Babylonians had raised. *My great name;* they gave the heathen occasion to think meanly and contemptibly of me, but I will show I am as great as good, in both infinite. *Was profaned:* see ver. 20, 22. *Which ye have profaned;* God chargeth the Jews with the blasphemies the heathen cast on God, the Jews were the cause of them, and they are therefore justly imputed to the Jews. *That I am the Lord;* by what I do, the heathen shall know what I am, and from the great and good things I do for you, performing my promises, and purifying you, shall see I am great, good, faithful, and holy; then shall I be sanctified in you, as I have been profaned by you in their eyes: and so it was, Psal. cxxvii. 2.

24 For [e] I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

[e] ch. 34. 13. & 37. 21.

The heathen purpose, as Pharaoh did, to detain you servants, and think it impossible any power should take you out of their hand or break the yoke; but I will do it, I will by my omnipotent hand rescue you from their power. *Gather you;* they were scattered so through a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, that the heathen judged it impossible to reassemble them, but God will do this too. *Will bring you into your own land:* so many difficulties lay in their way of getting into their own land, that they thought them insuperable, so long a journey, so many enemies, and strong, crafty, and malicious, such weak, poor, and unarmed people, &c.; yet all these shall not prevent me; I will bring them safe to their own land, and settle them. When this is done, they shall confess, and the heathen shall confess, that I am great, good, wise, and faithful to my promise; a God not like theirs, but worthy to be thought well of, and to be spoken well of, to be praised and obeyed.

25 ¶ [f] Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: [g] from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

[f] Is. 52. 15. Heb. 10. 22.

[g] Jer. 33. 8.

He alludes to the sprinklings under the law, perhaps to that Numb. xix. 9, which was for purification of sin; and ver. 19, 20. So God will purify them from their guilt. *Clean water:* some think it may refer to baptismal water; if so, it is to the blood of Christ, signified by it, and this, say the best expositors, is here intended, and this is *the blood of sprinkling,* Heb. xii. 24. *Ye shall be clean;* when sin is remitted, the person is indeed clean, both in the account of God and Christ. *From all your filthiness;* though they have been many of all sorts, and among all ranks of men, yet multitude of sins shall not hinder me from pardoning. *From all your idols;* that notorious great abomination, your multiplied idolatry, I will pardon that also, that ye may be clean. Thus remission of sin is promised.

26 A [h] new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

[h] Jer. 32. 39. ch. 11. 19.

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A new heart; a renewed frame of soul, a disposition and mind changed from sinful to holy, from evil to good, from carnal to spiritual. See chap. xi. 19. A heart in which the law of God is written, as Jer. xxxi. 33. It is a sanctified heart, in which the almighty grace of God is victorious, and turns it from sin to God. *Will I give you;* God takes it to himself, as indeed it is his only work, see chap. xi. 19. *A new spirit:* this is exegetical, and tells us what the new heart is: it is a new holy frame in the spirit of man, which is put in him, not found in him; given to him, not wrought by his own power. *The stony heart;* stubborn, senseless, untractable heart, that receives no kindly impressions from the word, providences, or Spirit of God in its ordinary operations and influences, that hardens itself in a day of provocation, that is hardened by the deceitfulness of sin; this evil heart shall be taken away, and this God will do, who only can do it. *Out of your flesh,* put for the man. *An heart of flesh;* that is, a heart different from the stony, hard heart, quite of another temper and frame, hearkening to God's law, trembling at his threats, by gentlest providences moulded to a compliance with his will; to forbear, do, be, or suffer what God will, receiving the impress of God, as softened wax receiveth the impress of the seal.

i ch. 11. 19. & 37. 14.

27 And I will put my [i]spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*.

Put, elsewhere *pour out;* God will give freely and abundantly. *My spirit;* the Holy Spirit of God, which is the immediate principal cause of that change of an old heart into new, and of hard into soft. By the efficient cause we may know the effect; and understand what a new heart is, and what the new spirit is, when we know they are wrought in us by the Spirit of God, which is given to and dwelleth in the saints, which makes them saints, and then abideth with them. *Cause you;* sweetly, powerfully, successfully, yet without compulsion; for our spirit, framed by God's Spirit to a disposition suitable to his holiness, readily concurreth and co-worketh. *Keep my judgments;* be willing and ready, able, and in your degree sufficient, to keep the judgments and to walk in the statutes of God, which is to live holiness.

k ch. 28. 25. & 37. 25. l Jer. 30. 22. ch. 11. 20. & 37. 27.

28 [k]And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; [l]and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Spiritual blessings. promised in ver. 25—27, are now followed with temporal blessings; so earth doth follow heaven. *Ye shall dwell:* God adds this to his taking, gathering, and bringing into the land, ver. 24; when they are there, they shall settle and continue proprietors, possessing their own houses and lands. *Which I gave;* they were greatly pleased to think Canaan their land was by God given to their fathers; in this land under this character you shall dwell, the land that was your right by promise to Abraham, 1346 years or near it. *My people,* as your fathers were, who reverenced, loved, worshipped, obeyed, and believed in me. *Your God,* as I was their God, to protect, guide, comfort, and enrich, &c.; see chap. xi. 20; to perform my promise to their faith and patience; and so you shall inherit the blessing.

m Mat. 1. 21. Rom. 11. 26. n See Ps. 105. 16. o ch. 34. 29.

29 I will also [m]save you from all your uncleannesses: and [n]I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and [o]lay no famine upon you.

Perhaps the former part of this verse would have been better joined with the former verse, as a glorious fruit of God's taking them to be his people, and his condescending to be their God. Salvation from all uncleannesses includeth justification, in our pardon, sanctification, the renewing our minds, somewhat of adoption in peace and hope, and a consummate glorification in heaven, that state of absolute purity. All this God gives when he is our God. *Corn;* all necessaries for aliment comprised in one, and these brought to them at God's call, which they will hear, Psal. cv. 16, 40; Hos. ii. 21, 22. *Famine* is God's arrow, he shoots it; where it is, he layeth it; but his people shall neither have it their misery nor their reproach any more; as in the next verse.

30 [p]And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. p ch. 34. 27

The former part of this verse is explained chap. xxxiv. 27, and ver. 8—10 of this chapter. The latter part is explained in ver. 29.

31 Then [q]shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that *were* not good, and [r]shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. q ch. 16. 61, 63. r Lev. 26. 39. ch. 6. 9. & 20. 43.

Then, when I have given you my Spirit, renewed your hearts, brought you by miraculous mercy out of captivity in a strange land unto liberty in your own, ye shall call to mind, review, and examine all your past life, your ways opposite to God's; therefore both their own by choice, and also evil in their very nature, the ways the prophets condemned and threatened, as chap. xxii.; Jer. iii. 5, &c. *Not good;* it is a meiosis; not good, i. e. exceeding evil, like, yea worse than, other nations, chap. v. 6, than Sodom, chap. xvi. 46. *Loathe yourselves:* see chap. vi. 9. Your mind shall abhor what you loved, and deeply grieve at what you rejoiced in; when swine, ye wallowed in mire; when made sheep, you shall as much fear and flee from it. *In your own sight;* not in sight of others, but repentance in the chief parts lieth more retired and inward, and loathes sins that are in the heart, though none ever knew them beside God and his own soul. This fruit is the first and most sure sign of true repentance.

32 [s]Not for your sakes do I *this,* saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. s Deut. 9. 5. ver. 22.

Not for your sakes: to a self-exalting people, who have too high thoughts of themselves, this is a necessary monition; we are all like the Jews, proud of somewhat we have not; see ver. 22; an old disease, and we are long since warned of it, as well as they, Deut. ix. 5, 6. *Be ashamed and confounded:* shame and confusion, self-abhorrence and deepest humiliation, will become you, for you have walked stubbornly in your own ways, though I would have reclaimed you, and did call you back from them by my prophets.

33 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause *you* to dwell in the cities, [t]and the wastes shall be builded. t ver. 10.

Committed sin, that deserveth, and imputed sin, that doth bring down, judgments on the sinner, so did the Jews' sins, and continued the punishment in those judgments, until a pardon take away guilt, and then judgments will be removed; so here, pardoned captives return to and dwell in their own cities. Sin unpardoned wasted the country, but sinners repenting and pardoned shall build the wastes. Sin unpardoned leaves the land untilled and barren, but pardoned ones shall plough, sow, reap, and eat.

34 And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by.

35 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of [u]Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities *are become* fenced, *and* are inhabited. u Is. 51. 3. ch. 28. 13. Joel 2. 3.

They shall say; strangers or foreigners, who had heard or seen the sad wastes, and now either hear or see the replanting of it, and how it succeedeth. *Like the garden of Eden;* see the phrase chap. xxviii. 13; most fruitful, pleasant, and desirable. This is true of the church of Christ without an hyperbole. but here it is to be accommodated by a comparative, thus; that good state the Jews are now in, compared with what they were in, is as an Eden to a wilderness. *Fenced;* not only built for habitation, but fortified for defence.

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36 Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined *places, and* plant that that was desolate: [x]I the LORD have spoken *it*, and I will do *it*.

x ch. 17. 24. & 22. 14. & 37. 14.

That are left; that were not carried away and dispersed, whether they were Tyrians, Zidonians, on the north, or Ammon, and Moab, and the Philistines, and Edomites, eastward and southward, these remnants of the heathen shall see and confess a peculiar providence of God toward the Jews, in their flourishing so greatly upon their return.

37 Thus saith the Lord GOD; [y]I will yet *for* this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do *it* for them; I will [z]increase them with men like a flock.

y See ch. 14. 3. & 20. 3, 31.

z ver. 10.

Though I have repeated so often my promise to return them, to rebuild, to multiply them, yet they shall know it is their duty to entreat it, to wait on me, and then I will give a merciful answer and do it. Thus Daniel prayed, when he knew the return was sure and near. Or else it may be thus; Above all this, or yet more than all this, I will be found of them when they do seek me: thus it is a promise made to their prayer, in the other it is a requiring them to pray, so they shall increase as a flock.

38 As the †holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

† Heb. *flock of holy things.*

The holy flock; flocks designed to holy uses, as sacrifices, and therefore further described by the place where they are, Jerusalem. *Her solemn feasts;* the occasion and time, solemn feasts, either the three annual great feasts, or you may take in the daily sacrifices. These flocks were for quality the best of all, and for numbers very great, on the solemn feasts; thirty thousand at once of lambs and kids in Josiah's time, and many more at the passover in after-times. Thus should men multiply, and fill the cities of replanted Judea.

CHAP. XXXVII.

By the resurrection of dry bones the revival of the lost hope of Israel is prefigured, 1—14. *By the uniting of two sticks is showed the incorporation of Israel with Judah,* 15—19. *Their blessings in union under Christ their King,* 20—28.

cir. 587. THE [a]hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out [b]in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which *was* full of bones,

a ch. 1. 3. b ch. 3. 14. & 8. 3. & 11. 24. Luke 4. 1.

The hand; either the prophetic Spirit, as chap. i. 3; viii. 1, moving him to prophesy by this emblem; or else the Spirit of God carrying him visionally, not corporeally, as in chap. viii., into such a prospect or landscape. *In the spirit;* either in the power of the Spirit of God, or it may refer to the prophet's own spirit, he was in his spirit, or mind and apprehension. *Set me down;* so it seemed to me in the vision, that I was set gently down. *In the valley:* it is vain to inquire what valley this should be, which was visional, not corporeal or real. *Full of bones:* it is as vain to inquire whose bones these were, they are visional, and hieroglyphics of Israel's present condition.

2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, *there were* very many in the open ‖valley; and, lo, *they were* very dry.

‖ Or, *champaign.*

Caused me; I was made to go round about them, in the same manner in which I was carried to see them. *Round about;* round, round, perhaps twice or oftener, to view them well. *Behold:* he reports what he observed remarkable. *Very many;* first for number, they were not only many, but very many, as ver. 10, they made an exceeding great army. *In the open valley;* next the place, the face or surface of the plain, exposed to wind, weather, and to violence. *Very dry;* the quality of them, dry, very dry, in which could be nothing that might promise life.

3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, [c]thou knowest.

c Deut. 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 6. John 5. 21. Rom. 4. 17. 2 Cor. 1. 9.

He said; the Lord, who brought Ezekiel hither, asks him what he thought. *Can these bones live?* either, is it likely they should? or, is it a future thing that shall be, or possible, that they may live? *Thou knowest:* the prophet's answer refers all to God, to whom all things are possible which argue power in doing, and who knows all he will do in time to come. The prophet's answer seems to own the possibility, and refers the futurity to the will of God.

4 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

The prophet had spoken often to things that could as little hear as these bones could, yet when they are deaf to a prophet, they will hear the prophet's God. *Ye dry bones, hear:* alas, what, dry bones hear! no, not a syllable of this word. *The word of the Lord;* but this they will hear, observe, and obey it; his voice who calls things that are not, and makes them to be, gives being by his word.

5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will [d]cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

d Ps. 104. 30. ver. 9.

My prophet prophesied and spake, but I, saith the Lord, only can and I will surely give life to them. When God had formed Adam's body, as lifeless as these bones, he created him a living soul, by breathing into his face the breath of life; by a creating power he brings breath into these bones too. The effect shall be sure and speedy, when God brings his power to work it.

6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; [e]and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

e ch. 6. 7. & 35. 12. Joel 2. 27. & 3. 17.

Sinews tie the bones together. *Flesh* fills up the hollownesses, and being full of muscles helps motion. *Skin,* as the upper silken garment, covers all with a clear and blushing colour. *Breath* lastly must be added. All this God declares he will do, and I suppose these promises are what the prophet is to declare to these bones that they may revive.

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

I prophesied; declared or pronounced these promises or gracious purposes of God concerning them. *As I was commanded:* whether it was thus or some other way, the prophet was commanded it, and so he did it; he spake to them which could not but be deaf to him, and which could not but hear when God speaks. *As I prophesied;* either according to the purport of my prophecy, or rather during the time, or while I was prophesying, or so soon as I prophesied. *A noise;* thunder, say some; others, more likely, the noise was the rattling of the bones in their motion; such noise they could not but make, where multitudes of them heaped or laid together disperse, and roll themselves from one to other, till they meet their fellow bones. *A shaking;* there was a trembling or commotion among these bones, enough to make this noise, and to manifest a Divine presence and word from God working among them. *Came together;* crept, or with this shaking motion glided, nearer and nearer, till each bone met the bone to which it was to be tied.

8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but *there was* no breath in them.

The noise he heard would certainly make any one look, and consider what it was. *I beheld;* looked carefully, and heedfully observed. *Came up upon them;* came gradually, spreading itself, as what grows wider and longer. *Above;*

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uppermost the skin covered them. So here were men in skin, with flesh, sinews, bones; but, like Adam before inspired with the breath of life, the spirit of life was yet wanting.

9 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto
‖ Or, *breath.* the ‖ wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD;
f Ps. 104. 30. ver. 5. f Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

Then said he; the Lord God. *Unto me;* to Ezekiel, viewing, and no doubt wondering at the sight. *Prophesy;* declare to that what my will is. *Unto the wind,* Heb. *spirit;* and it might be so rendered, but our version hath it *wind,* while the French hath it *spirit,* i. e. the soul, whose emblem here is wind; which, as it did gently blow upon these lifeless creatures, they received, each inspired with its own soul and spirit. *Come from the four winds;* gather yourselves from all quarters of the earth under heaven, unite to your own bodies, inspire them once more. *Slain* by the sword of an enemy long since, some of them these seventy years. *May live;* revive and rise.

10 So I prophesied as he commanded
g Rev. 11. 11. me, g and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

I prophesied: see ver. 7. *The breath,* Heb. *the spirit;* the spirit of life, or the soul, Gen. ii. 7. *Came;* entered, took up its abode. *They lived;* presently discovered that they did live. *Stood up;* rose with strength, able to support themselves. *Army;* a *power,* so the Hebrew, or army of strong, courageous, and well-ordered soldiers. The phrase in the Hebrew is very full; a power, or great host, very, very great. Thus they rise, that the prophet and we might know how safe they would be in themselves, and how terrible to their enemies.

11 ¶ Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of
h Ps. 141. 7. Is. 49. 14. Israel: behold, they say, h Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

The whole house; the hieroglyphic or emblem of the house of Israel. *They say;* think, discourse, and conclude. *Our bones are dried;* their state as hopeless, as far from recovery, as dried bones scattered abroad, and, undistinguished, heaped up, are from life. *Our hope is lost;* the hope, not that false prophets gave us, but that the true prophets proposed to us, is utterly lost, and we are out of all expectation of a recovery.

12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold,
i Is. 26. 19. Hos. 13. 14. i O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your
k ch. 36. 24. ver. 25. graves, and k bring you into the land of Israel.

Prophesy; tell them their mistake, and revive their hope by a new promise and declaration of my purposes of mercy towards them. *Say unto them;* these poor desponding, dejected Israelites. *Behold;* consider what my prophet assures you he hath seen, dry bones miraculously revived, and standing up in power as a mighty host, so shall you. *I will open your graves;* though your captivity be as death, your prisons and confinements close as the grave, yet I will open those graves. I will lift you out, lend you a hand to bring you out with life and strength. And I will be your guide, that you may know the way; be your support, that you may be able to go; and your guard and defence against dangers of the way, that you may certainly come into your own land.

13 And ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

When your restitution to your own land, and your prosperity in your land, when your growth to strength and power, shall be so miraculously effected, then you shall acknowledge and publish the glory of my power, faithfulness, goodness, and wisdom.

14 And l shall put my spirit in you, and
l ch. 36. 27. ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken *it,* and performed *it,* saith the LORD.

My spirit: see chap. xi. 19; xxxvi. 27. *Ye shall live,* joyful in, thankful for, and contented with the blessings I give. *I shall place you;* quietly and in rest settle you in your own habitations, and in your ancient possessions. *I the Lord have spoken it:* this shall demonstrate the truth of my promises, the fulness and punctualness of my performances.

15 ¶ The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

16 Moreover, thou son of man, m take
m See Num. 17. 2. thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for n the children of Israel
n 2 Chron. 11. 12, 13, 16. & 15. 9. & 30. 11, 18. his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and *for* all the house of Israel his companions:

One stick; tablet, i. e. a writing tablet or a tally, such as is fitted to be written upon, or a rod, or staff, on which thou mayst write; the Hebrew calls it *wood,* without describing its form and fashion; but whatever its fashion was, it must be but one. *Write upon it;* the inscription is not only commanded, but the words also in which it is to be written. *For Judah;* the tribe, or possibly the kingdom; if the latter, then the companions mentioned will be such as in process of time fell off from the ten tribes, and united with the kingdom of the house of David; if the former, which is most likely, then *the children of Israel,* his companions, are Benjamin and Levi in part, who kept, with the tribe of Judah, their obedience to David's seed. *Then;* when thou hast written on the first stick, then take *another stick;* a second stick, such as the first was. *For Joseph;* he was father of two tribes, one of which was chief of the ten tribes, and is therefore mentioned here. *The stick of Ephraim;* Ephraim was the son of Joseph, whom his grandfather blessed, and by prophetic Spirit foretold and promised that he should be one of the chief of all the tribes; and Ephraim was most considerable in the kingdom of Israel when divided from the other two. *All the house of Israel;* the other nine tribes. *His companions;* who did at first side, and have continued still, with Ephraim. Some say Ephraim was the whole kingdom of the ten tribes, and that his companions were the Gentiles converted to the faith of Christ, which I wish were well proved.

17 And o join them one to another into
o See ver. 22, 24. one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

Join them: some would have this done miraculously, but I do not think God bade the prophet work a miracle; were it so, God would rather have said, I will make them one, for he can do miracles. It was enough if glued together, or but held in his hand, so that in his hand they were one.

18 ¶ And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying,
p ch. 12. 9. & 24. 19. p Wilt thou not shew us what thou *meanest* by these?

When; so soon as. *The children of thy people;* to whom thou art watchman by office, and near of kin by natural descent. *Wilt thou not?* there was some reason why they might doubt whether he would, because they had carried it so frowardly toward him; therefore they request it by an interrogatory, *Wilt thou not?* We shall never know the meaning unless thou unfold it; wilt thou not do it then?

19 q Say unto them, Thus saith the
q Zech. 10. 6. r ver. 16, 17. Lord GOD; Behold, I will take r the stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, *even*

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with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.

The stick of Joseph; on which Joseph's name is written, and which represents Joseph. *Which is in the hand of Ephraim;* which was under the government of Ephraim; or thus, which is the tribe of Ephraim, the latter explaining the former. *His fellows:* see ver. 16. *Put them with him;* Judah and his companions. *One stick;* one kingdom, one people, whereas these have been divided and enemies a great while. *They shall be one;* real, cordial in their union. *In mine hand;* under my government, care, and blessing. This is the meaning, God will make the two divided kingdoms one in his hand, as I make these two sticks one in my hand.

20 ¶ And the sticks whereon thou
[a] ch. 12. 3. writest shall be in thine hand [a]before their eyes.

To affect them the more, and to assure them the more fully, let them see these two divided sticks made one in thy hand.

21 And say unto them, Thus saith the
[t] ch. 36. 24. Lord GOD; Behold, [t]I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

See this explained chap. xxxvi. 24. *The children of Israel;* the ten tribes, as well as Judah and Benjamin; at least, many of the ten tribes. *Whither they be gone:* the expression seems to look to them that were gone among the heathen by a voluntary peregrination, whether before the captivity or after it I will not conjecture; but it is likely enough to me, that among the Jews carried away, and among their children, there were some that were uneasy where they were against their wills, who would ramble and range over countries, hoping to fare better; and perhaps these wanderers may be the persons meant by this *gone*, where they are who walked thither, as the Hebrew. *On every side;* the wind was to come from the four coasts of heaven, ver. 9, thereby telling us they should, as here, be gathered on every side.

[u] Is. 11. 13. Jer. 3. 18. & 50. 4. Hos. 1. 11.
[x] ch. 34. 23, 24. John 10. 16.
22 And [u]I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and [x]one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all:

I will make them one nation: they were one in David's time, who was type of the Messiah, and continued so to the end of Solomon's time, whose name includes peace. So when the Beloved, the Peace-maker, the Messiah shall be King, and on his throne exercising his kingly power, they shall be once more one again. *In the land* of Canaan, called here, as elsewhere, *the mountains of Israel. One king;* Messiah; the most and best, if not the learnedest, interpreters understand not Zerubbabel, nor Nehemiah, nor Judas Maccabeus. *No more two nations;* the union under the Messiah's visible and actual exercise of his regal power shall be perpetual. From this place, so full and express for a firm, lasting union between the two nations Ephraim and Judah, and their being of two kingdoms made one in the land whence they were scattered, some take occasion to inquire whether it be fulfilled already, or remaineth yet to be accomplished; the discussion whereof, as it would be very alien to a literal paraphrase, and too prolix, I pass over, saying no more of it in the affirmative or negative.

[y] ch. 36. 25.
[z] ch. 36. 28, 29.
23 [y]Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but [z]I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

Defile themselves: idolatry is a very defiling sin, and the Jews in both kingdoms were exceedingly addicted to it, pertinacious in it, to the utter ruin of both kingdoms; but after the return from Babylonish captivity, we find no where that they fell to idolatry. *Their idols:* it may refer to the heathen, and then it means, they shall not defile themselves with the idols the heathen did worship; or to the idols of the Jews, their own idols, with which they shall no more be defiled. *Their detestable things;* the same with idols, and added to set out the loathsomeness of the sin. *Their transgressions;* the former obstinate, bold, daring transgressors did that which these shall not defile themselves with: see chap. xxxvi. 25, 33; xi. 17, 18. *I will save them;* whilst there I preserved them, and now I will bring them safe out of the places. *Wherein they have sinned;* where out of a bad fear, or worse choice, they sinned, as did the heathen with whom they dwelt. *Will cleanse them;* both sanctify and make them holy, and justify and give them pardon, chap. xxxvi. 29. *My people:* see chap. xi. 20; xxxvi. 28.

24 And [a]David my servant *shall be* king over them; and [b]they all shall have one shepherd: [c]they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.

[a] Is. 40. 11. Jer. 23. 5. & 30. 9. ch. 34. 23, 24. Hos. 3. 5. Luke 1. 32.
[b] ver. 22. John 10. 16.
[c] ch. 36. 27.

David: see chap. xxxiv. 23, 24. It is the Son of David, who was also his Lord, that is here intended. *My servant:* the Messiah, in his mediatory office, is God's servant and our Saviour. *Over them;* over their hearts, and rule there in spiritual manner. *One shepherd;* this King shall be a Shepherd, that feeds, not fleeceth, the flock; there is but one chief Shepherd, others that feed and rule the flock are so by commission from him. *They shall also walk, &c.:* it is both declaratory of duty, predictive of the event, and promissory of ability and assistance to keep the holy commandments of God. Christ's kingdom is that which by law and precept commandeth righteousness, and which by grace and power strengthens its subjects to this, and so the event is sure, and freest grace makes holiest lives.

25 [d]And they shall dwell in the land
[d] ch. 36. 28.
that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, *even* they, and their children, and their children's children [e]for ever: and [f]my servant David *shall be* their prince for ever.

[e] Is. 60. 21. Joel 3. 20. Amos 9. 15.
[f] ver. 24. John 12. 34.

They; the ten tribes and the two tribes. *That I have given:* see chap. xxviii. 25. *Your fathers,* Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, whose memory you venerate, and greatly affect to be heirs more of their lands and houses than of their virtues and piety. *Their children's children for ever:* if this prophecy or promise be to be understood with the precedent verses in the letter of it, and not mystically and only spiritually, I doubt not but to the end of the world, till Christ's coming to judgment, the Jews converted to Christ, and professing the gospel, shall, they and their seed after them, inherit this land of Canaan in much peace and glory. But I speak on supposition, not asserting any thing herein. *My servant David;* typically understood it asserts the everlasting kingdom of our Messiah, and the everlasting happiness of all the faithful subjects of this King: see chap. xxxiv. 23, 24.

26 Moreover I will make a [g]covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and [h]multiply them, and will set my [i]sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

[g] Ps. 89. 3. Is. 55. 3. Jer. 32. 40. ch. 34. 25.
[h] ch. 36. 10, 37.
[i] 2 Cor. 6. 16.

I will make; as it was my kindness to your fathers to give them, so shall it be to you to give you, my blessings on the sure and inviolable security of a covenant. *A covenant of peace;* comprehending all blessings that may give a people content, and render them happy; peace with God in heaven, peace in your conscience with yourselves, with your brethren in the church, with the beasts of the field, and with your enemies, who shall for fear, though not of love, keep peace with you, while your ways please your God. *An everlasting covenant;* the spiritual part is abso-

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lutely endless, the external part shall be for a long time, as it is always to be interpreted where temporals seem promised for ever. *My sanctuary;* both temple and worship; not such as is typical of the Messiah to come, but such as may assert he is come, such as bring to the knowledge, love, and obedience of him. I will set up a spiritually glorious temple and worship amidst you. *For evermore;* never to be altered or abolished on earth, but to be consummated in heaven.

k Lev. 26. 11, 12. ch. 43. 7. John 1. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 20. & 14. 11. & 36. 28.

27 [k]My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be [l]their God, and they shall be my people.

My tabernacle; the tabernacle of my presence, or wherein I will show my presence among them. Their fathers had a tabernacle of witness, so shall they; that was brought by Joshua into Canaan, but the Messiah shall bring with him a better, a spiritual and heavenly. *I will be their God:* see chap. xi. 20; Rev. xxi. 1—3. *They shall be my people;* by my grace I will make them holy, as the people of a holy God ought to be, and I will make them happy, as the people of the ever-blessed God expect and hope to be.

m ch. 36. 23.

28 [m]And the heathen shall know that

n ex. 20. 12.

I the LORD do [n]sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

When Christ by his Spirit in gospel ordinances is among them, it shall appear they are a consecrated and a sanctified people.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

The army of Gog, 1—7. *His evil attempts in the latter years,* 8—13. *God's judgment against him,* 14—23.

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

a ch. 39. 1. b ch. 35. 2, 3. c Rev. 20. 8. ‖ Or, *prince of the chief.* d ch. 32. 26.

2 [a]Son of man, [b]set thy face against [c]Gog, the land of Magog, ‖ the chief prince of [d]Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him,

Since the two former chapters had assured so great and wonderful blessings to the Jews, after the return out of Babylon, and the gathering them together in their own land; it is more than probable the Jews would expect a full accomplishment of all these things quickly after their return, and if troubles should, as they did, intervene, and prove long, would be discouraged, and quarrel with Providence; God doth in this 38th and the 39th chapters forewarn them, by telling what enemies and troubles would interpose themselves, to the great losses and dangers of the Jews, ere they should overcome them, and God should fully and finally deliver them. *Set thy face against:* see chap. xx. 46; xxi. 2; xxv. 2. *Gog:* this cannot be one single person, or one only prince, though like enough it points out some one by whom the troubles foretold were begun, yet the successors of this one, whoever he was, are included and designed by this Gog; nor is he to be limited to one certain nation that he was king of, nor yet confined to one age, or (it may be) to two or three. Some will fix the beginnings of this Gog among the Seleucidæ, and take in the others who divided the Grecian empire among themselves, and who did much hurt to the Jews, the history of which in part you meet with in the Books of the Maccabees. But if we must account why these are called Gog, perhaps this may suffice: Gyges, who gave name to the land, predecessor to Crœsus, (for he was grandson to Gyges,) was conquered by Cyrus, and deprived of the kingdom; and this was made and continued tributary to the Persians, till taken from them by the Grecians; and when that kingdom was divided, it fell among the successors of Alexander in Seleucus's line, and so the Seleucidæ may, not without some ground, be thought pointed at by Gog, whose country fell into the hand of Seleucus by the successes he had against Antigonus. And of all the Seleucidæ, the sixth from Seleucus stands fairest for it; this was Antiochus Epiphanes, type of antichrist, and a fierce enemy of the Jews. Others judge this war, in which Gog is prince and leader, refers to times much later, and there are several particulars that do not well suit with the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. They will therefore rather refer it to some Scythian king or kings, and that the time is still to come wherein this prophecy is to be fulfilled; and that it must intend those enemies of God's church who descended from the Scythians, and are now masters of Cappadocia, Iberia, Armenia, or are in confederacy with the Tartars, and those northern heathens. Now the arms and equipage here mentioned well suit with these Scythians, and they with the Turks, as like to make up part of this army. But others think that all the enemies of Israel in all quarters, both open and secret enemies, are here intended, and that the antichristian forces and combinations are what the prophet foretells; and if from a conjunction of affairs now, or lately on foot in the world, we might make our guess, the invasions of the Turks on one side, and the contrivance of others on this side Christendom, to extirpate the northern heresy, as some have called our religion, we might be excused, if we err, saying, The Constantinopolitan antichrist, and the Roman antichrist, with all their associates and helpers, are this Gog. *Magog* is at least part of Scythia, and comprehends Syria, in which was Hieropolis, taken by the Scythians, and called of them Scythopolis. It is then that country which now is in subjection to the Turks, and may be extended through Asia Minor, the countries of Sarmatia, &c., from those parts under more than one in succession of time, and in the last times under some one particular active, undertaking, and daring prince, enemy of Israel; all their power will be stirred up against Christ and Christians. *The chief;* or prince who is supreme in authority, most violent in opposition to the church of Christ, and most active to attempt its ruin. *Prince;* what we render prince may well be the proper name of Araxes in Arabic, the principal river of Armenia, and so that the first country mentioned under the command of Gog, or the Scythians of Mount Taurus, which were called Rhos. *Tubal:* see chap. xxvii. 13.

3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

4 And [e]I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, [f]all of them clothed with all sorts *of armour, even* a great company *with* bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords:

e 2 Kings 19. 28. ch. 29. 4. & 39. 2. f ch. 23. 12.

I will turn thee back: the words seem to imply a diverting him from some other enterprise, or else intimate to us, when that mighty power come out, that they are still under God's control, and he will turn them back from what they intended, that they shall not effect it. *Hooks:* see this expression chap. xxix. 4. *I will bring thee forth;* so dispose affairs, thou shalt leave thine own country to invade, and spoil, and destroy. *All thy army;* the whole power thou canst make. *Horses;* those nations, Sarmatæ, or Scythians, Cappadocians, &c., or which comprise all the Turks and Tartars, are to this day strong in horse, and their armies consist much of horsemen. *All of them clothed;* their leaders both rich and gaudy, yet well armed, and their soldiers well provided too, and we know how they and other antichristian soldiers march with all warlike provisions. *A great company;* in vast armies, far greater than any of their neighbours can bring out against them. *Bucklers* for their foot, and *shields* for their horsemen, as Servius observes the difference between the two Latin words *scutum* and *clypeus,* if not misreported. I doubt whether the Hebrew words do so differ; however, these were for defence of those that bear them, and to this day the Tartars use oblong shields for defence on horseback, as the figures represent them to our eye. *Handling swords;* that is, very ready, expert, and strong in using the sword; this to slay the enemies, as the other to save themselves.

5 Persia, Ethiopia, and ‖ Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet:

‖ Or, *Phut.* ch. 27. 10. & 30. 5.

Persia; the land for the people, who are Mahometans, and enemies to the name of Christ. *Ethiopia;* not the African, which is Abyssinia, or Nubia, or both the old Macrobii, but the Asiatic or Arabian Ethiopia, posterity of

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Cush, Mahometans too. *Libya;* a people of Africa, either now subjects of, or confederates with, the Turks, and who are near enough to join, when the effect shall demonstrate this Gog who he is. *With shield and helmet;* prepared to save themselves what they can, though they slay their enemies. Now some of all these were in the armies of Antiochus against the Jews, and many more will serve in the last army of Gog.

g Gen. 10. 2. h ch. 27. 14.

6 [g] Gomer, and all his bands; the [h] house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: *and* many people with thee.

Gomer; inhabitants of Galatia, called formerly Gallogræci, Phrygians, and Bithynians, also these descended of Gomer. *Togarmah;* Paphlagonia and Cappadocia: see chap. xxvii. 14. *Of the north quarters:* it might be read in apposition, and leave out *of*, so it will bring in many more to assist Gog; beside all those mentioned, the more northern people, the numerous Tartars, shall with all their bands fight for Gog. *Many people;* great, and mighty of stature, and strength, and courage, as well as many in numbers.

i Like Is. 8. 9, 10. Jer. 46. 3, 4, 14. & 51. 12.

7 [i] Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.

Be thou prepared: it is an irony; God, the prophet, and the church deride this mighty preparation, as once the daughter of Zion laughed Sennacherib, that proud Assyrian, to scorn, and the scoff is doubled. *Prepare for thyself;* such a mighty army will need great magazines and granaries, and good watches and guards for their marching in safety, therefore awaken thy diligence, let nothing be wanting, for, O Gog, thou wilt find I am against thee, saith the Lord.

k Gen. 49. 1. Deut. 4. 30. ver. 16. 1 Is. 29. 6. m ver. 12. ch. 34. 13. n ch. 36. 1, 4, 8. o Jer. 23. 6. ch. 28. 26. & 34. 25, 28. ver. 11.

8 ¶ [k] After many days [l] thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land *that is* brought back from the sword, [m] *and is* gathered out of many people, against [n] the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall [o] dwell safely all of them.

After many days: some refer this to the time of the Maccabees, about two hundred years after their return, and finishing the repairs of the city wall; others say after the expiring of the thousand years spoken of Rev. xx. 7. But certainly the full accomplished days are yet to come, when Gog and Magog shall be destroyed, and so these days are the latter days of the Messiah's kingdom among men. *Be visited;* be called to account, judged and punished for thy violence, and possibly convinced by thy overthrow; it may prove a visitation in mercy for conversion. *The latter years:* these must be contemporary with the many days already mentioned, so that where those are to be fixed, there these also are. *Thou shalt come,* Gog with all thy numbers, *into the land;* the land of the Jews, who were under this character in the Maccabees' time, and will be under the same in these latter days,-a people of God recovered from slavery and captivity, into which the sword of their enemy brought them, but God had now gathered out of the countries. *Against the mountains of Israel:* if it refer to Gog, it was against the mountains; but if it doth, as it may, refer to the people gathered, it should be *to*, not *against* the mountains. *Which have been always waste;* either designed to desolation by the rage and malice of enemies, or else because so long waste that it is beyond the memory of many living. It was four hundred years and upwards from this prophecy to Antiochus Epiphanes' death, if he were Gog; but if the ten tribes, gathered to the two and made one kingdom, be this people, and the wasted mountains refer to them, they may well be called mountains always waste; for it is already two thousand four hundred years since the ten tribes were carried away by Shalmaneser. *It is brought forth;* the land of Canaan, i. e. the people of it, *land* being, as often before, put for *people*. *Out of the nations,* among whom they were scattered. Though we can give account of those nations to whom the two tribes were in captivity, we cannot so of them to whom the ten tribes are to this day servants; but if this prediction do as much concern them as some confidently believe, these dry bones shall revive and come together. *They shall dwell safely:* this began at least to be fulfilled, when, for some three hundred and eighty years after their return, they lived tolerably quiet; afterwards Antiochus vexed them, and did them much damage. What remains of longer and fuller quiet and prosperity after the slaying of Gog time will discover to the people of God, whose lot it will be to stand up in those days.

p Is. 28. 2. q Jer. 4. 13. ver. 16.

9 Thou shalt ascend and come [p] like a storm, thou shalt be [q] like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.

Thou shalt: sometimes such phrase declares duty and is preceptive, but here it declares the event and is predictive, Gog will, though he should not. The Hebrew might be read thus, *Thou shalt ascend as a storm, thou shalt come as a cloud.* This storm is violent, with confused, tumultuous noises, and with devastation, as the word implieth; and come as a cloud, that is, as dark, as large, and as inevitable, and which continueth the violent waving storm. *To cover the land;* Gog and his bands shall be a storm that overspreads the whole land. *All thy bands;* troops, or wings. *Many people;* many in number, great in courage and strength.

10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, *that* at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt ‖ think an evil thought:

‖ Or, conceive a mischievous purpose.

At the same time that the people are gathered together, settling in peace, before they have secured themselves, much like the dragon waiting on the child-bearing woman with purpose to devour her child. *Things come into thy mind;* projects or designs for mischief, as appears ver. 11. *Thou shalt think an evil thought;* and these mischievous thoughts thou shalt so manage, as to forecast how they may, and to set on the execution till they do, take effect. If Antiochus Epiphanes be this Gog, Daniel, in chap. xi. 24, 25, foretells the like thing of him against Egypt.

r Jer. 49. 31. s ver. 8.

11 And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will [r] go to them that are at rest, [s] that dwell ‖ safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

‖ Or, confidently.

Thou shalt say; thou wilt resolve in thyself, and declare it to thy council. *Go up;* invade with all thy puissance. *Of unwalled villages;* weak, and without any considerable defences: a scattered people, that dwell in villages, can make little if any resistance. *That are at rest;* who would willingly be quiet. *That dwell safely;* suspecting as little evil from others, as they intend little against others, and trusting in the protection of their God, who hath promised they shall dwell safely. *Without walls* that may resist and be too strong for my forces and engines; though they have walls, bars, and gates, yet Gog accounts as none against his mighty armies.

† Heb. *To spoil the spoil, and to prey the prey.* ch. 29. 19. t ch. 36. 34, 35. u ver. 8. † Heb. *navel.* Judg. 9. 37.

12 †To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon [t] the desolate places *that are now* inhabited, [u] and upon the people *that are* gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the †midst of the land.

To take a spoil: the Scythians, and those other nations in this army, were from their original a violent, unjust, and thievish people, addicted to robberies; and they now, under this Gog, follow the old trade. *To take a prey;* the same repeated. *To turn thine hand:* either it speaks the ease with which Gog presumeth he shall do what he intendeth, or the sad desolation which he would cause to return upon the Jews. *The desolate places;* made so by the Babylonians, and continued so till of late years past. *Now inhabited;* newly repeopled and rebuilt upon their return out of Babylon. *Which have gotten cattle and goods;* or which are now by their husbandry and diligence getting

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somewhat of estate and riches; or, as we read it, *have gotten;* for it was to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes from their return near three hundred and fifty years, and from the finishing the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah to the time of Antiochus two hundred years, so that in that time the Jews might be grown rich enough to be accounted a great prey to him, if he were this Gog. However, such the Jews will be thought, when Gog attempts this enterprise.

x ch. 27. 22, 23. y ch. 27. 15, 20. z ch. 27. 12. a See ch. 19. 3, 5.

13 [x]Sheba, and [y]Dedan, and the merchants [z]of Tarshish, with all [a]the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?

Sheba: see chap. xxvii. 22: this Sheba was southward, and contains all of that coast which assisted Gog. *Dedan;* Idumeans, or the most easterly parts of Arabia Deserta: by these are noted the eastern nations that assisted, say some. *The merchants of Tarshish;* the inhabitants of the sea-coast westward, and Magog north. Robbers by land on three sides, pirates by sea on the fourth, in a confederacy to spoil the church of God. *The young lions;* young men thirsty of blood, but more of spoil, flock to Gog, resolved to join, if they may rob and spoil for themselves. *Art thou come to take a spoil?* this repeated inquiry made by these, I suppose, is not so much to sound the intentions of Gog, as it is a capitulation and agreement to come to his assistance; and on condition they might have, possess, and carry away what they seize, they are for him; and they mention particulars, *silver, gold, cattle, goods.* They are thus exact, out of foresight what little part they might have without such a compact.

b Is. 4. 1. c ver. 8.

14 ¶ Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; [b]In that day when my people of Israel [c]dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know *it?*

In that day: see ver. 8. *Dwelleth safely:* see ver. 11; chap. xxxiv. 25. *Shalt thou not know it?* thou wilt be informed how weak, yet how rich, how easy it is to make them a prey, and thou wilt believe and try it.

d ch. 39. 2. e ver. 6.

15 [d]And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, [e]and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army:

Thou shalt: see ver. 9. *From thy place;* out of thine own land. *Out of the north parts;* from Scythia, from the Euxine and Caspian seas, and countries thereabouts. *Thou;* the leader and chieftain. *Many people;* mighty and numerous, as ver. 6, 9. *Riding upon horses:* see ver. 4. *A great company:* see ver. 9.

f ver. 9. g ver. 8. h Ex. 14. 4. ch. 36. 23. & 39. 21.

16 [f]And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; [g]it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, [h]that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

On the first part of the verse, see ver. 9. *In the latter days:* see ver. 8. *I will bring thee:* see ver. 4. *That the heathen may know me:* Gog gathers all from all quarters to be with him to take the spoil, God brings them together to do that among them which may make the heathen see and own his hand. They do it in proud contempt of God and his people, but God doth it to glorify his own name, and to vindicate his people. *Sanctified;* confessed to be a great God over all, a gracious and faithful God to his people, and a just though dreadful enemy and avenger against the wicked and proud tyrants. *Before their eyes;* in the sight of all the heathen that are with Gog in his expedition, and much more in the sight of God's own wonderfully delivered people.

17 Thus saith the Lord GOD; *Art* thou he of whom I have spoken in old time †by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days *many* years that I would bring thee against them?

† Heb. *by the hands.*

Art thou he? either by way of contempt from God, upon him and all his preparations, or by way of monition: All these enterprises I foresaw, have spoken of them, and I will as well defeat as I did foretell them. *Of whom I have spoken:* it is not said it is written, though that be true also, but it was more spoken of. *In old time;* in the days of those years past, or of their years, in the times when those prophets lived. *The prophets of Israel;* not by prognosticators or soothsayers, but by true prophets, my servants whom I sent, Dan. xi.; Zech. xiv. Now, though they had not foretold this when Ezekiel did, yet when the question shall be asked by the church, it will be so many hundreds of years past, it may well refer to these two prophets; beside Isaiah, xxvi. 20, 21, with xxvii. 1; Jeremiah, xxx. 23, 24; Joel, iii. 1, 15, 16; and Micah, v. 5, 6, are prophets cited, as those who spake of this mighty enemy and his coming, and from which an understanding reader may soon collect that this foe was intended as well as others in those places.

18 And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, *that* my fury shall come up in my face.

Gog cometh up in fury against Israel, and God's fury, i. e. hot yet just displeasure, comes up in his face against both the attempt and the attempters, against Gog and all his power, who think to find a weak people, but they shall meet with an angry God.

i ch. 36. 5, 6. & 39. 25. k Ps. 89. 46. l Hag. 2. 6, 7. Rev. 16. 18.

19 For [i]in my jealousy [k]*and* in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, [l]Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;

In my jealousy for my own people, that I may preserve them, and for mine own glory, to vindicate that, as chap. xxxix. 25; Zech. i. 14. *In the fire of my wrath* against mine enemies, Gog and all his herds. *Surely:* it is in the Hebrew after the form of an oath, as chap. xxxvi. 5. *A great shaking;* to be sure a very great disturbance and tumult, like an earthquake, as the word signifies, for such an army, such threats, such assaults, and sieges will shake cities, towns, and the hearts of the stoutest. *In the land of Israel;* or against the land of Israel, which, for aught I know, will make the sense more obvious; the mighty preparations and the proud threats of Gog against Israel will make many hearts to quake, as well as foundations of cities.

m Hos. 4. 3.

20 So that [m]the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that *are* upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, [n]and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the ‖steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

n Jer. 4. 24. Nah. 1. 5, 6. ‖ Or, *towers, or, stairs.*

Here is a lofty strain indeed, giving us the description of the tokens of God's presence against his enemies; the effects of his displeasure against them are seen on all the creatures, sensible that their Maker is angry, though they know not with whom or for what. If to be interpreted literally, we shall find some parallels: when our God marched before Israel through the Red Sea, as the waters, so the fishes, saw, trembled, and fled, Psal. lxxvii. 16, 19. When he breaketh the cedars, Psal. xxix. 5, and discovers the forests, the birds that make their nests there shake at his presence and power. When Sinai trembled, Lebanon and Sirion skipped like a young unicorn, the creeping things in them no doubt shook, and the beasts feeding on them did no less, Psal. xxix. 6. But men, apprehensive of God's displeasure, and shaken with their own guilt, shall much more shake. But I think it is a very elegant allusive

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description of those strange troubles and consternation of men's minds at that day, and so metaphorically to be understood. Mountains may be great ones. Or, possibly, when God comes to judge Gog, he will by his mighty power give the world so great a shake, that it shall be a preface to his dreadful judgment day.

o Ps. 105. 16. p ch. 14. 17. q Judg. 7. 22. 1 Sam. 14. 20. 2 Chron. 20. 23.

21 And I will °call for ᵖa sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: ᑫevery man's sword shall be against his brother.

Call; summon and awaken. *A sword;* my army, the people of Israel. *Against him;* Gog and his powers. *Throughout all my mountains;* from all parts of the land, called here *mountains*, because it was full of mountains. *Every man's sword;* as it was in Jehoshaphat's time; indeed these swords may be meant by the *sword* God will call for through all, for they ranged all over his mountains.

r Is. 66. 16. Jer. 25. 31. s ch. 5. 17. t Ps. 11. 6. Is. 29. 6. & 30. 30.

22 And I will ʳplead against him with ˢpestilence and with blood; and ᵗI will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that *are* with him, an overflowing rain, and ᵘgreat hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

u ch. 13. 11. Rev. 16. 21.

I will plead, as judge and avenger, and in most dreadful manner, whether you take the words figuratively or literally. I slew others, Sennacherib's army, by pestilence, probably this was the angel's sword; others, as Ammon, Moab, Mount Seir, with blood by their own swords; the Amorites with hailstones, Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone, the old world with an overflowing flood. Each single was dreadful, but all meet in the destruction of Gog to make it most terrible. Whether these things are enigmatical or literal, I will not determine, but I am sure they tell us how great the final ruin of the enemies of God and his church shall be.

x ch. 36. 23. y Ps. 9. 16. ch. 37. 28. & 39. 7. ver. 16.

23 Thus will I magnify myself, and ˣsanctify myself; ʸand I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Thus, in this most dreadful manner, *will I magnify myself;* undeniably prove that I am the mighty, just, faithful, wise, holy, and merciful God toward my people, and that I am the great, just, and terrible One against mine and my church's enemies. *Sanctify myself;* declare I am holy and true to my word. *Many nations;* many heathen nations shall see this in the execution of my judgments, and own it to my praise, that I am, and none else is, the Lord.

CHAP. XXXIX.

God's judgment upon Gog, 1—7. *The loss of the enemy denoted by the multitude of weapons burned by Israel,* 8—10. *Gog's burial in Hamon-gog,* 11—16. *The feast upon the slain proclaimed to the fowls and beasts,* 17—20. *The heathen shall see God's judgment, and know that he plagued Israel for their sins,* 21—24; *but he will gather them again with everlasting favour,* 25—29.

a ch. 38. 2, 3.

THEREFORE, ᵃthou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

See chap. xxxviii. 2, 3, where this whole verse is unfolded.

‖ Or, *strike thee with six plagues*; or, *draw thee back with an hook of six teeth*, as ch. 38. 4. b ch. 38. 15. † Heb. *the sides of the north.*

2 And I will turn thee back, and ‖leave but the sixth part of thee, ᵇand will cause thee to come up from †the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel:

Turn thee back: see chap. xxxviii. 4: or else, when Gog or his assistants shall go into their countries to compose disorders risen since this enterprise was set on foot, they shall return to the rest of the confederates. *Leave but the sixth part of thee:* some read, as our margin notes, I will draw thee back with a hook of six teeth, alluding to the drawing fish out of the water; others, I will strike thee with six plagues; others, I will kill five of six, and leave but the sixth part of thee: let me conjecture too, I will leave in thy country but one in six, and I will bring forth thy people with thee in so great numbers, that five of six shall march on this expedition. This runs more compliant with what follows. *Will cause thee to come up;* by his all-wise providence God will dispose things so, that Gog shall deliberately choose this expedition; so God will bring him, as chap. xxxviii. 4. See chap. xxxviii. 4, 8, 15, 21.

3 And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.

I will smite thy bow; make thy hand weak, not able to hold the bow, and thy heart faint, not daring to take it up again. What is said of the bow rendered useless, is to be understood of all other weapons of war. This one kind, the bow, being most in use with these Scythians, is mentioned for all the rest. *Thy left hand;* the hand for holding the bow, while the right fits the arrow to the string, and draws to shoot. *Thine arrows to fall;* thou shalt throw away thine arrows, that thou mayst the better flee for escape.

c ch. 38. 21. ver. 17. d ch. 33. 27. † Heb. *wing.* † Heb. *to devour.*

4 ᶜThou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that *is* with thee: ᵈI will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every †sort, and *to* the beasts of the field †to be devoured.

Thou shalt fall; thy army shall be overthrown and slain. *Thou*, Gog himself the leader of this army, *and all thy bands;* thine own soldiers, the old trained soldiers. *The people;* the several nations that had joined in this enterprise with Gog. Their unburied carcasses shall be torn and mangled by every ravenous bird of the air, and the wild beasts, that range over the mountains for their prey, shall eat them; so many of them shall be denied a burial. See a like place chap. xxxii. 4, 5.

† Heb. *the face of the field.*

5 Thou shalt fall upon †the open field: for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord GOD.

See chap. xvi. 5; xxix. 5; xxxii. 4.

e ch. 38. 22. Amos 1. 4. ‖ Or, *confidently* f Ps. 72. 10.

6 ᵉAnd I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that ᶠdwell ‖carelessly in ᶠthe isles: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

I will send, by an unusual judgment from God, *a fire;* either civil dissensions, such as Egypt was consumed by, chap. xxx. 16; or else the destroying pestilence, which always carrieth with it a burning distemper or fever; or that fire and brimstone mentioned chap. xxxviii. 22. Or whatever this fire was, it should devour and lay desolate. *Them that dwell carelessly;* who perhaps thought their situation would be their safety; though Gog fell on the land, the ships and isles might escape; not so, for the same hand will send the fire on the isles and their inhabitants which sent it on Gog. Possibly the Tyrians and Sidonians may be aimed at.

g ver. 22. h Lev. 18. 21. ch. 20. 39. i ch. 36. 16. 23.

7 ᵍSo will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not *let them* ʰpollute my holy name any more: ⁱand the heathen shall know that I *am* the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

In ver. 6, the judgments executed on Gog make God known in the midst of the heathen, here they make him known among his own people; in both glorious. *My holy name;* the destruction threatened against the wicked for their enmity against holiness, being executed, manifest that God is holy, and the protection of such. Or, *holy name*, for that he does in his oath swear by his *holiness*. So his *faithfulness* is here commended and illustrated. *I will not let them pollute my holy name any more;* I will give them that new spirit, that due sense of my mercy; they

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shall not, as formerly, profane my name among the heathen, chap. xx. 9. See chap. xxxviii. 23.

k Rev. 16. 17. & 21. 6.

8 ¶ [k]Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this *is* the [l]day whereof I have spoken.

l ch. 38. 17.

It, this prophecy, to be fulfilled in the destruction of Gog, the rescue of God's people, and magnifying the name of God, *is come;* as sure as if already come; or, as if already done; nor shall it be too long ere, in effect, and fully, it shall be done. *The day;* that notable day of recompences against the last great enemies of Christ and the church. *I have spoken*, by Ezekiel now, and by others: see chap. xxxviii. 17.

9 And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the ‖handstaves, and the spears, and they shall ‖burn them with fire seven years:

‖ Or, *javelins.*
‖ Or, *make a fire of them.*

Shall go forth, out of their houses and out of the cities, with joy to see and admire the great goodness of God towards them, and the greatness of his power against their enemies. *Shall set on fire:* this expression seems to intimate that they should burn these things in the open field or mountains, where they found them; here is no mention made of the carrying any into city or houses, to burn in their chimneys: it may be they should make those fires in token of joy. *The weapons;* the warlike provision, instruments, engines, carriages, and waggons, &c., as well as those recounted. *The shields:* see chap. xxxviii. 4. *The hand-staves*, that either their leaders used, like our halfpikes, or perhaps such as they cast like darts at the enemy. *They shall burn them with fire seven years:* it may be wondered they burn these weapons, which might be of use to them for defence and safety; but it was done, partly, because they were weapons of the *uncircumcised;* partly, because they were *anathemata*, as all Jericho was; but chiefly, in testimony that God was their safety and defence, on which they relied, and would ever since he had so wonderfully delivered. We might read the words thus, *they shall kindle with them a fire of seven years*, and then the sense would be plain, that there should be such store of weapons and warlike utensils, that, heaped together, they would last so long, being cast into the fire still by such as found them; for it is not unlike they gathered up the weapons, as they did scattered bones, on their walks, as they lighted on them. Others tell us it is a certain number for an uncertain; others, that it is somewhat a proverbial speech, they shall have enough by the spoil of the enemy to make them and keep them warm, much as we sometimes say of one well provided, He is a warm gentleman; and some others tell us it is an expression of the Jews, who love to use this number in extraordinary cases, though they intend not precisely the same, as we say of a thing delayed, It will be seven years ere it come, or of a thing that will serve us a good while, It will last seven years. Or else, since the Hebrew hath not a distinct way of declaring what might be, or the potential mood, as the Latin, but they express *possible* by *future*, and say, *that shall be*, which we express by *that may be*, the meaning of these futures, *they shall*, in this and the next verse, is no more than, *they may or might burn for seven years;* and so Kimchi glosseth it as to countenance this last guess. They shall be sufficient; and in such a country, where the need of fire is much less than with us, it will not seem very incredible that the warlike utensils of so numerous an army might be enough to furnish them with fuel for so many years, or more.

10 So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down *any* out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: [m]and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD.

m Is. 14. 2.

So, Heb. *And*, they shall not, &c. *They shall take:* this, as noted before, taken potentially, or speaking what they might, not what they eventually should do; such store of fuel from the weapons and utensils of war left by these Gogites, that the Jews will not need to go to the forests to cut down wood. Or else comparatively, as some will; what they shall need to fetch from the forests shall be nothing in comparison to what they were wont to fetch. *They shall burn;* they may if they will: it is not preceptive, to make it duty, nor doth it necessarily determine that they must, but there were and would be for all that time who would be burning these weapons, and save the labour and cost of buying and fetching wood; and these who should do this I would look for among the poorer sort. *They shall spoil;* strip the dead, rifle their waggons and tents, searching what they may find of value and use, in which it is likely the poor among the Jews would be earliest and most diligent. *Those that spoiled them;* the army of Gog, and his followers. *And rob:* it was not theft or robbery in the Jews to do this, though it was robbery in Gog and his company to spoil the Jews; but for decorum of the phrase, the prophet useth the same word in both cases.

11 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the ‖*noses* of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call *it* The valley of ‖Hamon-gog.

‖ Or, *mouths.*
‖ That is, *The multitude of Gog.*

At that day; when God shall have destroyed this prince, and his formidable army. *Give unto Gog;* and to many of those who were with him, for some were given to the birds and beasts to be devoured, ver. 4. *A place there of graves:* beside many other reasons for burying these slaughtered multitudes, the humanity that religion is full of would guide the Jews to it, and God tells us that Gog shall have a grave in Israel. He came to take possession, and so he shall, but not as he purposed and hoped, but as God intended; Gog shall possess his house of darkness in that land which he invaded to make a prey of. He shall have one place there, *a grave*, as the Hebrew. *The valley of the passengers on the east of the sea:* this valley hath here its name and situation; the name from the frequent travels of passengers through it from Egypt and Arabia Felix into the more northern parts, and from these again into Egypt and Arabia. By its situation it is on the east side of the Dead Sea, to distinguish it from the valley that is on this side Jordan westward, in which is Dothan. Now in this valley did the Jews discomfit the Ammonites, Moabites, Tyrians, and Sidonians, 1 Macc. v. This might be a type, or first-fruits, and assurance of this great victory, but no more; for this was of a few against a few, and in this fight of some but few fell, &c. *It shall stop the noses;* the stink of the putrefying carcasses should make travellers stop their noses, offended with the ill smells. *There shall they bury;* partly in doing the office of humanity, though to dead enemies; and let their enemies live, who would not (for want of others) be so civil to them when dead; but chiefly to remove the nuisance of eye and nose, and to prevent diseases, that rise many times from such smells. *Gog:* this prince, whoever it is, shall there fall, and be buried with *his multitude. They shall call it:* this shall give name to the valley, which is to be called *The valley of Hamon-gog:* which appellation I do not know to be given to any valley as yet, probably because this prophecy is not yet fully accomplished.

12 And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, [n]that they may cleanse the land.

n Deu. 21. 23. ver. 14, 16.

Seven months shall the house of Israel, many of the house of Israel, some voluntarily, others by appointment, *be burying of them;* a little time would not suffice to bury so great multitude, make what haste they could. *Cleanse the land;* not in a legal sense, but in a natural, to clear the land of hurtful stinks.

13 Yea, all the people of the land shall bury *them:* and it shall be to them a renown the day

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o ch. 28. 22. that °I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD.

All that dwell thereabout, or all that came out to resist and fight with this army. *It shall be to them*, the house of Israel, *a renown*; a commendation, matter of praise, that did, like men, bury the dead, who otherwise must have been all dung on the face of the earth, and the swelling hill rising from their buried bones shall be a monument to the praise of Israel's courtesy. Or else thus, the day of my being glorified shall be a renown to Israel: as indeed it is an honour to be owned of God, so when God shows he owneth such, he gives them honour among all that observe it. *Glorified*, in the deliverance of Israel, and in the destruction of Gog by my wonderful power, in my just zeal against mine enemies, and for my people.

† Heb. men of continuance.

14 And they shall sever out †men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those

p ver. 12. that remain upon the face of the earth, ᵖto cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.

They, the rulers in Israel, *shall sever out*, choose out men who shall make it their work. *Passing through*; to go up and down over the whole land, for many of Gog's wounded, flying soldiers died in thickets, and by corners into which they crept, when they could go no further. *With the passengers*; whose assistance they would desire of courtesy, or command by order, and that with reason, all this care and labour for burying the dead tending to their good, that they might unoffended travel whither they were going. *That remain* unburied by the public labour of the house of Israel during the seven months. *To cleanse it*: a legal cleansing, if referred to Antiochus Epiphanes's times, but not so with those that refer it to a season not yet come, for all legal ceremonies are ended: when Gog's army shall be destroyed and buried, the land shall be cleansed from the stench and noisomeness of these carcasses. These officers begin their work after the first seven months are expired, for during the seven months there would be work for all of them to bury the dead and slain of Gog's army.

15 And the passengers *that* pass through the land, when *any* seeth a man's

† Heb. build. bone, then shall he †set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog.

Order should be taken to inform travellers, if they lighted on any bone or bones of men, as they journeyed, that they were desired to set up some mark at them, that thereby the public officers appointed to gather and bury them might find and carry those bones to the common burying-place. *When any seeth a man's bone*: many of Gog's soldiers were torn by beasts, which if some of the greater beasts did, the lesser could not, break and devour the bones, but with the flesh these were dragged about by beasts, or scattered by the eagles and vultures, and so lay divided from the body; of these the prophet speaks.

16 And also the name of the city *shall*

‖ That is, the multitude. *be* ‖Hamonah. Thus shall they ᵠcleanse

q ver. 12. the land.

The city; either which is next to this common tomb of Gog, as most likely, or the city Jerusalem, whose people, delivered, sanctified, grateful, and magnified in the eyes of the nations by the wonderful mercy of their God, shall be called by way of eminence, *The people*, or *Her people, Hamonah*.

17 ¶And, thou son of man, thus saith

r Rev. 19. 17. † Heb. to the fowl of every wing. s Is. 18. 6. & 34. 6. Jer. 12. 9. Zeph. 1. 7. ‖ Heb. slaughter. t ver. 4. the Lord GOD; ʳSpeak †unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, ˢAssemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my ‖sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, *even* a great sacrifice ᵗupon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood.

Speak; though they understand not thy word, yet speak, for they will understand my word, which shall go out with thine. *Unto every feathered fowl*; to all sorts of carnivorous birds, every kind of those that eat flesh. *To every beast*, that are for the prey, little or great, which either by craft or power get their food out of the flesh of others. *Assemble yourselves*; come in whole companies, flocks and herds too; and this repeated twice more, *come, gather yourselves*: they have an earnest invitation, from all sides. *To my sacrifice*: when sacrifices were offered, there usually was a feast to the priest the sacrificer, and for what guests were invited; now God is about to make such, he invites his guests, resolved to entertain them plentifully. *That I do sacrifice*: the punishment of these God calls a sacrifice, which he doth offer, i. e. to his own justice, to satisfy that. *For you*: it was for higher ends, yet since God intends to fill them with the flesh and blood of it, he is pleased to tell them he hath slain for their entertainment. *A great sacrifice*, where more thousands are offered at once than ever were at any time offered; it is a sacrifice so great, that none ever was or will be like. *The mountains of Israel*; the land of Canaan. *Eat flesh*; the flesh of the sacrifice. *And drink blood*; the blood of it: this was entertainment fitting these invited guests.

18 ᵘYe shall eat the flesh of the mighty, u Rev. 19. 18. and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of †goats, of † Heb. great goats. x Deu 32. 14. Ps. 22. 12. bullocks, all of them ˣfatlings of Bashan.

In these two and the two following verses, God takes on him the person of one that makes a feast, invites his guests, and promiseth to satisfy them. Of the two former, the first is an enigmatical invitation, or an invitation in a riddle; the latter is the key to this character. *The mighty*; who had great authority, great courage and strength, the giant-like ones, commanders of great note in the army. *The princes*: many princes came with their countrymen and subjects to assist in this war, whose blood these fowls should drink; and these compared to *rams* which lead the flock. *Lambs* are the more ordinary in the army. *Goats*; great goats, as the Hebrew denoteth; and these signify the more lascivious and impetuous among them. *Bullocks*; such as, though more slow, were of great strength. *Fatlings*; well fed, it was no lean sacrifice made. *Of Bashan*, a mountain of most rich and sweet soil, and that fed the best of any.

19 And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.

Eat fat; accounted best, and which shall here be plentiful. *Till ye be full*; none should fray them away, nor should any devour so much as to leave others hungry. *My sacrifice*: see ver. 17.

20 ʸThus ye shall be filled at my table y Ps. 78. 6. ch. 38. 4. z Rev. 19. 18. with horses and chariots, ᶻwith mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD.

At my table; in the field where Gog, his princes, and army are slain, compared to a table. *Horses* put for horsemen, not common foot-soldiers. *Chariots* for the men that ride in them. *Mighty men*; see ver. 18.

21 ᵃAnd I will set my glory among the a ch. 38. 16, 23. heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and ᵇmy b Ex. 7. 4. hand that I have laid upon them.

I will set, I will advance and continue, *my glory*; the glory of power, justice, and wisdom against enemies, and of power, mercy, and faithfulness, with wisdom, toward his people. *The heathen*, among whom my name was evil spoken of; they eclipsed, but God will clear up his glory. *The heathen*, that are either in Gog's army, or in the countries to which the news shall come, *shall see*, not be able to deny or doubt, *my judgment*; the punishment just and from heaven, called God's *hand laid upon them*.

22 ᶜSo the house of Israel shall know c ver. 7, 39. that I *am* the LORD their God from that day and forward.

Shall know that I am the Lord: see chap. xxxiv. 31. *From that day*, from the day of Gog's signal destruction, *forward*, while time shall be

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d ch. 36. 18, 19, 20, 23.

23 ¶ [d]And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they

e Deut. 31. 17. Is. 59. 2.
f Lev. 26. 25.

trespassed against me, therefore [e]hid I my face from them, and [f]gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword.

The sottish heathen thought meanly of the God of Israel, and reckoned they came into captivity because the people of some greater god had by the power of their god prevailed against Israel's God and his people; but by this overthrow given to Gog, they shall see it was not impotence in Israel's God, but iniquity in Israel's people, that brought them into captivity. *Trespassed;* committed sin perversely, continually, and with a high hand. *Hid my face;* withdrew my favour, would no more regard them, and then it was soon a night of trouble to them. *Into the hand,* into the power, *of their enemies,* which could not have hurt Israel if Israel had not first forsaken his God, but then God forsook them. When God withdrew his defence, as fenceless, they fell under the sword of the enemy, for it is he that subdueth enemies and giveth victory.

g ch. 36. 19.

24 [g]According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them.

Whatever severity I have seemed to use, it was but according to their sins, yet less than their sins, in punishing and hiding my face from them.

25 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD;

h Jer. 30. 3, 18. ch. 34. 13. & 36. 21.
i ch. 20. 40. Hos. 1. 11.

[h]Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the [i]whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

Therefore; since my name, my power, and justice are vindicated, and the heathen see it was Israel's iniquity brought them into captivity, and Israel knows this too. *Now;* from this time of Gog's overthrow. *Jacob;* the seed of Jacob, here called by their father's name. *Have mercy:* this reducing captive Jews is mere mercy: it is very true by sin they deserved to be made captives, and it is as true they never did or could deserve a deliverance from captivity; it was not extremity of justice that so punished, but it was the riches of mercy that so pardoned and redeemed. *Upon the whole house of Israel;* on the ten tribes with the two. And all this in zeal *for my holy name,* by which I am engaged to be their God.

k Dan. 9. 16.

26 [k]After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when

l Lev. 26. 5, 6.

they [l]dwelt safely in their land, and none made *them* afraid.

After they have long suffered, and now shall suffer no longer; for it is enough my people know, and the heathen know, that I am the Lord. *Borne their shame;* reproach for their sins cast on them by the heathen, with great reflections on their God: this was part of the punishment of them all, and the greatest grief to the best among them, that their God was reproached. *Their trespasses;* the punishment of those trespasses whereby they sinned against God, which this prophet plainly and frequently chargeth them with. *When they dwelt safely;* and this done amidst that prosperity and safety which should have obliged them to love and obedience; but when they were safe at home, they sinned as if danger would never overtake them. *None made them afraid;* no enemy to endanger and alarm them. Strange ingratitude, to cast off the fear of God, and his law, when he had set them free from the fear of enemies!

m ch. 28. 25, 26.
n ch. 38. 23, 24. & 39. 16.

27 [m]When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and [n]am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations;

When I have brought them: see the phrase chap. xxviii. 25. The persons here are not the two tribes only, but the ten with them, as ver. 25. *Out of their enemies' lands;* wherever they were, they were among enemies, out of their own country. *Sanctified;* by their accepting punishment, repenting for sin, loathing their former ways, and themselves for them, acknowledging God to be holy, his law holy, and his worship holy, and engaging themselves in covenant of perpetual obedience to God, and keeping it; by these things God will be sanctified among the Israelites, and in sight of the nations, when they see the furnace hath purified them.

o ch. 34. 30. ver. 22.
† Heb. by my causing of them, &c.

28 [o]Then shall they know that I *am* the LORD their God, †which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.

Know; on fullest experiences, and clearest evidences, see, acknowledge, and publish to each other. *The Lord;* the Mighty One, the just Judge, who determineth righteously between men and men, yea, between them and himself. *Their God;* who, in covenant with their fathers, hath remembered it for the good of their children, who did assure them, that if they violated his covenant he would punish, and when they repented he would show mercy. *Which caused;* who by his own hand raised up enemies against, and then delivered them into the enemies' hand, so sent them into a sad and long captivity. *But I have gathered them;* but now done more for them than when I brought them out of Babylon, whence the two tribes (yet not all of them, for some staid behind) and a few of the house of Israel returned; now the whole of the twelve tribes shall be gathered. *Unto their own land;* that country they so dearly loved, somewhat for their fathers' sake, whose ancient seat it was, but more for the goodness of it, which flowed with milk and honey. *Have left none:* this recovery it seems shall be much more universal than the former in Zorobabel's time: as, coming out of Egypt, not a feeble person left behind; so nor here, if the words be to be literally explained. *There;* in the land of captivity, the enemies' country.

29 [p]Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have [q]poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

p Is. 54. 8.
q Joel 2. 28. Zech. 12. 10. Acts 2. 17.

Neither will I hide my face: see ver. 23. I will not turn from them in displeasure. *From them;* from the whole house of Israel. This is no assurance to any pretender of great interest in God, who yet lives in sin. *Poured out,* in abundant measures of wisdom and holiness, *my Spirit;* which is a Spirit of sanctification to make them holy, and a Spirit of strength to confirm them in holiness, and of adoption to sweeten obedience to them; they shall not, they will not depart from me, according to the promises, chap. xi. 19, 20; xxxvi. 25—27; xxxvii. 23—28; Jer. xxxi. 31, &c.; xxxii. 37—40. It was sin that caused God to hide his face, and now grace shall be given to keep them out of sin, and to engage them to constant obedience, that God may rejoice over them to do them good in this their latter end.

CHAP. XL.

Ezekiel's vision of the model of a city, and of an angel with a line and measuring reed taking the dimensions of the temple, 1—5. *The description of the east gate of the outer court,* 6—19; *of the north gate,* 20—23; *and of the south gate,* 24—26: *of the south gate of the inner court,* 27—31; *of the east gate,* 32—34; *and of the north gate,* 35—38. *The eight tables,* 39—43. *The chambers for the singers and for the priests in waiting,* 44—47. *The porch of the house,* 48, 49.

574.

IN the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth *day* of the month, in the fourteenth year after that [a]the city was smitten, in the selfsame day [b]the hand of the LORD was upon me, and brought me thither.

a ch. 33. 21.
b ch. 1. 3.

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Of our captivity; of those that with Jeconiah, who is also called Jehoiachin, were carried away into captivity eleven years before Jerusalem was sacked and burnt. And this falls in with the 3374th year of the world, or near it; about 574 years before Christ's incarnation. *In the beginning of the year;* in the month Nisan. *The tenth day;* the day that the paschal lamb was to be taken up in order to the feast on the tenth day, on which Israel went out of Egypt. *In the fourteenth year;* which appears thus, the city was smitten in the eleventh year of Jeconiah's captivity, or eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, to which if you add fourteen, they amount to twenty-five. *Was smitten;* taken, plundered, and spoiled by the Babylonians. *In the self-same day:* this is very particularly noted, as of some weight. *The hand of the Lord;* the Spirit of prophecy: see chap. i. 3; iii. 14; viii. 1. *Brought me;* not by local motion carrying his body, but in visional representation, showing the prophet what he relates to us. *Thither;* to Jerusalem, the place where it did stand, as appears in the next verse.

c ch. 8. 3. d Rev. 21. 10. ‖ Or, upon which.

2 [c]In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, [d]and set me upon a very high mountain, ‖by which *was* as the frame of a city on the south.

In the visions: by this it appears it was not a corporeal transumption of the prophet: see chap. viii. 3. *Brought me:* see ver. 1. *Into the land of Israel;* the land of Canaan was in a scheme represented to him. *Set me upon a very high mountain;* placed him in the most convenient situation for prospect. It were vain to inquire what mountain this was, since this is a vision; probably it was Mount Moriah here signified. *Was as the frame,* the portrait and model, *of a city;* a goodly, fair city, or, by way of eminence, *the city,* or of that city which fourteen years ago was burnt. *On the south;* on the south of the mountain where the prophet was set, and this was the situation of Jerusalem, on whose north was Mount Zion, Psal. xlviii. 2.

c ch. 1. 7. Dan. 10. 6. f ch. 47. 3. g Rev. 11. 1. & 21. 15.

3 And he brought me thither, and, behold, *there was* a man, whose appearance *was* [e]like the appearance of brass, [f]with a line of flax in his hand, [g]and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.

He brought me; the Lord by his Spirit, as ver. 1. *Thither:* see ver. 1. *A man;* the same, no doubt, which appeared to the prophet, chap. i. 26, whose name is The Branch, and who builds the temple, Zech. vi. 12, 13. *Whose appearance,* whose fashion and colour, *was like* burnished *brass;* so Rev. i. 15; much like to that chap. i. 27; and speaks glory and strength. *A line of flax;* a plumb-line, a mason's line, to discover the rectitude of the building, or its defects. *In the gate;* not in the east gate, but in the north gate next toward the east.

h ch. 44. 5. i ch. 43. 10.

4 And the man said unto me, [h]Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew *them* unto thee *art* thou brought hither: [i]declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.

The man: see ver. 3. *Said unto me;* Ezekiel, called here, as in many other places, the *son of man. Behold with thine eyes;* diligently view; all accurateness is required here in looking into these things presented to the eye. *Hear with thine ears;* like care and attention use also in hearing what shall be spoken: these kind of phrases do bind us to greatest heedfulness. *Set thine heart upon;* ponder and weigh with thyself, meditate and study on them. Though here is a supernatural revelation, yet he is required to act the utmost part of a man to know the things revealed. *All;* nothing is insignificant here, therefore all must be regarded. *To the intent;* this was the reason why thou wast brought hither, and why I am come to meet thee. *Declare;* plainly tell them, that they may discern, and tell all, conceal nothing.

k ch. 42. 20.

5 And behold [k]a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits *long* by the cubit and an hand breadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.

A wall: this was that outmost wall, which did encompass the whole ground on which the temple stood, and the courts that belonged to the temple; a wall that encompassed the whole Mount Zion, upon whose top the temple stood. *On the outside:* this passage clears which wall it was, viz. the outermost of three, which the floor of the temple and the mount was encircled with. *Of the house;* house of God, the temple, as chap. x. 4; 2 Chron. ii. 1. 5. *In the man's hand:* the prophet is called to see and hear, but the standard is not put into his hand; Christ, who is this man, hath and keeps the reed in his own hand, as the only fit person to take the measures of all. *Reed,* or cane, for this measuring rod or staff was of those canes growing in that country, straight, long, and light, and which architects did make use of. *Of six cubits long;* each cubit consisting of eighteen inches in our common account; and though there is much wrangling about the exact dimensions of this cubit, I will not intermeddle with the dispute, it was about one Roman foot and half, which comes very near to our English foot and half, or eighteen inches, or one half-yard. *An hand breadth,* added to each six cubits, not, as some have supposed, to each cubit. *The breadth;* the thickness of the walls, which were one reed and one hand's breadth, or three yards and three inches, thick. *The height;* and the height equal, taking the measure, not from the bottom of the wall in the valley on the outside, which was of different height, as the valley was of different depth, but taking the measure from the area, or floor, on the inside of the wall, it was in the whole circuit of equal height, as here.

† Heb. whose face was the way toward the east.

6 ¶ Then came he unto the gate †which looketh toward the east, and went up the stairs thereof, and measured the threshold of the gate, *which was* one reed broad; and the other threshold *of the gate, which was* one reed broad.

Then, when the prophet had well observed the outer wall and the measuring thereof, *came he,* the man with the measuring reed, i. e. Christ. *The gate,* either of one of the inner walls, or of the temple itself. *Went up the stairs thereof:* till he was got up, he could not measure the threshold, which was laid at the top of the stairs; and these were ten if the measurer be supposed in the gate of the house, or eight if in the gate of the court of the priests, or seven if in the court of Israel, and each stair half a cubit in height, too high at lowest for him to take the measure of the threshold, if he did not go up the stairs. *Measured the threshold;* it is like he measured the lower threshold first, as next hand. *The other threshold,* i. e. the upper threshold, or lintel of the gate, which was of equal dimensions with the lower, a reed broad, or three yards and three inches broad, or thick.

7 And *every* little chamber *was* one reed long, and one reed broad; and between the little chambers *were* five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate within *was* one reed.

Along the wall of the porch were chambers, three on one side and three on the other, ver. 10, of equal dimensions, each one reed square. *Five cubits,* a space of two yards and one half, between each chamber, either filled with some neat posts or pillars, or it may be quite void, and nothing in them. *Within;* the inward threshold as well as outward were of the same measures, and curiously arched over head from side to side, and end to end, which was from east to west.

8 He measured also the porch of the gate within, one reed.

The porch; the posts, which were joined together at the top by an arch, and so made the portico, say some. The open space under the arch between the posts, or the ally which leads from the gate into the more inward parts of the house, or to the inmost. So the French version, *puis après il mesura d' une canne l' allée qui menait à la porte la plus en dedans.*

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9 Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and the posts thereof, two cubits; and the porch of the gate *was* inward.

This, say some, was another porch of another gate, distinct from that ver. 6. But others, more likely, refer this measuring to the same gate, but where, as before the breadth, now the length is measured. *The posts:* these were half columns, that from the floor to the height of the wall jutted out, as if one half of the column were in the wall, and the other without, which was both for beauty and strength; and the protuberance of this half column was one cubit, the other taken up in the wall.

10 And the little chambers of the gate eastward *were* three on this side, and three on that side; they three *were* of one measure: and the posts had one measure on this side and on that side.

This is a repetition of what the 7th verse hath already acquainted us with; I only observe, these chambers were for the priests and Levites to lodge in during their ministration, according to their courses in the temple, where they kept watch continually night and day. The whole was framed in very great harmony and just proportions.

11 And he measured the breadth of the entry of the gate, ten cubits; *and* the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.

The breadth of the entry: it is meant of the whole length of the entry, or walk through the porch, which was so wide, and to which they ascended by stairs of a semi-circular form. *The length;* the height is meant, but it is called its length, either because height is an erected length, or rather because thirteen cubits is the greater dimension; and this interpreters agree in, it is the height of the gate here measured.

12 The †space also before the little chambers *was* one cubit *on this side*, and the space *was* one cubit on that side: and the little chambers *were* six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side.

† Heb. *limit*, or, *bound.*

The space; the bound, limit, or rails, as some think, which were set up at a cubit distance from the front of these little chambers, and gave a beauty to them; or else the space of a cubit on the outside for convenient placing of benches for the priests to sit on, while they observed who came in and went out of the gate. *The little chambers:* see ver. 7. *The space* between the rails, or balusters, and the chambers on each side, north and south. There was no difference in the dimensions of these little chambers, they were all alike on each side.

13 He measured then the gate from the roof of *one* little chamber to the roof of another: the breadth *was* five and twenty cubits, door against door.

He measured from the extremity of one little chamber on the north side of the gate, to the extremity of the opposite chamber on the south side; and so one cubit and half for the back wall of the one chamber, and as much for the back wall of the other chamber, with the length of the chambers six cubits each, and ten for the breadth of the gate, amounts to twenty-five cubits. *Door against door;* either so placed, that the door of the first chamber on the north side answered to the door of the first on the south side; or some think the doors of the chambers were two in each chamber in the east and west parts, and so exactly set, that, the doors being all open, you had a clear prospect through all the chambers to the temple.

14 He made also posts of threescore cubits, even unto the post of the court round about the gate.

He made; measured, and thereby showed what kind of posts they should be. *Posts of threescore cubits:* if this might be interpreted by Cyrus's edict for building this fabric sixty cubits high, it would be a clear confirmation of the Divine mission of the prophet, and the certainty of a future performance of the good he promised in God's name, when it appears so evident that he had so long before declared to what height the building should be raised by licence from Cyrus. But more like it is that it refers to the height of this gate, built up two stories above the arch, and the posts in their height are only mentioned, but imply all the rest of the building over the east gate. These high columns or posts on the inner front of this gate were so disposed, that the last on each side was very near to the first post, or pillar of the court on either side of the gate; and so the posts, and buildings laid on those posts, joined on each side of this gate.

15 And from the face of the gate of the entrance unto the face of the porch of the inner gate *were* fifty cubits.

This verse seems to sum up all the dimensions at length, this gate, its porch, and thickness of its walls; and so sum the cubits, six in the thickness of the outer wall, eighteen in the three chambers, twenty in the spaces between the chambers, and six cubits in the thickness of the inner wall of the porch.

16 And *there were* [1]†narrow windows to the little chambers, and to their posts within the gate round about, and likewise to the ‖arches: and windows *were* round about ‖inward: and upon *each* post *were* palm trees.

[1] 1 Kings 6. 4.
† Heb. *closed.*
‖ Or, *galleries, or, porches.*
‖ Or, *within.*

Narrow windows: these lights were made through the thickness of the wall of the chambers, and the wall was sloped for that purpose, both within toward the chamber, and without toward the cloister, this outward sloping gathering the light from without, and the inward sloping did disperse it over all the chamber; so they were windows narrowed inward, to the middle. *The little chambers;* the three on each side of the porch. *To their posts;* the upper lintel of each door, over which was a window to let in light from that side. *To the arches;* windows under the arches between post and post, to give light to the five cubits' space between chamber and chamber. *Windows were round about inward:* these were on both sides of the porch within the gate exactly unlike. *Palm trees,* i. e. engraven with curious art for beauty, and whose upper branches spreading themselves along under the arches seemed to bear up the arches.

17 Then brought he me into [m]the outward court, and, lo, *there were* [n]chambers, and a pavement made for the court round about: [o]thirty chambers *were* upon the pavement.

[m] Rev. 11. 2.
[n] 1 Kings 6. 5.
[o] ch. 45. 5.

The outward court; so called in regard of the more inward court, between that where he was and the temple itself: this court here, called the outward court, was at least the second about the temple, as you go through the first and greatest court, or floor encompassed with that wall of one reed high, and one thick, through the second, which is the court of the people, and which probably is this in our text. *There were chambers;* not only lodging rooms for the priests, but also storehouses for tithes and offerings; these were treasuries, and so rendered by some. *A pavement;* a very beautiful floor laid with checker-work, as some say of marble, or of porphyry, which is much richer. *Round about;* it was not laid as we see some courts before great houses with us, in a fair walk up from the gate to the door of the house, but the whole floor of this court was thus paved. *Thirty chambers;* that is, fifteen on the south side of the gate, and fifteen on the north side, built over the pavement.

18 And the pavement by the side of the gates over against the length of the gates *was* the lower pavement.

The pavement; that mentioned ver. 17. *By the side of the gates;* that part which lay on each side of the gate, and from thence spread itself towards the chambers, leaving a space of pavement of equal breadth with the porch, or gate in the middle. *The length of the gates:* this length was measured fifty cubits, ver. 15, from the outside of the first wall to the outside of the inmost wall of the gate and porch, from which, on a pavement somewhat raised, as in other stately walks, this went on to the next gate of the next

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court. *The lower pavement;* the side pavement was laid somewhat lower than this middle pavement, not only for state, but for the more convenient keeping it clean; so the middle pavement rose with a little convex surface, and the edges sunk with a little declivity.

19 Then he measured the breadth from the forefront of the lower gate unto the forefront of the inner court ‖without, an hundred cubits eastward and northward.

‖ Or, *from without.*

He measured the breadth of the whole ground between the inner front of one gate and porch, to the outer front of the next gate more inward to the temple. *The lower gate;* called so in respect to the next gate, which was on the higher ground, and into which the entrance was by stairs or steps. So the first of the fabric was the lowest, the last was the highest, and the middle gates were the one higher than the other, as in all buildings that stand upon such ascents. *Unto the forefront;* to the outside front of the gate of the priests' court, which was next to this gate now measured; that is, from the west front of the lower to the east front of the upper gate. This court was one hundred cubits in length from the west front of the lower gate to the east front of the gate of the inner court; and so was the space from the south front of the court to the north front: so the court was exactly square.

20 ¶ And the gate of the outward court †that looked toward the north, he measured the length thereof, and the breadth thereof.

† Heb. *whose face was.*

Now is this measurer giving account of the north gate of this outward court, in which is a most exact harmony with the measures, fashion, and ornaments of the east gate, so that nothing needs be here repeated; who would know all particulars of this gate may find them in the east gate.

21 And the little chambers thereof *were* three on this side and three on that side; and the posts thereof and the ‖arches thereof were after the measure of the first gate: the length thereof *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

‖ Or, *galleries, or, porches.*

The first gate; called, ver. 22, east gate. *The length thereof was fifty cubits:* see ver. 15. *The breadth five and twenty cubits:* see ver. 13.

22 And their windows, and their arches, and their palm trees, *were* after the measure of the gate that looketh toward the east; and they went up unto it by seven steps; and the arches thereof *were* before them.

See ver. 16. *By seven steps:* it is not said what number of stairs they went up to the east gate, but by this it appears they were seven steps in number, and it is said by some the form was semi-circular. *The arches thereof,* of this portico, the curious vaulted roof. *Before them;* within, or more inward than the steps or gate.

23 And the gate of the inner court *was* over against the gate toward the north, and toward the east; and he measured from gate to gate an hundred cubits.

The gate, the north gate, *of the inner court,* or court of the priests. *The gate toward the north;* the north gate of the outer court, these were directly over each other. *And toward the east:* it is concise, but thus to be expressed fully: The east gate of the inner court was directly over against the east gate of the outer court, and equally distant from each other.

24 ¶ After that he brought me toward the south, and behold a gate toward the south: and he measured the posts thereof and the arches thereof according to these measures.

Having finished the measuring of the east gate, and showed the prophet the sameness of the north gate's buildings, measures, and ornaments, now he is informed of the south gate, and its exact symmetry with the other two, which consult in ver. 5—11. *The south;* the south point of heaven. *A gate toward the south;* south part of the house. *The posts and the arches:* see ver. 16, 21, 22.

25 And *there were* windows in it and in the arches thereof round about, like those windows: the length *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

See ver. 16. *Like those windows,* which were in the east gate, and already measured there.

26 And *there were* seven steps to go up to it, and the arches thereof *were* before them: and it had palm trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof.

Seven steps: see ver. 22. *To go up to it;* the floor or square court. *Before them:* see ver. 22. *One on this side, and another on that side;* on the right and on the left-hand posts, each post had one palm tree.

27 And *there was* a gate in the inner court toward the south: and he measured from gate to gate toward the south an hundred cubits.

As before the east gate answered to east, and north to north, so here one south gate answers to the other in the confronting or parallel walls, and in all points exactly uniform. To prevent repetition, I refer you to the particular measures, &c. of the east gate.

28 And he brought me to the inner court by the south gate: and he measured the south gate according to these measures;

He brought me from the south gate of the outer court through the porch, and over the one hundred cubit pavement to the south gate of the inner court, which is here described by its harmony with the other gates, which were before measured, and to them are you referred, lest we needlessly repeat the same things.

29 And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures: and *there were* windows in it and in the arches thereof round about: *it was* fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad.

Fifty cubits long: see ver. 15. *Five and twenty cubits broad:* see ver. 13.

30 And the arches round about *were* [p] five and twenty cubits long, and five cubits †broad.

[p] See ver. 21, & 25, & 33, & 36.
† Heb. *breadth.*

Five and twenty cubits long: here, as once before, ver. 11, length is put for height.

31 And the arches thereof *were* toward the utter court; and palm trees *were* upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it *had* eight steps.

In this verse two things are mentioned wherein this gate differed from the other; first, in the arches or porch, which stood not inward, but outward towards the outer court, the reason whereof will appear in what follows. The next difference lieth in this, that the ascent was by eight steps (more than the other, say some, and so make them fifteen). Now, if the porch to this gate built outward stood upon such ascent, it would be necessary the pillars should be such as ver. 30 expresseth them, five cubits in the breadth of the basis, and twenty-five cubits high.

32 ¶ And he brought me into the inner court toward the east: and he measured the gate according to these measures.

The inner court; the court of the priests, which was next to the house or temple itself. *Toward the east;* to the east gate of that court; so he is brought from the south to the east gate. *According to these measures;* as the other, so this, exactly like to the first in all dimensions of length and breadth.

33 And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, *were* according to these measures: and *there were* windows therein and in the arches thereof round about: *it*

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was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad.

Compare ver. 33 with ver. 6—16, where the form and dimensions are expressly set down.

34 And the arches thereof *were* toward the outward court; and palm trees *were* upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it *had* eight steps.

See ver. 31, where this verse is explained.

35 ¶ And he brought me to the north gate, and measured *it* according to these measures;

From the east gate, and taking the measures thereof, he passeth by order to the north gate, where all is exactly conformed to that in the south and east gates.

36 The little chambers thereof, the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, and the windows to it round about: the length *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

37 And the posts thereof *were* toward the utter court; and palm trees *were* upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it *had* eight steps.

38 And the chambers and the entries thereof *were* by the posts of the gates, where they washed the burnt offering.

The chambers; either the six, three on one side, and three on the other, as before in the gates of the outer court, or else chambers built on purpose for the uses here specified, as some conjecture. *The entries;* the doors, as well as the chambers, were by the pillars probably adjoining to them. Though some have thought the north gate was that alone where they washed the burnt-offering, yet others conceive it was done at the east gate too, if not at the south also; and the plural number warrants us to look for another gate beside the north, when it is said these chambers *were by the posts of the gates*, plural. God commanded that the legs and entrails of this burnt-offering should be washed, Lev. i. 13; now here they did that, and whether these chambers were built for this use only, or put to this as to other holy uses, is not greatly material to inquire.

39 ¶ And in the porch of the gate *were* two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, to slay thereon the burnt offering and [q] the sin offering and [r] the trespass offering.

[q] Lev. 4. 2, 3. [r] Lev. 5. 6, & 6. 6. & 7. 1.

Though the words seem so express, yet doubt is made whether any table were in the very porch itself, and think they would cumber the passage, but sure where only the priests in course of ministration entered, there would be no great crowd; therefore I conceive that these two pairs of tables were set in the very porch of the gate, which is the letter of the text.

40 And at the side without, ‖ as one goeth up to the entry of the north gate, *were* two tables; and on the other side, which *was* at the porch of the gate, *were* two tables.

‖ Or, *at the step.*

On the right hand without, and probably in the open air, or else under the cloister that went eastward, stood two, and on the left hand two, in like manner, for the same end and use, to slay the sacrifices.

41 Four tables *were* on this side, and four tables on that side, by the side of the gate; eight tables, whereupon they slew *their sacrifices.*

Either within the porch two, and without it two, on either side, or else, as some will, four without the porch and gate, in the cloisters on the right and left hand of the gate. However placed, they were eight for number, and designed for slaying the sacrifices on.

42 And the four tables *were* of hewn stone for the burnt offering, of a cubit and an half long, and a cubit and an half broad, and one cubit high: whereupon also they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt offering and the sacrifice.

The four tables; each four tables, for the prophet speaks of all eight, but names them four, because they were coupled so, one four on the one side and the other four on the other side. *Hewn stone:* it is not likely these were mean, worthless stones, but either best marble, or else some stone better than marble, and they are exactly square, a cubit and half every way. *One cubit high:* here is nothing said of the thickness of these stone tables, it is probable they were of a good thickness, which, added to the cubit height, on which they were set, might raise them to convenient height for use. *They laid the instruments,* when they were brought out for present use; at other times we know they were laid up in chambers and cupboards prepared for that end.

43 And within *were* ‖ hooks, an hand broad, fastened round about: and upon the tables *was* the flesh of the offering.

‖ Or, *andirons*, or, *the two hearth-stones.*

Within the house, porch, or whatever the place be called where these tables stood. *Hooks;* learned conjectures here, as in many other places, perplex more than explain. Hooks, on which the slaughtered sacrifice might be hanged, while they prepared it further, were needful, and the word imports such iron hooks. It is probable that there might be two hooks of iron fastened to or wrought out, where the plate was so broad, and therefore called hooks in the plural. *Fastened* to walls, no doubt, near these tables. *Upon the tables was the flesh of the offering;* they were careful to keep the holy flesh from lying any where that might look like common ground. It is like that the sacrifice was fastened to these hooks, and rested on these stone tables, while the priests cut them into their pieces.

44 ¶ And without the inner gate *were* the chambers of [s] the singers in the inner court, which *was* at the side of the north gate; and their prospect *was* toward the south: one at the side of the east gate *having* the prospect toward the north.

[s] 1 Chron. 6. 31.

Without; when he was got through the gate of the inner court. *Were the chambers,* several in a row, *of the singers;* where they lodged both their instruments and themselves during the time of their attendance. *In the inner court;* next to the temple. The back parts of these lodgings were toward the north wall of the inner court, and their lights and prospects to the south, and stood both on the north-east side and on the north-west side. *One;* one row of chambers. This row in length was from east to west, and however this row butted, it is certain the position of their lights was to the north; so these chambers must have their back parts on some building that run out from the east gate into the body of the court westward.

45 And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect *is* toward the south, *is* for the priests, [t] the keepers of the ‖ charge of the house.

[t] Lev. 8. 35. Num. 3. 27, 28, 32, 38. & 18. 5. 1 Chron. 9. 23. 2 Chron. 13. 11. Ps. 134. 1.

‖ Or, *ward*, or, *ordinance:* And so ver. 46.

He, who appeared with measuring line and reed, ver. 3. *This chamber;* this range of chambers, for this single number refers to the whole row, not to one particular chamber. *For the priests,* the sons of Aaron, yet, I think, not excluding others, who had charge under the priests. *The keepers,* while, according to their courses, they had the charge of the house of God, and attended on the service of it.

46 And the chamber whose prospect *is* toward the north *is* for the priests, [u] the keepers of the charge of the altar: these *are* the sons of [x] Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the LORD to minister unto him.

[u] Num. 18. 5. ch. 44. 15.

[x] 1 Kings 2. 35. ch. 43. 19. & 44. 15, 16.

The chamber: see ver 45. *For the priests, the keepers:* see ver. 45. *Of the charge of the altar;* to preserve the fire perpetually on the altar, &c. *Zadok;* the high priest, who was put in by Solomon's depriving of Abiathar, in whose race the high priesthood continued. While God's

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order was observed, his sons, especially among the Levites, had this charge, and in their turns took care of the altar, which that they might the better do, they had those chambers, whose prospect I suppose was toward the altar.

47 So he measured the court, an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad, four-square; and the altar *that was* before the house.

The court; the inner court, or court of the priests, who, according to their several charges, had lodgings in it, as ver. 46. *Four-square:* this court was an exact equilateral square. *The altar:* here the place of the altar is only mentioned, the measuring of it is chap. xliii. 13—18. This altar was placed in the very centre of this square, in a direct line from the north, east, and south gates, and might be seen from the lower courts by those who stood there. *The house;* the temple itself.

48 ¶ And he brought me to the porch of the house, and measured *each* post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate *was* three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side.

He brought me, from the measuring the building and court, *to the porch of the house,* that porch which joined to the temple, and was part of the house. *Each post of the porch;* the post or wall on each side of the gate. The thickness or space between the outside of the wall and the inside of the wall was five cubits on each side, north and south, if we suppose the breadth of the porch from north to south, and the length from east to west. The whole breadth was eleven cubits, but the breadth of each leaf of this folding gate was three cubits, and they met, or shut, on an upright post, set in the middle of the gate-space, and this one cubit broad; and then each leaf hanged on posts two cubits thick; which amount to eleven cubits.

y 1 Kings 6. 3.

49 y The length of the porch *was* twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; and *he brought me* by the steps whereby they went up to it: and *there were* z pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side.

z 1 Kings 7. 21.

Though learned men dispute the position of the length, whether from east to west, or from north to south, express word determines the dimensions of this length and breadth. *The steps:* eight, say some, others eleven, and some say ten, others say twelve; but most say eight. *There were pillars:* so soon as he was come into the porch, he saw two pillars, that stood off from the side walls, not joined to them, as the posts were, much like Jachin and Boaz in Solomon's temple.

CHAP. XLI.

The measures, parts, chambers, and ornaments of the temple.

AFTERWARD he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, *which was* the breadth of the tabernacle.

After the measuring of the courts, &c., now the prophet is brought to see the temple itself measured. *The posts;* the thickness of the walls (called *posts* here, as also chap. xl. 48) on the north side and on the south side of the gate. *Six cubits broad;* one whole reed in thickness. These walls in their thickness took up as much space as the whole breadth of Moses's tabernacle, Exod. xxvi. 22—25, where eight boards, each one cubit and half broad, make just the breadth of the tabernacle, twelve cubits.

‖ Or, entrance.

2 And the breadth of the ‖ door *was* ten cubits; and the sides of the door *were* five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side: and he measured the length thereof, forty cubits: and the breadth, twenty cubits.

The door; or the aperture, the open space which let in light, as well as men; properly the door of the porch. *Ten cubits,* between post and post, on which the folding doors did hang. *The sides of the door;* the space from the edge of the wall by the posts to the side wall inward was on each side five cubits, on the north side so many, and on the south so many, which make the contents between wall and wall, as the verse hath it, twenty cubits in breadth. *The length* of the sanctuary, from the porch to the partition between the holy of holies, and the inward front of the wall of the sanctuary, was forty cubits, unless we must take in the thickness of the walls of both sanctuary and holy of holies, of which more may possibly be spoken.

3 Then went he inward, and measured the post of the door, two cubits; and the door, six cubits; and the breadth of the door, seven cubits.

Inward; from the porch through the body of the temple, to the partition between the body of the temple and the holy of holies, or the oracle. *The post;* either the thickness of that partition wall, or of the pilasters, which stood one on one side and the other on the other side of the door. *The door,* or entrance out of the temple into the oracle. This door was *six cubits* high, say some, but, more likely, it was six cubits broad, and an upright bar or post on which the leaves did meet, and which was of one cubit's breadth, make out the seven cubits mentioned in the last words of this verse.

4 So a he measured the length thereof, twenty cubits; and the breadth, twenty cubits, before the temple: and he said unto me, This *is* the most holy *place.*

a 1 Kings 6. 20. 2 Chron. 3. 8.

The length thereof; of the oracle, or holy of holies. It was an exact square, as was Solomon's, 1 Kings vi. 20. *Before the temple;* parallel with the breadth of the temple. *He said unto me;* the prophet was commanded to hear, and now he shows us his attention. *This is the most holy place,* as having the tokens of God's more especial presence, in that the mercy-seat and propitiatory were there, so called Numb. vii. 89; it was called also the *oracle,* 1 Kings vi. 16, and *the inner house,* ver. 15, 17.

5 After he measured the wall of the house, six cubits; and the breadth of *every* side chamber, four cubits, round about the house on every side.

Having left the holy of holies measured in the 3rd verse, now he is come to take the measures of the outer wall. *The house;* the temple itself. *Six cubits;* three yards thick was this wall from the ground to the first story of the side chambers. *Every side chamber* of the lowest floor; for there were three stories of these, and they differed in their breadth, as the wall of the temple on which they rested abated of its thickness; for the middle chambers were broader than the lowest by a cubit, and the highest as much broader than the middle. *Round about;* on the north, south, and west parts. *On every side;* on each side of every one of these three gates. The east gate, and buildings about that, were not faced with such facings.

6 b And the side chambers *were* three, † one over another, and ‖ thirty in order; and they entered into the wall which *was* of the house for the side chambers round about, that they might † have hold, but they had not hold in the wall of the house.

b 1 Kings 6. 5, 6.
† Heb. *side chamber over side chamber.*
‖ Or, *three and thirty times, or, foot.*
† Heb. *be holden.*

One over another; in three stories high. *Thirty in order:* how these thirty in a row were distributed is not said, some guess twelve on the north side, as many on the south side, and six on the west; but as this may be, so possibly it may not be; but we are sure the whole number is thirty in a row on each story, i. e. three times thirty, or ninety in all. *The wall;* not the five or six cubit wall, which was the wall of the house, but another wall of one cubit thickness, on the top whereof was a rest or ledge of one cubit breadth, on which the ends of the cedar beams were fastened. It is said this was built *for the side chambers:* either from the foundation the wall was made so thick, that at five cubits from the ground they might rebate or draw in the thickness of the ascending wall one cubit, or else this cubit-thick wall was after added; but this, as not probable, I reject. *That they might have hold;* that the beams of the chambers

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might have good and firm resting hold. *They had not hold in the wall;* the ends of the beams were not thrust into the main body of the wall of the temple, as we see beams laid into the body of the walls of houses. But for each story a rebatement of one cubit in the thickness of the wall, so that six cubits thick at the ground, up to the first floor, and five cubits thick from that to the second floor, and four cubits thick from the second to the third floor, so each floor rests on a ledge of one cubit without the wall, and each story grows a cubit broader than that which is next lower.

† Heb. it was *made broader, and went round.* c 1 Kings 6. 8.

7 And †[c] *there was* an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side chambers: for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house: therefore the breadth of the house *was still* upward, and so increased *from* the lowest *chamber* to the highest by the midst.

An enlarging, viz. of the side chambers, so much of breadth added to the chamber as was taken from the thickness of the wall; that is, two cubits in the uppermost, and one cubit in the middlemost, more than in the lowest chambers. *A winding about;* winding stairs which enlarged as the rooms did, and these run up between each two chambers, from the bottom to the top; so there were two doors at the head of each pair of stairs, one door opening into one chamber, and the other into the opposite chamber; or else you must make the chambers thoroughfares, and suppose passages through all. These stairs, as they rose in height, enlarged themselves too. *Round about*, i. e. on all sides of the house where these chambers were, which, as observed, was on three sides of the house. *The breadth of the house;* of each chamber. *Increased;* grew broader by one cubit in every upper room or chamber; from five in the lowest to six in the middle, and to seven in the highest chamber.

8 I saw also the height of the house round about: the foundations of the side chambers *were* [d] a full reed of six great cubits.

d ch. 40. 5.

Of the house; of the chambers, or the three stories of them; it is not the temple. The lowest chamber had properly a foundation laid on the earth, but the floor of the middle and highest story must be accounted here a foundation; so from the ground to the ceiling of the first room was six great cubits; from the first beams, joists, and boards to the second, six great cubits; and from the third floor to the roof of the chamber, a like number; to which if we add one cubit for thickness of each of the three roofs or floors, you have twenty-one cubits for height, ten yards and half high.

9 The thickness of the wall, which *was* for the side chamber without, *was* five cubits: and *that* which *was* left *was* the place of the side chambers that *were* within.

The outward wall for these chambers was five cubits in thickness, and was made of stone, which added both beauty and strength to the other part of the building, and served as buttresses to the temple wall. *That which was left;* that space which was left without this wall, about five cubits broad, and served for a walk before the chambers, or for a passage from one chamber to another. *Within* the walk and wall.

10 And between the chambers *was* the wideness of twenty cubits round about the house on every side.

Between the chambers that on one side joined to the temple, and were public repositories for offerings, and tithes, &c., and those other chambers, which were built on the wall of this inner court, and were lodgings for the priests, there was a void space, or pavement, in the open air, twenty cubits broad, and these round about on all sides of the court, and probably some rails, or balusters, or low wall round too before them enclosing this space.

11 And the doors of the side chambers *were* toward *the place that was* left, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south: and the breadth of the place that was left *was* five cubits round about.

The doors of the lowest row opened into this void paved space. Beside the particular doors to each chamber, there were two, one on the north, where was a fair staircase, which did lead up to every story, and above these to the top of the temple. And so another like this on the south, excepting that this south staircase led not up to the top of all, as that north staircase did.

12 Now the building that *was* before the separate place at the end toward the west *was* seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building *was* five cubits thick round about, and the length thereof ninety cubits.

This is a new building not yet mentioned, but now measured by itself. *Before*, or over against, *the separate place;* either the temple, with all the appendant treasury chambers; or the oracle, which was in the west end of the temple, and separate from the rest of the temple; or that twenty cubits' space which was cut off from the chambers, and the five cubits' space before them by a breast wall, as some think. *At the end* of either temple, oracle, or foresaid space, *toward the west, was seventy cubits broad:* as men are not agreed about the fabric, and its dimensions, here intended to be measured, so they are as little agreed how to compute the measures; every one however makes out his account, whether the thing he measures be the right or mistaken. First, suppose the temple and the west part of it from north to south, thus: Twenty cubits the oracle, each side wall six cubits, breadth of chambers on each side four, the thickness of the out-walls of these chambers on both sides five cubits each, a void space of five cubits compassing the whole, and then the low or breast wall that enclosed this space five cubits thick on each side, making up the third ten, produce the seventy cubits. But they that think of a distinct building on the west end of the temple, do also in their method make out the account. *The wall of the building was five cubits thick:* this seems to countenance their opinion who conceive a distinct building meant. *The length thereof ninety cubits:* these proportions are easily laid together, which will make up the total, and agree with the temple, thus: Temple and oracle with their walls seventy cubits, porch eleven, and chambers and walls nine cubits. And who will have such a new structure here measured (which is more than was in the first temple fabric) will make all correspond to their hypothesis, and you may more easily object against another's than demonstrate your own guess. The best is, the error is not great if a man do err here.

13 So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long; and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long;

The house; the whole temple, oracle, sanctuary, and porch, with the walls. *An hundred cubits long*, from east to west, thus: Stairs of the east porch or the thickness of the wall six cubits, the passage through the porch eleven, wall of the temple within the porch six cubits, the temple itself forty cubits, partition wall two cubits, the oracle twenty cubits, west wall thick six cubits, the chambers at bottom of the west wall four cubits, and the outer wall of the chambers five cubits. *The separate place:* see ver. 12. *The building*, on both the north and south side of the temple. *An hundred cubits long;* which is thus reckoned: The breadth of the temple twenty cubits, thickness of both walls twelve cubits, the bottom chambers on both sides eight cubits, the outer walls of these chambers five cubits a piece, the breadth of the place left out on each side five, on both sides ten, (i. e. five each,) and then the wideness between this on either side twenty cubits.

14 Also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the separate place toward the east, an hundred cubits.

Of the face; the whole front of the house eastward, the prospect of it being to the east. *Of the separate place:* this explains the other, say some, the house is the separate

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place; or else, as others, that other building on the west end of the temple, which was of equal dimensions with the temple. *An hundred cubits;* measuring from the north point along by the eastern front to the south point, or corner of the buildings or wall. The admeasuring the particulars I forbear; but since this side runs equal with the length of the whole from east to west, we need not doubt it is a hundred cubits.

15 And he measured the length of the building over against the separate place which *was* behind it, and the ‖galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, an hundred cubits, with the inner temple, and the porches of the court;

‖ Or, *several walks, or walks with pillars.*

The building, possibly that of ver. 12, 13, or else the buildings of this court next to the temple, or else the west buildings behind the oracle, or the buildings of the utter court, of which in chap. xlii. 1, 3, 7, 8. *The separate place:* see ver. 12. *Which was behind it;* the buildings that were behind on the west side of that supposed range of buildings, or else behind the temple. *Galleries;* either chambers, or porches, or balconies, places supported by pilasters, made for beauty and delight. *With the inner temple;* according to the measures of the temple, and its appendant buildings.

16 The door posts, and [e] the narrow windows, and the galleries round about on their three stories, over against the door, †cieled with wood round about, ‖and from the ground up to the windows, and the windows *were* covered;

[e] ch. 40. 16. ver. 26.

† Heb. *cieling of wood.*
‖ Or, *and the ground unto the windows.*

What are here recounted were all measured by the angel, and with the same reed or measure. *The door posts:* see chap. xl. 48, 49. It is likely he means the door posts of every gate, or porch in every court. *Windows:* see chap. xl. 16. *Galleries:* see ver. 5, 15. *Three stories;* see ver. 6, 7; or parts, or buildings; temple, separate place, and on the court walls. *The door;* the singular for the plural number; the doors, which were *ceiled with wood,* were measured; this ceiling was with choicest wood. *From the ground up to the windows;* the height of these windows were taken too. *Were covered;* had lids or curtains to cover them, and lattices too, say some.

17 To that above the door, even unto the inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about within and without, by † measure.

† Heb. *measures.*

In the 15th verse the prophet began his catalogue, and continueth it through this verse, in which, in the gross, he tells us all above the doors, in every porch and gate to the very inner house, and all without, the buildings about the walls, were measured exactly, though we have neither the particular account of what these were, either things or measures.

18 And *it was* made [f] with cherubims and palm trees, so that a palm tree *was* between a cherub and a cherub; and *every* cherub had two faces;

[f] 1 Kings 6. 29.

Now we are acquainted with the ornaments, the beautiful carving, which in all parts mentioned were to be seen. *Made;* beautified. *Cherubims;* generally taken for the portrait of angels, and framed to the beauty of young men with wings. Yet is the description of them very different in different places, as the curious observe in Ezekiel's vision, chap. i., Isaiah's vision, chap. vi., John's vision, Rev. iv., and in Solomon's temple. *Palm trees;* a very beautiful, upright tree, from a straight, well-grown body, spreading its head with large boughs and branches, which were used on occasions of joy, and were emblems of victory, John xii. 13; Rev. vii. 9. These were so engraven, that each palm tree was between two cherubs, and each cherub between two palm trees, and this ariseth from the different aspect, or numbering them. *Two faces,* curiously wrought on the same head, somewhat like a Janus's head; what these faces were the next verse tells us.

19 [g] So that the face of a man *was* toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side: *it was* made through all the house round about.

[g] See ch. 1. 10.

The face of a man, this one face, the other *of a young lion.* Now as to the aspect, it was thus; the cherub between two palm trees looked towards both trees, towards the one a man's face, towards the other a young lion's face, looked. And thus it was through the whole house round about, and from bottom to top, as ver. 20.

20 From the ground unto above the door *were* cherubims and palm trees made, and *on* the wall of the temple.

The door: some think it is the great east gate; I think rather here is an enallage, or change of number, *door* for *doors,* and that every porch was so beautified: see chap. xl. 16, 22, 26, 34. These beautiful sculptures were round about the walls of the temple, and oracle too, though not expressed here.

21 The †posts of the temple *were* squared, *and* the face of the sanctuary; the appearance *of the one* as the appearance *of the other.*

† Heb. *post*

The posts on each side of the gate or door, both of temple and oracle, *were squared;* not round, as some other were, and as the posts of the door of the tabernacle were, but of exact square. *The face,* the form of the door, or gate of the temple, was square, i. e. not arched, as the gates of our churches ordinarily are, but with a flat beam, or upper lintel, laid on the top of the posts, and so either made an equilateral square, or an oblong square. *The appearance of the one as the appearance of the other;* as was the form of the gate of the temple in its larger, so was the form of the gate of the oracle in its lesser dimensions.

22 [h] The altar of wood *was* three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits; and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, *were* of wood: and he said unto me, This *is* [i] the table that *is* [k] before the LORD.

[h] Ex. 30. 1.
[i] ch. 44. 16. Mal. 1. 7, 12.
[k] Ex. 30. 8.

The altar of incense. *Of wood;* so the inward parts were made, and covered with gold, Exod. xxx. 1—10; 1 Kings vi. 20, 22; and from this covering of gold it was called the *golden altar. Three cubits high;* one cubit higher than that in the tabernacle of Moses, Exod. xxx. 2. *The length thereof two cubits;* as long again as Moses's altar of incense in the tabernacle. *The corners;* the horns framed out of the four posts at each angle on the top of the altar. The sides of this altar, for it was made up on all sides, are here called *the walls thereof,* made of wood, but covered with gold. *The table;* some say it is spoken of this altar of incense; others say, the angel pointed him to the table of shew-bread, and spake of that. *Before the Lord;* in the temple, not in the oracle, or holy of holies: this incense altar was placed without the oracle, as appears from the priests' offering incense at it by courses, whereas none but the high priest might enter into the holy of holies.

23 [l] And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors.

[l] 1 Kings 6. 31,—35.

Each had one door, so there were two doors, and they were folding doors, or two-leaved doors.

24 And the doors had two leaves *apiece,* two turning leaves; two *leaves* for the one door, and two leaves for the other *door.*

25 And *there were* made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubims and palm trees, like as *were* made upon the walls; and *there were* thick planks upon the face of the porch without.

Made; carved. *On them;* the doors of both temple and oracle. *The temple;* including the holy of holies also. *Cherubims:* see ver. 18. *Thick planks;* I suppose these were boards of more than ordinary thickness, which were fastened to the great beams, whose ends came out beyond the wall of the porch, and probably were laid so as to make

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a part of an arch over the entrance into the gate, as we see over some houses, and as sometimes under the balconies; and here also in these thicker planks, it is like, were some ornaments. *Upon* or above the front *of the porch. Without;* on the court side of the porch, that part that looked outward.

m ch. 40. 16. ver. 16.

26 And *there were* [m] narrow windows and palm trees on the one side and on the other side, on the sides of the porch, and *upon* the side chambers of the house, and thick planks.

Narrow windows: see ver. 16. *Palm trees:* see ver. 18. *On the one side and on the other side;* on the north and on the south side, as you enter in from east toward the west; thus the sides of the porch outward were garnished. *Upon the side chambers;* which were thirty in a row, and three stories high: see ver. 6. *Thick planks;* alike carved and beautified, and alike strengthening and defending the places where they were used.

CHAP. XLII.

The chambers for the priests, 1—12. *The use thereof,* 13, 14. *The measures of the outward court,* 15—20.

THEN he brought me forth into the utter court, the way toward the north: and he brought me into [a] the chamber that *was* over against the separate place, and which *was* before the building toward the north.

a ch. 41. 12, 15.

After a particular view of the temple, and all its parts, with the inmost court, and all in it, the prophet is *brought forth into the utter court;* called so in regard to that more inward, whence the prophet now cometh: it is likely, if not certain, this was the priests' court, which had two others more outward, but because the prophet had been in one more inward than that of the priests, he giveth the name of outer to this court. *Toward the north;* through the north gate, by which he descended into the court, where the staircase was by which he went up into the chambers, built over the pilasters and arches, so that underneath was a cloister, or gallery. *The chamber;* either the singular number for the plural, or chamber for the row of chambers; or else, into one of the many that were there. *The separate place:* whether you take it for the temple itself, or for that building equal to the temple, on the west part of the temple, still this row of chambers faced the north part of it. *Before the building toward the north:* the south front of this range of chambers looked to the north front of the temple, and its buildings on that side, or to the north front of the separate place.

2 Before the length of an hundred cubits *was* the north door, and the breadth *was* fifty cubits.

The temple, of one hundred cubits long, and of fifty broad, was on the south prospect of these chambers; or, possibly, this north door did give entrance into buildings that were one hundred cubits long and fifty cubits broad.

3 Over against the twenty *cubits* which *were* for the inner court, and over against the pavement which *was* for the utter court, *was* [b] gallery against gallery in three *stories.*

b ch. 41. 16.

The twenty cubits' space of the inner court, or court of the temple, faced the south front of this row of chambers, their southern lights looked into this space, and to the north of the temple. *The pavement,* which was in the priests' court, and on the north side of this building, into which pavement the north windows looked. *Gallery against gallery;* that is, a gallery on the south part toward the inner court, and a gallery toward the pavement northward, and between the backs of these galleries were chambers. *In three stories;* either in height, or else in three ranks, as now placed, two galleries on the sides, and a chamber in the midst; or two rows of chambers, and one long gallery in the middle.

4 And before the chambers *was* a walk of ten cubits breadth inward, a way of one cubit; and their doors toward the north.

This row of chambers had on the south side, or inward, a walk of ten cubits broad, which lay between the wall on which these chambers were built, and the twenty cubits' space; possibly it might be some cloister, running along the wall on the inside. Before the galleries, probably, was a ledge of one cubit broad, running the whole length from east to west, called here *a way,* though not designed for any to walk on it: such ledges we see in many great houses. Every chamber door opened to the north; and so the entrance into these chambers was through the gallery, which looked to the pavement of the outer court.

5 Now the upper chambers *were* shorter: for the galleries ‖ were higher than these, ‖ than the lower, and than the middlemost of the building.

‖ Or, *did eat of these.*
‖ Or, and *the building* consisted *of the lower and the middlemost.*

Were shorter: at first view it should seem to refer to the length, but indeed it refers to the height of the chambers, of which the lowest chamber was highest pitched from the floor to the ceiling; the second lower pitched than the first, yet of greater height than the uppermost between the floor and ceiling. *The galleries were higher than these:* possibly, there might be over the uppermost chambers a flat roof, on which, as on a gallery, they might walk from one end to another, and therefore that floor was much lower than the middle or lowest, according to the rule of architecture, which directs that the upper rooms take not up so much in their height as the lower, that the weight of the timber be not too heavy for the walls.

6 For they *were* in three *stories,* but had not pillars as the pillars of the courts: therefore *the building* was straitened more than the lowest and the middlemost from the ground.

In three stories; built high one over another. *As the pillars of the courts;* as thick and strong as those were, but of the slenderer and weaker make. *The building,* the highest room of the building, *was straitened;* was laid at nearer distance than the middlemost from the lowest, or than the roof of the lowest from the ground.

7 And the wall that *was* without over against the chambers, toward the utter court on the forepart of the chambers, the length thereof *was* fifty cubits.

The wall; not of the chambers, but some wall at distance from them; perhaps some wall that might keep up a terrace-walk. *Over against the chambers;* therefore was northward from the chambers. *The utter court;* the court of the men, or of Israel, which is called utter with respect to this, wherein this building stood, as this was called *utter,* ver. 1, 3, with respect to the court that was more inward. *On the forepart of the chambers;* which evidently shows that the wall of fifty cubits stood north from these chambers. *The length thereof was fifty cubits;* answerable to the length of this building from east to west.

8 For the length of the chambers that *were* in the utter court *was* fifty cubits: and, lo, before the temple *were* an hundred cubits.

This verse gives us a reason why the wall over against the chambers was but fifty cubits, it might not be more or less because it was to hold exact symmetry with these buildings, which it confronted: possibly this verse may give some light to the second verse, latter part. *The utter court:* see ver. 1, 7. *And, lo, before the temple were an hundred cubits:* some say the angel, conducting the prophet from these north chambers to the south, hath occasion given him to take notice of, and to measure a second time, this space before the temple; but what if the angel and the prophet were now on the roof of this fifty cubits' building, as they seem to be ver. 5, measuring it, and thence the angel might point to the hundred cubits' space before the temple, and bid the prophet to mind it? The former, most received, suits best with the 11th and 12th verses.

9 And ‖ from under these chambers *was* ‖ the entry on the east side, ‖ as one goeth into them from the utter court.

‖ Or, *from the place.*
‖ Or, *he that brought me.*
‖ Or, *as he came.*

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I suppose this verse describes the entrance into the south chambers, that it was on the east point, and that whoso would go into them must go up the stairs (which probably were winding stairs) at the east end of these buildings, whose front was toward the south.

10 The chambers *were* in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, over against the separate place, and over against the building.

The chambers, galleries also with them, of this south building now measured. *The thickness*, or the breadth, of that wall of the court which was eastward, and as an enclosure of the building. *The separate place;* which was west from this building, whose length lay north and south, and its breadth east and west: what this separate place may be, see ver. 1. *The building:* see ver. 1.

c ver. 4. 11 And [c]the way before them *was* like the appearance of the chambers which *were* toward the north, as long as they, *and* as broad as they: and all their goings out *were* both according to their fashions, and according to their doors.

The way; the walk, as ver. 4. *Like the appearance*, exactly uniform with the fabric, on the north side. *All their goings out;* every window and door. *Were both according to their fashions;* framed in the same manner. *According to their doors;* according to the number of the doors in the one was the number of the other, all in all things exactly like.

12 And according to the doors of the chambers that *were* toward the south *was* a door in the head of the way, *even* the way directly before the wall toward the east, as one entereth into them.

This verse is a particular description of the door and way that, from the east end of this south building, did lead either under the buildings, or through some part of them toward the west point, as before; such a way from the north buildings did lead to the south, nor do I think necessary to speak more of the words.

13 ¶ Then said he unto me, The north chambers *and* the south chambers, which *are* before the separate place, they *be* holy chambers, where the priests that

d Lev. 6. 16, 26. & 24. 9. approach unto the LORD [d]shall eat the most holy things: there shall they lay the

e Lev. 2. 3, 10. & 6. 14, 17, 25, 29. & 7. 1. & 10. 13, 14. Num. 18. 9, 10. most holy things, and [e]the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; for the place *is* holy.

Then said he; the measurer, Christ, man in appearance at that time. *The separate place:* see ver. 1. *Holy chambers;* set apart, consecrated to holy services and uses, as vessels, garments, and days may be holy. *The priests*, and Levites too, *that approach;* that were then in waiting, according to their courses; for this approach is not only mentioned as distinguished from the distance the people were kept at, but as including the present actual approaches of the priests, in their ministering before the Lord. *Shall eat* together, as in a public refectory. *The most holy things;* things devoted to God were these most holy, some parts whereof God gave to the priests to live on. In some of these chambers the holy things that might be eat were laid up as in a storehouse, and those which were not for present use were here to be reserved till they were to be used; and whether it were more or less that was allowed to the priests out of the offerings, here it was to be kept till used. *The meat-offering:* see what this was, Lev. ii. 1—12; vi. 14—16. *The sin-offering:* see what this, Lev. vi. 26, 29, 30. *The trespass-offering:* see Lev. vii. 2, 3, &c.

f ch. 44. 19. 14 [f]When the priests enter therein, then shall they not go out of the holy *place* into the utter court, but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister; for they *are* holy; and shall put on other garments, and shall approach to *those things* which *are* for the people.

When, at the time of their service, *the priests*, and Levites also, who assisted, *enter therein*, come into the court of the temple or inmost court in their priestly garments to offer sacrifice, or to do any other part of their office, *then*, when they have done their office, *shall they not go out*, in their priestly garments, *of the holy place*, the court of the priests, not of the temple, *into the utter court*, the court of the people. *There;* in some one of the chambers of south or north buildings, which is a wardrobe for them. *Lay their garments;* lay up, either for other priests, whose course came next, or for themselves against the next return of their course. *Wherein they minister;* expressly directed by God, Exod. xxviii. 40—43. *They are holy;* consecrated, ceremonially and relatively holy, for they are not capable of inherent holiness. *Shall put on other garments;* when they go out of this court into the outer, or outmost, they must put on common garments. *Shall approach to those things*, and so they may, as they have occasion, and see good, *which are for the people;* which common people may meddle with, which the priests may in their ordinary garments intermeddle with, and not be guilty, but may not touch while in the garments of their ministration.

15 Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner house, he brought me forth toward the gate whose prospect *is* toward the east, and measured it round about.

The inner house; the holy of holies, the temple, and all the buildings that were in it, and its inner courts. *He brought me forth*, quite out to the outmost court, and wall of it, which compassed all the rest of the courts. *Toward the gate whose prospect is toward the east;* to the east gate of the outside wall, mentioned chap. xl. 6, which see. *Round about*, i. e. the four squares of the wall for this, as the other walls, was square, not round, and therefore this round about is to be understood of measuring all four equilateral sides or parallels.

16 He measured the east †side with the measuring reed, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed round about. † Heb. wind.

He, the angel, or Christ in the appearance of a man, *measured the east side*, from the two opposite angles of the inside north and south, *with the measuring reed*, which was of six cubits and one hand or three inches. *Round about;* as ver. 15. The four square was five hundred reeds, that is, each wall was one hundred and twenty-five reeds, say some, yet this hath its difficulties, though I think it more likely than the conjecture of L. C.; and, for aught I see, the guess of Villalpandus may be admitted, that the whole square was four times measured round about, from the east round, from the north round, &c., as this: the 17th, 18th, and 19th verses repeat it.

17 He measured the north side, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed round about.

18 He measured the south side, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed.

19 ¶ He turned about to the west side, *and* measured five hundred reeds with the measuring reed.

Here is nothing new added but what is in the 16th verse. I observe that the 16th and 17th verses expressly mention the measuring round about, and why I should doubt it was twice done, when it is related twice, as done from different points, I know not; and then it is easy, and likely enough, that the double relation of this measuring in the 18th and 19th verses will be the relation of the same way of measuring from other points; which, I suppose, is the ground of Villalpandus's opinion, and is far more agreeable to the Hebrew text, and context, and account, and more agreeable to divinity, than that of L. C.

20 He measured it by the four sides: [g]it had a wall round about, [h]five hundred *reeds* long, and five hundred broad, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place. g ch. 40. 5. h ch. 45. 2.

He measured it, the whole wall, *by the four sides*, repeating the measure of the whole, according to the number of the

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sides. *It had a wall;* the whole had such a wall: had each side been five hundred reeds, the prophet must in propriety of speech have said *they*, i. e. the sides, not *it*, i. e. the whole compass of the wall. *Five hundred reeds long:* in such an equilateral square there is properly no length, for all sides are equal, but because in the temple structure there was length and breadth, therefore that *latus*, or side, which runs in straight line, parallel with the length of the temple, is here taken for the length; the other, which was parallel to the breadth of the temple, is the breadth of this isopleuron, or equilateral square. *Five hundred broad:* he speaks not here of the thickness, though sometimes breadth and thickness are the same. *To make a separation;* to distinguish, and accordingly to exclude or admit persons, for all might not go in. *The sanctuary;* not the temple, this is not here meant; but we must remember here that the Jews accounted the whole earth profane, i. e. common or unclean, compared with Canaan, and Canaan common or less holy than Jerusalem, and every part nearer the temple the more holy; and so here the outward court was enclosed to distinguish it by its comparative holiness, it was more holy than all without it.

Thus, enveloped in clouds and darkness, thou hast, good reader, a conjecture at many things, which, I need not blush to confess, are more above mine own comprehension than above some others. The mystical sense I refer to thy thoughts.

CHAP. XLIII.

The glory of God returneth into the temple, 1—6. *God promiseth to dwell there, if the people will put away their sins,* 7—9. *In order to incite them to repentance, the prophet showeth them the model and law of the house,* 10—12. *The measures of the altar,* 13—17. *The ordinances thereof,* 18—27.

AFTERWARD he brought me to the
a ch. 10. 19. & 44. 1. & 46. 1. gate, *even* the gate [a]that looketh toward the east:

After that the measuring of the temple was finished, *he brought me*, from the west gate where the whole was finished, and where the 42nd chapter left the prophet, *to the gate*, which, lest we should mistake, is expressly described the east gate, of the first wall measured, where he began with the angel, chap. xl. 6. From this gate, in a direct line, you have the fairest prospect of the temple.

b ch. 11. 23. 2 [b]And, behold, the glory of the God
c ch. 1. 24. Rev. 1. 15. & 14. 2. & 19. 1, 6. of Israel came from the way of the east:
d ch. 10. 4. Rev. 18. 1. and [c]his voice *was* like a noise of many waters: [d]and the earth shined with his glory.

Behold: sometimes this word is expletive, but here surely it stands for more; it expresseth, no doubt, the joy the prophet had to see this excellent sight, which should not be seen there more than sixty years; for in the sixth year of the captivity the glory of God left the city, chap. xi. 22, 23; and now the prophet foreseeth its return after the settling the temple, its buildings, and ordinances, which took up a great time, as is evident, John ii. 20, which time of forty-six years (viz. thirty in Cyrus, eight in Cambyses, and some six in Darius) is very near accounted. So that between the departure and the return of the glory of God, are about one hundred and six or eight years, and about fourscore between this vision and the accomplishment. *The glory:* see chap. i. 28. *Of the God of Israel;* of him who is an infinitely glorious Being, yet in covenant with us, as a peculiar people of God. *Came from the way of the east:* when the glory departed it went eastward, and now that it returns it comes from the east. *His voice:* though by the voice of God thunder is sometimes meant, yet here it was an articulate voice, as appears ver. 7 and 8. Perhaps this might be attended with thunder, as usually in such cases. *Like a noise of many waters;* terrible, and a mighty voice, as the noise of mighty waves of the sea; so chap. i. 24; Rev. i. 15. *The earth;* not the whole earth, but that part about Jerusalem and the temple. *Shined with his glory;* the rays of glory, like the sun-beams, made the dark earth to shine with glorious light.

3 And *it was* [e]according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, *even* according to the vision that I saw ‖when I came [f]to destroy the city: and the visions *were* like the vision that I saw [g]by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face.

e ch. 1. 4, 28. & 8. 4.
‖ Or, *when I came to prophesy that the city should be destroyed:* See ch. 9. 1, 5.
f So Jer. 1. 10.
g ch. 1. 3. & 3. 23.

And it, this glory of the God of Israel, *was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw:* see chap i. 4, 28. *To destroy the city;* to declare that their sins would ruin their city, chap. ix. 3; x. 4, which see. Here the effect seems ascribed to him, though he only declares it will be. *By the river Chebar:* see chap. i. 1, 3. *Fell upon my face;* overwhelmed, and as it were swallowed up: see chap. i. 28.

4 [h]And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect *is* toward the east.

h See ch. 10. 19. & 44. 2.

The glory: see ver. 3. *Came;* the sins of impenitent Israel caused the glory of the Lord to go out of his house, but now the repentance of Israel is blessed with the return of this glory. *Into the house;* the temple where before it dwelt. *Whose prospect is toward the east;* whose front looks eastward: see ver. 2.

5 [i]So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, [k]the glory of the LORD filled the house.

i ch. 3. 12, 14. & 8. 3.
k 1 Kings 8. 10, 11. ch. 44. 4.

The spirit: see chap. ii. 2. *Brought me;* carried me, at least supported and moved. *The inner court;* the court next to the house of the Lord, this was the innermost court. *Filled,* either with splendour and brightness, or with a cloud, such as formerly was, Lev. xvi. 2; 1 Kings viii. 10, 11, the token of his presence. *The house;* the temple.

6 And I heard *him* speaking unto me out of the house; and [l]the man stood by me.

l ch. 40. 3.

I heard, distinctly, intelligibly, so that I am sure it was no delusion. *Him;* the Lord, who was in that glory. *Speaking;* what was spoken appears in the next two verses. *Out of the house;* God speaks to his out of his temple. *The man;* Christ, Mediator. *Stood by,* to encourage, inform, and strengthen him.

7 ¶ And he said unto me, Son of man,
m Ps. 99. 1. n 1 Chr. 28. 2. Ps. 99. 5. o Ex. 29. 45. Ps. 68. 16. & 132. 14. Joel 3. 17. John 1. 14. 2 Cor. 6. 16.
p ch. 39. 7.
q Lev. 26. 30. Jer. 16. 18.
[m]the place of my throne, and [n]the place of the soles of my feet, [o]where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel [p]no more defile, *neither* they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by [q]the carcases of their kings in their high places.

And he; the glorious God of Israel. *The place of my throne:* his throne, i. e. of glory and majesty, is in heaven, but the throne of his grace is in his temple; in the dispensations of grace, God manifests himself a King. *The place of the soles of my feet:* after the manner of man God speaks, and expresseth his abode and rest, where it is in his temple, as type, in his church, as the antitype. *I will dwell;* not only shall my ordinances be there administered, but I myself will dwell there. *For ever;* for a very long time, till the age of infancy with the Jewish church be over; and to eternity with my church, signified by this temple and city. *My holy name:* see chap. xxii. 26; xxxvi. 20. *No more defile;* dishonour, and bring into contempt, as they have done. *Neither they;* the priests, the false prophets, and the common people, nor their governors and kings. *By their whoredom;* by idolatries, and worshipping of strange gods, which, after the captivity, they did very punctually abstain from, as history assures us. *By the carcasses of their kings;* either the dead bodies of their deceased kings, buried too near the temple, less likely; or by the sacrificing of men to their idols, to Moloch; or idols are here called carcasses, as dead, stinking, loathsome things

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in the sight of God. Or, if I had instances of any kings buried in the temples of the idols, I should incline to interpret this passage of the profane and wicked burying idolatrous kings near the idols they worshipped. *In their high places;* where idol temples and idol worship were celebrated.

r See 2 Kin. 16. 14 & 21. 4, 5, 7. ch. 8. 3. & 23. 39. & 44. 7.

‖ Or, *for there was but a wall between me and them.*

8 [r] In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their post by my posts, ‖ and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger.

The idolatrous kings of Judah and Israel built temples and altars for their idols, and these are called their *thresholds.* The Jews, or people of Judah, and their kings, erected these in the courts, or near the courts, of the temple, and so in local nearness their threshold was by God's thresholds, and their posts by his, that they were a nuisance to him. And there was but a wall between me and them, that under my eye, and within my hearing, they have with greatest presumption defiled my name. *Defiled my holy name;* despised my ordinances, corrupted my worship, or forsaken it, used me as if I were neither great nor holy. *Abominations;* abominable idolatries, and wickednesses not to be named. *Committed;* acted boldly and openly, against precept, threat, and admonitions. *Wherefore I have consumed them;* for which sins I brought destruction upon them. The Chaldeans ruined them, but they were the rod of God's anger. *In mine anger;* in great displeasure and wrath, i. e. in my provoked justice, as chap. xx. 13; xxii. 31.

9 Now let them put away their whoredom, and [s] the carcases of their kings, far from me, [t] and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.

s ver. 7.

t ver. 7.

This verse is either prophetic or preceptive, it doth direct the Jew what he should in duty do under this temple, and foretell what the people of God will do under the gospel. *Put away;* cast away, as impure and loathsome things should be cast away. *Their whoredom, &c.:* see ver. 7. *Far from me,* my temple and worship. *I will dwell in the midst of them,* as their light, protection, and glory. The promises which are made in these cases enjoin us duty: men may sin away God's presence and blessings. Cast away all sin, that God cast not you away. *For ever:* see ver. 7.

u ch. 40. 4.

10 ¶ Thou son of man, [u] shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the ‖ pattern.

‖ Or, *sum, or, number.*

Son of man; Ezekiel, who is called thus above eighty times in this book. *Shew:* he could not lay a model before their eye, but he could, and this is required, describe it to them in all the parts. *The house;* temple, which he had seen, and exactly measured. *To the house of Israel;* to the rulers, prophets, and priests especially, not excluding others. *That they may be ashamed of their iniquities;* when they shall blush to see what glory their iniquities had ruined, how great losers they were by their sins: or else thus interpret the meaning of these things, And let the Jews know what a church God will erect among the Gentiles, that so the Jews may be ashamed of their iniquities, which provoked God to cast them off, and to destroy their church and state. *Let them measure the pattern;* as thou declarest let them write down, delineate all, and then compute the whole, that they may fully comprehend it.

11 And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof: and write *it* in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.

They; the house of Israel. *Be ashamed;* repent, and show it by manifest tokens. *Of all:* it is not true repentance which is ashamed of some only, but not of all sins. *The form;* the model of the temple. *The fashion;* the manner of the building, and fitting each part to other. *The goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof;* all the alleys, gates, stairs, &c. *The forms,* which ought to be observed, saith the French version. Now though this be not in the Hebrew, yet the word may imply as much, it being an idea, pattern, or platform to which a thing is to be conformed. *The ordinances;* rites and orders, rules of governing priests, and their services. These are again repeated in the next words of the verse, which is usual in Scripture, and with this prophet. *Write it in their sight:* that it may be remembered, they shall have a draught of it from thy hand, and drawn in their sight, that they may inquire of any particular wherein doubt ariseth. *That they may keep the whole form thereof:* as Moses and Solomon did, so must the builders of this temple, frame the whole to the pattern or exemplar set before them, for not doing whereof a heavy account lieth on some in the church.

12 This *is* the law of the house; Upon [x] the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about *shall be* most holy. Behold, this *is* the law of the house.

x ch. 40. 2.

This is the first comprehensive rule. Holiness becomes God's house or temple: this relative holiness referred to personal and real holiness, and required it. The whole circuit of this mountain shall be holy, but the top of it, on which the temple stands, shall be most holy, into which only holy persons and holy things shall be brought.

13 ¶ And these *are* the measures of the altar after the cubits: [y] The cubit *is* a cubit and an hand breadth; even the †bottom *shall be* a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the †edge thereof round about *shall be* a span: and this *shall be* the higher place of the altar.

y ch. 40. 5. & 41. 8.

† Heb. *bosom.*

† Heb. *lip.*

Of the altar of burnt-offerings; for the altar of incense was within the temple, and is called the golden altar, but this in this verse is the brazen altar, and stood in the court of the house. *The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth;* the great or sacred cubit, three inches longer than the common cubit. *The bottom,* the ledge or settle, or as a little bench fastened to the altar on all sides at the bottom, *shall be a cubit* in height. *The breadth,* from the edge of this settle or bench on the outside, to the edge where it joined the body of the altar, *a cubit;* and this breadth, twenty-one inches, broad enough for the priests to walk on round the altar, as they had occasion. *The border,* a ledge going round on all the squares, on the outer edge of this settle, *a span* high, about nine inches, which was to prevent the priests, that they slipped not down in walking on this settle. *This shall be the higher place of the altar:* this seems somewhat harshly translated; the French hath it, this shall be the back of the altar; as the back bears burdens, so this should bear the weight of the whole altar; this the basis or bottom, as called before, which was one cubit in each square broader than the next square frame or settle.

14 And from the bottom *upon* the ground *even* to the lower settle *shall be* two cubits, and the breadth one cubit; and from the lesser settle *even* to the greater settle *shall be* four cubits, and the breadth *one* cubit.

From the bottom; from the superficies of the first ledge, which was a cubit broad and a cubit high from the ground. *To the lower settle;* to the top of that square settle which is called lower, because another settle is raised upon it. *Two cubits* in height. *The breadth one cubit* on every square, as the first and bottom settle, which by this account was two cubits larger in each square or side than the middle settle. *From the lesser settle;* from the highest edge of the uppermost settle, down to the cubit broad ledge about the lower settle. The prophet measures now downward. *The greater;* so called, because it exceeded the upper settle

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a cubit in breadth on each side. *Four cubits* in the height thereof. *The breadth one cubit*, as the two other were.

† Heb. *Harel*, that is, *the mountain of God.* † Heb. *Ariel*, that is, *the lion of God.* Is. 29. 1.

15 So †the altar *shall be* four cubits; and from †the altar and upward *shall be* four horns.

The altar: this upper part is now called the altar, though sometimes this name is given to the whole, as ver. 13. *Four cubits* in height, for it was of much greater wideness, as in the next verse. *From the altar;* from the top of the altar, at each corner shall be a horn, four in all.

16 And the altar *shall be* twelve *cubits* long, twelve broad, square in the four squares thereof.

The altar; that which in the 15th verse is precisely determined to be the altar, the uppermost and least settle. *Twelve cubits long, twelve broad;* an exact square, by which we may know the dimensions of the other two; the first of the two was wider by two cubits, and longer by two cubits, than the highest, and the lowest was as much greater and larger than the middlemost. The highest twelve cubits square, the middle fourteen cubits square, and the lowest sixteen cubits square.

17 And the settle *shall be* fourteen *cubits* long and fourteen broad in the four squares thereof; and the border about it *shall be* half a cubit; and the bottom thereof *shall be* a cubit about; and [a]his stairs shall look toward the east.

[a] See Ex. 20. 26.

The settle; so called now, since the uppermost carrieth the name of *altar*, proper to itself. *Fourteen cubits*, as said in the former verse: nor can it be otherwise, since it is one cubit on each side broader than the altar, which was twelve cubits square. *The border;* or a border, or ledge, fastened to the edge of the outside of this bench, that goes round about the settle. *Half a cubit;* about eleven inches, being the half of this great cubit: now this border was for security to the priests in their going round the altar, that if a foot slipped, this border might stay it. *The bottom*, the superficies, on which the priest treads when he is doing any thing on the altar, or the breadth of this bench within the border, *a cubit. Stairs*, or steps, for such they needed; and probably each stair about one fourth of a cubit, to carry them up to the first and second settles. These stairs were placed eastward, that he who went up should have his face to the west, his back to the east; his face toward God, not toward the rising sun, as they who made the sun their idol.

18 ¶ And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; These *are* the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to [a]sprinkle blood thereon.

[a] Lev. 1. 5.

These are the ordinances; these are the measures and proportions for building the altar. *In the day when*, whensoever, *they shall make it*, the returned captives shall build and use it. *To offer burnt-offerings thereon:* it appears then this was the great brazen altar, of which see Exod. xxxviii. 30; xxxix. 39. *To sprinkle blood thereon*, according to the law, Lev. i. 5.

19 And thou shalt give to [b]the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, [c]a young bullock for a sin offering.

[b] ch. 44. 15. [c] Ex. 29. 10, 12. Lev. 8. 14, 15. ch. 45. 18, 19.

Thou shalt give; direct or command that it be given; for the prophet could not bestow such a gift on them. *The priests the Levites;* explaining who were meant by the priests. *Zadok*, who was put into Abiathar's room. See chap. xl. 46; xliv. 15. *To minister unto me:* see chap. xlii. 13. *A young bullock;* the sacrifice appointed, Exod. xxix. 1, 36, at the consecrating of the priests. *For a sin-offering;* an expiatory sacrifice, to make an atonement for errors, and to reconcile the person that brought the sacrifice. New consecration and reconciliation, needful after so long an interruption of their ministration, and for such as never were before consecrated.

20 And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put *it* on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it.

Thou shalt take; appoint it to be taken. *Of the blood thereof;* of the slain bullock. *Put it*, not all, but some of the blood, on the horns of the altar, as Lev. iv. 30 prescribeth, and as Moses did, Lev. viii. 15. *Of the settle*, on which the altar stood, which was two cubits high, and set upon one of a cubit high from the ground. *Upon the border:* see ver. 17. *Cleanse and purge it;* make it legally clean, that it may be fit for so sacred a use as this of sacrificing was.

21 Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, and he [d]shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, [e]without the sanctuary.

[d] Ex. 29. 14. [e] Heb. 13. 11.

Thou shalt take; as ver. 20. *And he*, the priest of Zadok's line, that by his course in ministration ought at that time to offer the sacrifice, *shall burn it;* either the whole, or so much as is commanded to be burnt. *The house* here is not the temple itself, but a place within the circuit of the most consecrated ground; it is called *the place of the house*, because the place in which the house was built, which is the sanctuary or temple. This was done without the gate, without the camp, while the tabernacle stood. Now it is to be done in the court of the house, and on the altar appointed and consecrated. This is the first day's sacrifice.

22 And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse *it* with the bullock.

The next day's sacrifice is here directed. *Without blemish:* this was a qualification required in all sacrifices, and there were priests appointed to search whether they were perfect, in which search they were very punctual and curious. *For a sin-offering:* see ver. 19. *And they*, the priests in attendance or course, *shall cleanse the altar*, with the blood of the kid put upon the altar, as appointed, and as the blood of the bullock, ver. 20.

23 When thou hast made an end of cleansing *it*, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish.

Made an end of the first and second days' sacrifices, and cleansing the altar. *Thou shalt offer* on the third day, and so on, through seven days. *A ram:* a kid, ver. 22, now a ram; both, or either, as God appoints; there was no inherent excellency in either one or other to commend them to God, but a male and without blemish it must be.

24 And thou shalt offer them before the LORD, [f]and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up *for* a burnt offering unto the LORD.

[f] Lev. 2. 13.

Thou shalt offer; direct them to offer. *Before the Lord;* not only to the Lord, but before the Lord, i. e. before the temple; so the altar stood where the burnt-offering was to be offered. *Cast salt upon them;* so the law, Lev. ii. 13, expressly required, and the priests salted every sacrifice made by fire three times, they say, in the salt chamber, at the bottom of the altar, and when the sacrifice was on the altar. It may allude to the perpetuity of the covenant thus made by sacrifice, and salted; as Numb. xviii. 19; 2 Chron. xiii. 5. *They;* the priests.

25 [g]Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat *for* a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish.

[g] Ex. 29. 35, 36. Lev. 8. 33.

By this it appears that there were seven days appointed for consecrating altar and priests, and that either these three sacrifices were every day of the seven offered up, and their blood sprinkled on the altar, or at least the young bullock every day, and one goat or one ram with it: the word

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here is copulative, but possibly the sense disjunctive, for so this particle is often used.

26 Seven days shall they purge the
† Heb. *fill their hands.* Ex. 29. 24. altar and purify it; and they shall † consecrate themselves.

They, the priests in course, *shall purge the altar:* the same with what is said of the priests; they and the altar were thus consecrated and dedicated unto God, to be his in peculiar manner.

h Lev. 9. 1. 27 h And when these days are expired, it shall be, *that* upon the eighth day, and *so* forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your ‖ peace offerings; and I will i accept you, saith the Lord GOD.

‖ Or, *thank offerings.* i Job 42. 8. ch. 20. 40, 41. Rom. 12. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

When these days are expired; when you have on every day of these seven offered the sacrifices as appointed, and for the ends mentioned. *Upon the eighth day*, which begins a new week; and it is probable the first of these seven days for sacrifice might be the sabbath, and end on our Friday; however, the first week is spent in solemn consecration of altar and priests; all weeks after are to have, day by day, the usual appointed sacrifices. *Burnt-offerings;* which were sacrifices expiatory, and for atonement of sin. *Upon the altar* of burnt-offering, the great brazen altar described in this chapter, ver. 13—17. *Peace-offerings;* sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving unto God for his goodness. *I will accept you;* be well-pleased with your persons, pardon your sins, smell a savour of rest in your thanksgiving, and own you with signal tokens of my favour and kindness; I will show my good-will and delight in you.

CHAP. XLIV.

The east gate assigned only to the prince, 1—3. *The people reproved for suffering strangers to pollute the sanctuary*, 4—8. *Idolaters declared incapable of the priest's office*, 9—14. *The sons of Zadok are accepted thereto*, 15, 16. *Ordinances for the priests*, 17—31.

THEN he brought me back the way of
a ch. 43. 1. the gate of the outward sanctuary a which looketh toward the east; and it *was* shut.

Then; when the altar was measured, and directions given for consecrating it at first, and for the perpetual use of it for future. *Back;* from the inner court, where he had been viewing the altar, to the outer part of the same court, and to the east gate thereof: others say it was to the temple-gate eastward, and that the temple is called *outward sanctuary*, in respect of the holy of holies. *It was shut;* when, or by whom, the prophet says not, but he found it shut.

2 Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened,
b ch. 43. 4. and no man shall enter in by it; b because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.

Likely the prophet was somewhat suprised, and wondered that the door should be shut; and while he museth on it the Lord speaks to him out of the temple, and informs him, and satisfieth him. *Shall not be opened*, i. e. shall not ordinarily stand open, but be shut till occasion requires it should sometimes be opened. *No man;* none of the common ordinary sort of people, or none but the prince, God's vicegerent, and the ministering priests. *The God of Israel hath entered in:* what was *the glory of the God of Israel*, chap. xliii. 2, is here *the Lord, the God of Israel*, that glory was the visible sign of his presence. His glory is himself, and where that entered he entered, i. e. gave evidence of a more than ordinary presence there. *It shall be shut;* either kept shut with bars, or, by a prohibition, be as if it were shut, that none should enter thereby.

3 *It is* for the prince; the prince, he
c Gen. 31. 54. 1 Cor. 10. 18. shall sit in it to c eat bread before the
d ch. 46. 2, 8. LORD; d he shall enter by the way of the porch of *that* gate, and shall go out by the way of the same.

For the prince; for the king, say some; if so, then the door shut was the door, not of the temple, but of the east gate of the priests' court. The high priest, and the second priest, say others, and indeed this is most likely. *He shall sit:* the king might sit before the Lord, others might not, and the priests stood ministering, as Heb. x. 11. Perhaps the high priest might have some privilege to sit, when others might not. *To eat bread:* if understood of the king, it was his eating of the sacrifice, that part of it which was allowed to the offerer. If this prince be the high priest, this bread was the shew-bread, which it seems he might sit and eat in or near the porch of the gate, whereas other priests were bound to eat in the common refectory, as appears, chap. xlii. 13. *He shall enter;* he may, it is his privilege; or he shall, that is, it is his duty to enter at this, and to come out at it, that the people may know which way to look, when they would see their high priest enter to make atonement: which may be mystical, and include our looking to the great High Priest.

4 ¶ Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, e behold, the glory of the
e ch. 3. 23. & 43. 5. f ch. 1. 28. LORD filled the house of the LORD: f and I fell upon my face.

Then, when he had been informed of the reason why the east gate was shut, and when he perceived he must not go out thereby. *He;* the angel, or Christ in the appearance of man. *The way of the north gate;* to the north gate of the inner court, whence he had a prospect of the temple, though no door to it on that side. *Behold;* through the windows of the temple he did discern that brightness and lustre which filled the temple. *The glory of the Lord, &c.:* see chap. i. 28; xliii. 2.

5 And the LORD said unto me, g Son
g ch. 40. 4. of man, † mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary.
† Heb. *set thine heart.*

The whole of the first part of this verse is found at chap. xl. 4, where it is explained. *The ordinances;* the prescribed rules for persons and things in and about the temple; these ordinances are called laws in this verse. *Mark well;* set thy mind, that thou mayst comprehend them all. *The entering in;* not so much the gates and porches, through which the entrance is to the house, as the persons who may, and who may not, enter. *The sanctuary*, taken here largely for the holy courts, rather than for the house itself.

6 And thou shalt say to the h rebel-
h ch. 2. 5. lious, *even* to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O ye house of Israel, i let it suffice you of all your
i ch. 45. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 3. abominations,

The rebellious: see chap. ii. 3, 6—8. *Let it suffice you;* let the time you have spent on your sins, your many great sins and abominations, let it be thought enough, nay, too much, as 1 Pet. iv. 3; do so no more.

7 h In that ye have brought *into my*
h ch. 43. 8. ver. 9. Acts 21. 28. † Heb. *children of a stranger.* *sanctuary* † i strangers, m uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, *even* my house, when ye offer n my bread, o the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations.
i Lev. 22. 25. m Lev. 26. 41. Deut. 10. 16. Acts 7. 51. n Lev. 21. 6, 8, 17, 21. o Lev. 3. 16. & 17. 11.

Ye have brought; either by abusing your power you have licensed, or by conniving you have permitted, to come into my holy courts. *Strangers;* foreigners and heathen, who had their idols in the very courts of the temple, and there worshipped their idols, as chap. viii. 5, 10, 14, 16. *Uncircumcised in heart;* the worst of them, profane and impious. *Uncircumcised in flesh:* no uncircumcised one

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should come into the court of the people, but you have brought them into the very sanctuary at the times of public worship, and when you have been offering my bread, &c. Some think that the profane carelessness of the Jewish rulers was such, that they suffered uncircumcised ones to be priests among them, and to approach to God's altar. This was done in Solomon's degenerate days, and in the days of Ahaz, Manasseh, Amon. *My bread;* either the meat-offering, or first-fruits of corn and dough, and the shew-bread. *The fat*, which was taken off the sacrifices and burnt. *The blood*, how let out, received into vessels, sprinkled and poured out, the priests and rulers of my house, through a sinful familiarity with heathens, have given them courage to ask, and you have not zeal and courage enough to refuse them, but you have satisfied their forbidden curiosity, and showed them all these things; or, as was said, have advanced some to be priests in my house, and suffered others to be priests of idols, standing and worshipped in my courts. *They*, the whole nation of the Jews, the people of the land, *have broken my covenant;* turned idolaters, mixed with heathens, forsaken me and my law, taking example from your practices, or complying with your superstitious and idolatrous inventions.

p Lev. 22. 2, &c. ‖ Or, *ward*, or, *ordinance:* And so ver. 14, & 16, & ch. 40. 45.

8 And ye have not [p]kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my [‖]charge in my sanctuary for yourselves.

You have not observed the laws I gave you for the careful and exact keeping of my holy things; house, sacrifices, and worship. You have substituted others in your rooms, made officials, and surrogates, and curates to look to the gates, and these have let in the profane and unclean; your pride, or covetousness, or laziness, hath taken you off from your duty and your charge; or you have, as you saw good, consecrated persons, whether fit or unfit, whether approved or not approved by me. So you have profaned my name, and violated my law, Numb. xviii. 4.

q ver. 7.

9 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; [q]No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that *is* among the children of Israel.

Now God renews his former law against the permitting of the wicked and heathens to enter his sanctuary. None, of what quality soever, what interest soever they make, though princes, nobles, learned, travellers, that come to view nations and the rarities of them; none of these, or such like, shall on any colour of pretence be brought into my sanctuary. Perhaps Solomon showed Sheba's queen too much, we are sure Hezekiah showed the ambassadors too much, yet we read not that either of them showed the sanctuary.

r See 2 Kin. 23. 8, &c. 2 Chr. 29. 4, 5. ch. 48. 11.

10 [r]And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity.

The Levites; priests intended here, and indeed the sons or posterity of them are here intended; for this apostacy among them was elder than the eldest of them all. *Far from me:* idolaters go far from God, for they depart as an adulterous wife from her husband; their hearts and affections are far from God, they fall to heathenish idolatry. *When Israel went astray:* it may be worth our while to inquire what time, or near what time, this was. I doubt Baal-peor, Numb. xxv., or from Solomon's time, when there was somewhat of this sin among the priests. But of Rehoboam's time it is said, 2 Chron. xii. 1, *all Israel forsook the law of the Lord.* And in Ahaz's time, when the altar at Damascus so pleased him and the high priest Uriah, that presently an altar like that is made and set up between God's house and altar; and orders, or, in our language, injunctions, from the king to the high priest, and from him to the inferior priests and Levites, who obey, 2 Kings xvi. 16: and Manasseh carried the apostacy higher. Now account from any of these; from the last of them to the first return out of captivity is one hundred and fourteen years, to which we must add the twenty-five years which each priest must be ere they enter the priest's office, it will amount to one hundred and thirty-nine years, and to these add forty-four ere this temple was repaired, it will be one hundred and eighty-three years too great an age for any of the priests to be of; therefore, as I said, the priests that are now degraded are the children of those apostate priests who were (as Zechariah, i. 5, 6, said of the fathers) dead. *They shall bear their iniquity;* shall bear the punishment of this their apostacy, be debased to meanest services, subjected to others, and be deprived for ever ministering at the altar. So 2 Kings xxiii. 8, 9; and so God executed his threat against Eli's house, 1 Sam. ii. 13.

11 Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, [s]*having* charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: [t]they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and [u]they shall stand before them to minister unto them.

s 1 Chron. 26. 1. t 2 Chron. 29. 34. u Num. 16. 9.

Ministers; servants, employed in the lowest and least honourable work. *In my sanctuary;* not the temple itself, but about the courts of it. *Having charge at the gates;* shall be porters to open and shut and sweep, and ready to go on errands. *Ministering;* probably made to learn the arts of mason or smith, to mend and repair, to fetch wood and water with Jebusites. *They shall slay;* do that servile work for the sacrificing priest. *The sacrifice for the people;* all the sacrifices the people bring. *Stand before;* Hebrew expression of servants' attendance. *To minister unto them;* to wait on and obey the priests.

12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and [w]† caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I [x]lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity.

w Is. 9. 16. Mal. 2. 8. † Heb. *were for a stumblingblock of iniquity unto*, &c. ch. 14. 3, 4. x Ps. 106. 26.

Ministered; acted as priests to idols, and in the name of idolatrous worshippers sacrificed to the idols. *Caused the house of Israel;* were first occasion of fall to some, when their example was followed; and in after-times they seduced, persuaded, and urged them to serve their idols, and sacrifice to them, for this was the gain of the idol priests. *Lifted up mine hand;* sworn against them, that they shall suffer for this their iniquity. This lifting up the hand is the form of an oath, Exod. vi. 8; Deut. xxxii. 40; chap. xx. 5. *Their iniquity;* the punishment of this sin; so it is chap. xiv. 10; xviii. 19, 20; xxiii. 35, 49.

13 [y]And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy *place:* but they shall [z]bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed.

y 2 Kin. 23. 9. Num. 18. 3. z ch. 32. 30. & 36. 7.

They shall never be admitted to the office, nor employed in the proper work of a priest that ministers to me. They shall not come into the temple, much less into the oracle, nor have any part in the offering up of sacrifices on the altar, though they have meat, drink, and lodging about the temple; yet, as discarded servants, that are retained lest they starve. *They shall bear their shame;* they shall be little regarded, but disesteemed, and put to shame, and this shall be part of their punishment. They shall be dealt with according to their abominations, i. e. their apostacy and idolatry, and bear the punishment thereof.

14 But I will make them [a]keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein.

a Num. 18. 4. 1 Chron. 23. 28, 32.

See ver. 11.

15 ¶ [b]But the priests the Levites, [c]the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary [d]when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near

b ch. 40. 46. & 43. 19. c 1 Sam. 2. 35. d ver. 10

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e Deu. 10. 8. f ver. 7. to me to minister unto me, and they [e]shall stand before me to offer unto me [f]the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD:

The priests; so called from their office. *The Levites;* by descent from Levi, Jacob's son. *Sons of Zadok;* who was of Eleazar's family, to whose father Phinehas a covenant of salt insured the high priesthood, and all the honour, privileges, and advantages thereof, Numb. xxv. 12, 13. *Kept the charge;* were constant, zealous, and faithful in their priestly office, and their duties in it. *Went astray:* this may possibly refer to that transgression in the matter of Baal-peor, of which Numb. xxv. 3; Psal. cvi. 28—30. See ver. 10. *They shall come near to me:* see chap. xl. 46. *To offer unto me the fat and the blood;* to offer expiatory sacrifices, to make atonement and intercede for the people. This honour God put upon them for their integrity and constancy in the things of God.

g ch. 41. 22. 16 They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to [g]my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge.

They shall enter, the high priest and the other priests shall have right and liberty of entering, *into my sanctuary;* both to the altar, to the temple, and the high priest into the holy of holies. *To my table;* to set the shew-bread on, and to take it off. *To minister unto me;* to offer sacrifice at the altar, and incense in the house; this the priests did in their course; and of this line the high priest alone, once a year, in the day of expiation, went in to minister to the Lord in the holy of holies. *They shall keep my charge:* see ver. 8.

h Ex. 28. 39, 40, 43. & 39. 27, 28. 17 ¶ And it shall come to pass, *that* when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, [h]they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them, whiles they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within.

When they enter: they must put on their priestly garments in the chambers that are appointed for vestries to them, where they put off the garments when the service was done, and where they put them on when they approached to the altar, chap. xlii. 14. *At the gates of the inner court;* where the altar of burnt-offering stood, and where the temple, which is included, stood. *With linen garments;* according to the law, Exod. xxviii. 42, 43. *No wool;* the reason hereof is given in the next verse. *In the gates of the inner court;* about the altar of burnt-offering. *And within;* in the temple itself, in every service of both.

i Ex. 28. 40, 42. & 39. 28. 18 [i]They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird *themselves* ‖† with any thing that causeth sweat.

‖ Or, *in sweating places.* † Heb. *in or, with sweat.*

This verse recounts but two garments of linen, the bonnet and the breeches, but Exod. xxviii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 18, 28; xiv. 3, mention a linen coat, or ephod; so they had three linen garments, and a girdle of fine twined linen about to gird the coat fast, yet so as not to make them sweat, or smell offensively.

k ch. 42. 14. l ch. 46. 20. See Ex. 29. 37. & 30. 29. Lev. 6. 27. Matt. 23. 17, 19. 19 And when they go forth into the utter court, *even* into the utter court to the people, [k]they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall [l]not sanctify the people with their garments.

See chap. xlii. 14, where this verse is explained, yet here are two things that verse hath not, of which a word. *The utter court:* this tells us in which court stood the chambers, wherein the priests did attire themselves, into which also they retired to unclothe themselves of the priestly garments. The chambers were in the court next to the court of the people, as chap. xlii. 14. *They shall not sanctify:* by the law, common things touching holy things became consecrate, and to be no more for common use. If the priests' consecrated clothes touched the people's, they must part with them, this would be inconvenient; so some. Or lest the people should think themselves the holier for such contact, and grow proud of it; so others. The Chaldee paraphrast frames it to the last clause of the 14th verse of the 42nd chapter, they in holy vests shall not intermix with the people; this would be a profaning the holy vests. Or else thus, they shall not come out to bless the people in their priestly garments, but, having finished the sacrifice and all belonging thereto, they should change garments, and in their ordinary garments come out to the people, and bless them in that form, Numb. vi. 23, 24.

m Lev. 21. 5. 20 [m]Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads.

To *shave their heads* was forbidden, Lev. xix. 27; xxi. 5. Hair is given for an ornament, and the priests should not disfigure themselves, nor imitate idolatrous heathens. *Nor suffer their locks to grow long;* priding themselves in it, as Absalom, giving ill example by such excess. *Shall only poll their heads;* when the hair is grown somewhat, they shall trim, cut the ends of their hair, and keep it in moderate size; beside, long hair was a token of a Nazarite's vow, and God would have all holy things and persons kept unmixed and distinguished from other common things.

n Lev. 10. 9. 21 [n]Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court.

Any priest; any one, on any pretence. *Wine,* or any other strong intoxicating liquor. *When they enter into the inner court;* when they go, either to trim the lamps, or set the shew-bread in order, or to offer incense in the temple; or when they go to the altar to offer a sacrifice, which stood in the inner court: this prohibition you have Lev. x. 9, which see, and it was to prevent all indecencies in the service.

o Lev. 21. 7, 13, 14. † Heb. *thrust forth.* † Heb. *from a priest.* 22 Neither shall they take for their wives a [o]widow, nor her that is †put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow †that had a priest before.

God allowed them to marry, only directs that it be not to one of ill fame or divorced, Lev. xxi. 13, 14, nor the widow of any deceased common person; yet a priest might marry a priest's widow, but a virgin is rather commended to their choice; and whether widow or virgin, it must not be as Moses married a daughter of a strange people, or as they did in Babylon, Ezra x. 18, &c.; and possibly this of Ezekiel was designed as a rule to direct Ezra in reforming this disorder when they came from Babylon. Nor were they at liberty to marry any of any tribe, but it must be one of their own tribe too.

p Lev. 10. 10, 11. ch. 22. 26. Mal. 2. 7. 23 And [p]they shall teach my people *the difference* between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

They shall teach; by their place they were bound to instruct the people, Lev. x. 10, 11; this was part of their work, to read the law, expound it, and resolve questions arising about it. They were to be, as ministers ought now to be, *apt to teach,* 1 Tim. iii. 2. *Between the holy and profane;* whether legally and ceremonially so, or morally and really so, that they might keep the people from pollutions. *Between the unclean and the clean;* the same thing in other words, only this seems to require priests' patient instructing, till the people have learned to difference unclean and clean.

q Deut. 17. 8, &c. 2 Chron. 19. 8, 10. 24 And [q]in controversy they shall stand in judgment; *and* they shall judge it according to my judgments: and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; [r]and they shall hallow my sabbaths.

r See ch. 22. 26. *In controversy;* in doubts about lawful and unlawful, in pretences of right and wrong in all contests. *They shall stand in judgment;* if the controversy be brought to them, they shall hear and consider. *Shall judge it;* shall determine, end the controversy, and reconcile parties. *According to my*

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judgments; not as they favour and affect, or disaffect and hate, but according to what God hath by his laws in that behalf directed. *They shall keep;* priests first, and people with them. *Mine assemblies;* public congregations for worshipping of God. *Shall hallow my sabbaths;* with holy care observe the sabbaths, as days of holy work, to be spent in secret, family, and public worship of God, as he requires.

a Lev. 21. 1, &c.

25 And they shall come at no [a]dead person to defile themselves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves.

They, the priests, who come near to minister before the Lord, *shall come at no dead person;* neither touch, nor come into the room, nor attend the funeral of the dead; for this would be a legal and ceremonial defilement, and it is prohibited Lev. xxi. 1. The Jews tell us that he who comes within four cubits of the dead is defiled; and the law, though it determine not at what distance such are defiled, it doth determine that they are unclean till evening by touch or coming near the carcass of any but man, and the defilement by coming near a dead man lasted seven days. *But for father, &c.:* the priest was indulged in the death of so near relations, as Lev. xxi. 2, 3, where they are reckoned up as in this verse. *They may defile themselves;* mourn for them, touch them, be at their funerals, and show their natural affections to them.

t Num. 6. 10. & 19. 11, &c.

26 And [t]after he is cleansed, they shall reckon unto him seven days.

After he is cleansed; after that for seven days he hath kept from the dead, by which the Jews accounted a man was cleansed, for as nearness did defile, so absence did cleanse in this case. *They*, the priests, who are about the house of God, *shall reckon unto him seven days;* shall appoint seven days more to this defiled person for his cleansing, before he is admitted into the sanctuary.

u ver. 17.
x Lev. 4. 3.

27 And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, [u]unto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, [x]he shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord GOD.

During the days of his uncleanness he kept out of the sanctuary; when the days of purifying are fulfilled he then may go in. *The sanctuary;* not the temple itself, but, as the next words have it, the inner court. *To minister;* to execute the priest's office. *Sin-offering:* it is not said what this should be, nor doth that Lev. vi. 21 refer to this. I think rather that, Lev. iv. 3, a young bullock was to be this sin-offering in purifying as it was in consecrating him, chap. xliii. 19.

y Num. 18. 20. Deut. 10. 9. & 18. 1, 2. Josh. 13. 14, 33.

28 And it shall be unto them for an inheritance: I [y]*am* their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel: I *am* their possession.

Sin-offering being mentioned immediately before, gives the occasion of repeating the provision made for the priests, for under this one all other offerings are couched; and if the Lord do so expressly require a defiled priest to bring his sin-offering, in which the ministering priests had their share, he would expect the same of all Israel, which would amount to a great sum. *For an inheritance,* instead of lands and cities. *I am their inheritance;* God is the inheritance of all his people, but especially of his priests; and so what is given to God, by him is assigned to his officers. *Ye shall give them no possession,* as the rest of the tribes had. *I am their possession;* the peculiar blessing of God on them, and their share in his offerings, was a very rich possession.

z Lev. 6. 18, 29 & 7. 6.
a Lev. 27. 21, 28, compared with Num. 18. 14.
‖ Or, *devoted.*

29 [z]They shall eat the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; and [a]every ‖dedicated thing in Israel shall be their's.

We must not think that the whole of these were eat, God had his part, and the priest his part too; somewhat of each came to the priest. *Every dedicated thing;* as first-fruits, and tithes, &c., the priest had part of them.

‖ Or, *chief.*
b Ex. 13. 2. & 22. 29, 30. & 23. 19. Num. 3. 13. & 18. 12, 13.
c Num. 15. 20. Neh. 10. 37.
d Prov. 3. 9, 10. Mal. 3. 10.

30 And the ‖[b]first of all the firstfruits of all *things*, and every oblation of all, of every *sort* of your oblations, shall be the priest's: ye [c]shall also give unto the priest the first of your dough, [d]that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house.

And the first; so soon as the first-fruits are ripe in the field, your vineyards and olive-yards, &c.; nay, redemption money for the first-born of man was theirs. *Every oblation,* whether free-will offering or prescribed. *Of every sort;* of what sort soever, whether of flock, or herd, &c. *The first of your dough:* it is conceived this was of every mass of dough they made, and of the first of the dough which every year they first made of the new corn, as by the custom of the Jews at this day appears, who, since they cannot give to the priest, will burn a little cake of every batch in the oven. *That he,* the priest, may bless and pray for thee.

e Ex. 22. 31. Lev. 22. 8.

31 The priest shall not eat of any thing that is [e]dead of itself, or torn, whether it be fowl or beast.

This was forbidden to all the Jews, much more to the priests, Exod. xxii. 31; Lev. xxii. 8.

CHAP. XLV.

The portion of land for the sanctuary, 1—5, *for the city,* 6, *and for the prince,* 7, 8. *Ordinances for the prince,* 9—25.

† Heb. *when ye cause the land to fall.*
a ch. 47. 22.
b ch. 48. 8.
† Heb. *holiness.*

MOREOVER, †when ye shall [a]divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall [b]offer an oblation unto the LORD, †an holy portion of the land: the length *shall be* the length of five and twenty thousand *reeds*, and the breadth *shall be* ten thousand. This *shall be* holy in all the borders thereof round about.

When ye, ye returned Jews, restored to your own land, *shall divide by lot:* it was not on the return divided by lot, as it was by Joshua, but lot and inheritance are the same many times in the Scripture, and the expression alludes to the usual way of assigning inheritances. *The land;* land of Canaan. *Ye shall offer an oblation;* as it is fit God have his portion first set out. *Holy portion,* by its relation to God, and because dedicated to his service. *Reeds:* the Hebrew doth not express either *reeds* or *cubits*; our translators supply *reeds*. but the French reads it *cubits, (coudees,)* Rochelle edit. 1616. The Greek keeps to the Hebrew, and adds not *reed* or *cubit.* Could it be demonstrated which is here intended, we might proceed with greater clearness and certainty. It is true *reeds* are first mentioned as the measure, but *cubits* are also very often mentioned, as a known measure in measuring the temple and courts, as appears to any one that will read over chapters xl.—xliii. Besides, the 2nd verse expressly saith *cubits;* and I am apt to think that it hath relation as well to the twenty-five thousand, ver. 1, as to the five hundred, ver. 2. I rather favour the cubit measure than the reed, that so the whole contents may not seem overgrown; for at reed measure this portion contains at least seventy-seven miles and a little more in length; but at the cubit measure it amounts but to twelve miles and a half. This easily, the other hardly imaginable. *Ten thousand* reeds is at least thirty miles and a half, but cubits amount to five miles in breadth, and this seems to me both likeliest to be intended and easiest to be understood: however, since the 1st verse mentions not the particular measure, I may as well borrow it from the 2nd verse, as others fetch it from the 40th chapter; and I think the 3rd expressly limits us to the measure by cubits, which see, with notes. *Shall be holy;* set apart for holy uses, the whole circuit thereof.

c ch. 42. 20.

2 Of this there shall be for the sanctuary [c]five hundred *in length*, with five hundred *in breadth*, square round about;

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‖ Or, void places

and fifty cubits round about for the ‖ suburbs thereof.

Of this whole consecrate portion of twenty-five thousand cubits long, or twelve miles and half, and ten thousand broad, or five miles and little more. *For the sanctuary;* for a platform for the sanctuary, both house and courts. *Five hundred in length, with five hundred in breadth;* five hundred cubits square, which is about one-fourth of a mile square. *Fifty cubits;* which amount to twenty-nine yards and half a foot. This bears some proportion to the contents of that square, which is one quarter of a mile in each side; but fifty cubits suburb to that square, that should be supposed to have sides each a mile, a half, and half quarter long. *The suburbs thereof:* place round about this the five hundred cubits square mountain of the house.

3 And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand:

d ch. 48. 10. [d]and in it shall be the sanctuary *and* the most holy *place*.

Of, or by, or from this cubit measure, ver. 2, shalt thou measure. So express, that indeed I wonder a dispute can arise; and this justifies the French version, which from this verse no doubt took the *coudee*, which they use in ver. 1. *In it*, in the centre or navel of this twenty-five thousand and ten thousand, shall the whole sanctuary, courts, temple, and holy of holies, or the oracle, be built.

e ver. 1. ch. 48. 10, &c. 4 [e]The holy *portion* of the land shall be for the priests the ministers of the sanctuary, which shall come near to minister unto the LORD: and it shall be a place for their houses, and an holy place for the sanctuary.

The holy portion; the whole contents of twelve miles and half long, and five broad. *For the priests;* sons of Zadok, who minister to the Lord, and others with them, who, though degraded from the priestly honour, yet lived upon priestly provision. *A place for their houses;* in which twenty-three of twenty-four courses of priests may dwell conveniently, while the twenty-fourth minister at the temple, as by order they did. *And an holy place;* and how much God did reserve to himself for his dwelling is expressly mentioned. Thus God makes himself and what is his the inheritance and possession of the priests his servants, as he told them, chap. xliv. 28.

f ch. 48. 13. 5 [f]And the five and twenty thousand of length, and the ten thousand of breadth, shall also the Levites, the ministers of the house, have for themselves, for a

g See ch. 40. 17. possession for [g]twenty chambers.

As we render the words they are a little clouded, but as they are rendered in the French they are plainer: we read them as if the verse spake of the same twenty-five thousand long and ten thousand broad, which the priests have; but the French thus, there shall be other twenty-five thousand in length and ten thousand in breadth, which shall appertain to the Levites, who do the service of the house, with twenty chambers; so they have abroad in the country equal share with the priests, and in the outer court or courts about the house twenty chambers or rows of them in which to abide for their conveniences, when, in their courses, they attend the services they were to perform, as porters, singers, and attendants on the priests.

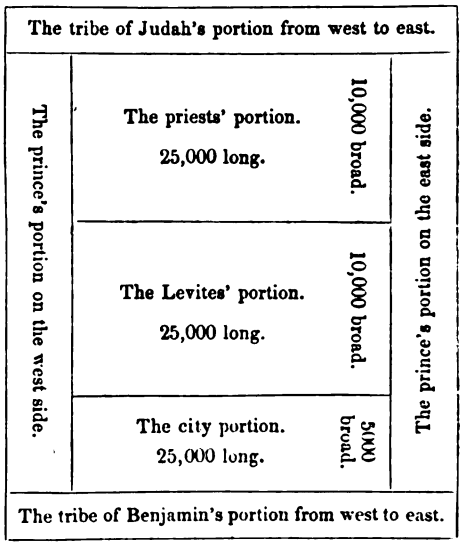
h ch. 48. 15. 6 ¶ [h]And ye shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long, over against the oblation of the holy *portion:* it shall be for the whole house of Israel.

Appoint; order and measure out. *The possession;* land to be a possession to the citizens of Jerusalem, and to be the contents of the city. *Five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long;* about two miles and half broad, and twelve miles and half long, measured by the cubit, as ver. 3 directs. *Over against the oblation of the holy portion:* this must run along parallel in length with the holy portion, though but half its breadth. *For the whole house of Israel:* as the chief and capital city, to which the tribes resort, it must be large enough to entertain them too; and was to be framed with twelve gates to twelve streets, for the twelve tribes, as chap. xlviii. 31.

7 ¶ [i]And *a portion shall be* for the prince on the one side and on the other side of the oblation of the holy *portion*, and of the possession of the city, before the oblation of the holy *portion*, and before the possession of the city, from the west side westward, and from the east side eastward: and the length *shall be* over against one of the portions, from the west border unto the east border.

i ch. 48. 21.

A portion; though not said how much, it is likely it was near fourfold to that of the city, sanctuary, or the priests and Levites. *For the prince;* the king, or supreme ruler. One half of the prince's portion lay on the west side of those three already set out; the other half lay on the east side thereof; so the portion of city, Levites, and priests lay in the middle of it. *Of the holy portion;* of priests, and Levites, and sanctuary. *Before;* it lay parallel, as broad as these three were broad, and so run on both sides in its breadth from north to south, and had its length as the other from east to west, as in this diagram.



Over against; what called now *over against*, or parallel, or by the side all along, is called *before* three times together. So now you have an exact square of 25,000 cubits laid out for God, the Levites, and city, which appears thus in the breadth:

10,000 for the priests.
10,000 for the Levites.
5000 for the city.

And the length of each 25,000, that is, some twelve miles and half square.

And the prince's portion embracing or bounding all at each end, as a guard and defence both of church and state, of religion and the civil rights, which may fairly be intimated by this assigning him his portion on each end of the other three.

8 In the land shall be his possession in Israel: and [k]my princes shall no more oppress my people; and *the rest of* the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

k ch. 46. 18. See Jer. 22. 17. ch. 22. 27.

In the land; either in that portion of land set out for him, or, as it is added, *in Israel*, i. e. in the land of Israel. *My princes;* who own my favour in their advancement,

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and my law in their government. All princes are in some sort God's princes, but all do not regard God as sovereign Lord of them and their people; but God did raise up such at the return out of Babylon, who were and did recognise themselves God's princes. *Shall no more oppress:* both Ezekiel and other prophets did reprove the injustices, cruelties, and oppressive methods of the kings of Israel, and yet they took not off the yoke; but it shall be better after the days of Babylonish captivity are ended. *The rest;* after God had his portion, which was that the priests and Levites had, after the city and the prince have theirs, the remainder is to be given to the people. *They;* the persons that are officers appointed to divide the land. *The house of Israel;* two tribes and ten tribes. *According to their tribes,* to the number of the tribes, and their right, we must be restored to them, or they compensated with an equal value.

1 ch. 44. 6.
m Jer. 22. 3.
† Heb. *expulsions.*

9 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; [l]Let it suffice you, O princes of Israel: [m]remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your †exactions from my people, saith the Lord GOD.

Princes are here in God's name, and by advice from him who made them princes, counselled, exhorted, and commanded. *Let it suffice;* be content, aim not at more: he who gave no more can make this enough, and he will curse and blast what you indirectly, and by sinful, oppressive crafts, wrest from others. *Remove violence;* put it far from yourselves, do not you use it, and so discountenance in others, that neither common subjects dare violate one another, nor your officers violate any of them. *Spoil;* either the same as violence, or the effect of it, violent courses; rob the oppressed and spoil them. *Execute judgment;* judge righteously, and then look the sentence be executed, for terror to the unjust, and relief of the oppressed. *And justice:* this is added for emphasis, though the same thing. *Exactions;* heavy taxes and impositions on estates or trade. *My people;* whom I must, if you will not, right.

n Lev. 19. 35, 36. Prov. 11. 1.

10 Ye shall have just [n]balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath.

Ye; princes of Israel. *Shall have:* though they were not traders to use, yet they must have, i. e. appoint, for to them as a privilege it appertains to appoint standards for measure among their subjects. *Just balances,* or weights and scales, by which to measure what is to be sold by weight, one and the same to all, that none buy by a greater and sell by a lesser. So Lev. xix. 35, 36; Prov. xi. 1; xvi. 11; Micah vi. 10, 11. So must the prince remove oppressive cheating by divers weights. *Ephah,* to measure dry things, as corn, olives, dates, &c. *Bath:* this was a measure of liquid things, as oil, wine, or water, and what each contained the next verse will acquaint us.

11 The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer: the measure thereof shall be after the homer.

One shall contain as much as the other, the *ephah* shall contain as many gallons of dry, as the *bath* doth contain of liquid things. *An homer* is commonly said to be thirty bushels, or near it. So that the ephah will be some three bushels, in dry things, and the bath sixty-four pints, or eight gallons, in liquid things.

o Ex. 30. 13. Lev. 27. 25. Num. 3. 47.

12 And the [o]shekel *shall be* twenty gerahs: twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh.

Having laid down the standard for weight and measure in less valuable things, and that are sold for money, now the standard is set down for the current coin which passed among them, and the valuation of which was part of the prince's prerogative. The first mentioned in the text is *the shekel,* which, saith the text, contained *twenty gerahs;* now every gerah was one penny halfpenny English value: the shekel then was two shillings and sixpence, the twenty shekels was two pounds ten shillings, the fifteen shekels was one pound seventeen shillings and sixpence, and twenty-five was three pounds two shillings and six pence. *Maneh:* some say it is one pound, and that the pound was either least, middle, or greatest, according as there were more or fewer shekels in it; the least or common pound was but seventeen shillings and sixpence; the next, which was the royal, was fifty shillings; and the greatest, or pound of the sanctuary, was sixty-two shillings and six pence.

13 This *is* the oblation that ye shall offer; the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of wheat, and ye shall give the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of barley:

In the daily service, the morning and evening sacrifice, there must be wheat and barley flour. *Sixth part of an ephah;* sixtieth part of an homer, about one half bushel, and one peck, and one quarter of a peck, and three pints, or near it; so some. Others abate the odd measures, and say the ephah was about our half bushel, as indeed it can be no more; if the homer were thirty bushels, the ephah a tenth part of the homer, that is, three bushels, the sixth part of the ephah amounts to four gallons, or half a bushel.

14 Concerning the ordinance of oil, the bath of oil, *ye shall offer* the tenth part of a bath out of the cor, *which is* an homer of ten baths; for ten baths *are* an homer:

Now forasmuch as oil was always offered with the meat-offering, here is direction what quantity shall be used at each offering. *The bath of oil;* which contained about twenty-four gallons, or very near it. *The tenth part;* so the quantity of oil by this account will be two gallons, three pints, and a little more. *The cor;* which is here said to be *an homer:* these were two names of one and the same measure, and described by the baths it contained.

‖ Or, *kid.*
‡ Or, *thank offerings.*
p Lev. 1. 4.

15 And one ‖lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for ‖peace offerings, [p]to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord GOD.

This verse prescribes the proportion that is to be observed in bringing the lambs for daily sacrifice. They were bound to choose out of the best pastures of Israel the best and fattest lambs, one out of two hundred; so favourable was God to them in these cattle, taking so few out of so many. And these lambs were designed for to be offered with the meat-offering, either in expiatory sacrifices, or in eucharistical sacrifices: thus daily sacrifices kept up their peace with God.

† Heb. *shall be for.*
‖ Or, *with.*

16 All the people of the land †shall give this oblation ‖for the prince in Israel.

The plain and summary meaning of this verse is, that this daily sacrifice should be, as for the people and the prince, so should it be provided by a common purse of prince and people, all should contribute to this charge. Though some think the people were to give this, and the prince to give a like share; and I know some think that this prince is the high priest, and that all the people, joining and contributing to this sacrifice, are here bound to bring it to the high priest.

‖ Or, *thank offerings.*

17 And it shall be the prince's part *to give* burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the ‖peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.

The prince's part; beside the share he gives to the daily sacrifice in the common charge, ver. 16, the prince is bound also, on solemnities to give sacrifices out of his own. *Burnt-offerings:* see Lev. i., where these are described. *Meat-offerings:* see Lev. ii. 1, &c. *Drink-offerings:* see

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Exod. xxx. 9; Numb. xv. 24: the drink-offering was ever joined with the meat-offering, Numb. xxix. 11, 16, 19, 22. *In the feasts;* which he doth particularly recount, as new moons, &c.; of all particularly to treat would be too long. *He shall prepare:* here lieth the main deciding circumstance, whether the secular or ecclesiastical prince be here intended. Some say this preparing is a sacerdotal act in order to offering; if so, it must be the high priest; but I think they mistake. This preparing is nothing more than on the prince's charge, and by his care, to see that there be such beasts ready at hand as are required at such solemnities; and so it is the secular prince. *To make reconciliation:* see ver. 15. *For the house of Israel;* all the people.

18 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the first *month*, in the first *day* of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish, and [q] cleanse the sanctuary:

[q] Lev. 16. 16.

In the first month of the year, every new-year's day; or the first new-year's day after the temple is built, a kind of feast of dedication: the former better agreeth with the following verses. *Thou shalt take;* procure, either bring out of his own flock, or buy with his money; this the prince must do. *A young bullock without blemish;* such the law required, both for kind and quality, in what sacrifice, or on what occasion soever the sacrifice was offered. *And cleanse the sanctuary;* that by this, offered according to the law, the temple might be cleansed.

[r] ch. 43. 20. 19 [r] And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering, and put *it* upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court.

The priest: had the 17th and 18th verses intended by *prince* the high priest, there would have been no need of changing the phrase, or of mentioning the *priest*, it would have been enough to have said, *And he shall;* but in those verses the bringing and preparing is not priestly, but ascribed to the prince, as it would be to any other who offers a sacrifice to the Lord by the hand of the priest. *Shall take;* carry with him in some vessel or other, from the place where the bullock was slain. *Of the blood of the sin-offering:* see Lev. i. 5; chap. xliii. 20. *Upon the four corners of the settle:* see chap. xliii. 20. *Upon the posts;* the blood of the sin-offering was to be put upon the posts of the temple door, and on the posts of the gate of the inner court, or that next to the temple.

[s] Lev. 4. 27. 20 And so thou shalt do the seventh *day* of the month [s] for every one that erreth, and for *him that is* simple: so shall ye reconcile the house.

The priest must offer the like sacrifice for cleansing the errors of the people, and reconciling them. *The seventh day;* about a week before the passover. *For every one that erreth;* for all the errors of all the house of Israel, in all that had erred through ignorance. *For him that is simple;* that is, of weak intellectuals, half-witted, or a fool, as the word signifies; or, for one that was seduced. *Reconcile the house,* i. e. *cleanse,* as ver. 18, which legally or ceremonially was defiled by those errors done in the city or courts of the house, whither these persons might come, for it is not the temple itself, I suppose, that is here meant.

[t] Ex. 12. 18. Lev. 23. 5, 6. Num. 9. 2, 3. & 28. 16, 17. Deut. 16. 1, &c. 21 [t] In the first *month*, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.

In the first month; Nisan, which is part of March and part of April with us. *The fourteenth day;* as was appointed of old by Moses, Exod. xii. at large. *Ye shall have;* have, and slay, for so Exod. xii. 6. *The passover;* the lamb, which was to be eaten with thanksgiving for God's sparing the Jewish children, their first-born, when he slew the chief of the strength of Egypt, and for bringing the whole house of Israel out of Egypt. *A feast of seven days:* see the institution, Exod. xii. *Unleavened bread shall be eaten:* though here is an ellipsis, yet the thing clearly speaks itself; through the whole feast unleavened bread was to be eaten under great penalty, Exod. xii. 18, 19. These things no doubt concerned the returned captives, though they have a mystical meaning also.

22 And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land [u] a bullock *for* a sin offering.

[u] Lev. 4. 14.

Upon that day; upon the fourteenth day, on which the passover was slain. *The prince;* as before, ver. 17, 18. *Prepare for himself,* to expiate his own sins. *And for all the people:* see ver. 17, where the same is found.

[x] Lev. 23. 8. 23 And [x] seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; [y] and a kid of the goats daily *for* a sin offering.

[y] See Num. 28. 15, 24, 30. & 29. 5, 11, 16, 19, &c.

After the first day's offering, ver. 22, or else after the fifteenth day was over, though first more likely. The prince at his own charge is to get ready day by day seven bullocks, seven rams, perfect without blemish, as the law required, and one kid each day of the seven; in all forty-nine bullocks, as many rams, and seven kids of the goats. These the priests were to offer to make atonement for the prince and his people.

[z] ch. 46. 5, 7. 24 [z] And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil for an ephah.

And he, the prince, *shall prepare a meat-offering;* for the sacrifice was not entire without this, and the text proportions this also: for each *bullock* one *ephah* of fine flour, three bushels and one half with the seven bullocks of the first day; and so for the *rams;* that is, seven bushels every day for seven days together, according to the number of rams and bullocks. *An hin of oil:* this was about one gallon and three quarters of a pint. *For an ephah;* to each ephah of meal. To every of the seven there were

Seven bullocks, seven ephahs, and seven hins of oil,
Seven rams, seven ephahs, and seven hins of oil;

Forty-nine of each kind of the beasts in the space of the seven days, and ninety-eight ephahs and as many hins with them: a greatly and costly service.

[a] Lev. 23. 33. Num. 29. 12. Deut. 16. 13. 25 In the seventh *month*, in the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the [a] feast of the seven days, according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering, and according to the oil.

The seventh month, according to their ecclesiastical account, Tisri, which answers to part of our August and September. *The fifteenth day;* on that day the feast of tabernacles began, and it continued seven days. *Shall he,* the prince, as before, ver. 24, *do the like,* in every respect, for sacrifices, and all that belonged to them. *According to the sin-offering, &c.:* as was required at the passover, so at this feast also, and therefore you are referred to the particulars of that feast.

CHAP. XLVI.

Ordinances for the prince in his worship, 1—8, *and for the people,* 9—15. *An order for the prince's inheritance,* 16—18. *The courts for boiling and baking,* 19—24.

THUS saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

It was the east gate of the court next to the temple, or which did lead into the inmost court, where the altar of burnt-offering stood. *Shall be shut:* this explains that of chap. xliv. 2. *The six working days;* or every day that is a working day. *On the sabbath;* on that holy rest the prospect into the temple and to the altar shall be free. *It*

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shall be opened; the priests should open it. *The new moon:* this one festival is named, but all the rest are included: this gate was to be shut only on working days, therefore to be open on all holy days, which were days of holy service to God.

a ch. 44. 3. ver. 8.

2 [a]And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of *that* gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.

The prince must come in at the gate which is between the court of the Jews and the court of the priests, which is here called the *gate without*, or the *outer gate* of that court, and so go up to the gate within, which leads into the inmost court, and rose by ten, or twelve, or fifteen stairs, say some. While this solemn service was acting to make atonement for the prince, or to offer sacrifices of peace-offerings for himself, he is directed to *stand* before the Lord; in other cases he might sit: the greatest should revere that God whose mercy they need and seek. *By the post;* one of the inward posts, where he might best see the sacrifice offered up, but may not go into the court; none might go in but such as were, by God's appointment, to minister before him. *The priests shall prepare:* chap. xlv. 22—24, it is said *the prince shall prepare;* here the priests must prepare; but these places speak of different preparations: the prince prepared by buying, or bringing of his own the best for sacrifice; the priest prepared by receiving, bringing the sacrifice to the altar, slaying and disposing of all things according to the rule. The householder prepares, so doth his cook prepare the feast, so that each prepares what is proper to him; and so it is here, the prince prepares, but doth not sacrifice, the priest prepares, but doth not buy, or bring the sacrifices. *He shall worship;* he shall bow (as the Hebrew) himself: it is a praying posture, Exod. xii. 27, in which duty the prince, as all others, are to attend on God, while the expiatory sacrifice is offering, while their reconciliation is to be made; and in which posture the prince is to be all the while the priest is offering, 2 Chron. xxix. 29. *At the threshold:* here he took his standing in the beginning of the service, here he is when it is finished; at the inner threshold of the gate, where his eye might see enough; if his understanding were enlightened with knowledge of these mysteries, he need not approach nearer to God than his faith could now carry him while at the threshold. *Then he shall go forth;* not stay to gaze or talk; but as he came to worship, so having worshipped he must return. *Until the evening;* till all the sacrifices were offered, and the offerers reconciled; now each offerer was to bring his offering to this gate, and there give it to the priest, and there lay his hands on the head of the sacrifice, Lev. i. 3, 4.

3 Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons.

Likewise, Heb. *And*, i. e. as the prince had done, bringing, standing, worshipping at the threshold of the gate, and departing when the sacrifice was finished, so must the people when they brought their sacrifices; but one manner, one gate, one sacrifice; but one Saviour. *Before the Lord;* with due sense of God's holy and glorious presence. *In the sabbaths;* both weekly and other holy days, which are called *sabbaths* on good ground. *The new moons;* which were solemn feasts to the Jews in their generation; but these days privileged them only to come thus near who brought their particular offerings, for I suppose the people might not approach at pleasure to see the stated morning and evening oblation sacrificed, this would crowd the gate; but at this time they kept in their own court.

b ch. 45. 17.

4 And the burnt offering that [b]the prince shall offer unto the LORD in the sabbath day *shall be* six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish.

The burnt-offering; this is different from that chap. xlii. 13, as appears both from the kind of sacrifice and the occasion of it, or the time of each. *In the sabbath day;* or weekly, sabbath by sabbath; this was three times as much as was required, Numb. xxviii. 9. *Six lambs* of the first year, and males, ver. 13, and as the Hebrew implies. *Without blemish;* unblemished sacrifices were ever required, and so this, Lev. i. 3; Numb. vi. 14. *A ram;* when it was more than a year old, the Jews accounted it a ram.

c ch. 45. 29. ver. 7, 11.

5 [c]And the meat offering *shall be* an ephah for a ram, and the meat offering for the lambs †as he shall be able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

† Heb. *the gift of his hand.* Deut. 16. 17.

An ephah, three bushels of meal, for each ram. *As he shall be able to give;* rather, as he shall see good, as much as he thinks fit in decency or in bounty. *An hin;* one gallon and a pint, for an hin did contain twelve logs, and each log contained three quarters of a pint, or thereabouts. *To an ephah;* which was three times eight gallons, for each ephah contained three bushels: see chap. xlv. 11. So then one gallon and one pint of oil was required as proportion to three bushels of meal in the meat-offering.

6 And in the day of the new moon *it shall be* a young bullock without blemish, and six lambs, and a ram: they shall be without blemish.

In these verses nothing new occurs but the appointing a bullock with its meat-offering for the new moon sacrifice, of which also on another occasion already, ver. 1. *A young bullock:* see chap. xlv. 22. *Without blemish:* see ver. 4. *Six lambs:* see ver. 4.

7 And he shall prepare a meat offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs according as his hand shall attain unto, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

See ver. 5, and chap. xlv. 24.

d ver. 2.

8 [d]And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of *that* gate, and he shall go forth by the way thereof.

Shall enter into the gate of the court next the temple to offer his sacrifice. *Go in by the way of the porch;* go to the threshold, the inward threshold of the east gate, that opens into the court of the temple. *Go forth by the way thereof;* none of the people might do so, only the prince and the priests might go out the same way they came in.

e Ex. 23. 14, —17. Deut. 16. 16.

9 ¶ But when the people of the land [e]shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it.

All except the prince, when they come to worship, must observe to go out at that door that is over against the door at which they came in. *Come before the Lord*, present themselves and their sacrifices, *in the solemn feasts*, the three great annual feasts, the new moons, and the weekly sabbaths. *He that entereth in, &c.:* the east gate they might not enter at, as already is observed, and whatever reason might be given besides, this passage in this verse gives one, they could not go right forward to go out at a west gate; for the temple and the entrance into it stood in a straight line from every one of the east gates from the outmost court, so that if any should go straight forward, they would go into the temple and oracle, which was not to be. There were but two gates the people might enter at, the south or north. *He shall not return, &c.:* none might turn their back on the temple, nor do that which looked like a going away from God, which may give us somewhat the meaning of Jer. ii. 27; xxxii. 33, their turning the back on God.

10 And the prince in the midst of them, when

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they go in, shall go in; and when they go forth, shall go forth.

The prince and people must meet together at the same time, and when it is the time for offering the morning or evening sacrifice, be ready to present their prayers to the Lord. And when they offer any particular oblations, on account whereof they go any whit nearer than at other times, both prince and people shall do it at the same time.

11 And in the feasts and in the solemnities [f] the meat offering shall be an ephah to a bullock, and an ephah to a ram, and to the lambs as he is able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

[f] ver. 5.

See ver. 5 and 7.

12 Now when the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt offering or peace offerings voluntarily unto the LORD, [g] *one* shall then open him the gate that looketh toward the east, and he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, as he did on the sabbath day: then he shall go forth; and after his going forth *one* shall shut the gate.

[g] ch. 44. 3. ver. 2.

In ver. 2, 4—7, orders were given about those offerings which were required, which the prince *must* offer; in this, direction is given about those that are *free-will offerings*, which in all points must be prepared as the other were on the sabbath day, which see in the forementioned verses. *One shall shut the gate;* one of the priests' porters; as the gate was opened for this service only on such a day, so, the service performed, some priests' porter shall shut it, for it must not stand open on ordinary days.

13 [h] Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt offering unto the LORD *of* a lamb † of the first year without blemish: thou shalt prepare it † every morning.

[h] Ex. 29. 38. Num. 28. 3. † Heb. *a son of his year.* † Heb. *morning by morning.*

Daily prepare: see ver. 2. *A lamb:* see ver. 4.

14 And thou shalt prepare a meat offering for it every morning, the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to temper with the fine flour; a meat offering continually by a perpetual ordinance unto the LORD.

A meat-offering: see ver. 7. *The sixth part of an ephah;* half a bushel of fine meal. *The third part of an hin;* an hin held nine pints. *Continually;* morning by morning. *A perpetual ordinance,* to continue till the Messiah comes, who will set up a more spiritual worship.

15 Thus shall they prepare the lamb, and the meat offering, and the oil, every morning *for* a continual burnt offering.

This verse is a ratifying of all prescribed in ver. 13, 14. These three verses direct the daily sacrifice; and because they mention only the morning sacrifice and one lamb, some think that here less is required than in Numb. xxviii. 3, 4; but they forget that there is a parity of reason for the evening sacrifice, and that this is included. They were to do in the evening oblation as they did in the morning.

16 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; If the prince give a gift unto any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons'; it *shall be* their possession by inheritance.

A gift, of houses or lands. *The inheritance thereof,* the right to those houses or lands, shall descend to children's children; the fee simple shall be to the posterity of that son to whom it was first given. They shall enjoy it, possess it, as heirs possess an inheritance.

17 But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to [i] the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince: but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them.

[i] Lev. 25. 10.

Of his inheritance; of any part or parcel of the crown land, or the prince's inheritance. *To one of his servants;* whether such servant be, strictly taken, a servant or bondman, or in more large sense any of his servants in the court, and in office about it. *The year of liberty;* the year of jubilee, as Lev. xxv. 10, 13, 28. *To the prince;* or his heirs, if the prince be dead. *His inheritance:* this may be understood either of the prince or the servant. Either thus, though the land by gift go back to the prince or his heirs from the servant, yet what lands this servant had of his own inheritance shall descend to the heirs of that servant, and be theirs: or else thus, whatever lands of the prince are given to servants, by gift, shall at the year of jubilee revert to the sons of the prince, who shall repossess them, forasmuch as they are lands of inheritance, and of right belong to the heir. *For them;* and for theirs after them.

18 Moreover [k] the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession; *but* he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession: that my people be not scattered every man from his possession.

[k] ch. 45. 8.

Shall not take; seize and escheat as forfeited, (like as Ahab dealt with Naboth, or David with Mephiboseth,) to give to others, or keep for himself. *By oppression;* whether fraudulent or violent oppression, whether under colour of justice or against all rules of law. *To thrust them out,* that he may put in his own creatures or children. *He shall give his sons,* provide for his own, out of that is his own. *That my people be not scattered;* that they may keep together in their own land.

19 ¶ After he brought me through the entry, which *was* at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers of the priests, which looked toward the north: and, behold, there *was* a place on the two sides westward.

We left the prophet, chap. xliv. 4, at the north gate, and on the inside of it; now we find him going through a private way by the side of that gate to the holy chambers appointed for the priests. *The holy chambers:* see chap. xl. 45, 46; xlii. 13, 14. *On the two sides westward;* rather, on their sides westward, that is, on the west side of these chambers which looked toward the north. The Seventy read it thus, Behold, there was a place enclosed.

20 Then said he unto me, This *is* the place where the priests shall [l] boil the trespass offering and the sin offering, where they shall [m] bake the meat offering; that they bear *them* not out into the utter court, [n] to sanctify the people.

[l] 2 Chron. 35. 13. [m] Lev. 2. 4, 5, 7. [n] ch. 44. 19.

Where the priests shall boil the trespass-offering; those that were brought sacrifices for sin were in part for the sacrificing priest, and he was to eat thereof; but it was to be dressed in the verge of holy ground, and so kitchens, boilers, ovens, and other utensils were prepared to do it, and these kitchens are here described. *That they bear them not;* the priests, or the attending Levites. *Into the utter court,* where the people were, and many times in great numbers, that this holy flesh must needs be very near many of them, if it were carried out. *To sanctify the people:* see chap. xliv. 19.

21 Then he brought me forth into the utter court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and, behold, † in every corner of the court *there was* a court.

† Heb. *a court in a corner of a court, and a court in a corner of a court.*

The utter court; either the court of the people, or more likely the court of the priests or Levites, called here utter court, because it was more outward than the court of the temple. *To pass by the four corners,* to go about the whole square of the court. *In every corner,* where the side walls did meet in right angles. *A court;* a smaller court made up on the outer sides with the walls of the greater square,

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and on the inside made with two walls, the one forty cubits long, the other thirty cubits broad.

22 In the four corners of the court *there were* courts ‖ joined of forty *cubits* long and thirty broad: these four † corners *were* of one measure.

‖ Or, *made with chimneys.* † Heb. *corner ed.*

They were then an oblong quadrangle, and all of equal capacity for length and breadth.

23 And *there was* a row *of building* round about in them, round about them four, and *it was* made with boiling places under the rows round about.

A row of building; a range of building on the inside of the walls of the lesser courts, or four ranges answerable to the four sides. *Round about in them;* added, lest any should think the buildings were on the outside of the walls of these courts. *Four;* four courts in the four corners. *Boiling places;* places of stone raised on purpose, and framed for the more convenient boiling of that part of the sacrifice which was allowed to the priest, or to the people, to eat before the Lord, and feast with. *Under the rows:* these rows of building were so framed, that the caldrons and pots were placed under them; it is likely they might be like cloisters, over which was a roof to cover both the priest or Levite cooks, and the meats they dress, and they were either open as a cloister, or had windows, out of which the smoke of the fire or steam of the meat passed.

24 Then said he unto me, These *are* the places of them that boil, where the ministers of the house shall ° boil the sacrifice of the people.

° See ver. 20.

Them that boil; appointed to do the cook's work. *The ministers;* either Levites, or else degraded priests, of which see chap. xliv. 9—14. *The house;* the temple of God. *Shall boil the sacrifices* which they bring, particularly their peace-offerings, of which the people were to have a portion, and to eat it before the Lord, which is the reason some think these courts and kitchens were in the corners of the courts of the people. But I think, as the people bringing a sacrifice were admitted into the court that was the court of the priests, and to the very gates of the court of the temple, where they gave the sacrifice to the priest, and saw him prepare and offer it for them, so they might be admitted to feast on so solemn occasion in the courts or chambers, whither ordinarily they might not come; I cannot therefore determine these kitchen courts to have been in the court of the people, it is more likely they were in the priests' courts.

CHAP. XLVII.

The vision of the holy waters, 1—5. *The virtue of them,* 6—12. *The borders of the land,* 13—21. *The division of it by lot,* 22, 23.

AFTERWARD he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, ª waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house *stood toward* the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south *side* of the altar.

ª Joel 3. 18. Zech. 13. 1. & 14. 8. Rev. 22. 1.

After that the temple was measured, and the ordinances of it were settled, and what pertained to prince and people assigned, &c., *he brought me;* the angel, or the Spirit of God, chap. i. 3; iii. 22. *The house;* the temple itself. *Waters issued out:* some do observe that there were aqueducts laid under ground, which from some fountain were conveyed to cleanse and purge away the blood of sacrifices poured fourth, and the excrements of the slain beasts, of which some would remain after the greatest care. However, they would need much water about their temple services, and this was conveyed in pipes from the fountain Etam, as Dr. Lightfoot observes from their rabbins, and from Aristæus an eye-witness; these gave occasion or ground of this vision. *From under the threshold;* the fountain lay to the west, the conduit pipes were laid to bring the water to the temple, and so must run eastward, and perhaps one main pipe might be laid under the east gate of the temple. *From the right side;* on the south side of the temple, for so the south is to a man whose face looketh toward the east. *At,* or towards, *the south side of the altar,* for so it seems they were conveyed to run, till they came to the altar, and were conveyed by the right side of it into a room they called the *well* room. The spiritual meaning I refer to the private meditations of Christians; thus far of the aqueducts.

2 Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

Then brought he me out of the inmost court, where he saw the waters running under the threshold, and by the south side of the altar. *The way of the gate northward:* the east gate being shut, the prophet in this vision is led to the north gate, out of which he goeth into the next court, and so through them all, till he comes to the north gate of the outmost court. *Led me about;* caused him to go about from that gate to the east gate of the same court. *The way without;* not on the inside of the wall, but round on the outside of the wall, which will appear presently, and the reason why. *The utter gate;* the outmost north gate in the wall, that compassed the whole mountain of the Lord's house. *The way that looketh eastward;* when the prophet was come quite out of all the courts, and is on the outside of the last wall, he is turned from the north gate towards the east gate, and walks up to that gate. *And, behold,* there he found the watercourse. *On the right side;* that is, on the south side. See ver. 1.

3 And when ᵇ the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the † waters *were* to the ancles.

ᵇ ch. 40. 3. † Heb. *waters of the ancles.*

The man: this is he who accompanied the prophet as his guide all along, and of whom already hath been spoken in several notes. *The line,* mentioned in chap. xl. 3, but hitherto not used, for the reed and cubit hitherto were used only, at least only mentioned. *Eastward;* from the gate directly east, with whom the prophet goeth. *He measured,* by the line in his hand. *A thousand cubits;* almost the third part of an English mile; it wanted about eighty yards of a third part. *Through the waters;* went before him, as his guide, and the prophet followed; all this in vision. *To the ancles;* some five or six inches deep.

4 Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters *were* to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters *were* to the loins.

5 Afterward he measured a thousand; *and it was* a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, † waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

† Heb. *waters of swimming.*

This was all done in vision, and these waters thus increased were visional waters; there was no such natural course of waters in the place, nor is it imaginable, that in three miles or thereabouts, which was the most of the current, the waters should so rise; but it is emblematical, and hath a deep mysterious meaning, and includes spiritual things, and their wonderful growth from small beginnings, and these from the temple also. But I refer this still to private meditations.

6 ¶ And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen *this?* Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river.

He said. i. e. the man with measuring line in hand. *Seen this;* observed and considered this; hast thou well seen this? *Caused me to return:* it is not said whether he was gone from the bank, though it be said he returned to the brink, or perhaps it is, he caused me to return along by the brink of the river.

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7 Now when I had returned, behold, at the † bank of the river *were* very many [c] trees on the one side and on the other.

† Heb. *lip.* [c] ver. 12. Rev. 22. 2.

In his first coming he observed no trees, and no mention is made of any, but it seems he found them on his return: though they do not really so soon grow, they might be visionally there. *At the bank of the river*, where usually, for delight and ornament, and for profit too, men plant trees. *Very many trees;* the kinds are not mentioned, though the excellency of them is commended, ver. 12, but the multitude of them is mentioned, and the growth intimated, in the Hebrew; and perhaps the uniformity of them, which seemed as of one tree, for so it is, the singular number, in the Hebrew. *On the one side and on the other;* on the north and south sides, for the river ran from east to west.

8 Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the ‖ desert, and go into the sea: *which being* brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

‖ Or, *plain:* See Deut. 3. 17. & 4. 49. Josh. 3. 16.

Then said he: see ver. 6. *The east country;* some read it as a proper name, and so render it, they did run toward Galilee in the east, and the Hebrew bears it indeed, as to the sound of the word; but it cannot be the meaning of the place, for neither the Upper nor Lower Galilee were east, but north-west from Jerusalem toward Tyre: our translation doth therefore better render it the east country, or border, as the Hebrew properly. *Into the desert;* to Arabia, say the Seventy in their Greek version: if this were the course of the waters, they did run a course quite contrary to that of Galilee, which lay north and by west from Jerusalem, whereas Arabia lay south and by east from Jerusalem. It is then the champaign, plain country, or the desert, as we read it, and may literally be understood of the desert of Maon, or Kadesh, or Ziph, which lay on the Dead Sea; and this suits well enough with En-gedi, and En-eglaim, mentioned as bordering on these waters, ver. 10. *Into the sea;* the sea of Tiberias, say some; others, the sea called the Dead Sea, or lake of Sodom, which needed healing. *Being brought forth:* when they run into this sea, or fall into it, (which is our usual phrase,) *the waters* of the sea *shall be healed*, made wholesome. Where the grace of God from his temple and altar flows, as this water, it heals the corrupt, vicious nature of man, and renders barren, horrid, and terrible deserts as a land of waters and gardens; so represented here, and so promised by the Lord, Isa. xxxv. 1, 2; xli. 19; xliii. 19, 20; li. 3. Once more, to this verse let me add, that as the Hebrew doctors do, so we may take it here, that these flowing waters do divide themselves, and that some flow toward one sea, i. e. the sea of Tiberias, toward Galilee, other parts flow toward Arabia the Desert, and so in their way take their course by En-gedi, the desert of Ziph, and into the Dead Sea.

9 And it shall come to pass, *that* every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the † rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.

† Heb. *two rivers.*

That liveth; as fish, so this universal is to be limited. *Which moveth* in the waters; so in Gen. i. 20 this kind of living creatures are described. *The rivers shall come;* these rivers flow: by this it appears the Hebrew doctors have some ground for their interpreting the running of these waters in two channels. *Shall live;* be preserved alive, or nourished, and thrive, whereas no fish can live in the Dead Sea, as all reports assure us, and to which this of the prophet alludeth. *A very great multitude of fish;* before none, now innumerable fish there. *These waters;* these temple waters, which have in them a healing virtue. *They shall be healed;* the poisonous waters of the Dead Sea shall be made wholesome for fish. *Shall live;* thrive and multiply in the virtue of the healing streams of this temple water. Thus enigmatically is the fruitfulness of the grace of God in the church set forth.

10 And it shall come to pass, *that* the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a *place* to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish [d] of the great sea, exceeding many.

[d] Num. 34. 6. Josh. 23. 4. ch. 48. 28.

The fishers; men whose trade is to fish for livelihood and profit. *Shall stand;* shall dispose of themselves about these waters; either on the shore along the river-side, or in boats on the sea, to take the fish. *Upon it;* the sea, whose waters healed become fruitful. *From En-gedi;* which lay on the south-west of the lake of Sodom, so near, that it is reported there are the trees which bring forth fruit beautiful to the eye, but touched with the hand fall into ashes; yet on those parts more remote from this sea, En-gedi affords excellent vines, Cant. i. 14, or gardens of balsam trees. *Unto En-eglaim;* a city on the north-east of the Dead Sea, near which place Jordan runs into it, and they say it is a boundary town of Moab. Others will have it no proper, but a common name, and signifying the confluence of waters in any place; if so, it will be likeliest to be understood of that part of the Red Sea where Jordan and two lesser rivers run into it, at the north and north-east end of this sea. *A place to spread forth nets,* all along on the west side of this sea, to dry them and fit them again. *According to their kinds;* of all sorts. *As the fish of the great sea;* for number, growth, and goodness for use. *Exceeding many,* or great, of exceeding great bigness in their several kinds. All this is mystical, and fulfilled since Christ hath made his ministers, as he made his apostles, fishers of men.

11 But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof ‖ shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

‖ Or, *and that which shall not be healed.*

Miry places; unsound, rotten parts, that are neither sea nor yet sound ground, a proper emblem of hypocrites. *The marishes;* low land, sopped with the overflowings of unhealthful waters, neither fit to breed fish as the sea, nor bear trees as the land. *Shall not be healed;* these waters find them and leave them corrupt and noxious. *Given to salt;* left to their barrenness, or used as salt to season, by being made examples to others.

12 And [e] by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, † shall grow all trees for meat, [f] whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth ‖ new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof ‖ for [g] medicine.

[e] ver. 7. † Heb. *shall come up.* [f] Job 8. 16. Ps. 1. 3. Jer. 17. 8. ‖ Or, *principal.* ‖ Or, *for bruises and sores.* [g] Rev. 22. 2.

By the river; all along this river, which way soever it runs, it shall make its banks so fruitful, that on both sides thereof it shall be abundantly planted with best trees. *Shall grow;* take root, flourish, and be fruitful, as trees that like their soil. *Trees for meat;* they shall not be as trees that are set only for pleasure, their fruit shall be for food. *Shall not fade;* ever green and flourishing, as trees in the spring and in their prime. *Neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed;* never be so little as to be consumed and spent, never rot and decay, there shall always be fruit and enough. *According to his months:* these trees have, as the tree of life, their fruit every month, Rev. xxii. 2. *Their waters;* called so because watered by this stream. *Issued out of the sanctuary;* and so carried a blessing with them; these waters came from the temple, and were indeed a spell against barrenness. *The leaf thereof:* there are many herbs of a healing property, none like the leaves of these trees. *For medicine;* healing the nations, as Rev. xxii. 2. These trees most likely were palmetto trees, whence the balm that healeth, the fruit that feedeth, and juice that refresheth, and allays our thirst. Thus the *letter*, the *mystery* I do not insist on; it is no hard matter for private Christians to accommodate it to themselves.

13 ¶ Thus saith the Lord GOD; This *shall*

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be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: [h]Joseph *shall have two* portions.

h Gen. 48. 5. 1 Chron. 5. 1. ch. 48. 4, 5.

The border; the utmost bounds of the whole land. *Shall inherit;* that is, shall divide for inheritance to the tribes of Israel. *According to the twelve tribes:* as it was at first divided into twelve portions, so now again. *Joseph;* that is, the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, and this pursuant of their adoption by Jacob, as well as in fulfilling the will of Jacob, who gave Joseph a double share.

14 And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another: *concerning* the which I ‖[i]lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers: and this land shall [k]fall unto you for inheritance.

‖ Or, *sware.* i Gen. 12. 7. & 13. 15. & 15. 7. & 17. 8. & 26 3. & 28. 13. ch. 20. 5, 6, 28, 42. k ch. 48 29.

One as well as another; by equal right, each tribe and each family shall inherit their assigned portion, by right of children descended from a father whose it was by letters patent from heaven. *Concerning the which I lifted up mine hand;* which by oath I bound myself, saith God, to give to you. See this form of oath chap. xx. 5; xxxvi. 7. *Unto your fathers;* first to Abraham, Gen. xiii. 15; xv. 18; next to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 3; next to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 13; and all three are frequently mentioned, as those to whom the Lord sware in this thing, Exod. xxxiii. 1; Deut. i. 8; vi. 10, &c. *Shall fall;* so we speak of the inheritance which is sure and firm by indefeasible right, and comes into actual possession; it may also refer to the dividing by lot, which God will guide, that each may have their own. *Unto you,* returned captives, who were carried away and used as if nothing were your own, and as if you never should have any thing; but in their sight you shall inherit.

15 And this *shall be* the border of the land toward the north side, from the great sea, [l]the way of Hethlon, as men go to [m]Zedad;

l ch. 48. 1. m Num. 34. 8.

In bounding the land, the prophet is informed what is the north border first. *The great sea;* called so, not that it is the greatest, for it is the Mediterranean here spoken of, but with respect to the Jews; this to them was the greatest they knew or traded on: from this sea doth the measuring of the land begin, from the west point along to Hethlon. *Hethlon* is called Hethalon by Adrichmius, in the tribe of Asher, at the foot or near the Mount Hermon or Senir, as chap. xxvii. 5 calls that mount: this city was in the north-east of Asher's lot, and on the north-west of Naphtali's lot, in the old division of the land. *Zedad* is Sedada, a small town under the same hill, and near the head of the river Eleutherus, anciently Gebat.

16 [n]Hamath, [o]Berothah, Sibraim, which *is* between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; ‖Hazar-hatticon, which *is* by the coast of Hauran.

n Num. 34. 8. o 2 Sam. 8. 8. ‖ Or, *the middle village.*

Hamath; very near to the head of Eleutherus, or Gebat, and to Sedada: it is likely to be that mentioned Isa. x. 9, situate about the middle of the north boundary of the land, called sometime Epiphania, from Antiochus Epiphanes, who repaired it, and some say now called Enimas. *Berothah;* Berotha, a small and inconsiderable town or village lying east of Sedada. *Sibraim,* or Sabarim, a place of no further note than the former, known thus by being a boundary. It lay between these two, Hamath to the west of it, and Damascus to the east by north, somewhat nearer to Hamath than to Damascus. *Hazar-hatticon;* though we render it as a proper name, some render it otherwise. The small villages between them two, (so the French,) i. e. between Hamath and Hauran. *Hauran,* or Auran, some miles beyond Jordan, eastward from Hamath, which also gives name to the country called Auranitis.

17 And the border from the sea shall be [p]Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus, and the north northward, and the border of Hamath. And *this is* the north side.

p Num. 34. 9 ch. 48. 1.

The border; the utmost northern bounds. *From the sea:* see ver. 15. *Hazar-enan;* the village Enan, or Enon, near Sedada. *The north northward;* a line drawn from west to east, that shall distinguish the most northern boundaries of Israel from the most southern of Syria Damascena.

18 And the east side ye shall measure † from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel *by* Jordan, from the border unto the east sea. And *this is* the east side.

† Heb. *from between.*

From Hauran; that was the north-east bound, where we must begin to measure the east side. *From Damascus:* this was more northward than the city Hauran, but the country Auranitis, for aught I know, might reach to Damascus, or near it, and so this more particularly direct the measuring: begin at Damascus, draw the line through Auranitis, and so on southerly to Gilead. *Gilead;* a famous mountain about fifty miles in length from south to north, where it joins Mount Libanus at the east end of it, and hath many particular names in particular places, and seems to end its southern progress at the rock Arnon. *From the land of Israel by Jordan;* from the outside of the land of Israel, which lay beyond Jordan. *Unto the east sea;* thence to the *east sea,* or Dead Sea, which lay on the east of Jerusalem. Thus a line drawn from Damascus through Auranitis, Gilead, the land of Israel beyond Jordan, to the east sea, made the eastern frontier.

19 And the south side southward, from Tamar *even* to [q]the waters of ‖strife *in* Kadesh, the ‖river to the great sea. And *this is* the south side ‖southward.

q Num. 20. 13. Deu. 32. 51. Ps. 81. 7. ch. 48. 28. ‖ Or, *Meribah.* ‖ Or, *valley.* ‖ Or, *toward Teman.*

The south side shall begin at that point which first vergeth southward from the east sea toward Tamar, which is near En-gedi, and known by the addition Hazezon-tamar; and so some place the lake of Sodom, that the greatest part will be this southern frontier. *To the waters of strife;* from Tamar a line drawn to Meribah in Kadesh, of which Numb. xx. 13; xxvii. 14. *The river,* called the river of Egypt, was on the south of Judah, and lay directly in the way to Egypt from Jerusalem. *To the great sea;* to the south-west part of the Mediterranean Sea near Gaza. This is the southern frontier.

20 The west side also *shall be* the great sea from the border, till a man come over against Hamath. This *is* the west side.

This boundary begins where the river falls into the Mediterranean, a little south of Gaza; this the south point of the western boundary, and the line runs all along the sea-shore northward, till you come in a straight line to Hamath; and this is the northern point of the west frontier, over right Sidon, or little differing.

21 So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel.

This land, now bounded. *According to the tribes of Israel;* into twelve parts or tribes, to which all, but what is allotted to prince, priests, Levites, and the city. This, as holy, must be reserved; and when reserved, a very fair portion is left to the twelve tribes, if you measure the holy portion by cubits, and not by reeds.

22 ¶ And it shall come to pass, *that* ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, [r]and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: [s]and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.

r See Eph. 3. 6. Rev. 7. 9, 10. s Rom. 10. 12. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.

It shall come to pass: this directs what they should do, as well as foretells the event that shall be. *Ye shall divide it by lot;* so it was divided before, so it must again, for thus all controversies shall be prevented; thus he will choose their inheritance for them, for the disposition of the lot is of the Lord. *Unto you,* that are the natural seed of Abra-

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ham. *To the strangers that sojourn among you:* foreigners never had such privilege before; though they might dwell and trade among the Jews, yet they were excluded all hereditary right, could not purchase nor possess inheritances. But now the constitution is altered; and by this temporal external incorporating them, a spiritual and heavenly is signified, no doubt; they are put into capacity of inheriting with Israel in both Canaans, in this below, in that above. *Which shall beget children among you;* who from their birth should be invested with this right of inheriting. *Among the children of Israel;* equally with the children of Israel in point of right, and with that very tribe in which they sojourn. *Have inheritance;* possess and enjoy, as well as you. *With you:* this speaks the equal title or privilege. *Among the tribes:* this directs where the inheritance of these strangers born among them, or that first came with them when they came out of Babylon, should be assigned them, viz. in that very tribe where they sojourned, which is fully expressed in the next verse.

23 And it shall come to pass, *that* in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give *him* his inheritance, saith the Lord GOD.

It shall come to pass: see ver. 22. *In what tribe;* whether by choice or chance the stranger fixed in that tribe. No stranger shall be excluded out of the tribe's inheritance, among whom he hath sojourned and begotten children. *The stranger;* every proselyte or Gentile that joins himself to the people of God. *There shall ye give him;* neither the Jew might thrust a stranger out into another tribe, nor might the stranger by choice go to another. *His inheritance;* it is called his, for so much as he had a right preceding the assignation. *Saith the Lord God:* all this confirmed by Divine authority.

CHAP. XLVIII.

The portions of the twelve tribes, 1—7. 23—29, *of the sanctuary,* 8—14. *of the city and suburbs,* 15—20, *and of the prince,* 21, 22. *The dimensions and gates of the city,* 30—35.

NOW these *are* the names of the tribes. [a] From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath, Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus northward, to the coast of Hamath; for these are his sides east *and* west; [†] a *portion for* Dan.

[a] ch. 47. 15, &c.

[†] Heb. one portion.

From the north end; as the measurer began to bound the land first on the north side, so he will first place the tribe to whom the most northern lot fell, or rather was assigned by a Divine direction. *To the coast;* along through the coast that leads from the west or great sea to Hethlon. *Hethlon:* see chap. xlvii. 15. *Hamath;* a frontier city of that name; see chap. xlvii. 16; anciently the royal city of Toi, who congratulated David in his victory over Hadadezer king of Syria Zobah, 2 Sam. viii. 9, 10. *Hazar-enan:* see chap. xlvii. 17, for I meet with no more concerning it. *The border of Damascus;* and so on by the border of Damascus, which lay further eastward than Enan, as geographers describe it. *To the coast of Hamath:* this is Syria, and perhaps might have been best so translated; along bordering on this coast the rest of the northern boundary did run. *His sides;* the land, or Dan, mentioned immediately after. *East;* that is, from the east point, where Mount Libanus joineth to Gilead, to the west point, which is supposed in the midland sea, near the hot baths or Sidon: see chap. xlvii. 20. *For Dan;* the tribe of Dan, and the strangers that sojourn with him.

2 And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Asher.

That is, all along on the south side of Dan, from east to west in length, shall the share of the tribe of Asher lie.

3 And by the border of Asher, from the east side even unto the west side, a *portion for* Naphtali.

To the north-west point, where the dividing line ends, being drawn from the north-east point to the north-west in the midland sea.

4 And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Manasseh.

5 And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Ephraim.

6 And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side even unto the west side, a *portion for* Reuben.

7 And by the border of Reuben, from the east side even unto the west side, a *portion for* Judah.

Hitherto you have seven of the twelve tribes placed in the northern part of Canaan, and reckoned as they lay in order, where nothing occurs new from the 2nd verse to the 8th.

8 ¶ And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be [b] the offering which ye shall offer of five and twenty thousand *reeds in* breadth, and *in* length as one of the *other* parts, from the east side unto the west side: and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it.

[b] ch. 45. 1,—6.

The offering; the holy portion, of which chap. xlv. 1, set out for priests, Levites, and city, chap. xlv. 4—6. *Reeds* is here supplied by the translators, but I rather think *cubits;* for the greatness of the portion measured by reeds will eat out the tribes, or leave very little for them, as appears thus: The whole length from north to south was about one hundred and sixty miles, the breadth about sixty. Now twenty-five thousand reeds is at the least seventy-seven miles, at one thousand paces to a mile. These seventy-seven taken out of one hundred and sixty, there will remain but eighty-three for the twelve tribes, which will afford not quite seven miles in breadth for each tribe; whereas seventy-seven miles are allotted to the priests, Levites, and city; so that there will remain but eighty-three miles for the twelve tribes, that is, to each one almost seven miles. Now this to me would seem very much disproportioned; but twenty-five thousand cubits reckoned doth give the holy portion and city twelve miles and half square, and gives near as much in breadth to each tribe, and five times almost as much in length to each tribe; which appears thus: twelve times twelve make one hundred and forty-four, and twelve quarters make three wholes; give then each tribe twelve and a quarter, you divide one hundred and forty-seven by twelve and a quarter: now to this add the prince's, the holy portion, and the city land, which is twelve miles and a half, and you have one hundred and fifty-nine miles and three quarters, which is the length of the whole land. Thus the breadth of each portion for each tribe; but the length of each exceeded the prince's by twelve and a half, and the holy portion as much as sixty exceeds twelve and a half. *From the east side to the west side;* that is, twenty-five thousand in length, which amounts to twelve miles and a half. Now the residue of the land from the sea eastward abutting on the whole breadth of the holy portion by equal proportion, will be twenty-three and a quarter, and as much from the other side, measuring from the eastern bounds of the holy portion to the utmost bounds eastward of the land, which is sixty miles from its utmost western bounds; as appears thus: take an oblong square, whose breadth is twelve and a half, its length sixty; suppose in the very middle twelve and a half square taken up, there will remain at each end the half of forty-seven and a half, which is twenty-three and three quarters. According to this we conceive the prince hath assigned him as much as two tribes very near, and almost four times as much as the holy oblation; so that there is good reason for that chap. xlv. 9, against oppression, and the command that he be content. *The sanctuary;* the whole contents of suburbs, courts, and house. *In the midst of it;* of the land laid out for the holy portion, for God and his priests.

9 The oblation that ye shall offer unto the LORD *shall be* of five and twenty thousand in length, and of ten thousand in breadth.

This verse is the same with chap. xlv. 3, which see.

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10 And for them, *even* for the priests, shall be *this* holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty thousand *in length*, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length: and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst thereof.

For the priests; who are more particularly described ver. 11, which see. *Toward the north;* the north side, in length from north-east to north-west. *Toward the west;* from south-west to north-west point, between which points lay the west side. *Toward the east;* between north-east and south-east points, which made the east border. *Toward the south;* from south-east by line drawn to south-west, the same measure with the north.

c ch. 44. 15. ‖ Or, *The sanctified portion shall be for the priests.* ‖ Or, *ward*, or, *ordinance.* d ch. 44. 10.

11 [c] ‖ *It shall be* for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok; which have kept my ‖ charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, [d] as the Levites went astray.

See this verse explained chap. xliv. 15, 16.

12 And *this* oblation of the land that is offered shall be unto them a thing most holy by the border of the Levites.

This oblation; which, as it were the *primitiæ* of the land, was ordered to be first set out for God. *Offered;* set apart, and dedicated to God. *Shall be unto them a thing most holy;* in the account both of the priests and the whole people it shall be most holy, on no occasion to be servant unto any common uses. *By the border of the Levites;* it shall lie next to the Levites; these lay southward between the priests' and the city's portion.

13 And over against the border of the priests the Levites *shall have* five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth: all the length *shall be* five and twenty thousand, and the breadth ten thousand.

See this verse explained chap. xlv. 5. The Levites' portion ran parallel with the priest's, whose northern limits were next to the southern limits of the Levites.

e Ex. 22. 29. Lev. 27. 10, 28, 33.

14 [e] And they shall not sell of it, neither exchange, nor alienate the firstfruits of the land: for *it is* holy unto the LORD.

It is most holy, and therefore no price should be offered for it, nor any price set upon it, nor may they pass away any on pretence of getting greater and more particularly serviceable to them and their employment, and so for convenience part with God's inheritance; this is forbidden: this is holy, as the first-fruits were under the law, Lev. xxv. 23, 24; 1 Kings xxi. 4.

f ch. 45. 6. g ch. 42. 20.

15 ¶ [f] And the five thousand, that are left in the breadth over against the five and twenty thousand, shall be [g] a profane *place* for the city, for dwelling, and for suburbs: and the city shall be in the midst thereof.

In the breadth over against; or running along by the side. *The five and twenty thousand,* assigned to the Levites. *A profane place;* a common, not consecrated place, in which the city should be built, a place for all services, as men shall need. Now as that is counted holy which is set apart only for the service of God, so that common or profane that is for common uses. *For dwelling;* houses within the walls. *For suburbs;* streets and dwellings, or gardens without the walls. *The city;* Jerusalem. *In the midst thereof;* of this common place, which is called here profane; so that ten thousand are left at each end.

16 And these *shall be* the measures thereof; the north side four thousand and five hundred, and the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four thousand and five hundred.

The measures; the extent and proportions of the ground for the city; a square of four thousand five hundred shall be taken out of the middle of the twenty-five thousand for the area or ground-plot of the city. So it shall be an equilateral square, every side exactly the same, north, south, east, and west, four thousand five hundred apiece, by which measures the whole contents are visible, eighteen thousand *cubits*, not *reeds*.

17 And the suburbs of the city shall be toward the north two hundred and fifty, and toward the south two hundred and fifty, and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty.

Here are the dimensions of the suburbs, which added to those of the city thus, two hundred and fifty added to the four thousand five hundred on the north side, and two hundred and fifty added to the four thousand five hundred on the south side, make five thousand; so on the east add two hundred and fifty to four thousand five hundred, and then add two hundred and fifty to the four thousand five hundred on the west, it makes up an equilateral square five thousand on each side.

18 And the residue in length over against the oblation of the holy *portion shall be* ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward: and it shall be over against the oblation of the holy *portion;* and the increase thereof shall be for food unto them that serve the city.

The residue in length, which remains on each side of the five thousand cubits square area, will be ten thousand on the east, and ten thousand on the west. *Shall be over against the oblation;* lie parallel and even with the south side of the Levites' portion both on east and west. *The increase thereof;* the product, revenues of this land. *For food;* the maintenance, both salary and allowances of bread and wine. *Unto them that serve the city;* for the city officers, so that they may live by the city, whose life is spent for the city, that the labourer may, as he is worthy of it, receive his wages.

19 [h] And they that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel. h ch. 45. 6.

Either this service is a burden, and if so, it is fit all should bear their part in it; or it is a privilege and advantage, and then it is as fit the advantage should be equally given to all the tribes; all tribes shall be capable of the advantage, and liable to the burden.

20 All the oblation *shall be* five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand: ye shall offer the holy oblation foursquare, with the possession of the city.

Having particularly measured out ten thousand for the priests, and ten thousand for the Levites, and five thousand for the city broadways, these make in all twenty-five thousand; and the length of each the same, twenty-five thousand; here is evidently a perfect equilateral square, whose sides are twenty-five thousand each. *With the possession of the city;* the land assigned for the city, being added to that of the priests and Levites, makes their twice ten thousand to amount to twenty-five thousand broad.

21 ¶ [i] And the residue *shall be* for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy oblation, and of the possession of the city, over against the five and twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward over against the five and twenty thousand toward the west border, over against the portions for the prince: and it shall be the holy oblation; [k] and the sanctuary of the house *shall be* in the midst thereof. i ch. 45. 7. k ver. 8, 10.

The residue of the land, which is a great portion, for it is the remainder of twelve and a half taken out of sixty; so that the remainder will be forty-seven and a half. *On the one side;* suppose it be the east side, there will be twenty-

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three and three quarters. *On the other side;* on the west just as much, twenty-three and three quarters. *Of the possession of the city;* the residue of that which is on each side, east and west of the five thousand square area. *Over against the five and twenty thousand;* which amounts out of the priests', Levites', and city portion. *Toward the east border* of the land of Canaan; all from the east side of the twenty-five thousand to the utmost bounds eastward, shall be the prince's portion, and so likewise on the west side westward to the great sea. *Over against the portions for the prince;* these twenty-five thousand on both sides lay over against, or run parallel with, the breadth of the prince's portion, but the length of the prince's portion on each side did exceed the length of the holy portion and the city land, as twenty-three and three quarters exceeds twelve and a half. *The sanctuary;* the holy mount. *Of the house;* of the temple of God. *In the midst thereof;* of the land assigned to the priests, which lay as described, bounded and guarded with the prince's portion at east and west ends.

22 Moreover from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, *being* in the midst *of that* which is the prince's, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince.

That we may clearly understand this, we must remember that the portion of Judah was laid from west to east next to the holy portion, and the portion of Benjamin is in ver. 23 laid likewise from west to east next to the possession of the city. So that on each side the extent of Judah and Benjamin run out to twenty-three miles and three quarters farther than the holy portion and possession of the city did; and all the land contained between the borders of Judah and Benjamin were the prince's right, both the twelve miles and half broad, twenty-three and three quarters long on the west, and the same proportion on the east; and this is the sum of the 22nd verse.

23 As for the rest of the tribes, from the east side unto the west side Benjamin *shall have* †a *portion.*

† Heb. *one portion.*

In the 7th verse we left with the prophet the last assigned portion to Judah, on the north side of the holy portions; now the first on the south side of the possession of the city is Benjamin, whose portion, as all the rest, runs in length from east to west, and its breadth from north to south.

24 And by the border of Benjamin, from the east side unto the west side, Simeon *shall have* a *portion.*

25 And by the border of Simeon, from the east side unto the west side, Issachar a *portion.*

26 And by the border of Issachar, from the east side unto the west side, Zebulun a *portion.*

27 And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side unto the west side, Gad a *portion.*

Thus all the tribes have their inheritances assigned them, but their lot is not here as in Joshua's division. It was a new church and state that was here intended, and accordingly many changes are made in it, which differenced it from the old; which changes no doubt are instructive, but the particular instructions fall not within the design of a paraphrase or comment, which is to make the letter of the text plain to ordinary capacities.

28 And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be even from Tamar *unto* [l]the waters of †strife *in* Kadesh, *and* to the river toward the great sea.

l ch. 47. 19.

† Heb. *Meribah-kadesh.*

The border of Gad; the south border of Gad. *The border* of the whole land southward. *From Tamar:* see chap. xlvii. 19. *To the river;* Sihor, say some; but if Sihor be the Nile, as Ortelius makes it, it cannot be the boundary: it is indeed a river that ariseth, as some place it, out of the north part of the mountains of Paran, and running a course west from its rise, passeth between Gerar and Rhino-curuva, and after some twenty-eight or thirty miles' travel falls into the great sea, better known in Scripture by the name of the *river of Egypt.* But possibly the true rise may be from Mount Carmel and Gozen, whence it may be some forty miles English to the great sea.

29 [m]This *is* the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance, and these *are* their portions, saith the Lord GOD.

m ch. 47. 14, 21, 22.

This is the land, whose south bounds are here repeated, the north bounds ver. 1. *Ye shall divide by lot;* not casting lots, but assigning the shares. *These are their portions;* these above described are the particular shares of each tribe.

30 ¶ And these *are* the goings out of the city on the north side, four thousand and five hundred measures.

Now the prophet hath a general topography of the city, which lay four-square. The first side mentioned is the north, for there he began to describe the land, or because it was nearest the temple. It was, as ver. 16, which see, four thousand five hundred cubits, i. e. about a mile and one third of a mile.

31 [n]And the gates of the city *shall be* after the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates northward; one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi.

n Rev. 21. 12, &c.

So then it is probable these gates were built at equal distance from the corners and from each other.

32 And at the east side four thousand and five hundred: and three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan.

33 And at the south side four thousand and five hundred measures: and three gates; one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulun.

34 At the west side four thousand and five hundred, *with* their three gates; one gate of Gad, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali.

o Jer. 33. 16. † Heb. *Jehovah-shammah:* See Exod. 17. 15. Judg. 6. 24. p Jer. 3. 17. Joel 3. 21. Zech. 2. 10. Rev. 21. 3. & 22. 3.

35 *It was* round about eighteen thousand *measures:* [o]and the name of the city from *that* day *shall be,* †[p]The LORD *is* there.

Round; measuring all four squares. *Eighteen thousand measures,* or cubits, at which proportioned measures it was about five miles in compass; if the measures were reeds, it would be thirty miles and three hundred and twenty-five yards in compass of the walls, which cannot be conceived credible; whereas the other is the proportion the city might have been built to, if the sins of the Jews had not prevented. *The name,* by which it shall be called, known, and which shall be the honour of it and its glory. *From that day;* from the day of the Lord's restoring this people, and rebuilding their city, and re-establishing his worship, and their thankful, holy, and pure worshipping of God there, from the day that such unmatched mercy produceth a suitable return unto God, from that day it shall be said of Jerusalem, *The Lord is there;* the Lord, who, as his name alone is Jehovah, so is the only true God, faithful to promise, rich in mercy, glorious in majesty, righteous in his judgments, wise and holy in his government, whose presence makes us happy, whose withdrawing from us leaves us to misery. This God will, by his favour and presence, repel enemies and protect his people, bring with him the confluence of all good to persons, families, and cities; this God will be there to dwell, govern, defend, prosper, and crown. The people is blessed that is in such case, for their God is the Lord. Psal. cxliv. 15. Such was the case of typical, earthly Jerusalem, though not long; such is and shall be for ever the case of the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of God, the true church and temple of God. Such is the case of every true sincere believer, who may, wherever he is in his way of duty, still write, Jehovah-shammah, My God is here; and it is best to be where he is, till he bring me within the gates of the glorious city, where inconceivable light and love from the immediate presence of God give every one an eternal demonstration that יהוה שמה To him be glory for ever.

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THE

BOOK OF DANIEL.

THE ARGUMENT.

IN DANIEL and his prophecy, observe these things for the better understanding of this book, and the mind of God in it:—

1. As to the author; First, He was a prophet, as appears in the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands, meaning Christ the Messiah and his kingdom, what he should do, chap. ii.; likewise chap. vii. to the end of the book: the first six chapters are historical, the last six prophetical. Secondly, As to his lineage, he was one of the royal seed. Thirdly, He was a captive. Fourthly, He was rarely qualified for piety, wisdom, beauty. Fifthly, As to his education, he was trained for three years in learning. Sixthly, His advancement for his parts and wisdom. Seventhly, He was faithful and blameless in the place of honour to which he was preferred. Eighthly, His care and kindness for his companions; he procured their promotion also. Ninthly, His singular holiness and power with God in prayer, Ezek. xiv. 14. Tenthly, His faithfulness and constancy in the worship of God, maugre the envy and persecution of his enemies. Eleventhly, The strange providence of God in his preservation and deliverance. Twelfthly, His signal integrity and flourishing state under several kings' reigns, even in critical times and great changes, unto his old age, and beyond the seventy years of captivity. Five kings' reign. Gierg.

2. As to the book itself, both the historical and prophetical part of it, especially the latter, we find, First. Great variety in them. Secondly, Famous predictions; of the Messiah, of dreadful wars, of fearful desolations to countries, and the Jewish nation in particular, for putting Christ to death; great persecutions of the church, by the Grecians and Romans especially, in which Antiochus and antichrist are pointed at. These things are all of such weighty consideration, that our blessed Saviour calls for especial understanding in the reading even of one part of it, Matt. xxiv. 15. His chronology and calculations may be called the key of time, relating to the church's sufferings and deliverances. Daniel was the greatest favourite we read of, namely, of the King of heaven, chap. ix. 23; x. 11, and of the greatest kings then on earth. He was the noblest pattern of a public heart for the church of God, for whose affliction he was deeply afflicted in the midst of his court honours and employments.

CHAP. I.

Jehoiakim's captivity, 1, 2. *By the king of Babylon's order the master of the eunuchs taketh Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, to instruct them, and changeth their names,* 3—7. *They refusing to eat of the king's meat thrive upon pulse and water,* 8—16. *Their proficiency in wisdom,* 17—21.

B. C. cir. 607. a 2 Kings 24. 1. 2 Chron. 36. 6.

IN the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah [a]came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

Comparing this with 2 Kings xxiv. 1, and with 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, the meaning is, after the Lord had taken away that good king Josiah for the sins of Judah and Manasseh, which were very great, by Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king; he reigned but three months, wherein he did so much evil in the sight of the Lord, that the said Pharaoh-necho put him in bands at Riblah, and afterwards carried him to Egypt, where he died, and made Eliakim his brother king in his stead, and turned his name to Jehoiakim; he became Nebuchadnezzar's servant three years, for that king of Babylon had overthrown Pharaoh's army at Carchemish by the river Euphrates. Jehoiakim rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar, made him come up from Babylon and take Jehoiakim, and bind him in fetters to carry him to Babylon; of whom, and his death and burial, you have a sad account, Jer. xxii. 17—19.

cir. 606. b Jer. 27. 19, 20. c Gen. 10. 10. & 11. 2. Is. 11. 11. Zech. 5. 11. d 2 Chron. 36. 7.

2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with [b]part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried [c]into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; [d]and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

In this expedition Nebuchadnezzar carried away some of the vessels of the temple, and some captives, among whom was Daniel and his friends. These vessels he carried into the house of his god; which god was Baal or Bel, and Nebo, Isa. xlvi. 1; which words they put into the names of their kings and favourites, of which more afterward. These vessels as spoils he put in the house of his god, for his honour, because he thought he had gotten his victory by the help of his idol god, 1 Sam. xxxi. 9, 10, as the Philistines did, Judg. xvi. 23, 24; whereas the text saith the Lord gave all into his hand, ver. 2. The executioners of God's wrath upon God's sinful people have other thoughts than God hath about that, Isa. x. 5—16.

3 ¶ And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring **certain* of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; * Foretold 2 Kings 20. 17, 18. Is. 39. 7.

These here called *eunuchs* were chief among the king's servants, and they are called *eunuchs* because many of them were such of old among all the princes of the East, and at this day, but they were not all such, Jer. lii. 25. The word translated *eunuch* signifies also *chamberlain;* such was *Hatach*, Esth. iv. 5; such were *Bigthana* and *Teresh*, Esth. vi. 2, and *Harbonah*, Esth. vii. 9, and *Ashpenaz* in the text, the master of the king's *eunuchs*, who had set *Melzar* over *Daniel* and his companions, ver. 11.

Here was fulfilled what the prophet Isaiah had foretold king Hezekiah, Isa. xxxix. 7. Some think Daniel and his companions were made eunuchs in a strict sense, which doth not appear to be probable; but rather to be bred up in the court for officers, and thereby to alienate their minds from the religion of their country, and from seeking the welfare and return of their people; but God had otherwise appointed by this education of them, as appears in many signal testimonies of the presence and power of God with them, for the conviction of idolaters that God was above all gods.

4 Children [e]in whom *was* no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as *had* e See Lev. 24. 19, 20.

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ability in them to stand in the king's
f Acts 7. 22. palace, and [f]whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

If princes are so curious in their choice, no marvel that God was cautious in his, Lev. xxi. 17—21; xxii. 20—25. The reason why they were so delicately trained up was, that they being in the flower of their age should be allured with the delights of the court, and should thereby be brought to forget their fathers' house and their religion; this hath been the artifice of the Turk in taking Christians' children, and making them Mamelukes and Janizaries, that thereby they may become, as renegades, the greatest champions for Mahomet, and enemies to the Christians. *To stand in the king's palace:* this notes men fit by their parts to give advice in arduous matters, 2 Chron. x. 6: which shows that men only of promising abilities, and not incompetent, should be admitted to the presence of kings. *The learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans:* for this cause *Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*, Acts vii. 22; yet it must be supposed that neither Moses nor Daniel learned any thing that was ungodly, but only to search nature, and that which was only moral; wherein both the Chaldeans and Egyptians were skilled above any other nations of the heathens. And although their magi or wise men did at last degenerate into curious and vain arts, yet Daniel had no further design to know their wisdom than to choose the good of it, and to shun and reject that which was unlawful. The Chaldean tongue differed from the Hebrew in dialect and in pronunciation, which they learned in the right tone and accent, that they might be the more acceptable to the king and court, by their conformity in garb, language, and manners; for which they had the space of three years allotted them.

5 And the king appointed them a daily
† Heb. *the wine of his drink.* g Ver. 19. Gen. 41. 46. 1 Kings 10. 8. provision of the king's meat, and of †the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might [g]stand before the king.

Of the king's meat; such as he had at his own table, wherein his bounty and humanity appeared towards them the more conspicuous, they being captives. By this preparation they were judged fit to stand before the king. Men of ingenuity and proficiency are fit to stand before kings, Prov. xxii. 29.

6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

Doubtless most of them of the royal lineage of Judah, to which tribe God had a special respect, upon the account of David; and this tribe of Judah had the pre-eminence in many things.

h Gen. 41. 45. 2 Kings 24. 17. i Ch. 4. 8. & 6. 12. 7 [h]Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: [i]for he gave unto Daniel *the name* of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.

Names; that is, other names: this was done by the subtle instigation of Satan, that they might renounce their names received in circumcision, by assuming names imposed relating to the idol gods, being a profanation and a further degree of their apostacy; for Daniel had the name of *Belteshazzar*, or Baltasar, from the great Babylonian idol Baal or Bel, &c. This was by the king's command, and herein he put forth an act of his sovereignty. Thus Adam, Gen. ii. 19, 20. Thus Pharaoh did, Gen. xli. 45; he gave *Joseph* the name of *Zaphnath-paaneah*. And Pharaohnechoh changed the name of *Eliakim*, Josiah's son, to *Jehoiakim*, 2 Kings xxiii. 34. And the king of Babylon turned the name of *Mattaniah* to *Zedekiah*, 2 Kings xxiv. 17. The Lord changed the name of *Sarai* to *Sarah*, of *Abram* to *Abraham*, of *Jacob* to *Israel*. Thus the Lord changed *Simon's* name to *Cephas* or *Peter*, Mark iii. 16.

8 ¶ But Daniel purposed in his heart
k Deut. 32. 38. Ezek. 4. 13. Hos. 9. 3. that he would not defile himself [k]with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

There may be several weighty reasons assigned why Daniel did this. 1. Because many of those meats provided for the king's table were such as were forbidden by the Jews' law, whereof Daniel made conscience. 2. Daniel knew these delicacies would too much gratify and pamper the flesh, and therefore he would prevent the defilements which too often do arise from delicious fare, Deut. xxxii. 14, 15; Ezek. xvi. 49; Hos. xiii. 6; Rom. xiii. 13; so that those who fare deliciously would practise this. 3. Daniel knew he should by this bait be taken with the hook which lay hid under it, and insensibly be drawn from the true to a false religion, by eating and drinking things consecrated to idols. 4. Daniel saw his people lie under God's displeasure by their captivity, and therefore could not but be sensible how unsuitable a courtly life would be in him to the afflicted state of God's people, Heb. xi. 24—26. Therefore Daniel was herein a rare pattern of avoiding all the occasions of evil, which he did with purpose of heart, Acts xi. 23; saith the text, he *purposed in his heart* to abstain.

9 Now [l]God had brought Daniel into
l See Gen. 39. 21. Ps. 106. 46. Prov. 16. 7. favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

This is a special act of God's favour to his afflicted people, to give them any favour in the eyes of them that do afflict them; Psal. cvi. 46, *He made them to be pitied of those that carried them captive.* This is the effect of sincere holiness and innocence, Prov. xvi. 7. This is the effect of prayer, 1 Kings viii. 50. This is the effect of the special presence of God, Gen. xxxix. 3, 4, 21.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces † worse liking than the children which *are* of your ‖ sort? then shall ye make *me* endanger my head to the king.

† Heb. *sadder.* ‖ Or, *form, or, countenance.*

He believed their countenances would bewray them; and the king having appointed it, he dares not disobey, for his life lay at stake.

11 Then said Daniel to ‖Melzar, whom
‖ Or, *the steward.* the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee,
† Heb. *of pulse.* † Heb. *that we may eat, &c.* ten days; and let them give us †pulse † to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

By these words Daniel secures Melzar against fear and danger, only by ten days' trial; which was a fair and reasonable proffer. Thus the servants of God must carefully do, when they have good offices done them by the servants of princes, as Elijah was careful of good Obadiah, 1 Kings xviii. 11, 12, to secure him from death.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

There be three things here to be observed. 1. The hand of God, in persuading Melzar to incline to Daniel's request. 2. The goodness of God, to make good Daniel's words. 3. That the blessing of God upon homely fare affords oftentimes more healthful nourishment and strength, than more costly fare to them that eat the fat and drink the sweet.

16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

Which he could not but take well, for hereby he gained

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the costly provision of four men for the space of three years to his own use and profit. Hence observe that courtiers are no losers by the favours they procure for God's servants. They are most willing to serve God's servants, when they can therein also serve themselves by it.

m 1 Kings 3. 12. Jam. 1 5,17. n Acts 7. 22. ‖ Or, *he made Daniel understand.* o Num. 12. 6. 2 Chron. 26. 5. ch. 5. 11, 12, 14. & 10. 1.

17 ¶ As for these four children, [m] God gave them [n] knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and ‖ Daniel had [o] understanding in all visions and dreams.

We must own *knowledge, and skill, and wisdom* to come from God, James i. 5. These are beams of light shining in us from the Father of lights, and a man can receive nothing of this unless it be given him from above, John iii. 27. *Object.* But was not this magic, and was not this learning forbidden as abomination to the Lord, Deut. xviii. 9—14? *Answ.* The Chaldeans used lawful arts and sciences, and unlawful; these four young men, Daniel and his companions, used only those that were lawful; rejecting all that wisdom which is sensual, carnal, and devilish, James iii. 15. *In all visions and dreams;* not in idle, vain, and lying, but in such as were sent of God, and predictions of things to come, as Numb. xii. 6. such as the prophets had. Such was that of Nebuchadnezzar.

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18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

At the three years' end, according to the king's command, which Melzar punctually observed, and brought them in before the king.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore [p] stood they before the king.

p Gen. 41. 46. ver. 5.

Communed with them, i. e. to try their proficiency: this argues the king's ability and judgment, how else could he discern their fitness and their excellency above others? He examined all candidates, he preferred those that outstripped others.

q 1 Kin. 10. 1. † Heb. *wisdom of understanding.*

20 [q] And in all matters of † wisdom *and* understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* astrologers that *were* in all his realm.

This is a further confirmation of the king's noble endowments of mind, and of his great care whom he chose to be in offices of trust; namely, persons excellently qualified to serve him in the great affairs of the kingdom, not to serve his lusts by them for base jobs, for which men of no abilities or honour are usually chosen.

r ch. 6. 28. & 10. 1. He lived to see that glorious time of the return of his people from the Babylonian captivity, though he did not die then. So *till* is used, Ps. 110. 1. & 112. 8.

21 [r] And Daniel continued *even* unto the first year of king Cyrus.

i. e. In the court of Babylon until Cyrus, and then he was in the Persian court, and he lived in honour and high employment all that time, yea, after Cyrus began to reign; for, chap. x. 1, he had visions and revelations in the third year of Cyrus. He might live longer, for the word *until* doth not exclude things that follow after, Psal. cx. 1; cxii. 8.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter are four principal parts: I. *The king's dream,* 1. II. *The wise men's ignorance and danger,* 2—13. III. *The revelation and interpretation of the dream by Daniel,* 14—45. IV. *The advancement of Daniel to great honour by that means,* 46—49.

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AND in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, [a] wherewith his spirit was troubled, and [b] his sleep brake from him.

a Gen. 41. 8. ch. 4. 5. b Esth. 6. 1. ch. 6. 18.

In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Heb. *in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar,* for this was properly in the fifth year of that king's reign and of Daniel's captivity, and the ninth year of Jehoiakim; but in the second year after Daniel had by his three years' preparation been brought before the king and approved, then the king dreamed. *Dreamed dreams;* it was one dream, but of many parts, therefore called dreams; chiefly for what follows. *His spirit was troubled;* by reason of the strangeness of it, he was terrified and in great consternation, and this made him awake.

2 [c] Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

c Gen. 41. 8. Ex. 7. 11. ch. 5. 7.

The magicians and the astrologers: these words signify astrologers, or those that cast nativities, that pretended great skill in natural and supernatural things; and the *sorcerers,* or necromancers, were those who used diabolical arts. See Exod. vii. 11; xxii. 18; Deut. xviii. 10. Though Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar made use of these as their great counsellors, yet God baffled them by Moses and Daniel; and forbade his people the use or toleration of them, because they are an abomination to him. God will have his people ask counsel of him and his words, and not of the devil's oracles. *Chaldeans:* this name the magicians assumed, as being national and most noble; and whatever these wise men or wizards said, it was as if Jupiter himself had spoken it, as the Roman satirist said of them, Juv. Sat. 6. *They came and stood before the king.* Daniel was not called among them. Why? Because the king confided more in these his own old standers; but chiefly God had thus ordered by his wise providence that Daniel should not be in their number, for if he had, the interpretation would have been attributed to astrology and magic, and not to God, as now it was.

3 And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.

He remembered the fact in general, but could not repeat it perfectly, much less know the meaning of it; yet it had left such an impression on him, as put him into great perplexity. The Lord hath ways to affright the greatest men in the world, in the midst of their security and jollity.

4 Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, [d] O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.

d 1 Kings 1. 31. ch. 3. 9. & 5. 10. & 6. 6, 21.

In Syriac; that is, in the Chaldee tongue, for Syria or Aram is taken in a large sense sometimes, containing Assyria, Babylon, Mesopotamia, Phœnicia, Palestine, 2 Kings xviii. 26, and from hence to the 8th chapter all is written in the Chaldee language, and not Hebrew, because it most concerned that people, and from thence in Hebrew again. *O king, live for ever:* this was a salutation to princes of old, 1 Sam. x. 24; 1 Kings i. 25; their meaning was, Let him live a long happy life, for thus the word live is often taken, Psal. xxxiv. 12, and this is agreeable to the desires of all worldly men in their prosperity. *We will shew the interpretation:* it is observed of old to this day, that there is not any sort of men who are such flatterers as impostors. So confident and arrogant are these fortune-tellers, that they promise to interpret a dream which they never knew: this was boldly said of them, seeing the Egyptian magicians could not interpret Pharaoh's dream though he told it them, Gen. xli. 8.

5 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be [e] † cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

e Ezra 6. 11. 2 Kings 10. 27. ch. 3. 29. † Chald. *made pieces.*

The thing is gone from me: this was of God, that these impostors should be made infamous, by detecting their ignorance and their arrogance, and that this should be a step

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to Daniel's honour, for knowing the king's dream and interpreting it, neither of which the Chaldeans could do. *With the interpretation thereof:* if they do not both, saith the king. *Cut in pieces, and your houses, &c.:* this was a usual punishment in those parts of the world; thus Samuel cut Agag in pieces, 1 Sam. xv. 33; 1 Chron. xx. 3. Thus David dealt with the Ammonites. And the like was in making *houses a dunghill.* The like we have chap. iii. 29; and thus they did to the house of Baal, *made it a draught-house to this day,* by Jehu's command, 2 Kings x. 27. The like did Darius threaten to them that would alter his decree for building the house of God, Ezra vi. 11. This commination argued the king's wrath to be excessive and furious, in punishing for not doing what was above their human strength, and which the Chaldeans never arrogated to themselves; yet was this a just reward to these men, that were so presumptuous.

f ch. 5. 16. 6 [f]But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and ‖rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof.

‖ Or, *fee,* ch. 5. 17. ver. 46.

As I threatened you with death for not doing, I promise you rewards and honour if ye perform it. This is in the power of princes, as they think, but all this would not do; therefore they are still where they were, they answered the king again.

7 They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it.

But this the king could not do; they could not tell the dream, and the king could not, yet both require impossibilities.

8 The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would †gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me.

† Chald. *buy,* Eph. 5. 16.

This ye do in policy, to escape punishment; when taken up with other affairs, I may forget to make further inquiry after this thing, but it shall not serve your turn.

9 But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, [g]*there is but* one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof.

g Esth. 4. 11.

There is but one decree for you; that is, I will not retract my sentence, ye shall surely die: you are upon tricks, ye have prepared corrupt and lying words, for he that can interpret a dream can tell the dream, both come from a Divine inspiration, which ye pretend to; but I say ye have it not.

10 ¶ The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore *there is* no king, lord, nor ruler, *that* asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean.

11 And *it is* a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, [h]except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

h ver. 28. ch. 5. 11.

The Chaldeans bring three arguments to convince the king. 1. There is not a man upon earth can show the king's matter. 2. There is no king requires such a thing of any magician. 3. None but the gods can do this. The Chaldeans with other Gentiles did believe more gods than one, and the supreme deity or deities did not meddle with the affairs of men, but had the cognizance by inferior or intermediate demons. So Plato and many of them held. The meaning then is this, Seeing there are some things that God, who knoweth all things, will not communicate the knowledge of to men, and hath not done it to us, it is therefore a singular and unreasonable thing the king should require it of us, and that so suddenly, and upon such penalties.

12 For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon.

Tyrants are inexorable, and they rule according to their will, and being crossed they are furious, and that brings forth death; the wrath of such is the *roaring of a lion.*

13 And the decree went forth that the wise *men* should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.

This was unjust, that Daniel and his fellows should have their share in the punishment, and yet be excluded from the other part which was the reward; the reason why they were not called was because of their youth, which the Chaldeans despised, wherein we have these three things observable. 1. The magicians confessed this, that knowledge and revelation must come from God, and therefore what Daniel did was not by any human strength, but Divine only. 2. That the Lord held the governor's hands, so that he did not slay Daniel presently with the first. 3. That Daniel, by his prudence and piety, saved all the magicians' lives.

14 ¶ Then Daniel †answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the ‖† captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise *men* of Babylon:

† Chald. *returned.* ‖ Or, *chief marshal.* † Chald. *chief of the executioners,* or, *slaughtermen,* Gen. 37. 36.

15 He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why *is* the decree *so* hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel.

So hasty; so precipitate, to slay the innocent who were never called, who knew nothing of it; this appears plainly from these words, *Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel,* ver. 15, which was this, that the king had dreamed a strange dream that troubled him, that he had forgotten it, that he called all his wise men to show both the dream and interpretation, but they could not; therefore the king decreed the death of all the wise men in Babylon, and Daniel with his fellows among them, without saving the life of one of them, and he, viz. Arioch, had received command to execute it presently. Thus there was but a step between him and death.

16 Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation.

There are four things here very strange and wonderful. 1. That Arioch, instead of executing the king's decree speedily, should make this stop. 2. That he should dare to see the king's face when he was so wroth, instead of doing what his commission tied him to. 3. That Daniel should have the boldness to go in to the king when he was in his fury. 4. That he should desire time and obtain it of the king, who had denied the same thing to the wise men. To which we answer, The signal hand of God was in all this. 2. In particular, Daniel was in great esteem with the king above all the wise men, chap. i. 19, 20. 3. He gave both Arioch and the king hopes he would show and interpret the king's dream.

17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:

According to the good hand of his God upon him, who had shown him favour thus far, and obtained the king's leave, he went to his house near the palace, that he might seek God in secret for this great thing. For, 1. Their lives were at stake. 2. It was not a small thing, he was sure, that God was about, wherewith he had troubled the king's mind in such a manner. Therefore he reinforceth his strength, calling his friends to help him: as prayer in times of danger is the most seasonable and sovereign help so, in a common danger we must call in all the help we can to it.

18 [i]That they would desire mercies †of the God of heaven concerning this secret; ‖that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon.

i Mat. 18. 19. † Chald. *from before God.* ‖ Or, *that they should not destroy Daniel, &c.*

Observe here Daniel's humility, he sought not to engross

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this business, and the honour of it, wholly to himself, but would have his fellows share in it with him. Again, they would desire mercy, Heb. the *bowels of tender mercy:* the choicest saints desire to be saved by mercy, Psal. li. 1. *That Daniel and his fellows should not perish:* the Lord hath a distinguishing care and love for his people, 2 Thess. i. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 9, especially in common calamities, Exod. xiv. 19, &c.; Rev. xviii. 4.

19 ¶ Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel [k] in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

k Num. 12. 6. Job 33. 15, 16.

It is not improbably conjectured that Daniel spent the night in watching and prayer, for night vision is distinguished from dreams, Numb. xii. 6; whether sleeping or waking, Daniel had the same thing revealed unto him which king Nebuchadnezzar had, with this difference, the king remembered not his dream, nor knew what it meant, but Daniel was able to tell his dream and give the meaning of it also. *Daniel blessed the God of heaven;* he gave thanks and praise to the Father of lights, from whom all wisdom comes, who heard his prayer, and revealed this secret to him. Note, this was revealed to Daniel, and not to his companions, for he was chief, and by this is signified by what steps he rose up to the degree of a famous prophet. Again, he calls the true God the *God of heaven*, because he made heaven, his throne is there, and the magicians' and heathen gods come not there, but were cast out thence, being devils of hell; but the God of Israel is the *God of heaven.*

l Ps. 113. 2. & 115. 18.

20 Daniel answered and said, [l] Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: [m] for wisdom and might are his:

m Jer. 32. 19.

He blesseth God for two things. 1. *Wisdom;* he means chiefly the wisdom God gave him in revealing this great secret to him, which the wise men could not attain to, because they knew not the true God, nor did seek to him for it, this is clear in ver. 21—23. 2. *Might is his;* that is, almighty, above all mighty potentates of the world, above Nebuchadnezzar and all the kings of the earth, for he sets them up and plucks them down at pleasure, ver. 21, as the interpretation of the dream and vision shows.

n Esth. 1. 13. 1 Chron. 29. 30. ch. 7. 25. & 11. 6. o Job 12. 18. Ps. 75. 6, 7. Jer. 27. 5. ch. 4. 17. p Jam. 1. 5.

21 And he changeth [n] the times and the seasons: [o] he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: [p] he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

God made time; God made the sun, moon, and stars, the measure of time; he made the day and the night, and seasons of the year, yea, the revolutions and change of times; he can make bad times better, and turn night into day. He can make the sun go backward or stand still, as in Ahaz's and Joshua's time; it is the great part of God's power and prerogative to change times. Daniel here attributes that to God which heathens attributed to nature, which they deified, or to chance; seeing that God only, that made all by his power, doth rule, and sometimes overrule all by his providence.

q Job 12. 22. Ps. 25. 14. ver. 28, 29. r Ps. 139. 11, 12. Heb. 4. 13. s ch. 5. 11, 14. Jam. 1. 17.

22 [q] He revealeth the deep and secret things: [r] he knoweth what *is* in the darkness, and [s] the light dwelleth with him.

The deep and secret things; both of nature, wherein are infinite depths and secrets: and of men's hearts and counsels, which are very close, deep, and secret, saying in themselves, Who can see us? and the deep and secret things of grace, and the mysteries of Christ's kingdom: all this is comfortable to the saints, and glorious to God. *He knoweth what is in the darkness,* and it dwelleth with him, and he in it. He sees and foresees the most hidden things. Daniel points at the king's dream in the night, which he only gave the king, and then took it from him, and then gave it Daniel for him again.

23 I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we [t] desired of thee: for thou hast *now* made known unto us the king's matter.

t ver. 18.

Here he gives his God another distinguishing title from all the gods of the heathen, he calls him the *God of his fathers,* meaning the covenant made with Abraham, &c., to whom and their seed God revealed his saving knowledge, which he did not to the heathen. God is the God of all by the kingdom of his power, but the God of his church only according to the kingdom of his grace. *Thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter;* in which words he intimates a twofold privilege; the one that, as the son of such fathers, he obtained the grace and favour of God in giving him safety and wisdom; the other, that he found him a God hearing prayer, and that in a thing of a high nature, he *made known to him the king's matter.*

24 ¶ Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise *men* of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise *men* of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation.

Being now prepared, he goes to Arioch to go in with him to the king; and bid him stay his hand, and not destroy the wise men of Babylon. Arioch might plead the king's command, Daniel tells him that was because they could not tell the king's dream: come, saith he, I will show that; by that I take away the ground of thy commission to destroy. *Quest.* Did Daniel do well in desiring to have them spared, who deserved to die for their unlawful arts, diviners, necromancers, &c.? *Answ.* Two things are usually answered to this: 1. They were not all such, some were innocent, studied arts and sciences lawful and laudable. 2. Those that were otherwise, he pleaded not for them as such, but for justice, that they ought not to die unjustly; and that was their case and cause.

25 Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, †I have found a man of the †captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.

† Chald. *That I have found.* † Chald. *children of the captivity of Judah.*

How comes Arioch to boast of what he had found; as if he got him by great search, or by great chance, and as if Daniel had been some obscure, unknown person, when Daniel had asked time of the king just before? It is the manner of courtiers to be very officious, and [t] to commend their own little deeds, that thereby they may signify something with their prince, and make themselves necessary to him, possibly Arioch might not know that Daniel had been with the king, and therefore comes with this Εὕρηκα, I have found your man, here he is, behold him, he will give the king full satisfaction in all concerning the dream.

26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

By this name of *Belteshazzar* he had given Daniel, he took courage as if he might expect some great thing from him; for the word signifies the keeper of secret treasure, i. e. to lay up and bring forth. *Art thou able, &c.?* as if he had said, I question if thou canst, seeing all my wise men cannot do it; canst thou presume to do more than all they?

27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise *men,* the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king;

He reckons up here all sorts of divination, to show that divine things, and the secrets of God, cannot be comprehended by man without special revelation; and that those who presume to do it arrogate too much to themselves, and that it is too tyrannical to require it of any, and that upon pain of death; for, saith Daniel, they cannot do it.

28 [u] But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and †maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar [x] what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;

u Gen. 40. 8. & 41. 16. ver. 18, 47. Amos 4. 13. † Chald. *hath made known.* x Gen. 49. 1.

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Here the prophet gives God entirely all the glory, proving all the powers on earth to come short in it, it being one of God's peculiar prerogatives to reveal secrets. Yea, in great humility he denies himself to have any share in it, as also ver. 29. *What shall be in the latter days:* observe here the prophet's wisdom in this discovery, he doth not fall abruptly upon the dream, but first prepares this lofty king for it in general, and by degrees he doth labour to win him to the knowledge of the true God, 1. By this his power; and, 2. By his gracious favour to the king, in revealing to him the greatest secret in the world about the change of kingdoms and governments, and touching the power of Christ's kingdom over all in the latter days. See ver. 44.

29 As for thee, O king, thy thoughts †came *into thy mind* upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: [y] and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.

† Chald. *came up.*
[y] ver. 22, & 28.

30 [z] But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for *any* wisdom, that I have more than any living, ‖ but for *their* sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, [a] and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

[z] So Gen 41. 16. Acts 3. 12.
‖ Or, *but for the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king.*
[a] ver. 47.

For their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king: some will have this relate to the Jews and the church of God, by whose prayers this was obtained; but the more plain sense is this, *But* that the interpretation may be manifest to the king, and that thou mayst know the thoughts of thy heart, that thou mayst be better instructed and satisfied in thy mind in this great secret, when thou seest the mind of God in it, and what it points at, and what thy duty is, and how to steer thy counsel and actions in this vast monarchy, and towards the afflicted church of God in it.

† Chald. *wast seeing.*

31 ¶ Thou, O king, †sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness *was* excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof *was* terrible.

A great image; not a painted, superficial image, but a massy one, a statue in man's shape, great, splendid, majestical: thus they were wont of old to represent great emperors and empires, and worshipped them as gods: called here an image, and in a dream, all which is in show and shadow rather than in substance, and therefore vanishing. *Stood before thee,* and that upright, of a prodigious height, noting the grandeur of those monarchies. *The form thereof was terrible:* government is to be feared, *fear to whom fear, and honour to whom honour;* also some had rather be feared than loved. Some say the image was so placed that the face looked toward the king, and thus it might trouble and terrify him.

[b] See ver. 38, &c.

32 [b] This image's head *was* of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his ‖ thighs of brass,

‖ Or, *sides.*

33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

By this we see the world is much worse and far declined, every age degenerating from what it was of old; as the poets, which borrowed their fancy from this image, have described the ages of the world from metals; the first was golden, and so, coming on coarser, it ended at last, as this image in the text, in dirt.

‖ Or, *which was not in hands:* as ver. 45.
[c] ch. 8. 25. Zech. 4. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 1. Heb. 9. 24.

34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out ‖ [c] without hands, which smote the image upon his feet *that were* of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

i. e. All of it to pieces, all vanished, *and the stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth:* this is the dream, and the interpretation of all follows.

35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became [d] like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that [e] no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image [f] became a great mountain, [g] and filled the whole earth.

[d] Ps. 1. 4. Hos. 13. 3.
[e] Ps. 37. 10, 36.
[f] Is. 2. 2, 3.
[g] Ps. 60. 9.

36 ¶ This *is* the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

By this word *we* appears Daniel's piety and modesty, for he declares by it that he and his companions had begged this skill from God, and therefore he did not and could not arrogate it to himself, excluding them, without injury and dishonour to God that heard prayer. Now begins the interpretation.

37 [h] Thou, O king, *art* a king of kings: [i] for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

[h] Ezra 7. 12. Is. 47. 5. Jer. 27. 6, 7. Ezek. 26. 7. Hos. 8. 10.
[i] Ezra 1. 2.

A king of kings; he means Nebuchadnezzar in person, together with his successors, Evil-merodach and Belshazzar. The prophet would not mind the king of any thing past, nor of any other governments but those with whom his church were then and to be concerned for the future, till the coming of the Messiah, by whose coming they should support and comfort themselves against all their sufferings by oppressors; and also God would have the prophet mind Nebuchadnezzar of the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, growing and breaking in pieces all earthly power. *The God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom;* it came not to thee by thy ancestors, or by fortune, or by thy valour, but the great God of heaven hath the bestowing of those, and giveth them to whomsoever he will. *Power, and strength, and glory;* authority; victorious armies, with great prosperity.

[k] ch. 4. 21, 22. Jer. 27. 6.

38 [k] And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. [l] Thou *art* this head of gold.

[l] ver. 32.

Hath made thee ruler over them all, i. e. hath given thee absolute dominion of all creatures, men and beasts, within the bounds of thy vast kingdom, to hunt, catch, or kill for thy use and pleasure. God as Lord paramount allows thee, his vassal and tenant at will, all this. This was not universal over all the world, but only within his large territories, which yet were bounded. *Thou art this head of gold.* 1. Why *head?* Because he was first in order, as the head is before the other parts, and the vision began in him, and descended downwards to the other three monarchies. 2. Why *head of gold?* Because of the vast riches wherein it abounded, and which the Chaldeans most coveted, and scraped from the spoils and tributes of all countries, Isa. x. 13, 14; Jer. li. 41, 44. Also this is called the golden head, because it stood longest, five hundred years, and was fortunate and flourishing to the last.

39 And after thee shall arise [m] another kingdom [n] inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, [o] which shall bear rule over all the earth.

[m] ch. 5. 28, 31.
[n] ver. 32.
[o] 1 Mac. 1. 3.

Another kingdom inferior to thee; this was that of the Medes and Persians, inferior in time and succession; in duration, it lasted not half so long as the Assyrian; and in prosperity and tranquillity, for the Persian was fuller of trouble; yet was this wonderfully rich and large for a time, Esth. i. 1: this was the breast and arms of silver. *Another third kingdom of brass;* this was the Grecian monarchy, under Alexander the Great, who conquered the former, called "the city," because given so much to luxury; *brass,* because coarser than the other, and their armour was chiefly brass, χαλκοχίτωνες. *Which shall bear rule over all the earth;* therefore this is also called a universal monarchy; for Alexander marched into the Indies, and conquered much of that, (by which he was said to conquer the world,) and wept that he had not another world to conquer: yet this lasted not long, for he was soon overcome and killed by his worldly lusts.

40 And [p] the fourth kingdom shall be

[p] ch. 7. 7, 23.

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strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all *things:* and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

The fourth kingdom is the kingdom of the Romans; and was to last not only to Christ's first coming, but under antichrist to his second coming, but still going down as to pagan worship, and at last to antichristian and papal power; for in ver. 28 Daniel tells the king that God made known to him what should be in the latter days; therefore he intended a general history to the end of the world, ver. 44; chap. vii., latter end; and chap. xi., xii. *It shall break in pieces and bruise:* this did break in pieces all other kingdoms, being too strong for them, and was never in subjection to any, but brought all in subjection to it, till the stone fell upon it, of which afterward.

[q] ver. 33.

41 And whereas thou sawest [q] the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

The kingdom shall be divided; partly strong and partly weak. The Roman kingdom was divided, partly, because tyranny followed aristocracy, and the government made up of both; partly, in their civil wars, when two competitors strove each for dominion, the common people against the senate, Sylla against Marius, Cæsar against Pompey; also, partly, when conquered provinces and kingdoms cast off the Roman yoke, and set up kings of their own, and so the empire was divided into ten kingdoms or toes. The vision attributes two legs to the image, and to the fourth monarchy, because the Romans had sometimes duumvirs, two consuls, two emperors, one in the east, the other in the west.

42 And *as* the toes of the feet *were* part of iron, and part of clay, *so* the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly ‖ broken.

‖ Or, *brittle.*

This was plain in the civil wars of the Romans, the falling off of some countries, especially in and towards the end of it.

43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave † one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

† Chald. *this with this.*

With the seed of men, i. e. by marriage; but they shall never solder well together, because ambition is of stronger force than affinity and consanguinity in rulers.

† Chald. *their days.*
[r] ver. 28.
[s] ch. 4. 3, 34. & 6. 26. & 7. 14, 27. Mic. 4. 7. Luke 1. 32, 33.
‡ Chald. *kingdom thereof.*
[t] Is. 2. 9. Is. 60. 12. 1 Cor. 15. 24.

44 And in †the days of these kings [r]shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, [s]which shall never be destroyed: and the ‡kingdom shall not be left to other people, [t]*but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

In the days of these kings, i. e. while the iron kingdom stood, (for Christ was born in the reign of Augustus Cæsar, Luke ii. 1,) *shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.* Now see the difference of Christ's kingdom from all other kingdoms in the world. 1. In the rise of it, it was not by earthly succession, or arms, or policy. 2. It is spiritual and heavenly in the laws and administration of it. 3. Jesus Christ was not a mere man, but God-man, he is the King, the Son of God. 4. It is stronger than all others, because it breaks them in pieces. 5. It is not bounded by any limits as worldly empires are, but truly universal. 6. It shall be for ever, and never destroyed and given to others, as the rest were.

[u] ver. 35. Is. 28. 16.
‖ Or, *which was not in hand.*

45 [u]Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain ‖ without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass †hereafter: and the dream *is* certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

† Chald. *after this.*

This verse notes, 1. The small beginning of Christ's kingdom visibly. 2. The different rise of Christ from all other; his conception by the Holy Ghost, like as Melchizedek, without father and mother, respectively as to his two natures. *Who shall declare his generation? His name shall be called Wonderful,* Isa. ix. 6. 3. This stone, as a heavy rock, tumbling down from the mountain, brake the image in pieces, which it could not be said any other did. 4. Christ is a stone that grinds to powder those it falls on. He is the precious foundation and chief corner-stone of his church for ever. 5. He is a growing stone, even to a mountain, and therefore will fill the earth, 1 Cor. xv. 24. *God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter,* i. e. the great God hath shown all this, who is above all the kings of the earth, and only knows, and decrees, and effects future things, who only doth great and wondrous things. *The dream is certain,* i. e. this dream is no ordinary dream, but an oracle of God; it is sent from heaven, and gives a perfect scheme and prophetical history of things to come, about the special providence of God in changing governors and governments, with particular regard to his church under them; and above all, about the kingdom of Christ, and the growth of it, maugre all the enterprises of pagan and antichristian Rome. *The interpretation thereof sure;* it is not a conjectural guess of the magicians and wise men of Babylon, who use to prepare lying words, because they have no knowledge of the true God, and therefore are wholly unacquainted with his secrets, which he revealeth to his prophets by the Spirit of prophecy, which he hath now signally imparted to me; this I have faithfully made known unto thee, O King.

46 ¶ [x]Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation [y]and sweet odours unto him.

[x] See Acts 10. 25. & 14. 13. & 28. 6.
[y] Ezra 6. 10.

This was strange, that so great a monarch should thus worship his vassal: thus was it sometimes done to men, as to Elias the prophet, 2 Kings i. 13: this was done in consternation and admiration, because he saw so much of God in the prophet, and in the revelation of the dream; but why did Daniel suffer it to be done to him? 1. Though he could not hinder the king in his prostration, and in his word of command, yet doubtless he showed his averseness with much zeal and abhorrence, as the apostles did in the like case, Acts xiv. 13—15, because it was high sacrilege and idolatry. 2. It is not said they offered sacrifice to Daniel, but only the king commanded it, which doubtless Daniel refused, because he was so careful in not defiling himself with the king's dainties, chap. i. 8; also when he would not omit the worship of God, though with the hazard of his life, chap. vi. 10; therefore the king, being instructed of Daniel, gives God all the glory, in the next words.

47 The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth *it is,* that your God *is* a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, [z]and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.

[z] ver. 28.

A God of gods; the greatest and supreme God of all the world, above Baal, or Bel, and above all other gods. *A Lord of kings;* the word is *Maron* or *Maran,* which in the Syriac signifies *Lord,* or *high Lord,* seeing he is the highest King of all the earth. He makes, overrules, and pulls down whom he will, 1 Tim. vi. 15; Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16: by this he gathers that God is a *revealer of secrets,* Isa. xlviii. 3, 5—8. *A revealer of secrets;* is supreme God, because he knows, and foreknows, and decrees all things future. *Seeing thou couldest reveal this secret;* therefore Daniel had it from God, who revealed it to him, which here the king confesseth.

48 Then the king made Daniel a great man, [a]and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province

[a] ver. 6.

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b ch. 4. 9. & 5. 11. of Babylon, and [b]chief of the governors over all the wise *men* of Babylon.

Made Daniel a great man, Chald. *rabbi*, magnified him. *Many great gifts;* an estate suitable to his honour. *Ruler over the whole province of Babylon; gnal col medina* over the chief province of Babylon, which was head, because of the metropolis; the word is also Arabic, and therefore used in Spain at this day. *Chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon:* see chap. iv. 9. Daniel was chief of them in wisdom, for he could unfold what none of the wise men could. Again, he was chief in place and power, he had the rule and inspection of them which were students and professors of wisdom and learning, into their studies and manners, like a perpetual lord chancellor. Not that this holy prophet gave any encouragement to them in their unlawful arts and divinations, but rather discouraged and corrected them, teaching them the knowledge of the true God: thus doth the true religion top all the world, and make the grandeur thereof stoop to it, for it is the wisdom of God and the power of God.

49 Then Daniel requested of the king,

c ch. 3. 12. [c]and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the pro-

d Esth. 2. 19, 21. & 3. 2. vince of Babylon: but Daniel [d]*sat* in the gate of the king.

He substituted them as lieutenants for the king's service, under Daniel, which, as the curious observe, was chiefly about agriculture, and gathering revenues and provisions for the court; but Daniel was as privy counsellor and lord chamberlain, about arduous affairs of the king and kingdom, sitting sometimes in judgment, and also admitting and conducting persons and causes to the king, as there was need, to whom there was difficult access, according to the magnificence and majesty of the kings of the East. Thus Daniel sat in the king's gate, to be near and ready for the king's chiefest business; and it notes honour, also high favour; but especially we must look upon Daniel's promotion to be for the service and protection of his brethren in their present state of captivity, as Mordecai was, which shows that God doth remember his people in their low estate, and doth not leave himself without witness to them, in raising up nursing-fathers for them.

CHAP. III.

Nebuchadnezzar setting up an image commandeth all persons to worship it, 1—7. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego are accused of disobeying the command, 8—12. The king threateneth them; their resolute answer, 13—18. They are cast into the fiery furnace, 19—23. God delivereth them unhurt out of it, which Nebuchadnezzar seeing blesseth God, and acknowledgeth his power, 24—29. Their advancement, 30.

cir. 580. NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

This daring sin of Nebuchadnezzar was aggravated many ways, by the greatness of the kingdom and majesty God had given him, by the late discovery made to him when Daniel interpreted his dream, by his conviction and confession upon it of that great God and his sovereign power: this is the height of ingratitude, arguing his carriage before to be only a fit of astonishment, without the least change upon his heart.

The vast proportion of the *statue*, or *idol*, was to show his greatness by the height and bulk of it, and his pride and magnificence in the richness of it, seeing it was of gold, and to be a monument to posterity of his famous exploits. Some give this reason, that he might seem hereby to avert the fate of his empire, foretold by Daniel, and declare himself sole monarch of the world, or head of gold, because he made it of gold, whether massy, or plated, or gilded, matters not. Likewise that he might seem no ways to be inclined to the Jews, or their religion, whereof the Chaldeans might be jealous, seeing he had owned their God to be greatest, and had preferred Daniel and his friends to great honours. Nebuchadnezzar assured his wise men and nobles that he would still maintain the old established religion, without innovation or mixture: so Mald., Menochius, Geierus: that they had a spite against the Jews is clear, ver. 8, 12.

2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

This great statue, whether Nebuchadnezzar's own, or Bel, or any other of his gods, see ver. 14, must be solemnly dedicated, and therefore all the peers of the realm are called to it; but whether these ranks of men and officers are truly rendered from the Chaldee words is hard to determine, and not worth disputing; etymologists differ in it: this only is material, that the heads of all that vast empire were summoned, of several nations and languages, to testify their conformity to the emperor's will, and thereby give assurance of obliging the people under them to the same obedience, i. e. to the same idolatrous worship.

It was the manner of the heathen to consecrate their idol before they worshipped it, and herein, as in many other, Satan imitated the Jews, and their temple dedication, John x. 22: they held a feast. The popish church do the like, when they dedicate material temples to particular saints, with solemnity and jollity, from whence come the feasts of wakes and revels to this day.

3 Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

i. e. In the plains of Dura, where great multitudes might easily be gathered, and behold it lifted up on high, conspicuous to all; they beheld it with admiration, ready to adore it, in obedience to the king's will and pleasure, for whatsoever pleased him pleased them, *walking willingly after the commandment*, as Jeroboam by his calves made Israel to sin. Heathenish and profane men are unstable as water, and blown any way by every wind of doctrine, suitable to their princes and to their own lusts. If the king had commanded idols to be broken and burnt, and the worship of the true God to be set up, this people would not have been so forward in their conformity, because men are generally more inclined to false worship than true.

4 Then an herald cried †aloud, To you †it is commanded, [a]O people, nations, and languages,

† Chald. *with might.*
† Chal. *they command.*
a ch. 4. 1. & 6. 25.

An herald: it is likely there were many heralds at the head of that great concourse, else they could not all hear. *People, nations, and languages:* proclamation was made therefore in several languages, to some of several nations assembled there, and to the representatives of all.

5 *That* at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, ‖†dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:

‖ Or, *singing.*
† Chald. *symphony.*

All kinds of music, i. e. wind and stringed instruments of various sorts and fashions, for we have here Syrian and Greek ones, as appears by the words, though in Chaldee letters, for this mighty monarch was lord over them all. *Ye fall down and worship:* mark, all that is required of them is only a gesture of worship, without oral profession. The pomp and equipage, the solemn sound of the music, and the strict command, was enough to induce them to stoop and fall down to it. This is one of Satan's great engines to draw the world from God's pure worship, and the simplicity that is in Christ, dazzling men's eyes, and bewitching them with a gaudy, whorish dress of idolatrous service, as ye see

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in this example, and Rev. xvii. 4, 5; all which ariseth merely from hence, because men do not or will not see that God's worship is wholly spiritual, and most beautiful and glorious as such, 2 Cor. iii. 7 to the end; by this it excels all pagan, Jewish, and antichristian worship, all which is human, bodily, uncommanded of God, therefore displeasing and provoking, unprofitable, insnaring, and destructive. Now idolatrous gestures are sinful, because forbidden of God, Exod. xx. 5, because this satisfies and hardens idolaters in their way, also because by this snare and critical mark their proselytes are known and distinguished, as here, they that stood up, when others fell down; thus antichrist and new Babylon hath her mark in the forehead and hands of her followers, Rev. xiii. 15—17. Primitive Christians would not offer a grain of frankincense to a pagan idol for fear or favour, nor true protestants kneel to the host, which the popish priest holds up to insnare them.

6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour [b] be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

[b] Jer. 29. 22. Rev. 13. 15.

This was a punishment usual among the Chaldeans, to scorch, roast, and burn offenders with fire, Jer. xxix. 22: see 2 Macc. vii. 3. And this the king of Moab imitated, 2 Kings iii. 27; Amos ii. 1. This shows the hellish malice and cruelty of wicked men, especially against those that cross their pride and superstition, which was visible in the tortures Christians were put to in the ten persecutions, and in the fires which antichrist hath kindled in all his reign against the witnesses of Jesus; witness the book of "Acts and Monuments:" whom they cannot allure with their gaudery, they fright with their fires and massacres, as ye see the effects of both in the verse following.

7 Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

The same methods hath new Babylon followed, in the long slavery of their false catholic church, for the whole *world wondered after the beast, and none could make war with him*, Rev. xiii. 3, 4, 7, 8.

8 ¶ Wherefore at that time certain [c] Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews.

[c] ch. 6. 12.

9 They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, [d] O king, live for ever.

[d] ch. 2. 4. & 5. 10. & 6. 6, 21.

10 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

11 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

12 [e] There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; these men, O king, † have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

[e] ch. 2. 49.

† Chald. *have set no regard upon thee.*

Now the devil's cloven foot appears, now ye have the bottom of the plot; one of these two is clear: these Chaldeans finding the Jews made courtiers, and preferred to places of trust and honour, they either put the king upon this work, or else made use of it, both to satisfy their ambition and wreak their malice against those three worthies; as they dealt with Daniel, chap. vi. 4, 5. They *accused the Jews*; which word signifies to calumniate, and also to eat up and devour, which is the design of envy and malice. See how they go to work: 1. They strike while the iron is hot, they take the king in his huff. 2. They read a law established. 3. Then they say the Jews do not observe the king's laws, a people already obnoxious. 4. Yea, several of them despise the king's laws and authority. 5. They abuse the king's great favour and indulgence to them. 6. They should give good example, being in places of trust and dignity. 7. Yet, behold, they declare their contumacy and rebellion in not conforming to the king's laws. This set the king all in a flame of rage and fury, and he commanded to bring these three men before him.

13 ¶ Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Then they brought these men before the king.

Why not Daniel too, because he was chief of all in honour? *Answ.* Because the king had a greater favour for him, and he was popular, and beloved for his great wisdom and unblamable carriage; they would not meddle with him now, lest by his knowledge and interest in the king he might chance to spoil their plot.

14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, *Is it* ‖ true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

‖ Or, *of purpose*, as Exod. 21. 13.

Now when these men were brought before the king, though in rage, yet he doth not presently throw them into the fire, but makes inquiry by interrogatories, that he might see first if they were guilty, by hearing them speak for themselves, and telling them he expected obedience and conformity to his laws from them, and it was in vain to look for any indulgence from him, he would bate them nothing, they should be burned. What! do ye make a jest of my gods, and my religion, and my commands? so the word *tseda* in the Syriac doth signify, to scoff or deride, as if he had said, Is it true indeed that ye refuse to worship my gods? do ye do it in earnest, or in jest? it seems by your carriage, if it be true what I hear of you, that ye slight my gods, and make a mock of my authority, but ye shall know there is no jesting with these edge-tools.

15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; [f] *well:* but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; [g] and who *is* that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

[f] as Exod. 32. 32. Luke 13. 9.

[g] Exod. 5. 2. 2 Kings 18. 35.

Prodigious pride and blasphemy! for he doth not only insult over all gods in general, but particularly against the only true God, whom he lately confessed, chap. ii. 47, to be *a God of gods, and a Lord of kings*. So the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xviii. 30, 33. Thus all the tyrants of the East, Turk, Mogul, Kham, whose very titles are blasphemy. It is a wonder why these men worship any god, seeing they set up themselves above all. Reason of state makes them set up somewhat to keep the people in awe; they themselves are exempt, and care for none. The root of Nebuchadnezzar's arrogance lay chiefly here, he had burnt the temple of the Jews' God, and made slaves of his people, and he did not deliver either, and therefore thought he could not; and so presumes the same now; but God will make him quickly of another mind.

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, [h] we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter.

[h] Matt. 10. 19.

Heb. *We care not*, we may not, there is no need of any answer in this case, for it is in vain for us to deliberate and debate the matter; the king is resolved to have his will of us, and we are resolved on the contrary; for to obey him in this horrid thing will be disobedience against our God to the highest.

17 If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able

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to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king.

They were endued with a strong faith in their God, not only as to his power, which was omnipotent and unlimited, but also as to his will, which readily inclined him to succour his servants in their distress, for his name's sake, according to his promise and the saints' experience in the like cases of extremity.

i 2 Mac. 7. 2. 18 [i]But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

They add this, *But if not*, to show they did not presume to tie God to this deliverance absolutely, for God is arbitrary, and knows how to deliver, and sometimes to suffer his saints to glorify him by suffering. It was therefore all one to them, which way of the two God would honour himself, they were resolved to venture suffering rather than sinning, and leave the cause to God.

† Chald. *filled.* 19 ¶ Then was Nebuchadnezzar †full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: *therefore* he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

The king's fury appeared in his face, and in his words; taking this answer for the highest affront and provocation, which as the case stood he could not bear, the pride of his heart made his indignation boil over, and therefore he made the *furnace seven times hotter*. Tyrants would burn the people of God in hell if they could.

† Chald. *mighty of strength.* 20 And he commanded the †most mighty men that *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.

Did he think these three men would have resisted, or that their God would defend them from his power, or that, if he had, the king and his mighty men could have prevailed? None of all this was in the case, for God purposed to show his power when the king did his worst, and to quench the violence of the fire, both of the furnace and of the king's fury, at once; and in the thing wherein he dealt proudly, to be above him.

21 Then these men were bound in their ‖coats, their hosen, and their ‖hats, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

‖ Or, *mantles.* ‖ Or, *turbans.*

This is observable and wonderful, that the fire should not catch their garments, being the most obnoxious to it.

† Chald. *word.* 22 Therefore because the king's †commandment was urgent, and the furnace ‖ Or, *spark.* exceeding hot, the ‖flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

The king's commandment was urgent; which made them the more hasty and precipitate in their execution, and took less care for themselves against the violence of the flame. *The fire slew those men;* a signal hand of God upon such as execute wicked commands, who, though mighty men, had no might to escape the flame at the mouth of the furnace, when the other escaped in the midst of it.

23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

All this is expressed with emphasis, to make the power of God more glorious in their preservation; for that flame that slew the executioners might much more easily have suffocated the three children before they fell down.

24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonied, and rose up in haste, *and* spake, ‖ Or, *governors.* and said unto his ‖counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

Rose up in haste: this fear, perturbation, and amazement, as the word signifies, surprised the king, being surprised with the strangeness of it, beholding something supernatural in it, together with the disappointment of his design and cruel commands. *True, O king:* the Lord extorted this confession from them, though enemies.

k Is. 43. 2. † Chald. *there is no hurt in them* 1 Job. 1. 6. & 38. 7. Is. 34. 7. ver. 28. 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see [k]four men loose, †walking in the midst of the fire, and †they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like [l]the Son of God.

I see; the fire gave light to see them, though it had no power of heat to burn them. *Like the Son of God;* a Divine, most beautiful, and glorious countenance; either of a mere angel, or rather of Jesus Christ, the Angel of the covenant, who did sometimes appear in the Old Testament before his incarnation, Gen. xii. 7; xviii. 10, 13, 17, 20, &c.; Exod. xxiii. 23; xxxiii. 2; Josh. v. 13—15; Prov. viii. 31; in all which places it is Jehovah; Gen. xix. 24; Exod. iii. 2; Acts vii. 30, 32, 33, 38.

† Chald. *door.* 26 ¶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the †mouth of the burning fiery furnace, *and* spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come *hither*. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire.

Came near; as near as he durst come, within hearing. *And spake* with a milder tone than before, God having abated the fire of his fury. Now he could at once confess and acknowledge the true God to be the Most High above all gods, and the three worthies to be his faithful servants. *Came forth of the midst of the fire;* they went out upon the king's call, without which they would not have stirred.

27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, [m]upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

m Heb. 11. 34.

Saw these men, with great admiration, for the satisfaction of all by their sight of them, and by their smell. All the works of God are perfect, and there was nothing here wanting to make this wonderful deliverance complete. Here was a pure act of God's omnipotence, to divide between the fire and its most intense heat, and to master any creature in the world in its height, by working against and above nature, whose utmost sphere of activity is limited by God.

28 *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that [n]trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

n Ps. 34. 7, 8. Jer. 17. 7. ch. 6. 22, 23.

Thus out of the mouths of blasphemers and contemners of God can the Lord ordain praise: yet all this did not draw off this king from his idolatry, for he saith, *the God of Shadrach*, &c., not his God. Wonders will not work conversion till God work upon the heart, Deut. xxix. 2—4. He blesseth God for four things. 1. For sending his angel to deliver his servants that trusted in him. 2. That they changed the king's commandment, i. e. frustrated it, and make it void, and convinced the king, and brought him to a better mind. 3. Therefore yielded their bodies to the fire, and to his fury, by passive obedience, rather than not obey God actively, by worshipping any false god, 4.

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But only the true, whom they chose to be their own God. Observe also here the power of faith, it quencheth the violence of fire, Heb. xi. 34; and the presence of God with his people, even in the fire, and in fiery trials, Isa. xliii. 2; 1 Pet. i. 7; iv. 12.

o ch. 6. 26. + Chald. *a decree is made by me.* + Chald. *error.*

29 °Therefore †I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak †any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be p†cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: q because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

p ch. 2. 5. + Chald. *made pieces.* q ch. 6. 27.

Observe here, that though he doth not resolve to worship the true God, nor command others to do it, yet he would not allow the God of the Jews to be evil spoken of; this was all that he came up to. He was resolved to hold fast to the religion established, his own idols; nay, the great golden idol, which had been slurred and slighted by these three worthies, he would not take down and relinquish: this was the best quarter the true God could get among them, not to be spoken amiss of under great penalty; though he confessed no god else could deliver after that strange sort. Bel could not preserve his men out of the furnace, God preserves his servants in the furnace. All was one for that, Bel should be his god still.

+ Chald. *made to prosper.*

30 Then the king †promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the province of Babylon.

They that honour God, them will God honour. To suffer, and suffer shame and pains, for God, is to honour God. John xxi. 19; 1 Pet. iv. 14. It is probable that the Chaldeans used to reproach the God of the Jews, and more upon this account, because for his sake these his servants refused conformity to Babylonish idolatry; and their common quarrel with the people of God was upon the account of their religion; thus here in this instance, and thus in Daniel's case, Dan. vi. 4, 5; thus Haman, Esth. iii. 8. Also for that very thing they make them disloyal, and breakers of the king's laws. Now God would vindicate his people herein, and make this great king to do it too, knowing it was a grief of heart for these men, Shadrach, &c., to hear the name of God abused by idolaters and profane wretches, and doubtless they complained to the king of it, who did them right by this severe decree, as long as it lasted, seeing the king moreover thought fit to promote them to honour, i. e. he did restore them to their places, as the word signifies, and made an addition to their former dignities.

CHAP. IV.

Nebuchadnezzar acknowledgeth God's eternal dominion, 1—3. *He relateth a dream which the magicians could not interpret,* 4—7. *Daniel hearing the dream,* 3—18, *interpreteth it,* 19—27. *The dream fulfilled in Nebuchadnezzar's loss of dignity and reason for a time; which being restored to him, he glorifieth God,* 28—37.

cir. 570. a ch. 3. 4. & 6. 25.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king, aunto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

The prophet Daniel here sets down another strange story, after he had finished that of the three young men: this the prophet sets forth not in his own words, but in the words of the king's own proclamation, that it might pass with undoubted credit, and without all dispute; being sent to all his vast kingdoms, and questionless put into the king's archives and court rolls, as the manner was. These three first verses of this fourth chapter are improperly annexed to the end of the foregoing third chapter, by some; seeing they are the preface of the following history. *Peace be multiplied unto you,* i. e. all health and happiness: this was always the form of greeting and salutation among the Eastern nations, comprehending peace, plenty, with uninterrupted joy and felicity in all comfortable enjoyments; and from them it came derived down to the penmen of the New Testament, and notes more, even peace with God in Jesus Christ, spiritual and everlasting. Now the reason hereof was, that war being the root of all misery, especially where all government was tyrannical, and when once it brake forth, it made all desolate; therefore peace was as heaven in comparison of the hell of war, which made the heathens paint Plutus the god of riches in the bosom of peace.

2 †I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders bthat the high God hath wrought toward me.

+ Chald. *It was seemly before me.* b ch. 3. 26.

I did upon mature thoughts judge it very becoming me, yea, it was my pleasure to let all the world know, 1. The signs and wonders, 2. Wrought by the high God, 3. Toward me, wherein I was personally concerned: these were his reasons why he made it known to the world.

3 cHow great *are* his signs! and how mighty *are* his wonders! his kingdom *is* dan everlasting kingdom, and his dominion *is* from generation to generation.

c ch. 6. 27. d ver. 34. ch. 2. 44. & 6. 26.

How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! these two words signify in their roots, admiration and astonishment; it seems these works of God had that impression upon this king; a great cause whereof was his ignorance of the true God, together with his own excessive pride and epicurism. God by this following dream, and Daniel's instruction, had told him his fate, and that no kingdom but God's kingdom was everlasting, which he had told him once before this, Dan. ii. 44.

This confession of the king was upon conviction, and it looks somewhat like repentance, but the sequel proves him to be no changeling, though God made prodigious mutations in his kingdom, and in the form of his person, as ye see, ver. 31, 32 of this chapter; he was metamorphosed to a monstrous beast, and then to a man again, and yet no convert.

4 ¶ I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace:

At rest when his wars were over, which were great, and he victorious. Then I sat down quiet, enjoying the spoils of my enemies. *In my palace;* which was most magnificent, there I lived in all delights and grandeur.

5 I saw a dream which made me afraid, eand the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head ftroubled me.

e ch. 2. 28, 29. f ch. 2. 1.

There is no felicity in this world lasting; a black cloud, big with storm and tempest, spoils the fairest sun-shine day. They that fear not God shall be frighted by him. God doth justly make epicures and tyrants uneasy in the midst of their fool's paradise, where if the fool saith in his heart, There is no God, he shall soon find in his heart to think otherwise.

6 Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise *men* of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream.

Though he had experienced before that these wise men were fooled, and could do nothing either in telling or interpreting his dream, chap. ii., yet he will try them once again, possibly because they might gain fresh credit with the king; or he would hear what they could do, and if they failed him, he would then make use of Daniel whom he had in reserve. Perhaps these Chaldean doctors and wizards shunned and scorned Daniel's company, and he was as much shy of theirs; therefore they came not together; but God had disposed of this whole scene, and, for the honour of his name, suffered Daniel not to be sent for till the last.

7 gThen came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

g ch. 2. 2.

And yet this was it they stood upon before, that the king should tell the dream, and they would interpret it, which now they could not do: this shows them to be mere impostors, and that neither their natural skill nor diabolical help could unfold God's secrets.

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8 ¶ But at the last Daniel came in before me, [h]whose name *was* Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, [i]and in whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, *saying*,

h ch. 1. 7.
i Is. 63. 11. ver. 18. ch. 2. 11. & 5. 11, 14.

Daniel came in before me; whether sent for by the king, or brought in by another, appears not, but he was last, that it might appear he had the true understanding of these secrets; for if he had come first, before the rest had done their best in trying all their skill in vain, they would have said they knew as well as he, and so God would not have had the glory; but now it is plain the Spirit of God in the prophet did all. *The holy gods;* he speaks in the plural, like an idolater, and because he calls him *Belteshazzar*, according to the name of his god, i. e. Bel or Baal. By the *spirit of the gods* he means the spirit of *divination*, or prophecy of future contingent things, which God only knows, and reveals by his Spirit as he pleaseth, which none of the magicians were endued with.

9 O Belteshazzar, [k]master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods *is* in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

k ch. 2. 48. & 5. 11.

This argued he was convinced of Daniel's great abilities, and that he truly deserved the title and dignity the king had honoured him with; and by this persuasion and confidence he had of him, Daniel would show he answered both the opinion and expectation the king had of him.

10 Thus *were* the visions of mine head in my bed; †I saw, and behold [l]a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof *was* great.

† Chald. *I was seeing.*
l Ezek. 31. 3, &c. ver. 20.

The visions of mine head; because the fancy and imagination is in the head; and he calls them *visions* or *seeings*, because eyes and sight are attributed to the understanding, and the thing seemed visible to him, as if he beheld it with his eyes. *A tree:* those that write of the language of the East tell us that a tree denote some excellent man. Thus the prophet Ezekiel, chap. xxxi. throughout, describes the king of Assyria, and Pharaoh king of Egypt, in their flourish, height, and great fall, comparing them to huge cedars.

11 The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth:

12 The leaves thereof *were* fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it *was* meat for all: [m]the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.

m Ezek. 17. 23. & 31. 6. See Lam. 4. 20.

The fruit thereof much: this notes the public good and benefit of magistracy; so that it is better living under tyranny than anarchy, as Calvin saith.

13 I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, [n]a watcher and [o]an holy one came down from heaven;

n Ps. 103. 20. ver. 17, 23.
o Deu. 33. 2. ch. 8. 13. Zech. 14. 5. Jude 14.

By a *watcher* is meant an angel, a holy or good angel, the instruments of God, and his messengers to execute God's judgments, which they watch constantly to perform, Psal. ciii. 20, 21.

14 He cried †aloud, and said thus, [p]Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: [q]let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches:

† Chald. *with might.*
p Matt. 3. 10.
q Ezek. 31. 12.

He cried aloud, and said; whereby is shown the consent of the angels, when one stirs up another to cut down, i. e. to cast out and take away.

15 Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and *let* his portion *be* with the beasts in the grass of the earth:

Here he mitigates and corrects the former rigour of his sentence, that the kingdom should remain, with hope of return and readmission: God cuts off many flourishing kingdoms to the stumps, by spoiling their riches, beauty, and majesty. *In the tender grass of the field:* let the body of Nebuchadnezzar be preserved, and the kingdom remain firm, though he be turned out to grass for a while among the beasts.

16 Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven [r]times pass over him.

r ch. 11. 13. & 12. 7.

Let him live seven years as a beast in man's shape, among beasts of the field, let him become brutish, without human sense and understanding: and this appeared much also in his outward shape; nails like claws, and hair like feathers. Some think that he was truly changed into a beast, but this cannot be, for then the Chaldeans would never more have owned or restored him. Others judge that he was not changed at all but in appearance only to the beholders and in their fancies; but this is a false construction of God's works, when the Scripture saith it was truly done. It is probable he was mute, and bellowed only, that he went naked, and bowed, and ate grass among the beasts, with whom his converse was: a dreadful example upon the greatest man on earth, for his brutish and raging tyranny, and inhuman carriage, abasing himself, and abusing his honours and great prerogatives to wickedness and savage cruelty, to be thus forsaken of God and men, and to be made a prodigy and spectacle to the world, and that upon record to all generations.

17 This matter *is* by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent [s]that the living may know [t]that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

s Ps. 9. 16.
t ch. 2. 21. & 5. 21. ver. 25, 32.

The decree was God's, and the demand was of the holy angels; if God would enact and ratify it, the angels as commissioners had the dispensation of it put into their hands, and they all consent to it as a just judgment of God, to be executed by them according to the will and pleasure of God; and they desire of God it may be done, alluding to the customs of some nations, and speaking after the manner, for the holy angels are zealous for God's honour, and pray him to assert his own sovereignty against the bold encroachments of mortal men, especially rampant and savage tyrants, to make them know themselves. *Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men:* this Nebuchadnezzar and his flatterers conceited he was god in earth, independent and unaccountable to any; and though he had notions of a supreme God, yet he confined his government to heaven. Jupiter in heaven, Cæsar in earth, rules all, said the heathen poet. But the great God will make all men know he rules all in earth too, and sets up at his pleasure whom he will, and plucks them down again. All power is of God, Rom. xiii. 1, who doth often make use of his power in this case, thereby declaring he only is arbitrary and absolute; for instance, he gives this dignity sometimes *to the basest of men*, as he took it from Saul and gave it David, a poor shepherd's boy, Psal. lxxviii. 70, 71, and made him a name among the great men of the earth, 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8; 1 Chron. xvii. 7, 8.

18 This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, [u]forasmuch as all the wise *men* of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou *art* able; [x]for the spirit of the holy gods *is* in thee.

u Gen. 41. 8, 15. ch. 2. 8, 15.
x ver. 8.

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y ver. 8. 19 ¶ Then Daniel, [y]whose name *was* Belteshazzar, was astonied for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and

x See 2 Sam. 18. 32. Jer. 29. 7. said, My lord, [x]the dream *be* to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.

His thoughts troubled him, because he foresaw such tragical things coming upon the king, for whom he had such reverence for the high favours and honours he had conferred on him, and he was afraid to declare them; these things coming upon him while he was acted by a Spirit of prophecy, doubled his consternation, and troubled his thoughts, Dan. x. 16, 17. *Let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee;* speak out freely, let the event be what it will.

Though this king were a tyrant, and an enemy of God and his people, yet the prophet is grieved for him, and prayed for him that God would avert his judgments from him, and lay them rather upon his enemies, Jer. xxix. 7.

a ver. 10, 11, 12. 20 [a]The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth;

21 Whose leaves *were* fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it *was* meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation:

b ch. 2. 38. 22 [b]It *is* thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is

c Jer. 27. 6, 7, 8. grown, and reacheth unto heaven, [c]and thy dominion to the end of the earth.

It is thou, O king; thou art he that is meant by it. The king is the tree, the branches are his princes, children, and nephews, the leaves are his nobles and captains, the fruits are his riches and revenues, the shadow is the protection which his people had under him. See Achmetes of the Language of the East. Now in that he speaks plainly and roundly the whole truth, this prophet is herein a pattern to every faithful minister of Christ; first to preach the truth of God and to apply it without respect of persons, and yet with that wisdom and moderation that men may see they have a compassionate care for their souls. *Thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven;* thou art high and mighty in the majesty and splendour which God hath given thee. *To the end of the earth;* say some, to the Caspian Sea north, to the Euxine and Ægean west, to the Mediterranean south, for it is not clear that it reached further, and this alone was great.

d ver. 13. 23 [d]And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with

e ch. 5. 21. the dew of heaven, [e]and *let* his portion *be* with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him;

24 This *is* the interpretation, O king, and this *is* the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king:

By saying these words, *my lord the king*, he endeavours to sweeten the bitterness of this cup of God's displeasure as much as he can.

f ver. 32. ch. 5. 21, &c. 25 That they shall [f]drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee [g]to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, [h]till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and [i]giveth it to whomsoever he will.

g Ps. 106. 20.

h ver. 17, 32. Ps. 83. 18.

i Jer. 27. 5.

Because thou hast lived a brutish, epicurean life, and wert lifted up above the common race of mankind in thy heart, therefore thy fate shall be, not to be cast out to live among the basest and meanest sort of men, which were hard enough; no, not among herdsmen, as if that were too good for him; but among the beasts, to herd with them. This was such a thundering peal, that it was wonderful the king could endure to hear without wrath and fury boiling in his heart, yet the Lord withheld him.

How hard is it for lofty princes to learn this lesson, that God is the giver of all they have, and will call them to account severely for all they do, and make the kings and kingdoms of the world to know they are his, and not theirs, and that their tenure is but at the will of the Lord solely, who can alter and alienate the property of all their enjoyments, being the high Lord paramount above all!

26 And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the

k Matt. 21. 25. Luke 15. 18, 21. [k]heavens do rule.

There shall be no other king chosen in thy room all the time thou livest as a stump of a tree. Thou shalt recover all again, young branches shall sprout out of thee, Job xiv. 7—9. *After that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule:* see ver. 34, 35, &c. If princes will not learn and know this, God will beat it into them. This is the end of all God's rods upon them, if they would hear the voice of them, and him that hath appointed them, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13; Psal. cxix. 67, 71; Micah vi. 9. Though Nebuchadnezzar never proved a convert, yet God made him acknowledge this truth upon his restoration.

27 Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and [l]break off

l 1 Pet. 4. 8.

m Ps. 41. 1, &c.

thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; [m]if it may be ‖[n]a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

‖ Or, *a healing of thine error.*

n 1 Kings 21. 29.

Let my counsel be acceptable unto thee: these words Daniel adds out of his good will to the king, if perhaps it might turn away this dreadful stroke from him, and give the king some hopes of mitigation at least, as it was with Nineveh and others. *Break off:* the word is well translated *break off*, for so it properly signifies, and not *redeem*, as the papists would wrest it, to establish their works of satisfaction and merit; and is no more than this, cease to do evil and learn to do well, change thy course, instead of oppressing the poor show them mercy. *If it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity:* Daniel was not certain of pardon for him, nor did he altogether despair of it, as Peter dealt with Simon Magus, Acts viii. 22. Joel ii. 14, *Who knoweth if he will return and repent?* Jonah iii. 9; Zeph ii. 1—3. Though Daniel gave not this counsel to elude or nullify the decree of God, which was immutable, yet it might turn to the king's good many ways, if he followed this counsel. 1. Hereby this judgment was shorter in the time, and easier in the rigour. 2. That he might acknowledge God to be gracious to him in this chastisement. And, 3. That he might become by his reformation more capable of pardon, and prepared for it.

28 ¶ All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.

29 At the end of twelve months he walked ‖in the palace of the kingdom of

‖ Or, *upon.*

Babylon.

Here we see God did forbear the execution of his judgment decreed the space of one whole year, which may be upon Daniel's words, and he did reform somewhat, as Ahab was spared a good while upon his humiliation, 1 Kings xxi. 27; and God would try him by giving him

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space of repentance, as he did to them before the flood, Gen. vi. 3; and to Jezebel, Rev. ii. 21; but it is most probable, though he may be a little astonished at the first, when he heard God's decree against him, yet having this respite, he grew hardened, and thought it was over, and therefore spreads his plumes and strutted in his pride as high as ever.

o Prov. 16. 18. ch. 5. 20.

30 The king °spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

Great Babylon: as to the greatness of this place, it might be well called great, for most historians and geographers make it forty-five miles about the walls, some sixty; for the height of the walls, they affirm them to be a hundred cubits, and for their thickness, such as six chariots might go abreast upon the top of them. See Bochart in his Phaleg. *That I have built;* which words of his are not true, as to the first foundation of Babylon; for that was done by Nimrod, or Bel, which is the same, Gen. x. 10; but if ye speak touching the repairing and enlarging of it after Nineveh was destroyed, so Nebuchadnezzar might be said to build it, i. e. to make it so great and glorious as at last. *For the honour of my majesty:* the manner of proud tyrants is to engross all honour to themselves; moreover, he attributes nothing to the signal goodness of God to him, but takes all to himself. Now God, that resists the proud, presently falls upon him, and down he comes while he stood crowing and pruning his gay feathers.

p ch. 5. 5. Luke 12. 20. q ver. 24.

31 PWhile the word *was* in the king's mouth, there fell qa voice from heaven, *saying*, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.

There fell a voice from heaven: this made the judgment more remarkable, and argued the sin more provoking, and the anger of God more just against him. Sudden judgments are most dreadful; whereof we have many instances, as in Herod, Elymas, Ananias and Sapphira, &c.: this voice was from God; it also was loud, and clearly perceived by the king and them about him, which the dream intimated more obscurely. Not the kingdom, but the administration of the government, was transferred to others.

cir. 569. r ver. 25.

32 And rthey shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

From men; from the society and conversation of men.

33 The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' *feathers*, and his nails like birds' *claws*.

He was driven from men; being bereft of his understanding, as a man distracted, he fled, and betook himself to the woods; or was thrust and driven out, either by popular tumults, or conspiracy of his nobles, or by his son Evil-merodach. Some think, when he raved, he was bound with chains, and after turned off loose into the woods among beasts. *And his nails like birds claws,* which might easily grow in seven years to a prodigious length and deformity.

cir. 563. s ver. 26.

34 And sat the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him tthat liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* uan everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation:

t ch. 12. 7. Rev. 4. 10. u Ps. 10. 16. ch. 2. 44. & 7. 14. Mic. 4. 7. Luke 1. 33.

Mine understanding returned unto me; God shined upon his soul, and gave him understanding to reflect upon his condition, to consider his sad state, and the causes of it. *I blessed the Most High;* by prayer and praise adoring the justice and mercy of God towards him, giving God the glory of his sovereignty and unchangeableness, ver. 35.

35 And xall the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and yhe doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and znone can stay his hand, or say unto him, aWhat doest thou?

x Is. 40. 15, 17. y Ps. 115. 3. & 135. 6. z Job 34. 29. a Job 9. 12. Is. 45. 9. Rom. 9. 20.

A due consideration of God's infinite greatness makes the creature appear as nothing in comparison of God. Creatures are nothing to help, nothing to hurt, nothing absolutely, nothing in duration, nothing solid and substantial, nothing without dependence, and influence, and support from God. God is *I am*, and there is none else. *Verily every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Selah*, Psal. xxxix. 5. Yea, *less than vanity, and nothing*, Psal. lxii. 9; Isa. xl. 17. *He doeth according to his will*, Psal. cxv. 3. God only is arbitrary. *In the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;* being the Lord of hosts, and the only absolute and universal Monarch of the world. *None can stay his hand;* he is irresistible and uncontrollable, Job ix. 12; Isa. xlv. 9; Rom. xi. 33—36.

36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; band for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was cadded unto me.

b ver. 26. c Job 42. 12. Prov. 22. 4. Matt. 6. 33.

My reason returned unto me: what is a magistrate, yea, or a man, without reason? A brute; as a ship without a pilot, as an army without a commander, as a flock or herd without a shepherd. *Mine honour and brightness returned unto me;* instead of the shape of a savage beast, I got the majesty of a king in my countenance. *My counsellors and my lords sought unto me;* they who before despised and rejected me now were glad to creep to me, and to know their place and distance. *I was established in my kingdom;* in my wonted power and place, owned and obeyed without competitors by all, without question or complaint: see chap. v. 18, 19. *Excellent majesty was added unto me;* he was the most august and magnificent prince on earth, therefore was his kingdom called the lady of kingdoms, Isa. xlvii. 7, 8.

37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, dall whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: eand those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

d Ps. 33. 4. Rev. 15. 3. & 16. 7. e Ex. 18. 11. ch. 5. 20.

Thus can the Lord make the stoutest hearts to stoop, and do him homage. This doxology proceeds from his heart. God is *truth* essentially; he is the rule and standard of truth, his words are truth, his ways are truth: and they are *judgment;* he is wise, and hath dealt justly with me for my pride, and in very faithfulness hath afflicted me, and in very tenderness hath restored me: I do and ever shall adore him for it. *Those that walk in pride he is able to abase;* as he hath declared upon me, in stupendous changes, which I proclaim to all the world for his glory. He had a just controversy with me, and I have no ground to quarrel with him, but to give him glory by this confession.

CHAP. V.

Belshazzar's impious feast, 1—4. *The hand-writing on the wall, which the magicians could not explain, troubleth him*, 5—9. *At the recommendation of the queen Daniel is brought in*, 10—16. *He reproveth the king of pride, profaneness, and idolatry*. 17—21. *He readeth and interpreteth the writing*, 25—29. *Belshazzar slain; the kingdom translated to the Medes*, 30, 31.

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cir. 538. BELSHAZZAR the king [a]made a great
[a] Esth. 1. 3. feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

Belshazzar's name is from riches and power. They were wont, when they were promoted, to take new names, which also were significant, as this is, Belshazzar; Bel hath or gives power and riches; this they attributed to the honour of their idol, which belongs only to the God of heaven. There is much contest among the learned who this Belshazzar was; let us mind the Scripture, and not trust to heathen historians. In the second verse here he is called the son of Nebuchadnezzar, his father, so ver. 11 twice, and ver. 13, 18, 22; if he were his son, then was he called also Merodach, or Evil-merodach. Yet he might be called his son though his grandson; under these three was the captivity, Jer. xxvii. 7, Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach, and Belshazzar. *Made a great feast*, after the manner of the East, who showed their magnificence this way, and pleased the epicurean palates of his nobles herein, it being no small piece of policy with some princes to oblige their grandees by balls and compotations; this I believe: yet I conceive also, this feast was anniversary for the honour of their idol Bel, as Herodotus testifieth. But this is prodigious, that he should carouse when the city was besieged and ready to be taken by Darius the Mede, for, saith the text, *he drank wine before the thousand.* These Bacchanalian feasts have often proved fatal and tragical, Esth. i.

2 Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine,
[b] ch. 1. 2. Jer. 52. 19. commanded to bring the golden and silver
‖ Or, *grandfather*: As Jer. 27. 7. 2 Sam. 9. 7. 2 Chr. 15. 16. vers. 11, 13. vessels [b]which his ‖father Nebuchadnezzar had †taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.
† Chald. *brought forth.*

This king having the wine, liked it so well, that he resolved to make a merry day of it, and in order to it, sent for the vessels of God's temple, which he did in scorn and contempt, triumphing thereby over God and his people; but this sport lasted not long: they had more honour for the vessels of their own idols, which they kept sacred and untouched; therefore the prophet upbraids them with this insolent profaneness, for the concubines also drank of them.

3 Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which *was* at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.

[c] Rev. 9. 20. 4 They drank wine, [c]and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

At the same time insulting the great God of heaven and earth. The name of God is never more profaned than among drunkards and epicures.

[d] ch. 4. 31. 5 ¶ [d]In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

In the same hour: by this it did appear what was the cause of the king's punishment and ruin, namely, his reproaching of God and profaning the holy vessels. *Fingers of a man's hand;* the likeness of a man's hand, which Rabbi Solomon saith was managed by the angel Gabriel; it is clear it was immediately from God. This was a plainer testimony then that of his father's dream, for hereof were above a thousand witnesses, besides his conscience that shook him, a thousand more. *Over against the candlestick:* by this it appears how the feast continued far in the night in which Babylon was taken and Belshazzar slain, ver. 30. *The king saw the part of the hand that wrote:* God intended it for him, and that he should see it with his own eyes, and it should not be brought, him by report, which affords ground of doubting; but here was undeniable proof and conviction, the visible hand of God was here; and it was also for terror to him, and spoiled his draughts of wine, and was a cooler to their jollities.

6 Then the king's †countenance †was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the ‖†joints of his loins were loosed, and his [e]knees smote one against another.
† Chald. *brightness.* ver. 9. † Chald. *changed it.* ‖ Or, *girdles.* Is. 5. 27. † Chald. *bindings.* [e] Nah. 2. 10. or, *knots.*

His cheerful countenance was turned to paleness, fear and horror had quite blasted the majesty of his face, like an eclipse of the sun. So soon can the terrors of God shake the loftiest cedars; it is like an earthquake in the bowels. Thus can God terrify the tyrants of the earth, that he who hath the heart of a lion shall utterly melt away. Thus can the Lord spoil the mad mirth of drunken atheists in a moment; when they are in their cups, oh how valiant are they! as the king of Syria, 1 Kings xx. 16, 19, &c.

7 [f]The king cried †aloud to bring in
[f] ch. 2. 2. & 4. 6. † Chald. *with might.* [g] Is. 47. 13. [g]the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. *And* the king spake, and said to the wise *men* of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with ‖scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about his neck, [h]and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.
‖ Or, *purple.* [h] ch. 6. 2.

To bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers, to read the hand-writing, with promise of *scarlet clothing, gold chains, and honours.* This is the old trade, and the last refuge this poor heathen prince had, which yet failed him; for how can the devil help when God is against him? 1 Sam. xxviii. 16, &c. Moreover, he had his father's experience, chap. ii. 27; iv. 7. Twice he tried them, and they could do nothing, and yet he will go to the devil's oracle. Men naturally leave God and go to refuges of lies, and God gives them up to strong delusions to believe their lies.

8 Then came in all the king's wise
[i] ch. 2. 27. & 4. 7. *men:* [i]but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.

The rabbies say it was not in the Chaldee character, though the words were Chaldee, but the old Hebrew, Canaanitish, Phœnician, and Samaritan letters; or else because only the initial letters, M. T. P., were written. But God reserved this honour for Daniel, and to him that He might have all the glory. Besides, this interpretation was figurative, about weighing in a balance.

9 Then was king Belshazzar greatly
[k] ch. 2. 1. † Chald. *brightness.* ver. 6. [k]troubled, and his †countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonied.

The second time, because his hopes in his wise men made him ashamed, and God would give him so much grief as he had pleasure in his luxury. *His lords were astonied:* these were associates in sinning, and therefore must share in his consternation: so far were they from comforting him.

10 ¶ *Now* the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house: *and* the queen spake and said, [l]O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed:
[l] ch. 2. 4. & 3. 9.

The women in those courts had always an apartment by themselves, and this being queen mother, and aged, did not mingle herself with the king's wives and concubines, but withdrew herself from those pleasures in banqueting, yet brake rule in coming in now upon this solemn occasion and fright.

11 [m]There is a man in thy kingdom, in
[m] ch. 2. 48. & 4. 8, 9, 18. whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy ‖father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the
‖ Or, *grandfather.* ver. 2.

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king Nebuchadnezzar thy ‖father, the king, *I say*, thy father, made [n]master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, *and* soothsayers;

‖ Or, *grandfather* ver. 2.
n ch. 4. 9.

A man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: this man was Daniel; but how came the king not to think of him? Daniel possibly was out of his place, by his own resignation, or his enemies' malicious contrivance, and was willing to withdraw himself from the court, and from the company of the soothsayers, and would not be reckoned one of them.

12 [o]Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, ‖interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and ‖dissolving of †doubts, were found in the same Daniel, [p]whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

o ch. 6. 3.
‖ Or, *of an interpreter, &c.*
‖ Or, *of a dissolver.*
† Chald. *knots*
p ch. 1. 7.

13 Then was Daniel brought in before the king. *And* the king spake and said unto Daniel, *Art* thou that Daniel, which *art* of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my ‖father brought out of Jewry?

‖ Or, *grandfather.*

Though he was in high esteem for his skill in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, who had him in high honour, *for the Spirit of God in him;* yet he being dead, and other kings coming on that had never tried his abilities nor known his merits, (as it was in Joseph's case, Exod. i. 8,) hereby he came to be neglected and despised, as those words seem to import, ver. 13, *Art thou that Daniel of the captivity of the children of Judah*, &c.?

14 I have even heard of thee, that [q]the spirit of the gods *is* in thee, and *that* light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.

q ver. 11, 12.

15 And now [r]the wise *men*, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing:

r ver. 7, 8.

16 And I have heard of thee, that thou canst †make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: [s]now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

† Chald. *interpret.*
s ver. 7.

These things were spoken to before, ver. 7, 8.

17 ¶ Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy ‖rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

‖ Or, *fee*, as ch. 2. 6.

Did not Daniel receive gifts and honours from Nebuchadnezzar, on the like occasion? *Answ.* He was then young, and the captivity was to be long, and he by his place could be helpful to his poor brethren: but now the time of the captivity was near expired, and Babylon in distress by invasion and siege, and that night king, city, and kingdom lost; and there the time was different, and the case also. Moreover Daniel would not receive a reward for so sad a message.

18 O thou king, [t]the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:

t ch. 2. 37, 38. & 4. 17, 22, 25.

This the prophet repeats, to put Belshazzar in mind how God dealt with his father; for it is good for kings to read over the story of their ancestors, and take warning, and take example. In the first they are seamarks, in the second landmarks.

19 And for the majesty that he gave him, [u]all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

u Jer. 27. 7. ch. 3. 4.

He ruled arbitrarily, and had power of life and death, he did what he would, his will was a law. And this lifted up his heart in pride, and hardened it as Pharaoh's, for which, being incorrigible, *he was deposed from his kingly throne*, as in the next verse.

20 [x]But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened ‖in pride, he was †deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

x ch. 4. 30, 37.
‖ Or, *to deal proudly* Ex. 18. 11.
† Chald. *made to come down.*

Which was explained before: all this Daniel minds him of to rub up his memory, that he might have the fuller blow in the application, ver. 22, for the aggravation of his crime.

21 And he was [y]driven from the sons of men; and ‖his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; [z]till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and *that* he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

y ch. 4. 32, &c.
‖ Or, *he made his heart equal, &c.*
z ch. 4. 17, 25.

22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, [a]hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;

a 2 Chron. 33. 23. & 36. 12.

Sins against knowledge, experience, and example have the highest aggravation. Thy father was punished for his pride most dreadfully, and thou knewest it, and behold thou art worse than he. God punisheth others for example and warning to us, that we *may hear and fear, and do no more wickedly;* but thou, O king Belshazzar, art more wicked than thy father; he was restored, but thou art utterly destroyed. And now he goes on to tell for what.

23 [b]But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, [c]which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath *is*, [d]and whose *are* all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

b ver. 3, 4.
c Ps. 115. 5, 6.
d Jer. 10. 23.

He instanceth in three or four things. 1. They have brought the vessels of his house before thee to drink wine in them, to profane them in your idolatrous feast, and ye have all polluted them with your filthy, blasphemous mouths, concubines and all. 2. Ye have praised the idol gods of metal, wood, and stone, which cannot hear, nor see, nor know. 3. And hast not glorified the true God, in whose hands thy breath is, and all thy ways. Yea, thou hast highly dishonoured, and affronted, and reproached him.

24 Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.

It is called *part of the hand*, because the hand appeared parted from the rest of the body.

25 ¶ And this *is* the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

26 This *is* the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

Mene, Mene; He hath numbered, or, It is numbered,

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it is numbered. These words are doubled for the greater confirmation, to note that the number of his sins and of his days, both of life and reign, are full. It relates to the number of the seventy years' captivity now completed, or to the seventy years for the overthrow of the Babylonish empire, or the translation of it to the Medes and Persians, foretold Isa. xiii., xiv.; Jer. l., and in the dream, Dan. ii. 32.

e Job 31. 6. Ps. 62. 9. Jer. 6. 30.

27 TEKEL; [e]Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

Thou art weighed in a hanging balance, alluding to the weighing of goods exactly in scales; and God is said to weigh the mountains in scales: it shows his just proceeding; God is not hasty in punishing, but will give just allowance in weighing, he will hold the scales, he will do it fairly before all the world. *Art found wanting;* thou dost not hold weight, but comest short vastly. There is no weight nor worth in thee. Thou hast made light of God in his honour, people, vessels; and the Lord makes light of thee, thou art reprobate silver, false coin; thou art of no value.

f Foretold, Is. 21. 2. ver. 31. ch. 9. 1. g ch. 6. 28.

28 PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the [f]Medes and [g]Persians.

Separated, divided, broken. *Peres* signifies two things, *broken off*, and *Persian;* noting, first, That this kingdom was broken from Belshazzar, and his line and family. Secondly, That it was given from the Chaldeans to the Persians. Then it was divided between the Medes and Persians; for Cyrus took Babylon, he was a Persian; after that he gave part of it to Darius his son-in-law, and he was a Mede; and so they were as it were partners. So this vast empire, that was one sole, entire thing under Belshazzar, becomes now as it were two, divided betwixt the Medes and Persians, which thing is curious to observe, from this word *Phars, Pharsin, Peres*, which signifies not only *dividing*, but *Persian*, as Pliny testifies. With the Chaldeans, the Persians, in Scripture, are called Elamites.

29 Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and *put* a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, [h]that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

h ver. 7.

Though it were a sad unwelcome message to him, yet he would be as good as his word, and performed his promise; for his princes were witnesses to it, and the word of those kings was counted sacred; besides, it was a great thing that Daniel had unfolded, all were convinced of it as well as the king. *Quest.* But how comes Daniel to accept that now, which he seemed to refuse before, ver. 17? *Answ.* He refused before lest he should seem to prophesy for reward, which was dishonourable; now it is as it were forced upon him, for the king commanded it, and there is as much danger and crime with some in refusing a favour as boldness in begging.

cir. 538. i Jer. 51. 31, 39, 57.

30 ¶ [i]In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

Which the heathen histories do also confirm. This shows the severity of God's judgment against the highest offenders, Psal. ii., cx., cxlix.; Hos. x. 7. It also confirms the truth of God's threatenings, and of the hand-writing, as Daniel interpreted. Some are sad instances of God's veracity.

k ch. 9. 1. † Chald. he *as the son of, &c.* ‖ Or, *now.*

31 [k]And Darius the Median took the kingdom, †*being* ‖about threescore and two years old.

There were two of this name, one called the Mede, another Darius called Persian. This in the text was he that with Cyrus besieged and took Babylon; he gave himself the name Darius, being before called Nabonnedus. He was chief in the siege, and first in the quarrel against the Chaldees.

CHAP. VI.

Daniel is made chief of the presidents and princes of the realm, 1—3. *They conspire against him, and obtain an insnaring decree,* 4—9. *Daniel, accused of the breach thereof, against the king's will is cast into the lions' den,* 10—17. *The king findeth him miraculously saved,* 18—23. *His adversaries are cast in and devoured,* 24. *Darius by a decree magnifieth God,* 25—28.

cir. 538. a Esth. 1. 1.

IT pleased Darius to set [a]over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom;

2 And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel *was* first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

Of whom Daniel was first: this was Belshazzar's promise to Daniel, he should be the third ruler in the kingdom, chap. v. 7, 16, 29; the first was general of the army, the second president of the palace, the third of the land and provinces.

b ch. 5. 12.

3 Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, [b]because an excellent spirit *was* in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

There were three things that made Darius greatly favour Daniel. 1. Because he prophesied the destruction of Belshazzar and his reign, for which cause the king of Babylon favoured Jeremiah the prophet, chap. xxxix. 11, &c. 2. Because he saw so noble a spirit in him, *the spirit of the holy gods.* 3. Because Darius himself was old and unfit for government, and therefore took Daniel with him into Media, Joseph. Antiq. 10. 12, whereby the Lord by advancing Daniel made careful provision for his church. This was an act of great wisdom in Darius, to prefer men for their parts and merit, and to make them that have most of God in them to be their chief favourites; a thing rarely minded by the princes of the world, who usually favour them most that do most gratify their lusts.

cir. 537. c Eccles. 4 4.

4 ¶ [c]Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he *was* faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Sought to find occasion against Daniel; made diligent inquiry, and set their wits to work about it: *who can stand before envy?* This disease always reigns in princes' courts, every one would be uppermost and chief favourite, and quarrel with all them that stand in their light; their eye is evil because their prince's eye is good. *Concerning the kingdom;* and so to have made him guilty of treason, or other high misdemeanours, unfaithfulness, and falseness in the king's business; but all their wit and malice could find none, forasmuch as he was conscientiously faithful.

5 Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find *it* against him concerning the law of his God.

Pliny said of old, it is the custom of courtiers to study how to make innocent men faulty, and Scripture and experience tell us that the most religious are accounted most dangerous to the government, and that debauchery is loyalty; and that flatterers ought to be the best favourites. Ezra iv. 12—14; Neh. vi. 5—7; Esth. iii. 8; Dan. iii. 12, and this text, are plain proofs of it, besides the experience of every age to this day. This was for the honour of Daniel's integrity, and for a brand of infamy upon his malicious enemies.

‖ Or, *came tumultuously.* d Neh. 2. 3. ver. 21. ch. 2. 4.

6 Then these presidents and princes ‖assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, [d]King Darius, live for ever.

‖ Or, *interdict.*

7 All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm ‖decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

8 Now, O king, establish the decree,

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and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the [e] law of the Medes and Persians, which [†] altereth not.

9 Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

[e] Esth. i. 19. & viii. ver. 12, 15. [†] Chald. passeth not.

The sum of all was this; they had a plot against Daniel and his people, to throw him out of place and favour; to effect that, they fall upon him in the point of religion, which they would make to be treason. How so? They contrived an act of uniformity, by an unalterable law, to ask no petition of any god or man, but of the king, for one month, upon pain of death. They wheedled the king into it, and passed it into a law. The king sees the plot to be against Daniel, and would have saved him, but they held the king to it; they were zealous for executing laws of their own procuring; it was a net they had privily laid for this holy man, and had got him fast. 1. We see the horridness of this decree against God, for it was to ungod him for a time, that Darius might be deified. 2. It is marvellous that Darius should suffer himself to be persuaded to this idolatry, blasphemy, and sacrilege, but that we know it was common to the kings of the East to show themselves willing to be accounted gods. Some give three reasons why Darius was persuaded to it. (1.) Because he was old, and had not much authority, and by this means he would gain it highly. (2.) Because by this the superstitious Chaldeans, newly conquered, would be the better kept under. (3.) Hereby he would seem not at all to be beholden to Cyrus for the share of his government. 3. The wickedness of this decree appeared also in this, that it brake all the bonds of nature's laws, between superiors and inferiors, for one month. 4. The craft of this cursed cabal is seen in this, that they mind Darius that it was his honour, interest, and duty to see this law executed, seeing it was the custom and constitution of the Medes and Persians, and he himself was a Mede. The Babylonians had no such law and custom, but the others had of old, Esth. i. 15, 19; viii. 8. 5. The courage, zeal, and sincerity of Daniel in not baulking the course of his devotion for fear of the king's edict; but as if he had not been concerned at all in it, being overawed by the fear of God, who was superior to all the gods and princes of the world, he made the command and institution of God alone the rule of his worship.

10 ¶ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber [f] toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees [g] three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

[f] 1 Kings 8. 44, 48. Ps. 5. 7. Jonah 2. 4. [g] Ps. 55. 17. Acts 2. 1, 2, 15. & 3. 1. & 10. 9.

His windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem: this was, 1 Kings viii. 47—49, according to Solomon's prayer, which doubtless all the devout Jews in their captivity did observe. *Toward Jerusalem;* not towards the east, which was the manner of the Gentiles; nor towards the king's palace, lest that, in compliance with the king's edict, he should seem to worship him; but towards the west and the temple in Jerusalem, where the holy of holies stood in the west end, and because the temple was the place where the Lord placed his name and worship, and promised to appear, and accept his people and their sacrifices, all being a type of Christ, through whom only the saints are accepted; which doubtless Daniel by faith had an eye to; believing also that God in his own time would deliver them out of this captivity, and bring them back again, and that he faithfully minded these things in the midst of his honours, and riches, and employments. *Kneeled upon his knees:* this posture was always used in times of mourning and danger; not that we are tied to this gesture, but it is a comely posture before the great God; noting of guilt at the bar of God's tribunal, and begging for our lives, by humble confession and humiliation, and craving pardon, and blessing God for his mercies. *Three times a day:* thus David, Psal. lv. 17. These three times were, one at nine in the morning, which was their third hour of the day, Acts ii. 15; the sixth hour was at twelve o'clock, then Peter prayed, Acts x. 9; the ninth hour was our three in the afternoon, which was the time of the evening sacrifice, 1 Kings xviii. 36; Acts iii. 1; it is called *the hour of prayer*, and at that our Saviour Christ offered up himself a sacrifice for us, Matt. xxvii. 46, 50. Now Daniel ordered his affairs so, that, though great, they should not hinder his solemn devotions to God. *As he did aforetime;* by which we see he was a holy man, also that he did not abate his prayers for the king's command, nor did he rashly break the law, by doing it purposely, because he did no more than he was wont to do in serving his God. Daniel did not imprudently, much less sinfully, in this action. 1. Because he would have declared by it that he preferred man before God. 2. It was against the law of nature, which commands God to be worshipped. 3. Against the dictates and peace of his own conscience. 4. Against the people of God, whom he would grieve and stumble by this forbearance. 5. Against his enemies, by hardening them in their evil way, and giving them occasion of triumphing and blaspheming.

11 Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

This design being laid by them, they watched narrowly, and it took; they came and found all open. He feared not to be found praying, he prevented their breaking open doors, and rushing in, or making proof; he owned all, and freely offered himself.

12 [h] Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask *a petition* of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing *is* true, [i] according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

[h] ch. 3. 8. [i] ver. 8.

They had enough now, they came with open mouth, they pleaded the breach of the king's laws, they tell the king he had signed it, and it could not be disannulled; the king's authority and the honour of the nation lay at stake. The king owned such a law, and it was unalterable.

13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, [k] which *is* of the children of the captivity of Judah, [l] regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

[k] ch. 1. 6. & 5. 13. [l] ch. 3. 12.

Here they call him *that Daniel*, as, ver. 5, *this Daniel;* both by way of contempt, when they had laid him low in their thoughts and words, intending the king should have the same thoughts of him too; hereby they should have the fairer blow at him. *Of the children of the captivity of Judah;* a prisoner at mercy, and yet rebelliously slights the king and his laws. What! because he chose to obey God rather than men, and an ungodly law, as this was in the height? Well, that is his great crime, that he prays to his God three times a day. *Regardeth not thee, O king;* which we account dishonourable to thy greatness, and unsufferable from such a mushroom as he is. What, do all the native subjects of the king keep his laws, and must this Daniel presume to break them and be indemnified? Wilt thou tolerate this, O king?

14 Then the king, when he heard *these* words, [m] was sore displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

[m] So Mark 6. 26.

He was not wroth with Daniel, as Nebuchadnezzar upon the accusation against the three young men, chap. iii. 19, but he was angry with himself, that he should be so moved by his courtiers, against an innocent person of so much honour and honesty. This made him labour to save Daniel till sun-set. Sometimes blaming his own inadvertency and levity in so rash and sinful a decree. Sometimes considering the great reverence of so holy a man. Then the

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cruelty and craft in laying snares by laws made on purpose, against the best people in his court and kingdom. Then withal how hard it was to break or elude a law that was by custom unalterable, and how unsafe to reject his princes when they pleaded for the king and his laws.

15 Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that [n] the law of the Medes and Persians *is*, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

n ver. 8.

These were bold men, they were resolved to follow their blows, and would have their will rather than the king should have his in this case; which on the king's part was honourable and royal, to retrieve an evil act, and to retract, or at least to mitigate, a rigid and rash decree. *No decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed:* thus Haman contrived and pleaded, yet there was a way found to prevent execution, Esth. viii. Again, this law, which they plead was fundamental to make all laws and decrees immutable, was absurd and impolitic; for laws should be essentially changeable by the law-makers, because they often see greater cause to change a law when it grows obsolete and burdensome, though before thought necessary, than to make it at first; whereof we have sufficient instances in all nations in all ages. Will any legislative power in the world so bind their own hands, as to entail a yoke upon themselves and nation which they and posterity could not remedy? The intent of the lawgiver is the law, the equity of it is the obligation of it, which also is the true measure of its duration.

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast *him* into the den of lions. *Now* the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

The king commanded: he had a good mind to do Daniel a kindness, but he could not stem the tide of his flatterers, who being crossed might machinate some mischief against him; having this plausible pretence for it, that they stood for the fundamental laws of the land, which the king endeavoured to null by his prerogative for the sake of one person, his pure vassal, being an alien, and of another religion, which was contrary to that which was by law established. *Cast him into the den of lions:* thus the best man in the kingdom becomes a sacrifice to the malice of the vilest men; the king consenting and commanding it against his conscience, but for reasons of state; being inexcusable for assuming the honour and worship of a god, exclusive to all other gods and worship; and, for all that he was convinced of the true God, would not worship him, nor suffer others to do it, under pain of death. *Thy God will deliver thee.* No thanks to him. Why, then, did he cast the servant of God to the lions to try experiments upon him? No, to excuse himself, and to comfort Daniel; but to little purpose either.

17 [o] And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; [p] and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

o Lam. 3. 53.

p So Mat. 27. 66.

They are resolved to make all fast and sure. So did the enemies of the *three young men*, by the hellish heat of the fiery furnace. So did the enemies of Christ, Matt. xxvii. 66. So did Herod serve Peter, Acts xii. 4, &c. Thus Paul and Silas were made sure, Acts xvi. 23, 24. Thus the heathen persecutors, that thought by variety, cruelty, and universality of persecutions and torments to drive the Christian religion out of the world. And thus antichrist by crusades, massacres, and burnings. In this *sealing of the den* they took away all power from the king of delivering Daniel, because they knew he favoured him; by which the power and providence of God for his preservation and deliverance was the more signalized, Acts iv. 26—28. Thus the Lord gratifies the enemies of his people oftentimes, as if they had a commission from him to do their worst; and they go a great way in it, as far as they have rope, Isa. x. 6, 7; Luke xxii. 53.

18 ¶ Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were ‖ instruments of musick brought before him: [q] and his sleep went from him.

‖ Or, *table.*

q ch. 2. 1.

Passed the night fasting; yea, and without instruments of music and sleep. The king was in perplexity, he was under great conviction that he had done very dishonourably and cruelly, by hearkening to the counsel of his wicked courtiers; he should have rescinded his rash decree, and rated them for their barbarity against Daniel, and have overruled them, and let him out; he is convinced of all this, and grieves for it, but to little purpose. Many are displeased with themselves for their vices, yet are drawn away with them; and, upon a point of honour, or other carnal ground, never come to true repentance, which consists in a change of heart and life. Herod was like troubled for John Baptist, but for all that, for his oath's sake to a wanton wretch, and for the company's sake, he sent and beheaded him, Matt. xiv. 9.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

Watching, and grieving, and being between fear and hope, longing to be satisfied.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: *and* the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, [r] is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

r ch. 3. 15.

Servant of the living God: this was a commendation both of Daniel and his God, though he served both very coarsely. *Is thy God able to deliver thee?* is he omnipotent? surely if ever he will put forth his power, it will be in thy case, for thou servest him continually, thou wilt not be frightened from his service by savage beasts, by ramping and roaring lions; now it will appear what thy God will do for his servant. Ah, poor king, God is a better Master to his servants than thou art, even to Daniel.

21 Then said Daniel unto the king, [s] O king, live for ever.

s ch. 2. 4.

He prays for the king's prosperity, though he suffered under his hand.

22 [t] My God hath sent his angel, and hath [u] shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

t ch. 3. 28.

u Heb. 11. 33.

My God hath sent his angel; he had his eye specially to Him whose cause and honour was concerned in this matter. The Lord either took the lions' hunger away from them, or made Daniel appeared terrible to them; or, literally, shut their mouths. *Before him innocency was found in me;* because by faith he trusted in the Lord, Heb. xi. 33; therefore the papists from hence falsely conclude justification by works and merits, assigning fallaciously a false cause instead of a principal, formal, and meritorious cause; for the word *forasmuch* or *because* in Scripture doth often signify an occasion rather than a cause; Psal. xxv. 11, *Pardon my sin, for it is great.* Daniel did not use to argue thus, but the contrary, Dan. ix. 7, 18. Daniel pleads the innocence of his cause to the king in suffering, not the righteousness of his person; and that the Lord delivered him to assert his honour in his unjust sufferings. *Before thee, O king, have I done no hurt;* nor have I sinned against thee, O king: the fear of God is set before honouring of kings, 1 Pet. ii. 17.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, [x] because he believed in his God.

x Heb. 11. 33.

He trusted in God's power and faithfulness, not to work

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a miracle, but committed himself to him as a righteous Judge, who would deliver here, or save him hereafter.

x Deut. 19. 19.

24 ¶ And the king commanded, [x]and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast *them* into the

z Esth. 9. 10. See Deut. 24. 16. 2 Kings 14. 6.

den of lions, them, [z]their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

They cast them into the den of lions; thus they digged a pit for another, and fell into it themselves, which the heathens say was a very just law, the law of retaliation, which the Lord doth often observe, as in the case of Adonibezek, and Ahab, and many more. *Them, their children, and their wives:* Darius was yet cruel in this execution, because he cast in with them to the lions their *wives* and *children*. This is not without precedent in Scripture, as in Korah and his company, Achan, and Haman, for the greater terror. For the king's justice in this fact, we need not trouble ourselves, it being the custom of the arbitrary tyrants of the East.

a ch. 4. 1.

25 ¶ [a]Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

In all the earth, i. e. of the known earth then, being chiefly that great empire; for what had he to do in all the world besides? It is usual with the Turk, Tartar, Chinese, to arrogate the same universality with the like pride.

b ch. 3. 29.
c Ps. 99. 1.
d ch. 4. 34.
e ch. 2. 44. & 4. 3, 34. & 7. 14, 27. Luke 1. 33.

26 [b]I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men [c]tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: [d]for he *is* the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be [e]destroyed, and his dominion *shall be even* unto the end.

Tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; take heed how they speak evil of this great God, but own and honour him as such; whereof he gives the reason following. *He is the living God, &c.* You would take Darius by these words to be a convert: how far this went with him, and how long it lasted, who knoweth? Surely if he were in earnest, he would forsake his idolatry, and set up the worship of the true God in his kingdom, that his subjects might turn from dumb idols, as inconsistent with the living God and his worship. Howbeit, it is clear that Darius had learnt this doctrine from Daniel, whom he heard and honoured, and was the more convinced of it by this miraculous deliverance of Daniel from the lions.

f ch. 4. 3.

27 He delivereth and rescueth, [f]and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from

† Heb. *hand.*

the †power of the lions.

g ch. 1. 21. h Ezra 1. 1, 2.

28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, [g]and in the reign of [h]Cyrus the Persian.

See chap. i. 21. Who was after Darius's death, who was called, say some, Nabonnedus. Daniel continued all this time in great honour.

CHAP. VII.

Daniel's vision of the four beasts, 1—8, *and of God's kingdom,* 9—14. *The interpretation thereof,* 15—28.

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IN the first year of Belshazzar king of

a Num. 12. 6. Amos 3. 7. † Chald. *saw.* b ch. 2. 28. ‖ Or, *words.*

Babylon [a]Daniel †had a dream and [b]visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, *and* told the sum of the ‖matters.

This prophecy is written in Chaldee, to be a monument and document to him of the reverence his father and grandfather showed towards God, who had done such mighty works for them, and against them, to humble their pride, and make them know that the high God ruled, and they reigned at his mercy. Howbeit Belshazzar made no use of it, but lifted himself up in profaneness and pride till the wrath of God plucked him down. *In the first year of Belshazzar:* now Daniel begins to declare the visions God showed him at sundry times, therefore he goes back to the first year of Belshazzar. It is observed by the curious, that the word *Belshazzar* is here changed by the prophet, one letter transposed, which alters the signification greatly; for his name is בלשאצר chap. v. 1, which signifies *treasures searched out and possessed;* but the word in the text is this, בלאשצר which means, *Bel is consumed with the fire of an enemy,* as was prophesied by Jeremiah, chap. l. 2; li. 44. See Jer. li. 25, 58. The Jews used to change the names of idols and idolaters, and it turned to a reproach to them, as Grotius proves well out of Moses de Kotzi. *He wrote the dream:* these visions of Daniel were sent, and recorded by him in writing, for the benefit of the church, to rectify their mistake; for they thought all things would succeed prosperously after they returned out of their captivity: yet they should find a world of troubles in many generations following, seeing that of the four great monarchies, which he calls beasts, there was but one passed, and they should find three more yet to come. This Daniel dreamed, saw, wrote, and told the sum of it.

2 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.

Because Daniel doth not expound what is meant by *winds*, expositors think there is room left for every one's conjecture; wherein this seems most likely, that by the four winds of the great sea is signified commotions of contrary nations and factions, striving together by wars, and producing these four beasts successively. That this is often signified by winds, see Jer. xlix. 36; li. 1; in the destruction of Babylon, the first monarchy; and of Elam, i. e. the Persian monarchy. *The great sea* in Scripture is the Mediterranean Sea, called now the Levant, Archipelago, Straits, &c. 1. Comparatively; for the people called lakes seas, as the sea of Galilee, Gennesareth, Cinneroth, the Dead Sea, or lake of Sodom; but the Mediterranean was *Jamma rabba*, the great sea, for its length and breadth, above all the lakes put together, though it be itself but a lake in comparison of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. 2. *Great sea*, because the great stage of action hath been on it, and adjoined to it; and all the four great monarchies have been masters of it. 3. Allegorically, for it is usual in Scripture to compare people to waters, and nations to seas, Rev. xiii. 1; xvii. 15; called so from the confused noise of it, Rev. xix. 6, and from the unstableness of them, always running and rolling with every wind as it blows, endangering those that ride upon the backs of its swelling waves.

3 And four great beasts [c]came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

c Rev. 13. 1.

That is, four great monarchies. *great* in comparison of particular kingdoms that were little to them; *beasts* for their idolatry, and tyrannical oppressions and depredations.

4 The first *was* [d]like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, ‖and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

d Deut. 28. 49. 2 Sam. 1. 23. Jer. 4. 7, 13. & 48. 40. Ezek. 17. 3. Hab. 1. 8. ‖ Or, *wherewith.*

Lion, and eagle; one the king of beasts, the other the king of birds, for which he is called the golden head, as Dan. ii. 32, 38. This was the Chaldean or Assyrian; whose seat was first at Babylon, after at Nineveh, and then at Babylon again. *Had eagle's wings;* they were swift, overrunning many countries, and brought their monarchy to a prodigious height in a short time. Thus Jeremiah prophesied, chap. iv. 13, *He shall come up as clouds, his chariots shall be as a whirlwind, his horses are swifter than eagles;* in the 7th verse called a *lion*, and here like *clouds, whirlwinds*, and *eagles* for swiftness, Jer. xlviii. 40; Ezek. xvii. 3. *The wings thereof were plucked;* which was first in stopping the career of their victories, and after in casting them

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out of their kingdom, the nation was not destroyed, but their monarchy. *A man's heart was given unto it:* this was truly verified in Nebuchadnezzar, after he was as a beast turned out amongst beasts, Dan. iv. 31—34; and finished upon his son Belshazzar for not taking warning, Dan. v. 22.

e ch. 2. 39.

5 eAnd behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and ‖it raised up itself on one side, and *it had* three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.

‖ Or, *it raised up one dominion.*

Another beast, viz. the Medes and Persians, a fierce, grim, ravenous creature, and barbarously cruel, especially the mountainous part, as of Caucasus, Armenia, and Media by the Caspian Sea near the Tartars, and that which borders upon the Mogul, the Usbecks, and the Sasbuts; read Isa. xiii. 17, 18; Jer. li. 48, 53, called *spoilers.* See Jer. li. 11, &c. Thus God sent in the northern bears upon Babylon to devour flesh. See how God calls them against Babylon, Jer. li. 20—23, 27, 28; he reckons Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz, and the Medes, i. e. Armenia, Parthia, Hyrcania, &c., the rough northern hungry bears. *On one side,* i. e. the north side; for the Mede first arose and sent to Cyrus the Persian to come in and assist him against the Assyrian, and made him general. *It had three ribs in the mouth of it:* several of the Babylonian subjects revolted from the Babylonian, (and all these made the three ribs,) as the Hyrcanians, and Gobrias.

6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also ffour heads; and dominion was given to it.

f ch. 8. 8, 22.

This *leopard* was the Grecian monarchy; a leopard is less than a lion, so was this monarchy at first, but yet durst fight with a lion; so did Alexander encounter Darius with a force very small to the other. A *leopard* also for his swiftness; therefore described with *four wings* on his back. *The beast had also four heads,* because his commanders that succeeded him were four of his chief commanders, that divided that empire into four parts between them; and these were the four heads to whom dominion was given, Ptolemy, Seleucus, Philippus, Antigonus, or, as others, Perdiccas and Meleager, Dan. viii. 21, 22. *Dominion was given to it:* Alexander did this by the mighty power of God; else how could he conquer Darius, that had six hundred thousand, with thirty thousand, and in so short a time go conqueror over Asia to the East Indies, I mean that part which now the Mogul possesseth, where he fought with Porus and beat him?

7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold ga fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it *was* diverse from all the beasts that *were* before it; hand it had ten horns.

g ch. 2. 40. ver. 19, 23.

h ch. 2. 41. Rev. 13. 1.

A fourth beast: this was the Roman empire; for that followed the Grecian, and was monstrous as to his rise and progress. *Stamped the residue with the feet of it.* As to the variety and cruelty of the government, it made use not only of Italians, but Spaniards, Gauls, Germans, Britons, which made their armies hardy and hard as iron, which broke in pieces the gold, silver, and brass. But it is plain this is the last kingdom of the four, that was to be destroyed by Christ's kingdom, and this work was to be doing till the last age, ver. 13. *Ten horns,* i. e. kings, ver. 24; Rev. xvii. 12, called *horns,* i. e. of iron, as the teeth were, i. e. cruel and persecuting; as beasts push and gore with their horns.

8 I considered the horns, and, behold, ithere came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn *were* eyes like the eyes kof man, land a mouth speaking great things.

i ver. 20, 21, 24. ch. 8. 9.

k Rev. 9. 7. l Ps. 12. 3. ver. 25. Rev 13. 5.

Daniel *considered,* and this calls upon us to consider the matter. *Another little horn:* some will have the Turk meant; others, before him, Antiochus Epiphanes; others Julius Cæsar; others antichrist. It is certain the horn that riseth out of the he-goat is Antiochus, Dan. viii. 9—12, but the horn here mentioned riseth out of the fourth beast, or under him. Therefore he must be the Turk, as some will have it, or the Romish antichrist. Not the Turk, since, 1. The horn signified only one king, ver. 24. 2. He must gain all the fourth kingdom. 3. He must reign before the kingdom of Christ is erected. *Before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots:* some will have Egypt, Asia, and Greece to be the three which are possessed by the Turk; but though he hath got the Egyptian and Constantinopolitan, which are two, must the German be the third? He hath pushed hard for it now of late. *A mouth speaking great things:* this again some interpret of Antiochus, some of Mahomet, some of the Cæsars, others of antichrist, all concerning their craft and blasphemies, which properly can be meant but of one.

9 ¶ mI beheld till the thrones were cast down, and nthe Ancient of days did sit, owhose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, p*and* his wheels *as* burning fire.

m Rev. 20. 4. n Ps. 90. 2. ver. 13, 22. o Ps. 104. 2. Rev. 1. 14. p Ezek. 1. 15, 16.

By *thrones cast down* must be meant the kingdoms of this world, destroyed by Christ the King and Judge of all, called the *Ancient of days,* because of his eternal Deity; *without beginning and end of days. Whose garment was white as snow;* thus kings' viceroys were clothed, as Joseph in fine silk, Gen. xli. 42, and Mordecai, Esth. viii. 15. *The hair of his head like the pure wool;* see Rev. i. 14; noting his innocence, and righteousness in judgment, Isa. xlii. 4. *His throne was like the fiery flame:* this notes his majesty in judgment: see Psal. l. 3, 4; Mal. iv. 1; Rev. xix. 11, 12. *His wheels as burning fire;* arguing the greatest and most formidable state of the last Judge and judgment; alluding to the kings who had movable thrones, which had wheels: it notes also God's swiftness in judgment, Mal. iii. 5.

10 qA fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: rthousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: sthe judgment was set, and the books were opened.

q Ps. 50. 3. & 97. 3. Is. 30. 33. & 66. 15. r 1 Kings 22. 19. Ps. 68. 17. Heb. 12. 22. Rev. 5. 11. s Rev. 20. 4, 12.

A fiery stream issued; see Psal. l. 3; noting his justice and wrath, in giving sentence and executing it. *Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him:* this is the great assize. *The judgment was set, and the books were opened:* see Rev. xx. 11, 12. This, say some, is spoken agreeable to the Synedrium or Sanhedrim, and after the manner of men, and notes the book of life, of God's eternal decree, the book of God's omniscience, &c.

11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: tI beheld *even* till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

t Rev. 19. 20.

This cannot but be meant of the ruin and judgment of antichrist, till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame, 2 Thess. ii. 8; Rev. xvii. 8; xix. 20; xx. 10.

12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet †their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

† Chald. *a prolonging in life were given them.*

They had their dominion taken away; the prophet chiefly intends the fourth empire, and therein the proud, blasphemous horn; yet did not wholly omit to speak of the three first empires, and what became of them. He saith they

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were wholly taken away, that is, successively, as histories tell us. The beast and the horn perish together, for the Holy Ghost tells us that the horn shall prevail against the saints till the *Ancient of days* come to sit in judgment, and because the session of judgment in Daniel's vision was principally to pluck up by the roots that wicked horn, ver. 26 following, Daniel's expectation had failed him, if the horn had not perished with the beast. Besides, the state of the beast under the horn was to be a time, times, and the dividing of time, ver. 25, of which more when we come to it.

13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, [u]*one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to [x]the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

u Ezek. 1. 26. Matt. 24. 30. & 26. 64. Rev. 1. 7, 13. & 14. 14.
x ver. 9.

One like the Son of man; that is, the Messiah: this is the same with the stone, Dan. ii.; he came *with the clouds of heaven*, Matt. xxiv. 30, i. e. gloriously, swiftly, and terribly, Jer. iv. 13. *They brought him near before him:* this relates to his ascension, Acts i. 9—11, at which time, though King before, Matt. ii. 2, yet now, and not before, he seems to receive his royal investiture for the protection of his church and the curbing of their enemies, which he says he had before, Matt. xxviii. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 25; chap. ii. 44.

14 [y]And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all [z]people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* [a]an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.

y Ps. 2. 8, 7, 8. & 8. 6. & 110. 1, 2. Matt. 11. 27. & 28. 18. John 3. 35. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Eph. 1. 22.
z ch. 3. 4.
a Ps. 145. 13. ch. 2. 44. ver. 27. Mic. 4. 7. Luke 1. 33. John 12. 34. Heb. 12. 28.

15 ¶ I Daniel [b]was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* †body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

b ver. 28.
† Chald. *sheath.*

I was transported even to astonishment with the vision, it was so strange, surprising, and terrible to me.

16 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

Unto one of them that stood by; that is, to an angel that ministered, Zech. iii. 4, 7. *Asked him the truth of all this;* that I might learn of him the true and full meaning of this vision; which the angel readily told him.

17 [c]These great beasts, which are four, *are* four kings, *which* shall arise out of the earth.

c ver. 3.

Men of the earth, of earthly principles, idolatrous, ambitious, sensual, tyrannical; who, after they have acted their parts, shall be driven off the stage into the tiring rooms of death and destruction.

18 But [d]the saints of the †most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

d Is. 60. 12, 13, 14. ver. 22, 27. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Rev. 2. 26, 27. & 3. 21. & 20. 4.
† Chald. *high ones*, that is, *things*, or, *places*.

Jesus Christ being their King, they shall reign with him, Rev. i. 6; xx. 4, and possess the kingdom for ever, Matt. xix. 28; 1 Cor. i. 9; vi. 3; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. v. 10. This shall be for ever, because Christ's kingdom is the last kingdom, never any shall succeed after that.

19 Then I would know the truth of [e]the fourth beast, which was diverse †from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth *were of* iron, and his nails *of* brass; *which* devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

e ver. 7.
† Chald. *from all those.*

I would feign know it more perfectly and exactly, because the Jewish nation and church were to be scattered long by and under the fourth beast.

20 And of the ten horns that *were* in his head, and *of* the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even *of* that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look *was* more stout than his fellows.

And of the ten horns; what they meant. *Whose look was more stout than his fellows,* i. e. he had more power and more fierceness. This is wont to be interpreted of Antiochus, and the persecuting emperors, because it agrees well to them.

21 I beheld, [f]and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

f ch. 8. 12. 24. & 11. 31. Rev. 11. 7. & 13. 7. & 17. 14. & 19. 19.

22 [g]Until the Ancient of days came, [h]and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

g ver. 9.
h ver. 18. 1 Cor. 6. 2. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 20. 4.

This shows plainly the horn is antichrist of Rome, or the whore that rides the beast, and this is more apparent in the interpretation of the *fourth beast and the ten kings.*

23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be [i]the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

i ch. 2. 40.

24 [k]And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

k ver. 7, 8, 20. Rev. 17. 12.

Ten kings; which Junius, Piscator, Polanus make to be the kings of Syria, and reckon ten of them, and that is not all neither; the tenth is Antiochus, but this cannot be, for he died one hundred and sixty years before Christ.

Others interpret the other *that riseth after the ten, and that shall subdue three,* to be Mahomet; but Maldonate himself saith it agrees better to antichrist, and the 25th verse too, where he speaks of *changing times and laws, which God hath set;* none of which things he could do, but that God gives him commission for it, till God's set time be fulfilled, which is three years and a half, i. e. one thousand two hundred and sixty years; or forty-two months, which is all the time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, of the church's being in the wilderness, and of antichrist's reign, Rev. xi. 3; xii. 6; xiii. 5, 6, &c.: mind these places and compare this of Daniel with them, and ver. 26, 27, how he shall be judged and executed. The sixth and seventh vials will decide and illustrate all this.

25 [l]And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall [m]wear out the saints of the most High, and [n]think to change times and laws: and [o]they shall be given into his hand [p]until a time and times and the dividing of time.

l Is. 37. 23. ch. 8. 24, 25. & 11. 28, 30, 31, 36. 1 Mac. 1. 46. Rev. 13. 5, 6.
m Rev. 17. 6. & 18. 24.
n ch. 2. 21.
o Rev. 13. 7.
p ch. 12. 7. Rev. 12. 14.

The numbers of Daniel and John seem to agree. Daniel was certainly prophetical in these things, and his prophecy reacheth to the end of times, even of antichrist's reign. I will not deny but Antiochus might be a type and forerunner of antichrist, and did many things against the Jewish church, with craft, cruelty, and blasphemy; but he was no part of the fourth, but of the third beast; whereas Daniel here points mainly at the Roman power and persecution, especially by the *little horn,* which lasted to his ruin; after which it is clear the Lord Christ will reign in and over his saints much more gloriously; which the Jews will never be beaten from, because there are so many signal places in the prophets speaking of it yet unfulfilled, and in the Apocalypse, to the wise reader, after the beast and whore are destroyed, with all their supporters. But enough of that at present.

26 [q]But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end.

q ver. 10, 22.

27 And the [r]kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the

r ver. 14, 18, 22.

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people of the saints of the most High, [s] whose kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, [t] and all ‖ dominions shall serve and obey him.

28 Hitherto *is* the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, [u] my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I [x] kept the matter in my heart.

[s] ch. 2. 44. Luke 1. 33. John 12. 34. Rev. 11. 15.
[t] Is. 60. 12.
‖ Or, *rulers.*
[u] ver. 15. ch. 8. 27. & 10. 8, 16.
[x] Luke 2. 19, 51.

The end of the matter, i. e. of the vision, and the angel's interpretation. *My countenance changed in me:* 1. Because it became him so to be, as a holy wise man ought to be in that case. 2. By this impression made upon him, God would have it laid up in his heart to be drawn out occasionally, and delivered to his people, and that all these wonderful discoveries from God might engage him more earnestly in prayer for the church of God, as he doth, chap. ix.

CHAP. VIII.

Daniel's vision of the ram and he-goat, 1—12. *The days of suspension of the daily sacrifice, and desolation of the sanctuary,* 13, 14. *Gabriel comforteth Daniel, and interpreteth the vision,* 15—27.

cir. 553. IN the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, *even unto* me Daniel, after that which [a] appeared unto me [a] at the first.

[a] ch. 7. 1.

This follows then in time after the former. Those things that were meet for the Chaldees to know are recorded by Daniel in that tongue; but now he writes in Hebrew, which lasts to the end of the book, because these things relate to the church of Christ, Jew and Gentile, to the end of the world.

In the other vision he speaks of all the four monarchies, here only of the three first; this vision being both as a part and a comment upon the first.

2 And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I *was* at [b] Shushan *in* the palace, which *is* in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.

[b] Esth. 1. 2.

I was at Shushan; in his mind and thoughts, not bodily, and was by the river Ulai: some think he was locally there, being sent thither in embassy by Cyrus; but Daniel was now at Babylon, when it was besieged and taken, Dan. v.; he was only there in spirit, as the prophet Ezekiel saith he was in Jerusalem, Ezek. viii. 3. Now Daniel had this vision at Shushan, because their deliverance was to come by Cyrus the Persian or Elamite, for Elam is Persia. This city was called Shushan, i. e. a lily, for the pleasantness of it: such names they give also their cities in China. *The river of Ulai;* a river whose waters were so wholesome that they were carried far, and the king drank of no other.

3 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had *two* horns: and the *two* horns *were* high; but one *was* higher than † the other, and the higher came up last.

† Heb. *the second.*

Which had two horns; by which is meant the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, as it is in ver. 20, where it is so interpreted. Before he was called a *bear*, and here a *ram*, both noting the same thing, though by different expressions. A ram because he is a fighting creature, pushing. *The two horns were high*, i. e. they were very powerful. *One was higher than the other*, i. e. the Median, that it *came up last;* but afterward the Persian was much superior in magnificence and fame, which was verified in Cyrus; who had an incredible heap, even fifty millions of talents. See Curtius and Strabo.

4 I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither *was there any* that could deliver out of his hand; [c] but he did according to his will, and became great.

[c] ch. 5. 19. & 11. 3, 16.

Westward, i. e. towards Babylon, Syria, Cappadocia, Asia the Less, and Greece, all westward from Media and Persia; for the Persians under Darius and Xerxes made war against Greece. *Northward*, i. e. against the Armenians, Iberians, Lydians, Colchi, Caspians. *Southward*, i. e. against Ethiopia, Arabia, Egypt, which Cambyses invaded. *No beasts might stand before him;* they prospered and conquered all, as did Cyrus. *He did according to his will, and became great;* he prevailed against all that opposed, and did what he would without control, and became the greatest king of the earth then.

5 And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and ‖ touched not the ground: and the goat *had* † [d] a notable horn between his eyes.

‖ Or, *none touched him in the earth.*
† Heb. *a horn of sight.*
[d] ver. 21.

An he-goat; Alexander the Great, king of Macedonia and all Greece, called a *he-goat* because the Greeks were called Egeans, as was their sea, that country and its islands abounding in goats, as the word signifies, *goatish*. The word *he-goat* signifies a *young he-goat;* for so was Alexander, called *pellæus juvenis*. The he-goat goes before the flock, Jer. l. 8. This notes him to be the Grecian captain and leader. This he-goat answers to the belly and thighs of the image, and to the leopard and third beast. *On the face of the whole earth*, i. e. in that part of Asia where he opposed Xerxes, and overran all the Eastern empire. *Touched not the ground;* therefore called a *leopard with wings*, for he conquered with incredible swiftness in a short time, for in six years' space he overcame the Medes and Persians, Babylon, Egypt, and all the countries round far and near; as if he had but travelled over them, he so *came, saw*, and *overcame* them. *A notable horn between his eyes:* this was Alexander the Great, the western emperor. Creatures that have one horn are therefore strong, as the monoceros or unicorn, Numb. xxiii. 22. *Between his eyes*, noting his power and policy; also his wise council, captains, and conduct, as Parmenio, Clitus, Philotes, &c.

6 And he came to the ram that had *two* horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.

The ram that had two horns, i. e. the king of Media and Persia, and joined battle presently and furiously, Jehu like.

7 And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

Brake his two horns: Artaxerxes Mnemon, by aiding Cyrus against him, and then Darius Codomanus; these are the two horns, or the Medes and Persians. *Cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him;* he overthrew him utterly, that he could never rise again. This was at the Granicus, Issus, and Arbela.

8 Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up [e] four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.

[e] ch. 7. 6. & 11. 4. ver. 22.

The he-goat waxed very great, by conquering all the Eastern empire and power, even to India. *The great horn was broken:* this was the mighty power of the Lord of hosts, who is higher than the highest, and stronger than the strongest, though they seem invincible. *Verily every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Selah.* When Alexander the Great was greatest, in his youth, not thirty-three years old; when he called himself the son of Jupiter; when he was swoln with victories and successes; then was he broken, and that to pieces, for he, his mother, son, brother, and all his kindred were destroyed. So weak are the

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greatest to bear prosperity long! for this wonder of men, by pride, luxury, and passion, prepared himself for ruin; he that wept because he had not another world to conquer, and wanted breathing room in this, how soon was he tumbled into a grave of six feet! *For it came up four notable ones:* 1. Antipater got Greece. 2. Asia was possessed by Antigonus. 3. Ptolemy got Egypt. 4. Seleucus had Babylon and Syria. All these were variously situated: to the east, Babylon and Syria; to the south, Egypt; to the north, Asia the Less; to the west, Greece.

f ch. 7. 8. & 11. 21. g ch. 11. 25. 1 Mac. 1. 16,—19. h Ps. 48. 2. Ezek. 20. 6, 15 ch. 11. 16, 41, 45.

9 [f]And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, [g]toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the [h]pleasant *land*.

A little horn: this little horn was Antiochus Epiphanes, he arose out of the Seleucidæ of Syria; called *a little horn*, 1. Because he was much less than Alexander, called *a notable horn*, ver. 5. 2. Little, because he was the youngest of his brethren. 3. He was held a prisoner and pledge at Rome, whence he escaped. 4. Little, because he had nothing at first of greatness and heroic nobleness in him, also of low fortune. *Toward the south*, i. e. Egypt, where he besieged and took many places from Philometer, till the Romans stopped him. *Toward the east*, i. e. in Syria, Babylon, Armenia. *Toward the pleasant land;* Judea, so called because of the temple and people of God in it, and the fruitfulness of it, Ezek. xx. 6, *the glory of all lands*. So ver. 15; Psal. xlviii. 2, 3, &c.; Jer. iii. 19; Dan. xi. 16, 41, 45.

i ch. 11. 28. ‖ Or, *against the host.* k So Is. 14. 13. l Rev. 12. 4.

10 [i]And it waxed great, *even* ‖to [k]the host of heaven; and [l]it cast down *some* of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

Even to the host of heaven, i. e. the church of God militant, who worship the God of heaven, who are citizens of heaven, whose names are written in heaven; and among these chiefly the priests, and nobles, and champions, who were as *stars* shining above the rest; these he profaned and slew cruelly.

m Jer. 48. 26, 42. ch. 11. 36. ver. 25. ‖ Or, *against.* n Josh. 5. 14. o ch. 11. 31. & 12. 11. 1 Mac. 1. 44,—64. ‖ Or, *from him.* p Exod. 29. 38. Num. 28. 3. Ezek. 46. 13.

11 Yea, [m]he magnified *himself* even ‖to [n]the prince of the host, [o]and ‖by him [p]the daily *sacrifice* was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

Even to the prince of the host; not only against the high priest Onias, whom he put from his priesthood, and sold the high priesthood, 2 Macc. iv., but against God himself, which showed his daring insolence, and God's patience and permission, for the sins of his people. *By him the daily sacrifice was taken away;* for he so persecuted the people of God, that he forced them to omit the worship of God. *The place of his sanctuary was cast down;* he took away the use of the temple as to the holy service and sacrifices, commanding that it should not be called the temple of God, but of Jupiter Olympus, whose image he set up in it, and gave the priesthood to wicked men, as Jason and Menelaus.

q ch. 11. 31. ‖ Or, *the host was given over for the transgression against the daily sacrifice.* r 1 Mac. 1. 11, &c. 2 Mac. 4. 13,—17. s Ps. 119. 43, 142. Is. 59. 14. t ver. 4. ch. 11. 28, 36.

12 And [q]‖an host was given *him* against the daily *sacrifice* [r]by reason of transgression, and it cast down [s]the truth to the ground; and it [t]practised, and prospered.

By reason of transgression, i. e. either the transgression of the priests, for Jason perfidiously took away the priesthood from his brother Onias, and afterwards Menelaus did the like by him. Or else for the sin of the people about the worship of God. Or else Antiochus wickedly and in contempt of God put soldiers into the city to hinder or break up the meetings of God's people about his worship, 1 Macc. i. 47. *It cast down the truth*, i. e. the law of God, called the *law of truth*, Mal. ii. 6, which Antiochus cut in pieces and burnt, 1 Macc. i. 59. This was his practice, and it succeeded for a time as he desired.

u ch. 4. 13. & 12. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 12. ‖ Or, *the numberer of secrets*, or, *the wonderful numberer.* † Heb. *Palmoni.*

13 ¶ Then I heard [u]one saint speaking, and another saint said unto ‖† that certain *saint* which spake, How long *shall be* the vision *concerning* the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression ‖ of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

‖ Or, *making desolate.* ch. 11. 31. & 12. 11. 1 Mac. 1. 54.

By the first *saint* is meant a holy angel, by the other is meant Jesus Christ, *Palmoni*, a *numberer* or *revealer of secrets*, a *wonderful revealer*, Isa. ix. 6. Of him the angel asks this secret concerning the calamity of the church, how long it would last, for Daniel's sake and his people. For the Lord Christ is the Teacher of his people, the Wisdom of God, and hath all this in his power by office, and as he stands in relation to his church, and for them.

The Lord knows his suffering people are much concerned about the time of their sufferings, because there is an appointed time for it, and the Lord doth sometimes reveal it, as we see here, unto his considering ones, ver. 5, and praying saints, chap. ix.; they cry out in their agonies, How long, O Lord? and it is an addition to their sorrow that no man *knoweth how long*, Psal. lxxiv. 9. How long shall Antiochus continue his tyrannical vexations against the people of God, and the worship of God? This is the *treading down of the sanctuary and the host.*

† Heb. *evening morning.* x 1 Mac. 4. 36, &c. † Heb. *justified.*

14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred †days; [x]then shall the sanctuary be †cleansed.

He said unto me, i. e. that angel unnamed. Why did he speak to Daniel, and not to the angel that asked him? Because Daniel, and the church to which he related and was to communicate the answer, was most concerned in it, and the angel that asked the question did it upon their account. *Unto two thousand and three hundred days:* this seems to many learned men a very difficult place, i. e. where to begin and where to end these days. 1. Some explain it thus: A year contains three hundred and sixty-five days; then two thousand three hundred make six years, three months, and eighteen days, reckoning in two days of the leap years gained from the supernumerary hours and minutes. Now this time begins at the first entrance of Antiochus into Judea, when he profaned the priesthood; and takes in also his second coming in, when he interdicted their worship, set up an idol in the temple, and interrupted the daily sacrifice. 2. Others count the two thousand three hundred days from the people's revolt, which was procured by Menelaus, which began in the year 141 of the reign of the Seleucidæ, 1 Macc. i.; but Antiochus did not act his impieties till the next year after, viz. 142, in the 6th month and the 6th day; from whence if we reckon to the 25th day of the 9th month of the year 148, there will fall out precisely six years, three months, and eighteen days. 3. Others reckon a little otherwise, from the beginning of Antiochus's profanations to his death; from 143 to 148, taking in both years to the number. For though Judas Maccabeus recovered the city and cleansed the temple in 148, yet Antiochus was not dead till 149, till when the work was not finished. 4. Others make it to begin in the year of the Seleucidæ 145, and to end *anno* 151, two years after Antiochus's death, for the abomination of desolation was set up in the month Chisleu, 1 Macc. i. 57, for not till two years after Antiochus's death was Nicanor overthrown with all his army. Thus Jacob Capell, and L'Empereur. 5. Others reckon not days, but sacrifices, (at two every day,) and restrain the time to fewer years, out of Maccabees. *Josephus.*

y See ch. 12. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. z Ezek. 1. 26.

15 ¶ And it came to pass, when I, *even* I Daniel, had seen the vision, and [y]sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me [z]as the appearance of a man.

Having obtained the favour of knowing something, he longed for a more clear discovery of those things; and he had his desire granted. *As the appearance of a man;* either the angel Gabriel or Michael, who appeared often in the shape of men, and are the messengers of God in the great things concerning his church, Heb. i. 14; others will have this angel to be Christ.

16 And I heard a man's voice [a]be- a ch. 12. 6, 7.

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tween *the banks of* Ulai, which called,
b ch. 9. 21. Luke 1. 19, 26. and said, [b] Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the vision.

A man's voice, i. e. of him but now before mentioned, namely, Christ. *To understand the vision*, i. e. by declaring it more plainly to him: this shows Christ to be God, in commanding and sending his angel. Gabriel signifies the *strength of God*.

17 So he came near where I stood:
c Ezek. 1. 28. Rev. 1. 17. and when he came, I was afraid, and [c] fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end *shall be* the vision.

He came near, that he might speak more familiarly to him, yet Daniel could not bear the glory of it, Matt. xvii. 6. How much less can we bear the glory of God! and how graciously hath the Lord dealt with us to teach us by men, and not by angels! and how vain are they who aspire to a converse with angels here on earth! *O son of man:* he calls him son of man, to make him mind his frailty, and not to be lifted up with visions, and this great condescension and familiarity of Heaven with him. *At the time of the end*, i. e. in God's appointed time, i. e. in the latter generations, but not now in thy lifetime, but about four hundred years hence. See ver. 26.

d ch. 10. 9, 10. Luke 9. 32. e Ezek. 2. 2. † Heb. *made me stand upon my standing.*
18 [d] Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: [e] but he touched me, and † set me upright.

In a deep sleep on my face toward the ground; being terrified and astonished with the splendour and grandeur both of the messenger and message; by the sight and by the voice. *Set me upright*, by one touch only. The power of spirits is incomparably greater than the strongest of men. Carnal, and flesh and blood, in Scripture signifies *weak*, 2 Cor. x. 3, 4.

19 And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of
f ch. 9. 27. & 11. 27, 35, 36. & 12. 7. Hab. 2. 3. the indignation: [f] for at the time appointed the end *shall be*.

In the last end of the indignation, i. e. that God will raise up Antiochus to execute his wrath against the Jews for their sins, and that yet there shall be an end of that *indignation;* God will have the end of his *intention*, and the end of his *execution*, in all his severe providences relating to his people. *At the time appointed the end shall be:* this he saith to make us wait patiently. He that believeth will not make haste.

g ver. 3.
20 [g] The ram which thou sawest having *two* horns *are* the kings of Media and Persia.

Or the kingdom, chap. vii. 17.

h ver. 5.
21 [h] And the rough goat *is* the king of Grecia: and the great horn that *is* between his eyes [i] *is* the first king.
i ch. 11. 3.

The king of Grecia; of Javan, or Ion, or Joan, which properly is Asia the Less, which was inhabited by Javan, Gen. x. 2, but spread over all Greece, and all spake Greek, and the sea was thence called the Ionian Sea. See more in Bochart. *The first king*, i. e. Alexander the Great; called the Great from his great power, success, and possessions; and the *first king*, i. e. in Asia, and by his exploits and victories over the Persian monarchy; for else there were other kings of Greece before him, but none of them in the sense aforesaid.

k ver. 8. ch. 11. 4.
22 [k] Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

Being broken, i. e. by death, which breaks the horn of all pride and earthly glory. *Four stood up for it*, i. e. four kingdoms of the nations of the Greeks. *Not in his power;* that is, not in his majesty and magnificence, but inferior to him.

23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, [l] when the transgressors † are come to the full, a king [m] of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, [n] shall stand up.
l 1 Mac. 1. 11, &c. & 2. 15. † Heb. *are accomplished* m Deut. 28. 50. n ver. 6.

In the latter time of their kingdom, i. e. when they were come to the height, and beginning to decline. It notes that time when the Romans began to seize part of the Grecian kingdom, by Emilius Probus, who subdued Perseus king of Macedonia, and thereby brought all Greece under the Roman jurisdiction; which was one hundred and sixty-six years before Christ was born, that very year Antiochus set up the *abomination of desolation. When the transgressors are come to the full;* when the Jews were grown to an excess of wickedness, and called for punishment, then God suffered Antiochus to persecute them. *Of fierce countenance;* such was he: the word is translated *impudent, inhuman*, for the countenance is the discoverer of the mind and manners oftentimes. *Understanding dark sentences;* full of all subtlety, another Julian, to lay snares, and fetch over the inconstant and backsliding Jews: such a one all histories declare this Antiochus to be.

24 And his power shall be mighty, [o] but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, [p] and shall prosper, and practise, [q] and shall destroy the mighty and the † holy people.
o Rev. 17. 13, 17. p ver. 12. ch. 11. 36. q ver. 10. ch. 7. 25. † Heb. *people of the holy ones.*

Not by his own power; not by any heroic deeds, or truly regal qualities, but by making use of the Jewish factions, and also through the Divine permission and commission given him to punish a backsliding, degenerate nation; lastly, by the help of Eumenes and Attalus, by whose means and help he got up to this height; who being kings, suspected the Roman power, and raised him to be a kind of check to them. *The holy people;* he shall by force, craft, and cruelty destroy many of God's people, from the highest to the meanest ranks of them.

25 And [r] through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; [s] and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, [t] and by ‖ peace shall destroy many: [u] he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be [x] broken without hand.
r ch. 11. 21, 23, 24 s ver. 11. ch. 11. 36. 2 Mac. 9. 4, 7, 8, 11. t 1 Mac. 1. 30, &c. ‖ Or, *prosperity.* u ver. 11. ch. 11. 36. x Job 34. 20. Lam. 4. 6. ch. 2. 34, 45. 1 Mac. 6. 8,—13. 2 Mac. 9. 9, &c.

He shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; he shall contrive many devices, and most of them shall take; he shall be a great master of those kinds of artifices: all to circumvent and destroy, as beasts and birds of prey have a kind of craft to compass and then devour their prey. *He shall magnify himself in his heart;* shall take a pride in his wicked devices and tricks. *By peace shall destroy many;* under colour of kindness, and promising peace and amity, shall lull men asleep, so as to fear nothing from him. *He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes:* all this you find verified of him in the Maccabees and Josephus. He fought against God in removing the high priest, affronting God's laws, profaning God's worship, name, and temple, and setting up the image and worship of Jupiter there. *He shall be broken without hand*, by a disease whereof he died, 1 Macc. vi. 8; 2 Macc. ix. 5.

26 [y] And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told *is* true: [z] wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it *shall be* for many days.
y ch. 10. 1. z Ezek. 12. 27. ch. 10 14. & 12. 4, 9. Rev. 22. 10.

The vision is true, i. e. of the two thousand three hundred days before, ver. 14. This exposition of it is true, plain, and certain, and therefore to be believed and seriously minded. *Shut thou up the vision;* lay it up in thy heart, keep it secret, reveal it to none till it be fulfilled. He doth not mean that it should be concealed from the people of God that were wise in heart, for they were concerned in it, and therefore it was revealed to Daniel; but he would not have it revealed to the Chaldeans and profane heathens, and therefore it was written in Hebrew, and not in Chaldee. It was to be fulfilled in after-times, and therefore to be safely laid up, and wisely to be thought on and improved. There-

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fore it is added, *for it shall be for many days;* three hundred years after this, in the time of the Seleucidæ; long after Daniel's days and that generation. See Rev. xxii. 10.

a ch. 7. 28. & 10. 8, 16. b ch. 6. 2, 3. c See ver. 16.

27 [a]And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain* days; afterward I rose up, [b]and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, [c]but none understood *it.*

Was sick certain days; greatly afflicted, to consider the sad calamity that should befall the poor people of God. This he did in compassion and sympathy with his people, upon whom these sufferings should fall. 2. Under the dreadful apprehensions of God's wrath, provoked by his people's sins, which made it an act of justice in God to punish them thus severely. 3. That Daniel should not be lifted up with this vision and revelation 4. That hereby Daniel might be in a due frame of humiliation and posture for prayer. 5. To show the powerful operations and impressions of the mind upon the bodies of men by the passions chiefly of fear and grief, causing often faintings, and consternation, which appear most in thoughtful, good men, whereof are many instances in Scripture, Hab. iii. 16; Rom. ix. 1—3. Having digested his grief, and recovered strength, he minded his place, duty, and trust, and concealed the whole, that they might not see it by his countenance; though he had deep thoughts of heart about it.

CHAP. IX.

Daniel, considering the time of the captivity, 1, 2, *maketh confession of his people's sins,* 3—15, *and prayeth for the restoration of Jerusalem,* 16—19. *Gabriel informeth him of the seventy weeks, and of the time and death of the Messiah, and of the succeeding troubles,* 20—27.

cir. 538. a ch. 1. 21. & 5. 31. & 6. 28. ‖ Or, *in which he,* &c.

IN the first year [a]of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, ‖which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

In the first year of Darius; that is, immediately after the overthrow of the kingdom of Babylon, which was also the year of the Jews' deliverance from their seventy years' captivity; therefore punctually here set down. The Lord hath carefully recorded the several periods of time that relate to his church, and the signal providences both of mercy or judgment exercised towards it; for hereby God is glorified in the signal displaying of his attributes, and the saints' graces exercised, especially faith and patience, by calling to mind what God hath done in time past, Psal. lxxvii. 5—7. This Darius was not Darius the Persian, under whom the temple was built, as Porphyrius would have it, that thereby he might persuade unlearned men that Daniel lived long after the time that he did live in. Therefore this is called Darius the Mede, and by the Greeks called Cyaxares. *Which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;* and this is confirmed by Xenophon.

2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to [b]Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

b 2 Chron. 36. 21. Jer. 25. 11, 12. & 29. 10.

Understood by books; by sacred books, both of Jeremiah the prophet, Jer. xxv. 11, 12; xxix. 10; so also the Pentateuch, which he had, as is plain, ver. 10—13, &c.; by which we see this great prophet did not disdain to study the word of God, and the state of the church of God, though he had the converse and revelation of angels, and though he was in a heathen court, and in high office, which required great attendance. *That he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem:* see Jer. vii. 34; xxii. 5; xxv. 18.

c Neh. 1. 4. ch. 6. 10. Jer. 29. 12, 13. Jam. 4. 8, 9, 10.

3 ¶ [c]And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

Observe two things: 1. That deep revolting, and deep afflictions, call for deep and solemn humiliation. 2. God's decrees and promises do not excuse us from duty and prayer, but include it and require it. God will be inquired of for those things which he hath purposed and promised to give his people, Ezek. xxxvi. 37. And if it be objected by any, (as it is by Calovius,) that both God's threats and promises are absolute, and not hypothetical, as they will prove by Jer. xxv. 11, 12; xxix. 10; it is answered that, 1. Though it be spoken peremptorily and absolutely, yet not without a tacit condition and secret reserve in God, Jonah iii. 4. 2. God often speaks positively to put sinners in the more awe of his judgments, and to drive them to repentance, Jer. xviii. 7—10. 3. If God give a reason of his threatening, viz. because they have despised his word and abused his patience, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16; Luke xix. 42—44; then the threat is absolute. 4. And if God add upon his threatenings such words as these, *I will not hear you, pray not for this people,* of which we have many instances, then it is peremptory. 5. When the threat and the judgment threatened are the fruit of God's decree, then it is irreversible; not else. Mind all these rules well in this case.

4 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O [d]Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

d Ex. 20. 6. Deut. 7. 9. Neh. 1. 5. & 9. 32.

By this it appeared he prayed in faith, to the true God, and his God. 2. He made confession of sin when he prayed for deliverance, because hereby he justified God in the captivity of his people. 3. He knew if God vouchsafed pardon of sin, upon this confession, that would be a sure foundation of future mercy. 4. He set down here the words of his prayer, because it is the prayer of a righteous man, and one of God's eminent saints and favourites in Scripture, who had great power with God in prayer, Job xlii. 7—9; Ezek. xiv. 14, 20; James v. 16. *Keeping the covenant;* he puts God in mind of his covenant, Deut. vii. 8; Neh. i. 5; he calls him *great and dreadful,* as to his severe justice and wrath: now though the covenant hath promises and mercy, yet it includeth obedience on our part, as here is expressed.

5 [e]We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

e 1 Kings 8. 47. Neh. 1. 6, 7. & 9. 33, 34. Ps. 106. 6. Is. 64. 5, 6, 7. Jer. 14. 7. ver. 15. Bar. 1. 17, 18.

As if he had said, We are not only sinners, but our sin is wickedness aggravated to the height: thus much the gradation here intimates, by *doing wickedly and rebelling.* In our confessions of sin to God there must be no mincing nor cloaking of sin, but a full and naked discovery, with self-judging and self-abhorrence. Note here, all along after, this holy man Daniel puts himself in the number of the greatest sinners: so when we are suppliants and penitents, we must include ourselves in the general petition.

6 [f]Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

f 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. ver. 10.

For God to send his prophets to his people was their high privilege, and the highest act of favour to them, and of his authority over them, for they were God's ambassadors, and came to them in the Lord's *name;* and therefore their sin and punishment was the greater. God's ambassadors have a large commission, and general instruction to speak in the name of their Lord with all authority, and without respect of persons. And this shows, 1. God's authority over all. 2. God's mercy towards all, of all sorts. 3. The aggravation of this sin, because it was of all sorts, as Gen. vi. 12, 13; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. Now the abuse of ambassadors hath by the law of nations ever been highly resented, 2 Sam. x.; xii. 29—31.

7 O Lord, [g]righteousness ‖*belongeth* unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces,

g Neh. 9. 33. Dan. 1. 15. ‖ Or, *thou hast,* &c.

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as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, *that are* near, and *that are* far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

h ver. 7. Bar. 1. 15.

8 O Lord, to us *belongeth* [h] confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

Here the prophet, after he had arraigned himself and his people upon their guilt, passeth judgment; for in this case every true penitent sits in judgment, and proceeds judicially, that is, solemnly and impartially; for he judgeth for God, and proceeds according to God's law, and conscience is witness; and this God takes notice of, and takes well, for it prevents his judging of us, 1 Cor. xi. 31, and is a true sign of true repentance: see 2 Cor. vii. 11.

i Neh. 9. 17. Ps. 130. 4, 7.

9 [i] To the Lord our God *belong* mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;

How did God show himself merciful, when he punished them so severely? *Answ.* 1. Because it was less than their sin deserved, for it was rebellion. 2. Because their punishment was God's chastisement, which to his people is an act of love and mercy, as you see, Heb. xii. 6—9. 3. Because God preserved them in their captivity, and delivered them from it. They therefore that pray to God under their sin and misery must eye God's mercies, as well as his justice, Psal. li. 1; cxxx. 4. For as the one doth cast them down, so the other bears them up, and gives them hope; or else we might be swallowed up of too much sorrow and despair, 2 Cor. ii. 7, 11, wherein Satan would be too hard for us, as well as in dedolency or want of godly sorrow.

k ver. 6.

10 [k] Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

To be large in, 1. Confession of sin, especially in a day of humiliation, is no vain repetition, for we offend commonly in being slight and perfunctory in our confessions; and God will have all out, and make us own it. 2. It was God's mercy not only to give his people a law, which he did solemnly by Moses, but set it plainly and powerfully before them, and set it home upon them by the expositions and applications of all the prophets, for this was their work.

l Is. 1. 4, 5, 6. Jer. 8. 5, 10.

11 Yea, [l] all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that *is* written in the [m] law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

m Lev. 26. 14, &c. Deu. 27. 15, &c. & 28. 15, &c. & 29. 20, &c. & 30. 17, 18. & 31. 17, &c. & 32. 19, &c. Lam. 2. 17.

1. When sin is epidemical, it is sad and fatal to a nation, as in Psal. xiv. 3; Rom. iii. 12: so a deluge of sin brought a deluge of judgment, Gen. vi. 13, 17. 2. This makes the gap great, and leaves none to stand in it. Then the curse comes upon a people, i. e. the punishment of the breach of God's law. Jer. xlii. 18; xliv. 12. This, 1. Shows the holiness of God's law. 2. It shows the sinfulness and heinousness of sin, the breach of it. 3. It shows the necessity and excellency of Jesus Christ, who was sent of God to bless us, in freeing us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

n Zech. 1. 6.

12 And he hath [n] confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: [o] for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

o Lam. 1. 12. & 2. 13. Ezek. 5. 9. Amos 3. 2.

He hath confirmed his words which he spake against us: by this it appears that God's judgments threatened against sin are to be feared, because of the great and terrible God, ver. 4; Deut. vii. 9, 10; Neh. i. 8. *Against our judges that judged us;* whose place and duty it was to govern the people, to judge their causes, and to appoint others for it; wherein if there be a failure, as there often was, it was a sin and judgment upon the people, and upon the rulers and judges themselves also, of which we find many instances and complaints in Scripture, Psal. ii. 2, 9, 10; lviii. 1, 2. *Jerusalem;* a place privileged many ways above all others, chiefly by the signal presence of God there, and his promises to it, Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2; yet when sin is found there, as it was in Jerusalem, to the height, as in Sodom, it was punished to the height. Read the book of Lamentations.

p Lev. 26. 14, &c. Deut. 28. 15. Lam. 2. 17.

13 [p] As *it is* written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: [q] yet †made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.

q Is. 9. 13. Jer. 2. 30. & 5. 3. Hos. 7. 7, 10.

† Heb. *intreated we not the face of the, &c.*

As it is written in the law of Moses: see Lev. xxvi. 14—39. The sum of all is, As the Lord threatened and forewarned us long ago, so it is come to pass this day upon us, because we took no warning, we understood not, but sinned and returned not. The Lord is true and just in all that is come upon us; chiefly because we have not made our prayer unto God to prevent our misery before it came upon us, nor to remove it when it lay heavy on us. See it in Ezekiel, who prophesied in the captivity, and how they received him; and though they kept a formal fast, yet what did that signify? Zech. vii. 5—7.

r Jer. 31. 28. & 44. 27.

14 Therefore hath the Lord [r] watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for [s] the Lord our God *is* righteous in all his works which he doeth: [t] for we obeyed not his voice.

s Neh. 9. 33. ver. 7. t ver. 10.

Therefore hath the Lord watched: this notes, 1. God's taking notice of all their ways, even while men sleep in carnal security, and dream of no danger. 2. God's watching here notes the fit ways that he always takes to punish sinners. 3. It notes his haste in executing judgment duly and seasonably, when it makes most for the honour of his justice. 4. That he may, like a careful watchman, not suffer any to escape his hands.

u Ex. 6. 1, 6. & 32. 11. 1 Kin. 8. 51. Neh. 1. 10. Jer. 32. 21.

† Heb. *made thee a name.*

x Ex. 14. 18. Neh. 9. 10. Jer. 32. 20.

y ver. 5.

15 And now, O Lord our God, [u] that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and †hast gotten thee [x] renown, as at this day; [y] we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

Daniel mentions this deliverance now, that God would please to put forth the same power in this deliverance out of Babylon, according to his promise, Psal. lxxx. 8; Jer. xvi. 14; xxiii. 7: this he grounds his faith upon, Jer. xxxii. 13, read thence to the end. 1. How the Lord assured them they should return out of captivity, by the prophet's making a purchase and sealing evidences, and laying them up safe. 2. How the Lord would certainly plague them notwithstanding for their wickedness. 3. How he would deliver them, as once out of Egypt.

z 1 Sam. 12. 7. Is. 31. 1. & 51. 2. Mic. 6. 4, 5.

a ver. 20. Zech. 8. 3.

b Ex. 20. 5.

c Lam. 2. 15, 16.

d Is. 41. 13, 14. & 79. 4.

16 ¶ O Lord, [z] according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, [a] thy holy mountain: because for our sins, [b] and for the iniquities of our fathers, [c] Jerusalem and thy people [d] *are become* a reproach to all *that are* about us.

As if he had said, Lord, according to thy righteousness thou hast punished thy people, as they justly deserved; now also, according to thy mercies, which is the other part of thy righteousness, save thy people, though they deserve it not. See Psal. cxliii. 1, 2. For God hath promised, and therefore he will do it, yet in mercy, and this is faithfulness and righteousness. See 1 John i. 9. Now though sin is the *reproach* of any people and nation, yet much more of the people of God, which should be a holy people, because their God is a holy God, and his laws are holy laws, by which they excel all other people. Yet, Lord, saith he, if Jerusalem be a *reproach*, this is a *reproach* to thee, because

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of their relation to thee; therefore, I pray thee, take away this double *reproach;* it is grievous unto us to bear it; for thy name's sake, O let it be grievous unto thee, and therefore wipe it away.

17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, [e]and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary [f]that is desolate, [g]for the Lord's sake.

e Num. 6. 25. Ps. 67. 1. & 80. 3, 7, 19.
f Lam. 5. 18.
g ver. 19. John 16. 24.

1. Here the prophet is most concerned for the *sanctuary*, and place of worship, a type not only of the church, and the worship of God, but also of Christ; because in all these the Lord is greatly concerned in honour, especially considering, 2. His argument, *for the Lord's sake;* for Christ's sake, the Messiah, who is meant here: which I prove, 1. Because the concurrent testimony of the best interpreters, and the synod of Sardis, is for this interpretation. 2. Because this construction is most agreeable to the text and the Hebrew: the contrary is against it, and forced and figurative, when there is no need of it. 3. The plurality of persons is expressed thus. 4. The word *Lord* is often attributed to Christ in the Old Testament, Psal. cx. 1; and in the New Testament, Luke i. 43; ii. 11; John xx. 28; Rev. xvii. 14. 5. Because the Jews had none else to trust to for salvation, John xiv. 13; Acts xv. 11; Eph. iii. 12; 1 Tim. ii. 5. Thus in the Old Testament, Psal. lxxx. 15—17; for the Son's sake, whom he calls the Son of man, ver. 17, for so the Chaldee paraphrase, for the King Messiah. So upon that place, Psal. lxxii. 1, *Give the king thy judgments, and thy righteousness to the king's son*, i. e. the King the Messiah. 2 Sam. vii. 21, *For thy word's sake*, i. e. Christ, John i. 1. 2 Sam. xii. 25, *He called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord*, of whom Solomon was a type.

18 [h]O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, [i]and behold our desolations, and the city [k]† which is called by thy name: for we do not †present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

h Is. 37. 17.
i Ex. 3. 7. Ps. 80. 14, &c.
k Jer. 25. 29.
† Heb. *whereupon thy name is called.*
† Heb. *cause to fall.* Jer. 36. 7.

Observe here, 1. How he entitles God to the city for his name. It was the city of God, Psal. xlviii. 1. 2, 8; Jer. xxv. 29. It is a good argument in prayer to entitle ourselves to God; yea, to interest God to ourselves, and to our cause. Observe, 2. How careful and cautious the prophet is to flee to mercy, and to renounce merit. Thus all the saints.

19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, [l]for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

l Ps. 79. 9, 10. & 102. 15, 16.

Here, 1. We have the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man prevailing: he never gave over till he got it. 2. The Lord allows and loves importunity in prayer. 3. He and the people of God were under a sore trial, for the seventy years' captivity were expired. Therefore he saith, Defer not now, Lord, it is high time for thee to have mercy upon Zion, yea, the set time is come: Lord, hear for thine own sake, though not for ours. What! hast thou forgotten? O Lord, remember.

20 ¶ [m]And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;

m Ps. 32. 5. Is. 65. 24.

21 Yea, whiles I *was* speaking in prayer, even the man [n]Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly †swiftly, [o]touched me [p]about the time of the evening oblation.

n ch. 8. 16.
† Heb. *with weariness, or, flight.*
o ch. 8. 18. & 10. 10, 16.
p 1 Kings 18. 36.

1. By this we see Daniel used vocal prayer, pouring out his soul. 2. That the saints in prayer do parley with God; it is a humble, and holy, and fervent unbosoming our soul to God. 3. That holy men, in confessing the sins of the nation, confess their own sins too, and that impartially, begging pardon for all. 4. That when a child of God sets himself in earnest to seek God by prayer, the Lord hears him. Compare ver. 20 with 23. 5. As the angels are all ministering spirits, so the chiefest angels are sent in the chiefest messages relating to the church of God. Thus Gabriel before, chap. viii. 16. Thus here. Also to Zacharias, and Mary, Luke i. 11, 19, 26, about the incarnation of Christ, and our salvation by him. 6. God herein gives a great encouragement to prayer, and fulfils his promises made of old to his people in this behalf, Lev. xxvi. 40—42; Deut. xxx. 1—3; Isa. xxx. 19; and chap. lxv. 24, *It shall come to pass, before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear.* 7. The Lord is quick in hearing and helping his people. The angel was made *to fly swiftly*, even unto weariness, as some translate it. Or, to fly with flight, Hab. i. 8. *The time of the evening sacrifice* was a solemn and set time of devotion. Then God heard Elijah and did wonders, 1 Kings xviii. 36—38; and Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world was sacrificed for us at that time, about the ninth hour, Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34; Luke xxiii. 44, &c.; all these three evangelists mention Christ's giving up the ghost at the ninth hour, which was the time of the evening sacrifice. At this time Gabriel is sent to Daniel to tell him the time of the Messiah's death, and the consequence of it. See ver. 24, &c.

22 And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth †to give thee skill and understanding.

† Heb. *to make thee skilful of understanding.*

That is, to make thee know great and secret things concerning the city and sanctuary of Jerusalem, of the rebuilding of it, and of the Messiah, &c.

23 At the beginning of thy supplications the †commandment came forth, and [q]I am come to shew *thee;* [r]for thou *art* †greatly beloved: therefore [s]understand the matter, and consider the vision.

† Heb. *word.*
q ch. 10. 12.
r ch. 10. 11, 19.
† Heb. *a man of desires.*
s Mat. 24. 15.

The commandment came forth: this thing was decreed before in God's counsel; but not divulged, or ordered to be proclaimed, till Daniel petitioned. *Greatly beloved*, Heb. *a man of desires*, i. e. dear to God, Luke i. 28.

24 * Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, ‖to finish the transgression, and ‖to make an end of sins, [t]and to make reconciliation for iniquity, [u]and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and †prophecy, [x]and to anoint the most Holy.

* They begin from the 20th of Artaxerxes. See Num. 14. 34. Ezek. 4. 6.
‖ Or, *to restrain.*
‖ Or, *to seal up.*
t Lam. 4. 22. t Is. 53. 10.
u Is. 53. 11. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Heb. 9. 12. Rev. 14. 6.
† Heb. *prophet.*
x Ps. 45. 7. Luke 1. 35. John 1. 41. Heb. 9. 11.

Seventy weeks: these weeks are weeks of days, and these days are so many years; though neither days, nor months, nor years are expressed, (which makes it somewhat the more obscure,) but weeks only. It is yet plain and obvious that the angel useth the number seventy to show the favour of God towards them, that they might have so much liberty and joy as their seventy years' bondage and sufferings amounted to. Yet was this but a type of the time of grace which was to follow after by the coming of Christ. *Upon thy people, and upon thy holy city.* Why doth he call them Daniel's people? 1. Because they were his by nation, blood, laws, and profession. 2. Thine because thou dost own them, and art so tender of them, and so zealous for them. *To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity.* Note, 1. The angel discovers first the disease, in three several words, פשע חתם השגה which contain all sorts of sin, which the Messiah should free us from by his full redemption, (see Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; Matt. i. 21,) viz. original, actual, of ignorance, presumption, &c.; also fault and punishment, which we may prove by Scripture. 2. The angel shows us also the cure of this disease in three words, *le callee, le chatem, le capper:* 1. *To finish transgression;* 2. *To make an end of sin;* 3. *To make reconciliation:* all which words are very significant in the original, and signify to pardon, to blot out, mortify, expiate. *To bring in everlasting righteousness*, i. e. to bring in justification by the free grace of God in Jesus Christ the Lord our Righteousness, Isa. liii. 6; Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16; 1 Cor. i. 30; called *ever-*

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lasting because Christ is eternal, and he and his righteousness is everlasting. Christ brings this in, 1. By his merit; 2. By his gospel declaring it; 3. By faith applying and sealing it by the Holy Ghost. *To seal up the vision and prophecy;* to abrogate the former dispensation of the laws, and to fulfil it, and the prophecies relating to Christ, and to confirm and ratify the new testament or gospel covenant of grace. The Talmud saith, all the prophecies of the prophets related to Christ. *To anoint the most Holy;* by which alluding to the holy of holies, which was anointed, Exod. xxx. 25—31; xl. 9—16. This typified the church, which is called anointed, 2 Cor. i. 21, and heaven, into which *Christ is entered*, Heb. viii. 1; ix. 24; x. 19; but chiefly Christ himself, who is the Holy One, Acts iii. 14. He received the Spirit *without measure*, John iii. 34. His human nature is therefore called *the temple*, John ii. 19. and *tabernacle*, Heb. viii. 2; ix. 11: moreover Christ is he that held the law, by which the will of God is revealed; the *propiatory*, appeasing God; the *table*, that nourisheth us; the *candlestick*, that enlightens; the *altar*, that sanctifies the gift and offering. All these were anointed and holy: by this word *anointing* he alludes to his name Messiah and Christ, both which signify *anointed*. Christ was anointed at his first *conception* and personal union, Luke i. 35; in his *baptism*, Matt. iii. 17; to his *three offices* by the Holy Ghost, (1.) *King*, Matt. ii. 2, (2.) *Prophet*, Isa. lxi. 1, (3.) *Priest*, Psal. cx. 4.

x ver. 23. Matt. 24. 15. x Ezra 4. 24. & 6. 1, 15. & 7. 1. Neh. 2. 1, 3, 5, 6, 8. ‖ Or, *to build again Jerusalem*: as 2 Sam. 15. 25. Ps. 51. 20. a John 1. 41. & 4. 25. b Is. 55. 4. † Heb. *shall return and be builded.* † Heb. *in strait of times*, Neh. 6. 15.

25 Know therefore and understand, *that* † from the going forth of the commandment ‖ to restore and to build Jerusalem unto [a] the Messiah [b] the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street † shall be built again, and the ‖ wall, [c] even † in troublous times.

Know therefore and understand, i. e. by deep consideration, upon a due search of reason, and comparing of things, and minding what the angel saith. *Seven weeks* from the publication of the edict, whether of Cyrus or Darius, to restore and to build, we shall see anon. *Even in troublous times;* noting the enemy should create them much trouble in the building and reparations of the wall, city, and temple, which they did many ways, as we read in Nehemiah, which the Spirit of God doth premonish them of, lest they should think this their chief deliverance and redemption. These *seven weeks* are therefore mentioned by themselves, and repeated no more, because they contained the time of building the wall, city, and temple of Jerusalem, at the end of which seem to begin the *sixty-two weeks*.

d Is. 53. 8. Mark 9. 12. Luke 24. 26, 46. e 1 Pet. 2 21. & 3. 18. ‖ Or, *and shall have nothing*, John 14. 30. ‖ Or, *and [the Jews] they shall be no more his people.* ch. 11. 17. or, *and the prince's [Messiah's,* ver. 25.] *future people.* f Matt. 22. 7. g Luke 19. 44. h Matt. 24. 2. i Matt. 24. 6, 14. k Is. 8. 7, 8. ch. 11. 10, 22. Nah. 1. 8. ‖ Or, *it shall be cut off by desolations.*

26 And after threescore and two weeks [d] shall Messiah be cut off, [e] ‖ but not for himself: ‖ and [f] the people of the prince that shall come [g] shall destroy the city [h] and the sanctuary; [i] and the end thereof *shall be* [k] with a flood, and unto the end of the war ‖ desolations are determined.

After the threescore and two weeks. i. e. after the seven before, and after the sixty-two that followed them, which all make up sixty-nine, referring the angel's seventy weeks, which is nothing though no week more be described, because it makes up the number a round number, after the Jewish manner of calculation, and there might be some fragments in the particular reckoning to make up the sum, or it might be finished in the seventieth week, and that was enough to call it seventy weeks, ver. 24. *Shall Messiah be cut off;* which word כרת signifies cutting off, or cutting down, as a tree, Isa. xliv. 14; Jer. x. 3. Secondly, it is used for cutting off by capital punishment, Exod. xii. 15; xxx. 33, 38; whether this be by the signal hand of God, or by the magistrate, for some heinous offence, Lev. xviii. 29; xx. 17; Psal. xxxvii. 34. This foreshows that the death of Christ should be as of a condemned malefactor sentenced to death, and that justly. So did the Jews, Christ's executioners, proclaim that he died for *blasphemy*, and that he was a devilish impostor, &c. Yea, God himself charged sin upon him and the curse, Isa. liii. 4; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13. *But not for himself;* ואין לו which being abrupt, is variously rendered and read; some referring it to Christ, and some to the people, and others to both, and all with very probable conjectures, Psal. xxii. 6, 7; Isa. liii. 3: i. e. not to him: There was none to succour him; or that they would none of him for their Messiah; they set him at nought, and would not have him live, and therefore he would not own them for his people, but cast them off, for thus dying is expressed in short, not to be. Thus Enoch, Gen. v. 24, Joseph, Gen. xlii. 36, and Rachel's children, Jer. xxxi. 15; Matt. ii. 17, 18. But our English translation seems to hit the truest sense, i. e. *not for himself*. He was innocent and guiltless, he died for others, not for himself, but for our sakes and for our salvation. *The people of the prince that shall come;* the Romans under the conduct of Titus Vespatianus. Some will include Christ's people here, whom he should chiefly gather out of the Roman empire, should ruin that church, and polity, and worship. *Desolations are determined;* God hath decreed to destroy that place and people by the miseries and desolations of war, i. e. sword, famine, sickness, scattering. All this is signified by *shomemoth:* also the profaning of the temple by idols, which are called abominations that make desolate; this was done by the Greeks and Jews before, and the Romans at their siege, and after. *Quest.* But some will query, why the angel who was sent to comfort Daniel should insert here this tragical business of destruction and desolation, being beyond the space of seventy weeks? *Answ.* 1. That Daniel might be informed of the judgments of God upon that place and people, and the reasons of it, viz. their rejecting and killing Christ. 2. That the spirit of God's people should not fail when these tragedies were acted; being foretold, thereby they were prepared and fortified against it, and to expect it, and not to be surprised by it when it came.

‖ Or, *a.* Is. 42. 6. & 55. 3. Jer. 31. 31. Ezek. 16. 60, 61, 62. m Is. 53. 11. Matt. 26. 28. Rom. 5. 15, 19. Heb. 9. 28. ‖ Or, *and upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolator.* n Matt. 24. 15. Mark 13. 14. Luke 21. 20. o See Is. 10. 22, 23. & 28. 22. ch. 11. 36. Luke 21. 24. Rom. 11. 26. ‖ Or, *upon the desolator.*

27 And he shall confirm ‖ [l] the covenant with [m] many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, ‖ and for the overspreading of [n] abominations he shall make *it* desolate, [o] even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured ‖ upon the desolate.

He: this *he* is not Titus making truce with the Jews, which he did not, though he endeavoured to persuade them that he might spare them. I say then with Graser, Mede, and others, that this *he* is the Messiah, and the covenant he confirms is the new testament or covenant, called therefore the covenant of the people, Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 8; and the Angel of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1; and the Surety of the covenant, Heb. vii. 22; and the ancient rabbins called the Messias איש גיים a *middle man*, or middle man between two. *Quest.* How did Christ confirm the covenant? *Answ.* 1. By testimony, (1.) Of angels, Luke ii. 10; Matt. xxviii.; (2.) John Baptist; (3.) Of the wise men; (4.) By the saints then living, Luke i. 2; (5.) Moses and Elias, Matt. xvii. 3; (6.) Pharisees, as Nicodemus, John iii. 2; (7.) The devils that confessed him. 2. By his preaching. 3. By signs and wonders. 4. By his holy life. 5. By his resurrection and ascension. 6. By his death and blood shed. *Shall confirm the covenant;* הגביר he shall *corroborate* it, as if it began before his coming to fail and be invalid. *With many;* noting hereby the paucity of the Jewish church and nation, compared with the great increase and enlargement by believing Gentiles throughout all nations and ages of the world, Isa. xi. 9; xlix. 6; liii. 11, 12; liv. 2, 3; Mark xvi. 15; Acts xiii. 46: q. d. With many Jews first and last, and with many more of the nations, yea, with the many whom the rabbins and Pharisees despise as the rabble, the common people, Isa. xlii. 3; Matt. xxi. 31; John vii. 48, 49; 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. *For one week;* by a figure, take the greater part of the whole, he shall, though rejected by the chief and bulk of the Jewish nation, yet make the new testament prevail with many in that time, i. e. at the latter end of the seventy weeks. *The*

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sacrifice and the oblation to cease; zebach and *mincha*, bloody and unbloody, to cease, i. e. all the Jewish rites, and Levitical ceremonious worship, i. e. by the burning of the temple before the city was taken, for they were only to offer sacrifice in the temple, nor had they wherewithal in the siege. Yet is there more in it than this, viz. that the Lord Jesus, by his death, and by the execution of his wrath, did abrogate and put an end to this laborious service, and made it to cease for ever. *For the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate;* desolate *for the wing*, for the manifold and great abominations stretching, and our text hath it well *overspreading*. This abomination was the Roman army with their eagles, and with their superstitious rites in approaching to besiege and subdue any place; and this is executed by Christ upon them, Matt. xxii. 7, when he is called a King sending forth his armies, and destroying the murderers that destroyed him, and burning their city, and their coming is Christ's coming, Mal. iii. 1, 2; John xxi. 22; James v. 7; therefore it is said here, *he shall make it desolate. Even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate:* here all this is made the effect of God's decree, and therefore irrevocable. This word *shomen* notes that this people were bewitched, sottishly superstitious, wanderers, banished, the astonishment and scorn of the world; all which did justly and dreadfully befall them, and they verify it to this day.

They that will curiously search further into the seventy weeks and other numbers in Daniel, and have leisure and skill, let them read Graserus, L'Empereur, Wasmuth, Mede, Willet, Wichmannus, Sanctius, Rainoldus, Pererius, Derodon, Broughton, Liveleius, Helvicus, Calovius, Geierus, &c. Read also Joseph Med. p. 861, &c., and Bail. p. 180, &c. This scripture shows the coming of the Messiah so clearly, his sufferings, and the wrath of God so severely upon the Jews for it, that it thoroughly confutes their unbelief, and fully confirms our faith in Jesus Christ.

CHAP. X.

Daniel, having humbled himself, seeth a glorious vision, and is troubled with fear, 1—9. *An angel comforteth him, and, telling him of the opposition of the prince of Persia, the assistance he had from Michael, and the coming in of the prince of Grecia, promiseth him further information,* 10—21.

cir. 534. IN the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel,
a ch. 1. 7. [a] whose name was called Belteshazzar;
b ch. 8. 26. Rev. 19. 9.
c ver. 14.
† Heb. *great.*
d ch. 1. 17. & 5. 16.
[b] and the thing *was* true, [c] but the time appointed *was* †long: and [d] he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

This fell out in the thirty-first year, which was the last year of the kingdom of Persia, but *the third year* after his seizure and monarchy of Babylon; indeed it is said, Dan. i. 21, that Daniel continued to the first year of Cyrus, i. e. in his place of honour, but he lived much longer. *A thing was revealed unto Daniel;* revealed by an angel from heaven, not in a dream, or in any more obscure and uncertain way, but plainly. This chapter is but a general preface to what is more particularly declared in the next chapter. *Belteshazzar:* by this name Daniel was famous among many people, and they took notice of him by his honourable place, name, and prophecy. *The thing was true;* both in the matter, and that which was truly to come to pass, not feigned, nor a bare conjecture, ואמה it was truth. *The time appointed was long*, i. e. for three hundred years' space, as was said, Dan. viii. 26, or to the end of Antiochus's persecution, or of the world, Dan. xii. 2. *And he understood the thing and the vision.* This is doubled, to beget the greater credit, and assurance of the truth of it.

† Heb. *weeks of days.* 2 In those days I Daniel was mourning three †full weeks.

There are several causes of Daniel's mourning. 1. Because the Jews had liberty to go out of captivity, yet many of them staid still in Babylon. 2. Because when they were building the temple, walls, and city they were greatly hindered and molested, Ezra iv. 4. 3. Because he foresaw the many calamities of the Jews that would befall them for their sins, especially in destroying the Messiah, and rejecting his gospel. *Three full weeks;* he fasted and mourned all that time, both to declare his deep sense of those calamities ensuing, and to be in a better posture to receive Divine impressions, which usually God reveals to humble souls.

† Heb. *bread of desires.* e Matt. 6. 17. 3 I ate no †pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, [e] neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

Fasting and feasting are very inconsistent; Daniel at other times lived magnificently, according to the dignity of his place, he had the best bread, flesh, wine, and anointing after the manner of the East, all which he laid aside, that by austerity he might afflict his body, and quicken his soul suitably to the time of Jacob's trouble and to a true fasting frame.

f Gen. 2. 14. 4 And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which *is* [f] Hiddekel;

The first month; it was the month Nisan, which is March. This *Hiddekel* was Tigris, which is a great branch of Euphrates: the prophets had many of their visions by rivers.

g Josh. 5. 13. Heb. 12. 6, 7.
† Heb. *one man.*
i Rev. 1. 13, 14, 15. & 15. 6.
k Jer. 10. 9. 5 Then [g] I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and [h] behold †a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins *were* [i] girded with [k] fine gold of Uphaz:

He beheld wistly and with a composed mind. *A certain man;* which *man* some will have an angel, either Gabriel, who appeared to him before, or Michael, chief among the angels, Jude 9, archangel, who is mentioned after. Or rather, Christ, who was true man. 1. He appeared to Daniel in royal and priestly robes, which was not proper for any angel. 2. He appeared in so great brightness and majesty, which made Daniel astonished, and laid him prostrate. 3. Compare this place with Dan. xii. 6, 7, and you find him the same as here, revealing the secrets of times, and of God's providence towards his church, which is Christ. *Clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz:* see Rev. i. 13—17, where the Lord Jesus Christ is described as here in Daniel, and for the same end. Now he appeared thus before his incarnation, in the Old Testament, as a prelude of it, as the best expositors grant it. By this appearance the Lord Christ held out clearly his three offices of King, Priest, and Prophet. The girding of loins signifies his readiness to obey the commands and do the work of his Father; besides the ornament of the curious golden girdle.

l Ezek. 1. 16. m Ezek. 1. 14. n Rev. 1. 14. & 19. 12. o Ezek. 1. 7. Rev. 1. 15. p Ezek. 1. 24. Rev. 1. 15. 6 His body also *was* [l] like the beryl, and his face [m] as the appearance of lightning, [n] and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms [o] and his feet like in colour to polished brass, [p] and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

Like the beryl, which is of a sea colour; others translate it the chrysolite, others the jacinth, the word in the text תרשיש like the tarsis, this is a colour like the sea: the beryl, which is azure, and like the heavens, show Christ to be immortal and glorious, the Lord from heaven, heavenly, 1 Cor. xv. 47. See Ezek. i. 16; x. 9; xxviii. 13. *His face as the lightning* quickens to succour his saints and terrify his enemies, Matt. xxiv. 27; xxviii. 3; Rev. iv. 5. *His eyes like lamps of fire*, signify omniscience, splendour, and terror in Christ. *His arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass*, note his incredible power and swiftness to defend or to destroy invincibly. *The voice of his words like the voice of a multitude:* by this the Lord would distinguish the Lord Christ from creatures, and when he comes with a noise and a sound, to show the grandeur and terror of his presence. And thus his presence is wont to be ushered in before the revelation of great things, Ezek. i 24; xliii. 2; Acts ii. 2; Rev. i. 10, 15; xiv. 2; xix. 1; by the example of Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the apostles; noting also the mighty power of Christ to tear.

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q 2 Kings 6. 17. Acts 9. 7.

7 And I Daniel [q]alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.

So Luke xxiv. 16; Acts ix. 7. 1. The Lord hereby shows his power over our senses, both outward and inward, in a signal, distinguishing way. 2. The weakness of mortals to see or hear heavenly things, unless he strengthen them. 3. Their fleeing and quaking argued the terror of God upon them; and thereby the truth and certainty of the vision, by hearing such a sound though they saw it not, Acts ix. 7, 8.

r ch. 8. 27.

8 Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, [r]and there remained no strength in me: for my ‖ [s]comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.

‖ Or, vigour. s ch. 7. 28.

This great vision; great in the appearance, and great in the great things revealed. *There remained no strength in me;* by the recoiling of his spirits inward. *My comeliness was turned in me into corruption;* his colour was changed into paleness, as one that is faint, and pining into a consumption, by terror and consternation.

t ch. 8. 18.

9 Yet heard I the voice of his words: [t]and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.

Yet heard I the voice of his words; nevertheless he made me to hear: here was power in weakness, and yet this added to his fear and frailty. *Then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground;* as one that swooned, or as one that slumbered, and as one that adored the ground.

u Jer. 1. 9. ch. 9. 21. Rev. 1. 17. † Heb. *moved.*

10 ¶ [u]And, behold, an hand touched me, which †set me upon my knees and *upon* the palms of my hands.

What a poor worm is man to crush or to raise by the mighty hand of God! Thus dealt the angel Gabriel with him before, chap. viii. 16, 17.

x ch. 9. 23. † Heb. *a man of desires.* † Heb. *stand upon thy standing.*

11 And he said unto me, O Daniel, [x]†a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and †stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

A man greatly beloved: the Lord moulds and models us as clay in his hands to receive his impressions: we are not fit for any great thing till we are abased; and yet when we are vilest in our eyes we are most precious in God's eyes. *Understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright.* Thus Saul, when he was struck down, and struck blind, then he received his call and commission to be an apostle, and to know the mystery of Christ: see Hab. iii. 16. *When he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling:* the Lord doth not restore at once his servants from their frailties, that they by gradual comforts may prize every drop of mercy, being not quickened at once, when they are mortified, but may be admonished, by the remains of fears and frailties, to keep their hearts humble.

y Rev. 1. 17.

12 Then said he unto me, [y]Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, [z]thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

z ch. 9. 3, 4, 20, 23. Acts 10. 4.

1. The Lord is quick in hearing the fervent prayer of a humble soul, though he doth not presently let them know it. God heard the first day, though he sent not his angel to tell Daniel of it till three weeks after. 2. A soul that would obtain great things from God by prayer must be solemn and fervent in seeking God. 3. The fervent and constant prayers of the saints make God to *send from heaven and save.* Thus in Peter's case, Acts xii. 5—15, and here in Daniel's.

a ver. 20.

13 [a]But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, [b]Michael, ‖ one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

b ver. 21. ch. 12. 1. Jude 9. Rev. 12. 7. ‖ Or, *the first.*

But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: this place hath some difficulty, therefore variously expounded. Some expound it of earthly princes, some of angels, and among them some will have good angels meant, who they say have the patronage of the kingdoms and provinces of the earth; but who can imagine that good angels should quarrel one with the other? therefore, say others, they are bad angels that oppose the people of God, and their deliverance, seeking rather their ruin, as Michael and the devil strove, Rev. xii. 7: now sometimes God permits Satan to do much this way. But I judge by the prince of Persia is meant Cambyses, who was an enemy to the Jews, and hindered the building of the temple. Now he could not properly resist the angel, but figuratively he did. Angels' power is not unlimited, but by commission and instructions from God, and their works successive. Therefore God suffered the wicked counsels of Cambyses to take place a while; but Daniel by his prayers, and the angel by his power, overcame him at last. And this very thing laid a foundation of the Persian monarchy's ruin, ver. 20; and doubtless that king was stirred up to his evil machinations against the people of God by the prince of the powers of darkness, that ruleth in the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2. *Michael:* this we take to be Christ. 1. His name signifies, who is like God. 2. He is the first in dignity above all the angels, Heb. i. 4—7, &c., called *archangel,* and the church's prince, ver. 21. 3. The chief champion of his church, helping Gabriel not as his fellow, but as his general. Thus we see what care God takes of his church's safety against their potent enemies, by doubling their succours, (when he could do it, if he pleased, without means,) thereby to consult his own glory in the world by defeating the counsels and breaking the powers of the mightiest enemies, after he had given them rope to do their worst.

c Gen. 49. 1. ch. 2. 28. d ch. 8. 26. ver. 1. Hab. 2. 3.

14 Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people [c]in the latter days: [d]for yet the vision *is* for *many* days.

Now at last, with much ado, after the contest is over, I am come to give thee understanding touching all the purposes and providences of God relating to his church: this made amends for the delay; this was the comfortable effect of effectual fervent prayer; this was God's overflowing kindness to his servant Daniel, to certify him by so honourable a messenger as this, that God would not only give him the knowledge of the present times and dispensations towards his church and their enemies, but for a long time after, even four hundred and ninety years, to the coming of the Messias, as he did to David, 2 Sam. vii. 19. By which we learn this solemn truth, that God will never leave himself without witness to his people; but in the worst of times he will afford them sufficient discoveries of his care of them; as he did by this prophecy in those dark days.

e ver. 9. ch. 8. 18.

15 And when he had spoken such words unto me, [e]I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb.

He was not yet quite free of all his fear, of which we heard, ver. 9; haply this pressed him down the more, when he considered the majesty of the angel, the greatness of the vision, and his own frailty; this transported him with astonishment; and above all, that he saw so much of God in it, in his favour to him and his poor church.

f ch. 8. 15. g ver. 10. Jer. 1. 9. h ver. 8.

16 And, behold, [f]*one* like the similitude of the sons of men [g]touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision [h]my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.

One like the similitude of the sons of men; an angel in

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the shape of a man, and no other but Jesus Christ, as before he that had humbled him now helped and encouraged him. *I opened my mouth, and spake;* which cannot be till the Lord touch our lips, Psal. li. 15; Isa. vi. 5—7; Jer. i. 9. Though the angel appeared to him, and spake to him as a man, yet could not Daniel bear his presence without some dread.

‖ Or, *this servant of my lord.*

17 For how can ‖the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.

The condition of the church under the gospel is a better dispensation than the law and the prophets, when God spake often by angels; but now by his Son, and that not in angelical shape and splendour, but as a mean man, in a meek and humble garb, and most familiar, Isa. lxi. 1—3; John xiii. 5; Acts iii. 22.

18 Then there came again and touched me *one* like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me,

Daniel needed a second touch, and another word of encouragement, before he could hear and bear the angel's words as to the vision and prophecy; and now, being fortified by degrees, he hath got courage.

i ver. 11.
k Judg. 6. 23.

19 [i]And said, O man greatly beloved, [k]fear not: peace *be* unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.

The Lord is gracious and compassionate towards his saints under their infirmities, Psal. ciii. 13, 14. And this tender carriage towards him was a token for good to him and his people, that the Lord would be propitious to them.

20 Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I

l ver. 13.

return to fight [l]with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.

Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? i. e. by what I have said already, and what I have further to tell thee upon thy prayers, which God hath accepted, and hath given me in charge to reveal to thee as followeth to the end. *To fight with the prince of Persia;* Cyrus, or Cambyses, who by his counsels and captains hinder the work of God; and to bring the prince of Greece upon him, viz. Alexander the Great, who utterly ruined the Persian monarchy, which is ushered with the word *lo*, because it was a wonder that the prince of Greece with thirty thousand men should do it. Thus the Lord sets and disposeth the fates of empires, and changeth them as he lists; especially in his church's quarrel.

† Heb. *strengthened himself.*
m ver. 13. Jude 9. Rev. 12. 7.

21 But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and *there is* none that †holdeth with me in these things, [m]but Michael your prince.

In the scripture of truth, i. e. in the peremptory decree and purpose of God, more authentic and unalterable than the laws of the Medes and Persians. Now God hath appointed to deliver the Jews from the Persians by the Greeks; and from the Greeks by the Maccabees, especially the Seleucidæ and Lagidæ; and how the Romans should come after, and plague the people of God long, both by the persecuting emperors and by antichrist, and how that also should have an end. *Michael your prince;* Jesus Christ alone is the Champion and Protector of his church, and that all-sufficient, when all the princes of the earth besides deserted or opposed it. For it cannot be meant of *angels* in any sound sense, as popish interpreters would have it, thereby to countenance their angel worship; for can we imagine upon rational and orthodox principles, that the angels of heaven should be divided into parties, and but two of them mind the cause of the church of God, with other like absurdities, which accompany the popish sense that Maldonate, a Lapide, &c. fasten upon this scripture?

CHAP. XI.

The overthrow of Persia by the king of Grecia, whose empire shall be divided. 1—4. *Leagues and conflicts between the kings of the south and of the north,* 5—20. *The exploits of one of the latter princes,* 21—29, *who, being checked in his progress by the ships of Chittim, shall turn his fury against the Holy Land,* 30—35. *An impious tyranny set up,* 36—39. *Events that shall take place in the latter times,* 40—45.

a ch. 9. 1.
b ch. 5. 31.

ALSO I [a]in the first year of [b]Darius the Mede, *even* I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.

This first verse should have been the last verse of the tenth chapter, for it pertains to it; and the second verse of this chapter should have been the first; which neglect those who divided the Scripture into chapters have been found guilty of more than once.

Thus speaks the angel to Daniel; because Darius had the rule of Babylon by the consent of Cyrus. he settled the monarchy of the Medes and Persians upon the ruins of the Babylonian, for the verifying of prophecies, and for protection and preservation of the church.

2 And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than *they* all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.

The truth: this is that thing which Daniel saith, chap. x. 1, was *revealed unto him, and was true*, i. e. plain, without any obscurity, and should suddenly and certainly come to pass. *There shall stand up yet three kings in Persia;* which notes their flourishing and strength; for after them that monarchy declined. These three are Cyrus, Smerdis, Darius Hystaspes. Others put Cambyses for Cyrus; others add Xerxes, who is added as the fourth in this same verse, and made more potent than all the other three, because his father Darius had gathered an incredible mass for him, and he also himself drove the same trade for six years together before he made his expedition against Greece. There were more kings of Persia besides those four, but they had no concern with the people of God; but those four had, either in hindering or helping the building of the temple, and therefore the angel's instructions from God to Daniel were principally touching those four who are mentioned. *The fourth shall be far richer than they all:* he had vast territories from India to Ethiopia; he had a navy of one thousand two hundred ships, and an army of eight hundred thousand, as Ctesias writes, but Herodotus speaks of a prodigious army that Xerxes had little short of five millions and a half, (five millions two hundred and eighty-three thousand,) and all against the realm of Greece, where he made incredible havoc at Thermopylæ and Athens, as the Greek and Latin histories mention.

c ch. 7. 6. & 8. 5.
d ch. 8. 4. ver. 16, 36.

3 And [c]a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and [d]do according to his will.

This was Alexander the Great, the he-goat, who, moved with choler for the Persian invasion, run down the ram and stamped on it, and got a golden fleece from him by that, and after many victories; afterward he did according to his will, even what he would without controlment by any. See Dan. viii. 7, 8.

e ch. 8. 8.
f ch. 8. 22.

4 And when he shall stand up, [e]his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, [f]nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.

When he shall stand up; when he is come to his highest, as monarch of the world, &c. After he had enjoyed that title a little while, *his kingdom was broken*, as the text saith. So it was, into four pieces, whereof we have spoken, Dan. vii., viii. *Not to his posterity,* but to four of his chief com-

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manders, who should reign in the four quarters of the world, i. e. Alexander's conquest, though here he only mentions two of them, Egypt and Syria, i. e the south and the north. Alexander had a brother, named Aridæus, and two sons, Alexander and Hercules, besides others of his blood, but the nobles destroyed them all; and so the whole race of Alexander was rooted out to fulfil this prophecy; but judicially, for his great cruelty, pride, and luxury. *Nor according to his dominion;* they did not reign as kings at first, but only as captains; and as to the extent of their dominion, it was far less than Alexander's, yea, all four fell short of his. *For others beside those;* some lesser commanders shared several parts of that empire, as Eumenes, Philotes, with many more, at least ten; as histories tell us.

5 ¶ And the king of the south shall be strong, and *one* of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion *shall be* a great dominion.

This king was Ptolemy the son of Lagus, the first king of Egypt after Alexander, who is brought in because he took Jerusalem by treachery, for the angel minds only those persons and things which related to the Jews, passing over many things that pertained not to them. *His dominion shall be a great dominion;* his riches by land and sea, and his territory besides Egypt, that Theocritus takes notice of it in Idyllio, what this first Ptolemy, the father of Ptolemy Philadelphus, added, viz. Cyprus, Phœnicia, with many other countries, to Egypt, and left all to his son, with an incredible treasure and an invincible army. *One of his princes,* i. e. either one of these Ptolemies, or Antiochus, or Nicanor, or Seleucus Nicanor, so called for his great victories, who overcame Demetrius, and added Asia to his empire; he overcame the king of Thrace, and a king of India, and built many cities; and Judea, lying in the midst of them, was much afflicted by him, and his antagonists and allies.

† Heb. *shall associate themselves.*

6 And in the end of years they †shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make † an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and ‖ he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in *these* times.

† Heb. *rights.*

‖ Or, *whom she brought forth.*

They shall join themselves together, i. e. the successors of those first kings of Egypt and Syria shall join and make leagues. This confederacy was two several times: the first peace was concluded between Ptolemy Lagus and Antiochus Soter. The other (which is here meant) was between Ptolemy Philadelphus and Antiochus Theus the son of Soter. So Junius and Polanus. *The king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement;* Bernice shall come from Egypt and marry with Antiochus Theus, who was the son of Antiochus Soter, and nephew to Seleucus Nicanor, for her father brought her to Pelusium with an infinite sum of gold and silver for her dowry. Here was nothing sincere on either side, for each gaped after the other's kingdom. and covered all with a league and a marriage; for Antiochus put away his lawful wife Laodice, by whom he had two children, that he might take her sister to wife. Thus sacred wedlock and leagues were violated. *But she shall not retain the power of the arm;* she continued not in favour and authority, for Antiochus now put away Bernice, and took Laodice again. *Neither shall he stand, nor his arm;* for she made away Antiochus by poison, and set up her son Seleucus Callinicus in his stead, who slew Bernice. From hence many cruel wars and tragedies arose between those two kings. See here the miserable fates of wicked princes and courts, where their sinful politics most commonly end in their ruin; for so it did to these two families: which thing God by his angel instructs Daniel in, to inform and satisfy him about these wonderful providences relating to his church and their enemies

7 But out of a branch of her roots shall *one* stand up ‖ in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail:

‖ Or, *in his place, or, office.* ver. 20.

i. e. Of Bernice shall come Ptolemy Euergetes, who shall be king, and revenge the wrong done to his sister; for he invaded Syria, and took many strong holds, with a great part of Syria. *And shall prevail,* i. e. shall be conqueror, and destroy Callinicus with his mother, whose treachery was hereby repaid.

8 And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, *and* with † their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue *more* years than the king of the north.

† Heb. *vessels of their desire.*

With their precious vessels of silver and of gold; which with other vessels amounted to two thousand five hundred, among which were the images which Cambyses long before had carried out of Egypt into Persia; for which good act the Egyptians called this Ptolemy, Euergetes, the Benefactor. *He shall continue more years than the king of the north;* he continued forty-six years, and had subdued all Seleucus's kingdom, had he not been recalled.

9 So the king of the south shall come into *his* kingdom, and shall return into his own land.

So he did, with a booty of forty thousand talents of silver, without fear or danger.

10 But his sons ‖ shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and *one* shall certainly come, [g] and overflow, and pass through: ‖ then shall he return, and be stirred up, [h] *even* to his fortress.

‖ Or, *shall war.*

[g] Is. 8. 8. ch. 9. 26.

‖ Or, *then shall he be stirred up again.*

[h] ver. 7.

His sons shall be stirred up; he means the sons of the king of the north, i. e. Antiochus, and Seleucus Ceraunus, shall be incensed with the deeds of Ptolemy Euergetes, and his son Ptolemy Philopater. *One shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through;* he means Antiochus the Great, because the other, viz. Seleucus Ceraunus, is taken off by poison at the beginning; he shall pass through Syria, and recover what the king of Egypt took from his father. *To his fortress,* i. e. to the entering of Egypt Raphia, which was check to any irruptions from Arabia or Idumea, besides many other places. The cause of which success was partly the Egyptian king's luxury, and the hatred his people had against him for his cruelty in slaying his father, mother, and sister; called Philopater ironically and reproachfully.

11 And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, *even* with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand.

Enraged by his losses, and the affronts put upon him, he fought with Antiochus, and slew ten thousand of his army, and took four thousand prisoners. So historians relate of it, Polybius and Strabo.

12 *And* when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down *many* ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened *by it.*

He might have conquered and recovered all again, but he grew proud of his victory, and returned again to his luxury. Entering Judea he entered into the temple of God at Jerusalem and the holy place against the law; yet, though he *cast down many thousands,* he was not *strengthened by it.*

13 For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come † after certain years with a great army and with much riches.

† Heb. *at the end of times, even years.* ch. 4. 16. & 12. 7.

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Antiochus the Great shall raise great forces, even from Babylon and Media; Philopater being dead, and Ptolemy Epiphanes his son yet a child, under whom Agathocles, a dissolute, proud person, *hated of all*, governed Egypt as his viceroy.

14 And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also †the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.

† Heb. *the children of robbers.*

i. e. Many of the Grecians, Arabians, Edomites, &c., and some add, many of the profane, apostate Jews, shall join with the rest for plunder and spoil, whereby they fulfil what was foretold of them by Moses and the prophets.

15 So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take †the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither †his chosen people, neither *shall there be any* strength to withstand.

† Heb. *the city of munitions.*

† Heb. *the people of his choices.*

Antiochus Epiphanes shall march on irresistibly and victoriously, besieging and taking fenced cities and strong holds, as Sidon, Samaria, &c., nor shall all the power of Egypt withstand him.

16 But he that cometh against him [i]shall do according to his own will, and [k]none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the ‖†glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.

i Ch. 8. 4, 7. ver. 3, 36.
k Josh. 1. 5.
‖ Or, *goodly land*, ch. 8. 9. ver. 41, 45.
† Heb. *the land of ornament.*

He that cometh against him, i. e. Antiochus, *shall do after his own will*, as he listeth, without control. *In the glorious land*, i. e. Judea; the word may be rendered *pleasant, desirable, noble*, Dan. viii. 9. Antiochus held all Judea, the Jews not opposing, and with the provision and product of it maintained his army.—*Josephus*. And to win them to his side from the Egyptians, he gave them liberties, as to their religion, encouraging their sacrifices, and easing their taxes. For so Josephus translates כלה by τελειῶν, *to consummate* and *make perfect*, and not to *consume*, as some render it; and thus the LXX. likewise.

17 He shall also [l]set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and ‖upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, †corrupting her: but she shall not stand *on his side*, [m]neither be for him.

l 2 Chron. 20. 3.
‖ Or, *much uprightness, or, equal conditions.*
† Heb. *to corrupt.*
m ch. 9. 26.

He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom; he shall use all the force and fraud he can to master Egypt, and engross it to himself, because Ptolemy was then young, and not able to match him. *And upright ones with him*, i. e. many of the religious Jews joined with him, Numb. xxiii. 10, called righteous in opposition to the rest of his army, which was composed of idolaters, and a profane rabble of rude heathens. *He shall give him the daughter of women*, i. e. Antiochus shall give Cleopatra his daughter, who was young, to young Ptolemy, called *the daugter of women* for her beauty, and rare parts, which she afterwards discovered; and gave in dowry with her Cœlosyria, Phœnice, and Judea, dividing the tribute and revenues between them. *But she shall not stand on his side:* as Saul gave Michal to David to be a snare to her husband, to betray him and destroy him, but she stuck to her husband's interest, and not her father's.

18 After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince †for his own behalf shall cause †the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause *it* to turn upon him.

† Heb. *for him.*
† Heb. *his reproach.*

After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many, i. e. the isles and sea-coasts of that part of the Mediterranean and Ægean Sea, as Cyprus, Rhodes, &c.; also Asia the Less with the Grecian coasts, for the Hebrews call countries bordering on the sea *isles;* particularly Greece and Italy. The meaning is, that this Antiochus craftily desisted for a time from his enterprise against Egypt, for fear of the Romans, and, dissembling with them both, presumed he should outwit them all, and therefore persuaded as many of the Greeks as he could to take part with him against the Romans, slighting and reviling them. *But a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease*, i. e. a brave Roman ambassador, and commanders sent by the Roman senate, viz. Atilius, and chiefly Scipio, beat Antiochus at his own weapons of power and policy, and turned the reproach *upon his own head;* for they fell upon him, because Ptolemy required help of them, who was besieged by Antiochus; they raised the siege, and recovered all that he had gotten from them; for the Romans were dexterous in protecting their allies, and in retorting indignities and affronts offered them by encroachers and oppressors.

19 Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, [n]and not be found.

n Job 20. 8. Ps. 37. 36. Ezek. 26. 21.

Being beaten in battle by Scipio, with thirty thousand Romans, he himself having seventy thousand, and rejecting the counsel of Hannibal, he yielded upon dishonourable terms to deliver his ships and elephants to the Romans, and all the places he had taken from them, which turned to his disgrace. Then he turned his face homeward, and was made to be content with the narrow limits of the remotest corner of his kingdom; and though he sported himself with his retirement, yet was he not in safety so, but was slain when he sought to enrich himself by the sacrilegious spoils of the temple. Thus Antiochus called Magnus came to nothing.

20 Then shall stand up ‖in his estate †a raiser of taxes *in* the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in †anger, nor in battle.

‖ Or, *in his place.* ver. 7.
† Heb. *one that causeth an exacter to pass over.*
† Heb. *angers.*

This was Seleucus Philopater, a very covetous griper, who peeled his subjects; who being told by his friends this would alienate his friends from him, answered, Money was his best friend; and therefore spared not to rob the temple, for which cause he sent Heliodorus to rifle that treasury, 2 Macc. iii. 7, therefore said to raise taxes *in the glory of his kingdom. But within few days he shall be destroyed;* for he lived not out the third part of his father's reign. *Neither in anger, nor in battle;* not by open force, but by poison or secret wiles, and treachery of Heliodorus, as some write of him: the seed of evil-doers are never renowned, in life or death.

21 And ‖in his estate [o]shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.

‖ Or, *in his place.*
o ch. 7. 8. & 8. 9, 23, 25.

Antiochus called Epiphanes, i. e. illustrious; thus he was called by his flatterers and admirers: but the people of God accounted him contrary, i. e. infamous, base, treacherous, barbarous; such were his manners, and accordingly the angel calls him here *a vile person*, the type of antichrist, Epimanes, a mad persecutor. *To whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom*, i. e. neither peers nor people; nor was he the heir, but his nephew, or brother, Philopater's son, but he cheated him of the kingdom, and crept in by flatteries, i. e. he was a great flatterer of the Romans, as well as of his people, till he got up, and shut out Demetrius the son of Seleucus; so vile a flatterer was he, that he would bathe in the same bath with mean people, to make them believe he was good-natured, and not proud. He soothed and courted the nobles with much kindness and presents, and said he was but guardian to his brother's son the heir, till he destroyed him.

22 [p]And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken; [q]yea, also the prince of the covenant.

p ver. 10.
q ch. 8. 10, 11, 25.

They shall be overflown, i. e. the Egyptian force near Pelusium, where they fell by the power of Antiochus, with a great slaughter; and it was near the river Nilus, to which

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the Holy Ghost alludes here by the phrase, *arms of a flood. The prince of the covenant*, i. e. the high priest with his place and honour, for he put out Onias, and set up in his stead Jason his brother, ambitious of that honour. Thus he opposed the people and worship of God with the same stratagems as he did the king of Egypt.

Fulfilled cir. 171.

23 And after the league *made* with him [r]he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.

[r] ch. 8. 25.

For he made a league with Egypt, and came with a few in comparison, (but they were chosen men,) and he took the passes, and set garrisons, and put all in subjection to him.

24 He shall enter ‖peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do *that* which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; [a]he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: *yea*, and he shall †forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time.

‖ Or, *into the peaceable and fat, &c.*

[a] 1 Mac. 3. 28, &c.

† Heb. *think his thoughts.*

He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; he shall come in upon the Egyptians under pretence of peace, and in time of peace, to a secure people in a plentiful and delicious country, and among a mass of treasures which the kings successively had heaped up, the greatest part of which this Antiochus took and distributed among his chiefest confidants, whereby he obliged them the faster to him, for he was large-hearted and liberal. He did herein (saith the text) *what his fathers had not done*, the kings of Syria before him could never attain to this success over Egypt, as he did. *He shall forecast his devices against the strong holds*, i. e. having succeeded thus far in the lesser places of the country, he shall proceed to the most important cities and places of greatest strength in that kingdom. *Even for a time;* that is, till God put a stop to his career; for he held Egypt not long, the Egyptians found means to deliver themselves from his yoke when their king grew to riper years; yet against this did Antiochus *forecast his devices*, as saith the text.

Fulfilled cir. 170.

25 And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him.

Antiochus Epiphanes, being imboldened by his former successes, shall wage war against Ptolemy king of Egypt, with all his might, and with open force. *And the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle;* being exasperated against Antiochus. *But he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him:* he might have prospered, if he had not been betrayed by Eulaius, Lenæus, and the rest of his nobles, being corrupted by Antiochus.

26 Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall [t]overflow: and many shall fall down slain.

[t] ver. 10, 22.

His most familiar friends and confidants shall be false and treacherous to him, for he shall be overthrown with a great slaughter, as when Nilus overflows the country, for there was the battle, between Mount Casius and Pelusium.

27 And both these kings' †hearts *shall be* to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for [u]yet the end *shall be* at the time appointed.

† Heb. *their hearts.*

[u] ver. 29, 35, 40. ch. 8. 19.

They shall speak lies at one table; they shall meet under pretence of peace, but with treacherous intents on both sides; they both played the gipsies with each other at Memphis, where Ptolemy invited Antiochus to a feast. These interviews of neighbour kings jealous one of another have ever proved fatal, though under the smoothest promises. *But it shall not prosper;* for neither shall Antiochus gain Egypt by all his artifice, nor Ptolemy Syria. *At the time appointed*, viz. by the Lord, whose purpose and counsel shall stand, whatever the devices of men's hearts are.

28 Then shall he return into his land [x]with great riches; and [y]his heart *shall be* against the holy covenant; and he shall do *exploits*, and return to his own land.

[x] 1 Mac. 1. 19.

[y] ver. 22. 1 Mac. 1. 20, &c. 2 Mac. 5. 11, 14, &c.

Antiochus shall depart with his booty gotten in Egypt into his kingdom of Syria, and be content with the bounds of that, leaving Egypt behind him. *And his heart shall be against the holy covenant;* against the law and covenant of God, with the people that worshipped God according to his rule and will. *He shall do exploits, and return to his own land;* he shall greatly afflict and vex the people of God; yet was it a mercy they had this warning of this sore trial. Antiochus was a fit instrument of the devil for this work, being rich and proud, and thought he might take this in his way: God permitting this horn to push and gore, for his people's sins, and for a preparation to his own ruin.

29 At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; [z]but it shall not be as the former, [a]or as the latter.

Fulfilled cir. 169.

[z] ver. 23.

[a] ver. 25.

Come toward the south, i. e. Egypt, to fight against Ptolemy and his wife Cleopatra, sister to Antiochus. *But it shall not be as the former, or as the latter;* this shall not be so prosperous as the two former expeditions, but shall fail of his victory and booty.

30 ¶ [b]For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation [c]against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, [d]and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.

Fulfilled cir. 168.

[b] Num. 24. 24. Jer. 2. 10.

[c] ver. 28. 1 Mac. 1. 30, 44, &c. 2 Mac. 5. 24, &c.

[d] 1 Mac. 1. 43, 52. 2 Mac. 6. 15, 23.

The ships of Chittim shall come against him, i. e. the Romans out of Italy, and parts of the Archipelago, under them, shall come with force, and they shall vex and afflict him; for the Romans had harbours for their ships and galleys in Cilicia, Macedonia, and other parts of those coasts; whereby, after they had subdued Greece, they pursued Antiochus in Asia, and sent into Egypt to prevent his going into Alexandria.—*Liv.* l. 45. This grieved and fretted him; for when he lingered and framed excuses, Popilius the Roman ambassador made a circle about him with his rod, commanding he should not stir thence till he gave him a positive present answer, by which, sore against his will, he was fain to pack away out of Egypt, and withdraw his garrisons and navy thence. This made his heart boil with rancour, which he spit out all against the Jews; therefore it is said, *he shall be grieved and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant;* especially being solicited to it by Jason first, and Menelaus after, who were apostates, and betrayers of their brethren, and the true worship of God, 2 Mac. iv. 26, 27, &c. Because Onias was in power, this they envied, therefore went to Antiochus.

31 And arms shall stand on his part, [e]and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily *sacrifice*, [f]and they shall place the abomination that ‖maketh desolate.

[e] ch. 8. 11. & 12. 11. 1 Mac. 1. 37, 39, 41, 45, 46.

[f] 1 Mac. 1. 54, 59. & 4. 58.

‖ Or, *astonisheth.*

Arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, i. e. Antiochus shall come with armed power to assist the deserters, and force the faithful Jews by his garrisons. *Shall take away the daily sacrifice;* for he polluted the sanctuary by taking away the holy vessels, and forbidding the public worship; but he added a third pollution, by setting up in the temple the *abomination of desolation*, i. e. the abominable idol of Jupiter Olympius, with many more, 1 Macc. i. 21—23, 41, to the end; 2 Macc. v. 24.

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g 1 Mac. 1. 43, 52. 2 Mac. 4. 13, 14. & 5. 15.
‖ Or, *cause to dissemble.*
h 1 Mac. 1. 62. & 2. 41, 42, 43. 2 Mac. 5. 27. & 6. 19, 20. & 7. 1, &c.

32 [g]And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he ‖corrupt by flatteries: [h]but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do *exploits.*

By gifts, preferments, and promises he drew away great multitudes of this wretched people of Judea, always bent to backsliding, to his idolatrous and heathenish practices and interest: but they that adhere to the true worship of God, and are zealous for it, shall scorn Antiochus's gifts, and abhor his ways, and defy his force, not loving their lives to the death; as you have many instances, 1 Macc. i. 62, 63; 2 Macc. v.—viii.; and also how Judas Maccabeus and his few followers did exploits against Nicanor and others.

i Mal. 2. 7.
k Heb. 11. 35, &c.

33 [i]And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: [k]yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, *many* days.

Such as Eleazar, that old scribe, 2 Macc. vi. 18. and some others learned in the laws of God, and holy in heart and life, *shall instruct many* in the righteous ways of God, and retain them from apostacy when others fall off: yet many of the people shall fall, yea, of their pious and learned teachers, as well as their disciples, 1 Macc. i. 52, 66; 2 Macc. vi.

l 1 Mac. 3. 2. 2 Mac. 8. 1.
m 2 Mac. 12. 40. & 13. 21.

34 Now when they shall fall, [l]they shall be holpen with a little help: [m]but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.

i. e. God in their affliction, when it is great, wherein he never leaves himself without witness, shall raise up some succour, to be witnesses to this truth, to vindicate his honour and save his people from utter destruction, viz. by the Maccabees. Read what Mattathias and his sons did at Modin, 1 Macc. ii., read the chapter, who would not be flattered out of their religion.

n ch. 12. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 7.
‖ Or, *by them.*
o ch. 8. 17, 19. ver. 40.
p ver. 29.

35 And *some* of them of understanding shall fall, [n]to try ‖them, and to purge, and to make *them* white, [o]*even* to the time of the end: [p]because *it is* yet for a time appointed.

To try them: we see hereby that the best of men have some dross, which makes afflictions, yea, fiery trials, necessary for them, for the word signifies all kind of examination and trials, either as founders try metals to purge them, or as corn is winnowed to cleanse it from chaff, or as fullers that wash and scour to take out spots, Mal. iii. 1—3. *Even to the time of the end:* now mark here the Spirit of God seems to slide into the Roman monarchy, for this began in the reign of Antiochus, so that he did begin that which the Romans afterward in process of time acted more highly against the Jews and Christians too. For Antiochus is made by all a type of antichrist; as Maldonate confesseth. And thus you find the prophets, and our Saviour too. David brings in Christ, Psal. lxxii. 8, when the rest is spoken of Solomon. So Psal. xvi.; Isa. xlix., liv., and lx. So our Saviour, speaking of the temple, speaks with it of the end of the word. And thus the end of this chapter is clearly of antichrist, and this prophecy of Daniel ends with the world's end. Therefore Antiochus is a type of antichrist, in his pride, covetousness, craft, and cruelty against the people of God, and blasphemies and idolatries to the reproach of Christ. Therefore it is here added, *because it is yet for a time appointed.*

q ver. 16.
r ch. 7. 8, 25. & 8. 25. 2 Thes. 2. 4. Rev. 13. 5, 6.
s ch. 8. 11, 24, 25.
t ch. 9. 27.

36 And the king [q]shall do according to his will; and he shall [r]exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things [s]against the God of gods, and shall prosper [t]till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

The king, i. e. the Roman government, whether by the senate, or by emperors, or by the bishop of Rome, who shall shove out the imperial power not only from Rome, but from Italy and all the western empire, as far as he could, by striking in with the barbarous nations that invaded it, who are called *ten kings.* Read for all this Rev. xvii. 10—13, as all the seven or eight governments of Rome are called *horns,* and the horns *kings,* ver. 10, 11. The sum is this: Though it is granted some of these things are applicable to Antiochus, yet the angel speaks of him here and henceforward but by the by and very lightly; his main scope is antichrist, as will appear in the interpretation. *Shall do according to his will;* Antiochus did according to his will: he shall be arbitrary in his actions, notwithstanding any checks of Divine and human laws: the cause follows. *Shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods:* this is true of the Romans, who would deify what they please, and defy it or ungod it; most true of the persecutors of Christ and Christians in the time of the emperors, but most notoriously of the Roman antichrist. See how this agrees with that prophecy, 2 Thess. ii. 3—10; Rev. xvii. 3. *And shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished;* then shall antichrist continue long and prevail; read for this, Rev. xiii. *For that that is determined shall be done;* that which God hath decreed to be done by him against the saints shall be done, and that which God hath purposed to be done upon him shall be executed also to his destruction.

u 1 Tim. 4. 3
x Is. 14. 13. 2 Thess. 2. 4.

37 Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, [u]nor the desire of women, [x]nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.

Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers; he shall so far degenerate from the rule of Christ, and from primitive Christianity, that he shall be the head of that apostacy, 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Thess. ii. 3: mark those places, the first whereof is so fully opened by Mr. Joseph Mede in his Doctrine of Demons. The other by Bishop Jewel in his comment on that place. *Nor the desire of women,* i. e. the desire of wiving, i. e. forbidding to marry, forbidding priests marriage.

‖ Or, *But in a stead.*
† Heb. *as for the almighty God, in his seat he shall honour, yea, he shall honour a god, whom, &c.*
‖ Or, *munitions.* † Heb. *Mauzzim,* or, *Gods protectors.* † Heb. *things desired.* Is. 44. 9.

38 ‖ But † in his estate shall he honour the God of ‖†forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and †pleasant things.

He shall honour the god of forces; Mauzzim, of strengths or strong holds. The Phœnicians worshipped Mars the God of wars, which Antiochus did worship; but we are come to the Romans; and though many have conjectured several senses of this מעזים translated *god of forces,* yet none comes nearer than Mr. Mede, who interprets it of demons, or tutelar gods, which the Romans should worship with Christ, supposing them to be angels or saints. This is not to be thought a novel opinion, for many of the fathers say that this *Mauzzim* is the idol that antichrist should worship. So the meaning is, that in Christ's seat, or place, the temple, they should worship saints and angels with Christ, as the preposition imports, together with Christ; which it is notorious they do. That which made this place obscure was, that men generally took this strange god for an idol, which indeed the Jews call the Gentiles' gods, and so doth the Old Testament often, because foreign to the true God, which was their God; but the true God was foreign and strange to the Romans, because their gods were idols. Therefore the philosophers called Christ ξένον δαιμόνιον, a strange god. This god they should *honour with gold, and silver, and precious stones.* The Vulgate translates *Mauzzim, protector,* and we know too well how the Romanists adorn the churches and shrines of these their patrons and tutelar saints, Psal. xxvii. 1; xxviii. 8; xxxi. 3. And the fathers sometimes fatally hit upon this expression at the first setting and honouring of martyrs, calling them strong holds, and strong towers of defence; but the Council of Constantinople called them the devil's strong holds; thus they called their images also.

† Heb. *fortresses of munitions.*

39 Thus shall he do in the †most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge *and* increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for †gain.

† Heb. *a price.*

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A confirmation and ingemination of what he said before, he shall use all art and authority to propagate this idolatrous worship. We have laid by the interpretation of these things of Antiochus, though Polanus, Junius, and others apply all to him; but the angel speaks of the Romans, and it is plainly verified of antichrist, who did not only take upon him to dispose of kingdoms and provinces by usurped power, for his profit, drawing incredible masses of money from them, but upon a pretended religious account appointing tutelar saints over them.

y ver. 35.

40 [y]And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him [z]like a whirlwind, with chariots, [a]and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, [b]and shall overflow and pass over.

z Is. 21. 1. Zech. 9. 14.
a Ezek. 38. 4. 15. Rev. 9. 16.
b ver. 10, 22.

At the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him; in the last times, towards the end of the world, for it cannot be true of Antiochus, who died the eleventh year of his reign, and these things are joined to the last resurrection, chap. xii. 2. Therefore some understand the Turk and Saracen, who is without the church, as antichrist before mentioned sat in the temple; he extending his dominions into Asia and Africa, will be a great stop to antichrist's proceedings and encroachments. *The king of the north shall come, &c.*, i. e. The Turk from the north shall invade, and run down the Saracen.—*Mede.*

‖ Or, *goodly land*, ver. 16. † Heb. *land of delight*, or, *ornament*.
c Is. 11. 14.

41 He shall enter also into the ‖ †glorious land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, [c]*even* Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

When the Turk should subdue Judea, those people of Edom, Moab, and Ammon shall be left, because all along to this day these Arabians live partly by robberies, and partly by Turkish salaries to secure their caravans; these shall live, and not be overthrown by Mahometans.

† Heb. *send forth.*

42 He shall †stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

Though Egypt (and the adjacent countries) long stood out under the Mamelukes, yet was forced to submit to the Ottoman, *anno* 1517.

43 But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians *shall be* [d]at his steps.

d Ex. 11. 8. Judg. 4. 10.

i. e. The parts westward from Egypt along the Barbary coast, and Ethiopia, not the Abyssines', but Arabia.

44 But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.

The Christian princes of the north, and the dispersed Israelites, and the Jews carried captive into the north, Jer. xvi. 14, 15, called also *kings of the east*, shall come and trouble him, and all his power shall not be able to withstand. See Rev. xvi. 12.

e Ps. 48. 2. ver. 16, 41. 2 Thess. 2 4. ‖ Or, *goodly*. † Heb. *mountain of delight of holiness.*
f 1 Mac. 6. 8,—16. 2 Thess. 2. 8. Rev. 19. 20.

45 And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas in [e]the ‖ †glorious holy mountain; [f]yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

Between the seas; the Euxine and Mediterranean, at Constantinople, and even to the Red Sea; *in the glorious holy mountain*, in the church of Christ eastern: so the Turk. Or in the western seas, the Mediterranean and Adriatic: so the pope, reaching to the western ocean. Both antichrists, one without, and the other within the temple of God.

CHAP. XII.

Michael shall deliver Israel out of trouble: the general resurrection and recompence of the just and unjust, 1—4. *Daniel heareth the times, but understandeth not: he is bid to wait the end, which shall be in his favour,* 5—13.

a ch. 10. 13, 21.
b Is. 26. 20, 21. Jer. 30. 7. Matt. 24. 21. Rev. 16. 18.
c Rom. 11. 26.
d Ex. 32. 32. Ps. 56. 8. & 69. 28. Ezek. 13. 9. Luke 10. 20. Phil. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 5. & 13. 8.

AND at that time shall [a]Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: [b]and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people [c]shall be delivered, every one that shall be found [d]written in the book.

Many interpret this of the heat of Antiochus's persecution, but their arguments are not cogent; but the meaning is this, as after the death of Antiochus the Jews had some deliverance and respite, so there will be yet a more famous deliverance to the people of God when Michael your prince, i. e. Messiah the Prince, shall signally appear for your salvation. He is called *the great Prince;* but these words in their contexture refer not to the times of Antiochus, but to antichrist, and to that part of them which are the last part. Yet I think the truest meaning is to interpret these words, *at that time*, of all the time of Christ, from his first coming to the last. These all are the last times wherein God spake to us by his Son, Heb. i. 1—3, to which Michael answers well, i. e. who is like God, which notes his equality with God, Phil. ii. 6. It was necessary Christ should now appear as a *Prince* to comfort his people against the oppression of Herod and the Romans, by bringing in a glorious salvation, which should wholly free the elect Israel of God from the Roman yoke, both under the persecuting emperors and under antichrist. *Every one that shall be found written in the book:* thus *this election* is called by a metaphor usual in Scripture, and drawn from the usage of men in many cases, namely, writing some select men's names in a book; showing that this salvation shall not be national neither to Jews nor any Gentile nation, but only a gathering together of the elect of God which are scattered abroad, called therefore *a remnant*, Rom. ix.

e Matt. 25. 46. John 5. 28, 29. Acts 24. 15.
f Is. 66. 24. Rom. 9. 21.

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, [e]some to everlasting life, and some to shame [f]*and* everlasting contempt.

So enamoured are some of their notions, though found false and ill-grounded, that they will pertinaciously hold them, and seek still to prove one absurdity from another, as Grotius doth here, still expounding all of Antiochus, and so makes this resurrection metaphorical, and not the real ultimate one; whereas the most learned Jews themselves are against him, as the late Manasseh Ben Israel in his book de Resurrectione.

g ch. 11. 33, 35.
‖ Or, *teachers.*
h Prov. 4. 18. Wisd. 3. 7. Matt. 13. 43.
i Jam. 5. 20. k 1 Cor. 15. 41, 42.

3 And [g]they that be ‖ wise shall [h]shine as the brightness of the firmament; [i]and they that turn many to righteousness [k]as the stars for ever and ever.

Here the faithful are called *wise*, i. e. *to salvation*, and so these two members include teachers, and disciples that are truly taught the way of salvation, i. e. such as are taught of God to learn Christ as the truth is in Jesus, John vi. 45; Eph. iv. 21. They that teach true justification by the *righteousness of Christ*, imputed to faith, which is the sum of the gospel, and express it by righteous walking, they shall have high degrees of glory. By being diligent and faithful instruments in the Lord's hand, by the word of God, and a holy example of the conversion of souls from an evil state, from an evil heart, and from an evil life unto God, they shall shine, not in fame for a long time, as Grotius lamely renders it, but for ever and ever in heavenly glory, as the words import.

l ch. 8. 26. ver. 9.
m Rev. 10. 4. & 22. 10.
n ch. 10. 1. ver. 9.

4 [l]But thou, O Daniel, [m]shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to [n]the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

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Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: by these words the angel doth not forbid all knowledge of the things here foretold, for *whatsoever is written is written for our learning;* but the meaning is, 1. That Daniel must take notice of the special favour of God to him to make so great discoveries of the Divine secrets. 2. That they were intrusted with him to see the force and fruit of his humiliation and fervent prayer. 3. That he should support, and lay up these things for the support of the godly in their future deep afflictions. 4. That God would never utterly forsake his people, though their sins justly provoked his heavy hand upon them. 5. That these things be kept from the profane, who would make an evil use of them. 6. The book was commanded to be sealed, because it would be long ere the words would be all fulfilled, whereas those that were shortly to be fulfilled were forbidden to be sealed: see 2 Chron. xxi. 12; Isa. viii. 16; Rev. xxii. 10. *Many shall run to and fro;* they shall diligently inquire and search these prophecies concerning the fates of the church, and shall see and admire both the prescience and providence of God concerning things to come; they shall know signs of the times, and wait upon God in the way of his judgments: see Psal. lxxvii. 5—7; Isa. xxvi. 8; 1 Pet. i. 10—12. The miserable Jews pervert this scripture, and forbid the people by dire threatenings to calculate times, namely, lest they find thereby that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah. Thus are they wilfully and judicially blinded, Acts xxviii. 26; Rom. xi. 8. *And knowledge shall be increased;* he means chiefly in gospel times, which came by the preaching of Christ and searching the Scriptures about it.

5 ¶ Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on
† Heb. *lip.* this side of the †bank of the river, and
o ch. 10. 4. the other on that side of the bank °of the river.

Two angels, waiting and ministering on Christ to observe his commands, by the banks of the river Tigris or Hiddekel, where this new vision was.

p ch. 10. 5. 6 And *one* said to ᵖthe man clothed in
‖ Or, *from above.* linen, which *was* ‖upon the waters of
q ch. 8. 13. the river, ᑫHow long *shall it be to* the end of these wonders?

To the man clothed in linen; to Michael, chap. x. 5; Christ, who seemed to stand between the banks, i. e. in the air above the waters, or upon them, Matt. xiv. 25; upon *many people*, say some, Rev. x. 2. *How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?* the angels themselves inquire into these things, for they do not know all, yea, they are ignorant of many things, Matt. xxiv. 36; Eph. iii. 10.

7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the
r Deut. 32. 40. Rev. 10. 5, 6. river, when he ʳheld up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware
s ch. 4. 34. t ch. 7. 25. & 11. 13. Rev. 12. 14. ‖ Or, *part.* u Luke 21. 24. Rev. 10. 7. by him ˢthat liveth for ever ᵗthat *it shall be* for a time, times, and ‖an half; ᵘand when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of ˣthe holy people, all
x ch. 8. 24. these *things* shall be finished.

He held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven: here he calls God to witness the truth of this thing: many reasons are given by sundry expositors of it why he held up both hands to heaven. 1. For the more sure and solemn confirmation of it. 2. To denote the unchangeableness of God's decrees, both for good to the church, and for evil to her enemies. *By him that liveth for ever;* by God the Father, and by the Deity, which was himself, that liveth for ever, to show the eternal God only knew that decreed it, and would bring it to pass; that he only is master of the times. Acts i. 7. *It shall be for a time, times, and an half;* it shall be for a long time, and yet a definite time. Some will have all this to be and end in Antiochus's time, but we have proved before that this is a great mistake, and the text and this chapter disprove that conceit. *When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished;* which reacheth to the calling of the Jews upon the destruction of antichrist, for till he be down the church will suffer and will not be up, which will fall out upon the pouring out the sixth vial and after, Rev. xvi. 12, &c., and the seventh vial, then all is finished, ver. 17: see also 2 Thess. ii. 3. The judgment of Christ will not come till the man of sin come and fall.

8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things?*

i. e. What is the meaning of all this, of the *times, time, and half*, when they begin and end; and when the enemies of the churches, and the sufferings of the church, shall have their end.

9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed
y ver. 4. ʸtill the time of the end.

They shall not be clearly understood till the event make them good: see ver. 4, and chap. viii. 26. God is choice in keeping the keys of time at his own girdle, Acts i. 7.

10 ᶻMany shall be purified, and made
z ch. 11. 35. Zech. 13. 9. white, and tried; ᵃbut the wicked shall
a Hos. 14. 9. Rev. 9. 20. & 22. 11. do wickedly: and none of the wicked
b ch. 11. 33, 35. John 7. 17. & 8. 47. & 1 Jn. 3. shall understand; but ᵇthe wise shall understand.

Of this purging and purifying you heard before, chap. xi. 35; the meaning is, the great afflictions of the church are to prepare them, by taking away their filth, for the Bridegroom, as gold and silver are tried and refined. *None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand:* they shall be blinded, they know not what they do, viz. they shall not be bettered by the word, or rod, or any warnings of God, but be hardened to their ruin; but the godly shall be taught of God to understand the ways of God's providence, foretold by the prophets, for this is it they are always minded of and commended for; particularly in this kind of wisdom: 1. Because it is obscure. 2. Because they are concerned greatly to know their safety, and God's honour lies in it.

11 And from the time ᶜ*that* the daily
c ch. 8. 11. & 11. 31. † Heb. *to set up the abomination.* ‖ Or, *astonisheth.* *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and †the abomination that ‖maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

12 Blessed *is* he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

These days are either, 1. *Natural* days, and properly so called, and so the times of Antiochus are hereby noted. Or, 2. *Prophetical* days, a day for a year, Ezek. iv. 6; and thus one thousand two hundred and ninety days is forty-two months, which if we multiply at thirty days the month make the sum one thousand two hundred and ninety. Here many learned expositors fall in together to that opinion of calculating these years by days, beginning the one thousand two hundred and ninety days from the profaning of the temple to the letter of king Antiochus to the Jews, 2 Macc. xi. 27, and so make them to end exactly then: and concerning the *abomination of desolation*, whereof see what is said Dan. vii. 25; viii. 14; ix. 25, being the epoch from Apollonius's coming, who was called the prince of *abominations*, or from the worship of God forbidden by Antiochus, and at last restored by Judas Maccabeus, and confirmed by Antiochus, from thence to the death of Antiochus are forty-five days, which added to one thousand two hundred and ninety make one thousand three hundred and thirty-five; but this is a false account, and contrary to the scope of this place, and to history and chronology, which the learned Joseph Mede hath proved at large, Lib. Oper. III. p. 882. The Jews make these days, i. e. years, to end at the coming of Christ, but uncertainly when to begin their reckoning, but have been often and grossly deceived. Sound Christians refer it to the second coming of Christ. Mr. Mede makes the chief revelation of antichrist to be in 1123. The latter number of one thousand three hundred and thirty-five ends in *anno Christi* 1168; and so the type of antichrist, which is Antiochus Epiphanes, leads us by the

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hand to the revelation of antichrist, which fell out *anno* 1106 to *anno* 1120; between which time the papal power was highly mounted, the church greatly persecuted, after that great numbers of them had separated from the abominations of Rome, openly declaring it to be antichristian. Therefore the angel saith, the saints by their trials *shall be purified and made white*, that is, by those cruel persecutions which befell them, from their ignorant and enraged enemies, who went on to do wickedly and did not understand. How this is further cleared, and why the angel makes use of the Roman supputation in this case, namely, by indictions, and how it answers and resolves the case, see in the forecited author.

13 But [d]go thou thy way till the end *be:* ‖ [e]for thou shalt rest, [f]and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

[d] ver. 9.
‖ Or, and
[e] Isa. 57. 2. Rev. 14. 13.
[f] Ps. 1. 5.

I have revealed to thee of these things what I had in commission, that thou and thy people should be prepared for the sufferings which will come upon them, and yet not without hope of a glorious deliverance. In which hope thou shalt die, and rest from fear or feeling of trouble, till the resurrection of the just to the joys of another world: which some make to be here after all enemies are destroyed, at least to begin here, and to be consummated in heaven eternally, comparing this with Rev. xix. 20, 21.

HOSEA.

THE ARGUMENT.

WITHOUT dispute our prophet is one of the obscurest and most difficult to unfold clearly and fully. Though he come not, as Isaiah and Amos do sometimes, nor as Ezekiel and Zechariah do frequently, with visions; yet his sententious and concise style, peculiar to himself, renders it many times difficult to find out first, and to declare next the genuine and undoubted sense of his words. In expounding this prophet, the expositor needs the candour of his reader, and the reader owes his expositor thanks if he make some darker passages fairly intelligible, though he do not demonstrate his exposition to be the only sense of the place. This latter is not pretended to; the former it is hoped the reader will find in the most, if not in every obscure passage. It was a very debauched age our prophet did live in, and you will find him very sharp against the vices of the ten tribes, and very plain and open in his threats for their sins, which he saw punished; for he lived to see Samaria taken, and Hoshea made a prisoner, and the people carried captives. As it is not agreed when he began, so nor is it agreed how long he continued to prophesy.

The kings of Judah and of Israel, in whose time he first appeared a prophet, were of long reigns; the one forty-one, the other fifty-two; in which long space of time very different beginnings may be conjectured. All agree that he continued a prophet very long, seventy years at least, and some add more years, and make them up ninety. The sum of what he prophesied is here given us in short heads, rather than in a continued discourse. And as it was preached in Israel, (though we read not of the places where Hosea either lived, or died, or did preach, it is most likely within the hearing of the court,) so it doth more particularly refer to Israel or the ten tribes: declaring to them what were their sins; advising them to repent; promising them mercy upon sincere repentance; threatening grievous judgments on their impenitence; foretelling their rejection if they did not amend; and, for the comfort of the godly, predicting mercy to them; intermixing many promises of the future kingdom and coming of the Messiah, to whom many should be converted, and by him be saved, and especially many of the two tribes, who hear from our prophet a more comfortable message (viz. of returning to their own land) than Israel, which must not expect any such return, i. e. for the whole body of the people. And he closeth his whole prophecy either with a form of confession and supplication for the remnant returned, or a prediction in what manner they would return, confess, supplicate, and rely upon God alone; to which duty performed, he adjoineth sweet and excellent promises, containing both temporal and spiritual blessings, chap. xiv.

CHAP. I.

The times in which Hosea prophesied, 1. *To show the idolatrous whoredoms of the land, he marrieth a wife of whoredom, and hath by her Jezreel,* 2—5, *Lo-ruhamah,* 6, 7, *and Lo-ammi,* 8, 9. *The restoration of Judah and Israel under one head,* 10, 11.

B. C. cir. 786. THE word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

The word, or the command, and the thing commanded; or the prediction expressed in the very words God suggested by his Spirit to the prophet, and the things too which are now foretold; for *holy men of God spake as they were moved,* &c., 2 Pet. i. 21, and the things that were shortly to come to pass were revealed also, in the words of Rev. i. 1. Hosea shows the things, and speaks them in words which God hath suggested to him. *The Lord; the Eternal,* as the French, *Jehovah,* Heb., which expresseth the eternity and infinite being of our God, together with his sovereignty and absolute authority over all. This is expressly added, to give warning to the prophet, to command audience, attention, reverence, and submission in the hearers, and to intimate to them the certainty of execution if they repent not, and the certainty of performance of promise if they believe; for it is Jehovah who changeth not that speaketh both. *Came to Hosea;* or was with him; as it came to him, so it did abide with him, made a deep impression upon his mind. Prophets were too backward, rather than overforward, to publish sad tidings to sinning people. Moses was unwilling to go to Pharaoh; Jeremiah pent up the word till it grew like fire in his bowels, too hot, and he could have no ease till he gave it vent. It is not unlikely the prophet Hosea intimates by this expression some such effect the word of God had on him; he was full of the prophetic Spirit, its motions were ever with him, and stirring within him. *Hosea;* a name that carrieth most comfortable news in the letter and signification of it, being the same with Joshua or Jesus; and his word or message from God to the good was comfortable, it was assurance both of preservation and salvation, as will appear in process of his prophecy. *The son of Beeri:* though some would have this Beeri to be the same with Beerah, 1 Chron. v. 6, it hath no probability, the names being different; beside that Beerah was carried captive by Tilgath-pilneser, and it is probable his family was carried away with him; or if Hosea had escaped his father's mishap, he would have given us at least some ground to believe by his words that he resented the unhappiness of his family in that respect; but we know the name of the prophet's father, we know not his tribe or country, or of what quality he was, where he lived, or when he

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died. *In the days*, i. e. during the reign, in the times; it is a Scripture expression of times. *Of Uzziah*, called *Azariah*, 2 Kings xiv. 21, and *Ozias*, Matt. i. 8; the beginning of whose reign is very variously guessed at, and after all is left uncertain; but this is clear, that Jeroboam was contemporary with Uzziah, who began to reign in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam: reckoning thence to the forty-first year of his reign, which was the last of Jeroboam, there will be fourteen years of Uzziah's reign in which Hosea prophesied; but if there was (as for aught I find there might be) some years of viceroyship in which Amaziah reigned with his father Joash, and the like between Jeroboam and his father, then a longer synchronism ariseth between Uzziah and Jeroboam, and a larger space of time for Hosea to prophesy in their days, which I search not into. *Jotham*; who succeeded Uzziah as governor, and judged the people while Uzziah, being a leper, was, according to the law, retired from conversing with men, and dwelt in a separate house, but retained the royal title and authority; but it is uncertain how many years this was. Some say fifteen years, others say four years (for we read, 2 Kings xv. 33, that he reigned sixteen years; and in ver. 30 we have his twentieth year. Now the four here mentioned seem to be those years of his viceroyship, or government for Uzziah); yet others say his governor's power was of shorter date, and that Uzziah was struck with the plague of leprosy in the last year of his age and reign. This seems scarce consistent with the report of Jotham's being over the house of the king, judging the people; and the leper king dwelling in a separate house till the day of his death, 2 Kings xv. 5; 2 Chron. xxvi. 21. They mistake, I think, who place this stroke of leprosy so late; and they do as much mistake who place it at the twenty-fifth of Uzziah, and make him a leper and seclude him twenty-seven years. Jotham hath the character of a good king, 1 Chron. xxvii. 2, 6; but he could not make his subjects good, 2 Chron. xxvii. 2. *Ahaz*; the worst son of a good father, yet the father of one of the best of kings. He sinned more in his distress, 2 Chron. xxviii. 22, and hastened God's judgments on him and his. *Hezekiah*; who reformed Judah, and walked so with God, that above any of the kings of Judah he was protected and rescued by the immediate hand of Heaven. How long Hosea prophesied in this king's reign appears not; but that he did prophesy a great while is most apparent, whether fifty, or sixty-five, or seventy, or seventy-five, or ninety years, which different computations have some to assert them, I determine not. *Jeroboam*; the great-grandson of Jehu, of whose greatness and sins you read 2 Kings xiv. 24, 25; he was of the religion of Jeroboam son of Nebat. *Joash*; whose story you meet with 2 Kings xiii. 10: though a great idolater, and reproved for it no doubt by Elisha, yet he gave a visit to the dying prophet, and with tears bewailed the public loss by Elisha's death, and by the prophet had a legacy given him, three victories over the Syrians; and more they should have been, had not Joash been sparing too much to his own great loss. I remember not any single visit so nobly and magnificently repaid. *Israel*; kingdom of the ten tribes, contradistinguished to Judah. By this then it appears Hosea was sent to prophesy against the sins of Israel, or the ten tribes, as well as against the sins of Judah; against Israel he prophesied during Jeroboam's times, (and afterward left them to their obstinacy,) but he continued to prophesy to Judah until his death.

2 The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to
[a] So ch. 3. 1. Hosea, [a]Go, take unto thee a wife of
[b] Deu. 31. 16. Ps. 73. 27. Jer. 2. 13. Ezek. 23. 3. &c. whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for [b]the land hath committed great whoredom, *departing* from the LORD.

The beginning of the word of the Lord: this, say some, gives Hosea the precedence of all the prophets, which perhaps may be allowed to him among all the prophets that have written distinct books of their prophecies, but simply first of all the prophets he was not; in David's and Solomon's times we meet with Nathan and Ahijah the Shilonite. Or this *beginning* may be, as our ordinary phrase, so soon as God spake, or at the very first of God's speaking, to Hosea, he commanded him to take such a wife, &c. *The Lord*: see ver. 1. *By Hosea*; in Hosea; denoting the impulse of the Spirit of prophecy, the internal motions and influence of the Spirit in the prophet: see ver. 1. *The Lord said*; directed and commanded him: this was warrant to him, doing which otherwise was unseemly for a prophet to have done. *Go, take unto thee*: this was, say some, done in vision, and was to be told to the people as other visions were: it was parabolically proposed to them, and this might be sufficient to convince the Jews, would they have considered it well, as David considered Nathan's parable. Others say it was really acted, and that the prophet did, as commanded, marry one who had been a strumpet, or that proved to be so after she was married. And though this would have been unseemly in the prophet, had he done it without this particular direction, now the scandal ceaseth, and it is very fit God be obeyed, and the prophet may with credit enough do what God had by his command made a necessary duty to him, and marry one known to be a lewd whore. *A wife of whoredoms*; an openly noted whore, a notorious one, so the Hebrew phrase, *wife of whoredoms*, as, a man of bloods, or man of sorrows; a woman of many whoredoms, and very lively emblem of idolatrous Israel. *Children of whoredoms*; either that, born of such a mother, are, as she, addicted to lewdness; or else, with the mother made his wife, he is to receive and maintain the children she had by her adulterers. And thus understood, it may lead our thoughts to God's rich mercy towards their ancestors, who were (Abraham himself not excepted) idolaters, when they dwelt on the other side the river, Josh. xxiv. 2, 3: yet God took them, and married them to himself, and did show wonderful kindness to them and theirs; all which is slighted and forgotten by their posterity, by you, O idolatrous Israelites! Or it may refer more expressly to what God did for Israel, when he brought them out of Egypt, and made covenant with them in Horeb, which was as a solemn espousing them to God. The Lord found them tainted with Egyptian idolatries, yet, as the prophet here, married them to himself, and covenanted with them to be faithful to him, but they broke the covenant. *The land*, i. e. the people of the land, intimating the universal spreading of this sin, all, or most of all, so infected. *Hath committed great whoredom*: the phrase, Heb. *playing the harlot hath played the harlot*, speaks the continuance of this idolatry among them, as well as the greatness of the whoredom. From their forefathers they had been idolaters; while God was giving them his law (from the nuptial day to Hosea's time) they committed spiritual whoredom, and first made, next worshipped, the golden calf. *Departing from the Lord*; so they left their first Husband, and doted on adulterers, on idols, as chap. ii. 5.

3 So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son.

So he went and took Gomer; as commanded, so he did, whether you take it parabolically or literally. If you take it literally, this Gomer will be some known harlot, and perhaps she was famous for her beauty, and skill in the courtesan's art, as her name may import. If you take it as a parable, we must take this name for a made name, assumed for its signification; both in the best sense Israel was perfect with the perfection which God did put upon her, Ezek. xvi. 14, he made her *Gomer*; and in the worst sense she made herself *Gomer*, one who was drawing to her end, who had undone and consumed herself; thus the word, Psal. xii. 1; and so, in one word, God's bounty and mercy, and Israel's ingratitude and sin, is set forth, together with her punishment hastening upon her. *The daughter of Diblaim*: literally understood, this Diblaim must be either father or mother of this Gomer, or else the name of the place where she was born. Parabolically understood, Diblaim, *bunches of dried figs*, may imply the deliciousness of her provision made of God, such as was made for great feasts, 1 Sam. xxv. 18; so 1 Chron. xii. 40: thus it will suit chap. ii. 5, 9, and the places where the fig is mentioned as fruit with which God had blessed Israel. All which abused to luxury and sin, will now make her a daughter of Diblaim, of wilderness, desolate. *Bare him a son*: this seems to favour the literal acceptation of all this as really done, and not only as represented in vision, parable, or hieroglyphic. But while either way it will be well applied to the purpose in hand, I shall leave it to the choice

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of every judicious reader to interpret and apply as best likes him.

4 And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little *while*, [c] and I will † avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, [d] and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.

c 2 Kings 10. 11.
† Heb. *visit.*
d 2 Kings 15. 10, 12.

And the Lord said unto him, Hosea the prophet, who as in taking to wife an adulteress, so in giving name to his son by her, was to presignify Israel's future calamities. *Call his name*, thy son now born, *Jezreel:* the word is, *The seed of the Lord*, or, *The arm of the Lord*, or, *The Lord will scatter;* so it may insinuate that God by his own arm will scatter among the people, i. e. the Assyrians, those who were his people or seed. But we have a surer guide to lead us through this, i. e. the history of what was by Jehu done in Jezreel; of which more presently. *For;* this is the reason why the prophet's son is so called. *Yet a little while:* it was four generations of Jehu God promised the throne to, and now the third that is now running, how near to an end we know not, but are sure it was within twenty-eight years; for Jeroboam began his reign in the fifteenth of Amaziah, and so thirteen years of his forty-one are spent ere Uzziah comes to the throne, 2 Kings xiv. 23; this according to one account: but 2 Kings xv. 1 accounteth Jeroboam's twenty-seventh to be the first of Uzziah, and then there are not above fourteen years to come; so little a while was this here spoken of, for in six months after Jeroboam's death Shallum conspired against Zachariah, and slew him, and reigned a month; so Jehu's seed was cast out of the throne. *Will avenge;* inquire after and punish these crimes, which were committed in Jezreel. Heb. *I will visit*, i. e. as a just and impartial judge I will require an account, and execute punishments. *The blood:* murders committed are in Scripture expressed thus by blood: here are particularly meant the slaughters made by Jehu's hand or by his order, 2 Kings ix. 10, 11; x. 1—7, in Jezreel, where he did with a treacherous mind, and aiming at his own greatness, destroy Ahab's house, and slew Ahaziah king of Judah also. This was the just judgment of God upon that wicked house by Jehu executed, but he did it not with that mind God required. *Of Jezreel;* the town which Ahab chose above others to dwell in, where the dogs licked up Ahab's blood, when his chariot was washed and cleansed of the blood of that slain king, and where dogs did eat Jezebel, as the prophet threatened, 1 Kings xxi. 23. *Upon the house of Jehu;* which had now possessed the throne (Jehu usurped) through the reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam; but the usurper and his successors adhering to the idolatry of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and adding other sins to it, had now provoked God to declare a sudden extirpation of the family, which God will in his just revenge make as like to Jeroboam's family as Ahab's, and they had made themselves like them in sin; all which came to pass when Shallum, conspiring against Zachariah, slew him, 2 Kings xv. 10. *And will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel;* not immediately, but soon after the death of Zachariah, the kingdom of Israel did cease first to be free, for Menahem made it tributary to strengthen himself; so it is likely it continued for ten years during his life, and two years during his son Pekahiah's reign; after him Pekah the conspirator and murderer usurped the throne for twenty years, and probably was feudatory to Tiglath-pileser; to be sure Hosea was so, and in his ninth year this word was fulfilled in the letter of it, the kingdom of Israel, after one and forty years' tottering, fell to utter ruin, and hath so continued to this day. *Israel*, or the ten tribes divided from the house of David.

5 [e] And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.

e 2 Kings 15. 29.

It shall come to pass; most certainly this shall be effected. *At that day;* when my vengeance hath overtaken the house of Jehu, when his great-great-grandson shall be slain. *I will break;* weaken, and by degrees quite break, i. e. by the conspiracies, seditions, and civil wars which will arise among themselves. *The bow:* this was a warlike weapon they much used and were skilful in; this one weapon put for all their warlike provision, power, and skill; possibly it may allude to the bow of Jehu, who slew Joram with an arrow, and usurped his throne, but now the bow of the house of Jehu and of Israel shall be broken. *Of Israel:* see ver. 4. *In the valley of Jezreel:* next to Samaria, Jezreel was chief city of the ten tribes, a very strong and fortified town, and both situated in the large and pleasant valley that hath from Joshua's time been known by this name, valley of Jezreel, Josh. xvii. 16. In this valley it is probable the bloodiest battles in the civil wars were fought, between Zachariah and Shallum, 2 Kings xv. 10, and between Shallum and Menahem, 2 Kings xv. 14; between Pekahiah and Pekah, 2 Kings xv. 25, and Pekah and Hoshea; the reason whereof probably might be this, because whoever carried the victory in this place were soon masters of Samaria and Jezreel, and consequently carried the kingdom too.

6 ¶ And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And *God* said unto him, Call her name ‖ Lo-ruhamah: [f] for † I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; ‖ but I will utterly take them away.

‖ That is, *Not having obtained mercy.*
f 2 Kings 17. 6, 23.
† Heb. *I will not add any more to.*
‖ Or, *that I should altogether pardon them.*

And she, Gomer, the hieroglyphic wife, who was to be a sign to Israel, *conceived again*, whether visionary or really it comes to one, *and bare a daughter;* which is to be a sign too, as was her mother. It is too nice which Ribera observes, that the state grew weaker, as appeared by the bringing forth of one of the weaker sex. This daughter was fit to be an emblem, and therefore it is a daughter rather than a son, though it will be next a son and no daughter. But *Lo-ruhamah* is feminine, and in congruity of speech it must be a female who bears this name. *God said unto him:* as before God imposed, so now again he imposeth a name, signifying what he would do with Israel. Though God direct what it shall be, the prophet is to give the name. *Lo-ruhamah, Not pitied.* Israel's name had been through many ages *Ruhamah*, i. e. *Pitied.* God had with marvellous patience forborne them, and with tender bowels pitied them, and saved them from enemies, but now Israel should be no more pitied as formerly, God would throw them up to the rage of usurpers, and to the merciless hands of prosperous conspirators; so Menahem mercilessly ripped up women with child in Tiphsah, 2 Kings xv. 16, and God gave up this bloody tyrant into the hand of Tiglath-pileser. *I will no more have mercy;* I was wont to add mercy unto mercy for Israel, I was never weary of showing them mercy, but I will do no more so for them; my pity saved them in Jeroboam's time, and raised them to a great height and glory, but now they shall, unpitied by me, sink lower and lower. Restraints of Divine pity are sure forerunners of destruction, Jer. xiii. 14. *Upon the house of Israel:* this to me seems a qualifying of the former threat; though the house of Israel as a body politic, as a kingdom, under this character, shall no more be as it hath been, pitied, yet many among them may obtain mercy in the days of gospel grace, and many of them had mercy showed to them by the Lord, when they joined with Judah in the return from Babylon's captivity; but the whole house, the families of the ten tribes, united in a kingdom, shall no more be to God *Ruhamah*, but ever *Lo-ruhamah*. Thus it hath been through the long series of two thousand four hundred years and more. *I will utterly take them away;* taking away I will take away, till the whole kingdom is utterly overthrown, and removed out of the land wherein it once had flourished. Thus some were taken away by the sword of civil wars, some ruined by oppression of the prevailing faction in those divided times, whole cities and all the land of Naphtali was taken away by Tiglath-pileser, 2 Kings xv. 29, and at last all swept away by Shalmaneser, 2 Kings xvii. 3—5.

7 [g] But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and [h] will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.

g 2 Kings 19. 35.
h Zech. 4. 6. & 9. 10.

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But, or *And*, or *Yet*. *I;* the Lord, who threateneth Israel, proud, flourishing, secure, and sinful Israel: he promiseth mercy to poor, oppressed, and impoverished Judah. *Will have mercy on the house of Judah;* prolonging that kingdom one hundred and thirty-two years after Israel ceased to be a kingdom; preserving them from the combined powers of the king of Syria and the king of Israel, who combine to destroy them; raising them up to greatness and glory in the reign of Hezekiah, in whose days the house of Judah was saved by a miracle: beside all these, Judah's captivity was for seventy years, Israel's for ever; Judah returned to their own land, Israel never did. By this, as the prophet would abate the pride of Israel, so possibly he would secretly direct the best among Israel whither to go to find mercy. *Judah;* including Benjamin, and such of the Levites as adhered constant to God's law and worship, and as many of the other tribes as renounced the calves, Baal, and all idolatrous worship, and worship God alone as he required, all these, in this case, are included in Judah, and so we find many such returning with Judah. *And will save them;* preserve, that violence do not swallow them up, nor length of captivity wear them out; and this preserved remnant shall return and be planted in their own land, and there kept in safety. This promise does seem to point out such temporal salvation, but as a type of a far better and more glorious salvation. *By the Lord their God;* either by Messiah, who is the Lord and their God, or by God himself, as their God, whom they did not, as Israel, forsake utterly. This passage bids us look to that extraordinary miraculous deliverance of Hezekiah and Jerusalem: see Isa. xxxvii. 36; 2 Kings xviii. 13; 2 Chron. xxxii. 1. *Will not save them by bow, &c.:* here God removeth all force and might, whether their own or their allies', all that might eclipse the glory of God in this salvation. Now this was very fully performed in Hezekiah's time, when Sennacherib's army was cut off in one night by an angel, Isa. xxxvii. 35, 36: and in Cyrus's time and Darius's the captive Jews saw it was not by power nor by might, but the Lord saved them; so should it be here, as Psal. xliv. 5, 6; Isa. xliii. 7, 15; Zech. iv. 6.

8 ¶ Now when she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son.

Though some wrest the words to an allegorical sense, I think the prophet keeps the decorum in the similitude, and therefore, as women ordinarily conceive not whilst they give suck, so this Gomer weaned her daughter ere she conceived the son which is to be an emblem of the final rejection of the ten tribes. *Bare a son*, to be a third sign to this incorrigible and self-undoing kingdom.

9 Then said *God*, Call his name ‖Lo-ammi: for ye *are* not my people, and I will not be your *God*.

‖ That is, *Not my people.*

Then said God to the prophet, as before, ver. 4, 6. *Call his name;* the name of this new-born son, the sign or type of the ten tribes, who had rejected God, and would not be reclaimed. *Lo-ammi. Not my people;* though once you were a peculiar people, you are so no more in my account, you are cast off as you deserved. *For ye;* the whole house of apostate Israel, who first cast off the house of David and my temple, and at last rejected me, that I should not be your God. *Are not my people;* though circumcised, yet have you cast off my covenant, you neither worship me, nor come up to my temple, nor keep my law; Baal, the calves, and the idols of your neighbours are your gods; ye are their people: ye are neither mine as to the civil constitution, you made you kings, and I knew it not, chap. viii. 4, without my leave or liking; nor as to church constitution are ye mine, for your whole worship is the politic contrivance of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. You have forgotten your Maker, and build temples, chap. viii. 14: ye count the great things of my law strange things to you; I must count you strangers to me. *I will not be your God*, to protect you against dangers and enemies, or to replenish you with blessings, the fruits of my wonted goodness, or to pity you when you do either want or smart, or to counsel you in difficulties, or to hear your cries, or pardon your sins, or accept an offering at your hand; as you have long and long refused me, and I have tried all ways to prevent your final self-undoing obstinacy, so now I do for ever reject you, O house of Israel, and will be a God to you no more than to any of the heathen nations. This God executed when he gave them up into the hands of Shalmaneser, who sent them where none now can find them; they are lost to men, they know not where they are; they are lost to God, he loves not nor careth for them.

10 ¶ Yet [i]the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; [k]and it shall come to pass, *that* ‖in the place where it was said unto them, [l]Ye *are* not my people, *there* it shall be said unto them, *Ye are* [m]the sons of the living God.

i Gen. 32. 12. Rom. 9. 27, 28.

k Rom. 9 25, 26. 1 Pet. 2. 10.

‖ Or, *instead of that.*

l ch. 2. 23.

m John 1. 12. 1 John 3. 1.

Yet: this may anticipate the carnal Israel's objection, that thus God would fail of his word to Abraham, or he would lose his people. Nothing so, yet, though ten tribes be for ever captivated, God will have his Israel. *The number of the children of Israel;* not Israel after the flesh, not those very persons, families that are carried captive, (though for aught I know, or any can tell to the contrary, these may be so increased for Abraham's sake,) but the Israel of God according to the faith, the spiritual seed of Abraham, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles. *Shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered;* innumerable, expressed by an elegant proverbial speech, alluding to the immenseness of the sands, Isa. x. 22, 23; Rom. ix. 27. *It shall come to pass;* the time is fixed, and the thing shall certainly be, God will bring it about in his time. *In the place:* as we read it, it is plain that in those places or countries where a people dwelt who knew not God, were not his people, there should be a people that should both be called and be his people; the heathen should be called into the church, and in every place God should have his people. Or else thus: Instead of being called the people of God, you shall be called the children; so blessed a change, that who were once far off, and not a people, shall now be more than people, they shall be children. *Where it was said unto them*, the Gentiles and Jews unconverted. *Ye are not my people;* in the state of unconverted ones, are far from God, without his covenant, and no people. *There it shall be said;* known, declared, men shall confess it, God will own it himself, and make it known to others. *Ye are the sons;* grace shall be enlarged, your relation nearer and sweeter, you shall be sons, not servants, have communion with God as with your Father; and this shall be the common or equal privilege of this whole Israel of God. This is fulfilled in the kingdom of the Messiah under the gospel, as the apostle argueth it, Rom. ix. 25, 26. *Of the living God*, who is the fountain of life to all his children, and who giveth them lively affections to serve him, to offer living sacrifices to the living God. So are we called, Rom. xii. 1, 2; 1 Thess. i. 9.

11 [n]Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great *shall be* the day of Jezreel.

n Is. 11. 12. 13. Jer. 3 18. Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 16. —24.

This verse without doubt hath in it both an historical sense and a mystical or spiritual sense; it looketh somewhat to the return out of the Babylonish captivity, and to their settling in Canaan; but it looketh further to a more glorious deliverance from a more miserable captivity. *Then;* in the type and history, when the Babylonish captivity is dissolved, and the captives are loosed. *The children of Judah;* the children of the two tribes, who adhered to the house of David, who were carried captives, but under promise of a redemption from it. *The children of Israel;* some of the ten tribes who either went over to and did incorporate with the kingdom of Judah, and so were carried captives with them; or some of the ten tribes which the children of Judah found in the kingdom of Babylon, which having swallowed up the Assyrian monarchy, now the ten tribes were captives to their conquering sword. Thus in type, but it is spiritually and mystically to be understood of the whole Israel of God, Jew and Gentile, redeemed by and converted to Christ, in the day of his power. *Be gathered together*, by the power of God, by the decree of Cyrus, by each other, heartening one another to return;

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so the type: in the antitype, shall be gathered together by the Spirit of God, the preaching of the gospel, and mutual instruction, exhortation, and encouragements of each other. *Appoint themselves one head;* Zerubbabel in type, who was appointed by Cyrus, yet with full approbation of the people, putting themselves under his conduct, to carry them up to Jerusalem. But in the antitype Christ, appointed by the Father Head of his church, whom believers, heartily accepting, may in large sense be said to appoint to themselves. *Out of the land;* literally, out of Babylon; spiritually, out of captivity of sin and Satan. *For great,* good, joyous, and comfortable, *shall be the day of Jezreel;* of the seed or people of God, the sons of God once dispersed, but now gathered by the gospel.

CHAP. II.

The people are exhorted to forsake idolatry, which is threatened with severe judgments, 1—13. *God allureth them with promises of reconciliation,* 14—23.

‖ That is, *My people.* ‖ That is, *Having obtained mercy.*

1 SAY ye unto your brethren, ‖Ammi; and to your sisters, ‖Ruhamah.

In the two last verses of the former chapter, the prophet did from God promise marvellous mercy to Judah and Israel, to that remnant of the seed of Abraham who returned out of captivity, and to the converted Gentiles; now in this verse he calls upon them to acknowledge the mercy, and to excite one another to mutual love and esteem. *Say;* declare, own, or publish. *Ye;* who of no people are made a people, who were once unpitied and unregarded, but now have obtained mercy; you that are the sons of the living God, whether Jews or Gentiles. You Christians, as the apostle applies the words, Rom. ix. 24, 25; and so in the antitype no doubt they are to be understood; but in the letter and type, the persons here mentioned are those who among this people were pious, feared God, and kept his law; some such there were among them. *Unto your brethren;* to those of the ten tribes who are, and will be these forty years, your brethren. *Ammi;* let them know that yet they are the people of God, and repentance may remedy all; they are still within the covenant of their father Abraham; if they will, as their father, walk with God, all shall be well. *And to your sisters, Ruhamah:* in a decorum to (what before was made an emblem of Israel) the prophet's daughter, *Lo-ruhamah,* some are here directed to reason (as it is ver. 2) with her, i. e. with Israel, whose name is yet *Ruhamah,* and it may be so still, if Israel will retain it by returning to God.

2 Plead with your mother, plead: for [a] she *is* not my wife, neither *am* I her husband: let her therefore put away her [b] whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts;

a Is. 50 1.

b Ezek. 16. 25.

Plead; argue the case, state it aright between me and your mother, then debate it fully; lay open either my displeasure, how great it is, or the effects of it already upon the house of Israel, or my menaces against them for the future, by my prophet Hosea: and next recollect the carriage of your mother of Israel; consider her sins, her lewdness, her adulteries, her unthankfulness, how notorious, how long, how multiplied and aggravated. *With your mother;* the synagogues, the whole body of the people Israel, which were emblemized in Gomer, the wife of whoredoms. *Plead;* ye that are sons or daughters of God amidst this degenerate, idolatrous nation, you that have any resentments for your Father, debate, or at least deal plainly with her, who is called your mother, and say how little right she hath to be called my wife, and how little reason I have to own myself her Husband. *She is not my wife;* in point of right she is not, for by her adulteries she hath dissolved the marriage covenant, and so abolished the relation, though in point of fact she is not cast off utterly; I have not sued out the divorce, nor turned her out of doors, but yet for all that she is no wife, nor hath any right to the honour, maintenance, or love of a wife. *Neither am I her Husband;* I do not account myself bound by any covenant of marriage to love, maintain, comfort, or protect her; nor will I long do it, if by her continued lewdness she still violate her faith, and abuse my patience. Tell idolatrous Israel, that her God will deal with her as an abused husband will deal with an unreclaimed adulterous wife. *Let her therefore put away her whoredoms;* when you have pleaded, then make an offer to her yet once more, counsel, persuade, entreat, and encourage her to do what becomes a wife that would not be divorced; try if you can prevail with her to cast aside and to remove from her all evil practices and inclinations, to cast off spiritual whoredoms, which all her idolatrous practices are accounted to be. *Out of her sight;* either remove the idols, their temples, priests, and gaudy rites, for ever out of her sight, as they did, Isa. ii. 20; or else cease from her whorish looks, her unchaste and immodest framing her face and gestures. *And her adulteries,* idolatries, which are spiritual adulteries, *from between her breasts:* by an immodest and lascivious manner of framing the breasts, and laying them open, these kinds of women here alluded to did entice adulterers; and so were idolatrous Israelites grown impudent in their idolatries, and courted others in shameless manner to turn idolaters also.

3 Lest [c] I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was [d] born, and make her [e] as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with [f] thirst.

c Jer. 13. 22, 26. Ezek. 16. 37, 39.
d Ezek. 16. 4.
e Ezek. 19. 13.
f Amos 8 11, 13.

Lest: this little word suggests great hopes; if this treacherous wife will cease her lewdness, and become chaste, she may be forgiven; it reserves room for repentance and reconciliation, without these it threatens. *Strip her naked;* as was usually done by incensed husbands, divorcing impudent adulteresses: see Ezek. xvi. 38, 39; xxiii. 26. So God will strip her of all her ornaments which he gave; so he did gradually by Israel's enemies the Assyrians, till at last by Shalmaneser she was stripped to the skin, and led away captive; God cast her out thus by him. *And set her as in the day that she was born:* it is not much material to fix the period of this birth, but it is enough God threatens, as sometimes we do, an extreme, poor, desolate, and comfortless condition, by a kind of proverbial speech, as naked as ever born. *And make her as a wilderness:* this phrase may somewhat intimate the time of Israel's birth, viz. between their going out of Egypt and the giving of the law, or their entering upon their travels in the wilderness. Their state was poor enough then, now it shall be as bad, or worse; they shall be as the wilderness, barren and desolate, affording nothing for life or delight, much less for profit: whereas adulteresses ordinarily hunt after profit and delights, God will punish adulterous Israel with denying both to her, she shall be like the wilderness, horrid and starving. *And set her like a dry land:* this is much the same with the former, and added to confirm and illustrate it. *And slay her:* all this shall be done to the end she may be destroyed: of old God led his people through the wilderness to a city of habitation, now he will make them as the wilderness that they may perish in it. *With thirst:* a miserable end, surely, thus to be scorched up with parching heat! so will God's wrath burn up these wicked, idolatrous Israelites.

4 And I will not have mercy upon her children; for they *be* the [g] children of whoredoms.

g John 8. 41.

I will not have mercy: see chap. i. 6. *Upon her children:* by this expression particular persons are severally, as by mother the whole nation was, threatened, that none might flatter themselves with hope of better: it is observable they are called *her children,* not God's. *For they be the children of whoredoms;* born in whoredom, and, like the mother, addicted to whoredom; as if God had said, They are none of mine by birth, nor any whit like me in disposition, but a spurious and hateful brood, and as such I will will use them.

5 [h] For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, [i] that give *me* my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my †drink.

h Is. 1. 21. Jer. 3. 1, 6, 8, 9. Ezek. 16. 15, 16, &c.
i ver. 8, 12. Jer. 44. 17.
† Heb. *drinks.*

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For: this demonstrates the truth of the charge, and justifieth the severity of the punishment. *Their mother:* see ver. 2. *Played the harlot;* doted on idols, worshipped them, and brought forth and educated children for them. *She hath done shamefully:* this practice, in the best circumstances it can be put, was dishonourable as well as dishonest; but here is an aggravation of it, it was done with shameless impudence, and openly avowed, with *a whore's forehead,* Jer. iii. 3. *She said;* she took up resolutions, declared them, stood to them, none could alter her course. *I will go after:* when they came not to her, she will go to them. Impudent adulteress! forsaken, thou courtest and wooest. *My lovers:* this spoken as if they loved her better than her Husband loved her; a high degree of impudence. These are the idols she worshipped, and the idolaters she associated and traded with. *That give me my bread, &c.:* whereas every mercy she enjoyed was God's gift to her, and a fruit of his covenant love and faithfulness towards her; yet she denies (like an impudent strumpet) all his kindness, and in a manner chargeth him with such hardness and ill usage, that she had starved if her idols and idolatrous friends had not maintained her, and gives out, the bread she ate, and water she drank, and the clothes she wore, all was of their kindness. This is shameful indeed, and the prophet hath set it forth to the life: and now is there not good reason why a Husband so abused should without pity cast off such a mother, such children, and leave them to live on their chosen lovers, or to perish under the hatred of their despised God?

k Job 3. 23. & 19. 8. Lam. 3. 7, 9. † Heb. *wall a wall.*

6 ¶ Therefore, behold, [k]I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and †make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.

Therefore; because she is so impetuous and shameless in her idolatrous courses, nothing hath, and she resolves nothing shall, hinder her, but she will follow them. *Behold;* take notice of it, thou lewd woman, and all that stand by. *I will hedge up thy way with thorns:* thou wilt set no bounds to thy lusts, and thy wanderings to satisfy them: I will deal with thee as men do with unruly and rambling beasts, set a hedge of thorns about thee, i. e. compass thee in with wars and other calamities, which shall wound and pierce thee, that though thou love thy sinful courses, and wilt follow them, thou shalt have little pleasure in them. *And make a wall;* another allusion to the method men take to keep in the wildest cattle, which would break through hedges, but cannot break through walls. God will make the calamities of this people as a strong and high wall, over which they cannot leap, nor through which they cannot break. So was the Assyrian army under Shalmaneser, which cooped them up in a long siege of Samaria, and at last took them, and carried them into a long captivity, which now lasteth. *That she shall not find her paths;* wherein thou didst go when thou wentest to Egypt or Syria for help; but by my judgments, and thine enemies' power and watchfulness, always shall be watched and guarded, thou shalt not find how to send to them for relief. These were her paths, whereas a chaste wife would have gone to her husband for relief.

7 And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find *them:* then shall she say, [l]I will go and return to my [m]first husband; for then *was it* better with me than now.

l ch. 5. 15. Luke 15. 18. m Exek. 16. 8.

And she, hedged in with many and great distresses, when under the judgments of God, *shall follow after her lovers;* with earnest travel, and with wearisome toil, she shall attempt every way to get to them, but to no purpose: afflictions and sorrows surround Israel; these Israel can by no means break out of to these lovers, and they, like false lovers, hasten as fast and as far from this adulteress as they can. *Her lovers;* idols and idolaters, her false friends, and falser gods. *She shall not overtake them;* they which hasten after such strange gods and helps, as this shameless harlot, shall meet with sorrow, but never overtake their desired help. *She shall seek them;* as is the manner of immodest strumpets; it speaks also her obstinate resolution in her way: so Israel forsook a God that would have sought him to do him good, and by no disappointments would be (for a long time) taken off from this frantic wildness, of seeking to idols that could do him no good. *But shall not find them;* the final issue of all is at last, she is wearied in her folly, tired with fruitless labour, and sits down hopeless of ever finding help from idols and idolaters. *Then shall she say;* as the prodigal, first think well on it, next resolve with herself. *I will go and return;* restless, she will try one way more; happy she if she had tried this sooner, this would have been successful; she will return, come back, and seek to her Husband. *To my first Husband,* i. e. God, who had married Israel to himself, who was her Husband indeed: all others were as adulterers, as deceivers and seducers, who abuse the credulity of wanton women first, and next abuse their husbands' beds. *For then was it better with me than now:* how much the tune is changed! In ver. 5, all her gallantry, her feasts, her rich apparel, these are gifts of her lovers; not a word of her Husband's greatest kindnesses. But now she sees and confesseth the least of her Husband's kindnesses was better than the greatest kindness of these her paramours, and at worst with her Husband she was better than at best with adulterers.

8 For she did not [n]know that [o]I gave her corn, and †wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, ‖*which* they prepared for Baal.

n Is. 1. 3. o Ezek. 16. 17, 18, 19. † Heb. *new wine.* ‖ Or, wherewith *they made Baal,* ch. 8. 4.

For; this unexampled ignorance, or inconsiderateness, was the cause of all this lost labour, and unthankfulness to God. *She,* in her fulness and prosperity, as were the days of Jeroboam, in which much of this lewdness was committed, and in which the prophet calls them to repentance, *did not know;* considered not, but carried it toward God as if indeed she did not know; nor did she own it or acknowledge it by any suitable obedience and thankfulness to the God of her mercies. *That I gave,* without desert or worthiness; it was mercy, and this free, from whence all she had came. *Corn;* which is the stay and strength of our life; one necessary comfort put for all the rest. *Wine and oil:* these cheer the heart, and include all provision for delight and sweetness. *And multiplied her silver and gold:* the treasures of gold and silver, and all precious things brought in by trade, and increased among them, were the effect of mine undiscerned and unacknowledged bounty and goodness. *Which they,* the generality or body of the Jews, these idolatrous Jews, *prepared for Baal;* first made the idol with the gold and silver, and next dedicated it to the service of the idol. Sottish ignorance, that with one part of the gold and silver make a god, with the other part provide for sacrifices to be offered to it. Thus one part is advanced to be a deity, the other part of the same mass consecrated to the service of its fellow lump. What absurdities will not down with such fools and sots?

9 Therefore will I return, and [p]take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will ‖recover my wool and my flax *given* to cover her nakedness.

p ver. 3. ‖ Or, *take away.*

Therefore, because I was not acknowledged nor served as the giver, *will I return:* much after the manner of man doth God speak; he had left large blessings behind him among this people, but their sottish ingratitude provokes him to resolutions of returning and seizing of all. *Take away;* take into my hands, or resume all I give, for all given was mine still; God never gives away his right. *My corn;* it was hers while thankfully received and rightly used, but want of these forfeit that right, and the propriety reverts to God. See ver. 8. *In the time thereof;* either when they should gather it in, as being ripe, or when they need it, and should use it. All they enjoy is mine, but since they so use me as to serve Baal by it, I will either take all away from them, or make all useless to them. When I take away my wool and my flax, she shall appear shamefully naked, not having one rag of her own.

10 And now [q]will I discover her †lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand.

q Ezek. 16. 37. & 23. 29. † Heb. *folly,* or, *villany.*

And now, when I make a seizure, and strip her of all that is mine, I will expose her, or else I shortly will do so, ere long. *Her lewdness;* the folly and wickedness of her

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idolatrous worship; and perhaps the corporal lewdnesses which idolaters seldom were free from may be here intended. *In the sight of her lovers;* among whom most will loathe her and hoot at her, some secretly despise her; if any shall attempt to help at this dead lift, it shall be to no purpose. *None shall deliver her out of mine hand;* they who would deliver her are few and weak, unable to rescue her from the infamy I adjudge her to. In short, as she hath like a strumpet shamelessly sinned, so like a strumpet she shall be shamefully, with greatest infamy, punished; and I, saith the Lord, will see it done.

r Amos 8.10.

11 [r]I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her [s]feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.

s 1 Kings 12. 32. Amos 8. 5.

I will also cause all her mirth to cease; the jollity of Israel was certainly damped when Tiglath-pileser took Ijon, and other cities, and captivated Naphtali, 2 Kings xv. 29, which was some, yet but few, years after this prophecy: but sure all their joy ceased about ten or twelve years after, when Samaria was taken, and Hoshea and all Israel made captives: so the threat was executed in this sense. But the prophet speaks (as by what follows appeareth) of their sacred or religious joys, which God will abolish. He did not set them up, but he will pull them down. *Her feast days:* though apostate Israel was fallen to idolatry, and renounced the true worship of God, yet by this text it appears they retained many of the rites and ceremonies that were used by the Jews, or else set up others like them, as their solemn feast at setting up the calves at Dan and Beth-el, in Jeroboam's time. *New moons:* these were days of greater sacrifices, Numb. xxviii. 11, and greater feasting, 1 Sam. xx. 5. *Sabbaths;* their weekly sabbaths. *All her solemn feasts;* the three annual feasts of tabernacles, weeks, and passover, or others with them, all which should cease when these people were carried captive, as they were by Shalmaneser.

† Heb. *make desolate.* t ver. 5.

12 And I will †destroy her vines and her fig trees, [t]whereof she hath said, These *are* my rewards that my lovers have given me: and [u]I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them.

u Ps. 80. 12, 13. Is. 5. 5.

God will do it either by blasting, or by the Assyrians, who, as other invaders, shall spoil all. *Destroy;* make very desolate, or lay waste. *Her vines and her fig trees:* these two were mentioned, but all other fruit trees are meant. *Whereof she hath said, These are my rewards:* this was in peculiar manner the sin for which Israel was punished thus, they gave the praise of the fruitfulness of these trees, and the abundance of them, to idols, robbed God of the praise due for them, therefore God will take them away. *That my lovers have given me:* their false gods are here made the givers of all outward blessings to Israel: see ver. 5. *I will make them;* their vineyards and oliveyards, and places where they planted and fenced in their fig trees, and other fruitful trees. *A forest;* wild and uncultivated, the hedges and fences shall be thrown up, and all run into the wildness of a forest, as it came to pass in the Assyrian invasion. *The beasts of the field;* savage men, such as the Assyrians were; or rather in the letter, the beasts of the field should break down their branches, and devour them, and pull off the fruit, as foxes pull the grapes, or wild boars of the wood root up and eat the tender and sappy branches and springles. *Shall eat them;* the trees and their fruits.

13 And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she [x]decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgat me, saith the LORD.

x Ezek. 23. 40, 42.

I will visit; punish, for the prophet threatens them with this visitation, by which it evidently appears to be a visiting in wrath. *Upon her;* the kingdom of Israel. *The days;* the sins of those days past. *Of Baalim:* Baal was the great idol of the ten tribes, the chief of their idols, their lord (as the word signifieth) and patron; here it is plural, Baalim, either to denote the multitude of idols which they worshipped, all called by this one name, or perhaps because of the multitude of his statues or images, and of his altars and temples, erected to Baal in all places of the land. *Burnt incense to them;* sacrificed and worshipped, for this one kind of religious observance is put for all the rest. *She decked herself with her earrings and her jewels;* to put the greater honour upon the idol, they put on their richest and best attire, or it may be they blindly thought this rich habit would make them the more acceptable to their senseless idol. *And she went after her lovers;* decked thus, strumpet like, she went on by her spiritual adultery to provoke me. *And forgat me;* and slighted me, if she did at all think of me, adulteress like.

14 ¶ Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and [y]bring her into the wilderness, and speak ‖ †comfortably unto her.

y Ezek. 20. 35. ‖ Or, *friendly.* † Heb. *to her heart.*

Therefore: this particle seems to connect these following passages with those that went before, as causal, or giving a reason why God will do thus, and so are difficulter than if read as לכן might be, either as a particle that speaks order or time of things, and is as much as *afterwards;* so it will be easy, *I will visit,* &c., *afterwards I will allure;* first punish, next comfort: or else it may be adversative, as much as *yet,* or *but;* so it is plain, thus, She like an adulteress hath sinned, and I have punished; *but,* or *yet,* or *notwithstanding, I will allure:* or else it is a particle that doth more strongly affirm; so rendered the place would be less obscure, thus, *I will destroy her vines,* &c.; *surely I will allure,* &c.: thus לכן is used Jer. v. 2; Zech. xi. 7. *Behold* with attention, and wonder at the methods of Divine grace. *I will allure her;* with kind words and kinder usage I will incline her mind to hear and consider what I propose; I will persuade by sweetest dealings, like a kind husband that makes use of the distresses of his disloyal wife to commend his love to her, to win her to himself, and to ways that are the honour and happiness of a wife. *And bring her into the wilderness; after that I have brought her into the wilderness;* so the French, and some other versions, and so it is plainer than as we read it. *The wilderness;* deep distress or captivity, with all the sorrows that attend captivity; then it is likely she will hearken: or by *wilderness* may be understood a retired place, and solitary, where shall be no diversions of her mind, no such temptations as formerly, where with best leisure she may consider and bethink herself: so understood, our version is easily intelligible. *And speak comfortably;* things that are full of comfort, and in such manner too as is comfortable to the hearer. Here are glad tidings, gracious promises, and wonderful mercy to the true Israel after afflictions have brought them to God, after they are converted from sin by these means.

15 And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and [z]the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in [a]the days of her youth, and [b]as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.

z Josh. 7. 26. Is. 65. 10. a Jer. 2. 2. Ezek. 16. 8, 22, 60. b Ex. 15. 1.

And I, reconciled to her, *will give her her vineyards;* will both settle her, and abundantly enrich her with blessings, as the phrase implieth. *From thence;* either from the place of their exile and sufferings, or from the time of their hearkening to the Lord speaking to them in their distresses and sorrows; or if it refer to ver. 12, it is a promise to comfort them under that threat which swept away the blessings of vines and fig trees in their own land, and here is a promise of vineyards to them from the time of their repentance, and from the place where they are captives. *The valley of Achor;* which was a large, fruitful, and pleasant valley near Jericho, and on the very entrance into the land of Canaan, where after forty years' travels and sorrows Israel first set foot on a country such as they expected. *For a door of hope:* as that valley was a door of hope to Israel then, by that Israel saw that he should enjoy the Promised Land; so would God deal with repenting Israel in the times here pointed at. *She shall sing* praises to their God for his mercies, and sing forth their own joys too, and answer each other, sing in responses, as the word signifieth. *As in the days of her youth:* as that age is most jocund, and expresseth it by singing, so shall it be as renewed youth to Israel, full of blessings from God, and full of praises to God.

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When she came up out of the land of Egypt: this passage explains the former; their youth is a time somewhat like the time of their coming out of Egypt, their mercies now like the mercies of that time, and their joys and songs shall be like too. However these things were fulfilled to the type, whose repentance and return to God is not very eminent, they are all fully made good to antitype Israel, the church of Christ, in spiritual blessings, chiefly here intended.

‖ That is, *My husband.* ‖ That is, *My lord.*

16 And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, *that* thou shalt call me ‖ Ishi; and shalt call me no more ‖ Baali.

At that day; when through deep distresses I have prepared her to return, and she who was an adulteress repents, and renews her covenant of love and obedience, and in the day of my blessings on her. *Saith the Lord:* this confirmeth and insureth the thing. *Thou,* my repenting Israel, *shalt call me Ishi;* both by words, affections, and obedience shall own me as thy loving, tender Husband, and delight to call me so. *And shalt call me no more Baali;* though the word hath no ill in itself, yet it is so near to the name of the abominable idols, that I will no more be called Baali.

c Ex. 23. 13. Josh. 23. 7. Ps. 16. 4. Zech. 13. 2.

17 For [c] I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name.

For I will take away the names of Baalim; it is my purpose to abolish the memory of Baalim. This great idol for all others; God will cut off all the remains of idolatry from his church. *Out of her mouth;* so God required of old, Exod. xxiii. 13. *They shall no more be remembered by their name;* these false gods and provoking idols shall be quite forgotten, their names perishing with them. When God shall so cut off all idolatry from his church in gospel days, it will be the final and fullest accomplishment of this prediction.

d Job 5. 23. Is. 11. 6.—9. Ezek. 34. 25.

18 And in that day will I make a [d] covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and *with* the creeping things of the ground: and [e] I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to [f] lie down safely.

e Ps. 46. 9. Is. 2. 4. Ezek. 39. 9, 10. Zech. 9. 10. f Lev. 26. 5. Jer. 23. 6.

In that day: see ver. 16. *Make a covenant;* command or enjoin, and these creatures shall as duly observe the command as just ones keep a covenant. *For them;* true converts, the Israel of God. *With the beasts of the field, &c.;* with all the creatures that might either serve or hurt them; it is a full and gracious promise of abundance of peace, safety, and love among all, through the creation, for the comfort of God's people. *And I will break the bow, &c.:* but if brute beasts do not hurt, yet unless more brutish creatures, bloody men, be tamed, there will be little safety to the church; therefore God will put an end to wars, and make men peaceable in their disposition, far more peaceable than heretofore they have been. *And will make them to lie down safely;* by a special care of, love for, and presence with them, God will provide for their safety. Now I doubt not but all this in some measure was made good to the Jews returning out of captivity, among whom were also some thousands of the house of Israel, who had their share in this promised peace, safety, and prosperity; but the full accomplishment is to be to the church of Christ, and in spiritual blessings shadowed out by these temporal blessings.

19 And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.

And I, thy God, who was offended, but now am reconciled, though I was divorcing thee, will now *betroth,* on new terms enter marriage covenant with *thee,* O Israel, who art my people, and leavest thine idolatries and rebellions. *Unto me,* God of mercy and truth, who hath forgiven and changed thee, and made thee suitable to myself, and who will be as kind and gracious as thou canst desire or need. *For ever:* the former covenant was broken, and the marriage nulled, but now it shall be an everlasting contract and marriage between my Israel and their God. *I will betroth thee unto me:* this promise is repeated to confirm it, and to remove scruples and jealousies. *In righteousness;* on equal terms on both sides. *In judgment;* with mature advice, or well-informed and settled judgment and resolution; this covenant shall be, as a well-taken oath, finished with integrity of heart and judgment. *In loving-kindness;* without desert in her that is betrothed, of mere love, and freest kindness. *And in mercies:* this, though the same with the former, is added to insure all to this new-espoused wife; or *loving-kindness* is the never-exhausted fountain, *mercies* are the never-failing streams, the abundant fruits of that love toward the poor and undeserving objects of it.

20 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and [g] thou shalt know the LORD.

g Jer. 31. 33, 34. John 17. 3.

This verse is a third promise in the same words to comfort and encourage the true Israel, only *faithfulness* is here added a qualification of this new marriage, which shall continue firm on a mutual, faithful promise, love, and contract. *Thou shalt know the Lord;* his just anger which hath punished, his rich grace which hath now pardoned and taken into covenant again, his faithfulness and tender compassions, his all-sufficiency and sovereignty, that we may obey him, and rest satisfied in his love, as it is our reward and happiness.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, [h] I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth;

h Zech. 8. 12.

22 And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; [i] and they shall hear Jezreel.

i ch. 1. 4.

In that day, when this new alliance is made, or in the day of gospel grace, *I will hear:* this general promise God gives us to encourage us to cry to him; he will so hear as to answer. *Saith the Lord:* this is the seal to the truth and certainty of the things promised.

There is a subordination of causes, all second causes do in their ranks (like wheels in a curious engine) move as moved by the first great spring, and so contribute to the good of such as any way depend on them. Thus here, God, the first and universal cause, will influence the heavens, he will command their dew and showers; they would be as iron over us, if God did not command them to distil their drops on the earth; when this is dry, parched, and barren, it does as it were cry to the heavens for refreshing showers, for fruitful rains; when the seed sown, the vines and olives planted, are at a stand, take no rooting, they do as it were cry to the earth for its kindly influences and fatness, that they may spring up and yield fruit for Jezreel: which may call, and cry, and wait, but never be satisfied, if God do not hear them, and command his blessing of fructifying influences, which God here doth promise to his people on renewing covenant with them. God's seed, his gathered ones, his espoused church, shall be served to her comfort by all the creatures. When disobedience, backslidings, idolatries, and such-like sins did provoke God to punish them with famine and scarcity; now their repentance and obedience shall be blessed with plenty, and God will set the frame of heaven and earth in due order to effect this, there shall be a harmony and correspondence between all subordinate causes moved by God the first great cause, whence expected events and fruits shall certainly be produced for their good and comfort.

23 And [k] I will sow her unto me in the earth; [l] and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I [m] will say to *them which were* not my people, Thou *art* my people; and they shall say, *Thou art* my God.

k Jer. 31. 27. Zech. 10. 9. l ch. 1. 6. m ch. 1. 10. Zech. 13. 9. Rom. 9. 25. 1 Pet. 2. 10.

Their sins, the enemies' sword, and God's just displeasure, had wasted and lessened their numbers; but now the Lord will bless them with wonderful increase of people, expressed with allusion to a seed sown in the earth, which multiplieth exceedingly: so the Jews multiplied after the Babylonish captivity, but much more are the numbers increased since the preaching of the gospel, and the gathering in the dispersed elect of God. *The earth;* either the

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land of Canaan, if you refer this to the Jews after the captivity; or the whole earth, all places and nations, if you do, as you should, refer it to gospel days; and so we have seen this promise fulfilled. *I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy:* see chap. i. 6, 10. *I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people;* so great is the change grace hath made, that a rejected people are once more taken to be a peculiar people; a remnant among them is saved. Not in word only, but with hearty consent, joy, affection, and thankfulness they shall be my people, as well as call themselves so. *They shall say, Thou art my God:* this people of whom the prophet here speaketh shall openly confess the Lord is their God, Sovereign to command and rule, and Saviour to deliver and save them. Their God to give them law and life, to direct their obedience, and to be their exceeding great reward for it; their God to sanctify, justify, and glorify.

CHAP. III.

By the prophet taking unto him an adulteress is showed the desolation of Israel, and their restoration.

a ch. 1. 2. b Jer. 3. 20. 1 THEN said the LORD unto me, [a] Go yet, love a woman beloved of *her* [b] friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons † of wine.

† Heb. *of grapes.*

Then, or *And*, Heb. or Furthermore. *Said the Lord;* commanded. *Unto me;* Hosea. *Go yet;* again, or once more; so it implieth he had once already been commanded and done some such-like thing. *Love a woman:* in the former he was commanded to marry, in this he is commanded to love, (the reason of which will appear in the application of the parable,) a woman, though described by her character, yet not named; and though her character would suit well enough to Gomer, yet it was not she, for this woman was to abide for him, ver. 3, but Gomer was presently married to him, or at least so represented; this was brought, Gomer was not. *Beloved of her friend;* her husband, though some think it may be some other person or lover. *An adulteress;* either already tainted, or that certainly will be tainted with that vice; a divorced woman, separate from her husband because of her falseness to him. *According to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel;* let this be the emblem of my love to the children of Israel: by this I intend, saith God, to let Israel know how I have loved, and how she hath loved: how greatly, dearly, constantly on my part; how slightly, inconstantly, falsely on her part. *Who look to other gods:* when I adopted them to be a peculiar people to me, to take me for their God, and required they shall have none other, (which relation is well expressed by that of husband and wife,) they have looked, liked, loved other gods, and depended on them, and their hearts have been estranged from me, they have turned downright idolaters. *Love flagons of wine;* loved the feasts of their idols, where they drank wine to excess, by too great measures, which, without dispute, was usual in the idol feasts, Amos ii. 8; 1 Cor. x. 21; or else these flagons of wine speak their loose, drunken, and riotous living.

2 So I bought her to me for fifteen *pieces* of silver, and *for* an homer of barley, and an † half homer of barley:

† Heb. *lethech.*

So I bought her; as I was commanded, I procured, or, as we read it, *bought her:* which exactly answers to the state of the Jews when in Egypt, tainted with Egyptian idolatry, and poor, without a portion; bought or redeemed to be affianced to God. *Fifteen pieces of silver;* whatever was the exact quantity and value of these pieces we need not here curiously inquire; but note, it was half the value of a slave, Exod. xxi. 32, and was some 37*s.* 6*d.* *An homer:* this measure might be about fourteen bushels; so the whole will, for her diet, amount to twenty-one bushels, no great provision for her diet; and it is *barley* in both places, the meanest kind of provision, and suited to a low condition, Judg. vii. 13; Ezek. iv. 9, 12: all this the fuller to set forth Israel's indigence and ingratitude to God, and God's bounty to Israel.

3 And I said unto her, Thou shalt [c] abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for *another* man: so *will* I also *be* for thee.

c Deut. 21. 13.

This verse is the form of contract, or the articles of agreement, between the prophet and this woman. *Abide for me;* dwell with me, and expect and wait in an unmarried condition, until I see it fit to espouse thee. *Many days;* it is not said how long, but a slave, as she is represented here, may not think this severe; the preferment will compensate her waiting. *Thou shalt not play the harlot:* this is the third condition, she is to live chaste and modest, not to do as she had done. This was to settle her in a virtuous life, and to prove whether she would betake herself to a life praiseworthy. *Thou shalt not be for another man;* she is bound to marry none other, nor to commit adultery with any other. *So will I also be for thee;* in due time I will accomplish the contract, and, as I wait, so I will be for thee. So the deed is mutually sealed and signed.

4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days [d] without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without † an image, and without an [e] ephod, and *without* [f] teraphim:

d ch. 10. 3. Song of the three children, ver. 15. † Heb. *a standing, or, statue, or, pillar,* Is. 19. 19. e Ex. 28. 6. f Judg. 17. 5.

Now the parable is unfolded and made plain; it shall be with Israel much like as with such a woman, they and she guilty of adultery, both punished with a divorce, both punished long with such afflicted state, both made slaves, kept hardly, and valued meanly, yet in mercy at last pardoned, reaccepted, and preferred, but this after long time of probation: how long we cannot tell, nor list to dispute whether seventy years of Babylon's captivity, or whether these seventy and the one hundred and thirty years of the ten tribes' captivity before the two tribes went captives, i. e. two hundred years; or whether till Messiah's coming, or the general and last conversion of the Jews; long it was to be no doubt. *Without a king;* none of their own royal line shall sit on the throne, and rule them, but foreigners, enemies, and they that had conquered them, should be kings over them. So the kingdom ceased, as chap. i. 4. *Without a prince;* the conquering kings will not out of the Jews make their chief officers to rule the Jews, but strangers shall be princes and governors over them. *Without a sacrifice;* either right, and according to law, (these sacrifices they had long since cast off,) or idolatrous ones, which they would choose. *Without an image;* they could carry none of their images with them, and the Assyrians would not let them make new ones. *Without an ephod;* no priest as well as no ephod. *Without teraphim;* idolatrous images kept in their private houses to worship and consult with, like the Roman *lares* and *penates*, household gods. In one word, such should be the state of these captives, they should have nothing of their own, either in kingdom and civil affairs, or in church and religion, but be wholly under the power and arbitrary wills of their conquering enemies.

5 Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and [g] seek the LORD their God, and [h] David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the [i] latter days.

g Jer. 50. 4. 5. ch. 5. 6. h Jer. 30. 9. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. & 37. 22, 24. i Is. 2. 2. Jer. 30. 24. Ezek. 38. 8, 16. Dan. 2. 28. Mic. 4. 1.

Afterward; after these long and sore troubles have broken their hearts and opened their eyes. *Return;* repent; it is not a promise of return into their own country. *Seek the Lord their God,* to know his way, and to live under his protection and blessing, to worship him, and they shall pray to him, depend on him, consult with him, with ardency and earnestness of desire. *David their king;* not son of Jesse, who was long since dead; nor Zerubbabel; but Messiah, who is elsewhere called David, Psal. cxxxii. 10; Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 24; xxxvii. 24, 25, which see; and Amos ix. 11. *Shall fear the Lord;* with reverence shall pray, depend on, and consult their God, and worship his Son the Messiah, whom the Father sent out of

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his infinite goodness and kindness towards us. *And his goodness;* God and his goodness, i. e. the good and gracious God, such to us in Christ; God in Christ and with Christ shall be worshipped. *In the latter days;* in the days of the Messiah, in gospel times, and perhaps the last of these latter days.

CHAP. IV.

God's judgments against the sins of the people, 1—5, *and of the priests,* 6—11, *and against their idolatry,* 12—14. *Judah is exhorted to take warning by Israel's calamity,* 15—19.

cir. 780. HEAR the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a [a]controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because *there is* no truth, nor mercy, nor [b]knowledge of God in the land.

a Is. 1. 18. & 3. 13, 14. Jer. 25. 31. ch. 12. 2. Mic. 6. 2. b Jer. 4. 22. & 5. 4.

Hear; attend, consider, and duly weigh: it is the hearing of the mind, as well as of the ear, is here required. *The word of the Lord;* he that speaks is the great God, though the messenger be a man; the message is not man's, but it is the word, the message of the sovereign, holy, just, and mighty Jehovah, who ever speaks most important things, things that respect our duty and safety. *Ye children of Israel;* you of the ten tribes, with whose ancestors my covenant was made, who received the law by the disposition of angels, but have not kept it, you that have turned aside from your God to idols. *The Lord;* who knoweth your sins, who hateth, threateneth, and will judge, and punish unless you repent, it is he that speaketh, and summoneth you to plead with him. *Hath a controversy;* just matter of debate or arguing against you; you have wronged him, and he will right himself, yet so that he will be clear in his judgment, all shall see that the just Lord doth justly, and that this people's sins are the cause of all their sufferings, that God doth not delight to afflict the children of men. *With the inhabitants of the land;* who dwell in the cities and towns of Israel, divided from the house of David, and from the house of God; ye that dwell with idolatrous neighbours: it is not a few, but the generality of the inhabitants; it is the whole land I have an action against. *There is no truth,* no faithfulness, in their minds, words, or works; they cover falsehood with fair words, till they may fitly execute their designed frauds. There is neither plain-heartedness nor constancy in their purposes and words. *Nor mercy,* kindness or gentleness of mind; all are hardened, and restrain their bowels, which should be opened toward the indigent and necessitous. There is neither compassion nor beneficence among them, they pity not, nor relieve any. *Nor knowledge of God;* all generally are ignorant, know not what God hath done for them, or what God is in himself, or what candour and truth, or what tenderness and beneficence, he requires in his word; if they have a slight knowledge of those things, yet they consider them not. They have rased the knowledge of God out of their minds. *In the land:* this speaks the universal ignorance, mercilessness, and unfaithfulness of that age.

2 By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and †blood toucheth blood.

† Heb. *bloods.*

By swearing; either falsely or profanely, or cursing and wishing evil to one; instead of truth here is perjury; instead of compassion here is execration and evil-speaking. *Lying* of all kinds; affirming of falsehoods, denying of truths, defrauding, lessening good, and representing it what it is not, greatening what is in others ill, and so flattering in some cases, and defaming in other cases, &c. *Killing:* though God hath forbidden all kinds and degrees of murder, this people, through ignorance of God, do fill the land with murders, either open or secret; by cruelty withholding relief from some, by violence and falsehood cutting off others: the temper of this people was toward killing, their designs laid for it, &c. *Stealing;* injuring one another, either by taking away what was another's, or detaining what should have been his, or giving less to another than was his due: every one inclined to frauds, many addicted to secret thefts, and some openly practising it. *Committing adultery;* which was a sin grown high among them, a sin directly against the truth and mercy which should have been among them. Under this, all degrees of adultery, unchaste thoughts, words, and gestures are included. *They break out;* as waters that swell above all banks, or as unruly beasts that break over all hedges, so you, O Israelites, have broken down the hedge of the law, which expressly forbids what you daily practise. *Blood toucheth blood;* slaughters are multiplied: by *blood* the Scripture understandeth slaughter, Gen. iv. 10, &c.; Psal. lviii. 10. Possibly the wrong done by the adulterer was (as Amnon's) revenged with the slaughter of the adulterer; or possibly it may refer to murders committed in the very court of the temple; so the blood of the murdered touched the blood of sacrifices. It is too particular to refer it to the blood of Zechariah slain between the porch and the altar, and which (some say) ran down to the altar and touched the blood of the sacrifice. Or what if this should refer to what will be ere long, when Jeroboam is dead, when Zachariah is murdered by Shallum, 2 Kings xv. 10; Menahem slew Shallum, ver. 14, and ripped up women with child in Tiphsah, ver. 16; when Pekah slew Pekahiah, and Hoshea slew him? These kings being thus slain, no doubt much blood was spilt; all which happened in less than forty years; for from Zachariah to Pekah's usurpation are but fourteen years, from Pekah's entrance on the throne to Hoshea's conspiracy are twenty years.

3 Therefore [c]shall the land mourn, and [d]every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.

c Jer. 4. 28. & 12. 4. Amos 5. 16. & 8. 8. d Zeph. 1. 3.

Therefore, since their sins are so many and so great, for those very sins already mentioned in the 1st and 2nd verses, *shall the land,* which the ten tribes did now inhabit, *mourn:* it is a metaphorical expression, for properly it cannot be spoken of the senseless and inanimate creatures; but as men and women mourn under the loss of their comforts and joys, as they neglect themselves in their habits, and go less neat, so when the sins of the people shall bring an enemy upon the land, when war shall first spoil their cities, towns, vineyards, and oliveyards, and finally shall carry the people captive, all shall run into horrid and saddest state, and into doleful plight. The same expression see in Isa. xxiv. 4, and much like Amos i. 2. *Every one that dwelleth therein;* no sort of men but had provoked God and sinned, no sort but should be punished; all that continue in the land till these threatened judgments overtake them. *Shall languish;* shall with grief and vexation pine away; what they see with their eye shall make their heart ache, and faint with greatest dejectedness and despair, as the word imports, Isa. xvi. 8; Joel i. 12. *With the beasts of the field:* these are elsewhere menaced, Zeph. i. 2, which see. God punisheth man in cutting off what was made for man's benefit and comfort; and it is probable that the tamer cattle were starved for want of grass or fodder, all being eaten up and consumed by the wasting armies. *With the fowls of heaven;* the tamer and innocent either killed by enemies, or, offended with stench and noxious air, die or forsake the country, or are devoured by eagles and birds of prey, which in those countries wait on armies. *Yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away;* whether by drying up the waters of rivers, lakes, and ponds, or by corrupting them with blood and carcasses, or by what other way we know not, he can do it, who saith he will; and we are sure it speaks the greatness of the threatened desolation.

4 Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another: for thy people *are* as they [e]that strive with the priest.

e Deut. 17. 12.

Yet; though judgments great and wasting are so sure, though the approaching calamities will lay all utterly waste. *Let no man;* none of private capacity, no priest or prophet, any more open their mouths to reason and debate with this people; let all know they are so obstinate and hardened it is to no purpose to warn any more. *Strive;* contend, as in causes pleaded before a judge; lay not the law before them, who have so often refused to hear it. *Nor reprove;*

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no more chide, or sharply inveigh against their sins and ways. Or this whole passage may be thus read, *Yet certainly there is none that may or can strive, &c.* All are so corrupted, that there is none free who may with confidence argue against others. But our version is better of the two. *Thy people;* thy countrymen, Hosea, if the former words be the words of God to the prophet. Or else, if they be the words of the prophet to the people, then he speaks to them of the temper of their neighbours and people with whom they dwelt. It is much one which we take, for Hosea was now among them; and whether his people or no, they are still the same persons spoken of. *Are as they that strive with the priest;* there is no ingenuity, modesty, or fear of God or man left among them, they will contend with their teachers, reprovers, and counsellors; they will justify themselves, and contemn all reproof; they will adhere to sin, and reject all better advice, just as they Mal. i. 2, 7; ii. 14. This doth not suppose, much less assert, the priests of Baal and the calves to be true priests; but were they as true as they are false, yet such is the temper of the people, they would not hear, consider, and amend, whoever contested with them. Let them alone therefore to perish with obstinate sinners.

f See Jer. 6. 4, 5. & 15. 8.

5 Therefore shalt thou fall [f]in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will †destroy thy mother.

† Heb. *cut off.*

Therefore, because thy sins are so many and so great, and thou art incorrigible in them, *shalt thou fall;* the prophet turns his speech to the people, thou, O Israel; he speaks to them as to one person, they were all of one piece in sin, and should be so one in punishment. *Fall;* stumble, and fall, and be broken. *In the day;* or this day, i. e. very suddenly, your fall shall be presently effected by your enemies' power, vigilance, and successes; it shall be no longer delayed. *The prophet;* who spake smooth things, who prophesied lies; the false prophets of Baal and the groves, Jer. xiv. 13—16; xxiii. 15. *Shall fall;* be in as sad calamitous condition as any. *With thee;* either the prophet that is with thee, that lived with and prophesied to this people; or, as we read it, when the people are ruined and captivated, with them the false prophet shall be likewise ruined and captivated. *In the night;* either proverbially taken, people and prophet shall continually fall; or allusively, both shall fall as a man that falls in the night. Or else, the prophet shall fall in the darkest calamities, he shall be covered with thickest clouds, who falsely foretold and promised light unto such people. *And I,* the Lord, against whom thou hast sinned, *will destroy,* cut off, or make to cease or be silent for ever: see chap. i. 4. *Thy mother;* both the state, or kingdom, and the synagogues, or mock churches: the public is as a mother to private persons: so all shall be destroyed; which also came to pass before the prophet Hosea died, he lived to see his threats fulfilled.

g Is. 5. 13. † Heb. *cut off.*

6 ¶ [g]My people are †destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

My people: the divorce was not yet issued out, the ten tribes yet were in some sense *Ammi. Are destroyed;* not only in the prophetic style, are, because ere long they shall most certainly be destroyed, but in the course of the history it is plain in matter of fact; many of them were cut off by Pul king of Assyria, 2 Kings xv., and many were destroyed by the bloody and cruel tyranny of Menahem, and more were ruined in their estates by exactions and impositions. The civil wars, the seditions, the usurpations of some and the deposing of others, were things the prophet Hosea lived to see, and I believe speaks of here as things that had already destroyed many. *For lack of knowledge* of God, his law, his menaces, his providences, and government of the world. Had they known his holy nature, his jealousy for his own glory, his hatred of sin and his power to punish it, had they known their God, they would either have forborne to sin, or repented of what sins they had committed, and so prevented his wrath. *Because thou:* the prophet now turns his words from the people to the priests among them. The people's ignorance was much from the ignorance and profane humour of their priests, and this the prophet doth tacitly charge on the priests, to whom he speaks as to one particular person: *Thou,* who callest thyself, art accounted by the people, and goest under the name of a priest. *Hast rejected knowledge:* strange perverseness! they who should direct others, who should be teachers, are and will be ignorant, will not know, reject knowledge; detestest to know, as the Chaldee paraphrase. *I will also reject thee;* with equal dislike I will reject thee, I will destroy your church constitution, and with that I will destroy your priesthood; and I will do this with detestation and abhorrence too. *Thou hast forgotten the law of thy God:* O Israel, and you, O priests, you have all sinned together, slighted and disrespected the law, broken all the precepts of it, set up other gods, other worship, other priests than the law directs. *I will also forget;* I will pay thee in thy own coin, I will forget, i. e. slight and disregard. *Thy children;* the people of Israel, the whole kingdom of the ten tribes; both those pretended priests and their ghostly children with them.

7 [h]As they were increased, so they sinned against me: [i]*therefore* will I change their glory into shame.

h ch. 13. 6. i 1 Sam. 2. 30. Mal. 2. 9. Phil. 3. 19.

As they; kings, priests, and people of that age, that is, Jeroboam the Second, great-grandson of Jehu, who raised the kingdom to its highest pitch and glory. *Were increased;* both multiplied for number, and grew great in riches, power, and honour. Such temper were they of, Isa. i. 2. *So they sinned against me:* sin grew with their wealth and honour; God who raised them was by them provoked the more, they turned his bounty into sin: too usual a return from sinners to God. *I will change,* turn by a just retaliation, *their glory into shame:* they turned their glory, all that in which they might glory above others, into sin; I will turn it into shame; that shall be their dishonour which, had it been well used, might have been their honour. I will degrade their priests, impoverish the people, captivate both.

8 They eat up the sin of my people, and they †set their heart on their iniquity.

† Heb. *lift up their soul to their iniquity.*

They, the priests who minister to the idols, *eat up the sin of my people;* live upon with delight, maintain themselves and theirs; either by conniving at their sins, not reproving as they deserve, lest thereby they should disoblige persons, and lessen their bounty to them; or leave them to sin first, and next look for sacrifices for those sins, like some that make gain by the sins of people with whom they dispense. Or more plainly, by *sin* is meant sin-offering, in which the priest had his share. *My people:* see ver. 6. *And they;* covetous, luxurious, idolatrous priests, the priests of Baal and the calves, *set their heart on their iniquity;* watch to, and earnestly desire, hope, and expect the people will sin, and bring offerings for sin, which is the iniquity as well as gain of these priests.

9 And there shall be, [k]like people, like priest: and I will †punish them for their ways, and †reward them their doings.

k Is. 24. 2. Jer. 5. 31. † Heb. *visit upon.* † Heb. *cause to return.*

The sum of these words is this, that God will certainly punish; for the sins both of priests and people are such that God will no further forbear either; and when he comes to punish, he will do it according to the ways and doings of both; where sins have been equal, punishment shall be equal too, both priest and people shall be led into captivity, and there used without any differencing respect of one or other.

10 For [l]they shall eat, and not have enough: they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase: because they have left off to take heed to the LORD.

l Lev. 26. 26 Mic. 6. 14. Hag. 1. 6.

For, or *And,* Heb. This is another part of their punishment, and it is better rendered as a particular part of their curse, than as a cause of that which was spoken in the former verse. *They shall eat, and not have enough:* in ver. 8 they are said to eat up the sin of that people, i. e. by sinful courses they project for their livelihood; now comes

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the curse God will punish this sin with. He will withhold his blessing, they shall not be nourished, not satisfied, with what they eat. See Hag. i. 6. *They shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase;* though they multiply wives to relieve them under the curse of barrenness and want of children, or by fornication seek to multiply their offspring, though they do this which they ought not to do, they shall not hereby increase the number of their children; either the women shall not bear, or the children not live. *Because they have left off to take heed to the Lord;* they have apostatized and turned from the true God, from his worship and law.

m Is. 28. 7. See Eccles. 7. 7.

11 Whoredom and wine and new wine [m]take away the heart.

Whoredom; unlawful converse with wanton women, the forbidden pleasures of an adulterous bed. *And wine and new wine;* excess of drinking, and indeed all immoderate pleasures; one kind being put for all. *Take away the heart;* besot men, and deprive them of the right use of their understanding and judgment. By these courses both priests and people here have disabled themselves to discern aright between good and bad, between safe and dangerous.

n Jer. 2. 27. Hab. 2. 19. o Is. 44. 20. ch. 5. 4.

12 ¶ My people ask counsel at their [n]stocks, and their staff declareth unto them: for [o]the spirit of whoredoms hath caused *them* to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God.

My people; whom I chose, brought out of Egypt, and settled in this land, who are not yet cast off, though they deserve it, who call themselves my people. *Ask counsel;* inquire about future things, and what shall befall them. I threaten from heaven, they believe not me, but flatter themselves it will be better than my prophets say it will, and they inquire of their idolatrous priests concerning their fate. *At their stocks;* wooden statues or idols with which their priests consult, and make them give answer suiting to the hope of these people. *Their staff declareth unto them:* this was another kind of forbidden consulting with the devil; an art much in use in those times and places. You read of this Ezek. xxi. 21. These were parts of their sottish idolatry. So they thought, they believed what their false prophets reported from the staff or stock. Unparalleled folly! not to believe God speaking from heaven, but at the same time believe a stock or staff, that knows not in whose hand it is, or what use it is put to. *The spirit of whoredoms;* a heart addicted to and insnared with whoredoms, spiritual and corporal. *Hath caused them to err;* hath blinded, misled, and deceived them. So Isa. xl. 20; xliv. 14, 18. *And they have gone a whoring from under their God;* so they have left their God, refusing to be under his guidance, endeavouring to evade his corrections, and to fortify themselves, rebel-like, against his armies raised to chastise them, trusting herein to idols.

p Is. 1. 29. & 57. 5, 7. Ezek. 6. 13. & 20. 28.

13 [p]They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof *is* good: [q]therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.

q Amos 7. 17. Rom. 1. 28.

They, both priests and people, *sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains;* where their altars were sometimes to God, sometimes to idols: these were the high places, chosen out by themselves, and where their sacrifices offered to God were esteemed little else than idolatry. Isa. lvii. 7. *Burn incense upon the hills;* another piece of idolatry they practised, which as it usually was joined to their sacrifices, so is it here added by the prophet. This idolatry abounded in Israel, where without control it had been in use ever since their revolt, if not before: a wood so deep-rooted, that the best kings of Judah could not quite extirpate it. *Under oaks;* some say pines, or the alder. *Poplars;* the white poplar. *Elms;* or lime-tree, or the tree whose boughs stretched out together cast a pleasant shadow. Under all these it is certain the ancient heathen did perform their idolatrous services; so did this people choose all these great trees which, having many and great boughs, do afford the darkest and coolest recesses, Ezek. xx. 28. *Because the shadow thereof is good;* convenient for the sacrificers, while the smoke and smell of the sacrifice went up through the boughs, and the coolness of the shady place kept their persons from sultry heat; it may be they thought (as the heathen did) that the *numen,* deity, delighted to dwell or be often in such places. *Therefore;* for these sins of yours, though you account them no sins, for your harmonizing with heathenish superstitions, for your leaving my temple, and, against my commands, sacrificing where best liketh you. *Your daughters shall commit whoredom;* shall dishonour themselves and their families by their lewdness and unlawful converse with fornicators. The sin of the fathers is thus punished, that they might see God's just hand punishing, and the sin punished. Here is spiritual whoredom punished with giving up daughters to their wandering lusts. *Your spouses shall commit adultery;* or, *spouses of your sons,* as the French version; a great unhappiness to any family, to be disparaged and wronged by adulteresses, and a grievous punishment, where or whensoever executed; and this is here foretold it will be so, not countenanced.

‖ Or, *Shall I not, &c.*

14 ‖ I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery: for themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots: therefore the people *that* [r]doth not understand shall ‖fall.

r ver. 1, 6. ‖ Or, *be punished.*

I will not punish, or visit upon, *your daughters;* God will not any more lay on them such restraints, as remarkable punishments are usually to all that observe them. They are threatened thus to be thrown up to their own hearts' and others' lusts. You have rejected my law which directed the correction and punishment of such sins, and do you think I will by extraordinary courses restrain, where you cast off the ordinary? You shall have no bitter water of jealousy to discover, convict, and torment an adulterous wife, as Judah hath, Numb. v. 12, &c., nor will I by unusual strokes of my hand smite them. This impunity will increase your grief and shame, and so you shall be punished. *Themselves,* the husbands and fathers, are examples to wives and daughters; those are *separated* with the lewd women, which either they took to them upon putting away their lawful wife, which these men did to satisfy their lusts; or else *separated,* i. e. withdrawn from the company of their fellow idolaters, that in privacy they might commit whoredom with the women they choose to themselves for that end. *They sacrifice with harlots;* perform the rites of sacrifices, both in offering first and in feasting next, in which feasts wine and women would prove great and prevalent temptations to whoredom among those men. *Therefore the people that doth not understand:* by all this it is evident this people is a sottish, ignorant people, that know not God, as ver. 1, 6, 11. *Shall fall;* be utterly ruined, broken into pieces, and scattered; broken at home first by intestine wars, next by foreign invasions, and carried away at last by conquering enemies.

s ch. 9. 15. & 12. 11. Amos 4. 4. & 5. 5. t 1 Kin. 12. 29. ch. 10. 5. u Amos 8. 14. Zeph. 1. 5.

15 ¶ Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, *yet* let not Judah offend; [s]and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to [t]Beth-aven, [u]nor swear, The LORD liveth.

This summeth up the sins, the idolatries of the ten tribes, and is a transition to what next follows; either by way of exhortation, or admonition, or prayer and wish, for the two tribes which stuck to the house of David, as to the temple. *Let not Judah offend;* commit like sins as Israel hath done, imitate none of their idolatry: possibly the prophet saw Judah inclined to backslide, or this might be preached in the beginning of Ahaz's reign. *Come not ye,* you of Judah, who have the temple and house of God with you, who have hitherto been preserved from Israelitish idolatry, *unto Gilgal;* a place near Jordan, where the twelve stones were pitched, Josh. iv. 9, the camp was pitched, circumcision revived, the passover kept, Josh. v. 2, 10; there Joshua divided the land, Josh. xiv. 6, there the tabernacle was at first pitched after they came over Jordan, and there they sacrificed. There was in Ahab's time a college of prophets;

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and now, whether out of reverence to the place on these accounts, or for what other reasons, it matters not, but certain it is, this Gilgal was chosen out by Jeroboam, or by succeeding idolaters, for a place of public worship of their idols, and grew famous for it. Go not up to partake of their idolatry, or to learn it. It is a concise speech, which forbids all the sins committed at Gilgal. *Neither go ye up to Beth-aven;* which is Beth-el, where Jacob lodged, had a vision of angels, and a more comfortable vision of God, who appeared to Jacob, who for this gave name to the place, and called it Beth-el, house of God; but when Jeroboam made it the place of his calf worship, it became, and is called, Beth-aven, house of vanity or iniquity. Go not thither to worship. It is as the former, a prohibition of being of that religion which was in use at Beth-aven, and had been the established religion for two hundred years, or thereabouts, viz. ever since Jeroboam's time. *Nor swear, The Lord liveth:* this is in itself a lawful oath, and may be used; but in the circumstances wherewith it is here attended it is forbidden, because many who went thither yet pretended there to sacrifice only to the true God, that they owned him the only living God, reverenced him, swore by him; though they went up to Beth-aven or Gilgal, yet they worshipped God there. This is a synecdoche, a part being put for the whole worship of God, which the prophet warns them not to blend and mix with idolatries, which yet was done before Josiah's time, Zeph. i. 5, which see, with the annotations on it.

x Jer. 3. 6. & 7. 24. & 8. 5. Zech. 7. 11.

16 For Israel [x]slideth back as a backsliding heifer: now the LORD will feed them as a lamb in a large place.

There is just cause why Judah should not imitate Israel, and this cause is here assigned. *Israel;* the ten tribes. *As a backsliding heifer*, grown lusty, fed and wanton, will neither endure the yoke to work, nor be confined in her allowed pastures, breaks over all bounds, casts off all service, so is Israel, as ver. 7, which see. *Now;* ere long, or suddenly; so chap. ii. 10. *The Lord*, offended by their sins, and provoked to displeasure, *will feed them as a lamb in a large place;* in their sinning they were like an untamed heifer, boundless, strong, and stood upon their defence, but in their punishments they shall be like a lamb, solitary, full of fears, in a large place or wilderness, where is no rest, safety, or provision: such shall be the condition of the ten captivated tribes. This is a proverbial speech, setting forth the forlorn state which Israel ere long should fall under.

y Matt. 15. 14.

17 Ephraim *is* joined to idols: [y]let him alone.

The children of Ephraim were numerous and potent among the ten tribes, a principal part of them, and out of which tribe the first idolater and usurper did arise, 1 Kings xi. 26; and therefore the whole body of the ten tribes, and the rulers among them, are here particularly pointed at. *Is joined to idols;* associated as friends to friends, or joined as lovers are joined to lovers; married to idols, and will not be taken off. *Let him alone;* he is indeed obstinately bent on his old courses, and as such throw him up; he will not return; let him wander, but let it be alone, O Judah, be not his companion, his friend, go not with him.

† Heb. *is gone.* z Mic. 3. 11. & 7. 3. † Heb. *shields.* Ps. 74. 9.

18 Their drink †is sour: they have committed whoredom continually: [z]her †rulers *with* shame do love, Give ye.

Though in their idol feasts they drink wine and strong drinks, yet this is either sour and unpleasant, or corrupt and hurtful, there is no good savour in it; therefore, O Judah, decline thou the intimate familiarity, and have nothing to do with the idolatries, of Israel. *They have committed whoredom*, both spiritual and corporal, *continually*, without ceasing from Jeroboam's time to this day, two hundred years, one king after another, and one idolater after another; not one but either was an idolatrous worshipper of Baal or the calves, &c. *Her rulers with shame do love, Give ye;* beside all this, there is shameful oppression and bribery among them; and what good then, O Judah, canst thou look for from society and friendship with them?

a Jer. 4. 11, 12. & 51. 1 b Is. 1. 29. Jer. 2. 26.

19 [a]The wind hath bound her up in her wings, and [b]they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

The whirlwind of wrath from God hath already seized this old adulteress, and carried some of her children away already, 2 Kings xv. 19, 29. Execution of judgment is already begun, and therefore, O Judah, keep distance from Ephraim. *They shall be ashamed;* greatly confounded and disappointed of their hopes: as thou, O Judah, wouldst prevent this shame, flee the society of these idolaters. *Because of their sacrifices;* what they made their confidence shall be their shame, their own idols cannot help them, but their idolatry shall surely undo them. Their idols which they worshipped and depended on shall be their shame and confusion, for thy God, O Judah, hath cursed such people. *Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols*, Psal. xcvii. 7. If Israel do, yet, O Judah, do not thou so.

CHAP. V.

God's judgments against the priests, the people, and the princes of Israel, for their manifold sins, 1—14, until they repent, 15.

HEAR ye this, O priests; and hearken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O house of the king; for judgment *is* toward you, because [a]ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor. a ch. 6. 9.

Hear ye this, O priests: proclamation is made, and the criminals are cited to appear, and attend their charge; amongst which the priests are first summoned: not of the tribe of Levi, not God's priests, but Baal's priests, priests of the high places; such they called themselves, so accounted by the people, and priests they were as good as their constitution by Jeroboam son of Nebat could make them. *Hearken, ye house of Israel;* all the people of Israel, hearken and consider duly. *Give ye ear, O house of the king;* all you of Menahem's court, and all you that are of the royal family. It is very probable, if not plainly certain, that Menahem was king at this time over Israel, and that Hosea points him out with his whole family. *For judgment is toward you;* for to you it appertained to execute judgment, and do right, so some; but the most read it, as we do, *judgment is toward*, i. e. against you; you have sinned, and God will punish. God's controversy, chap. iv. 1, is with you all, but first with priests who neglected to instruct the people, next with the body of the people, and lastly with the king, court, and his family. *Ye have been a snare;* you, O priests and princes, nobles and judges, have insnared the people by your examples and practices, which have been idolatrous, and the people have imitated you: it may possibly refer to that the Jews say was done, spies set to watch who went to Jerusalem to worship, and to inform, that they might be punished: or else thus, By commending the calves, and palliating the idolatry committed in worshipping them, by persuading the people they might as well worship there as at Jerusalem, you have been a snare unto them, and drawn them into idolatry. *On Mizpah;* either taken comparatively, as fowlers and hunters have taken many birds and beasts, by gins and snares, on Mizpah, so you have insnared many souls in idolatry; or, by idolatries acted at Mizpah you have insnared many: so at Mizpah there was a high place, and idolatrous worship performed there; whether at Mizpah in Judah, which is not very likely, or Mizpah part of Libanus, which is the more likely, I determine not. *And a net spread upon Tabor;* a very famous mount for its exact roundness, and the height thereof, and as famous for the pleasantness thereof, which easily persuades me to think this hill must needs have some high place on it, and that where high places were so much in fashion, Tabor could not be omitted. Here, as in Mizpah, idolatry caught men as birds or wild beasts are taken in a net: or briefly thus. The priests and secular power did make religion and the civil government a snare for men, both so managed the laws of each as to entrap all they could; as if men were fowls and beasts, and governors civil and ecclesiastical hunters and fowlers, and their laws nets and gins set to catch men, and make a prey of them. Thus it was in Israel at that day.

2 And the revolters are [b]profound to b Is. 29. 15.

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‖ Or, *and &c.* † Heb. *a correction.*

make slaughter, ‖ though I *have been* † a rebuker of them all.

The revolters; all those that have cast off the law of God, both in matters of religion and civil government. *Are profound;* dig deep to hide their counsels, or have taken deep root since their apostacy from God, and revolt from the house of David. *To make slaughter:* all their religion is but a butchering of cattle, no sacrifice to God; or, which is worse, a murdering of men. *Though I,* Hosea, *have been a rebuker;* a preacher, who in the name and word of God have sharply inveighed against their brutish religion and their bloody slaughters. *Of them all:* none that have been guilty have escaped the reproof; I have declaimed against idolatrous priests and bloody usurpers, such as were in those times, Shallum, Menahem, and Pekah.

c Amos 3. 2. d Ezek. 23. 5, &c. ch. 4. 17.

3 [c]I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me: for now, O Ephraim, [d]thou committest whoredom, *and* Israel is defiled.

These revolters neither are nor can be so deep as to conceal themselves, their designs, contrivances, and practices, from me; I thoroughly *know Ephraim.* The revolters are also called *Israel* in this verse, who *is not hid from me.* It is an elegant repetition of the same thing in different words. *Thou committest whoredom;* all thy fair pretences thou canst put upon thy devised religion cannot better it, still it is downright idolatry or spiritual whoredom. *And Israel is defiled:* Israel here is Ephraim; and when Israel is said to be polluted, it is to be understood both of spiritual and corporal pollution, which mostly are linked together, and draw on each other.

† Heb. *They will not give.* ‖ Or, *Their doings will not suffer them.* e ch. 4. 12.

4 †‖ They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God: for [e]the spirit of whoredoms *is* in the midst of them, and they have not known the LORD.

They, those revolters, polluted Israelites and idolatrous Ephraimites, *will not frame their doings;* they are so intent upon their idolatries and oppressions, they have been so long inured to these doings, that now they are become slaves to their own doings, insomuch that they neither have will or power to change them, as Jer. xiii. 23. *To turn unto their God;* to repent of those wicked courses, and to leave them, and so return to their God, who was once theirs by covenant, though now they have violated the covenant, and departed from God. They are in sin hardened to a hopeless and remediless obstinacy and impenitence. *The spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them:* see chap. iv. 12. Their mind and inclination stands bent and fixed upon spiritual whoredoms, and they are incited to it by the seducing spirit, allured by examples, and all these hurry them on. It is a universal distemper among them, all filled with this spirit, it hath seized the heart of them. *They have not known;* they never did rightly know, nor would they ever know, they forgot, were wilfully ignorant of, the way of holiness and pure religion, contained in the law of God. *The Lord,* who is pure, zealous for his glory, sovereign in his authority, rich in his rewards, severe in his punishments, and true to his promises and threats: that nothing can be more prejudicial to a people than to forsake, nor any thing more conducive to the good of a people than to keep, his law.

f ch. 7. 10.

5 And [f]the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them.

The pride of Israel: it might have been rendered, the excellency or glory of Israel; and so, referred to God, it would be a prediction that God himself would witness against Israel. God is said to swear *by the excellency of Jacob,* Amos viii. 7, i. e. by himself. Thus interpreted, it would very well accord with what follows in this and the following verse. But as it is here rendered, it is the haughtiness, carnal confidence of Israel, grown great under the long and prosperous reign of Jeroboam the Second, that they thought it impossible such calamities as foretold by the prophet should overtake them, or that God should think so ill of that worship they thought so well of; they neither confess their sins, nor fear God's judgments. *Doth testify;* is so full and evident witness against Israel, that no other testimony need be produced. *To his face;* to convince and silence the most impudent and shameless among them. *Therefore shall Israel and Ephraim,* the nine tribes, and the head of them, Ephraim, *fall in their iniquity;* be ruined for their sins of which they are guilty, but repent not. *Judah,* the two tribes under Ahaz, now lapsed to idolatry, *also shall fall with them;* be captivated too ere long, soon after sin will undo them.

g Prov. 1. 28. Is. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11. Ezek. 8. 18. Mic. 3. 4. John 7. 34.

6 [g]They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LORD; but they shall not find *him;* he hath withdrawn himself from them.

They; the people of Judah, say some, but I rather think it is spoken of the Ephraimites, and either implies by what they did support their confidence of escaping ruin, or else foretells that extremity of sufferings should force them at last to offer sacrifices to God; and the Jewish doctors tell us, that under Hoshea's reign Israel had liberty of bringing their offerings and sacrifices to Jerusalem: whether this were so or not, it is certain they did not seek him in right manner, it was with their flocks and herds, but not with their hearts, not with sound repentance. *But they shall not find him;* whilst he might have been found they would not seek him, now as a punishment, and to leave them remediless, God will not be found of them; he will not either accept a sacrifice, or pardon their sin, or return to save them. *He hath withdrawn himself from them;* in displeasure hath withdrawn his favourable presence from them, and with resolution to leave them to the violences of the Assyrian powers.

h Is. 48. 8. Jer. 3. 20. & 5. 11. ch. 6. 7. Mal. 2. 11. i Zech. 11. 8.

7 They have [h]dealt treacherously against the LORD: for they have begotten strange children: now shall [i]a month devour them with their portions.

They, the whole house of Israel, priests, people, and princes, and their kings with them, *have dealt treacherously;* have falsified their word and promise of fidelity and constancy, of love and affection, when they entered covenant with me; have turned idolaters, and worshipped and relied on false gods. *They have begotten strange children;* as if it were not enough that they were idolaters, they have trained up their children in the same idolatry, partly by their instruction, and more by their examples. *Now,* or therefore, or ere long, as chap. ii. 10. *A month;* either the new moon, one particular species of ceremonial, superstitious worship put for all the rest, as some interpret, or rather, a time not long (as an age); not as to the old world, nor as to Nineveh, forty days, but a shorter time: possibly it may refer to Shallum's short time of usurpation, which lasted but a month; a month shall devour them, the Assyrians shall make a speedy conquest over you. *With their portions;* not only persons, but their goods and chattels, are exposed to speediest spoiling; and as a token of such future speedy desolation, the prophet points out a short reign of one of the usurpers, and foretells the precise time of his continuance, that when they shall see this come to pass, they might believe the rest foretold by the prophet should also come to pass. Nor is this conjecture without some ground, since we know that Shallum slew Zachariah before the people, 2 Kings xv. 10, implying the people's concurrence herein, and their accepting of Shallum with expectation of peace and prosperity, to the increase of their portion under his government, all which was blasted at the month's end.

k ch. 8. 1. Joel 2. 1. l Is. 10. 30. m Josh. 7. 2. ch. 4. 15. n Judg. 5. 14.

8 [k]Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, *and* the trumpet in Ramah: [l]cry aloud *at* [m]Beth-aven, [n]after thee, O Benjamin.

Blow ye the cornet; ye watchmen, or whoever have the care and custody of these fortified towns, sound the alarm, for the enemy cometh. *In Gibeah;* a town of Benjamin situate on a hill, built by Asa, 1 Kings xv. 22; made by him a frontier, and likely always garrisoned against the incursion of the ten tribes. *And the trumpet;* add to the sound of the cornet the trumpet also, which is proper for war, and will be best understood by the people; lest they mistake the meaning of the cornet, which is, say some, a

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pastoral instrument, proper for shepherds, sound the trumpet. *In Ramah;* of which there were three, one in Naphtali, and Rama-sophim, and this of Benjamin near Gibeah, and was an inlet into Judah, of great importance, as appears 1 Kings xv. 17, 21; a town of strength, built on a high hill, and fit to be as a watchtower. Be you upon your guard when the invader is so near. *Cry aloud at Beth-aven;* as more concerned, cry out with more vehemency, awaken all to prepare for defence; or, howl and lament for the things that are come upon thee, O Beth-aven. The Assyrians' march will alarm thy neighbours, but their success against thee will ruin thee utterly, let thine inhabitants therefore cry and howl. If that Beth-aven situate in the wilderness, this passage foretells the destruction of it by the Assyrians, probably in the beginning of their invasion; if it were Beth-el, it was the chief seat of idolatry, and first or chief in miseries. *After thee, O Benjamin: thee* referred to Beth-aven speaks thus: after thy cries, when thou hast howled, let Benjamin and Judah too begin theirs, for they shall also fall for their sin.

9 Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke: among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be.

Ephraim; the whole kingdom of the ten tribes, all sorts and ranks of men among them. *Shall be desolate;* a desolation, i. e. most desolate, utterly cut off. *In the day of rebuke;* when Shalmaneser shall come up with his forces, besiege, sack, and captivate all thy cities, and Samaria with the rest; when by these Assyrians I shall rebuke, i. e. punish. *Among the tribes of Israel,* to the house of Israel openly, so that all might be informed, *have I made known;* by my prophets I have foretold what should be, and by some judgments already executed I have further made known to them; they are sufficiently warned, and should have considered in time, and prevented their own calamities. *That which shall surely be;* what is irrevocably determined and ratified, and they shall never evade, nor ever overcome.

10 The princes of Judah were like [o] them that [o]remove the bound: *therefore* I will pour out my wrath upon them like water.

o Deut. 19. 14. & 27. 17.

The princes; the great men about the king and court, the rulers and governors, who by the law of God and man should have been the maintainers of equity and justice among the people. *Of Judah;* of the kingdom of Judah, or the two tribes. *Were;* have been, and now are in the days of Ahaz, for to this man's time the prophet now pointeth. *Like them that remove the bound;* the ancient bounds which limited every one, prevented controversies and oppressions of encroaching, covetous men. The prophet, I doubt not, aims at reproving the sin of these great ones in changing the laws of religion, as well as altering the bounds of civil rights, whether by encroaching upon foreigners, and enlarging the kingdom of Judah by entrenching on the neighbouring kingdoms, or, which is more certain, by injustice and violence seizing what was another's. *Therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them:* this was sin and forbidden, Deut. xix. 14; this practice is cursed, Deut. xxvii. 17, and God now will punish it. *Like water;* like an overflowing flood.

p Deut. 28. 33. q 1 Kings 12. 28 Mic. 6. 16.

11 Ephraim *is* [p]oppressed *and* broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after [q]the commandment.

Ephraim; the subjects of the kingdom of Israel, the ten tribes; the prophet resumeth his threat against them. *Is oppressed;* supposing, as well we may, that this prophecy respecteth Ahaz's time, it will appear that the reigns of Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah were past, which were unjust, seditious, bloody, and tyrannical times, in which oppressions abounded, and of which our prophet now speaketh. The ten tribes are by sedition, civil wars, and bloody conspiracies eaten up already almost. But to those God will add his displeasure, and the Assyrians shall be the executioners, and shall oppress Ephraim. *Broken in judgment,* i. e. through fear of the partiality of the judge; though his cause be equal and just, yet money, or money's worth, is extorted, to prevent an unjust, or to procure a just sentence; a known course in such days as those the prophet lived in, or as the days of Marius and Sylla. *Because he,* Ephraim, spoken of as if one person, perhaps to intimate the universal defection, *willingly walked;* it was not forced upon them, they did it willingly. Though there was a law commanding, yet there was in the people a forwardness, and too great a readiness, to comply and obey that law which made idolatry the establishment in the ten tribes. *After the commandment;* to forbear going to the temple, and to worship the calves at Dan and Beth-el, as Jeroboam son of Nebat required.

12 Therefore *will* I *be* unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah [r]as ‖rottenness.

r Prov. 12. 4. ‖ Or, a worm.

Therefore, or *And,* Heb. *I will be;* I am; it is concise in the Hebrew, and might be thus expressed, But, or And, as for me, I am, and will be, to the ten tribes. *As a moth:* moths do leisurely eat up and mar our clothes; so God was then, and had been from Jeroboam's death to this day, weakening the ten tribes; their seditions did eat them up. *And to the house of Judah;* the two tribes, who now with Ahaz did, as Ephraim, cast God off. *As rottenness;* shall secretly consume and rot as wood doth by worms; so God will punish both Israel and Judah, these shall be forerunners and preparatories to the final desolation of both; of the one by Assyria, and of the other by Babylon.

13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah *saw* his [s]wound, then went Ephraim [t]to the Assyrian, [u]and sent ‖to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.

s Jer. 30. 12. t 2 Kings 15. 19. ch. 7. 11. & 12. 1. u ch. 10. 6. ‖ Or, *to the king of Jareb:* or, *to the king that should plead.*

When, Heb. *And,* after that. *Ephraim;* the king, and council, and kingdom of the ten tribes; Menahem is surely meant: see 2 Kings xv. *Saw his sickness;* weakness, like a consumption, threatening death. Though Menahem had killed Shallum, and got into the throne, yet he found himself unable to hold it against the opposite faction, and therefore sent for assistance from Assyria, 2 Kings xv. 19, or at least purchased the friendship of Pul, who was come out as an enemy. *Judah,* the other kingdom of the two tribes, *saw his wound;* a deep and festering wound; or a corrupting imposthume, which needs be opened, cleansed, and bound up: such was the state of the two tribes at that day, ulcerous and full of danger, for Ahaz had done very wickedly, and wounded the kingdom. *Then went,* made application, *Ephraim to the Assyrian;* particularly to Pul, as 2 Kings xv. 19, 20. Not one word of their going to God, he was not in all their thoughts: he did afflict leisurely that they might seek him, but they forgot him still. *And sent* ambassadors and presents to entreat and procure his help, *to king Jareb:* whilst interpreters agree not who this Jareb was, while some will have it be a proper, others an appellative name, of a person or place, I think it will be a surer course to compare times, who was king of Assyria when Ephraim was sick, and Judah was wounded, and both felt it, for whoever this will prove to be, he it is that is meant by Jareb: Pul in Menahem's time, Tiglath-pileser in Ahaz's time. Or what if Jareb be the sum of what Ephraim and Judah desired of this Assyrian king; they complained of wrong received, and sent to this foreign king their complaint, and requested that he would judge, or, in our modern terms, be arbitrator; so the word will bear. *Yet could he not heal you;* Ephraim's sickness grew worse by it, Israel was sicker for it. *Nor cure you,* Judah, Ahaz, and his wounded state, *of your wound;* the Assyrian king was either unable or unwilling to heal the wound, which he knew would as much profit him as hurt his patient.

14 For [x]I *will be* unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: [y]I, *even* I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue *him.*

x Lam. 3. 10. ch. 13. 7, 8. y Ps. 50. 22.

For I, the Lord, whose power is infinite, whose wrath they have enkindled, who hath threatened to extirpate them, *will be unto Ephraim as a lion;* a panther, say some, a very swift beast, wherein he excels the lion, and a very

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fierce and ravenous creature, wherein he equals the lion; or a lioness, say others: but to leave that, God will make the Assyrian a chirurgeon, such as a fierce, ravenous lion would be to a wounded man. *As a young lion to the house of Judah;* which is grown up to his strength for mischief, and retains his inclination to gamesomeness, or to play with his prey; so should Judah find himself when caught by this lion, first made a sport to please the tyrannous humour, and after made a feast to feed his ravenous hunger. *I, even I, will tear:* the threat is doubled to ascertain it and make it more dreadful. Divine vengeance by the Assyrians shall be as a lion tearing his prey. *And go away:* when satisfied, the lion goes away, fleeth not for fear. *I will take away:* he leaveth not any behind him, carrieth away what he did not eat; so should Assyria devour the land, and carry away the people. *None shall rescue him:* none have courage to attempt or power to effect a rescue, the prey must hopelessly perish; so it will be with Ephraim and Judah, when God appears as a lion against them.

† Heb. *till they be guilty.*
x Lev. 26. 40, 41. Jer. 29. 12, 13. Ezek. 6. 9. & 20. 43. & 36. 31.
a Ps. 78. 34.

15 ¶ I will go *and* return to my place, †till [x]they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: [a]in their affliction they will seek me early.

I will go and return to my place: after the manner of man God speaks, he will do that which shall be like a man's going away from such as refuse though they need his help, he retires; God will withdraw his saving help. *Till they acknowledge their offence;* till they confess and humble themselves for their sins. *And seek my face;* me their God, my mercy, and my law; their Sovereign as well as Saviour. *In their affliction they will seek me early;* in deep distresses they will, at least some will, seek me diligently, as indeed they did at the end of Judah's seventy years' captivity.

CHAP. VI.

An exhortation to repentance, 1—3. *A complaint against Israel and Judah for persisting still in their wickedness,* 4—11.

cir. 780.
a Deut. 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Job 5. 18. ch. 5. 14.
b Jer. 30. 17.

COME, and let us return unto the LORD: for [a]he hath torn, and [b]he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.

The former chapter ended with a declaration of God's resolution to bring his own chosen ones, true Israelites, by deep distresses to repentance, and to seek him whom they had forsaken; this chapter begins with a declaration of the success of this project. The prophet therefore brings them in exhorting and calling upon one another, and encouraging each other; the phrase you have Isa. ii. 3; Micah iv. 2, &c. *Let us return unto the Lord;* let us be wiser at last, idols have not profited us, they have been our sin, and our fall; we forsook the fountain of living water when we did forsake the Lord. Let us now, with repenting hearts, leave idols, and return to the Lord; let us cast them off, and betake ourselves to the worship, obedience, love, and fear of the Lord, the only true and eternal God. *For he hath torn;* we now see his hand in all we suffer, and as it is his we own it very just: we, like froward rebels, sought our help from his enemies, and he, as he threatened, hath met us, like a lion, and hath torn us: his voice in the judgment, like the roaring of a lion, hath awakened us; and our bleeding wounds have told us, that God hath done all this against us, and all this because we were departed from him. *And he will heal us;* for, beside his mercy inclining him, we know it was his design by this course to recover us to himself; and we are assured he hath withdrawn his hand, left us in perplexities, but till we would seek, till we would be willing to be healed: he will be our Physician, and by his lenitives will ease and cure us, now his severer course hath abated our phrensy. The Assyrian king could not, but Israel's God and King can and will heal. *He hath smitten;* the same thing in a different simile, God hath wounded. *And he will bind us up,* as a skilful and tender chirurgeon binds up with plasters, and swathes to heal.

c 1 Cor. 15. 4.

2 [c]After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

In this verse it is most certain we are to regard both the literal and historical sense, and distinguish it from the mystical and accommodated sense; in this latter, these words foretell the death, and resurrection, and future glory of Christ and Christians, as 1 Cor. xv. 4, and so are generally interpreted and applied by expositors. As to the letter, his history, it is in brief thus: *After two days;* after some short time of sufferings for our sins, or rather when our sufferings have brought us to repentance and return to God, our God will soon after show us his grace and favour, and revive our dead state. It is not needful we inquire how long time this two days intends, it is a certain time for an uncertain, two days for a short time. God doth not delay long when we return to him, Jer. xxxi. 18, 19, with 20; and Hos. xiv. 3, with 4. *He will revive us:* though we were as dead men, buried in our miseries, and neither deserved from God, nor could hope from any other hand, a resurrection, and recovery to a better state; yet our merciful God will quicken us again. Ezra ix. 8, 9, expresseth their return out of captivity in those words that might well paraphrase our prophet. *In the third day he will raise us up:* mercy recovers by degrees, and therefore a third day is added, in which this people shall be raised up, increased, established, and confirmed. Possibly the prophet may allude to the third day, which is said to be a critical day to the wounded, who conceive hopes when better on that day; or possibly it may refer to the third decree by Darius made to Nehemiah for building Jerusalem, and the two days may refer to the times of Cyrus reviving the Jews, first, by his decree of liberty, and command to build the temple. The second day or time that of Darius Hystaspes to Zerubbabel and Joshua, for building the temple, in which work his bounty revived the hopes of the Jews; however poor and unable, yet the temple should be built, and the worship of God restored. This was a great reviving, but their settlement was upon the third decree, which was given out by Darius Longimanus to Nehemiah, chap. ii. 1. *We shall live;* flourish in peace, wealth, and joy; in pure worship of God, in righteousness among ourselves, in safety from enemies. *In his sight;* the eye of our God being upon us for good, and we filled with the fruits of his favour, inheriting his promises here till we fully possess them in the light of glory.

d Is. 54. 13.
e 2 Sam. 23. 4.
f Ps. 72. 6.
g Job 29. 23.

3 [d]Then shall we know, *if* we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared [e]as the morning; and [f]he shall come unto us [g]as the rain, as the latter *and* former rain unto the earth.

Then; after that God hath revived and raised his repenting and inquiring captives, brought them to his temple and city, restored his worship and his law amongst them (all which are figures of more glorious things to be expected by the church of Christ after his resurrection). *Shall we know;* be better instructed in the law of our God, know what worship he requires, and is best pleased with. This knowledge of God shall be to us a spring of all holy, righteous, sober, and temperate conversation. Such knowledge, if we observe the Scriptures, was promised to the Jews after their return out of captivity, and their seeking the Lord, Jer. xxiv. 5—7; xxxi. 34; Ezek. xi. 17—20; xxxvi. 23; Hab. ii. 14; Zeph. iii. 9, &c. *Follow on to know;* it shall be an increasing knowledge, which by a diligent attendance to the word and works of God these shall attain, and improve by doing the will of God, and by worshipping him; they shall know experimentally and practically how holy, how good, how faithful God is, John viii. 31, 32. Before this they knew not God, and sinned, provoked God, and undid themselves; but now they shall know, obey, and please their God and Saviour. *His going forth* before his people who know him, and endeavour to increase that knowledge; his gracious, faithful, holy, just, and wise providences, and manifestations of himself in the conduct of them for his people's good and comfort. *Is prepared as the morning;* as sure, seasonable, beautiful, grateful, and as clear as the morning; which dispels the darkness, and proclaims its own approach. *As the latter and former rain unto the earth;* which reviveth, maketh it fruitful, beautifieth it, and gives a new face to all. So God will abundantly bless his

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repenting Israel, his returning people. This blessing he promised over and over to the Jews after the captivity, Ezek. xxxiv. 25; Hos. ii. 18, 19; xiv. 5, 6; Mal. iii. 10.

h ch. 11. 8.

4 ¶ [h]O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your ‖goodness *is* [i]as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.

‖ Or, *mercy*, or, *kindness*.
i ch. 13. 3.

The Lord now enters a debate with both Israel (here called *Ephraim*) and the two tribes, with all that were his people anciently; much after the manner of men, who having to do with froward and ungovernable children, or servants, whom they pity, and would not cast off, after much kindness and patience showed to them, and abused by them, at last seem at a stand what more to do, or appeal to by-standers whether more might be done, or demand of the untractable ones what they can desire more to be done. So Isa. v. 3—6; Micah vi. 3, 5. What is it I may do becoming my holy, just, and wise procedures, with my reasonable creatures? What should I do more to save you from ruin, and salve my own honour, truth, and justice? Would you of the ten tribes, and you of the two tribes, have me cease to be God, and resign to your idols? or repeal my own laws, and subscribe to your idols' rites? Or would you have Satan the wicked one, who hath seduced your kings, prophets, priests, and people, whom you worship in your idols, would you that he should still retain your love and service, and I maintain you in it? I would do, as appears by what I have done, any thing that may be done to reduce, reclaim, and reform you, who are as impudent adulteresses, that will not be sincere and faithful to their reconciled husband. *Your goodness*, or your kindness, your love to me, my law, worship, and honour, your promises of love and loyalty, *is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew*; vanisheth without effect, it is deceitful; you are hypocrites, nothing but short and empty signs of goodness, piety, and amendment. Their hypocrisy and unconstancy, elegantly expressed in this double allusion, renders them uncapable of further gentleness.

k Jer. 1. 10. & 5. 14. l Jer. 23. 29. Heb. 4. 12. ‖ Or, *that thy judgments might be, &c.*

5 Therefore have I hewed *them* [k]by the prophets; I have slain them by [l]the words of my mouth: ‖and thy judgments *are as* the light *that* goeth forth.

Therefore; because I would do for you whatever might be done, because I would cure you of your obstinacy and hypocrisy, and make you upright and constant. *I have hewed them*; I have severely, continually, and unwearedly by the prophets reproved, warned, and threatened. Your hearts have been like knotty trees, or hardest stones: I have made my prophets like labourers, and my words like axes or hammers to cut off the knots, and to hew off the roughness which make unfit for use; but all to no purpose, the desired effect hath not been attained. *By the prophets*; some that were before Hosea. Jeroboam the First was by a prophet reproved and threatened for this idolatry, in which Israel persisted, and to which Judah did too often fall; and through the space of two hundred years, from Jeroboam the First to Hosea's time, many other prophets were sent, whose names, and some memoirs of them, we have, as Ahijah, Jehu, Hanani, Elijah, and Elisha. These and such like were the prophets that did hew crooked and knotty Israel. *I have slain them*: some say the false prophets are the persons meant here, whom God did slay for their sin, seducing Israel to, and confirming them in, idolatry; indeed Elijah's sincere zeal did cut off so many, 1 Kings xviii. 22, 40, and Jehu's counterfeit zeal cut off so many, 2 Kings x. 21, 25, that it could never be forgotten among that people. So the thing is true, many false prophets were slain for this sin; yet the persons in our text were not these false prophets, but they were the people of Israel and Judah, the idolatrous, refractory hypocrites among them, whom God threatened with death, and that by the sword of enemies. *By the words of my mouth*; as he did by his word foretell, so he did effect too in due time. *Thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth*, i. e. the punishments threatened, the miseries foretold, which fell upon this people, did so fully answer the prediction, that every one might see them clear as the light, and as constantly executed as the morning. So Zeph. iii. 5.

6 For I desired [m]mercy, and [n]not sacrifice; and the [o]knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

m 1 Sam. 15. 22. Eccles. 5. 1. Mic. 6. 8. Matt. 9. 13. & 12. 7.
n Ps. 50. 8, 9. Prov. 21. 3. Is. 1. 11.
o Jer. 22. 16. John 17. 3.

I so hewed and slew them, because they did not what I most of all required, approved, and could accept of; they were full of sacrifices, and spared them not, but either to idols, or else in formality and pride. These sacrificers were either abominable idolaters, as were they of Ephraim, or proud hypocrites, as were too many of Judah. *I desired mercy*; compassion and charity towards men, this one principal duty of the second table put for all works of godly humanity, pleaseth me, in this I delight. I had found little of this among you, nor could I persuade you to it; though this was it that I required, Micah vi. 8. *And not sacrifice*; rather than, or more than, sacrifice, for it is not an absolute, but a comparative negative. Mercy to man who needed it, without a sacrifice to me who need it not, was more pleasing than a sacrifice (though required) with cruelty to man, which I forbade. *The knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings*: hearty, affectionate knowledge of God, which fills the mind with reverence of his majesty, fear of his goodness, love of his holiness, trust in his promise, and submission to his will; knowledge of God's law, the rule of our obedience, of his favour, the reward of our obedience, and knowledge of his omniscience, discerning and judging it, with those excellent effects, proper fruits hereof; are more than all sacrifice, as though they were burnt-sacrifices, which of all other were entirely given to God. But truth is, who knows God aright, and doth keep his heart for God, gives God more than he that brings whole burnt-offerings; for these are but ceremonies and signs, empty and insipid to God, without the heart. In short, these people acted all so contrary to this temper of their God, gave him so much of that he valued not, and so little of that he did most value, that he could not be too severe against them, nor is it any wonder he was so displeased with their sacrifices.

‖ Or, *like Adam*.
Job 31. 33.
p ch. 8. 1.
q ch. 5. 7.

7 But they ‖like men [p]have transgressed the covenant: there [q]have they dealt treacherously against me.

I told them by my prophets what I required of them by covenant, but I could not obtain it, they regarded not what I said. *Like men*; or, like Adam: some take it for a proper name, and so refer it unto the first man, and his breaking covenant; and, for aught I see, it may well enough refer to him, who forgot or slighted the threat, who judged of what he did by what it appeared, as a small matter; and so these forget and slight my threats, and judge of the place where, and the persons by whom, and the times when, sacrifices are to be offered as no material circumstances, and therefore do choose what places they please, and appoint what priest liketh them best to offer; or else transgress the covenant, as if it were the covenant of a man like themselves. *The covenant*; the law of their God, which directed and encouraged their obedience, and which threatened their disobedience, and cursed it. *There*; in that very place, the good land, which by covenant I gave them, they have broken my covenant; or in the things in which they thought they kept covenant, in their sacrifices, and observing of feasts, in these things they transgress the covenant. *Dealt treacherously against me*; very frowardly, and with wilful resolutions perverted my law; their transgressing was a designed perfidiousness. I told them, Obedience, not sacrifice; they reply, Sacrifice, and stop there; they give no obedience, though they offer many sacrifices.

r ch. 12. 11.
‖ Or, *cumbering for blood*.

8 [r]Gilead *is* a city of them that work iniquity, *and is* ‖polluted with blood.

Gilead; one of the six cities of refuge, situate in the country of that name, on a high hill, whence it is called Ramoth-gilead: now as a city of refuge it was a city pertaining to the priests and Levites, as all the cities of refuge did, in what tribe soever they were, Numb. xxxv. 6. *Is a city of them that work iniquity*; a sacerdotal city, where priests did, and religion, i. e. knowledge of God and mercy to man, should, dwell; but Gilead is a city full of most notorious transgressors, the inhabitants, though Levites and priests, are a generation of men that work all manner of wickedness. *And is polluted with blood*; murders com-

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mitted there have polluted it, or murderers protected there against the law of God, who provided these cities a relief for such as unawares, without malice, by chance slew his neighbour, not for wilful murderers; yet these for money or interest got in and were secured there; and probably many were kept out or delivered up to the avenger of blood contrary to the law: thus Gilead by name, and all the rest of the cities of refuge intended too, were polluted with blood.

x Jer. 11. 9. Ezek. 22. 25. ch. 5. 1, 2.
9 And as troops of robbers wait for a man, *so* x the company of priests murder in the way † by consent: for they commit ‖ lewdness.

† Heb. with one shoulder, or, to Shechem.
‖ Or, enormity.

What is here charged upon these priests, they turned highway-men and murderers, some understand of their killing and spoiling those that were going up to Jerusalem to worship God there; but more likely it is, that in this Gilead were many murderers, who durst not go out, nor could get their livelihood within the city, but, reduced to straits, took this wicked course for a livelihood, robbed and murdered on the highway, and then divided the prey with the priests, whose consent to the thing made them deeply guilty. And thus in this manner they act most lewd things; or these things are done and encouraged by the priests, because they make it their business, it is their trade now to contrive and act wickedness, highest wickednesses. Or, if you rather like it in the brief, the priests by companies lay wait, and rob, and murder, like as do the troops which rob towards Shechem.

t Jer. 5. 30.
u ch. 4. 12. 13, 17.
10 I have seen t an horrible thing in the house of Israel: there *is* u the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled.

I have seen: it may be understood of the prophet speaking what he had seen; or of God, who seeth now, and hath seen, *an horrible thing*, a very horrible thing, as some observe from the word, *in the house of Israel*, the ten tribes. *The whoredom*, idolatry, *of Ephraim;* which was brought in by an Ephraimite, by Jeroboam the First, two hundred years ago, and it is there still. *Israel is defiled;* it hath overspread all Israel, none free, but all defiled greatly with it.

x Jer. 51. 33. Joel 3. 13. Rev. 14. 15.
y Ps. 126. 1.
11 Also, O Judah, x he hath set an harvest for thee, y when I returned the captivity of my people.

This verse is confessedly very dark to interpreters, who agree not whether Judah be vocative or nominative; or who it is that setteth, whether Ephraim, Judah, or God; or what captivity is here meant, whether one past or to come: the conciseness of our prophet makes him very obscure. *Also, O Judah;* or also Judah, i. e. as Israel is polluted, and must expect to be chastised; or, O Judah, thou art like polluted Israel in sin, and mightest be every way like in punishment. *He hath set an harvest for thee;* but thy God hath appointed a harvest for thee, thou shalt not as Israel be utterly cut off, a seed of thee shall be sowed, and thou shalt reap the harvest with joy. *When I returned;* when I shall return, rather, so it looks to what is to come; or else, forasmuch as I will turn *the captivity of my people*, the house of Judah.

CHAP. VII.

Israel reproved for manifold sins, 1—10. *God's wrath against them for their hypocrisy*, 11—16.

cir. 780.
WHEN I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered,
† Heb. evils.
and the † wickedness of Samaria: for
a ch. 5. 1. & 6. 10.
a they commit falsehood; and the thief
+ Heb. strippeth.
cometh in, *and* the troop of robbers † spoileth without.

When: whether this chapter be a new sermon, or a continuation of that begun chap. vi., we need not inquire, nor are there any particulars by which we can guess at the time when this healing work was attempted; but, so soon as it was endeavoured; indefinitely it is spoken, and so to be interpreted. *I would have healed Israel:* God doth assume the person of a physician or chirurgeon, who compassionately endeavours to cure a people sick and wounded: such was the house of Israel, the whole body of the people. *The iniquity;* the hidden, old, and putrefying sores, here called iniquity, the impieties and injustice. *Of Ephraim;* of Israel, called Ephraim, or of Ephraim, the chief tribe of this revolting kingdom; some would have it mean the rulers, or principal men. *Was discovered;* broke out; as many times in cures of old sores it happens some deeper and more rooted distemper, unthought of by the chirurgeon, appears. *The wickedness*, the great and many sins, *of Samaria*, the royal city of the kingdom, where citizens, priests, prophets, and courtiers as much outsinned others as they exceeded them in wealth and ease. *They commit falsehood;* lying and cozening each other is acted as if it were a business they were bound to attend. *The thief cometh in;* secret thefts, or robbing others by subtle and undiscerned methods. *The troop of robbers spoileth without;* and open violence by hands joined to hands to spoil abroad. In a word, the strength and danger of their disease appears and increaseth more and more under endeavours to heal them.

+ Heb. say not in.
b Jer. 17. 1.
c Ps. 9. 16. Prov. 5. 22.
d Ps. 90. 8.
2 And they † consider not in their hearts *that* I b remember all their wickedness: now c their own doings have beset them about; they are d before my face.

They who are thus greatly wicked, notorious sinners, *consider not in their hearts*, do not remember, nor will they once seriously ponder this, *that I remember all their wickedness;* that I see all they do, and remember all I see; and that with more than an idle, unactive looking on, or retaining in memory; I look on, and remember to call them to account, and to punish for their sins. They would flatter themselves into an opinion that I take no notice of their wickedness, and that I will never require it. *Their own doings;* the guilt and punishment, the iniquity and mischief, of the works they have done; their own doings, not their fathers', as hypocrites and the incorrigible are ready to complain. *Have beset them about:* as cords wrap one taken in them, or as an enemy invests and besiegeth a town on every side, so these profligate people, courtiers, priests, prophets, and citizens, are all held enclosed with their own sins. *They are before my face;* what they have done I do see, and what they suffer I do see, and it is but just they should suffer what their sins deserve: they hoped for impunity, because they thought I did not regard, but now by a just punishment, by full measures of sorrows heaped upon them, they shall find all their ways were under my eye, and that I weighed their doings.

e Rom. 1. 32.
3 They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes e with their lies.

They, either the subjects in general, or rather the courtiers in particular who were about the king, *make the king glad with their wickedness:* the kings of Israel, every one of them from first to last, were addicted to vicious practices, and their minds were vitiated, deeply tainted with all kind of sins, and they it seems took pleasure in sins, both in their own and other men's; and here are a parcel of flagitious fellows that make it their work to invent pleasing wickedness, to acquaint their king with it, who is so far from doing his duty in discountenancing it, that it is one of his delights to hear or see it. *The princes;* great men about the court. *With their lies;* with false accusations brought in against the more innocent, or by false reports made of their words and actions, representing them as ridiculous or foolish, drolling them into infamy.

f Jer. 9. 2.
4 f They *are* all adulterers, as an oven heated by the baker, ‖ *who* ceaseth ‖ from raising after he hath kneaded the dough, until it be leavened.

‖ Or, the raiser will cease.
‖ Or, from making.

They are all adulterers, both spiritually and carnally, and this latter adultery is that which here is charged on the courtiers and people of Israel. *As an oven heated by the baker:* this vice is grown raging hot among them, as you see the fire in an oven, when the baker, having called up those that make the bread, to prepare all things ready, and the whole mass is leavened, he doth by continued supply

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of fuel heat the oven to the highest degree. So doth adultery among this people grow by degrees to raging flames. The whole mass of the people are leavened with this vice also, as well as the court, and every one inflamed with this unclean fire, as the oven heated by the baker.

5 In the day of our king the princes have made *him* sick ‖ with bottles of wine; he stretched out his hand with scorners.

‖ Or, *with heat through wine.*

In the day of our king: whether this day were any occasional day that the king of Israel took to feast his nobles, as Ahasuerus did his; or whether the anniversary of his birth or coronation, both which were usually celebrated among most nations, the birthday especially; so Pharaoh, Gen. xl. 20, and Herod, Matt. xiv. 6; whether of these we inquire not curiously. *The princes,* who attended on the king to witness their joy in the remembrance of that day which made the public glad so great a blessing was bestowed upon them, and to wish many such days unto their king and the kingdom. *Have made him sick with bottles of wine;* in their excess of drinking healths, no doubt; instead of a pious and thankful remembrance of God's mercies, they run into monstrous impieties of luxury and drunkenness, and with bottles of wine, drank off probably at one draught, inflame themselves and their king, and drink him almost to death while they drink and wish his life. *He stretched out his hand:* in these drunken feasts it seems the king of Israel forgat himself, became too familiar a companion, and used the formalities of these drinking matches, *stretched out his hand with scorners,* who deride religion, and wish confusion to the professors of it.

‖ Or, *applied.*

6 For they have ‖ made ready their heart like an oven, whiles they lie in wait: their baker sleepeth all the night; in the morning it burneth as a flaming fire.

For; surely. *They;* those luxurious and drinking princes, ver. 5. *Have made ready their heart like an oven;* do keep close some fire of ambition, revenge, or covetousness, like as a baker keeps a hot fire within his oven. *Whiles they lie in wait,* either against the life or estate of some of their fellow subjects, or it may be, as appears ver. 7, against the life which they seemed in their cups to pray for. *Their baker sleepeth all the night;* he who should watch and prevent mischief is swallowed up in the day with feasting and drunkenness, and sleeps in security all the night, never suspecting the projects of conspirators. *In the morning it burneth as a flaming fire;* but when he awakes too late, he seeth all in flames, and past quenching. Sedition and rebellion is among these a sin as hateful to God as dangerous to the public, yet frequently acted by the usurpers of those dissolute times.

Fulfilled cir. 773.
g ch. 8. 4.
h 2 Kings 15. 10, 14, 25, 30.
i Is. 64. 7.

7 They are all hot as an oven, and have devoured their judges; [g] all their kings [h] are fallen: [i] *there is* none among them that calleth unto me.

This verse is a key to the former, and helps us to understand the true sense thereof. *They:* see ver. 6. *All;* in a larger and more vulgar sense, the most, or almost all of them, few excepted. *As an oven:* see ver. 6. *Have devoured;* as fire destroys, so have these conspirators, when successful, destroyed. *Their judges;* those that were magistrates and rulers, who having somewhat of integrity, would not join with them, nor promote the interest of usurpers. *All their kings;* all that had been since Jeroboam the Second's reign to the delivery of this prophecy, viz. Zachariah, Shallum, Pekahiah, Pekah; these four fell by the conspiracy of such hot princes, only Menahem died a natural death. *Are fallen,* by treason and violence from such as would drink them sick with wishes of health. *There is none among them that calleth unto me;* not one of all these either feared, trusted, or worshipped God. By profession all were idolaters, in practice debauched, and by their company they kept these latter kings of Israel appear under a suspicion of men contemning God, and deriding providence; but they are long since fallen, where they must lie for ever, under God's justice.

8 Ephraim, he [k] hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned.

k Ps. 106. 35.

Ephraim; the kingdom of Israel. *Hath mixed himself among the people,* by leagues and commerce, by imitation of their manners, and by either entertaining their gods, and sacrificing to them, or at least worshipping idols as the nations about them did, directly contrary to the express law of God, Deut. vii. 2—4; xii. 2, 3. This was their sin, and the greater because voluntary: the expression seems to represent it as a thing of their own seeking, they did mix themselves with the heathen, whereas had the heathen sought it, it would in likelihood have been said that the nations mixed themselves with Ephraim; but this is in other words the same with chap. ii. 5, 7. Or this passage may be (as some conceive) a threat that the Ephraimites should be scattered among the nations, be captives to them, and dispersed amongst them, with whom, to ease their condition a little, they should endeavour to mix by friendship and alliances: if so, this is the punishment of their former sinful confederacies. *Ephraim is a cake not turned:* some interpret this of the particoloured temper of Ephraim, by such a proverb as ours, Is neither fish nor flesh; neither Israelite nor heathen, but a mongrel; neither a heathen idolater nor yet a worshipper of God, a hotch-potch of different religions and policies, like them, 1 Kings xviii. 21; Zeph. i. 5; neither bread nor yet dough, but partly both, as the unturned cake on the coals is: but it better expresseth their danger and sudden ruin, whose hungry enemies will eat them up quickly, as men do who for haste will not stay the full baking of their cake.

9 [l] Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth *it* not: yea, gray hairs are † here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.

l ch. 8. 7.
† Heb. *sprinkled.*

Strangers; foreigners, whose aid Ephraim sought, as 2 Kings xv. 19, 20, when Menahem bought the friendship of Pul king of Assyria for one thousand talents of silver, and impoverished the land thereby. *Have devoured;* eat up, lived upon, as men live on bread they eat. *His strength;* the riches and goods of the kingdom of Israel; the fruit of the olive and vine; the fruit of the earth, corn; the increase of their flocks and of their herds; the most or best of all eaten up by strangers, either soldiers in garrison among them, or else courted by presents and rich gifts sent to them. *Knoweth it not;* is not sensible either of the cause why, or the tendency of this hasty consumption of all; still they are secure, and sin as much as ever. *Grey hairs are here and there upon him;* the manifest symptoms of approaching death, undeniable tokens of old age, and declining strength never recoverable, are upon their kingdom, like grey hairs that are here and there intermixed on the head of a man: what with domestic seditions and foreign invasions, and the fears, cares, and griefs from both, Ephraim is turned grey-headed, his vital vigour and strength decayeth, and this is a forerunner of his death. *Yet he knoweth it not;* so secure and stupid, that no notice is taken of this, nor any course thought of for preventing the dismal effects of this declining consumptive state; none turn from sin, none seek to God, the only Physician that can heal.

10 And the [m] pride of Israel testifieth to his face: and [n] they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek him for all this.

m ch. 5. 5.
n Is. 9. 13.

The pride of Israel testifieth to his face: see chap. v. 5. Their proud contempt of God and his threats, of the prophets and their warnings, is notorious. *They do not return to the Lord;* they persist in sin without repentance. run away from God rather than return to him. Of this phrase, *return,* see chap. vi. 1. *Their God;* who was theirs of old, who still would be theirs on fair terms, of whom they talk and boast. *Nor seek him;* see this phrase chap. v. 15; they pray not, repent not, nor rely on God. *For all this;* though so greatly, continually, and severely punished, though almost eaten up.

11 ¶ [o] Ephraim also is like a silly dove

o ch. 11. 11.

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without heart: [p]they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.

p See 2 Kin. 15. 19. & 17. 4. ch. 5. 13. & 9. 3. & 12. 1.

Ephraim: see ver. 1, 8. *Is like a silly dove;* a deceived dove, seduced by false prophets and idolatrous priests, whose weak arguments are soon believed, and whose unseasonable advice is too soon followed: Ephraim is now become like the dove in weakness and fear, as well as in imprudence and liableness to be deceived. *Without heart:* this explains the former, whether heart here be judgment and discretion, as sometimes it is, or be resolution and courage, as other while it is; this dove, this Ephraim, wants both. *They call;* they should in their perplexity call on God, who can help, but they do not; they call indeed, but not to their God, or to a friend. *To Egypt:* this Hoshea did, 2 Kings xvii. 4; and I remember not any mention of other application to Egypt since Jehu's time. It is probable Hosea aims at this embassy, and private confederacy, of which, as of a thing in hand, he speaketh. They do call to Egypt, whose king is called So, and judged to be Sabacon the Ethiopian, who had lately conquered Egypt: by this also may we guess at the time of this prophecy, about some four years before Samaria was taken. *They go to Assyria;* so did Menahem when on the throne, so did Hoshea, as is evident, 2 Kings xv. 19, 20, with 2 Kings xvii. 3. Thus both betrayed the greatest imprudence, depending for help on professed, old inveterate enemies. So silly were they! See chap. v. 13; xiv. 3.

12 When they shall go, [q]I will spread my net upon them; I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven; I will chastise them, [r]as their congregation hath heard.

q Ezek. 12. 13.

r Lev. 26. 14, &c. Deut. 28. 15, &c. 2 Kings 17. 13, 16.

When they shall go, whensoever they shall send their ambassadors to seek aid of Egypt or Assyria, *I will spread my net upon them;* as fowlers spread the net, watch the birds, and cast it over them to catch them, so will God do to Ephraim. So he did with Israel when he accepted the alliance of Shalmaneser, and turned tributary; and again, when Israel sought by Egypt's help to get out of the snares of their vassalage to Shalmaneser, who revenged the conspiracy with a total captivity; nor can there be likelihood or possibility these fugitives should escape when it is God's net, and he spreads it, his almighty power, his all-searching wisdom, his just vengeance, that follows them. *I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven;* though they attempt to fly, yet as fowls in the net they shall certainly fall, I will bring them down; as he did when they were gathered into Samaria as a net, and there made prisoners, and thence carried captives. *I will chastise them,* thus they shall be punished, *as their congregation hath heard,* both from the law of Moses which they had with them, and as they had heard from my prophets which I have sent unto them. I will, saith God, make good my word.

13 Woe unto them! for they have fled from me: †destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me: though [s]I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me.

† Heb. *spoil.*

s Mic. 6. 4.

Woe unto them! it is the voice both of menace and lamentation, the prophet doth at once foretell and bewail their miseries. *They have fled from me;* as if it were not enough that they did at first leave my government, temple, and worship, they have gone further from me, they have hastened herein, they flew from me as birds on wing: their sin is apostacy. *Destruction unto them!* this explains the woe already mentioned, such woe it will be as ends in destruction. *Because they have transgressed against me;* rebelliously cast off my law and government, much in state, more in church matters, oppressors in one, idolaters in the other, and incorrigible in both. *Though I have redeemed them;* out of Egypt; but that is long since, and the prophet speaks of deliverance nearer to the times he lived in: God redeemed them partly by Joash, 2 Kings xiii., but more fully by Jeroboam the Second, 2 Kings xiv., and would have completed this deliverance, but they by sins hinder it. *Yet they have spoken lies against me;* practically they belie me, fleeing to idols, worshipping them, praying to them, as if I were not able or willing to help them; and ascribing praise of the good they enjoy to their idols, chap. ii. 5—7: they belied his corrections, as if not deserved, or severer than need; they belied the good done, as if too little, or not done by God, but by their idol.

14 [t]And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, *and* they rebel against me.

t Job 35. 9, 10. Ps. 78. 36. Jer. 3. 10. Zech. 7. 5.

And they, immersed in these troubles, taken in the net, *have not cried unto me;* either they cried to their idols, not to God, see ver. 7; or else their tongues made noise, their hearts were silent, and that is, in God's account, no cry at all. *With their heart;* with affection, hope, humility, and sincerity; but out of some trouble, and more fear, they cried out to be delivered out of their pain and fear; it is therefore elegantly and properly called howling: though they did thus howl, yet they prayed not, they did not pour out a supplication to their God. *Upon their beds;* on their couches, or in their chambers. *They assemble,* in the houses of their idols. *for corn and wine;* that they may have plenty of these to satisfy their appetite, to live luxuriously, and in jollity. *They rebel against me;* as in the use of these to excess, so in this manner of seeking these, they rebel against God, and give that honour to the idol which is due only to God.

15 Though I ‖ have bound *and* strengthened their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me.

‖ Or, *chastened.*

Though I; but as for me, or, And I. *Bound;* or chastised, as the word will bear; or instructed; either notion will well suit the place. When I had chastised them for their sins, as in Jehoahaz's time, I strengthened them in Jehoash's time, and in Jeroboam's time, and made them stronger than their enemies. Or, I taught them, gave them wisdom and skill to handle their weapons; so David speaks, Psal. xviii. 34, *He teacheth my hands to war,* and Psal. cxliv. 1. But the sense best suits with what he took upon him before, if we retain it as our version hath it, *bound:* as a chirurgeon binds up a weakened member, or, having set a broken one, doth with swathes and bands bind it up; so did God for Ephraim, when the Syrians and other enemies had broken their arms. *And strengthened their arms;* as I took care to bind, so I did, what none else could, give strength to them, both courage of mind, and strength of body, and success added to both; so they subdued them that had formerly wasted and spoiled them. What successes Jehoash had, or Jeroboam had, I gave, and they should have owned it, and been thankful; but *they imagine mischief against me;* they contrived, laid their heads together, and designed what evil they could against me: they imputed their successes to their idols, to their way of worship, and hardened themselves against all thoughts of repentance, and returning to me; and devised mischief against my prophets, and let loose the reins to all impieties. This is their requital for all my love!

16 [u]They return, *but* not to the most High: [x]they are like a deceitful bow: their princes shall fall by the sword for the [y]rage of their tongue: this *shall be* their derision [z]in the land of Egypt.

u ch. 11. 7.

x Ps. 78. 57.

y Ps. 73. 9.

z ch. 9. 3, 6.

They return; they sometimes have given some signs of returning, as when Jehu destroyed Baal, or Hoshea gave liberty to Israel to go up to Jerusalem (if it be true which some affirm of him); and if I were sure Hoshea did this, I should think the prophet aimed at it; in this they return, *but not to the Most High;* Jehu fell off to the calves, and Hoshea's reign was wicked too much, though the reigns of other kings were more wicked; what show soever of repentance among them, yet they never thoroughly repented, never fully embraced the law of God. *They are like a deceitful bow;* all was done (as the similitude elegantly sets it forth) in mere hypocrisy; though they seemed bent for and aiming at the mark, yet, like a weak bow, they carried not the arrow home, and, like a false bow, they never carried it straight toward the mark. *Their princes;* the royal family, principal nobles and magistrates, their brave commanders and leaders. *Shall fall by the sword;* be slain by

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either sword of base, false, and bloody traitors at home, or by sword of foreigners, as the Assyrian. *The rage of their tongue*, against God, his prophets and providence, which to decry with scorners was their usual diversion, ver. 5. *This*, this sad end, *shall be their derision*, shall be upbraided to them, *in the land of Egypt;* among their allies and seeming friends.

CHAP. VIII.

Destruction is threatened both to Israel and Judah for their impiety and idolatry.

cir. 760. SET [a]the trumpet to [†]thy mouth. *He shall come* [b]as an eagle against the house of the LORD, because [c]they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law.

a ch. 5. 8. † Heb. *the roof of thy mouth.* b Deut. 28. 49. Jer. 4. 13. Hab. 1. 8. c ch. 6. 7.

The Lord here commands the prophet to publish, as by sound of trumpet, that which God will bring upon apostate Israel, awaken them with the alarm of war. *He;* the king of Assyria, Shalmaneser, who carried Israel captive. *As an eagle;* swift, hungry, surmounting all difficulties, and which from above seizeth his prey; so shall the Assyrian army come. *Against;* or up to, as far as, so some, but it is better as here, *against. The house of the Lord;* either so called because the Israelites pretended their temples were not idols' houses, but houses of Jehovah, and so the prophet for once calls them so, perhaps to intimate to them that their sins would bring an enemy against those houses, though they were indeed what they pretend them to be, the house of the Lord; or else by *house of the Lord* is meant the family of Israel, or the Israelitish church, which till unchurched might be called the house of the Lord: or it may be a sarcasm or irony against their wilful, brutish ignorance, who would not understand what was most plain, that his house was only at Jerusalem; or a softer derision of them, one of whose principal places of worship was Beth-el, which in signification is near the same with this in the text, house of God. *They have transgressed my covenant;* taken other gods instead of me, turned idolaters. *Trespassed against my law:* this explains and confirms the former; covenant and law are synonymous, and so are transgressing and trespassing. They have violated the whole law and covenant, and are apostates from their God, rebels against him their King.

d Ps. 78. 34. ch. 5. 15. e Tit. 1. 16. 2 [d]Israel shall cry unto me, My God, [e]we know thee.

Israel, the ten tribes, *shall cry* in deep distress; when the Assyrian rangeth over their country, when Samaria is besieged, they will cry out aloud, but hypocritically; they will roar, but not pray. *My God;* then they will look to the ancient alliance and league between their fathers and me. *We know thee*, an only Saviour; be ours, for we are thine. Thus in hypocrisy will they carry it.

3 Israel hath cast off *the thing that is* good: the enemy shall pursue him.

This seems to be the answer God by his prophet gives to *Israel;* in the first part of the verse he doth refute their pretence of a peculiar relation and interest in God, in the latter he tells them what they must expect. *Israel*, the whole house of Israel, *hath cast off*, with an abhorrence, as an adulterous wife puts away her husband. *Good;* moral good to be done, all virtue and goodness; and the supreme good to be enjoyed, God, true religion and virtue; all cast off for idols, false religion, and debaucheries. Such a nation cannot be my people, nor do they know me. *The enemy shall pursue him;* that enemy he would be delivered from, the Assyrian army, shall overthrow, and then pursue, till he have cooped him up in Samaria, and till he have brought them captives out of their own land into Chalah, Chabor, and Gozan, &c. By this they shall know that I know them, their transgressions and hypocrisy.

f 2 Kings 15. 13, 17, 25, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah. g ch. 2. 8. & 13. 2. 4 [f]They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew *it* not: [g]of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off.

They; Israel, the prevailing faction among them in Hosea's time. *Have set up kings;* Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea, who usurped the throne. *But not by me;* not by my direction, or with my approbation; they neither prayed his blessing nor asked his leave. And this may be applied to the very first founding of the kingdom of Israel, divided from the house of David. *They have made princes;* rulers and magistrates, or nobles. *And I knew it not:* he that will not approve any one evil, when his omniscience discerns all, is pleased to say he knew not what he did not approve. *They made them idols;* heathen like, they have made them gods, and set up idolatry, so have perverted all in church and state settled by me. *That they may be cut off;* as if they were resolved to cut themselves off from being a people. By this they thought to establish themselves, but it will be quite contrary, these sins will be their ruin.

5 ¶ Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast *thee* off; mine anger is kindled against them: [h]how long *will it be* ere they attain to innocency? h Jer. 13. 27.

Thy calf; Jeroboam at first set up two calves, at Dan and Beth-el, but it is probable that in process of time there were more set up in other places, for when Israel forgot his God he built temples, ver. 14. The calf then here is the chief idol set up in Samaria, and worshipped there. The prophet, in contempt of the idol, and in derision of their folly, gives it its right name, it is no god, but a calf; nor yet so much, for that it is senseless and without life. *Hath cast thee off;* been the occasion of casting thee far off, in that by this thou hast provoked God to anger, and he hath cast thee off. Or else thus, if thy God, thy idol, thy calf, have done aught, it is mischief; thy calf could not keep itself in Samaria, but it is either carried a captive god, or, broken into pieces, is carried piecemeal into Assyria, and so hath cast thee off: it carrieth somewhat of irony in it. *Mine anger is kindled against them;* now it is evident that my anger, as fire, burneth against the idols, idol-makers, and idol-worshippers, and shall so burn till they are purified or consumed. *How long will it be ere they attain to innocency?* the prophet is very concise, and perhaps here must be supposed some or other (some one of the people, or the prophet himself) sighing out to God, How long shall thine anger burn? and answer returned by God, How long will it be ere they be cleansed?

6 For from Israel *was* it also: the workman made it; therefore it *is* not God: but the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces.

For, or because, *from Israel*, by their invention and authority, *was it also*, both the idol and the worship of it. *The workman*, the founder, silversmith, or goldsmith, *made it;* fashioned the calf. *Therefore it is not God;* you are sottish fools to think it is a god: if the making it will not convince you it is no god, yet I hope the destroying it will prove, whatever it was made for, or whatever thought to be, yet it was not, nor could it ever be, a god. *But the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces;* but when the idol is broken into pieces, Samaria shall see it was but a calf, and confess their folly in worshipping it; however, the destruction of it will be a perpetual witness of Samaria's sin, and God's just displeasure in its ruin.

7 For [i]they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no ‖stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so be it yield, [k]the strangers shall swallow it up. i Prov. 22. 8. ch. 10. 12, 13. ‖ Or, *standing corn.* k ch. 7. 9.

For; since that; or, for so much as; or, verily; so the Hebrew particle is sometimes used, Isa. vii. 9. *They have sown the wind;* a proverbial speech, to denote either lost labour, or, which is much worse, labour that will undo and tear to pieces him that laboureth: both these are in the verse. Man's life and labour is a seed that will bring forth fruit; but when this life and labour is laid out on sin, as here Israel's was, it will bring forth that fruit the sinner is unwilling to reap. *They shall reap the whirlwind;* a violent, tearing, and dissipating tempest, which beareth down and destroyeth all that is in its way; an emblem of the wrath of God breaking out against these vain and sinful

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men: so Ephraim reaped in his civil wars, and much more in the Assyrian war, which ended in a whirlwind, that hath scattered them into unknown countries, and where they have lain buried in forgetfulness above two thousand four hundred years. *It hath no stalk;* suppose this seed should have its harvest in no whirlwind, it will end in loss and disappointment, as seed that never springs up into a stalk, nor hath bud or ear: all your worship of and dependence on idols, and foreign assistance, will at best be as seed that yields neither stalk nor bud. *The bud shall yield no meal;* or suppose it produced stalk and bud, yet it will be no profit, but all lost labour, for the bud shall be lank, shrivelled, and blasted, and never yield meal: so was the fruit Israel reaped, from Pul to Menahem, and from Egypt's assistance to Hoshea against Shalmaneser. *If so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up;* or, if yet meal be found in the bud, Israel shall be never the better, foreigners devour it: so did Pul and his, and Shalmaneser and his Assyrians, eat up all.

l 2 Kings 17. m Jer. 22. 28. & 48. 38.

8 [l]Israel is swallowed up: now shall they be among the Gentiles [m]as a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure.

In the former verse the prophet foretells the lost labour of such pains and seed as Ephraim bestowed; now he addeth somewhat more dreadful, the harvest is ruin and destruction to the seedsman, he is swallowed up; and this is the effect of the whirlwind, ver. 7: ordinarily whirlwinds scatter the fruit, but here is one swallows up both labour and labourer. *Swallowed up*, very soon and irreparably, as a man that is swallowed alive by a mighty, overgrown shark. *Now;* ere long, within three or four years at most, as I noted on chap. vii. 11. *Shall they be among the Gentiles;* carried out of their own country by Shalmaneser, and dispersed at the pleasure of the conqueror into Chalah, Habor, &c. *As a vessel wherein is no pleasure;* as worthless and useless, cast out of doors; or if of any use, yet in basest and most contemptible: so shall these captives be among the nations whom they must serve; or Israel, impoverished by chargeable confederates, is now looked upon with contempt by them all, and cast off.

cir. 771. n 2 Kings 15. 19. o Jer. 2. 24. p Is. 30. 6. Ezek. 16. 33, 34. † Heb. *loves.*

9 For [n]they are gone up to Assyria, [o]a wild ass alone by himself: Ephraim [p]hath hired †lovers.

The prophet gives now an account why Israel was so impoverished, and why they should be so severely punished, why so punished of God, and why so slighted by man. *They are gone up to Assyria;* either gone, i. e. have sent ambassadors with rich presents to purchase assistance from Assyria, or gone with their tribute to procure the continuance of the Assyrian confederacy and aids. This confidence and trust in Assyria was accompanied with a casting off their dependence on and subjection to God: this their sin was very great, and their punishment shall, as their sin, be very great. Others refer this going up to their going into captivity into Assyria, and it surely may be a prediction of what shall be (if it be not a narrative of what is) done. *Assyria* was at that time a mighty nation, whose kings were very great, and yet more proud than great, as appears in Sennacherib's deportment toward God and man. This kingdom had now grown on through Pul, Tiglathpileser, Shalmaneser, and Sennacherib's reigns, was a terror to enemies, and the vain confidence of this foolish and sinful people, for which they are particularly threatened and severely punished. *A wild ass:* this is differently applied by interpreters; some refer it to the king of Assyria, who is fierce, swift, and haughty as the wild ass, and all for himself; thus the French interpret it: so it suits well; Israel, thou wilt be disappointed in thy expectation from Asshur, a wild ass, who seeks himself only. Others refer *wild ass* to Israel, who, wild, untamed, and burning in lust, (as is reported of the wild ass,) rangeth far and wide for lovers, seeks every where for aids and succours. *Alone by himself;* solitary, or in a wilderness, where is no path or track: this will well suit them in their captivity, when they shall be left as in a wilderness, and may, as perhaps many did, flee into more remote and desolate places, and ramble into uninhabited places, and there take rooting, and give being to nations which are now known to us, though we know not whence they descended. Or, *alone by himself*, in a posture fit to become a prey to the lion of Assyria; so it is reported the lions make a prey of the wild asses in the wilderness; so will Assyria make Israel a prey. *Ephraim hath hired lovers;* hath dearly bought the friendship of Assyria in Pul and Shalmaneser's time, and more dearly bought friendship of Egypt in the time of So, or Sabacon, or Sevechus; for beside all the treasure they laid out on this, they parted with their God for it, and set him against Israel.

q Ezek. 16. 37. ch. 10. 10. ‖ Or, *begin.* Or, *in a little while*, as Hag. 2. 6. r Is. 10. 8. Ezek. 26. 7. Dan. 2. 37.

10 Yea, though they have hired among the nations, now [q]will I gather them, and they shall ‖sorrow ‖a little for the burden of [r]the king of princes.

Yea, though; or, Yea, because; they think this the way to prevent their calamities, but it shall appear this was the ready way to bring their calamities upon them; and forasmuch as they have hired the aid of the nations to secure them against their God and his judgments, therefore, &c. *Gather them;* bring Israel together by a secret and unfailing train. I will, saith God, assemble and herd them together, that they may be taken and destroyed together. Others say, God will gather the nations together against Israel. *They shall sorrow a little*, for a while before their final captivity they shall complain and be grieved, *for the burden of the king of princes;* the tribute laid on them by the king and princes, i. e. of Israel; but better as we read it, the king of Assyria, the great king who boasted of his princes.

s ch. 12. 11.

11 Because Ephraim hath made [s]many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin.

Because: this refers to what follows. *Ephraim hath made many altars;* multiplied either to many idols, every one having his altar, or multiplied altars in several places to the same idol. They had many high places, and altars in all of them. *To sin;* both as acting against the law of God, which required but one altar, and also these altars were to sin, in that they were for sacrifices to be offered on them to idols. These persons did not intend them for sin, but their good intention did not, could not change the thing, it was sin, however they intended. *Altars*, either those here erected, or those they shall find in Assyria when they come captives thither, *shall be unto him to sin;* either because forced in captivity to worship Assyrian idols, and to attend their altars and sacrifices, or else by a just and dreadful judgment from God delivering them over to their wilful blindness and idolatrous heart: since they would never be reclaimed, nor taken off from sinful multiplying altars, let them follow their own hearts, and set up what they will; much like that Rev. xxii. 11. Or else thus, Altars shall be the occasion of his greater guilt and punishment, his altars, i. e. his idolatrous worship, shall be that sin that ruins him.

t Deut. 4. 6. & Ps. 119. 18. & 147. 19, 20.

12 I have written to him [t]the great things of my law, *but* they were counted as a strange thing.

I have written: some read it in the future, and by way of question, Shall I write? but most read as we, in the perfect or past tense, I have written, by Moses first, by other prophets afterwards; the law was given to them, as well as to the two tribes. *Great things;* for their importance, weighty; for their excellency, precious; and for multitude of precepts, counsels, and directions, sufficient; my law had all this in it for their conduct in all righteousness towards God and man. *But they*, all these things which I have written, *were counted as a strange thing;* Israel looks on them as nothing to them; they are a distinct kingdom, and have a distinct establishment, their laws are now become unpracticable to us, and we have, by the wisdom of our governors, other laws established for our worship; let Judah keep to theirs, we will keep to our laws; after two hundred years' desuetude, would it not be madness to introduce Judah's laws, and innovate all in Israel? Thus they contemned the excellent things of God's law, as if they were nothing concerned in them. And thus all their sins at last become incurable diseases, which nothing but utter destruction of the sinners can put an end unto.

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13 [u] ‖They sacrifice flesh *for* the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat *it*; [x] *but* the LORD accepteth them not; [y] now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: [z] they shall return to Egypt.

u Jer. 7. 21. Zech. 7. 6. ‖ Or, *In the sacrifices of mine offerings they, &c.* x Jer. 14. 10, 12. ch. 5. 6. & 9. 4. Amos 5. 22. y ch. 9. 9. Amos 8. 7. z Deut. 28. 68. ch. 9. 3, 6. & 11. 5.

They sacrifice; or, As for sacrifices, my gifts, so some, taking the words absolute and in apposition, read them, and perhaps they are plainer and closer connected with the former when so taken. I have written to them, and they count it a strange thing; and the sacrifices and gifts which they call mine, I tell you what I account them to be; as for sacrifices, which now they pretend to give me, it is flesh they sacrifice, and eat it when they have done, and I account no more of it: they sacrifice that they may feast and fill themselves with wine and mirth, and what is that to me? *The Lord accepteth them not;* neither owneth them as his, nor taketh any pleasure at all in them. These sacrifices shall never expiate their sins, nor reconcile me to them, saith God. I think here is a meiosis in these words, they may be a softer expression of hatred and detestation, which God bears towards such. *Now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins;* in his just and hot displeasure, he will reckon with them, and, by punishing them for all, make them know he remembers all their sins. Here remembering and visiting are the same, and include punishment. *They shall return to Egypt;* either alluding to their bondage in Egypt; so Assyria shall use them. Or else it is an upbraiding them for and minding them of their perfidiousness to Shalmaneser. They had been ever covenant-breakers with God and man; this last part of treachery God will punish. Or else, they shall return to Egypt, i. e. many shall to save their lives flee from the Assyrian into Egypt, and there seek their safety; and if they preserve their life there, the punishment of their sins shall follow them; exile, with misery as bad as captivity, shall be their lot there. So chap. ix. 6.

14 [a] For Israel hath forgotten [b] his Maker, and [c] buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but [d] I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof.

a Deut. 32. 18. b Is. 29. 23. Eph. 2. 10. c 1 Kings 12. 31. d Jer. 17. 27. Amos 2. 5.

Israel; the ten revolted idolatrous tribes. *Hath forgotten;* the same with chap. ii. 8, which see; or chap. iv. 1, 6. Either remembers not at all, or it is without love, thankfulness, and consideration what becomes him towards God. *His Maker;* who made, who preserved, who advanced them, and gave them all those privileges wherein they excel other nations; who brought them out of Egypt, &c. *Buildeth temples;* the word will bear palaces, or towers. It is like their idol temples were magnificent, that they might boast of them, and strong like towers, that they might for need garrison and fortify them, and trust in their strength in a day of war and trouble. *Judah hath multiplied fenced cities;* on like designs and motives doth Judah multiply strong holds, fortifying against threatened judgments, making flesh their arm, whilst their heart (as at this time of Ahaz's reign and apostacy) did depart from the living God. *Send a fire upon his cities;* bring an enemy upon them that shall besiege them in their cities, and burn them, which was effected by Nebuchadnezzar and his armies about one hundred and thirty years after. *It shall devour the palaces;* the stately palaces of their princes and nobles in their cities, these shall be burnt too. Judah hath imitated Israel, and made himself like to Israel in sin, and God will make them like in sufferings; the fire which their sin hath kindled shall consume both.

CHAP. IX.

The distress and captivity of Israel for their sins, especially their idolatry.

REJOICE not, O Israel, for joy, as *other* people: for thou [a] hast gone a whoring from thy God, thou hast loved a [b] reward ‖upon every cornfloor.

a ch. 4. 12. & 5. 4. 7. b Jer. 44. 17. ch. 2. 12. ‖ Or, *in, &c.*

Rejoice not: this might seem a morose humour of a discontented, sullen preacher: what! forbid a people to rejoice when things prosper with them? when should a people rejoice if not then? The prophet, who had a deeper reach, and took a larger prospect of things, had good cause to advise, or warn, or forbid as he doth, for he saw more cause to grieve than to rejoice, and to mourn than to be merry; the reason you will have presently. *O Israel;* you of the ten tribes. *For joy;* for any thing that is counted just matter of joy; though at present you prosper either under Jeroboam the Second's victorious arms, or under Menahem, and the safety he hath procured by a confederacy with Assyria, though at other times these might be matter of rejoicing, now in thy circumstances, O Israel, it is not meet thou shouldst show any gladness. *As other people;* with feastings, public games, and triumphs, or with solemn sacrifices of thanksgiving, or with erecting statues to the memory of your great and brave commanders, or for continuing the remembrance of their achievements. *For thou hast gone a whoring from thy God;* with thee, O Israel, it is as unseemly as it is for an adulterous wife to rejoice and be jovial, whilst the guilt of her adulteries, and the shame of her lewdnesses, and the displeasure of her husband, fly in her face and whisper reproofs in her ear. *Thou hast loved a reward,* such as is given by adulterers to lewd women, *on every corn-floor;* thou hast loved to see thy floor full, and hast thought and said thy idols had so furnished thee, and therefore thou didst love them. Though mirth might become an honest woman, it doth not so well suit with a dishonest adulteress; the very place, the company and occasion, do upbraid such a one rejoicing with her lewd adulterers: besides, this adulteress's joys will be short, and end in sorrows and shame; so will thine, O Israel.

2 [c] The floor and the ‖winepress shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail in her.

c ch. 2. 9, 12. ‖ Or, *winefat.*

The floor; the corn which is gathered into the floor and that is threshed there, that plenty which these sottish idolaters have, and think they have it from their idols, the bread they eat. For here *the floor* is put for the corn, and the bread made of it. *The wine-press,* by the same figure, put for the wine that is pressed out in it; though there is great plenty, and the vats overflow as well as the press full. *Shall not feed them;* all this plenty shall not nourish and strengthen them. Since they think their idols give them their corn and wine, let them give also, what I will not give, a blessing on these that they may support and refresh them; they shall be lean and half-starved in their plenty unless their idols can do this for them, i. e. bless their food. *Them,* who seek to idols for corn and wine, and praise their idols as givers of it. These I will blast, their provision shall be as theirs, Hag. i. 6. *The new wine shall fail in her;* or lie unto her, or fail her expectation. Samaria and all Israel expect a fair and full vintage, but they expect it from their idols, which are a doctrine of lies, and in this, as in all other, will lie.

3 They shall not dwell in [d] the LORD's land; [e] but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and [f] they shall eat unclean *things* [g] in Assyria.

d Lev. 25. 23. Jer. 2. 7. & 16. 18. e ch. 8. 13. & 11. 5. Not into Egypt itself, but into another bondage as bad as that. f Ezek. 4. 13. Dan. 1. 8. g 2 Kings 17. 6. ch. 11. 11.

They, who worship idols, and give my glory to them, depending on them, and ascribing to them what I alone give them, *shall not dwell in the Lord's land;* though they have been in possession many years, and though now they seem out of fear of losing it, being great at home and in peace with neighbours abroad, yet in midst of this prosperity and security, let them note it, they shall not much longer dwell in the Lord's land, which God gave them according to promise, with express condition that they should obey him and fear him, and him only, Deut. vi. 2, 3, and with express menace of exile and ruin if they forgat God, Deut. viii. 19, 20. This land, which is the Lord's propriety, and theirs only on condition, and this condition broken, shall be their possession no longer. *Ephraim shall return to Egypt;* many of Ephraim, for it is not meant of all or the most part; but of the more timorous, wary, and who consult their safety beforehand, many shall flee into Egypt, and shift out of the enemies' reach. So again ver. 6. *They shall eat*

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unclean things in Assyria; the residue who flee not into Egypt shall be carried captives, and in Assyria be forced to eat forbidden meats, called here unclean, such as polluted the eater.

h ch. 3. 4. i Jer. 6. 20. ch. 8. 13 k Deut. 26. 14. l Lev. 17. 11.

4 [h]They shall not offer wine *offerings* to the LORD, [i]neither shall they be pleasing unto him: [k]their sacrifices *shall be* unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread [l]for their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.

They, captived for their idolatry and other sins, *shall not offer wine-offerings:* these were by the law appointed to be offered with the morning and evening sacrifice; the sacrifice representing Christ, and pardon by him, the wine-offering represented the Spirit of grace. The sacrifice repeated daily continued their peace and pardon; the Spirit of grace supported, guided, comforted, and refreshed; all which shall be withheld from these captives, the law of God forbidding on one account, the law of their conquerors forbidding on another account. *Neither shall they be pleasing unto him;* or if any should venture to do it, and think thereby to appease God's anger, they shall miss their aim, it will not please God. *Their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners;* their eucharistical sacrifices, in which they were used to feast with joy, shall be to them as the bread of mourners, as if they had buried a father or mother, and to comfort or support their saddened spirits did force themselves to some larger allowance and choicer meats; so great should be their grief in midst of their joys. Or else thus, their sacrifices should as much pollute them and displease God as if one mourning for the dead, and forbidden to sacrifice in tears and mourning, should yet venture to do it, and, against the law, sacrifice to his God when polluted by the dead, Numb. xix. 11—14; Deut. xxvi. 14. *All that eat thereof shall be polluted;* so far shall these men's sacrifices be from expiating and purifying, that they should increase their guilt and danger, and incur the penalty threatened against the polluted, Numb. xix. 13. *For;* or, surely; the particle is not here causal, but assertive, as in many other places it is. *Their bread for their soul;* their *mincha* or bread, which they always offered and were bound to offer with their sacrifices. Or else the first-fruits of their corn, which were to be brought to the Lord, and which being rightly offered did sanctify and insure the rest to them, with a blessing. This should not be done, they should be at that distance from the temple, and under the confinement of captives, so that they should not be able to do it if they were willing. *Shall not come;* be brought in to the priest in the temple, Deut. xxvi. 2, 3, &c.

m ch. 2. 11.

5 What will ye do in [m]the solemn day, and in the day of the feast of the LORD?

Think with yourselves what you are likely to do then: on those days you were wont to cease from your labours, to offer sacrifices to God, (as you thought and said,) to feast with one another, all was full of seeming religion and real feasting and jollity on those days in your own country; but will your hard masters, that love their own profit, that hate your persons, and despise your religion, will they lose your labour, indulge your ease, encourage your religion, and suffer you to exercise it? Is this imaginable?

+ Heb. *spoil.* n ch. 7. 16. ver. 3. ‖ Or, *their silver shall be desired, the nettle, &c.* + Heb. *the desire.* o Is. 5. 6. & 32. 13. & 34. 13. ch. 10. 8.

6 For, lo, they are gone because of †destruction: [n]Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them: ‖†the pleasant *places* for their silver, [o]nettles shall possess them: thorns *shall be* in their tabernacles.

For, lo; mark it well, and observe the event. *They are gone because of destruction;* some of the wary and timorous are already withdrawn from the desolation that cometh on their country, and more will flee from the Assyrian invader; and it is very near, and very uncertain, expressed therefore in the perfect tense. *Egypt shall gather them up;* in Egypt they hope to be quiet, and survive these desolations, and to return into their own land; but they shall die in Egypt, and Egyptians shall lay them out, and prepare them to their grave. So this phrase, Jer. viii. 2; Ezek. xxix. 5. *Memphis*, which elsewhere is called *Noph*, Isa. xix. 13, a very greatly traded city in those days, and at this day also known by the name which speaks its greatness, Grand Cairo. *Shall bury them:* many of the ten tribes, fleeing their own wasted country, did no doubt remove so far as Memphis, partly for safety, that they might be out of the Assyrian's reach, but more principally for convenience of a trade, that they might at least get a livelihood, if not grow rich on their trade; there many of these fugitives died; and perhaps by the pestilence (which is a disease that frequently sweeps that city) multitudes of them might be swept away into their graves in and about that city. *The pleasant places for their silver;* their beautiful and strong houses built for keeping their wealth in. *Nettles shall possess them;* they shall be ruined, and lie long in rubbish, till nettles grow up in them. *Thorns*, or briers, or whatever (one kind for all) worthless and hurtful shrubs used to grow in perpetuated desolations, *shall be in their tabernacles*, in their dwelling-places, their houses, which here retain the name of their ancient habitations when they dwelt in tents.

+ Heb. *man of the spirit.* p Ezek. 13. 3, &c. Mic. 2. 11. Zeph. 3. 4.

7 The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know *it:* the prophet *is* a fool, †[p]the spiritual man *is* mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.

The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come: the prophet doubleth the same thing, both to confirm the certainty of it, and to awaken the stupid Israelites: the days of God's just displeasure, in which he will punish, and render to these incorrigible idolaters and abominable debauchees as their wickedness deserveth, are come, they are very near, within four years at most. *Israel shall know it;* Israel will not believe it, though God hath often told them of it, but when it is come, and they feel it, they shall then know indeed, as fools know when they smart for their folly. *The prophet is a fool;* their false prophets were all, to a man of them, fools and rash, judging by present greatness or alliances of Israel, not observing what were their sins and God's wrath. Now when Hosea preached what was contained in this 9th chapter, Israel had made a league with So king of Egypt, cast off the Assyrian, and not sought to God, but vainly trusted to the Egyptian succours; now any wise man might imagine that likely which the prophet Hosea did foretell as certain, that the Assyrian with all his power would fall upon the revolters; none but fools would promise such a people a time of safety when the war was falling upon their heads. *The spiritual man*, that pretends to be full of the Spirit of prophecy, and foretells good to them, whom we thought a true prophet; but now find by sad experience that we believed a madman, one much out of his wits; yet were we more, to believe what he promised. *For the multitude of thine iniquity:* God was highly displeased with the multitude of their iniquities, and began his punishments in giving them over to believe the lies of their false prophets, and to expect what peace those prophets did promise. *And the great hatred* which God had against your sins and ways: you would walk in ways which God hated, yet would have prophets to foretell peace and plenty; such you have had as described Micah ii. 11, and you believed them; and God, out of his just dislike, suffered this to be, left you to your choice.

q Jer. 6 17. & 31. 6. Ezek. 3. 17. & 33. 7. ‖ Or, *against.*

8 The [q]watchman of Ephraim *was* with my God: *but* the prophet *is* a snare of a fowler in all his ways, *and* hatred ‖ in the house of his God.

The watchman of Ephraim was with my God; the old true prophets indeed were with God, heard what he spake, and told it to the people; they were for God, for his honour, law, worship, and temple; and so should prophets now be. Ephraim once had such prophets, such were Elijah and Elisha, but none such now, or Ephraim cares not for them. The prophet speaks of God, the true God, as his God, in opposition to idols, on which Ephraim doted now, whose pretended oracles they believed. *But the prophet;* the prophets now-a-days, who call themselves prophets, and are so accounted by the people, have, as the people, left God, and do no more consult with God. *Is a snare of a fowler;*

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their pretended predictions and promises are but a snare, such as fowlers lay to take fowl in; and these impostors are conscious to themselves that they are deceivers; at least they cannot but know that the true God never gave them answer at any of their images, yet they pretend he hath done it, and that he will prosper them; so they insnare the people first in sin, next in punishment. *In all his ways;* and all they design and endeavour by all means is to keep the people in this opinion and hope. *And hatred in the house of his God;* so is hatred in the sight of God, he doth hate such deceivers; and he is hatred, i. e. ere long will be hatred, in the sight of the people he deceived; they shall hate their false prophets, who from the house of their God, by answers from the idols in their temples, confirmed the people in their rebellion, and hardened them against returning to God, which ends in their ruin: or else hatred, &c., i. e. cause of the people's hatred, against God and one another.

r Is. 31. 6. ch. 10. 9. s Judg. 19. 22. t ch. 8. 13.

9 [r]They have deeply corrupted *themselves*, as in the days of [s]Gibeah: [t]*therefore* he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins.

They, the people of the ten tribes, prophets, priests, princes, and people, *have deeply corrupted themselves*, have strangely and horribly debauched one another; beside all their idolatry, there is more than brutish filthiness among them. *As in the days of Gibeah;* the story whereof you have Judg. xix. *Therefore he*, God, who hateth such workers of iniquity, *will remember their iniquity;* he will not pardon their iniquity, but charge it upon them: when God saith he will not remember, it is a promise of pardon; when he threatens he will remember, it is a threat of not pardoning. *He will visit their sins;* he will punish: see ver. 7.

u Is. 28. 4. Mic. 7. 1. x See ch. 2. 15. y Num. 25 3. Ps. 106. 28. z ch. 4 14. a Jer. 11. 13. See Judg. 6. 32 b Ps. 81. 12. Ezek. 20. 8. Amos 4. 5.

10 I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as [u]the firstripe in the fig tree [x]at her first time: *but* they went to [y]Baal-peor, and [z]separated themselves [a]unto *that* shame; [b]and *their* abominations were according as they loved.

I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness: the Lord speaks of himself in the person of a traveller, who unexpectedly in the wilderness findeth a vine loaded with grapes, which are most delightful and welcome to him; such love did God bear to Israel, i. e. a very strong and hearty love: the simile expresseth the greatness, not the cause, of the Divine love. *I saw your fathers;* not Abraham, or Isaac, and Jacob, but your fathers whom I brought out of Egypt. *As the first-ripe in the fig tree at her first time;* as the earliest ripe fruit, either of the fig tree, as our version, or the first-ripe of any sweet and delicious fruit tree, as the word will bear, which are most valued and desired; so was Israel dear and valued. *They went to Baal-peor:* this evinceth that the prophet speaketh not of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but of those who were brought out of Egypt, as appears in the story of their deportment in Shittim, Numb. xxv. 1—3, where they committed idolatry with Baal-peor, of whose rites authors do variously discourse, some reporting them to have been practised with shameless looseness, as the rites of Bacchus, Venus, or Priapus among the Romans; others say, this idol of Moab had his name from a mountain in Moab where he was worshipped, and had a stately and famous temple; this mountain is mentioned Numb. xxii. 41, with xxiii. 28; and this is the more likely opinion. *Separated themselves;* they did consecrate and dedicate themselves; possibly some turned priests to the idol; however, they addicted themselves to and worshipped the idol, and brought their sacrifices. *To that shame:* by way of contempt and detestation the prophet speaks of this idol, and gives it the name of *shame* in the abstract, to express the greatest degree of detestation of it, and of that they did. *Their abominations*, their idols, and way of worshipping them, *were according as they loved;* either as they fancied, or as the idolatrous women whom they loved were multiplied, so their idols were, for they took the idols with them.

11 *As for* Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.

Their glory; their children or posterity, which was as much the glory of Israel, as their multiplying was above the common rate of other nations' multiplying; it was to them a singular blessing, and performing of promise, and they did greatly rejoice and glory in this blessing, Psal. cxxviii.; Prov. xvii. 6. *Shall fly away like a bird:* it is proverbial, and speaks a sudden and unexpected loss of children, which vanish and are gone as a bird: see Prov. xxiii. 5, where sudden loss of riches is expressed in the same proverb. *From the birth;* shall die as soon as born. *From the womb;* prove abortive, their mothers shall not bring the fruit of the womb to perfection, or alive into the world. *From the conception;* through barrenness their wives shall not conceive.

c Job 27. 14. d Deut. 28. 41, 62. e Deut. 31. 17. 2 Kings 17. 18. ch. 5. 6. f See 1 Sam. 28. 15, 16.

12 [c]Though they bring up their children, yet [d]will I bereave them, *that there shall* not *be* a man *left:* yea, [e]woe also to them when I [f]depart from them!

Or suppose neither of these, but that their children live, grow up and come to some maturity, yet God, provoked by their sins, will deprive them of their children by famine; or by civil wars, which were long and bloody on each other; or by pestilence; or by captivity, and dispersing them among enemies, to whom they shall be slaves, and, as slaves, beget children not to themselves, but to their masters. *There shall not be a man left;* there shall be a total extirpation of them and their memory; or else, I will cut them off from among men, as the phrase will bear. *Woe also to them when I depart from them!* to complete their misery, I will leave them, I will depart from them. It is sad to lose children, it is sadder to lose their God.

g See Ezek. 26, & 27, & 28. h ver. 16. ch. 13. 16.

13 Ephraim, [g]as I saw Tyrus, *is* planted in a pleasant place: [h]but Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer.

Ephraim; the kingdom of Israel. *Tyrus;* of which see Ezek. xxvi., xxvii., xxviii.; a very rich, well-fortified, and pleasant city, and secure too, that afterward held out thirteen years' siege against all the power of the Babylonian empire in Nebuchadnezzar's time. *Is planted in a pleasant place;* is now well provided, seems invincible, is as secure as Tyrus was in her prosperity; perhaps reckons either strength shall break the enemies, or money buy friends, or the magnificence and beauty of their places and dwellings shall be some safety to them; but all this shall avail nothing. *Shall bring forth his children to the murderer;* though a multitude of children to send forth in mighty armies against the enemy, yet it will be but a sending them out to the slaughter: God is departed from them, and will not go out with their armies, so they shall fall by the sword of the enemy, as they needs must whom God doth not befriend in a war.

i Luke 23. 29. † Heb. *that casteth the fruit.*

14 Give them, O LORD: what wilt thou give? give them [i]a †miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

Give them, O Lord; it is an abrupt but very pathetical speech of one that shows his trouble for the state of a sinking, undone nation, it is an intercession for them. *What wilt thou give?* as if he should say he knew not what to ask, or how to pray for them; he knew God had peremptorily determined to punish them with a total extermination, and in a most dreadful manner, as described ver. 11—13. Now give some mercy. *Give them a miscarrying womb;* the days are coming when the barren womb will be a blessing; give this, O Lord; it is less misery to have none, than to have all our children murdered by a barbarous enemy, Luke xxiii. 29. *Dry breasts;* not to starve the children born, but it is a further explication of the former; dry breasts are symptoms of a barren womb, whether by abortion or non-conception, by one or other. Prevent these woeful effects of our enemies' unjust rage, and of thy most righteous displeasure against us, O Lord.

k ch. 4. 15. & 12. 11. l ch. 1. 6.

15 All their wickedness [k]*is* in Gilgal: for there I hated them: [l]for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out

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of mine house, I will love them no more: [m] all their princes *are* revolters.

m Is. 1. 23.

All; the chief, or sum, or beginning: *Gilgal* is not to be understood exclusive to other places, for every city was full, there was all kind of sin elsewhere. *Their wickedness,* in rejecting God and his government. Here Saul was made king, and Samuel was rejected. Here they begun to turn the remarkable blessings God gave them in this place into a superstitious and hypocritical veneration of the place, and began their will-worship and idolatries. If all the impiety of Ephraim may be reduced to their horrible degeneracy and corruption in state and church, here it began, and so all was here. *Gilgal;* where Israel first pitched their tents after they passed over Jordan: see chap. iv. 15. *There I hated them;* as there they began to sin so notoriously, there also I began to show that I hated them *for the wickedness of their doings;* for the continued wickedness which from their first beginning there they have propagated to other places, and increased daily, and with obstinacy. *I will drive them out;* as men thrust out of their houses one that is altogether unworthy to dwell longer with them. *Of mine house;* by a synecdoche, the house for land; or, out of their house, which though theirs for use, was yet God's propriety; and when God casts Ephraim out of his house, he sends him into captivity. *I will love them no more;* I will cease to express any more love to thee; it is a meiosis, I will add no more love to them, i. e. I will add to hate them and punish them, I will leave them in the hand and under the fury of their enemies in a strange land. *All their princes,* their kings and rulers, both civil and ecclesiastical, *are revolters;* are and have been idolaters ever since the division in Jeroboam son of Nebat, not one of their kings but were idolaters, and obstinate and perverse in it also.

16 Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, [n] though they bring forth, yet will I slay *even* † the beloved *fruit* of their womb.

n ver. 13.
† Heb. *the desires.*
Ezek. 24. 21.

Ephraim is smitten: this gives us some guess at the time of this prophecy, which was after Jeroboam's death, in whose life and reign Ephraim was as a very flourishing tree, whose roots were full of sap and life; but after the death of this king they were, as here it is expressed, a tree smitten, as if scorched with lightning, or burnt up with a vehement and continued heat and drought by day; blasted they were, whatever was the means: or possibly it may refer to those seditions, civil wars, and rebellious conspiracies which (say some) did for some years afflict the kingdom of the ten tribes, which unnatural wars were as an axe to the root of this tree, and gave Pul king of Assyria opportunity and courage to set upon them, of whom they were forced to buy their peace at a dear rate, viz. a thousand talents of silver; or to the captivating of Naphtali, and taking many fortified towns out of Pekah's hand by Tiglath-pileser, who came up to the rescue of Ahaz, 2 Kings xv. *Their root is dried up;* this hath dried up the very roots of this tree; this blast from heaven hath not only scorched the top boughs, but rent the very body of this Israelitish tree, and hath spoiled its roots; or civil wars first, and foreign wars next, have cut up the roots of this tree, the strong and valiant young men, who were to perpetuate the life and beauty of this people. *They shall bear no fruit:* as such a dead root cannot spring out; so these Ephraimites never shall spring forth, they shall ever be barren. *Though they bring forth;* suppose they should yet bring forth, (such a supposition you meet with ver. 12, which see,) they shall not grow to maturity and greatness. *Yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their womb;* either by diseases, which are legibly from God's hand, or by the sword of one another, or of a foreign invader: if you do not enumerate all the ways God will take, we are sure he will take ways enough to make good his own word, and slay their beloved children, those children that were the more beloved for that their parents had either few, or else had lost some they had before.

17 My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be [o] wanderers among the nations.

o Deut. 28. 64, 65.

My God; no more thy God, O Ephraim, thou canst no more have hope on that account, but my God, saith the prophet, my God who hath revealed his purpose to me, and who will accomplish it, who will make good the word I have spoken against you. *Will cast them away:* your sins have been a weariness, a loathing to my God, and now as a vile, loathed, and wearisome thing is cast off by a man, so shall you be cast off from your God. *They did not hearken unto him;* neither did hearken to God to prevent apostacy, nor would ever after hearken to God at first to repent and turn to him; like a wilful adulteress, they would not keep faithful to their Husband, nor return to him when once departed from him. *They shall be wanderers;* have no city of their own, no settled dwelling-place; as much suspected, hated, ill used, and punished as vagabonds are in well-ordered commonwealths; all which is fully come upon them. *Among the nations:* Gentiles were such the proud circumcision did despise and hate, but now the sins of the circumcised shall bring them under as much contempt with the nations; nay, these proud apostates from God, when cast off and wanderers, shall account it a favour to be admitted to incorporate with, and so to grow up heathens among heathens, as after long time they did.

CHAP. X.

Israel is reproved and threatened for their impiety and idolatry, and exhorted to repentance.

ISRAEL *is* [a] ‖ an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit [b] he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land [c] they have made goodly † images.

cir. 740.
a Nah. 2. 2.
‖ Or, *a vine emp'ying the fruit which it yieldeth.*
b ch. 8. 11. & 12. 11.
c ch. 8. 4.
† Heb. *statues,* or, *standing images.*

Israel and Ephraim are terms our prophet doth ordinarily use, and they signify the same people, the ten tribes revolted from the house of David, and from the true worship of God. *Is an empty vine;* a vine wasted and spoiled, that hath lost its strength to bring forth any fruit, or that is robbed and pilled of the fruit it doth bring forth; this partly for want of the Divine protection and benediction, which they were wont to have, and partly from an inherent barrenness and weakness in this vine. *He bringeth forth fruit unto himself;* whatever fruit was brought forth by its remaining strength was not brought forth to God, for his service and honour; but for themselves, for their own use, for service of a state interest, to make presents, and to pay tribute; or, which is yet worse, to maintain the worship of idols. *According to the multitude of his fruit:* when the land yielded more plentiful increase, this plenty was impiously employed on multiplied idols, or on multiplied altars, built to the same idols. *He hath increased the altars* of their idols, either by adding to the number of altars, or else adding to the numbers of sacrifices offered to the idols on their altars. *According to the goodness of his land:* idolaters sottishly imagined that the goodness of their land was a blessing on them from their idols; thus sacrilegiously they robbed God, and on this mistake they proceed to further impiety. *He hath made goodly images;* more stately, more curiously wrought, more richly adorned, and it is most likely more for number too, accounting it a great devotion to have many and rich statues of their idols.

2 ‖ Their heart is [d] divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall † break down their altars, he shall spoil their images.

‖ Or, *He hath divided their heart.*
d 1 Kings 18. 21. Matt. 6. 24.
† Heb. *broken.*

Their heart is divided from God and his worship, or between God and Baal, such as Zeph. i. 5 speaks of, or else divided one from another by parties, and factions, and civil wars, which tended to their ruin. *Now shall they be found faulty;* as this was their sin, so the effects hereof should manifestly prove them faulty. *He,* either God, or the king of Assyria stirred up by God to invade and destroy Ephraim, *shall break down their altars;* utterly pull down those altars which they had multiplied to their idols: the Assyrians shall, as other conquering heathen idolaters, rage against the gods of the people they conquer, as well as against the

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people; such was the pride and atheism of these men. *He shall spoil their images;* waste or destroy them; how goodly soever they had seemed to be, yet they should be broken to pieces; and where made of rich materials, as silver and gold, or if adorned with it, the enemy should the sooner spoil them; and then it will appear how sottish this people were to trust in them, or ascribe any praise to them, when Baal cannot defend his own images or people.

e ch. 3. 4. & 11. 5. Mic. 4. 9. ver. 7.

3 [e]For now they shall say, We have no king, because we feared not the LORD; what then should a king do to us?

For; surely. *Now;* ere long. *They shall say;* see, and feel, and be convinced too of this truth. *We have no king;* either no king at all, as in an interregnum, or no such king as we expected and hoped: our dependence was much upon the wise, valiant, and successful conduct of our king; but he is either less wise and valiant, or less successful in his enterprises. *Because we feared not the Lord;* worshipped not, kept not his law, depended not on God, therefore we have no king, or one next to none, not able to help us. *What then should a king do to us?* and now if we had our king, were he as powerful, wise, and successful as Jeroboam the Second, yet it would be too late, the Assyrian power hath so far prevailed, and God is so far departed from us: kings are not able to save without the God of kings.

f See Deut. 29. 18. Amos 5. 7. & 6. 12. Acts 8. 23. Heb. 12. 15.

4 They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant: thus judgment springeth up [f]as hemlock in the furrows of the field.

They, the nobles and great men in Israel, the heads of the parties, or the counsellors of the kingdom, *have spoken words;* have in long and repeated consultations and debates contrived and laid forth the designs most like to help us; but all in vain, all is but words; or thus they have deceived one another, and ruined all; and this latter seems exactly to suit with what follows. *Swearing falsely*, by perjury deceiving those they treated with, *in making a covenant;* either among themselves, accepting a usurper, promising and swearing fealty to him; or with their allies, as with the Assyrian king, whose covenant they perjuriously broke, and, contrary to oath, sent to and confederated with Sua, or So, king of Egypt. *Judgment*, i. e. Divine revenges, do so abound every where; or else unequal and sinful projects, counsels, and resolutions of their rulers are, instead of just, wholesome, and saving, turned into bitter, poisonous, and pernicious as hemlock. *As hemlock in the furrows of the field;* a proverbial speech, expressing the greatness of this pernicious evil. So this will be explained by Amos vi. 12, oppression, injustice, and all sins spread (as hemlock quickly overruns a field) over all the kingdom.

g 1 Kings 12. 28, 29. ch. 8. 5, 6. h ch. 4. 15. ‖ Or, *Chemarim*, 2 Kings 23. 5. Zeph. 1. 4. i 1 Sam. 4. 21, 22. ch. 9. 11.

5 The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of [g]the calves of [h]Beth-aven: for the people thereof shall mourn over it, and ‖the priests thereof *that* rejoiced on it, [i]for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it.

The citizens who dwelt yet safe in Samaria, but knew that the Assyrian invaded the kingdom, beat Israel's army, and took his city; these idolatrous citizens were in bodily fear for their gods, lest the Assyrians should rudely spoil their godships. *Because of the calves of Beth-aven:* some give the reason of their fear, because they had sinned by these calves, and provoked God, therefore should this fear seize them; but it is more likely this doth speak the object of the Samaritans' fears, their cow-calves (as by way of contempt in the Hebrew) were the goodly deities they were afraid for; yet they trusted in these for aid against enemies, and now fear they have not power enough to defend themselves: what brutes are idolaters! Of this *Beth-aven*, principal seat of the calf god, see chap. iv. 15. *The people thereof;* they who dwelt at Beth-aven, who had gain and profit by the idol, to which many resorted; or else they that were addicted to this idol, worshipped it, and trusted in it. *Shall mourn over it;* howl and cry over the endangered god: so let all their sorrows be multiplied that hasten after any strange god. *The priests thereof*, that were to attend and offer sacrifices to these calves; the priests were like to lose their livings with their idol. *That rejoiced on it:* these priests formerly were fed, clothed, enriched, and got into credit by these their idols, this made them right glad. *The glory thereof*, all its credit and veneration, *is departed from it;* is vanished: it was once taken for a god, but now the case is altered, it is turned into a captive, and with loss of liberty hath lost its deity also; the Assyrians have either broken it, or carried it in derision into Assyria.

6 It shall be also carried unto Assyria *for* a present to [k]king Jareb: Ephraim shall receive shame, and Israel shall be ashamed [l]of his own counsel.

k ch. 5. 13. l ch. 11. 6.

It; the golden calf made by Jeroboam the First, 1 Kings xii. 28. *Shall be carried;* though it hath feet, it cannot go, it must be borne; as Isaiah derides the idols of Babylon, Isa. xlvi. 2, 7; Jer. x. 5; and it is carried in triumph. *For a present;* according to the custom of conquering generals, the rich and rare things of the conquered people were reserved for gifts to their kings; and here is a rarity indeed, a captive god, and it is rich, for it is made of gold. *King Jareb:* see chap. v. 13. *Ephraim shall receive shame, and Israel shall be ashamed:* the great confusion of this people is here foretold, and the certainty of it by the ingemination of the phrase: the Assyrians shall upbraid them with their brutish folly, to think that a god which could not keep itself from becoming a prey to insolent soldiers; and when thus taunted, Israel shall have nothing to answer, but must be silent with shame. *Of his own counsel;* which is expressly mentioned 1 Kings xii. 28; it was against the counsel of God; and as they began, so they persisted in it by the same counsel.

7 [m] *As for* Samaria, her king is cut off as the foam upon †the water.

m ver. 3, 15. † Heb. *the face of the water.*

As for Samaria, after three years' siege she shall be cut off. *Her king is cut off;* for all the rest of the kingdom was lost, and now he is pent up there also; he that was once the confidence of the ten tribes, and king of a mighty people, is now spoiled of all but one only city, where he is rather a prisoner than a king, kept close till made a captive. *Is cut off;* shortly will be cut off; it is not unlikely this prophecy should be delivered when Samaria was besieged. *As the foam upon the water;* as a contemptible, weak, and light thing: it is a proverb, and foretells how contemptibly the Assyrians should use them.

n ch. 4. 15. o Deut 9. 21. 1 Kin. 12. 30. p ch. 9. 6. q Is. 2. 19. Luke 23. 30. Rev. 6. 16. & 9. 6.

8 [n]The high places also of Aven, [o]the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed: [p]the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars; [q]and they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us.

The high places; the temples and altars of Baal and other idols. *Aven*, for Beth-aven, say most interpreters: what if *Aven*, vanity, folly, be here put for all idol worship and rites, which was notoriously *the sin of Israel? Shall be destroyed;* utterly overthrown; and lie so long waste and desolate, that thorns and thistles shall spring up out of the places where their altars once stood within their stately temples. When this shall be brought to pass, the idolatrous Israelites shall be in such perplexity, that they shall wish the mountains and hills might fall on them, and bury them alive, that they might escape the troubles that they did foresee were coming upon them; or it may be an upbraiding them for praying to lifeless stocks or statues, and telling them in their distress, and when their gods are gone, and cannot help, they should cry to deaf mountains to cover them.

9 [r]O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah: there they stood: [s]the battle in Gibeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them.

r ch. 9. 9. s See Judg. 20.

O Israel, thou hast sinned; you of the ten tribes with such consent have sinned, that you seem to do it as one man. *From the days of Gibeah;* ever since the days, so we; but, as Rivet observes, it will bear a comparative thus, *thou hast sinned above.* or *more than.* The ten tribes were greater sinners than those Gibeonites; so the prophet com-

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pareth the sins of the present age and that past. See Judg. xix., where the story is set down at large. See also chap. v. 8, the place described. *There they stood;* in that day and war some stood, who were a seed for raising up the tribe; so I refer this passage to the six hundred men who fled to the rock Rimmon. *The battle in Gibeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them;* that fatal battle did not reach them; but now Israel shall be more severely punished; for who escape the sword shall be carried captives, and they shall be no more a people or kingdom: or else thus; Israel hath sinned more than the Gibeonites, I will therefore punish them more than the Gibeonites; they stood once or twice, but Israel now shall be ever beaten and put to flight; in that war Israel had heart to rally, and after two defeats were victors in the third encounter, but it shall not be so now, a war shall overtake them now, not such to Israel as was that against the Gibeonites, for in that they had at last the better, but in this they shall be totally ruined.

t Deut. 28. 63. u Jer. 16. 16. Ezek. 23. 46, 47. ch. 8. 10. ‖ Or, *when I shall bind them for their two transgressions*, or, *in their two habitations.*

10 t*It is* in my desire that I should chastise them; and u the people shall be gathered against them, ‖when they shall bind themselves in their two furrows.

Our version leaves this verse somewhat obscure, but our reading in the margin doth much clear the words, and maketh them much more easily intelligible. *It is in my desire that I should chastise them;* I am resolved to punish them as I see good; they have deserved the utmost that I shall lay upon them, and therefore I will punish as I see meet. *The people shall be gathered;* the forces of the Assyrian empire shall be gathered in arms against them, I will bring Shalmaneser upon this sinful, idolatrous nation. *Against them;* Israel, or Ephraim. *When they shall bind themselves in their two furrows;* when I shall bind them, or when they shall be bound, for their two transgressions; so the marginal reading: and then it is plain, if once it appear what were their two transgressions; either corporal and spiritual adultery; and what if it were their revolt from David's house, their ancient rebellion and idolatry? or revolt from God: these were the two main spring-heads of their other particular sins, and for these they shall be bound as prisoners and captives, and carried away into Assyria.

x Jer. 50. 11. Mic. 4. 13. † Heb. *the beauty of her neck.*

11 And Ephraim *is as* x an heifer *that is* taught, *and* loveth to tread out *the corn;* but I passed over upon †her fair neck: I will make Ephraim to ride; Judah shall plow, *and* Jacob shall break his clods.

As an heifer; a young and wanton heifer, unaccustomed to the yoke, not used to hard labour. *Taught;* used to, and so skilled in or acquainted with. *Loveth to tread out the corn:* what we do by thrashing, the Jews did by these heifers or oxen, tread out the corn, and in doing this the law provided that the ox should not be muzzled, but should eat what it would: so it was with Ephraim, he loved that work that was so pleasant, which so well fed him. And God doth let Ephraim know that he had been very much indulged herein: God had given them all abundance and prosperity, and with little labour or care; and he expected thankfulness for it; but no such thing was done by Ephraim, he grew more insolent, untractable, and perfidious. When I found it so, *I passed over upon her fair neck,* laid some lighter yoke upon her, brought some gentler afflictions upon that people, to tame them, and make them serviceable; but this hath not prevailed. *I will make Ephraim to ride;* I will now deal more rigorously, I will try another course, and as horses are brought to work by one that can bring them to bear and carry the rider, so I will deal with Ephraim; I will ride on Ephraim, and tame him, i. e. by the Assyrians, who should subdue and enslave them. *Judah shall plough;* Judah, though less sinful, hath been used to harder labour, and more rugged treatment, hath ploughed when Ephraim hath reaped, yet I have spared Ephraim more. *Jacob shall break his clods;* the same in other proverbial speech repeated; their work is at present harder, but there is a harvest follows; though Judah plough, and Jacob break his clods, labour hard, and for their sins suffer, yet they sow in tears when harassed by Ephraim or going into Babylon, and shall reap in joy at the return. But Ephraim, who abused all my bounty and kindness, who worked only for his own profit, shall be more severely punished, and when he goeth forth shall return no more.

y Prov. 18. 21. z Jer. 4. 3

12 y Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; z break up your fallow ground: for *it is* time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness: the prophet continueth his care of their welfare, by exhorting them yet at last to repent, which, as learned interpreters observe, the prophet doth here in the same elliptic speech which is used before these imperatives, and is to be made up thus, The Lord hath said by his prophets, Sow, &c.; this same duty hath been pressed on them formerly, and is again commended to them; sow in righteousness, in universal righteousness, towards God in piety, towards man in equity, and herein see that ye sow plentifully, that is, exercise yourselves in these works. *Reap in mercy:* this is referred both to the Divine mercy, and so amounteth to a promise, and to the mercy we should show to man, and so is direction for another part of duty; both may well have place here. *Break up your fallow ground;* your hearts, O ye Ephraimites, have been, and still are, as ground overrun with weeds, which need be ploughed and broken up, that good seed may be sowed in them, that you may bring forth fruit in holy life, from a holy heart, and obtain mercy of God. *It is time to seek the Lord;* it is full time, if you consider it aright; or, it is yet time, you may seek and find he is not quite gone, still he calls you, therefore hearken, and follow seasonable advice, seek ye the Lord whilst he may be found. *Till he come;* seek with patience and faith until he doth, as certainly he will, come; for this passage is a virtual or implicit promise that God will come to them if they seek him, i. e. he will bless, favour, and love them; in these he will appear to them, which is his coming to them. *Rain righteousness;* plentifully pour out the fruits of his own goodness and mercy which he hath promised, and, having promised, it is a righteous thing they should be given according to promise; thus the mercies of God to us are his righteousness to us. *Upon you,* who repent and obey his counsel by his prophets.

a Job 4. 8. Prov. 22. 8. ch. 8. 7. Gal. 6. 7, 8.

13 a Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.

You, O Israelites, subjects of the kingdom of the ten tribes, *have ploughed wickedness;* instead of repentance, and a life of righteousness, you have lived in wickedness, and propagated it, you have increased all manner of impieties; thus you have abused and perverted the fruits of God's goodness. *Ye have reaped iniquity;* the wickedness you have sown hath sprung up and ripened into iniquity; or, you have met with a recompence worthy of this your labour, God hath punished you for your wickedness; the first seems most agreeable to the text. *Ye have eaten the fruit of lies;* fed yourselves with vain hopes, maintained yourselves upon a carnal, sinful confidence, forsaking the fountain of living waters; and these lies the prophet doth in the following words reduce to two heads. *Thou didst trust in thy way;* dependence on idols, worshipping them, and seeking to them; their way was their idolatry committed with the calves. *In the multitude of thy mighty men;* the next lie on which they lived was the wisdom and valour of their great men, their king, nobles, captains, and counsellors; in confidence of sufficient help by them, they held on in a way of sin and wickedness.

b ch. 13. 16. c 2 Kin. 18. 34. & 19. 13. d ch. 13. 16.

14 b Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shalman spoiled c Beth-arbel in the day of battle: d the mother was dashed in pieces upon *her* children.

Therefore, since such are their sins, and such will be their disappointments, since their refuges will be so vain, and their enemies so many and strong, *shall a tumult arise;* a

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discontent, murmur, and outcry, as of men affrighted, not knowing what course to take when the alarm is given, and certain news cometh, that Shalmaneser comes with his army against the kingdom of Israel. *Among thy people;* the Israelites, among all sorts of people, among all the tribes of the kingdom. *All thy fortresses shall be spoiled;* every one of thy strong holds, those impregnable fortifications on which thou hast laid out all that art and diligence could, to make them able to break the power of the enemy that dares besiege them, these, every one of them, (as the Hebrew construction bears it,) shall be wasted. *Shalman;* it is most probably spoken of Shalmaneser, though abbreviated, which is usual in all writings of history; so Alexander or Pompey, without the addition of Great, and so here *Shalman* without *eser*, or surnamed prince. *Beth-arbel;* possibly Arbel here may be the name of a man whose house and family Shalman destroyed, and so this passage might be read, *the house of Arbel;* but the more likely reading is as we read it, so it is the name of some country or city, or both. We meet with a city of this name, famous for the overthrow which Alexander gave to Darius. and probable it is that this might be that Arbel or Beth-arbel here spoken of, rebuilt and grown great again since the sack of it by Shalman, which was at least four hundred years before the overthrow of Darius. It was a city of Assyria, and gave name, Arbelis, to a country or region, part of Assyria, and lay somewhat below Arpad. *In the day of battle:* of this war we no where else read; it is likely it was not long before the war with Samaria and the ten tribes, that the memory of that severity was fresh, and the particulars then well known. *The mother was dashed in pieces upon her children;* all were put to the sword, and the city utterly destroyed.

15 So shall Beth-el do unto you because of †your great wickedness: in a morning [e]shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off.

† Heb. *the evil of your evil.*
[e] ver. 7.

So; mercilessly and universally ruin. *Beth-el;* one place put for every one, and the place put for the idolatry committed there. *Do;* procure, bring your idolatry and sins, do all this evil against you. *Unto you,* O Samaritans, and the rest of the ten tribes. *Because of your great wickedness:* this idolatry, and the concomitant sins, are here summed up in their total sum, *great wickedness*, exceeding great. *In a morning;* suddenly, or so soon as it is day; possibly the Assyrians might assault the city towards morning, and master it. *Shall the king of Israel,* Hoshea, *utterly be cut off;* his power broken, for his life was spared, and he made a prisoner, 2 Kings xvii. 4.

CHAP. XI.

Israel's ingratitude to God for his benefits, 1—4. *God's judgment upon them,* 5—7. *His mercy toward them,* 8—11. *Ephraim's falsehood, and Judah's fidelity,* 12.

cir. 740. WHEN [a]Israel *was* a child, then I loved him, and [b]called my [c]son out of Egypt.

[a] ch. 2. 15.
[b] Matt. 2. 15.
[c] Ex. 4. 22, 23.

When Israel was a child; in the infancy of Israel, which is here dated equal with his being in Egypt. *Then I loved him;* manifested that tender and paternal affection which I did bear to him, increasing him in numbers, wealth, and honour. *Called my son;* adopted him to be my son, and as my son provided for him, and brought him out of servitude; I so loved him as to give Egypt for his ransom, Isa. xliii. 3. *Out of Egypt;* where they had sojourned two hundred and fifteen years, and in them suffered many outrages from the Egyptians, who were their enemies, and aimed at extirpating Israel. Now, amidst such enemies, God owned them to be his sons, his eldest son, and redeemed him out of bondage, a fruit of wonderful love never to be forgotten. This in the letter and history is exceeding plain, but there is difficulty in the application of this unto Christ, and his call out of Egypt, of which many interpreters treat at large, which may not now be so much as summarily touched. It is too little to say that the evangelist doth allude to this place, Matt. ii. 15, and I think it is too much to say this place is cited by Matthew, as in the history of the thing, referring only to Christ being called out of Egypt; but if you will make Israel the first adopted son, type of Christ, the first-born, and the history of Israel's coming out to be a type of Christ's future coming out, you then give to both their proper share in these words, and the letter and history is verified in both, and the principal import of the words will refer to Christ, as principally intended in them, yet not excluding the type.

2 *As* they called them, so they went from them: [d]they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.

[d] 2 Kin. 17. 16. ch. 2. 13. & 13. 2.

As they; Moses and Aaron, and other prophets, and holy, zealous judges and priests, as Samuel, &c. *Called;* advised, persuaded, entreated, and urged by exhortations. *Them;* the whole house of Israel, and among these the ten tribes, or Ephraim. *So they;* Israelites, called and entreated, especially they of that age when the division was made, and ever since. *Went from;* frowardly and most disingenuously apostatized more and more, as the prophet, Isa. i. 5. Horrible ingratitude so to requite God! *From them;* from the prophets' counsel and commands, delivered as they came from God. *They sacrificed unto Baalim;* in the desert they began this apostacy, joined themselves to Baal-peor, Numb. xxv. 3, and worshipped the calf, Exod. xxxii. 4—6, and held on with obstinacy in it. *Graven images;* images of their gods, before which they performed another part of religious worship, burning incense before them.

3 [e]I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that [f]I healed them.

[e] Deut. 1. 31. & 32. 10, 11, 12. Is. 46. 3.
[f] Ex. 15. 26.

I taught Ephraim also to go; as a mother or nurse doth help the child, and with tenderest care doth guide and form its steps, and by long-continued patience waits on it; such like was the tenderness of God toward Israel in his childhood. *Taking them by their arms;* supporting and bearing them up, as nurses bear up the child in their hands, taking them up by the arms, giving strength for motion, till the child should grow to strength. *But they knew not that I healed them;* unthankful, sottish, and heedless ones, neither would see nor acknowledge me in it, but within few months' time ascribe their deliverance to a golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 4; thus foolishly they requite the love of their God.

4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and [g]I was to them as they that †take off the yoke on their jaws, and [h]I laid meat unto them.

[g] Lev. 26. 13.
† Heb. *lift up.*
[h] Psa. 78. 25. ch. 2. 8.

I drew them; I found them backward and unapt to lead, I therefore in my pity laid my hand on them, and, as a father or friend, drew them gently to me. *With cords of a man,* i. e. with such obliging kindness as best fits and most prevails with a man, with reason. *With bands of love;* those arguments of love, which might, as strong bands, hold them fast to my law and worship for their good. I used all manner of kindnesses towards them to fix them in good. *I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws;* as a careful husbandman doth in due season take the yoke from his labouring oxen, and takes off the muzzle with which they were kept from eating when at work, gives them time of rest and feeding: so did God with Israel. *I laid meat unto them;* brought them provision in their wants, as the careful husbandman brings fodder and provender for his wearied labouring oxen, by which plain simile God doth inform Israel in Hosea's time what ancient, tender, constant, and vigilant love he had showed to Israel, to their predecessors, and to them also, and hereby discovers their unheard-of ingratitude and wickedness, which began in their fathers, and hath continued with increase to the days of their final ruin.

5 ¶ [i]He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, [k]because they refused to return.

[i] See ch. 8. 13. & 9. 3.
[k] 2 Kings 17. 13, 14.

He; Ephraim thus provided for by me, thus indulged, or else Ephraim punished. *Shall not return into the land of Egypt;* either needed not have courted Egypt's friendship, or desired that assistance; I would have kept them safe enough, and sufficiently provided for them; so if you refer this to Ephraim not threatened or punished: but if Ephraim be here threatened, then you have it foretold, that though

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Ephraim flatters himself with false hopes of a refuge in Egypt, it should not be. *But the Assyrian shall be his king;* conquering and captivating them, should make himself their king, and rule them with rigour and cruelty. *Because they refused to return;* the reason of all is, their obstinacy in idolatry, and their impenitence, refusing to return to God; which two latter passages are also explicable as the former, thus, if they would have returned unto me, Assyria should not have been their king.

cir. 728. They became tributaries to Salmanasser. 1 ch. 10. 6.

6 And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour *them*, [1]because of their own counsels.

The sword; either intestine or foreign wars, or both. *Shall abide;* shall be long, not be as a sudden incursion, which doth much mischief to surprised and unfortified places, but it shall be a lasting war; three years Samaria was besieged, so the sword did abide. *On his cities;* all the cities of Ephraim, the enemy should have courage and leisure to attend the siege of every one of them. *Shall consume;* shall prevail to take, sack, burn, and ruin the branches. *His branches;* lesser towns and villages. *Devour them;* swallow them up with speed and ease, without remedy. *Because of their own counsels;* which they first took, 1 Kings xii. 28, and ever since irreclaimably have followed, in opposition to all the good counsels the prophets gave them from time to time, to all which they have turned a deaf ear; they have sued for Egypt and Asshur's favour, and slighted mine.

m Jer. 3. 6, &c. & 8. 5. ch. 4. 16. n ch. 7. 16. † Heb. *together they exalted not.*

7 And my people are bent to [m]backsliding from me: [n]though they called them to the most High, †none at all would exalt *him*.

My people; yet God owneth them for his, he had not cast them quite off; or since they call themselves his, he is willing to encourage them by owning all in them that looks toward him. *Are bent to backsliding from me;* or continue in suspense, doubtful and unresolved what to do, or rather inclined most to an aversion from me: though the Lord's prophets have persuaded them earnestly to return by repentance, yet they continue unresolved what is best to be done, whether to adhere to their idol gods, to make sure of Egyptian aids, or to turn to God, and cast off the other; this they most dislike, and continue as it were tacked and fastened to their rebellion, as the French version. *Though they*, the prophets, *called them to the Most High;* invited, exhorted, and encouraged them with many fair promises to give glory to God by returning. *None at all;* not one of many, scarce any one in those great numbers in Israel, would hearken and obey. *Would exalt him;* God in his holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, all which a repenting people do magnify, but these will not. They retain their idols, depend on Egypt, and put all on that cast, and will neither believe nor try God's goodness.

o Jer. 9. 7. ch. 6. 4. p Gen. 14. 8. & 19. 24, 25. Deut. 29. 23. Amos 4. 11. q Deut. 32. 36. Is. 63. 15. Jer. 31. 20.

8 [o]How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? *how* shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as [p]Admah? *how* shall I set thee as Zeboim? [q]mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.

After such unparalleled abuse of infinite mercy and patience, what could be expected, but unrelenting wrath and fiercest indignation? but here is a wonder above all the rest; bowels troubled, and struggling with anger, and contesting on behalf of most inexcusable sinners. O Ephraim, thou hast deserved to be destroyed for ever, thy sins call for this, and my justice threatens it, I may do it; but my mercy interposeth, and I would rather spare in mercy than destroy in justice, there is still a debate between these two: How shall I give up to justice? saith mercy; and, How shall I not give up (saith justice) into the hands of enemies? Justice must be executed, that I must do, saith God; and mercy shall be magnified, that I will do; but how shall this be done? If I deliver thee, O Israel, to thine enemies, they will utterly destroy, and where then is mercy? If I deliver thee not, thy sins will not be chastised, and where then is justice? If I punish thee, as I punished Admah and Zeboim, with fire from heaven, I do what is just, but then I show no mercy; for these are two of the four cities which suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, of which Gen. xix. 24. *Mine heart is turned within me:* after the manner of man God speaks; we know what it is to have a heart turned from wrath into kindness and compassions, so God speaks of himself here, and Isa. lxiii. 15; Jer. xxxi. 20. *My repentings are kindled together;* still, like a compassionate man, he could wish his threats in again, his bowels are now as in a flame for them.

9 I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: [r]for I *am* God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.

r Num. 23. 19. Is. 55. 8, 9. Mal. 3. 6.

Here mercy rejoiceth against judgment, and God declareth his purpose to spare, he promiseth that he will not execute according to utmost severity. This promise he confirmeth by doubling it, though in somewhat different words: I will not do as men, who having beat down an enemy, and wounded him, do return again to see whether he breathe, and to make an end of him; or conquerors, that plunder the conquered city, carry away the wealth of it, and after some time return to burn it; God will not do so. *I am God, and not man;* his compassions are infinite, his goodness unchangeable; he remembers all his promises to every one, and now seeth who among Israel believe, and hope for his grace and mercy; these he must spare, as he is just Judge of the whole earth, and for their sakes he will spare many others. *The Holy One in the midst of thee;* a holy God, and in covenant, though not with all, yet with many among you, and those that are in covenant with God are holy ones too: I will not make them as Admah or Zeboim, for the case is different, in the cities of the plain there were no righteous ones, but here are some, though not many: and so Rivet renders the words, there is a holy one in the midst of thee, where the singular is used for plural, as in that passage, *there is none righteous. I will not enter into the city;* I will not come amongst you, as I came into Sodom, &c. Here is comfort for God's remnant.

10 They shall walk after the LORD: [s]he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble [t]from the west.

s Is. 31. 4. Joel 3. 16. Amos 1. 2. t Zech. 8. 7.

They, whom infinite mercy spareth, the choice remnant, *shall walk after the Lord;* shall hear and obey, worship and depend on the Lord, on the Messiah, of whom these and the words of the next verse do certainly speak. They refer also to the return out of captivity, in both history and type, of our deliverance out of spiritual and eternal captivity. *He shall roar like a lion;* Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, shall send out his gospel: this is meant by the lion's roaring, Joel iii. 16, of whom it is observed, that he doth by roaring gather his whelps and others of his kind to the prey: by the mighty voice of the Lord in the gospel, the elect shall be gathered to partake of eternal life. *Then the children shall tremble;* the Spirit by its power awakening them to the sight of sin, shall make them fear and tremble, *from the west*, to the ends of the earth. This is the mystical sense; yet the literal, I think, refers to the return of the Jews out of captivity, when many out of Assyria and Egypt returned, and some report one hundred thousand from Ethiopia Cusæa, and the parts toward Arabia; and possibly this hath particular respect to Darius's decree, on the behalf of those that followed Haggai and Zechariah's counsel, finished the temple, restored the worship of God, reformed strange and unlawful marriages, paid their tithes, &c.; in these they followed the Lord; and Darius made a decree for them, terrible to the children of the west, as the roaring of a lion: Let this work go forward, Ezra vi. 7, &c.; who dares to hinder, let timber be taken out of his house, and a gallows made thereof, and such be hanged thereon, ver. 11, 12. All this filled the inhabitants of those parts with great fear, when God thus gathered his dispersed ones: but what I conjecture at I do submit to better judgments.

11 They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, [u]and as a dove out of the land of

u Is. 60. 8. ch. 7. 11.

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x Ezek. 28. 25, 26. & 37. 21, 25.

Assyria: x and I will place them in their houses, saith the LORD.

The summary of the first part of this verse seems to be, that some should hasten, yet with solicitude, out of Egypt, whither they fled for shelter, like as a bird that hath been cast out of her nest hasteth to it; others like doves shall hasten out of Assyria unto Judea, but with fear and solicitude, which cannot but attend them in a land, though their own, yet now desolate and horrid under one hundred and eighty years' devastation since Shalmaneser transported them, i. e. one hundred and ten years before and seventy years concurrent with the Jews' captivity in Babylon. *I will place them in their houses;* they will find none, but I will place them in houses, and they shall be theirs too. It is a very seasonable and comfortable promise, and suited to the state and wants of those returning exiles, and in the letter of it refers to them; and they as types of what is more mysteriously and more darkly contained in them, viz. the gathering of believers from all quarters to Christ with the alacrity and speed which birds make in flying to their nests, and God's providing mansions of rest for them: well resembled here in these similes.

y ch. 12. 1.

12 y Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful ‖ with the saints.

‖ Or, *with the most holy.*

This verse might better begin the next chapter, and by most interpreters I have seen, it is the first verse of the next chapter; but since we find it here we will here consider it.

Ephraim; many or the most of Ephraim. *Compasseth me about with lies;* play the hypocrites with me still; yet give me good words, call themselves my people, and say I am their God, and that they worship me and seek me; but they flatter me with their mouths, and lie unto me with their tongues, as Psal. lxxviii. 36. So God upbraids them with this their sin. *And the house of Israel with deceit;* the same thing in an ingeminated phrase, to affect and ascertain the more. *Judah;* the people of the two tribes, under the government of the house of David. *Ruleth with God;* while idolaters are vassals and slaves to the devil and to their own superstitious fears, the true worshippers of God, like princes, rule with God. Or rather, keeping to the house of David, retained the government in state affairs, which was *Theopolitia*, a government set up of God; when Ephraim made kings and princes, but God did not know it, i. e. did not advise nor approve it. *And is faithful with the saints;* retains also purity, at least truth, of worship, and in the holy things of God keepeth to his word, and comparatively is faithful: whereas Ephraim is hypocritical and false, Judah adheres to God's holy prophets, priests, and other saints of God.

CHAP. XII.

Ephraim and Judah are both reproved, 1, 2. *In consideration of God's former favours to Jacob they are exhorted to repent,* 3—6. *Ephraim's sins and ingratitude provoke God,* 7—14.

cir. 725.
a ch. 8. 7.
b 2 Kings 17. 4. ch. 5. 13. & 7. 11.
c Is. 30. 6. & 57. 9.

EPHRAIM a feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily increaseth lies and desolation; b and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and c oil is carried into Egypt.

Ephraim feedeth on wind: it is a proverbial speech, denoting the self-flattery of Ephraim, his supporting himself with hopes as unfit to sustain him, as the wind is to feed the body and nourish it; in his religious pretensions he did, hypocrite like, compass God with lies, and now in his civil concerns he compasseth himself with lies. *Followeth after the east wind:* in those countries the east winds were most vehement, dangerous, and blasting, Psal. xlviii. 7; Jonah iv. 8; a very apt emblem to represent the self-destroying course which Ephraim took, which, though yet he will not believe, shall ere long scorch, blast, rend, and tear him as the tempestuous east winds do the weaker and unfenced plants. *He daily increaseth lies;* by making new leagues, and fortifying himself with them against the menaces of God by his prophets, he increaseth friendships; but all of them will prove lies to him at last, like the wind he feeds on. The like you have chap. x. 13; Isa. lvii. 9, 13. *And desolation:* this is worse than merely to be disappointed by a lie; as before the east wind was hurtful and did him mischief, so here his purchased friendships shall hasten and increase his desolation. The league made with Sua, or So, king of Egypt, was accounted a conspiracy in Hoshea, and this brought Shalmaneser upon Israel, which war ended in Israel's ruin and final desolation. *They do make a covenant with the Assyrians;* with purpose to defeat the threats of God, and to secure themselves in their courses. Thus they sinfully confederate as before, chap. v. 13; vii. 11; viii. 9; they forsake God's covenant, and trust not him, but make a covenant with enemies, and trust them. *Oil is carried into Egypt;* not common oil for trade, but rich and precious oils, presents and price to procure friendship there too, though forbidden, Isa. xxx. 2, 6; xxxi. 1.

d ch. 4. 1. Mic. 6. 2.
† Heb. *visit upon.*

2 d The LORD hath also a controversy with Judah, and will † punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him.

The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah; though Judah, compared with Ephraim, be faithful, yet when considered in his ways and doings he is found faulty in many things, and God hath just matter of complaint against Judah in point of manners; in public worship Judah was faithful, kept to God and the temple, though not without some defects, but in their lives there were many more and greater faults, about which God will contend that Judah may be reformed. *Judah;* the two tribes. *Will punish;* or visit with chastising to amend, else to destroy: there is hope of Judah that he will be reclaimed, therefore I will try by gentler visitations, by fatherly corrections, yet I will not leave him as hopeless, nor as faultless. *Jacob;* not the patriarch, but those who are of him; his children, but that have degenerated from his ways of love, fear, trust, and obedience. Both Ephraim and Judah are of Jacob, but both have corrupted themselves, and therefore will I proceed against both; and if Judah, the less faulty, escape not, Ephraim can have no hope to escape; if Judah be whipped with rods because a disobedient son, Ephraim may fear a sword because he hath been and still is an obstinate rebel. *According to his ways;* neither can justly complain then, since their different ways are made the standard of the different proceedings of God against them, he will not lay upon either more than is equal; who suffers most hath deserved more, and who suffers least needed so much to to amend him. *According to his doings will he recompense him:* this is an elegant and very usual ingemination of the same thing, which doth assure it will be done, and should affect us the more.

e Gen. 25. 26.
† Heb. *was a prince, or, behaved himself princely.*
f Gen. 32. 24, &c.

3 ¶ He took his brother e by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he †f had power with God:

He, Jacob, *took his brother,* Esau, *by the heel in the womb:* the matter of fact you have Gen. xxv. 26; the design of mentioning it in this place is to mind them of that goodness which God showed to them in their father Jacob, who was by a miracle foretold to be superior to Esau, that he and his should have the birth-right: this should never be forgotten. The true worship of God they should have preserved, since in the priesthood, part of the primogeniture, it was included both as privilege and duty; justice and equity they should have maintained as a flower of the crown and kingly authority included in the birth-right, and a double portion or share in God's blessings was theirs too. But all these blessings are forfeited by their apostacy, for which at once they should blush, repent, and humble themselves, and at last remember their primogeniture, and labour to recover to a temper worthy this their original. Jacob strove for the blessing in the womb, but you profanely neglect it in full age. *By his strength;* this strength was not of nature, but of grace, a fruit of the Divine love and election, strength from God. *He had power with God;* strength received of God was well employed betimes, in it he

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wrestled for and obtained the blessing; but you let it slip out of your hands, and sin it away. There was somewhat of heroic; a conqueror from his birth, but you are revolters from the womb.

4 Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him *in* [g] Beth-el, and there he spake with us;

g Gen. 28. 12, 19. & 35. 9, 10, 15.

He; your famous progenitor of whom you boast. *Had power;* behaved himself as a prince with God, Gen. xxxii. 28. *Over;* with: the angel was willing to be conquered, or Jacob could not have gotten the victory. *The angel;* called *God*, ver. 3, and, ver. 5, is Jehovah, *Lord of hosts.* He was no created angel, but the uncreated Angel Christ, the Messiah, eternal God by nature and essence, angel by office and voluntary undertaking. *And prevailed;* got the victory, went out of the field a conqueror, but not by such arms and methods as you use. You are conquered by man because of your sins, he conquered with God by faith and prayer. *He*, not the angel, as some through mistake, but your father Jacob, *wept:* by this we know he prayed with tears, though the story say not so, with sense of his own unworthiness, with earnestness for the mercy he desired, and apprehensive of the majesty of him with whom he wrestled. But you, quite contrary, proud as if worthy, regardless of the best part of the blessing, and earnest only for the meaner part, seek it not of God, but idols. *And made supplication unto him:* it is Christ who is here intended; it was no mere creature, Jacob might not have prayed to such, but it was the Creator of angels and the Redeemer of man, the blessed Jesus, to whom every knee ought to bow, Phil. ii. 10. *He*, God, *found him*, Jacob, full of weariness, fears, and solicitude on his journey to Laban, Gen. xxviii. 12, 20, when prayers obtained a blessing; but with this, and more directly, when on his return after this wrestling bout, Gen. xxxv. 1, &c., God appeared to him, ver. 7—15, and blessed him. *Beth-el;* formerly called Luz, but by Jacob new named and called Beth-el, Gen. xxviii. 19. *There he*, God, *spake*, renewed his promise and confirmed the blessing, *with us:* by the current of the words in their grammatical order it should be, *he spake to him;* but it is, not without good reason, changed to the plural first person, *us*, as posterity were in Jacob's loins, and blessed with him. Yet more, where God appeared to Jacob he commanded him to build an altar there to God, to restore religion and reform his family from idolatry, which he did, Gen. xxxv. 4. But you, children of this Jacob by natural descent, are of another and far different humour; though you have been called and exhorted to leave your idols, yet these two hundred years you have kept them, and will, I see, keep them: this is your sin, and in it you are obstinate, and I will punish such a Jacob as you.

5 Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD *is* his [h] memorial.

h Ex. 3. 15.

Even, or and, he that appeared and spake, who promised the blessing, and commanded the reformation at Beth-el, was *the Lord*, Jehovah, the eternal and unchangeable God, who still promiseth with like commands. *God of hosts;* who can both perform his promise and execute his threat, who is a most terrible enemy and most desirable friend, all being to us as he is. *The Lord*, Jehovah, repeated for confirmation, *is his memorial;* by this he will be known, by this name, by such methods of his sovereignty and grace, Exod. iii. 15.

6 [i] Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and [k] wait on thy God continually.

i ch. 14. 1. Mic. 6. 8.
k Ps. 37. 7.

Therefore; no more vainly boast of Jacob; but, as he, do you approve yourselves to God. *Turn thou to thy God;* repent, leave idols, and all sins. He worshipped God alone, do you so; he cast idols out of his family, do you so too, be Jacob's children herein. *Keep mercy;* show kindness to all who need it, cast off cruelty and inhumanity, and be merciful to the afflicted: this contains all the duties we owe to any that are in straits. *And judgment;* wrong none; but with justice in dealings, in judicatures, and public offices, render to every one their due. Acquit the innocent, and condemn the guilty, and let none have just cause to complain of injuries. *Wait on thy God;* in public worship, and private duties of prayer, and seeking God, him only serve and trust, let not idols have either sacrifice, prayer, praise, or trust from you. *Continually:* and let your hope and worship be perpetuated, for ever continued towards God, till he save and rescue; trust, pray, and resign yourselves to him, who will be yours as he was Jacob's God, on these terms and no other. This short phrase, *wait on thy God*, includes all duties of the first table of the law, all religious worship of the true God; do this, and the Lord will be to you, as to Jacob, defence against danger and fulness in your wants.

7 ¶ *He is* ‖ a merchant, [l] the balances of deceit *are* in his hand: he loveth to ‖ oppress.

l Or, Canaan. See Ezek. 16. 3.
‖ Prov. 11. 1. Amos 8. 5.
‖ Or, deceive.

He is a merchant; Ephraim, of whom here, is so far from being Jacob, or as Jacob, that you may call and account him a Canaanite, a subtle merchant. *The balances of deceit are in his hand;* what he cannot gain by fair trading, he will by downright cheating; he is covetous, and very unjust. *He loveth to oppress;* where violence, calumnies, and false accusations are needful to compass his covetous and cozening designs, he will not stick at them; this way of gain he loveth, his heart is upon it; though God hate the false balance, and false witness, and the violent man, yet Ephraim loves them all for his gain.

8 And Ephraim said, [m] Yet I am become rich, I have found me out substance: ‖ *in* all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me † that *were* sin.

m Zech. 11. 5. Rev. 3. 17.
‖ Or, all my labours in-fer me not: he shall have punishment of iniquity in whom is sin.
† Heb. which.

Ephraim said; this covetous, oppressive merchant reckoned with himself, or discoursed with himself, upon the whole of his trading. *Yet I am become rich;* whatever is said by some, or thought by others, yet I get what I aim at: either it is good and lawful, and prospered to me by the blessing of God on it because it is just and righteous, or it is not so bad as morose prophets and preachers make it, or at worst (which I will venture, saith Ephraim) it lessens my innocency, but improves my stock, and this is more to such merchants than all the poor innocence in the world. *I have found me out substance;* the same thing, with a vain boast of what is not in his wealth and substance. If in his gain he assumed his own only to himself, it were praiseworthy; that is, if he took to himself with shame the sinful manner of acquiring it; but he takes the praise to himself, and forgets God; boasts of his wit, though he cannot of his honesty. *In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin;* finally, he hugs himself in the apprehension of close and crafty carriage of all his affairs, that no great fault, no crime, can be found in it to deserve a reproach or punishment, that he hath more reason to believe all is well since it doth prosper, than to suspect any great miscarriage which should deserve punishment. So this people do at once flatter themselves into security fearless of punishment, and into hardened obstinacy in sin incapable of amendment.

9 And [n] I *that am* the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt [o] will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feasts.

n ch. 13. 4.
o Lev. 23. 42, 43. Neh. 8. 17. Zech. 14. 16.

And, or but, I the Lord thy God, who forbade thy frauds and gave thee wealth, and am forgotten in both, thou fearest not mine anger and sinnest; thou forgettest that I give thee power to get wealth, and takest glory to thyself; but wouldst thou, as thou shouldst, remember, thou wouldst know *that I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt*, that all thy blessings from thy coming out of Egypt to this day are from me; I give more than thou gettest; thou boastest of what is not thine, and if thou wilt glory, remember it should be in my goodness and bounty. *Will yet make, &c.;* hitherto have made, &c.; thy peace, safety, plenty, and joy, (here expressed proverbially, in allusion to the joy and security which they enjoyed in the days of the feast of tabernacles,) were all through my goodness, presence, and faithfulness. And darest thou, O Ephraim, thus sacrilegiously rob me of the praise and glory? darest thou be thus unthankful? Or else thus, I would still make thee to dwell, &c., I take what course is fittest to prevent

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thy dangers, sorrows, and ruin, but all will not do, thou wilt undo thyself. I am Jehovah, I change not, I am thy God still, and have been so ever since thou camest out of Egypt, I gave thee plenty, peace, safety, joy, and would willingly continue it all, as will appear by what I have done to prevent thy sin, and continue thy obedience. Some tell us it is a threat that God will bring them into the condition of wanderers again, others make it a promise of future mercy; and in various conjectures we have ventured on what will suit the contexture of the words, at least tolerably well; if it be not the best, it best pleaseth at present.

p 2 Kings 17. 13.

10 [p]I have also spoken by the prophets, and I multiplied visions, and used similitudes, †by the ministry of the prophets.

† Heb. *by the hand.*

I have also spoken by the prophets; Heb. *and*, i. e. since I would have continued Ephraim's peaceful state, I have spoken to them by my prophets, who have warned them of their danger, reproved them for their sins, entreated them to repent and do their duty; so I would have established them, my prophets spake plainly to them. *I have multiplied visions;* by many visions and representations of my mind, the duty of the people, what would be safe, what dangerous, by lively emblems set before the prophets, and by them told to Israel, I have advised and warned that I might yet settle them. I would have had them dwelt still in the peace, safety, and joy of festivals, therefore I have sent such as Hosea, Isaiah, Joel, &c. *Used similitudes;* parables, examples, actions: Isaiah goes barefoot, names his son Maher-shalal-hash-baz, to warn Israel. Beth-arbel's desolation is mentioned to prevent Samaria's. Hosea takes an adulteress to wife to bring Israel to sight and sense of their sin. All this and much more by my prophets, because I had compassion and would have made them dwell in peace and safety under my government. And yet uncounselable and unthankful Israel will not understand and comply, will not own their sins and repent.

q ch. 5. 1. & 6. 8. r ch. 4. 15. & 9. 15. Amos 4. 4. & 5. 5. s ch. 8. 11. & 10. 1.

11 [q]*Is there* iniquity *in* Gilead? surely they are vanity: they sacrifice bullocks in [r]Gilgal; yea, [s]their altars *are* as heaps in the furrows of the fields.

Is there iniquity in Gilead? in this concise interrogatory the prophet warns the refractory, ungodly Israelites by an example of God's wrath on them. About A. M. 3264, at Ahaz's request and charges, Tiglath-pileser came up against Israel, and took Gilead among other towns, leading the inhabitants captives, 2 Kings xv. 29; now some sixteen or seventeen years after doth our prophet mind the sinful and secure Ephraimites what they must expect, and doth it in this pungent question, *Is there iniquity in Gilead?* i. e. is there only? or is there more? much like that of Christ's, Luke xiii. 2, *Suppose ye them greater sinners?* Be it so, captive Gilead was all iniquity, and Gilgal is no better. *They* that come up to Gilgal to sacrifice are idolaters, they sin against God in offering to them, and against their own welfare in trusting to them, both ways they appear to be *vanity;* whilst they multiply these altars and sacrifices, they multiply their sins, God's displeasure is increased, and the danger more near and dreadful. *Their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the fields:* idolatrous Israel, thou aboundest in altars; but if they are for number like heaps of stones, gathered out of ploughed land and laid in furrows, they are as common too, i. e. as far from sacred, as far from commending any offering to God, or atoning his displeasure. And canst thou, Ephraim, hope to escape, whose sins exceed the sins of captive Gilead? wilt thou never be wise, never warned, never repent?

t Gen. 28. 5. Deut. 26. 5. u Gen. 29. 20, 28.

12 And Jacob [t]fled into the country of Syria, and Israel [u]served for a wife, and for a wife he kept *sheep*.

Jacob, the patriarch, *fled into the country of Syria*, for fear of Esau. *And Israel*, though honoured with that great name, *served*, stooped to the condition which is next door to slave, *for a wife;* a wife was his wages. *And for a wife he kept sheep* of Laban. All which in the history is related at large, Gen. xxix.

x Ex. 12. 50, 51. & 13. 3.

13 [x]And by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.

Ps. 77. 20. Is. 63. 11. Mic. 6. 4.

By a prophet, by Moses, *the Lord brought Israel*, your forefathers, *out of Egypt;* where they had been bondmen two hundred and fifteen years, or near upon it, old slaves, or vassals for some descents. *By a prophet was he preserved* in the wilderness: see Exod. ii., iii., &c. Now the drift of the prophet herein to me appears to be this, to prevent their vain pride and boasting of their ancestors, their vainer sheltering themselves under ancestors' merits against God's just displeasure on them for their sins, and the sottish plea of what their fathers did at Beth-el and Gilgal. There are many things which arise on consideration of what their fathers were, suffered, enjoyed, and did, to aggravate their sins and insure them of punishment; but nothing to secure them against judgment to come, or to lessen judgments when they come.

y 2 Kings 17. 11, —18. † Heb. *with bitternesses.* ‡ Heb. *bloods:* See Ezek. 18. 13. & 24. 7, 8.

14 [y]Ephraim provoked *him* to anger †most bitterly: therefore shall he leave his ‡blood upon him, [z]and his [a]reproach shall his Lord return unto him.

z Dan. 11. 18. a Deut. 28. 37.

Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly: after all the means used from time to time to reclaim idolatrous sinning Israel, yet still they provoked God to indignation by their idolatries, perjuries, oppressions, murders, and all manner of sins which use to be rife among idolaters; these things were bitterness unto God. *Therefore*, seeing he will incorrigibly persist as he hath begun, and end in sin and misery, *shall he leave his blood upon him;* he shall bear the guilt and punishment of all his blood, his murders of the innocent, of those that testified against him, and, as one who hath murdered himself, shall bear his own guilt too. *His reproach*, which Ephraim hath cast upon the prophets and pious worshippers of God, all the reproach Ephraim hath cast on God, preferring idols before him, *shall his Lord return unto him;* either God, who is Lord of all, or the Assyrian king and his princes, lording it over captive Ephraim; God shall by these return the shame on Ephraim which he cast on God, his worship, temple, and prophets.

CHAP. XIII.

Ephraim's glory vanisheth by reason of idolatry, 1—3. *God's former care of his people: for their abuse of his benefits he will destroy them,* 4—8. *A promise of mercy and redemption from the grave,* 9—14. *The judgment of Samaria for rebellion,* 15, 16.

WHEN Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but [a]when he offended in Baal, he died.

cir. 725. a 2 Kings 17. 16, 18. ch. 11. 2.

When; so soon as, or *according as*, as the Hebrew phrase bears it, and implieth there was a time when according to the word of Ephraim there was deep impression on the hearers. *Ephraim;* Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite, say some; but this is wide of truth, nor suits the text, which refers to their worshipping of Baal, and this came into use in Israel in Ahab's time, 1 Kings xvi. 31; his wife Jezebel, daughter to Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, prevailed with him to take her country idol and add to Jeroboam's calves. *Ephraim* here is either the tribe of Ephraim, which was of all the ten tribes most powerful, and when angry and discontented made the other tribes afraid; or rather the whole kingdom of Israel, called frequently in Hosea Ephraim. *Spake;* when he consulted, commanded, threatened, or sent out his proclamation; it is a speaking like a king's or kingdom's speaking, which is backed with power sufficient to act as they speak; *trembling;* the tribes and the neighbouring kingdoms apprehended danger, were put into a fear of the consequence too, all men felt a commotion within them. Such once was the authority, power, and glory of Ephraim. *He exalted himself in Israel;* was magnified, advanced, and made glorious, the kingdom flourished in multitudes of people, in abundance of wealth, in the successes of their counsels, and in their credit abroad. In this flourishing state Ephraim, a principal tribe, and which first set up for

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the royal dignity and carried it, had principal share, and is said to exalt himself in or with Israel. *But when*, so soon as he sinned, *he offended in Baal*, by taking Baal to be their god added this idolatry to their former sins, *he died;* undid himself, lost his power, glory, and bravery, as a dead man.

† Heb. *they add to sin.*
b ch. 2. 8. & 8. 4.

2 And now †they sin more and more, and [b]have made them molten images of their silver, *and* idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let ‖the men that sacrifice [c]kiss the calves.

‖ Or, *the sacrifices of men.*
c 1 Kings 19. 18.

And now, though they are admonished, threatened, and in part punished, yet now that Baal is taken in for a god and worshipped, *they sin more and more;* they go on to sin, and add new idolatries to the old, they increase the number of their sins; in some respect their new sins are greater than those committed formerly, but the prophet here speaks not of greatness of sins, but the number. *And have made them molten images of their silver:* these were the figures and representations of the gods they worshipped, and were multiplied as families, able to go to the cost, did multiply; every one got their household gods, heathen like, and most of these puppets were made of silver. Or the phrase may imply, that at their own charge these people made them gods; so though it was a straight ash, or wood that would not soon putrefy, which was formed into the idol, yet because bought with their silver it may by a metonymy be called their silver. *Idols according to their own understanding;* every one as he fancied, as he thought most comely, and proper to represent a deity; perhaps these idolaters vied with each other who should have the handsomest god, as Ahaz would vie altars, and therefore made new ones. Perhaps some of these idolaters melted down their old less handsome gods to run them into more pleasing features. *All of it the work of the craftsmen;* whatever is of the image is of the workman, who gave it shape, but could not give it breath, still it is a lifeless lump or image. *They*, either the kings of Israel, or the priests of these idols, or the people, *say of them*, of the idols, *Let the men that sacrifice*, let every one that sacrificeth, all that bring their offerings to these idols, *kiss;* reverence, worship, or adore, and show they do so by kissing the calves. They will make them give full worship to their idols.

d ch. 6. 4.
e Dan. 2. 35.

3 Therefore they shall be [d]as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, [e]as the chaff *that* is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.

Therefore; for these sins in multiplied idolatries and trusting to idols. *They*, Ephraim, his king, his captains, his fortresses, and aids, *shall be*, in the day of the Assyrian invasion, suddenly, easily, totally, and finally dispersed, expressed here by four similes, every one very apt and full, clear and easy to be understood.

f Is. 43. 11. ch. 12. 9.
g Is. 43. 11. & 45. 21.

4 Yet [f]I *am* the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for [g]*there is* no saviour beside me.

Yet, though thou hast so revolted, and chosen other gods, it is not occasioned by any change in me, *I am* what I was, *the Lord*, the mighty God, the everlasting God, Jehovah. *Thy God from the land of Egypt;* thy God who alone brought thee out of Egypt, and who hath maintained thy lot; the calves and Baal were not known amongst you then. And since I alone brought thee out of Egypt, and saved thee with wonderful salvations many times since, why dost thou seek gods thou needest not, gods that cannot help? *Thou shalt know no god but me;* I forbade thee to know any other god but me, in gratitude thou shouldst know no other; if there were any other, in point of interest thou shouldst have known, i. e. worshipped, trusted, and obeyed, none but me. And finally, by woeful experience thou shalt know that calves and Baal are no gods, they cannot save thee nor themselves; thou shalt know I am God alone, who can destroy those who would not obey me. *For there is no saviour beside me;* when thy idols cannot save thee out of the hands of those I deliver thee up to, then thou shalt see, what now thou wilt not, that there is no saviour but me; none who can deliver from all evil, and who can enrich with all blessings, who can pardon sin and save the sinner.

h Deut. 2. 7. & 32. 10.
i Deut. 8. 15.
† Heb. *droughts.*

5 ¶ [h]I did know thee in the wilderness, [i]in the land of †great drought.

I did know, owned, took care of, guided, and supplied, *thee*. O Israel, in thy fathers, *in the wilderness;* through which for forty years together thou wast moving, and foundest nothing for thy sustenance but what my miraculous goodness and power gave thee; through those many deserts thou never didst want. *In the land of great drought;* in the parched sands, where were no refreshing showers, no rivers or springs of water, to suffice so many cattle and men; where thou wentest as it were through flames and on sands, scorching as embers of a fire, a place fit for none but fiery serpents, or salamanders (if any such).

k Deu. 6. 12, 14. & 32. 15.
l ch. 8. 14.

6 [k]According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore [l]have they forgotten me.

According to their pasture, so were they filled; when they were come into Canaan, that land of springs, brooks, and rivers, that land of wheat, barley, vines, olives, and figs, as Deut. viii. 7—9; when they had abundance of all things for delight, as well as for necessary sustenance; when I had, like a good, careful, and wise shepherd, brought them into this rich pasture; they, like hungry beasts, ate to excess, ran into luxury and riot; epicure like, gorged themselves with sweet wines and delicious fare. *They were filled:* either this is a reduplication of the charge to confirm it, I say, they thus luxuriously lived; or else it is elliptical, and to be made out thus, *And so soon as they were filled;* and thus it will be parallel to that, *Jeshurun waxed fat*, Deut. xxxii. 13—15. *Their heart was exalted;* grew proud, entertained high thoughts of their progenitors' worth, their nobleness by descent, their worthiness and righteousness above other people; they thought of God as of man, that he proportioned his blessings to what excellency was found in those he did good to. *Therefore have they forgotten me;* so they have forgotten me, who found them in slavery, poverty, reproach, and tears in Egypt, out of which I saved them; and they have most scandalously made them gods, worshipped them, and with sacrilegious unthankfulness given the praise of all I did for them to dumb idols, though I warned them of it beforehand, Deut. vi. 11, 12; viii. 13, 14.

m Lam. 3. 10. ch. 5. 14.
n Jer. 5. 6.

7 Therefore [m]I will be unto them as a lion: as [n]a leopard by the way will I observe *them:*

Therefore; since they have so abused my gifts by luxury, pride, and atheistical forgetfulness of me, of what I had done for them, what I deserved and expected from them, I will use them as is meet, and take my revenge upon them. *I will be unto them;* unthankful, apostates, idolaters, sottish drunkards, belly-gods, who live to eat and drink, and forget me. *As a lion:* see chap. v. 14; that is, in his fullest strength, of a middle age, swift in pursuing, and that can continue the chase till he overtake his prey; and which is strong, courageous, and proud of his strength and success; that will dreadfully roar over his prey, as if he challenged any one to attempt its rescue. *As a leopard;* a very fierce, swift, sly, and watchful creature, Jer. v. 6; Hab. i. 8. *Observe them;* watch for them, that I may be sure to take them.

o 2 Sam. 17. 8. Prov. 17. 12.
† Heb. *the beast of the field.*

8 I will meet them [o]as a bear *that is* bereaved *of her whelps*, and will rend the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: †the wild beast shall tear them.

I will meet them; I know their haunts, their walks, I will not fail to meet them there. *As a bear bereaved of her whelps;* robbed of her whelps, newly taken away, which makes her mad with rage; so great rage is proverbially expressed. Prov. xvii. 12. *Will rend the caul of their heart;* first kill, next tear in pieces, pull out the very heart: it is

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probable this fierce creature may by instinct hasten to tear up the prey, that it may drink the blood before it run to waste. *There will I devour them*, where I find them and seize them, like the hungry and fearless lion, which feasts on his prey where he caught it, draws it not into his den, but devoureth it immediately. *Like a lion;* an old lion, that hath his great teeth, his grinders, and hath still whelps, Gen. xlix. 9; fierce and terrible, that will either call in his whelps to divide the prey, or drag the prey to his den for them: and what hope of any thing to be spared, when you fall into such hands? *The wild beast shall tear them:* it is said of the lion, that he calls by his roaring the wild beasts together to the prey when he hath taken it; so you shall be devoured by the whole troop of wild beasts. Or it may be a general threat added to those particular ones before, every wild beast shall prey upon them. All this God executed on them by the Assyrians, who in their fierceness, cruelty, greediness, and courage answered the character here given to them: the particular resemblances I leave to any, who may easily suit them.

p Prov. 6. 32. ch. 14. 1. Mal. 1. 9. q ver. 4. † Heb. *in thy help.*

9 ¶ O Israel, [p]thou hast destroyed thyself; [q]but in me †*is* thine help.

Thou hast destroyed thyself; after these menaces it might seem I had destroyed thee, but thou thyself hast done it by thy sins. It is the rebel that destroys himself, though he fall by the sword of his provoked sovereign: thou art the cause and author of thine own ruin. *But in me is thy help;* or, *for* I was always ready and able to help thee, and would certainly have saved thee; but thy sins, thy wickedness carried thee toward other helps, which were lies, and have disappointed thee; and now thou dost perish under thine own choice, whereas hadst thou chosen me I would have helped and saved thee. Or else thus the whole verse: This hath destroyed thee, O Israel, for thou hast rebelled against me, against thy help: and so Sol. Jarchy.

‖ Rather, *Where is thy king?* King Hoshea being then in prison, 2 Kings 17. 4. r Deut. 32. 38. ch. 10. 3. ver. 4. s 1 Sam. 8. 5, 19.

10 ‖I will be thy king: [r]where *is any other* that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom [s]thou saidst, Give me a king and princes?

I will be thy King; I would have been thy King to govern and save thee, but thou refusedst me in both; yet I will be thy King to punish thee, I will not lose my right and honour by thy rebellious carriages against me, I will be a King and subdue such: or else it is a taunting question, Where is thy king, on whose counsel, wisdom, power, and conduct thou hast relied? let him now save thee if he can: so it runs smooth with the next words. *Where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities?* or, who is there, what wise, valiant, and successful commander, in any of thy cities, that can deliver thee first out of my hand, and next out of the Assyrians' hand? *Thy judges*, where are they? thy magistrates have sinned with thee, and shall be destroyed with thee. Thy rulers or inferior governors, *of whom thou saidst, Give me a king;* whom thou didst importune and solicit, in a manner forcedst to meet, consult, and resolve in seditious times who should be king next, when treasons had taken away him that was? Some refer this to their first asking a king, but it is better referred to the times either after Jeroboam the First, or to the times after Jeroboam the Second, between whose death and Hoshea's time, some say, there was an interregnum of twenty or near twenty years, during which a turbulent people, as the Israelites were, would be frequent and earnest in all likelihood in moving for a king. *And princes*, necessary to assist the king.

t 1 Sam. 8. 7. & 10. 19. & 15. 22, 23. & 16. 1. ch. 10. 3.

11 [t]I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took *him* away in my wrath.

I gave thee a king in mine anger; such as Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, &c.; but in displeasure against you. *I took him away;* the Hebrew says not what; I think, their kings mentioned. *In my wrath:* God was angry when he gave such kings to Israel, and he was no better pleased when he took them away; they were punishments when given, and it was punishment to Israel when they were taken away. If you read this verse in the future tense, as you may, I will give them a king in my anger, it may refer to God's giving the king of Assyria the rule over them, making them his vassals; and I will take away, i. e. you, O Israelites, in my wrath, I will destroy some, and send others into captivity, take all away out of your land, and send you in wrath to the grave, or captives into Assyria.

12 [u]The iniquity of Ephraim *is* bound up; his sin *is* hid. u Deu. 32. 34. Job 14. 17.

The iniquity, in the singular, instead of the plural, all the iniquities and sins, *of Ephraim*, the kingdom of the ten tribes, *is bound up;* as indictments drawn up and tied together against the day of trial; or as bills and bonds tied up that they may be ready against the day of account, when all must be paid. Or, as sins unpardoned; for to loose sins is to forgive, and to bind sins is to charge them upon the sinner, Matt. xvi. 19. O Ephraim, thine unpardoned sins lie in account against thee, thou shalt hear of them and smart for them. *His sin is hid;* not from God, but laid up with God against the day of recompence, as Job xxi. 19: so Rom. ii. 5; Deut. xxxii. 34.

13 [x]The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him: he *is* [y]an unwise son; for he should not [z]stay †long in *the place of* the breaking forth of children. x Is. 13. 8. Jer. 30. 6. y Prov. 22. 3. z 2 Kings 19. 3. † Heb. *a time.*

The sorrows of a travailing woman: by this simile, well known in Scripture, the prophet assures Ephraim that the punishment of his sins will overtake him suddenly, with very great anguish, and with as great certainty, Micah v. 3. *Shall come upon him;* as suddenly, inevitably, and with as much danger too, if he be not the wiser, and return to his God. *He*, i. e. Ephraim, *is an unwise son;* a very foolish son, an inconsiderate child, who endangers himself and his mother. *For he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children:* as a child that sticks in the birth, so Ephraim, just at the birth, hesitateth, one while will, another while will not, return to God; thus dieth under the delay.

14 [a]I will ransom them from †the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: [b]O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: [c]repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. a Is. 25. 8. Ezek. 37. 12. † Heb. *the hand.* b 1 Cor. 15. 54, 55. c Jer. 15. 6. Rom. 11. 29.

Some interpreters render this text not in the future absolute, but in the subjunctive and conditionally, I would have ransomed, I would have redeemed, &c., if Israel had been wise; so it will well cohere with the 13th and 15th verses. And if the words be considered as spoken of the whole body of Israel, they will be most intelligible, as they include a condition and are subjunctive. But the apostle doth, and most Christian interpreters with the apostle, interpret them as an absolute promise made for the comfort of the pious and elect among these Israelites, and labour not to connect them with the foregoing or following words, but suppose them to be in a parenthesis between them. And so we take them.

I, Jehovah or Messiah, the Father promiseth the Messiah. *Will ransom*, by power and purchase, by the price of the blood of the Lamb of God, and by the power of his Godhead. *Them* that repent and believe, and wait for redemption through Christ the Messiah. *From the power of the grave;* he conquered the grave, and rose out of it as our Captain and Head, and he will at the great day of the resurrection, by his almighty power, open those prison doors, and bring them out in glory, immortality, and incorruption, whom he redeemed by an inestimable and invaluable price. *I will redeem them from death;* from the curse of the first death, henceforth they that die in the Lord shall be blessed; and from the second death, which shall have no power over them; I will take away the sting of death, which is sin, i. e. in the dominion and guilt of it: now Christ redeems from the one by sanctifying grace, and from the other by justifying grace. *O death, I will be thy plagues;* thus I will destroy death, and defeat him that had the power of death: it is a metaphor, as the next. *O grave, I will be thy destruction;* I will recover the prey out of the mouth of the grave, I will pull down those prison walls, and bring out all that are confined there, of which the bad I will remove into other kind of prisons, the good I will restore to glorious liberty. The wicked shall have a worse prison, the godly shall for ever be freed from prison

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and so I will raze this prison, the grave, to the very foundation. *Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes:* this grace toward the godly, toward believers among Israel and in the church, through all ages, is unchangeable; I will never, as man that repenteth, change my word and purpose, saith the Lord. In either sense they speak the grace of God toward us; he is ready to pardon and save all that will repent, and he will most certainly and eternally save from death, the grave, sin, and hell all that do repent and obey the Messiah; an abundant comfort to pious ones who should yet die captives in Assyria, but rise by the power of the Messiah to eternal glory in the day of the general resurrection.

d See Gen. 41. 52. & 48. 19.
e Jer. 4. 11. Ezek. 17. 10. & 19. 12. ch. 4. 19.
†Heb. vessels of desire. Nah. 2. 9.

15 ¶ Though [d]he be fruitful among *his* brethren, [e]an east wind shall come, the wind of the LORD shall come up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up: he shall spoil the treasure of all †pleasant vessels.

Though he, Ephraim, *be fruitful*, at present, as a flourishing tree seems to be fruitful; things in the state seem to be well settled; peace at home, under Hoshea, and peace abroad with Assyria and Egypt. *Among his brethren;* and all his brethren surround him, either the rest of the tribes, or the nations who by league are become as his brethren. *An east wind shall come;* an enemy as pernicious to his estate as the east wind is to fruits shall certainly come; a mighty and violent enemy, called here, *the wind of the Lord*, the usual superlative among the Hebrews. *From the wilderness*, which lay south-east from Canaan; and so it speaks a more pernicious quality in these enemies, as the south-east winds in that country were of all most hot and blasting, coming over those hot, dry, sandy deserts. *His spring*, springs of water, which were most needful, and highly valued, *shall become dry;* shall fail and be cut off, dry up, that there shall be no waters in them. *His fountain shall be dried up;* the same thing in different words, confirming the certainty hereof. This the resemblance of the Assyrian, and the mischief he shall do to Israel; he shall lay Ephraim desolate, and dry up all his fountains, which were the comfort of that land. *He*, the Assyrian army, Shalmaneser, *shall spoil the treasure*, shall rob their treasuries, *of all pleasant vessels*, and carry away all desirable vessels and furniture, out of all their houses and wardrobes: thus all the glory of Ephraim shall wither whilst it is seemingly flourishing and well-rooted too.

‖ Fulfilled, cir. 721. 2 Kings 17. 6.
f 2 Kings 18. 12.
g 2 Kings 8. 12. & 15. 16. Is. 13. 16. ch. 10. 14, 15. Amos 1. 13. Nah. 3. 10.

16 ‖ Samaria shall become desolate; [f]for she hath rebelled against her God: [g]they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.

Samaria, the chief or royal city of the kingdom of Israel, *shall become desolate;* besieged, taken, plundered, and sacked, probably it was razed to the foundation, by the Assyrians, provoked by the treachery first, and by the obstinacy next, of Hoshea, maintaining the siege against Shalmaneser three years, 2 Kings xvii. 5. *Rebelled against her God;* both cast off his worship and set up idolatry, and also shook off the yoke of David's house and set up new kings, and maintained both long against God. *They*, the inhabitants of Samaria, and also the subjects of the kingdom of Israel, *shall fall by the sword;* be cut off in war by the prevailing arms of the king of Assyria. *Their infants shall be dashed in pieces;* a most barbarous piece of cruelty, yet usually practised in those countries when they were enraged against a people. *Their women with child shall be ripped up;* another kind of like or greater inhumanity. Thus Shalman raged against Arbel in the day of battle, and this confirms what the prophet saith chap. x. 14. And this was no doubt executed upon Samaria when it was taken, so their springs (women and children, which are as fountains) were all dried up.

CHAP. XIV.

An exhortation to repentance, 1—3. *A promise of God's blessing*, 4—9.

a cir. 725. ch. 12. 6.

O ISRAEL, [a]return unto the LORD thy God; [b]for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.

Joel 2. 13. b ch. 13. 9.

O Israel, you that are the true Israel of God, you that are the remnant amidst so great a body of incurable rebels, *return;* repent ye thoroughly, not hypocritically, turn ye from all your sins in which with others you have been defiled, and turn to *the Lord*, the everlasting, living God, who is worthy to be worshipped and obeyed; your idols were never worth your love, but the Lord, the Fountain of being and life, is worthy of it. Turn to him as *thy God*, in covenant with thee, to get pardon for past sins according to covenant promise, to renew covenant for time to come, and to engage thyself sincerely and heartily to be his people. *For thou hast fallen;* thy sins against the Lord thy God have enkindled his wrath against thee, have involved thee in endless troubles, have turned thy prosperity into extreme adversity; sin hath cast thee from the height of glory to the depth of reproach and contempt, thus thou art fallen. *By thine iniquity:* it is the singular number, either because all their sins were so linked together they were as one huge mass of sin, or it refers particularly to their idolatry, which is by way of eminency, and above any one other sin, a falling from God, and here punished with a fall into calamities.

2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and ‖ receive *us* graciously: so will we render the [c]calves of our lips.

‖ Or, give good. c Heb. 13. 15.

Take with you words; bethink yourselves what words will best set out your sins, God's patience towards you, and your present sorrow and repentance for sin; prepare yourselves to make confessions, petitions, vows, and praises to God; *and turn;* with words join deeds, let your hearts be in your words, turn, do not as the incorrigible hypocrite. *To the Lord:* see ver. 1. *Say unto him;* pray, present your petitions to him who heareth prayer: here is no mention of sheep or oxen, or any legal sacrifices; true repentance is required, which is much better, faith and hope through the great Sacrifice, in virtue of which these converts expect the grace they need and seek. *Take away all iniquity:* this petition for pardon of sin includes confession of it, sorrow for it, hope that God will of mere grace forgive it, and take away the guilt, prevent the punishment, and abolish the power of sin, not of some, but of all: sincere converts seek full justification, and full sanctification. *Receive us* into thy protection, guidance, and benediction, *graciously;* and this of thy mere grace and goodness; having taken away sin, take also graciously our persons, as reconciled and well-pleasing to thee. *So will we render the calves of our lips:* this will qualify and encourage us to give the sacrifices which are to God much more pleasing *than an ox that hath horns and hoofs*, Psal. lxix. 31; with these calves of our lips we will give our hearts also, for those praises of the lips are fruits of what praise the heart of the convert first gives, and these here are signs of their heart given to God, that so they may be spiritual sacrifices, such as Psal. l. 23, or Heb. xiii. 15.

3 [d]Asshur shall not save us; [e]we will not ride upon horses: [f]neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, *Ye are* our gods: [g]for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.

d Jer. 31. 18, &c. ch. 5. 13. & 12. 1. e Deut. 17. 16. Ps. xx. 7. Is. 30. 2, 16. & 31. 1. f ch. 2. 17. vers. 8. g Ps. 10. 14. & 68. 5.

Asshur shall not save us: it had been one great sin of Israel that they did trust to an arm of flesh; Asshur is particularly named, for that he was the last with whom they made a covenant fairly, or above-board, but any other foreign aids and friendships may be here understood. God promised his peculiar protection, and would have continued it if they had not cast him off, and trusted to man. *We will not ride upon horses:* another fault of theirs was, they multiplied horses, and trusted to their strength, which God forbade; this includes their home strength, and provision of all sorts. *Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods:* they had most brutishly thought their idols would be gods to help them; this is the particular confession of their great comprehensive sins, which brought on many others with them; now they renounce as well as confess them, and such renouncing is

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necessary, and grounded on hope of finding mercy, as appears by the reason they give of their renouncing these sins, and vain confidences in God, to whom they return, in him only there is help to be had. *The fatherless;* all that are destitute of strength in themselves, and destitute of help from others; all that, being sensible of their own helpless condition, look for it from God, who hath power, mercy, and wisdom to help and relieve. *Findeth*, obtaineth as often as he does rightly sue for, *mercy;* both fountain and streams of goodness too, free grace and rich bounty.

h Jer. 5. 6. & 14. 7. ch. 11. 7. i Eph. 1. 6.

4 ¶ I will heal [h]their backsliding, I will love them [i]freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

I will heal: it is a usual metaphor in Scripture; sin is our disease, God is the Physician who healeth us, Psal. ciii. 3; Jer. iii. 22; and he doth it through Christ, in whom this promise is made to returning backsliders. This promise God maketh by his prophet, to encourage them to hearken to his advice of repenting. *Backslidings;* aversions, voluntary and wilful turning away from God; well expressed here, and called rebellions by some other interpreters. These voluntary, continued, and obstinate aversions, or backslidings, are instances of greatest sins and sinners; yet God promiseth to heal these old putrefying sores, that we might be assured that he will heal all other lesser wounds: he will fully heal by pardoning and purifying. *I will love them;* though before he hated, could take no pleasure in them, now he will show that his mind and heart are towards them to accept them, and do them good. *Freely;* without their desert, and without bounds of time, or measure, or kind. All kinds of mercies the fruit of his love, infinite mercy in grace and glory, eternal mercies, his love will afford to them. This is liberal love indeed, this promised here. *For mine anger is turned away from him;* I am reconciled to them, my displeasure is turned away.

k Job 29. 19. Prov. 19. 12. ‖ Or, *blossom.* † Heb. *strike.*

5 I will be as [k]the dew unto Israel: he shall ‖grow as the lily, and †cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

I, the Lord, who have pardoned, and am appeased, *will be as the dew*, refresh and water, that they may grow, and that they may be fruitful and flourish, as the dew in those countries, where it was more abundant than with us, and for some months together supplied the want of rain; God will refresh and comfort, and make fruitful in good works, through his grace, such as return to him. *Israel;* those that do unfeignedly, not hypocritically, confess, pray, and repent. *As the lily;* which grows apace, is fragrant, beautiful, and delights in valleys, often grows among thorns; so the Israel of God among troubles in low state, yet comely, and fragrant to the Lord, and grows up in him speedily. *Lebanon*, put for the trees of Lebanon; as those trees spread forth their roots, grow up to strength, are most beautiful, odoriferous, and durable, cedars in Lebanon are these trees; so shall the true Israel, converted backsliders, be blessed of God. So flourishing and happy shall the church be under Christ.

† Heb. *shall go.* l Ps. 52. 8. & 128. 3. Ecclus. 50. 10. m Gen. 27. 27. Cant. 4. 11.

6 His branches †shall spread, and [l]his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and [m]his smell as Lebanon.

His branches, his tenderest branches which are new sprung out, shall gather strength, not be broken off, but by these shall they multiply in number of boughs. *Shall spread;* grow great and beautiful, and excellent for shade. *As the olive tree;* which retains its verdure all the winter, and is rich in fruit; so the true Israel of God shall flourish, not in fruitless beauty and stateliness, but in desirable and lovely fruit, even in winters of affliction and troubles. *As Lebanon;* the mountain famous for cedars, where also were the trees that afford the frankincense, which sweat out that excellent aromatic, and where many more sweetest flowers grow and perfume the air; such shall the spiritual fragrance of the church be to God and man.

n Ps. 91. 1. ‖ Or, *blossom.* ‖ Or, *memorial.*

7 [n]They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive *as* the corn, and ‖grow as the vine: the ‖scent thereof *shall be* as the wine of Lebanon.

They that dwell under his shadow; as many as unite to the church, are members of it, shall dwell under these spreading trees: the churches planted and spreading shall be to new converts as such trees to fainting travellers, almost spent with toil and heat; they shall find rest in this shadow, which may refer to Christ and the church. *Shall return;* revive and recover new strength and life; so do souls weary and heavy laden with sin and fears find comfort and life coming to Christ, conversing with such as have been eased and comforted by Christ in like manner formerly. *They shall revive as the corn*, which dieth ere it liveth to bring forth fruit; so converts die indeed to sin that they may live to God, die to all legal righteousness that they may live on rich grace: or else it may refer to the increase of the church, which shall be as many stalks from one ear of wheat. *And grow as the vine;* which in winter seems dead, is pruned, and promiseth little to the eye, but yet life, sap, and a fructifying virtue is in it, and it will spring and bring forth fruit; so the church of Christ is used, that it may bring forth fruit more abundantly, John xv. 2. *The scent thereof*, the savour of it to God and good men, shall be pleasing as the scent of the delicious wines of Lebanon, which are mentioned by profane authors with a great praise for their sweetness and deliciousness.

8 Ephraim *shall say*, [o]What have I to do any more with idols? [p]I have heard *him*, and observed him: I *am* like a green fir tree. [q]From me is thy fruit found.

o ver. 3. p Jer. 31. 18. q Jam. 1. 17.

Ephraim; not the whole body of Ephraim, but converted Ephraim, those who, ver. 1, 2, were sensible of sin, confessed it, and sued for pardon. *What have I to do any more with idols?* i. e. I have no more to do with them, nor ever will; they have been, first my sin, and next my sorrows, and my sorrows have been multiplied by hasting after other gods; I will no more do so: and with detestation against idols doth Ephraim speak, as the question implieth. *I have heard him, and observed him:* some refer these words to Ephraim, owning what he had found and observed in God; what grace and mercy in pardon, deliverance from miseries, and comfortable revival of his state. Others refer it to God, and make it a gracious promise from God of hearing prayers, and taking especial care of converted Ephraim; either way suits the words and matter, and I leave it to your choice. *I am like a green fir tree:* these words also, as the former, are either Israel's giving praise to God, who had on Israel's return changed his dead, withered state into a flourishing, lovely, and beautiful state: others say it is God's promise to be to Ephraim as such a tree is to a weary traveller, who may with delight and safety sit under the shadow of it; a tree, say some, that grows with very thick boughs, that rain or heat pierceth not, and whose smell drives away wild beasts; so there is safety and refreshment under the protection of the Lord, under his shadow. *From me is thy fruit found:* this also is differently interpreted: Israel confesseth that the fruit of God's grace is seen from what Israel now is and doth: others say, God promiseth the fruits of comfort Israel enjoys, and still shall enjoy, from God, and his grace toward Israel. I determine neither, but sure I am such is the correspondence of God's grace to the converted, that they cannot more readily acknowledge what God hath done for them, nor more readily engage to do what God adviseth and requireth, than God is ready to encourage them by gracious, and rich, and suitable promises.

9 [r]Who *is* wise, and he shall understand these *things?* prudent, and he shall know them? for [s]the ways of the LORD *are* right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

r Ps. 107. 43. Jer. 9. 12. Dan. 12. 10. Ecclus. 39. 24, 27. John 8. 47. & 18. 37. s Prov. 10. 29. Luke 2. 34. 2 Cor. 2. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? though not many wise, yet some methinks; now of those few, who is there that will consider what sins God complains of and threatens to punish in his people, what sins God forbade them so much as once to commit, and peremptorily commanded them to turn from when once committed; what duties he required, what promises he proposed, what patience he used toward them while any hope of their amendment, what se-

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verity upon their incorrigible sins? Whoso with any tolerable degree of wisdom will view these things, and seriously consider of them, they will understand, and know that the prophet hath given best advice, and that it is the safest course to follow it. *Prudent, and he shall know them?* the same thing doubled with elegancy, and to confirm the word, as is usual in Scripture. *For the ways of the Lord are right;* the ways which he would have us walk in towards him, his law, his ordinances of worship, his whole doctrine which directeth our walk, are all righteous and equal. And the ways wherein God walketh toward us, in corrections for sins committed, in suspending his promises of grace on conditions of duty, in afflicting or comforting, are all righteous and very equal. *The just shall walk in them;* will approve them, all justifying the righteousness of God's displeasure, and confessing he remembereth mercy in the midst of judgment; and justifying the righteousness of his precepts by endeavouring to observe them. *But the transgressors,* wilful, obstinate, and inconsiderate sinners, *shall fall therein;* eventually it proves so, they stumble and are offended somewhat at his precepts and commands, but more at his severe judgments; they cast off the one, and vainly hope to shift off the other, till at last they fall under the weight of their own sins and God's wrath.

JOEL.

THE ARGUMENT.

SINCE so many undeterminable points of less moment occur in our prophet, as of what tribe he was, whether his father were a prophet, whether he prophesied in Jeroboam's or Hezekiah's time, whether contemporary with Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah; whether he preached to the ten tribes, or to the two tribes, or to both; whether the locusts are literal, only, or typical and significative of enemies, or how many years they continued, what nations they did prefigure, when the execution began, when it ended; or when he began, or how long he continued to prophesy;—we may well rest ourselves contented in the undisputable things of greater moment, such as are, the Divine authority with which he came, attested by himself, chap. i. 1, and confirmed to us by the apostle, Acts ii. 17; Rom. x. 13, and by Christ himself, Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24; Luke xxi. 25: all he spake is the word of God. The pernicious consequences of national sins, such as were visible on God's own people at this very time in parching droughts, devouring locusts, and famine; the only method for removing these judgments, fasting, prayer, and amendment of our life; the successive sufferings of the church under the several monarchies till the coming of the Messiah, with the wonderful preservation of the good during those times; the just and final decisions God will make for his against their oppressors in those kingdoms, doing it by raising the succeeding empire to punish and overthrow the precedent; the conversion of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles; the advancement of the kingdom of the Messiah and communications of gifts and graces to his church; the final and universal decision of all things that concern God and his church on the one side, and their enemies on the other; the general judgment of quick and dead,—are the great subjects he doth in plainer or darker terms set before us. In unfolding of the whole, whoso excludes the letter and historical reference will fail on one hand, and whoso excludes the typical and mystical reference will err as much on the other hand. In a due and just application of both lieth the true mean, which hath been aimed at in this enterprise, and how far attained is submitted to the judgment of those that read the ensuing annotations.

CHAP. I.

Joel declareth the destruction of the fruits of the earth by noxious insects, 1—7, *and by a long drought,* 8—13. *He recommendeth a solemn fasting with prayer to deprecate these judgments,* 14—20.

B. C. cir. 800. THE word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.

Since this preface is word for word the same with that of Hosea, chap. i. 1, see it there explained. *Joel;* supposed to be of the posterity of Reuben, therefore could not be (as the Jews suppose) Samuel's son, nor will his time fit to 1 Chron. v. 4, 8; but of what tribe soever, we know he came from God, and with his authority, and is so cited by the apostle, Acts ii. 16. *The son of Pethuel:* more of this man I know not, and it is possible he might be, as the Jews suppose, very eminent, because he is named; however, it is an honour to be reported a prophet's father. The time of his prophesying, though not demonstrable, is with greatest probability laid about the latter end of Jeroboam the Second's reign over Israel, and in the days of Uzziah over Judah.

2 Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. [a] Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?

a ch. 2. 2.

Hear this: he is about to report a very wonderful occurrence, and desires all to consider it, mark it well, and tell me what you know. *Ye old men;* the oldest among you, who can remember things done in your days when you were young, some scores of years past. *Give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land:* it is an appeal to all that may possibly know more than others, and remember better than others can. *Hath this been in your days?* did you personally ever know the like? *Or even in the days of your fathers?* did your fathers ever tell you of such a thing happening in their days? was there ever such a thing known among them? have you ever heard them speak of it?

3 [b] Tell ye your children of it, and *let* your children *tell* their children, and their children another generation.

b Ps. 78. 4.

Declare it very particularly, or record it, write it as in a book, that your children may know it, and the memory of it may be perpetuated; for as it was a very wonderful and unusual thing, so it was for to mind us of the cause of it, and what it taught, or should have taught, them and us.

4 [c] † That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpiller eaten.

c Deut. 28. 38. ch. 2. 25. † Heb. *The residue of the palmer-worm.*

Four sorts of insects pernicious to all sorts of trees, corn, and herbs are here mentioned, which did succeed each other, and devoured all that might be a future support to the Jews; whence ensued a grievous famine for four years together, say the Jewish interpreters, though there is no cogent reason in what they mention for proof hereof. These insects might in the same year succeed each other, the one, as is usual, might come sooner, the rest successively, each in its season, and so spoil the springing of all things, which they did (I do believe) really; and though

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these might be emblems of some future devastation, yet it seems most agreeable to reason, and the context, that there should really have been such caterpillars and other vermin, and that they did devour all that was green; and though this is no where else mentioned, as I remember, in the sacred history, yet it is likely it was done, as here told, and as so done was a figure of some greater devastation made by foreign powers, as by Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar.

5 Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because
d Is. 32. 10. of the new wine; [d] for it is cut off from your mouth.

Awake: great drinkers of intoxicating liquors are apt to sleep and be secure, the prophet doth therefore here call to them, as to sleepers, and by one apt word expresseth a double duty, vigilance of mind as well as of the body; so may this be paralleled with Rom. xiii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 6; 1 Pet. v. 8, or Eph. v. 14. *Ye drunkards;* riotous livers, such as Prov. xxiii. 30—32; Isa. v. 11, 12, whose life is nothing but a continued feasting with choicest wines, and in excess, such as Amos vi. 4—6, describeth. *Weep and howl;* lament your condition with sober tears, for the sorrows coming upon you are just matter of weeping; nor will an ordinary degree of weeping suffice, cry out and howl, like men surprised with insupportable miseries, Isa. xiii. 6; xiv. 31; xv. 2. *All ye drinkers of wine,* who offend by an inordinate use of wine, for it is not to be understood of every one that drinketh wine, but of such as before are called drunkards, who are in love with wine. *Because of the new wine,* which is sweet and pleasing to the taste, and no doubt drank without stint or measure by men of that age, against which Joel prophesieth. *For it is cut off from your mouth;* suddenly cut off, even when you are ready to drink it, and totally, all cut off by these devouring vermin; which as it was a narrative of what was already done, refers to that waste and famine by the locusts; as it is allegorical and predictive, it will be more dreadfully fulfilled when the enemies of Judah shall destroy all.

e So Prov. 30. 25, 26, 27. ch. 2. 2, 11, 25. f Rev. 9. 8.
6 For [e] a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, [f] whose teeth *are* the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion.

This verse countenanceth their conjecture who take the locusts and vermin to be emblematical in part as well as literal; for it seems not very suitable to call their teeth *teeth of a lion. For a nation;* an innumerable multitude of locusts and caterpillars, called a nation here, as Solomon calls the conies and the ants, Prov. xxx. 25, 26. A prognostic of a very numerous and mighty nation, that ere long will invade Judah. *Is come up,* or suddenly will come, *upon my land;* upon Canaan, which God calls his land; or more particularly the two tribes, Judea strictly taken. *Strong;* mighty in power and undaunted in courage, if you refer it to the Assyrians or Babylonians; if to those vermin, they are, though each weak by itself, yet in those multitudes which come, strong enough, and irresistible, and shall do God's work, that is, waste the land, and devour all before them. *Without number;* not simply numberless, but in such multitudes none of you shall be able to recount them. *Whose teeth are the teeth of a lion;* a strong lion of the middle age, that hath whelps, and hunts the prey for them. *And he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion;* which is old, and the more fierce and terrible in his looks, no way lessened in his strength, and that preys for his young ones: now what waste such lions make, such these locusts will make, such the Assyrians will make.

g Is. 5. 6. † Heb. laid my fig tree for a barking.
7 He hath [g] laid my vine waste, and † barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast *it* away; the branches thereof are made white.

He, that nation of locusts, ver. 6, both literally and mystically understood, *hath laid my vine waste;* made it a desolation, i. e. most desolate, which is more particularly declared in what followeth. *And barked my fig tree;* peeled off the bark, which is certain destruction to the tree. *Made it clean bare;* eat off all the rind and green bark, and left the body of both vine and fig tree bare and stripped. *And cast it away;* as vermin cast out of their mouth the chewings of what they spoil, so here. *The branches thereof,* all the branches of both vine and fig tree, are by these devouring vermin *made white,* all their green being eaten off; so miserably desolate will the enemy signified by these locusts make Judah, God's vine.

8 ¶ [h] Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for [i] the husband of her youth.
h Is. 22. 12. i Prov. 2. 17. Jer. 3. 4.

The vicious and wicked among the Jews were alarmed and threatened in the former part of the chapter; now the prophet bespeaks the good and godly among them to prepare for mournful times.

Lament: this is minatory, and threatens calamitous times shall come, as well as directive, what to do when they are come; when God calls for weeping we must not rejoice. *Like a virgin:* this tells us to whom the prophet directs this part of his sermon, it is to those who amidst the Jews were like chaste and modest virgins, whose heart was fixed on one, her own, her chosen beloved husband. *Girded with sackcloth:* in deep mournings the people of those countries did use sackcloth in their mourning habit, and wore it girded close to their skin. *For the husband of her youth;* either married to her in youth, or espoused to her, but snatched away from her by an untimely death, which she doth most bitterly lament.

9 [k] The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD's ministers, mourn.
k ver. 13. ch. 2. 14.

The meat-offering; which by Divine appointment was to be of fine flour, oil, and frankincense, as Lev. ii. 1, &c.; vi. 14, &c. This meat-offering was necessary to every sacrifice offered under the law; so that without the *mincha,* or meat-offering, the sacrifice was maimed and illegal. *The drink-offering;* required daily, as appears Exod. xxix. 40, 41; Numb. xxviii. 8; a fourth part of a hin of wine for one lamb, Numb. xxviii. 7. *Is cut off;* by the destruction of the vines by the locusts forementioned, all that wine (out of which they ought to offer the drink-offering) did fail. *From the house of the Lord;* it was to be poured out, if wine, and part of the meat-offering was to be burnt on the altar, so both were disposed according to the law in the house of the Lord. *The priests;* sons of Aaron, with the Levites. *The Lord's ministers,* who did serve the Lord in the services of the temple. *Mourn;* grieve inwardly, and express it by outward signs. These had more cause than others to mourn, for as they had equal cause with others in respect to God, whose service hereby failed, so the priests, in respect to their private gain and maintenance, had more cause to mourn, their provision was by this means shortened.

10 The field is wasted, [l] the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: [m] the new wine is ‖ dried up, the oil languisheth.
l Jer. 12. 11. & 14. 2. m Is. 24. 7. ver. 12. ‖ Or, ashamed.

The field is wasted; the soil that was wont to be fat and fruitful, and did shout with fruits, now lieth waste, horrid to look upon, and such as promises no fruit; the famine in their houses, and the ceasing of the sacrifices in the house of God, is like to be perpetuated. *The land mourneth;* the inhabitants of the land, by a usual figure, here called the land. *The corn is wasted;* the wheat and barley, their bread corn, is eaten up in its greenness by these devouring locusts, whether in the letter by vermin, or in the figure by the Babylonians. *The new wine is dried up;* the word may as well be rendered is *ashamed,* or *confounded;* it is then a figurative expression, which this prophet useth, ver. 12, 17, in the last of which it is rendered *withered;* if you retain, as well you may, our version, it plainly tells us the heats and drought with them were so great, that the vines were withered, and all their hopes of new wine by this means cut off. *The oil;* the olive trees, as the vines, fade too, and promise very little oil. *Languisheth;* neither able to send sap from the root to maintain its verdure, nor to put forth berries, or to bring them to maturity. Now as these words declare what barrenness was now upon the land, so it is a plain account of the reason why the priests are called to mourn, and why the meat-offering and drink-offering are cut off; these must cease when that ceaseth which made them up corn, wine, and oil.

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n Jer. 14. 3, 4.

11 [n]Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished.

Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen: some read it assertively, the husbandmen are ashamed, and as to matter of fact it is true they were ashamed; but the imperative mood, or by way of exhortation, will better suit the context. They are now called upon to blush, repent, and search into the cause of this barrenness, and loss of their labour in ploughing, sowing, and manuring their tillage; the prophet aims at this principally, to bring them, as well as the priests, to repentance. *Vine-dressers;* a sort of men as well known with that people as gardeners are with us; men whose work was to plant, water, prune, and manage vineyards, and whose labour (unless for sin blasted) did usually succeed to a great increase. *Because the harvest of the field is perished;* your sins have brought upon you this woeful scarcity, your harvest in which you expected your labours and cares should be recompensed is perished, quite destroyed, as the word imports. This is just cause why you, O husbandmen, should lament, and further inquire why God is so displeased with you.

o ver. 10.

12 [o]The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, *even* all the trees of the field, are withered: because [p]joy is withered away from the sons of men.

p Is. 24. 11. Jer. 48. 33. See Ps. 4. 7. Is. 9. 3.

The vine is dried up: see ver. 10. *The fig tree;* a tree well known, and the fruit of it was usually a great advantage and benefit to the people of those countries. *The pomegranate tree;* a pleasant tree, as appears Cant. iv. 13; vii. 12; and its fruit lovely, therefore fit for ornaments about the pillars of the temple. These in the common drought and by locusts have lost their beauty, and fail the hopes of him that planted them. *The palm tree;* of great beauty in the height and uniformity of its growth, and that doth rise under the weight which would depress it, Psal. xcii. 12: with these Ezekiel's temple was adorned, chap. xl. 16, 22, 26; with the branches of these triumphant shows were also made; but these are withered and dry. *The apple tree;* the fruit whereof was very useful, and did ordinarily well recompense the care of the planter, but now, as other trees, fail them. *All the trees of the field;* none so hardy and able to bear unkind seasons, but are now destroyed by the judgments of God in drought and locusts. *Are withered;* not as in autumn, when the leaf falleth, but, because the root fails, is either dead or dying. *Because;* or therefore, or surely, for the particle here used is oftentimes assertive, not causal. *Joy is withered away from the sons of men;* all mirth and liveliness of men is blasted with this dismal blast upon their labours and hopes; they cannot rejoice who foresee they shall be, nay, are already, pinched with want and famine.

q ver. 8. Jer. 4. 8.

13 [q]Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for [r]the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God.

r ver. 9.

Gird yourselves; bind your mourning sackcloth close to you with a girdle, that it may be more troublesome to the flesh; for though in Hebrew it is only gird, the phrase is well known in the Scripture, on these occasions, to include sackcloth, as what is girded on the mourner, and sackcloth is expressly mentioned ver. 8, and in many other places, Isa. xv. 3; Jer. iv. 8; Lam. ii. 10; Ezek. vii. 18; xxvii. 31. *Lament;* weep bitterly, as they do who mourn for the dead, lament over your dead joys; let it be a hearty grief, as that of Abraham for Sarah, Gen. xxiii. 2, of Jacob's children and friends sorrowing for his death, Gen. l. 10, or of Israel lamenting their brave judge, 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. *Ye priests;* that you may be example to others, and because they had, as observed ver. 9, a double cause to mourn, one more than the rest of the people. *Howl:* see ver. 5. *Ye ministers of the altar:* they were the Lord's ministers, ver. 9; now ministers of the altar, they served the Lord in the things of the altar. *Lie all night;* the case needs a continued fasting, weeping, and supplication in the most humble posture, and with all the tokens of an afflicted spirit. The priests should above others mourn; if they mourn in the day, the priests should mourn night and day. *My God,* who, having sent me to speak to you in his name, doth call you to this, that he may pardon and bless you when you repent. *The meat-offering, &c.:* see ver. 9.

14 ¶ [s]Sanctify ye a fast, call [t]a ‖solemn assembly, gather the elders *and* [u]all the inhabitants of the land *into* the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD,

s 2 Chron. 20. 3, 4. ch. 2. 15, 16. t Lev. 23. 36. ‖ Or, day of restraint. u 2 Chron. 20. 13.

Sanctify ye; you priests, ministers of my God, set apart a day, or more days, appoint a time, forbid all servile work and sensual pleasures, do what you may to prepare for such a necessary work. *A fast;* wherein to afflict yourselves, confess your sins, repent of them, sue out your pardon, and return to God, that he may remove your present calamities, and prevent the future. *Call a solemn assembly;* proclaim and publish it, that every one may know they are restrained from common, daily work, and that they are commanded to come together, most solemnly to seek the Lord. *Gather the elders;* both for age and for authority, magistrates and rulers, who possibly had been by their sins, more than others, cause of these grievous calamities, and should now be examples to others in repenting. *And all the inhabitants of the land;* make this fast as public and universal as you can, command all the people of the land, all that dwell with you; perhaps the prophet intends proselytes of the law, and those of commerce, as well as the Jews. *Into the house of the Lord;* courts of the temple, for priests only might go into the temple itself; the court of Israel, where the people were wont to pray. *Your God;* remember the covenant by which you are his people, and he is your God, that you may plead his promises as well as wait for his mercies. *And cry unto the Lord,* with tears of repentance, with prayer of faith, cry more with the broken heart than loud voice.

15 [x]Alas for the day! for [y]the day of the LORD *is* at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

x Jer. 30. 7. y Is. 13. 6, 9. ch. 2. 1.

This verse and the three next may be looked upon either as a particular declaration of the grounds of this fast, or as a direction how to manage the fast, a suggesting to the people what they should spread before the Lord, or else as the words of the priests, bewailing the calamitous state of the land.

Alas! it is a very pathetical bemoaning themselves, which speaks their sense of the evil they suffered. *For the day;* the day of trouble, sorrow, and great distress. *For the day of the Lord:* this explains the former; it is a day of greater troubles than yet they felt, troubles which God will heap upon them, a day in which God will be judge, and punish by the locusts, by the drought, and by Babylonians, unless you repent. *Is at hand;* great calamities were now upon them, and greater were approaching to them: if the prophet aim at the captivity of the two tribes, it was one hundred and eighty years off; if of the ten tribes, it was about sixty years off, for he prophesieth about the latter end of Jeroboam the Second; it is likely therefore he aimeth at some other calamities. *As a destruction;* a total overthrow of the kingdom, the worship of God, and all your labours in your land. *From the Almighty;* whose displeasure, as a consuming fire, can and will burn up all before it; his power and hand will do it, and then nothing can resist it. *Shall it come;* most certainly and speedily, nothing can retard or divert it, unless fasting, prayers, and tears, and amendment do it.

16 Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, *yea,* [z]joy and gladness from the house of our God?

z See Deut. 12. 6, 7, & 16. 11, 14, 15.

Is not the meat? the question does most vehemently affirm, our food, what we should eat, i. e. all provision we should live upon. *Cut off;* devoured by locusts, or withered with drought, it is perished. *Before our eyes;* we see it, it is not so far off as what is foretold, it is under our eye. *Yea,*

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joy and gladness from the house of our God: sacrifices fail much, and priests have scarce enough to live upon, while free-will offerings, first-fruits, and tithes amount to very little, not sufficient to feast the sacrificers and offerers, who on such occasion did use to rejoice in the house of God.

† Heb. *grains.*

17 The †seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered.

The seed; called so from the seedsman's scattering it abroad when he soweth it, and in this place only so used, for aught I can observe, and yet this use of it here is justified by all the following words; the grain which is sown for the seed against next spring. *Is rotten;* is putrefied, grown musty and fruitless; nor is this word any where else used in Scripture. *Under their clods,* and earth, from under which the seed covered should spring up, but now, as unsound, rotten, and fruitless seed, is lost under it. *The garners,* or storehouses, treasuries of corn, in which it was kept for future use, *are laid desolate;* either run to ruin, because the owners, discouraged with the barrenness of the seasons, would not repair them; this will intimate that this judgment lasted some years, and is better ground for it than the four sorts of vermin repeated one after another, in ver. 4: or else *desolate,* being pulled down, and the materials employed for other uses, till they may have corn to keep in them. *The barns,* in which they lodged their unthrashed corn, *are broken down;* neglected, and without repair; *for the corn is withered;* there was no use of them, no corn to be laid up, all withered, and therefore the barns were not regarded.

a Hos. 4. 3.

18 How do [a]the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.

How do the beasts groan! so great was the penury and want of sustenance, that the beasts in the field, pinched with hunger, groaned, made dismal noise for fodder and water; the word *beasts* is general, and contains all sorts. *The herds of cattle;* the greater cattle, which go wandering about, and range over all places, yet can find no pasturage. *The flocks of sheep;* which, led by shepherds, might likely be supposed better secured; yet their shepherds find no pasture, and the sheep pine away and starve. These things are mentioned, either as convincing men of their stupidity, who were less sensible of present miseries than brute beasts were, or to provoke them to lay to heart the pressing calamities, or as arguments that he would pity and relieve innocent brutes, though he punished sinful brutes.

b Ps. 50. 15.

19 O LORD, [b]to thee will I cry: for

c Jer. 9. 10. ch. 2. 3. ‖ Or, *habitations.*

[c]the fire hath devoured the ‖pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.

O Lord, Maker and Preserver of these poor famished cattle, *to thee will I cry:* either it is the prophet's prayer he maketh, or a form prescribed for the priests. *The fire;* the immoderate heats, or else the scorching and blasting flashes of fire in the air, which in those hot countries are more frequent and more pernicious than in colder climates. *Hath devoured the pastures;* the fruitful and pleasant places where shepherds pitched their tents, and were used to feed their sheep, all are parched and dried as if burned with fire. *Of the wilderness;* either because the shepherds chose to pitch their tents far from cities and towns; or else because in those vast wildernesses there were some fruitful pastures scattered up and down, some lower places of springs and water-courses. *The flame,* the flashes of fire from the clouds, or in the air, without thunder, or else lightnings with thunder, *hath burnt all the trees,* that they neither afford their fruit, their shade, or their green boughs for browse for the relief of man or beast. This extreme desolation should affect them all; it doth shame the sinfully senseless among them; and it is a good argument to use with God, whose creatures they are as well as man.

d Joh 38. 41. Ps. 104. 21. & 145. 15. e 1 Kings 17. 7. & Is. 5.

20 The beasts of the field [d]cry also unto thee: for [e]the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

The beasts: see ver. 18. *Cry;* the wilder sort, that rove about many miles seeking their livelihood, find no sustenance, they look up to God, and cry to him: these creatures, that can better shift for themselves, yet can make no good shift; they utter their complaints in their sad tones, they have a voice to cry, as well as an eye to look to God. *Unto thee,* who only canst open thy hand, and fill them. Learn, ye brutish among men, look and cry to God. And again, Have pity, O God, many of thy sinless creatures perish without relief; hear them, though thou shouldst not hear men. *The rivers are dried up;* most extreme and tedious drought, which hath dried up the rivers themselves; there is no drink for the cattle, they must perish without help, unless thou, O God, send a plentiful and fruitful rain. *The fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness:* see this explained above, ver. 19.

CHAP. II.

The prophet describeth the locusts as a mighty army led by God to destroy the land, 1—11. *He exhorteth to repentance,* 12—14; *prescribeth a general fast and humiliation,* 15—17; *and promiseth mercy from God,* 18—20. *He comforteth Zion with present blessings,* 21—27; *and prophesieth the effusion of the Holy Spirit, and other blessings of the gospel,* 28—32.

a Jer. 4. 5. ver. 15. ‖ Or, *cornet.* b Num. 10. 5, 9. c ch. 1. 15. Obad. 15. Zeph. 1. 14, 15.

[a]BLOW ye the ‖trumpet in Zion, and [b]sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for [c]the day of the LORD cometh, for *it is* nigh at hand;

Blow ye the trumpet: the prophet continueth his advice or exhortation to the priests, who were by office appointed to summon the solemn assemblies, and to call them together by sound of trumpet or cornet; and so would he have the priests to gather the people together to fast, and weep, and pray. *In Zion;* which taken largely is the same with Jerusalem, though strictly taken it is the hill on which the city of David, or his royal palace, did stand. *Sound an alarm;* give notice that all may be prepared against the enemy, let it be known that the enemy is coming, what danger attends his coming, and what provision should be made. *In my holy mountain;* in Jerusalem, in Moriah, on which the temple did stand. *Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble;* stand in awe of God's majesty, fear his displeasure, and do this with a penitent heart, all you that dwell in the land of Canaan, the parched and burnt land. *For the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand:* see chap. i. 15.

d Amos 5. 16, 20.

2 [d]A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: [e]a great people and a strong; [f]there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, *even* to the years †of many generations.

e ver. 5, 11, 25. ch. 1. 6. f Ex. 10. 14. † Heb. *of generation and generation.*

A day of darkness and of gloominess; metaphorically taken for a time of exceeding great troubles and calamities, according to the style of the Scriptures, which express prosperity by the metaphor of light, and adversity by darkness, which certainly is intended here; and the synonymous terms are here multiplied, to intimate the extremity and length of these troubles. And this passage may well allude to the day of judgment, and the calamities which shall precede that day. *Thick darkness* does undoubtedly imply, as the gradual approach, so the dismal effects of God's judgments and the Jews' miseries. See this word used 2 Sam. xxii. 10, with 12—16; Psal. xviii. 9, 11. It was such terror with which God gave the law, and in such he will punish the transgressors of his law. *As the morning spread upon the mountains;* as the morning spreads itself suddenly over all the hemisphere, and as it first spreads itself upon the high mountains, so should the approaching calamities overtake this people. *A great people:* this seems more directly to intend the Babylonians rather than locusts, yet both are numerous, as the word imports, Heb.: see chap.

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i. 6. *And a strong;* bold to attempt, and mighty in strength to execute; both true of Assyrians or Babylonians, or the locusts. *There hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more:* locusts, emblem of the warlike nations, and the spoil done by both, are here described the greatest that ever yet were known; and of the Assyrian or Babylonian spoil made in Judea, the history doth ascertain this. *Even to the years of many generations;* if ever the like be, it shall not be in many ages to come.

g ch. 1. 19, 20.

3 [g]A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land *is* as [h]the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; [i]yea, and nothing shall escape them.

h Gen. 2. 8. & 13. 10. Is. 51. 3. i Zech. 7. 14.

A fire, either the heat of the sun more vehement than usual, or the locusts, or Chaldeans and Babylonians resembled by locusts, as fire, shall devour, utterly consume and eat up, *before them;* that people, ver. 2. *Behind them a flame burneth;* what is left behind them is as burnt with a flame; all that the locusts leave behind them is as that which the flame hath scorched, dried, and turned into charcoal; or, all the Chaldeans and Babylonians leave behind them is (as customary with the barbarous invaders) set on fire, and what they cannot eat or carry away they destroy with fire. *The land is as the garden of Eden before them;* it is every where most fruitful and pleasant, a land where they have not yet come. This is expressed in that proverbial speech, *as the garden of Eden:* see Isa. li. 3; Ezek. xxxvi. 35. *And behind them a desolate wilderness;* but wherever these locusts, or the armies they signify, come, all is turned into a most desolate wilderness. *Nothing shall escape;* nothing that was for beauty and pleasure, nor any thing for necessity and support of life.

k Rev. 9. 7.

4 [k]The appearance of them *is* as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.

The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; their carriage, for fierceness, agility, and irresistibleness, is like that of horses trained up to the wars, of which Job xxxix. 19, &c. *And as horsemen, so shall they run:* this gives light to the former expression, and by it we see these locusts are not resembled to the horse for shape, but for their nimbleness in motion. And as were these types, so should the armies which were typified be also.

l Rev. 9. 9.

5 [l]Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, [m]as a strong people set in battle array.

m ver. 2.

Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap; such warlike chariots on resounding mountains do, with their rapid motions, and shaking their irons about them, make a great and dreadful noise; so should these locusts in their flight; by which they shall terrify the people before they come to them, for the noise of them may be heard, say some, at six miles' distance. *Like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble;* which does with continued crackling burn what is under the flame, and threaten speedy and inevitable ruin to what is before it; all shall be endangered by it, as if surrounded with flaming fire. *As a strong people;* so ver. 2. *Set in battle array;* prepared to assault and destroy: in pursuance of this metaphor, see ver. 7—11.

n Jer. 8. 21. Lam. 4. 8. Nah. 2. 10. † Heb. *pot.*

6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: [n]all faces shall gather † blackness.

Before their face, at the sight of these locusts, both literally and figuratively considered, *the people* of the land *shall be much pained;* as a woman in travail is in pain, their fears shall be very great, lest these devouring creatures should seize and destroy whatever was for support of their life, and life of their families. *All faces shall gather blackness;* such as is the colour of dead men, or as is the dark paleness of men frighted into fits and swoons.

7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:

They, locusts, and they who by the locusts are signified, viz. Chaldeans, Assyrians, or Babylonians, *shall run,* with speed, fierceness, and irresistible power, against their enemies. *Mighty men;* valiant and strong men, or giants. *They shall climb the wall;* no walls of any fortified towns shall be high enough to keep them out. Strange locusts, that assault cities! but armed and commissioned of God, they shall vigorously act their part, and do what he appointeth and commandeth them to do. *Like men of war;* who fear no power that from within the cities might oppose them, they shall valiantly and skilfully manage the assault. *They shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:* naturalists testify the truth of this in the stories of these insects, and their marshalling of themselves, of which also see Prov. xxx. 27; Nah. iii. 17. This skill in ordering, and steadiness in keeping order, like exactly-trained soldiers, foretells the terror and strength both of the armies signified by these locusts, and of the locusts themselves. As these then did, so the Assyrians, Chaldeans, or Babylonians should proceed in arms against this people.

8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and *when* they fall upon the ‖sword, they shall not be wounded.

‖ Or, *dart.*

Neither shall one thrust another: the prophet, in pursuance of the allegory, tells us how this army of locusts do move without disorder; so shall they who are hereby typified; it is much the same with the last clause of the former verse. *They shall walk;* before it was *run,* i. e. for speed, now it is *walk,* for stedfast and even motion. *Every one in his path;* the track he first takes to, follow his leader exactly, and observe rank and file. *When they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded;* the sword shall not be a weapon to destroy them, they shall run among swords, yet not be wounded; literally verified in the locusts, and verified in the strange preservations and escapes from dangers in midst of the most desperate adventures made by Assyrians or Babylonians.

9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall [o]enter in at the windows [p]like a thief.

o Jer. 9. 21. p John 10. 1.

In this verse we must discern what is any whit proper to the locusts, and what is applicable more fitly to the soldiers figured by them. *They shall run to and fro:* this seems not proper to these insects, which move forward, and alter not their course in such limited and straitened bounds as a city; but this well suits with soldiers that conquer a city, and search all places for plunder and prey. *In the city;* in every city that they take. *They shall run upon the wall;* to clear the wall of all the besieged who did defend it, to help up others that were scaling the wall, and to seize towers which were built upon the wall: this is better fitted to soldiers that take a city than to locusts. *They shall climb up upon the houses;* either forsaken and shut fast up by the inhabitants before they left them, or houses defended by such as are in them, as is usual in cities taken by assault. *They shall enter in at the windows;* where they can find the first entrance, there they will through, and nothing shall keep them out. *Like a thief;* suddenly, unexpectedly, to spoil at least, if not to kill and destroy: locusts and soldiers will do this.

10 [q]The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: [r]the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:

q Ps. 18. 7. r Is. 13. 10. Ezek. 32. 7. ver. 31. ch. 3. 15. Matt. 24. 29.

Literally taken, this verse is an elegant description of most unparalleled armies of locusts, sent of God to waste this sinful people, in the description whereof the prophet shows his lofty style, and in a divine hyperbole warns the people: but there is another sense of the words we must look to; these locusts in this prophecy are hieroglyphics and emblems, and so are the earth, heaven, sun, moon, and stars. By *earth,* thus considered, the vulgar, mean multitudes are many times set forth; here, the common people

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among the Jews. *Shall quake before them;* locusts first, and armies of foreign enemies afterwards, and that ere long. *The heavens shall tremble;* grandees, rulers, and counsellors, or the whole frame of the kingdom and government, shall shake and tremble, their hearts shall sink within them who should be a support to others. *The sun,* their king, *and the moon,* their queen, who may as particularly be here pointed at as the queen of Nineveh is Nah. ii. 7, *shall be dark;* overwhelmed with amazement from the greatness of their troubles. *The stars shall withdraw their shining;* the courtiers and men of eminency, that were as stars for glory and brightness, shall be covered with clouds, and these thick and black; all this miserable confusion threatened against them for their sins, and in this emblem of vast multitudes of locusts presented to their thoughts.

s Jer. 25. 30. ch. 3. 16. Amos 1. 2.
t ver. 25.
u Jer. 50. 34. Rev. 18. 8.
x Jer. 30. 7. Amos 5. 18. Zeph. 1. 15.
y Num. 24. 23. Mal. 3. 2.

11 sAnd the LORD shall utter his voice before tthis army: for his camp *is* very great: ufor *he is* strong that executeth his word: for the xday of the LORD *is* great and very terrible; and ywho can abide it?

The Lord, Jehovah, the eternal and almighty God, Lord of hosts, *shall utter his voice;* summon them in, and encourage them, as a general doth encourage his soldiers engaging in fight; God commands their attendance, and countenanceth their attempts. *Before his army* of locusts and insects; and of Assyrians, Chaldeans, or Babylonians, signified by locusts. *His camp is very great;* very numerous and strong, and therefore described by the prophet in a manner almost above belief; it is the host which God gathers together, and by which he will do great things. *He is strong;* he giveth strength to his army, and is among them the Strong One; he doth by them execute his own purpose and threats, and so shows his strength. *That executeth his word;* what he hath declared and threatened to do. *The day of the Lord:* see chap. i. 15. *Is great;* wherein great sinners are punished, great judgments are executed, by great power in the instruments, and by greater power in the hand that useth them. *Very terrible;* full of terror, and such as will make the stoutest heart quail. *Who can abide it?* neither king, nobles, nor warriors, but all faces gather blackness, as it is ver. 6, 10.

z Jer. 4. 1. Hos. 12. 6. & 14. 1.

12 ¶ Therefore also now, saith the LORD, zturn ye *even* to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:

Therefore, since so great displeasure is conceived against you for your sins, and so terrible execution is shortly to be made upon you, and there is no way of resistance or escape left, *turn ye even to me;* repent of your sins whereby you have departed from me; all this preparation made against you is made not to destroy you utterly, but to awaken you to repentance; whilst you may find mercy upon repentance, be advised to it, and prevent your final desolation. *With all your heart;* not hypocritically, with divided heart, but sincerely and with full purpose of amendment; let your heart, your whole heart, first be turned to me your God and Sovereign. *With fasting;* public fasting as well as private, such fasting as is required, chap. i. 14. *With weeping;* make it appear that you are sensible of, and deeply affected with, your former sins in the jollity of your sensual life, now weep for it. *And with mourning;* tears do well become a fast, but they must not be tears only, but a mournful frame of heart within, a fountain of these tears, is expected, and indeed required.

a Ps. 34. 18. & 51. 17.
b Gen. 37. 34. 2 Sam. 1. 11. Job 1. 20.
c Ex. 34. 6. Ps. 86. 5, 15. Jonah 4. 2.

13 And a*rend your heart, and not* b*your garments, and turn unto the* LORD your God: for he *is* cgracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

Rend your heart; lay them open, as chirurgeons lay open putrefying sores that they may be thoroughly cleansed; remove iniquity from your heart, as the Chaldee paraphrast. *And not your garments;* as hypocrites do, who in sudden or great troubles easily stoop to tear a loose garment, but hardly are brought to rend their hearts: what God expecteth most they cannot be persuaded to, but what he careth least for they are ready to do. Be not such hypocrites before God, who cannot be mocked, nor spare them who dare do it: let your garments escape if you please; but your hearts, break them, circumcise them, Deut. x. 16. *Turn unto the Lord your God;* in repenting keep hope alive, look to God as your God, who by covenant hath promised to show you mercy on your repenting and turning to him, Deut. xiii. 17; xxx. 8, 9; Isa. lv. 7; Jer. xxxi. 19, 20; xxxii. 38—40. *He is gracious;* gentle, easy to be entreated, and ready to forgive the guilty. *Merciful;* compassionate, and ready to show pity and relieve the indigent: you are both guilty and afflicted; return to your God, who is gracious to pardon your guilt, and merciful to relieve your miseries. *Slow to anger;* who hath spared, doth still spare, and waits purposely that you might have time to repent, and turn and live. *Of great kindness:* your provocations are many and great, yet return, for his mercy is great, his kindnesses are many. *And repenteth him of the evil;* not as man, but as becometh his own holy, just, and immutable nature, he turneth from executing the fierceness of his wrath, Jer. xviii. 7—10. Be wise and obedient, and follow my counsel, repent and make your peace with God.

d Josh. 14. 12. 2 Sam. 12. 22. 2 Kings 19. 4. Amos 5. 15. Jonah 3. 9. Zeph. 2. 3.
e Is. 65. 8.
f ch. 1. 9, 13. Hag. 2. 19.

14 dWho knoweth *if* he will return and repent, and leave ea blessing behind him; *even* fa meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?

None need be discouraged, as if it were too late to seek and hope for mercy; God will pardon the truly penitent, and deliver them from eternal miseries, and it is possible he may deliver from present temporal calamities also. If you obtain not all you would, you shall obtain enough to show that it was worth your while to seek God. *Return:* God doth not locally move from one place to another, but when he withholds his blessings, the fruits of his favour, he is said to withdraw himself; so when he gives out his blessings, he is said to return. *Repent:* see ver. 13. *Leave a blessing behind him;* cause the locusts to depart before they have eaten up all that is in the land. *A meat-offering and a drink-offering:* see chap. i. 9.

g Num. 10. 3. ver. 1.
h ch. 1. 14.

15 ¶ gBlow the trumpet in Zion, hsanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:

Blow the trumpet in Zion: see ver. 1. *Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:* see chap. i. 14.

i Ex. 19. 10, 22.
k ch. 1. 14. 1 2 Chron. 20. 13.
m 1 Cor. 7. 5.

16 Gather the people, isanctify the congregation, kassemble the elders, lgather the children, and those that suck the breasts: mlet the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

Gather the people, assemble the elders: see chap. i. 14. *Gather the children;* though they understand little what is done, yet their cries under the affliction of a fast ascend, God hears, and with pity looks on their tears. *And those that suck the breasts;* let your fast be most universal, spare not sucking children, bring them with you; their tears and cries may perhaps move the congregation to greater mourning and earnest supplication to God for mercy, or will be a fit object to present unto the God of mercy to move him to show mercy. So the Ninevites, Jonah iii. 7, 8. *Let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber;* let the new-married man leave the mirth of the nuptials, and lay aside his bravery awhile, and afflict himself with the rest. *And the bride out of her closet,* or chamber, in which with the virgins she adorned herself or caressed them. That these may more earnestly seek the Lord, let them at this season forbear lawful delights.

n Ezek. 8. 16. Matt. 23. 35.
o Ex. 32. 11, 12. Deut. 9. 26.—29.
‖ Or, *use a byword against them.*
p Ps. 42. 10. & 79. 10. & 115. 2. Mic. 7. 10.

17 Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep nbetween the porch and the altar, and let them say, oSpare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to ‖reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: pwherefore should they say among the people, Where *is* their God?

Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep: see chap. i. 13. *Between the porch;* that stately porch built by Solomon, 1 Kings vi. 3; Ezek. xl. 48, 49. *And the altar;* not of incense, for that was in the holy place; but the great

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brazen altar, or altar of burnt-offering, which stood at some distance from this porch; and here the priests are commanded to stand, fasting and praying, whence they might be heard and seen by the people in the next court, in which the people were wont to pray. *Let them say*, with loud voice, and with louder heart and affection; after this manner let them pray and intercede with God. *Spare:* this includes confession of sin, acknowledging God's justice, laying themselves at the foot of God for mercy, and imploring of mercy; Though we have sinned and deserve severe wrath, yet spare, deal not with us as we deserve. *Thy people:* this includes all they can plead from the covenant of God with them, his grace, promise, faithfulness, &c.; We are thy peculiar people, thou art our God, therefore spare, &c. *Give not;* thou only canst expose us to famine and servitude, and both will come upon us if thou first give us up to these predooming locusts, they will consume all, and if thou after give us up to those nations which as locusts are innumerable and irresistible. O give us not up to them. *Thine heritage;* chosen, redeemed, possessed through many ages by thee. O Lord, even since we came out of Egypt thou hast owned us for thine heritage: though whilst we were impenitent, and sinned high against thee, we deserved to be cast off; now we return, repent, and pray, be gracious to us, and continue to own and bless thine heritage; since thou canst make it fruitful and beautiful, command it to excel in both; cultivate, fence, and watch over it, it is thine heritage. *To reproach*; it is a reproach to any land that it starves or eats up the inhabitants thereof, Numb. xiii. 32; Ezek. xxxvi. 30; and famine, though by locusts, will be a reproach to this thine heritage; it will be greater reproach to be slaves to the nations signified by the locusts; therefore of mercy deliver us from both one and the other. *The heathen;* whether Assyrians, or Chaldeans, or Babylonians. *Rule over them;* conquer first, and then enslave thy people; or, as the word will bear, take them up for a taunt and proverb, when they shall know that they leave their own land as too barren a place to maintain them, or seek their bread at a dear rate in heathen lands. *Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?* nay, these barbarous people will not so much consider our sins, or justify our God, but they will reproach God, our God, the great God, as if unable to maintain us. O spare for thine own glory's sake, never let them (as Psal. cxv. 2) deride thee our God.

q Zech. 1. 14. & 8. 2. r Deut. 32. 36. Is. 60. 10.

18 ¶ Then will the LORD [q] be jealous for his land, [r] and pity his people.

Then, when you follow my advice, saith Joel, and heartily repent you of your sins, and turn to God, &c., *will the Lord be jealous*, will show his love and zeal, *for* the credit of *his land*, the land of Canaan, *and pity his people;* consider their prayers, their arguments, and tears, and upon the whole will deal so with them that they shall know I do own them for my people, and that I will do them good.

s See ch. 1. 10. Mal. 3. 10, 11, 12.

19 Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you [s] corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen:

Yea, or *And*, Heb. *The Lord will answer;* before it was he would *pity*, ver. 18; not as men many times pity and profess to have compassion for the miserable who cry to them, yet do nothing; but God will pity their case and hear their request, nay, grant their request and relieve them. *And say;* speak to and work for his people. *Unto his people;* his covenant, praying, repenting, and reforming people. *Behold;* what he doth for such a people shall be visible, remarkable, and such as they may observe. *I will send you corn, and wine, and oil:* fruitful seasons shall come when God sends them, his command to the heavens to pour down their sweet and fruitful influences shall certainly be obeyed; these must hear God, and then the earth shall hear the corn, and wine, and oil, as Hos. ii. 21, 22. *Ye shall be satisfied therewith;* you shall have abundance to fill and satisfy you, that you may rejoice in your habitations and know no want. *I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen;* your heathen neighbours shall no more insult over you my people, nor over me your God. Obey my prophet, turn from your sins, and I will do you all this good I promise, or you need and ask.

t See Exod. 10. 19. u Jer. 1. 14.

20 But [t] I will remove far off from you [u] the northern *army*, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face [x] toward the east sea, and his hinder part [y] toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because † he hath done great things.

x Ezek. 47. 18. Zech. 14. 8. y Deut. 11. 24. † Heb. *he hath magnified to do.*

But, Heb. *And, I will remove far off from you the northern army;* that part of these numerous locusts which are towards the north shall be removed far from you, no more to annoy you on that quarter: some say this refers to the dissipation of Sennacherib's army, which came up from the parts which lay somewhat northerly from Jerusalem and Judea. *And will drive him;* some other part of this locust army shall be driven away into the southern deserts, here described by a *barren and desolate land. His face;* the van of this army, here called the *face*, shall be driven into *the east sea;* the sea of Tiberias, or the Salt Sea, or the Dead Sea, east of Jerusalem. *His hinder part*, the rear of this army of insects, shall be driven into the great, the west sea, here called *the utmost sea*, in the letter and history. The total destruction of this army of insects is here foretold, which no doubt came to pass. If Sennacherib's army and its dissipation were here shadowed out, it is fairly accommodable to this place, when upon his death and the rout of his army from heaven, his forces retired out of Judea on all quarters with loss of men, as is ever the fate of an invading army beaten in the heart of the invaded country. *His ill savour shall come up;* the stench of these locusts destroyed and lying putrefied on the face of the earth, or the corpses of the Assyrians slain and unburied. *Because he hath done great things:* some refer this to the locusts, and those whom they signified; *he*, i. e. this army of locusts or Assyrians: others refer it to God, thus, *for he will do great things;* as indeed the utter destroying of this devouring army, and removal of this dreadful famine, was a great work and marvellous, and it was an answer to their fasting and praying; though it was not all done which is contained in this conditional promise, for that this people never performed the condition.

21 ¶ Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.

Fear not, O land. In ver. 10, the land is said to quake at the approach of this devouring army; now at the approach of mercy it is encouraged, and commanded not to fear; by the same figure and in the same sense, it should not fear now as before it did quake. *Be glad and rejoice:* this tells us that *fear not* was a meiosis; shout for joy, express the greatest confidence. *For the Lord*, who is your God whom you seek, who by me assureth you it is his gracious purpose to do great things for your good, *will do great things:* either this explains that last clause, ver. 20, or is antitheton to it; the locusts, God's messengers and servants, did great things against, but now God will recall these, and do great things for Israel.

z ch. 1. 18, 20. a Zech. 8. 12. See ch. 1. 19.

22 Be not afraid, [z] ye beasts of the field: for [a] the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field. In chap. i. 18—20, the poor beasts were represented as in greatest perplexity, for want of pasture they were like to perish; but now they are (as if capable of fears or joy from foresight of what was coming toward them) encouraged, they should find pasture, both the tamer which are under man's hand, and the wilder which range the mountains. *The pastures of the wilderness:* see chap. i. 19. *Do spring;* begin to look green, and the grass fresh promiseth food for you. *The tree beareth her fruit;* all sorts of trees, though they were withered, and seemed to be dead, chap. i. 12, now they recover their strength and bring forth fruit. *The fig tree* does not, as chap. i. 12, languish. *The vine* is not, as before, dried up, but with change of season hath changed its

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hue. *Do yield their strength;* both these trees do mightily bear, are full of fruit, and bring forth as much as ever they are able to stand under.

b Is. 41. 16. & 61. 10. Hab. 3. 18. Zech. 10. 7.

23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and [b] rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you ‖ the former rain †moderately, and he [c] will cause to come down for you [d] the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first *month*.

‖ Or, *a teacher of righteousness.* † Heb. *according to righteousness.*

c Lev. 26. 4. Deut. 11. 14. & 28. 12. d Jam. 5. 7.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion: in the former verse the prophet, by a usual figure, and with known elegancy, called on land and beasts, though they understood him not; now he addresseth himself to them that can understand their work as well as their advantages, and the children of Zion, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, who were called to fast and weep. *Rejoice in the Lord;* show yourselves sensible of your mercies, thankful to that free bounty which gave your mercies; rejoice, but not only in your barns, garners, and bellies full, but in the eternal God, who hath been found of you. *Your God;* as such you were advised to seek him, as such own him, rejoice in him, and ascribe glory to him, who keepeth covenant to a thousand generations, and hath remembered his covenant for you in this your low estate. *He hath given you the former rain moderately;* the Hebrew will bear it, *a teacher of*, or *unto*, or *according to, righteousness.* Either some eminent prophet, or prophets, as Isaiah, or Joel himself, but as forerunners and types of the great Prophet Christ; so the words will be a promise of the Messiah, and lead these children of Zion to the Messiah, as the fountain of all the blessings they receive of God in temporals as well as spirituals: it is usual in Scripture thus to pass from temporal to spiritual, and from spiritual to temporal promises and blessings; so Isa. vii. 4, &c., with 14—16: but since our best interpreters retain, as ours, this version, *rain moderately*, or in due measure, we adhere to it also: God had sent sweet, gentle, yet sufficient showers to make the earth fruitful, and these showers have made pastures and trees to spring, flourish, and be fruitful. *And he will cause to come down for you the rain;* as he hath already given some, so he will give more, as the earth and trees shall need. *The former rain;* the autumn rain, which is needful to mellow the earth, and fit it to receive the corn and fruits, and to plant and sow them, about September. *The latter rain;* needful to bring forward and ripen the fruits planted or sown, accounted the latter rain because these husbandmen and vine-dressers reckoned from seed time unto spring and harvest. *In the first month;* that is, our March; both these rains, as promised Deut. xi. 14; Lev. xxvi. 4, shall be given from heaven.

24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.

The floors, where they thrashed their corn, *shall be full of wheat*, the best and most useful grain, the bread corn for man's life and support. *The fats*, the vessels into which the liquor ran out of the press, *shall overflow with wine and oil;* there shall be of the grape and olive enough to fill the vessels, nay, to make them run over, though the care of good husbands will save it; for what was said, ver. 22, is here fulfilled, the vine doth yield its strength.

25 And I will restore to you the years
e ch. 1. 4. [e] that the locust hath eaten, the canker-
f ver. 11. worm, and the caterpiller, and the palmer-worm, [f] my great army which I sent among you.

I will restore; make up to you, or compensate: the lean years of Egypt did eat up the fat, but with you now the fat years shall feed and enrich the lean ones. *The years:* by this it appears that this dreadful famine by these insects was longer than of one year's continuance, and perhaps countenanceth the Jewish conjecture of four because four sorts of insects are mentioned. These in the late years devoured the fruit of the earth, but now God will restore the fruits. *The locust, &c.;* all recounted chap. i. 4, with little variation of the order wherein named. *My great army:* see ver. 3—11. *Which I sent:* there was somewhat extraordinary in these armies of insects by which the people then living and afflicted by them might see they were sent immediately from Heaven, though history do not report it to us.

26 And ye shall [g] eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

g Lev. 26. 5. Ps. 22. 26. See Lev. 26. 26. Mic. 6. 14.

Ye shall eat; enjoy and live upon. *In plenty;* not with scarcity, as when water is measured to them, and bread is given by weight, Ezek. iv. 16. *Be satisfied;* the bread they eat shall refresh them, maintain their strength, not be as that Hag. i. 6. *Praise the name;* ascribe the glory to the mercy and faithfulness, to the power and wisdom, of your God; ye shall speak of it to his praise, stop the mouths of insulting heathens. *The Lord your God:* see ver. 13. *Dealt wondrously;* in one year giving as much as the locusts wasted in the years foregoing, whether three, or four, or more. *My people;* you that are my people, demeaning yourselves as becometh my people. *Shall never be ashamed;* neither disappointed of your hopes, nor refused when you pray, nor necessitated to seek relief among the heathen, who will reproach you and me.

27 [h] And ye shall know that I *am* [i] in the midst of Israel, and *that* [k] I *am* the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

h ch. 3. 17. i Lev. 26. 11, 12. Ezek. 37. 26, 27, 28. k Is. 43. 5, 21, 22. Ezek. 39. 22, 28.

And ye, who repent, pray, are blessed with such answer to your prayers, *shall know;* by experience shall see, and acknowledge. *That I am in the midst of Israel;* my true Israel, obedient Israel; I am with them to bless them, defend them, guide them, and provide for them. *That I am the Lord;* the almighty and everlasting God. *Your God*, as I was the God of your father Abraham; yours in peculiar manner by covenant, and to redeem you from evil. *And none else;* that there is not a god beside me, that the idols you formerly doted upon were no gods, that the idols the heathen boast of are a doctrine of lies, and deceive them that trust on them. *My people shall never be ashamed:* see ver. 26.

28 ¶ [l] And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I [m] will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; [n] and your sons and [o] your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

l Is. 44. 3. Ezek. 39. 29. Acts 2. 17. m Zech. 12. 10. John 7. 39. n Is. 54. 13. o Acts 21. 9.

It shall come to pass, most certainly this shall be done, *afterward;* in the latter days, after the return out of Babylonish captivity, after the various troubles and salvations by which they may know that I am the Lord, their God in the midst of them, when those wondrous works shall be seconded by the most wonderful of all, the sending the Messiah, in his day and under his kingdom. *I will pour out my Spirit;* in large abundant measures will I give my Holy Spirit, which the Messiah exalted shall send, John xvi. 7; in extraordinary power and gifts in the apostles and first preachers of the gospel, and in ordinary measure and graces to all believers, Eph. iv. 8—11. *Upon all flesh;* before these gifts were confined to a few people, to one particular nation, to a very small people; but now they shall be enlarged to all nations, Acts ii. 33; x. 45, to all that believe, all that are regenerate. *Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy:* this was in part fulfilled according to the letter in the first days of the gospel; but this promise is rather of a comparative meaning, thus, By pouring out of the Holy Spirit on your sons and your daughters, they shall have as clear and full knowledge of the deep mysteries of God's law as prophets beforetime had. The law and prophets were till John, and during this time the gifts of the Spirit were given in lesser measures, and of all men the prophets had greatest measures of the Spirit; but in these days, the least in the kingdom of God is greater than John. *Your old men shall dream dreams;* no difference of age, to old men who had been long blind in the things of God the mysteries of grace shall be revealed, and these shall know as certainly and clearly as if God had extraordinarily revealed himself to them by dreams sent of God upon them.

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Your young men shall see visions; many young men shall be as eminent in knowledge as if the things known were communicated by vision. In a word, all knowledge of God and his will shall abound among all ranks, sexes, and ages in the Messiah's days, and not only equal, but surpass, all that formerly was by prophecy dreams, or visions.

p 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.

29 And also upon [p]the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

And also, with equal freeness, *upon the servants and upon the handmaids*, upon the meanest believers: see Gal. iii. 28; Col. iii. 11. *My Spirit*, of sanctification and adoption.

q Matt. 24. 29. Mark 13. 24. Luke 21. 11, 25.

30 And [q]I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

And I will show wonders; as he promiseth such grace to believers, so he warneth them that they should not be surprised with those alarming prodigies which in those days God would show, which would usher in the hard times that should be chastisement to the best, and destruction to the worst: whoso will read and observe what historians and naturalists report of those times will see this fulfilled in the very letter, and Matt. xxiv. 7, 29; Mark xiii. 24; Luke xxi. 11, 25. *In the heavens and in the earth;* above men, and under their feet; all which signs are particularly named, and first the signs on the earth. *Blood;* possibly eruption of blood, as some fountains have been reported to have run with blood, and these prefiguring the great effusion of blood by the sword and wars following, or by antichristian persecutions. *Fire;* either breaking out of the earth, or else unusual lightnings, and unparalleled flashes of lightnings in the lower region of the air, setting many things on fire. *Pillars of smoke;* from those burning things fired by lightnings, or by extraordinary flashes, a smoke shall go up like a pillar. Particular instances of these may not here be gathered together, but Hottinger, that learned and painful historian, hath gathered many together of the first age, and so of the following ages of the church, in his Ecclesiastical History, which who desireth may consult.

r ver. 10. Is. 13. 9, 10. ch. 3. 1, 15. Matt. 24. 29. Mark 13. 24. Luke 21. 25. Rev. 6. 12. s Mal. 4. 5.

31 [r]The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, [s]before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

Having mentioned the prodigies which were to be wrought on earth, now the prophet specifieth what shall be done in heaven, where the great luminaries shall be wonderfully affected. *The sun shall be turned into darkness;* shall be greatly obscured; shall seem to be turned from a body of light to mere darkness. *The moon into blood;* either by eclipse, or by the intervention of vapours drawn up from the places where was great slaughter and effusion of blood; however as to manner, it is most certain as to the event; the moon shall seem to be blood. *Before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come;* great to all, terrible to the rejecters and persecutors of Christ. This day was the day of Jerusalem's destruction, and burning of the temple, and slaughter of the Jews, for their violence against and murder of the Messiah, for their sins against the gospel: this was fulfilled partly in the devastation of Jerusalem, but shall fully and finally be fulfilled in the day of judgment, and at the consummation of the world.

t Rom. 10. 13. u Is. 46. 13. & 59. 20. Obad. 17. Rom. 11. 26. x Is. 11. 11, 16. Jer. 31. 7. Mic. 4. 7. & 5. 3, 7, 8. Rom. 9. 27. & 11. 5, 7.

32 And it shall come to pass, *that* [t]whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for [u]in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in [x]the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Yet when nature seems out of course, and such terrible convulsions overthrow all states and kingdoms, and nothing but ruin and destruction appear on every side, yet then most certainly *it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord;* whoso heareth the gospel, repenteth of sin, believeth in Christ, and prayeth for grace, peace, and glory; whoso worshippeth the Father through the Son in truth and faith; *shall be delivered;* either delivered from those sad outward afflictions, or else, which is infinitely better, from eternal miseries, which will swallow up the unbelieving and impenitent world. When the Jews who rejected Christ were destroyed by the Romans, all (as Eusebius reports) the Jews that believed in Christ and submitted to the gospel escaped. *In Mount Zion;* in the true church, typified by Zion, the city of David; *and in Jerusalem;* not local Jerusalem; there was the chief place of slaughter, blood, fire, and death; but mystical Jerusalem, the church and city of the Messiah; *shall be deliverance;* salvation, whether temporal or eternal, or both; *as the Lord hath said;* according as God hath promised; and this promised deliverance gives the believer satisfaction and rest, whether in life or by death. *And in the remnant*, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, *whom the Lord shall call;* called of God to be his peculiar people; called to the knowledge of Christ, to profess his name, to believe in Christ, and by him to wait for eternal life and glory, John x. 16; Acts xiii. 46; Rom. xi. 4, 5, 7.

CHAP. III.

God's judgments against the enemies of his people, 1—17. *His blessing upon the church,* 18—21.

FOR, behold, [a]in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

a Jer. 30. 3. Ezek. 38. 14.

Though our dividing this chapter from the former seems to some a beginning of some new matter, yet indeed the prophet prosecutes his old subject, and proceeds to declare how that great thing mentioned in the last verse of the second chapter should be effected, and in this verse you have a transition to that thing. *Behold:* it is a note of great attention, and heeding what is to be here spoken. *When I shall bring again the captivity;* when I shall by Cyrus the type bring Judah's people out of Babylonish captivity, the emblem of a greater and worse captivity. *Judah* after the flesh as the type, but, according to the mystery of it, Judah signifieth the whole remnant or residue of those God will save. *Jerusalem*, both literally and typically understood; so that beside what refers to the history of the two tribes, or kingdom of the house of David, restored out of captivity by Cyrus, the bringing back the captivity of the whole Israel of God by Christ the Messiah is here to be considered, and all along through this chapter.

2 [b]I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into [c]the valley of Jehoshaphat, and [d]will plead with them there for my people and *for* my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

b Zech. 14. 2, 3, 4. c 2 Chron. 20. 26. ver. 12. d Is. 66. 16. Ezek. 38. 22.

I will also gather all nations: in the type, it is not simply all nations, but all those nations that have with hostile minds oppressed and scattered Judah; in the antitype, it is all nations that have been enemies to Christ and the church. *And will bring them down:* this is spoken with respect to the low situation of the place, being a valley, and we descend into low parts; so here they are caused to go down *into the valley of Jehoshaphat:* much difficulty interpreters find in explaining this; we must look to it as a type to somewhat signified by it, and so apply it. The valley of blessing where Jehoshaphat discomfited mighty and numerous enemies, and then triumphed in God with praises to him, 2 Chron. xx. 22, &c.: so the whole church may be this valley of blessing, and in this God will judge the enemies of his people, and give them occasions of praising God for his righteous judgments; and Jerusalem his church shall see this, as the inhabitants of Jerusalem might see what is done in the valley of Jehoshaphat, if they would be at a little pains to go out of the city. *Will plead with them;* after the manner of a just and impartial judge I will debate my people's cause, and do them right. *There;* in midst of my church, signified by the valley of Jehoshaphat, the valley of the judgment of God. *For my people;* Judah, the two tribes, but, as in their history, bearing a type of the church of Christ. *For my heritage Israel;* purchased and possessed by me ever since they were brought out of Egypt; though many times invaded and injured by their unjust

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neighbours, who were so much their enemies because they were my peculiar people, and kept to my worship. *Whom they have scattered among the nations;* either by force driving them out of their habitations, or else carrying them into captivity, and dispersing them in their insolent humour, of which dispersion more follows, ver. 3, 6, 8. *And parted my land;* divided among themselves the land I gave to my people to hold immediately of me; so it was my land that they divided, their robbery and spoil was sacrilege. Such is the injustice and oppression of persecutors of the church now, and so God will judge them in due time.

[e] Obad. 11. Nah. 3. 10.

3 And they have [e]cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink.

It was customary with conquerors to divide the captives by lot, and so did these enemies of the Jews, Obad. 11; and so did the Chaldeans on the captive Ninevites, Nah. iii. 10: though this was grievous, yet it was the common lot of captives. *Have given a boy for an harlot;* either procured a boy to bestow on some harlot or other which they kept, or gave a boy, instead of money, the price of a harlot to be enjoyed by lewd soldiers. *And sold a girl;* a young girl, which being captive, fell to their lot, they have valued at a base, low price, and sold *for wine, that they might drink;* so much as at one sitting one of them could drink; or perhaps for one draught of wine, when the barbarous soldier was dry or minded to be drunk.

[f] Amos 1. 6, 9. [g] Ezek. 25. 15, 16, 17.

4 Yea, and what have ye to do with me, [f]O Tyre, and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? [g]will ye render me a recompence? and if ye recompense me, swiftly *and* speedily will I return your recompence upon your own head;

What have ye to do with me? what just cause of quarrel have you against me? Have I done you any wrong which now you avenge upon my people? or do you begin to violate the laws of neighbourhood and friendship, and think to escape? Do ye think you have to do with a poor oppressed people, my people, and I nothing concerned at it? *Tyre,* a great mart town, which neighbour to the Jews, and ought to be friends, either joined forces with the enemy against them, or, retaining friendship with the enemy, bought the Jews for slaves, and sold them again to strangers, to Grecians: this, in his man trade, Tyre was accustomed to, Ezek. xxvii. 13. *Zidon,* a famous ancient emporium, whose merchants also bought up captive Jews at cheap rates of these barbarous soldiers. *All the coasts of Palestine,* which lay along the midland sea, among which were towns of trade, and merchants that bought and sold these captives. *Will ye render me a recompence?* do ye this by way of reprisal? Have I or my people so dealt with you or yours? *Speedily will I return your recompence upon your own head;* I will, since you deal so with my people, and with me, certainly and speedily avenge myself and my people on you; as you have used them they shall use you. It is probable this may refer to the Assyrian invasion, when Sennacherib took all the fenced cities of Judah, and might sell the captives, or to Shalmaneser's time, when he captived the ten tribes; or it may be a prediction of what Tyre, and Zidon, and these cities of Palestine would do in the Babylonish successes, and a threat what God would do against them for it; but to whatever particular history it refer, who sees not this in it, that God will plead the cause of his oppressed church, and avenge it as his own cause?

† Heb. *desirable;* Dan. 11. 38.

5 Because ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly †pleasant things:

Ye have taken; you Tyrians, Zidonians, and Philistines have received at the hands of those you confederated with, you have taken them either as part of the spoil, or as part of your pay. *My silver and my gold;* silver and gold vessels dedicated to my service in the temple, and about the altar. *And have carried into your temples;* and in contempt of me, with proud insulting, have presented them in your temples to your idols, as if they were mightier and more glorious than I: so did the Philistines carry the ark into Dagon's temple, but it cost Dagon his head, 1 Sam. v. 4; and Nebuchadnezzar carried away the sacred vessels when he spoiled the temple. *My goodly pleasant things;* God speaks of these after the manner of man, and so accounteth of these things.

6 The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto †the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border.

† Heb. *the sons of the Grecians.*

The children also of Judah, the Jews who dwelt in the land, *and the children of Jerusalem,* the citizens of Jerusalem; or perhaps the young ones, boys and girls, as ver. 3, both of city and country. *Ye;* Tyrians, Zidonians, and Philistines, though neighbours, and oftentimes befriended by the Jews, yet you have done this. *Sold unto the Grecians;* or sons of Grecians, who either employed them as slaves in Greece, or else sold them to other nations for slaves. *That ye might remove them far from their border;* that there might be no hope to these poor captives ever to return to their country, nor fear to the Tyrians and Zidonians of being called to account for the injury by them it was done unto. Amos i. 6, 9, mentions this sin of the Philistines, and God's displeasure at it.

[h] Is. 43. 5, 6. & 49. 12. Jer. 23. 8.

7 Behold, [h]I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompence upon your own head:

Behold; observe it well, for as it will be strange when done, so it shall certainly be done, to your joy, O my people, and to the astonishment of your enemies. *I will raise them;* awaken and raise them; though they lay sleeping, or as dead men. I will stir up some who shall befriend them. *Out of the place whither ye have sold them;* fulfilled when Alexander the Great and his successors, as Josephus, lib. 13. cap. 5, reports, dismissed all Jews that were slaves in Greece, and gave them leave to return to their own country. *And will return your recompence upon your own head;* and more than this, I will pay you in your own coin, you shall read and know your sin in your punishment.

[i] Ezek. 23. 42. [k] Jer. 6. 20.

8 And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the [i]Sabeans, to a people [k]far off: for the LORD hath spoken *it.*

I will sell your sons and your daughters; give them up into the hands of the Jews, who thereby shall have opportunities of disposing of them as they see good; so you did with my people, so I will recompense you. *Into the hand of the children of Judah;* to the Jews, the posterity and kindred of those you sold. *They shall sell them;* either as factors for Nebuchadnezzar or Alexander the Great and his successors, or else as merchants trading on their own account, they shall make this one part of their trade, to sell Grecians, Tyrians, &c. Now though we should not have any particular history that relates the transactions of these people in this kind, yet we may rest assured it was done, since God said it should be done; nor can we expect, or is it necessary it should be, that the Jews should by a conquest of these people bring them captives, and sell them: the Zidonians, Tyrians, and Philistines did not so against the Jews, but they bought particular persons out of the hands of Syrians and Assyrians, who took the Jews captives; so when Tyre, and Zidon, and the Philistines shall be captivated by the Babylonish power, or by the Grecian, these shall sell their captives either into the hands or by the hands of the Jews. *Sabeans* were a people in the parts of Arabia most remote from Tyre and Zidon; they were accounted the ends of the earth, Matt. xii. 42, and spread themselves along by the sea-coast on both sides of the Arabian bay or Red Sea, and passed over that sea, and planted in Africa, and were part of that country which now doth, or lately did, belong to the emperor of Abyssinia, who (as the king of Spain in both Indies) glorieth in being king of both Sabeas, and successor to the queen of Sheba; to one or both of these Sabeans did the Jewish men-sellers dispose of those slaves. *To a people far off:* this may be an elliptic speech, thus to be filled up, and the Sabeans shall sell them (i. e. whom they bought of the Jews) unto another nation far off from the Sabeans; or else it is an additional descrip-

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tion of this people and their country. *For the Lord hath spoken it;* then it was done, whether we know when, or by whom, or how many were sold, or not.

[1] See Is. 8. 9, 10. Jer. 46. 3. 4. Ezek. 38. 7. † Heb. *Sanctify.*

9 ¶ [1]Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; †Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

Proclaim; publish, or make known, as by sound of trumpet: some say it is an irony; I rather think it is a declaration of what is to come to pass through some ages before the coming of the Messiah, as will appear probable from what followeth. *This;* or these things, which I am purposed to do in retaliating to the enemies of my people; proclaim wars which may make captives for sale under the hand of my people. *Among the Gentiles;* the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Babylonians, and Grecians successively. *Prepare war;* make ready for wars against the enemies of my people, who shall by these be corrected, but their enemies at last shall be destroyed. *Wake up the mighty men;* the valiant men, who dare attempt any thing, and are of great strength to execute what they attempt. *Let all the men of war draw near;* all the captains, and experienced soldiers, let them appear at the rendezvous. *Let them come up;* when marshalled, let them march up on their design, toward the seat of the war, which will now for many ages be in or about the valley of vision, the church, the valley of judgment from the Lord.

[m] See Is. 2. 4. Mic. 4. 3. ‖ Or, *scythes.* [n] Zech. 12. 8.

10 [m] Beat your plowshares into swords, and your ‖pruninghooks into spears: [n]let the weak say, I *am* strong.

Beat your ploughshares into swords: here is a prediction of war, and such as should continue, with some intermissions, through many years; as, on the contrary, when swords were to be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, it was a prediction of peace, Isa. ii. 4: lay aside your husbandry in ploughing and sowing. *And your pruning-hooks into spears;* and let gardeners, vine-dressers, and planters think of getting spears instead of pruning-hooks. *Let the weak,* either of body, through sickness or natural weakness, or else weak of mind, fearful, and cowardly, *say, I am strong;* put on strength and valour greater than he hath, let none be absent from this war.

[o] ver. 2. ‖ Or, *the* LORD *shall bring down.* [p] Ps. 103. 20. Is. 13. 3.

11 [o]Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither ‖cause [p]thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD.

Assemble yourselves; the war proclaimed, ver. 9, provision made, ver. 10, now hasten to the general rendezvous; embody yourselves as you march, and hasten what you can, as the word imports. *Come all;* not simply and in utmost latitude, but all that are here concerned. *Gather yourselves together round about;* all round about Judea, the nations near about this valley of vision. *Thither,* toward Judea and Jerusalem, the church and heritage of God, *cause thy mighty ones to come down;* direct and lead them by thy providence, that they may pitch their tents, or encamp there; let all thy mighty ones, whether enemies of thy church gathered against it, or friends of thy church, and gathered for its defence, let them all here encamp; or all those mighty warriors which thou wilt make use of successively to punish the proud oppressors of thy church; so the Chaldeans punished Assyria, Persians and Medes punished Babylon, Alexander punished the Persians, and the divided captains successors plagued one another with wars within sight, as it were, of Jerusalem and Judah. *O Lord;* with which the prophet comforts himself and God's people, intimating that all these mighty ones are under God's conduct, and he is in the midst of them to save his own people.

[q] ver. 2. [r] Ps. 96. 13. & 98. 9. & 110. 6. Is. 2. 4. & 3. 13. Mic. 4. 3.

12 Let the heathen be wakened, [q]and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to [r]judge all the heathen round about.

Let the heathen; the several nations in their appointed time; and perhaps the Assyrians are first to awake and stir under Shalmaneser, next under Sennacherib, both which came up against this valley of Jehoshaphat. *Be wakened,* by the sins and divisions of God's own people, by their own ravenous and turbulent disposition, and by a secret hand of Providence. *And come up,* in hostile manner, against the church and people of God, intended here by this valley: so Sennacherib did in Hezekiah's time. *For there,* in the midst of my people and church, *will I sit to judge,* to plead with, condemn, and punish by the sword, *all the heathen round about;* not all the world, but all the heathen round about Judea, which was oppressed by these heathens: there God judged Sennacherib by his own hand; there God punished the Egyptians by Nebuchadnezzar who defeated Necho; and within sight of the Jews were all the punishments God inflicted on the Assyrian, Babylonish, Persian, and Grecian monarchies executed; and God all this while in the midst of his people preserved them as a bush all in a flame, yet not consumed: so did the Lord lead his mighty ones, and limited their power.

[s] Matt. 13. 30. Rev. 14. 15, 18. [t] Jer. 51. 33. Hos. 6. 11. [u] Is. 63. 3. Lam. 1. 15. Rev. 14. 19, 20.

13 [s]Put ye in the sickle, for [t]the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the [u]press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness *is* great.

Put ye in the sickle; ye mighty ones, ye men of war, executioners of Divine vengeance, begin to reap, cut down sinners ripe for judgment. Let Tiglath-pileser and his soldiers cut down Syria and its king Rezin, 2 Kings xvi., for their violence against my people; let Cyaxares and his armies begin to cut down Assyria, with Nineveh and its king, for their sins are ripe to judgment; let Nebuchadnezzar put in the sickle and cut down Moab, Ammon, Mount Seir, Egypt, Tyre, Zidon, and the Philistines; after this let Cyrus reap down the ripened Babylonians, and Alexander with his mighty ones reap down Medes and Persians, and let divided Grecian captains cut down one another, till the Romans cut them down. And when this is done, God will have mighty ones still to cut down his enemies, persecutors of his church, when the harvest is fully ripe, and till the final and universal judgment, wherein all God's enemies shall for ever be destroyed. *For the harvest is ripe;* the sins of those several nations are fully ripe.

In another metaphor the prophet declares the cutting off the church's enemies. *The press is full:* as the grape-gatherer cuts off the bunches and brings them into the press till it be full, and then they are trod; so here the enemies of God's people, ripe in sin and brought together to be punished, are to be trodden in the wine-press of God's displeasure. *The fats overflow;* a mighty execution is made, and the blood of slaughtered men runs as wine pressed out in greater abundance than the fats can hold from the press; verified in the slaughter made at the overthrow of the kingdoms here intended. *For their wickedness is great;* the violence and all manner of sins of these kingdoms is grown exceeding great.

[x] ver. 2. ‖ Or, *concussion, or, threshing.* [y] ch. 2. 1.

14 Multitudes, multitudes in [x]the valley of ‖decision: for [y]the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision.

Multitudes, multitudes; whether prediction or exclamation with wonder, it is doubled to intimate the mighty, numerous armies contending one against another, and thrashing each other, overthrowing numberless men between the conquered and conqueror. So each kingdom was overthrown successively. The Assyrian overthrown by Arbaces and Pul-belochus, conspiring against Sardanapalus, where the multitudes were so great that the blood of the slain is by Diodorus Siculus reported to have coloured the water of a river, and the number of the conspirators' army before Nineveh is said to be four hundred thousand. After this we meet Sennacherib's mighty hosts against Egypt and the Philistines, to neither of which could he march but either through part of Judea or very near to it, and after this he hath one hundred and eighty-five thousand slain in one night before Jerusalem; beside Necho's army marching toward Carchemish, and Nebuchadnezzar's army in pursuit of the routed Egyptian, and the armies of Alexander the Great, and after these the armies of the Seleucidæ and the Lagidæ. *In the valley of decision;* where God, having by wise providence gathered them, did by just determination of the victory decide their quarrels, and by the conqueror punished the conquered for their sins against God and his people. *The day of the Lord;* the day of

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vengeance and righteous recompences upon enemies, *is near:* if it begin in the punishment of Nineveh and the Assyrian kingdom, by the cutting off Sennacherib's army, it was in Joel's time, not above sixty-four years, supposing Joel prophesied in Jeroboam the Second's time; and probably not quite twenty years to this day of the Lord if Joel prophesied this in Hezekiah's time, or after the captivating of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, which was A. M. 3283, and Sennacherib's overthrow was 3294, eleven years after the deportation, as Archbishop Usher in his Annals.

z ch. 2. 10, 31. 15 The z sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

See chap. ii. 10. When God doth in the valley of decision punish any of the kingdoms which persecuted and oppressed his church, the punishment shall be so great as to darken the glory of such kingdoms, it shall be to the utter overthrow of those kingdoms and governments; and so it was effected on Babylon by the Mede and Persian; so on this by the Grecians, and on them by their intestine wars, and by the Romans at last on these and on the murderers of Messiah.

a Jer. 25. 30. ch. 2. 11. Amos 1. 2. 16 The Lord also shall a roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and b the heavens and the earth shall shake: c but the Lord *will be* the † hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

b Hag. 2. 6. c Is. 51. 5, 6. † Heb. *place of repair, or, harbour.*

The Lord; who, chap. ii. 27, is the Lord in the midst of Israel or in the midst of his church. *Shall roar;* when he brings forth his mighty ones the men of war, and commands them to march out against his and his church's enemies, he will strike the enemy with astonishment and fear, as the roaring of the lion doth astonish the weaker beasts of the forest. Fear shall surprise them when God shall speak against them. *Out of Zion;* the place where God chooseth to dwell, emblem of his church, and of the kingdom of Christ. *And utter his voice,* in wrath and indignation against those he will destroy, because they have destroyed his church. *From Jerusalem;* typical, so God roared and uttered his voice against Sennacherib; mystical, so he hath often already, and still will further discover his displeasure against his enemies, and he will, as one who dwells in a place for the defence of it, rebuke and check those who assault it: so God dwells in his Jerusalem, as it is ver. 17. *The heavens;* metaphorically the states and kingdoms, the great ones in those states. *The earth;* the common sort of people, the inferior ranks of men; the foundations of those kingdoms shall be shaken and overthrown. *Shall shake,* and fly as affrighted, so the word signifieth. *But the Lord;* but at that time, and in the midst of all those commotions, the eternal and almighty God, who fills the enemy with fears and astonishment, *will be the hope;* shall be the object of his people's expectation, they shall look for good from him by all these troubles: and so God was to his after their return out of captivity, through the Medo-Persian reign, through the Grecian rule under Alexander, and under the times of Alexander's successors. *Of his people;* of them that believe his word and obey his law. *And the strength,* strong defence and fortress, to his, here called *the children of Israel,* those that are Israelites indeed.

d ch. 2. 27. e Dan. 11. 45. Obad. 16. Zech. 8. 3. † Heb. *holiness.* f Is. 35. 8. & 52. 1. Nah. 1. 15. Zech. 14. 21. Rev. 21. 27. 17 So d shall ye know that I *am* the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, e my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be † holy, and there shall no f strangers pass through her any more.

So, by these effects of my presence with my people, by my anger against their enemies, by punishing them by each other, overthrowing oppressors, by fulfilling what is foretold, *shall ye,* ye that suffer for my sake, but hope in my word, and support yourselves on my strength, *know,* by most comfortable and unquestionable experience, *that I am the Lord your God;* that I have remembered my covenant for you, and acted according to the power and mercy of an almighty and all-gracious God. *Dwelling in Zion;* very graciously present with you, and ever watching over you, and delighting to save you, as a man would do his dwelling-house. *My holy mountain;* which is chosen and separated from all others to be the place of his habitation, as Psal. ii. 6, which he loves above all places. *Then,* after these things are finished, when enemies are destroyed, and the remnant is saved, and the Messiah is come, (for to him and his days do these things finally and ultimately refer,) and the gospel is preached, *shall Jerusalem,* the church of Christ, the spiritual Jerusalem, *be holy;* be much more holy and pure than now, being made so by the word and Spirit, and afflictions too. *There shall no strangers pass through her any more;* no profane and unclean persons shall pass through it as formerly, and bring their strange fashions, rites, worship, or doctrine; though they have done it formerly, as in Solomon's days, and Ahaz's and Manasseh's time, they shall do so no more for ever.

g Amos 9. 13. h Is. 30. 25. † Heb. *go.* i Ps. 46. 4. Ezek. 47. 1. Zech. 14. 8. Rev. 22. 1. k Num. 25. 1. 18 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the mountains shall g drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, h and all the rivers of Judah shall † flow with waters, and i a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water k the valley of Shittim.

In that day; when afflictions, amidst which they were preserved, from which delivered, and by which they were purified. *The mountains;* the vines planted upon the mountains, which were dried up, chap. i. 12, shall now be full of juice and fruit. *Shall drop down,* shall come down as the showers or dew, sweetly and plentifully, *new wine;* sweet and delicious. *The hills shall flow with milk;* so fruitful shall the hills be, and keep so many cows, sheep, and goats, that milk shall abound every where, as it were a current that ever runs down. *All the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters:* in the great drought rivers dried up, now the rivers shall be full of water and ever flow. *A fountain:* the prophet alludes to those waters which were conveyed from some spring through conduit pipes towards the altar, of which Ezek. xlvii. 1—5, for the use of the temple, in which water the priests washed what was to be washed. This no doubt is a shadow of the purifying blood of Christ, and his sanctifying Spirit and word. And in that it is said to *come from the house of the Lord,* it intimateth that these glad tidings, this saving grace, shall be first preached from Jerusalem, and by the church, which is the house of God, shall be published to others. *Shall water,* refresh, purge, and make fruitful in all holy works, *the valley of Shittim;* it was a place in the plains of Moab, on the borders of Israel towards the south-east, Numb. xxxiii. 49; Josh. iii. 1, not far from the Dead Sea. These spiritual waters shall flow down to the dry and thirsty, the barren and fruitless Gentiles, and make them fruitful.

l Is. 19. 1, &c. m Jer. 49. 17. Ezek. 25. 12, 13. Amos 1. 11. Obad. 10. 19 l Egypt shall be a desolation, and m Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence *against* the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

Egypt: it was in Egypt that the people of God were long kept in bondage, which defiled Israel too with its idolatries, contrived the ruin of Israel by a barbarous and unparalleled cruelty, murdering all the new-born males, and with utmost obstinacy resisted the deliverer who came to fetch Israel out of bondage. By Egypt understand we then all the enemies of the church of Christ, who carry it toward the church as Egypt carried it toward Israel. *Shall be a desolation;* most desolate, when God shall judge and punish; so shall spiritual Egypt, Rev. xi. 8. *Edom;* the posterity of Esau, of near kin to Israel according to the flesh, whose first father envied Jacob the blessing and vowed his death, and made him flee from his father's house and become a servant in a strange land, and was the first who denied Israel a friendly passage and the common civility of necessaries for their money, and came out in hostile manner to fight them, Numb. xx. 18, &c. It was Edom of whom you read in Obadiah, a most bloody, implacable enemy to Judah in his greatest distress. And all who come under Edom's character are here intended, and threatened under this name. *Shall be a desolate wilderness;* most desolate, and which art cannot repair; desolate houses or vineyards may, but wildernesses cannot, by art be repaired. *The children*

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of Judah; the people of God, his churches. *They have shed innocent blood in their land;* where distressed Jews should have found safety, they met their death; in Egypt and Judea.

‖ Or, *abide.*
n Amos 9. 15.

20 But Judah shall ‖dwell [n] for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.

But, and, or yet, *Judah,* the chosen, peculiar, redeemed of the Lord, his church. *shall dwell for ever;* no more be captivated and driven from home, but in their own land and houses abide safely and perpetually. This typifieth the eternal peace and rest to which God's people are redeemed. *Jerusalem;* city of God. *From generation to generation;* through many generations on earth, through eternity in heaven. Some shadow of this possibly we may find in the days of the Maccabees, but the fulness of this we expect when that day, great, dreadful, and finally decisive day, to which interpreters refer this chapter, shall destroy all the wicked, and put the godly into possession of eternal mansions of glory.

o Is. 4. 4.
p Ezek. 48. 35. ver. 17. Rev. 21. 3.
‖ Or, *even I the LORD that dwelleth in Zion.*

21 For I will [o] cleanse their blood *that* I have not cleansed: [p] ‖for the LORD dwelleth in Zion.

For, Heb. *And. Cleanse;* purge away, both by the Spirit of sanctification, and by free pardon in the blood of the Redeemer; by their sufferings also, by the waters of affliction, as well as by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. *Their blood;* their moral pollutions and sinfulness, compared here unto blood, as also Ezek. xvi. 6, 9; and so men in sinful state are called flesh and blood, Matt. xvi. 17; Gal. i. 16. God will pardon and purify believers, and when they are pardoned and purified, nothing attempted against them shall succeed. *That I have not cleansed;* which before I had not taken away; what was wanting in their sanctification, or justification and reconciliation, I will make up in them and to them. *For the Lord dwelleth in Zion;* and I am Jehovah dwelling in Zion, whence the law of grace was published, where the wonders of pardoning and sanctifying grace are wrought, that Israel might be a people with whom the holy God might dwell. Now whereas this can be done but in part here on earth, there is a Zion above, whither Jehovah who dwells there will take every saint after the day of judgment, having first vindicated, acquitted, and pronounced them holy and meet for enjoyment of the Holy One.

AMOS.

THE ARGUMENT.

If we might be allowed to make a conjecture at the quality of our prophet's sermons by the signification of his name, we must conclude that they contain heavy tidings and grievous judgments coming upon them to whom he is sent to preach; Amos in the Hebrew coming from a word which signifies to burden, to lay a weight or load on one. But we have a surer rule to judge the contents of his prophecy by. He is by some ancient writers, erring in this point, said to be the father of Isaiah; but besides that Isaiah was contemporary with Amos, which fairly argues it unlikely that Isaiah should be Amos's son, Amoz the father of Isaiah is quite another name, different from Amos, both in letters wherewith each is spelt, and in signification also. And if Isaiah were of the royal line, (as some say he was,) nephew to either Amaziah or Uzziah by a brother, it cannot be conceived how Amos, a plain herdsman of Tekoa, should be his father. It is certain he was either by birth, or education, or employment, or in all these respects, of the tribe of Judah, and as certain that by an immediate call from God he was taken off the herdsman's work and made a prophet, chap. vii. 14, 15. He did in deed, as he professed in word, come from the Lord, and in his name delivered his message to all those whom God sent him unto. And pursuant hereto he preacheth first against those nations who were borderers, and had been bitter, oppressive, and old adversaries to Israel and Judah, chap. i. 3, to the end, and chap. ii. 1—3. By this express course, declaring future just executions upon Syria, Palestine, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab, the prophet doth much prevent the prejudices which Israel and Judah might have had against his person and doctrine. Now he may more freely and plainly reprove and threaten the sins of God's own people, since he hath so plainly reproved and threatened their enemies; and they who easily believed him a prophet in his predictions against foreigners, must in reason as easily believe him a prophet in his reproofs and predictions against themselves. He doth bestow the far greater part of his discourses on Israel, or the kingdom of the ten tribes, to whom he was principally sent; yet he doth prophesy against Judah also; and to both he is very sharp in his reproofs, impartial in his censures, earnest in his persuasions to repent, very full in his encouragements to this duty, and demonstratively evident in his charging sin upon them. He had Isaiah, Joel, and Hosea contemporary with him, though it appear not how long.

He is in many places sententious and concise, which makes the passages the more obscure. Though he do bring with him many things from his country employment in his reproofs, allusions, and arguments, yet fitted with admirable skill, and beautified with an unimitable eloquence, and fortified with that loftiness of style that proclaims itself to be from Him who gave man both judgment, fancy, and tongue, which is an intrinsic character of divinity in our prophet's writing. He was a person of most undaunted resolution, of a prudent conduct, and of spotless integrity, as appears by the contest he had with Amaziah chief of the priests of Beth-el, chap. vii. 10, &c.

He lived when Judah's affairs were tolerably well and prosperous, but when Israel's were in the highest meridian, when they thought themselves secure against all the dangers he foretold: Uzziah had pretty well recovered Judah, and settled it; Jeroboam had highly advanced Israel's fame, riches, and power. With their growth in these, sin grew as fast and as exorbitant, and called for judgments, which our prophet foretells very plainly in express words, chap. vii. 11, 17, and in very significant hieroglyphics, chap. vii.—ix. He foretells the earthquake, chap. i. 1; an emblem of those civil dissensions which shook their foundations, and half ruined them before the Assyrian conquered and captivated them. Which miseries lasted through an interregnum of eleven years, say some; to be sure through the reign of Zachariah. Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea, in whose time all these miseries were swallowed up in a greater, their perpetual captivity, which came upon them about fifty-four or sixty-five years after the death of Jeroboam the Second, near to whose court and within their hearing Amos preached many, perhaps most of his sermons; and therefore you may observe his reproofs, threats, and predictions seem to be calculated for that court, which was highly guilty of the sins he reproved, and were called to repent of them, which because they did not, they did deeply suffer both in the civil wars under those four usurpers and conspirators, Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea, and most deeply in the Assyrian captivity. In the annotations you will find there is some reference to those times, with somewhat more particular application of the prophetic text to the circumstances of times he aimed at, than hath been by any learned pen I have happened to peruse; and would the brevity to which these annotations are bound have borne a larger account of those times, and a fuller ac-

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commodation of them to the prophetic discourses, I do not doubt but the truth of the prophet's charge, reproof, threats, and predictions against Israel would appear to every reader. Lastly, our prophet, as others, closeth the sad tragedy of this fleshly, sinning Israel with promise of a spiritual state under the Messiah, full of grace and peace.

CHAP. I.

The time when Amos prophesied, 1, 2. *He showeth God's judgments upon Syria,* 3—5; *upon the Philistines,* 6—8; *upon Tyre,* 9, 10; *upon Edom,* 11, 12; *upon Ammon,* 13—15.

B. C. 787. THE words of Amos, [a]who was among
a ch. 7. 14.
b 2 Sam. 14. 2. 2 Chron. 20. 20.
c Hos. 1. 1.
d ch. 7. 10. the herdmen of [b]Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel [c]in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of [d]Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two
e Zech. 14. 5. years before the [e]earthquake.

The words: the Holy Ghost doth in this expression comprehensively take in all the sermons, visions, and predictions which Amos preached and published; all the exhortations to duty, the menaces against sins, the warnings of dangers coming, and the promises of mercy to them that hear and obey his words: see Hag. i. 12. And so what Jeremiah preached to his auditors are *the words of Jeremiah*, chap. i. 1; and the instructions and counsel of Solomon are *the words of the Preacher*, Eccles. i. 1. Both the things spoken and the words wherein they are spoken are included. *Amos:* those who think this was father to the prophet Isaiah, either discern not the difference that is in the two Hebrew words, or pronounce hastily without considering what each is in the Hebrew, in which tongue these words have but two letters the same, i. e. M and O, the other are quite different; as also is the signification of each, for the one imports *strength* or *might*, the other imports a *burden* or *heavy weight*. *Among the herdmen*, or shepherds, but whether one of the meaner or one of the chief, whether a master herdman or a servant, the word imports the former, yet because the Scripture doth not say, we shall not inquire, since it conduceth little to our profiting, nor will it add to his authority, since it is God who sent him. *Tekoa:* whether it belonged to Zebulun, Asher, or Judah is not much material, though this last be most likely, for, 2 Chron. xi. 5, 6, we read of Rehoboam's building fortresses in Judah, among which Tekoa is mentioned. It was situate on a hill on the north of Judah, as a learned pen describeth it. *He saw;* received by revelation: this tells us that the things as well as words were to be understood, when it is said that these were the words of Amos. *Israel;* the kingdom of the ten tribes, revolted from the house of David, and now under the government of Jehu's great-grandson. *Uzziah;* called also Azariah, who was smitten with a leprosy for intruding into the priest's office, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, 19. *Judah;* including the tribe of Benjamin, and such of the Levites as did adhere to the house of David, the kingdom of the house of David. *Jeroboam;* not son of Nebat, but grandson of Jehu. *Joash;* who had some successes against Syria, according to the prophecy of Elisha, by which successes Israel was raised from a declining to a thriving, prosperous state. *The earthquake;* of which only this text, and Zech. xiv. 5, do make particular mention, and where somewhat is spoken of it; which see. It is the tradition of the Jews, that this earthquake happened when Uzziah usurped the priest's work and offered incense in the temple, against which violation of Divine rites God testified thus from heaven, say they. Further than this we need not inquire in this matter. It was a great and dismal earthquake, and perhaps by this God did smite the winter and summer houses, as chap. iii. 15; however, as it was foretold two years before it came, so we are sure it did come according to the time prefixed by the Lord.

f Jer. 25. 30. Joel 3. 16. 2 And he said, The LORD will [f]roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shep-
g 1 Sam. 25. 2. Is. 33. 9. herds shall mourn, and the top of [g]Carmel shall wither.

He; Amos. *The Lord;* the Almighty and Eternal, whom you of the ten tribes have forsaken, and thereby have provoked to displeasure. *Will roar:* the prophet, alluding to what was dreadful, dangerous, and most rousing to shepherds, the roaring of a hungry lion that comes out of his den for prey, doth express the danger of Israel, and would awaken them to a sense of it, that they might prevent it by repentance, before the Lord tears them in pieces as a lion tears his prey. *From Zion;* either the temple, in opposition to Jeroboam's idolatrous chapels; or intimating their defection and sin in leaving Zion for Dan and Beth-el. *Utter his voice:* this explains and confirms the former metaphorical expression of God's wrath. *From Jerusalem;* the city God had chosen, where he dwelt, the seat of God's instituted worship in the matters of religion, and the royal seat of the kingdom as God had settled it, from which in both respects the ten tribes had revolted. This whole paragraph you have Joel iii. 16, which see; and Jer. xxv. 30. *The habitations of the shepherds:* where the shepherds found convenient pasturage they pitched their tents, or built them cottages, and dwelt therein, that they might attend the care of their flocks, for which they also made folds; and this was the delight and wealth of these men: now by allusion to these Amos expresseth all the wealth, greatness, and delightfulness of the kingdom of Israel. Princes are, in the Greek dialect, shepherds of the people, people are the flock, towns and cities are the habitations of both; and so the Scripture useth the expression, Jer. ii. 8; iii. 15; Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 7—9; Nah. iii. 18, which see. *Shall mourn;* be made desolate, and reduced to a sad, mournful, and lamentable state, in which men shall see nothing but matter of sadness and tears. *Carmel;* there were two places of this name, and though distant from each other, yet both very fruitful, and much used by shepherds; the one was in the northern parts of Canaan, whither Elijah resorted; the other in Judah, the southern parts of Canaan: now this was nearer Tekoa, better known to Amos, and therefore some think this to be here intended; but the other was in Israel, which is here threatened, and and therefore fitter to be the emblem of the ten tribes, and meant here, say others: whichever you choose, it is no hard thing to accommodate it to the prophet's purpose of Carmel: see Nah. i. 4. *Shall wither;* either blasted, or else dried up with drought, and turned into barrenness. So the whole kingdoms of the people threatened, and of the ten tribes, though as fruitful and pleasant as Carmel, should be made horrid and desolate as a dry and barren wilderness. See Joel i. 12, 17.

3 Thus saith the Lord; For three
h Is. 8. 4. & 17. 1. Jer. 49. 23. Zech. 9. 1.
‖ Or, yea, for four.
i Or, because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron:
Or, convert it, or, let it be quiet: and so ver. 6, &c. 2 Kings 10. 33. & 13. 7.
transgressions of [h]Damascus, ‖ and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; [i]because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron:

Thus saith the Lord; Amos speaks not by conjecture, or of his own head, but as he comes in the name of the Lord, so he assures us of it by this most solemn attestation. *Three transgressions:* this certain number is put for an uncertain; three, i. e. many, especially when, as here, it is joined with four; their transgressions are so multiplied, grown to such height and number. *Damascus* was the chief city of the kingdom of Syria, and very ancient; Abraham's steward was of this city. It was north-east from Canaan; conquered by David, lost by Solomon, recovered by Jeroboam the Second, though soon after lost again, and was in Ahaz's time the royal seat of Rezin, whom Tiglath-pileser slew, 2 Kings xvi. 9. While it was in its power and greatness it mightily oppressed Israel. It is here by a synecdoche put for the whole kingdom of Syria. *I will not turn away the punishment thereof:* some refer this to the suffering Damascus to be quiet, God threatens that she shall not have rest; others say it is a threat that God would not convert it, but leave the Syrians to their impenitent heart; but our version is full and plain, it is a threat of punishment which

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they should certainly fall under. God would no longer continue to be patient and gracious towards such sinners, nor divert the menaced punishment foretold by the prophet, deserved by the people, and which shall be executed by an impartial hand. *Because they*, the Syrians, comprised in the word Damascus, by a synecdoche, *have threshed;* first gathered, (as husbandmen gather sheafs into a floor,) next trod them under foot, beat them small, i. e. with utmost cruelty destroyed the persons, towns, and cities. *Gilead:* of this name there was a great mountain fifty miles in length, saith my author; there was also a country of this name, and a city possessed by the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites; now the Gilead in this text is by a very usual figure put for the inhabitants of this country and city, whom Hazael king of Syria, as was foretold by Elisha, 2 Kings viii. 12, did most barbarously murder, as appears by the words of this text. *With threshing instruments of iron;* rakes, or flails, or harrows, or saws, or heavy wheels of iron; whichsoever of these were the instruments intended, it is most certain it was a very barbarous and cruel manner of using them.

k Jer. 17. 27. & 49. 27. ver. 7, 10, 12. ch. 2. 2, 5.

4 k But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

I, the Lord, avenger of mine oppressed Israel, Jehovah, as ver. 3. *A fire;* either literally understood, or figuratively, famine, pestilence, wars foreign or intestine, effects of God's great but just displeasure, which destroys all like fire. *The house of Hazael;* the family, or the material house in which he dwelt, or both; Hazael's stately dwelling-place should be consumed by fire, and his whole family be cut off. *Devour;* eat up, so as to leave nothing remaining of either. *The palaces;* the royal palaces, or those that descended from Hazael, and dwelt in them. *Ben-hadad:* whether this were some one of the Syrian kings before Hazael, or the Ben-hadad slain by Hazael, or son and successor to Hazael, is uncertain; nor can we know particularly who this was by this name Ben-hadad, which to the Syrian kings was a common name, as Pharaoh to the ancient Egyptian kings, Cæsar to the Roman emperors, and Czar to the Muscovite at this day: three Ben-hadads are mentioned in the books of the Kings, as 1 Kings xv. 18; 2 Kings viii. 7; xiii. 3.

l Jer. 51. 30. Lam. 2. 9. ‖ Or, *Bikath-aven.*

5 I will break also the l bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from ‖ the plain of Aven, and him that holdeth the sceptre from ‖ the house of Eden: and m the people of Syria shall go into captivity n unto Kir, saith the Lord.

‖ Or, *Beth-eden.* m Fulfilled, 2 Kin. 16. 9. n ch. 9. 7.

I, the mighty God, as ver. 4, *will break.* weaken and shake into pieces, *the bar;* literally, the bar with which the city gates were shut, and both fastened and strengthened, Judg. xvi. 3; Neh. vii. 3; Psal. cvii. 16. Metaphorically it contains all the munitions, fortresses, and strength of a place or people: so here. *Damascus:* see ver. 3. It is put here, as before, for the whole kingdom, of which it was the metropolis. *Cut off,* by the judgments of war, pestilence, famine, or diseases, all commissioned to do this. *The inhabitant,* for inhabitants, the singular used for the plural; and may possibly denote the universal excision and destruction of the Syrians, who shall perish as one man: see the like use of the singular number, Exod. viii. 6; Jer. viii. 7. *The plain of Aven:* it is possible this may refer to some peculiar manner which the Syrians observed in their choosing the valley or champaign for the place of worship to their idols: Israel chose high places, the Syrians chose valleys it is likely, and therefore though beaten in the hills, where they thought the gods which Israel worshipped were strongest, yet are confident that in the valleys, where Syrians worshipped their gods, the Syrians would find their gods the stronger, 1 Kings xx. 23: for this reason the valley or plain hath its name *the plain of Aven,* of iniquity and vanity, because in it they worshipped vain gods, and their religion was highest idolatry; or it may be that *Bikath-aven* was the name of some city of Syria well known then, but whose memory is perished with it a great while ago. *Him that holdeth the sceptre;* a description of the king of Syria, whose royal dignity shall be no security to him. *The house of Eden;* some royal seat, where the kings of Syria did think good to build them a house or palace, for pleasure and delights, and therefore gave it this name, *Beth-eden,* or the house of pleasure; all their pleasant seats, the king's summer-houses, shall be laid waste. *The people of Syria;* the main body of the subjects and people of Syria; this explains Damascus, ver. 3, and in this verse. *Kir;* Cyrene of Egypt, say some, but without any probability in this place: there was also Kir of Moab, Isa. xv. 1; but this was not the Kir in the text: this was Kir of Media, Isa. xxii. 6, now under the Assyrian yoke; and thither did Tiglath-pileser carry the conquered Syrians, 2 Kings xvi. 9, and placed them captives in that barren, mountainous country about fifty years after it was foretold by Amos. *Saith the Lord:* this gives us an assurance that all here threatened should at last be executed.

o 2 Chron. 28. 18. Is. 14. 29. Jer. 47. 1, 5. Ezek. 25. 15. Zeph. 2. 4. ‖ Or, *carried them away with an entire captivity.*

6 ¶ Thus saith the Lord: For three transgressions of o Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because they ‖ carried away captive the whole captivity, p to deliver *them* up to Edom: 2 Chron. 21. 16, 17. Joel 3. 6. p ver. 9.

Three transgressions: see ver. 3. *Gaza;* the principal city of the Philistines; all the rest are to be understood; and here the city is named, but the inhabitants are meant also with the city; ancient and strong, the seat of the Anakims, conquered by Judah, yet lost soon after to the old inhabitants. *I will not turn away the punishment thereof:* see ver. 3. *They carried away captive:* this refers to the inroad by the Philistines and Arabians made upon Judah in the days of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, the violence and cruelty of which is set forth 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17, about A. M. 3116; and this is that which is here threatened, as a sin that should be punished. *Edom:* the posterity of Esau, who were inveterate enemies to the posterity of Jacob, and as ill neighbours are, so were these, the worst enemies the Jacobites had, as appears Ezek. xxv. 12; Obad. 10—14; Psal. cxxxvii. 7. These Edomites were ever ready to oppress, enslave, and tyrannize over the Jews, if by any means they could by force or fraud get them into their hands.

q Jer. 47. 1.

7 q But I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza, which shall devour the palaces thereof:

I will send a fire; see ver. 4; desolating judgments, expressed here by fire. *On the wall;* which was strong, and a mighty defence to the city; this only mentioned, but all the power and strength of Gaza, and of whole Palestina, is here included, and the judgment denounced is here intended against all the munitions of that people. *Gaza:* see ver. 6. *Devour:* see ver. 4. *The palaces thereof:* see ver. 4. What is here foretold was fulfilled partly by Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6—8, and partly by Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 8, and partly by Sennacherib, Isa. xx. 1.

r Zeph. 2. 4. Zech. 9. 5, 6. s Ps. 81. 14. t Jer. 47. 4. Ezek. 25. 16.

8 And I will cut off the inhabitant r from Ashdod, and him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon, and I will s turn mine hand against Ekron: and t the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God.

The inhabitant: see ver. 5. *Ashdod:* see Zeph. ii. 4; Zech. ix. 6. This was one of the five cities of the Philistines, and had its roitelet. It was afterwards called *Azotus,* Acts viii. 40. In this city was Dagon's temple and statue, 1 Sam. v. 1—3. The like threat against Ashdod did Jeremiah denounce, chap. xxv. 16, with ver. 20. *Him that holdeth the sceptre:* see ver. 5. *Ashkelon;* another city of the Palestine pentarchy, and a very strong one, of which see Zeph. ii. 7; Zech. ix. 5, 6, which shall perish with the king and inhabitants thereof; which (besides what Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, or Sargon, kings of Assyria, did, and besides what Hezekiah did against Ashkelon) had some accomplishment in Nabopolassar's and Nebuchadnezzar's time, and in Alexander the Great, to whom this city, as well as Gaza and Ashdod, became subject. *I will turn mine hand against Ekron;* having destroyed these, saith

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the Lord, I will proceed on to Ekron, another of the five cities of the Philistines, strong, but, as the rest, cruel to Israel, and very sinfully idolatrous, worshipping Baal-zebub, for which this shall be destroyed also: see Zeph. ii. 4; Zech. ix. 5. *The remnant of the Philistines;* what remaineth either of cities, towns, or people, not already expressly mentioned and threatened. *Shall perish;* be cut off, and wasted utterly. *Saith the Lord God;* when all this shall be done, though perhaps ye may not know, yet know ye this, that assuredly it shall be done in its time, for the Lord hath said it.

u Is. 23. 1. Jer. 47. 4. Ezek. 26, & 27, & 28. Joel 3. 4, 5. x ver. 6. † Heb. *the covenant of brethren.* 2 Sam. 5. 11. 1 Kings 5. 1. & 9. 11.—14.

9 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of [u] Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; [x] because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not †the brotherly covenant:

The prophet having foretold the destruction of the Syrians and the Philistines, for their inhumanity and barbarous cruelty against the Jews, he doth now in the same manner and words foretell the destruction of the Tyrians. See ver. 3. *Because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom:* see ver. 6, where these passages are already explained. *And remembered not the brotherly covenant,* which was between Hiram on the one part, and David and Solomon on the other part, on account whereof these Tyrians ought to have befriended the Jews, and not betrayed them; so some: others thus, The nearness of blood between Israel and Edom should have been remembered by the Tyrians, and they should therefore have persuaded Edom to carry it as became a brother, and by their mediation the Tyrians should have made peace between Israel and Edom; but they did not so, they took advantage of times, and made merchandise of Israel, sold such as either fled for refuge from other enemies, or such as fell into the hands of the Tyrians, joining with Hazael and Ben-hadad in their wars against Israel. What other sins Tyre added to this between this time and Nebuchadnezzar's besieging and subduing Tyre were then punished, when after thirteen years' siege it was taken, of which see Ezek. xxvi., xxvii., xxviii., where at large Tyre is spoken of.

y ver. 4, 7, &c.

10 [y] But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof.

See ver. 4, 7.

z Is. 21. 11. & 34. 5. Jer. 49. 8, &c. Ezek. 25. 12, 13, 14. & 35. 2, &c. Joel 3. 19. Obad. 1, &c. Mal. 1. 4. a Gen. 27. 41. Deut. 23. 7. Nal. 1. 2. b 2 Chron. 28. 17. † Heb. *corrupted his compassions.* c Ezek. 35. 5.

11 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of [z] Edom, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because he did pursue [a] his brother [b] with the sword, and †did cast off all pity, [c] and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever:

Three transgressions: see ver. 3. *Edom:* see ver. 6. *I will not turn away the punishment thereof:* see ver. 3. *He did pursue;* watch for and lay hold on every occasion to oppress Israel. *His brother;* Jacob and his posterity here are meant, as is Esau and his posterity. Esau personally considered was an enemy to the person of Jacob, and vowed his ruin, forced him to flee into Padan-aram, and on his return thence frighted Jacob too by coming out with four hundred men armed; the posterity of Esau behaved themselves no whit more friendly. *With the sword;* either joining with the enemies, as Psal. lxxxiii. 6—8; cxxxvii. 7, or setting a war on foot on their own account, as 2 Chron. xxviii. 17, against them. *Cast off all pity;* common humanity was by Edom cast off, when Jacob's posterity needed it, as appears by their denial of passage and selling to them necessaries for their relief in travelling by their country, Numb. xx. 14—21; nay, they armed against Israel, ver. 20. Common pity would have forborne strangers travelling by our coasts; how much more brethren. The inhumanity of the Edomites appeared yet further in this, that they were chapmen to buy all the captive Israelites, and to sell them to the heathen for slaves, which is certainly the height of inhumanity. *His anger,* which is expressed by fierceness, and with vehemency, *did tear,* as a ravenous, hungry, and fierce lion tears the prey; so the word. *Perpetually;* though sometimes this anger did intermit for want of opportunity, yet on every occasion it revived, and showed itself again. *Kept his wrath for ever;* lest the fire of his wrath should extinguish. Edom did record, treasure up, and reserved the seeds of his displeasure, as men rake up fire in ashes to blow it up into a flame; such was Edom's wrath, a wrath that exceeded all bounds, as the word imports, and never ceased.

12 But [d] I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah. d Obad. 9, 10.

I will send a fire: see ver. 4, 7. *Teman;* metropolis of Idumea, called from Esau's grandson of that name; of this see Ezek. xxv. 13; Hab. iii. 3. And this here taken synecdochically implieth the inhabitants of this city, and of the whole country, which shall perish when the judgment here threatened shall be executed. *Which shall devour the palaces:* see ver. 4. *Bozrah;* a city bordering on Moab and Idumea, and which sometimes belonged to the one, sometimes to the other, as events of war determined. It may be there might be two cities of this name, the one in Moab, the other in Edom, or Idumea; however, this was a very strong city, and one of the chiefest in the whole kingdom, so that in the menace against Bozrah and Teman the strength and glory of Edom is threatened with an utter overthrow, as of that which is burnt up by fire.

13 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of [e] the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because they have ‖ [f] ripped up the women with child of Gilead, [g] that they might enlarge their border. e Jer. 49. 1, 2. Ezek. 25. 2. Zeph. 2. 9. ‖ Or, *divided the mountains.* f Hos. 13. 16. g Jer. 49. 1.

The children of Ammon: this is the fourth kingdom threatened; a people descended from Lot, by his younger daughter, of near kin to Israel, and much-like neighbours as the Edomites, bitter enemies to the Jews: see Ezek. xxv. 2. *I will not turn away the punishment thereof:* see ver. 4. *Ripped up the women with child;* a most inhuman practice, yet usual in those times and places, of which mention is made 2 Kings viii. 12; xv. 16; Hos. xiii. 16; which see. When, or in what particular place, this was done, is not reported in the history of the Bible. Probably it was when Hazael harassed Israel, 2 Kings viii. 12, with whom the Ammonites perhaps joined; but the thing was done, though we read not in any particular story when and where; all could not be written which was done in those ages. *Gilead:* see Hos. vi. 8; Zech. x. 10: name both of city and country about it, and very rich in excellent spices and balms. *Enlarge their border,* by destroying all that dwelt in it, and that hereafter might claim or pretend a title to it.

14 But I will kindle a fire in the wall of [h] Rabbah, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, [i] with shouting in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind: h Deut. 3. 11. 2 Sam. 12. 26. Jer. 49. 2. Ezek. 25. 5. i Ch. 2. 2.

I will kindle a fire in the wall: see ver. 4, where the phrase is explained: as to the time when this prophecy was fulfilled, it was partly when the Assyrian kingdom flourished, and partly by Nebuchadnezzar, as was foretold by Ezekiel, chap. xxv. 1—3, &c., which see. *Rabbah;* the chief city of the kingdom of Ammon, 2 Sam. xi. 1; xii. 26, which by a usual figure compriseth all the Ammonites, and all their strength, wealth, and glory, all which shall be devoured. *It shall devour the palaces thereof:* see ver. 4. *With shouting in the day of battle;* a mixed and horrid noise of trumpets, and alarms of war, with howlings of the distressed, groans of the dying, and acclamations of the conquerors. *With a tempest in the day of the whirlwind,* i. e. with irresistible force, and surprising swiftness, as the similitude imports.

15 And [k] their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together, saith the LORD. k Jer. 49. 3.

Their king; or Milchom, or Moloch, the idol of the Ammonites, so it signifieth, as well as king. I suppose the prophet may intend both, their god as well as their king

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shall be carried captive, as was customary with conquerors, 1 Sam. v. 2; Isa. xlvi. 2. *He:* this repeats and confirms the threat, whether it refer to the idol or the king. *His princes;* either nobles and ministers of state, who attend and serve the king, or the priests and ministers of the idol; here both may be included, and the utter overthrow of their affairs in religion and state be signified and foretold. *Saith the Lord:* this, as elsewhere, doth ratify and insure all; it shall so be, for God hath spoken it.

CHAP. II.

God's judgments upon Moab, 1—3, upon Judah, 4, 5, and upon Israel, 6—8. God complaineth of Israel's ingratitude for past kindnesses, and threateneth them for it, 9—16.

THUS saith the LORD; For three transgressions of [a]Moab, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because he [b]burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime:

a Is. 15, & 16. Jer. 48. Ezek. 25. 8. Zeph. 2. 8. b 2 Kings 3. 27.

For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof: in this form the prophet began, chap. i. 3, which see. Here he doth threaten a nation of some kin to Israel, &c., as was Ammon, and almost as much an enemy: they appeared early enemies to Israel, and took most wicked ways to ruin Israel; first hired Balaam to curse them, Numb. xxii., xxiii.; when this did not succeed, he next acts a vile part, and by lewd harlots draws Israel to sin, Numb. xxv. 1, 2, &c., that so he might do against sinful Israel what could not be done against innocent Israel. Moab also was the second oppressor of Israel, who for their sins were delivered into the hands of Eglon king of Moab, who oppressed them eighteen years, Judg. iii. 14; for which, and other hostile carriages, they are here threatened; yet their inhuman cruelty to Edom's king is only expressed, the other hostilities to Israel are implied. *He;* the king of Moab; who particularly this was is not here nor elsewhere mentioned, though some say it was Mesha, and refer this to 2 Kings iii. 4; yet it is not very likely that this was the king who acted such cruelty. *Burned the bones;* it had been barbarous to have burned the flesh and nerves of an enemy, but to make the fire so hot, and continue it so long, as to burn bones into ashes, is much more barbarous. *Of the king of Edom:* this somewhat aggravates the cruelty, he was no common man, but a king, who was so used: his name, and the time when it was done, whether it were some king alive or dead, and his bones digged up, is not mentioned, but every way it was barbarous, though it were done to bones digged out of the grave, as some conjecture. *Into lime,* or ashes, calcined the bones, reduced them by fire into fine dust, and (as others conjecture) used these ashes instead of lime to plaster the walls and roofs of his palace; and this was done in hatred and contempt of the king of Edom.

2 But I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palaces of [c]Kirioth: and Moab shall die with tumult, [d]with shouting, *and* with the sound of the trumpet:

c Jer. 48. 41. d ch. 1. 14.

I will send a fire: see chap. i. 4. *Moab;* some think, but I know not on what ground, that there was a city of this name, and meant here, but on better reason we conclude it to be the whole country, or by a metonymy the people, who were the posterity of Lot by his elder daughter. *It shall devour the palaces:* see chap. i. 4. *Kirioth;* a strong and principal city of this country; or the cities, so the word will bear, and then the threat is against all their cities. *Moab,* the Moabites, all sorts and ranks of them, *shall die,* be destroyed, and perish utterly. *with tumult;* such as soldiers in fight or assaults make, when they carry all by force, bearing down all opposition, and slaying all opposers, with that rigour which in such cases is very usual. *With shouting;* as conquerors shout, to the end they may dishearten the enemy, and animate their fellow soldiers. *With the sound of the trumpet:* this added partly to explain, and partly to confirm, what the prophet had foretold.

3 And I will cut off [e]the judge from the midst thereof, and will slay all the princes thereof with him, saith the LORD.

e Num. 24. 17. Jer. 48. 7.

I will cut off, by the sword of the enemy, *the judge;* the governor, i. e. every one of them; the singular being put for the plural, to intimate the destruction of all of them. *From the midst thereof;* either of Kirioth the metropolis, or of every city in which were judges appointed to govern and minister justice to the people; and these should be cut off in these cities, and in the midst of their government. *The princes;* either by birth, or by office, or by excellent endowments, the chief among the Moabitish people. *With him;* with the supreme governor, before threatened. *Saith the Lord;* noting to us the certainty of the thing, the irrevocable sentence passed upon Moab, its king, princes, and judges, who being cut off, the people must needs perish, and come to nothing.

4 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; [f]because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and [g]their lies caused them to err, [h]after the which their fathers have walked:

f Lev. 26. 14, 15. Neh. 1. 7. Dan. 9. 11. g Is. 28. 15. Jer. 16. 19, 20. Rom. 1. 25. h Ezek. 20. 18, 16, 18, 24, 30.

God hath in the former verses threatened the enemies of his people for their outrages against his people; now he does threaten his people for their obstinacy in reiterated sins: see chap. iv. 3. *Despised;* first slighted it, as if no excellency were in it, and next rejected it, as if it were not worthy of their observance; thus they refused with an abhorrence and detestation *the law of the Lord,* the whole law, partly by their immoralities and transgressions against the just commands of it, and partly by their false worship and idolatry: that law which was given with so much majesty and terror on Mount Sinai; from which they should not have departed either to the right hand or to the left; that law which was perfect, holy, and useful, with which no fault could be justly found. So much the greater were their sins, because committed against so clear, full, and pure a law. *Have not kept his commandments,* i. e. they have greatly violated, as the Hebrew phrase importeth, Neh. ix. 34; Dan. ix. 5, 10, 11. *Their lies;* idols, which are a lie, whether commended to them by their false prophets, or chosen according to their own humour and fancy; all their false, superstitious, and idolatrous worship. *Caused them to err;* their idolatry was first their error, and this blinded them, made them more sottish and brutish, which was partly from the natural tendency of this sin, and partly from the just judgment of God, Rom. i. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 10—12. *After the which,* idols or lies, *their fathers,* first in Ur of the Chaldees, before Abraham was called, afterwards in Egypt, the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan itself, *have walked,* successively, one generation after another; idolatry, and superstition, and will-worship have been old hereditary sins, and now shall be punished.

5 [i]But I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

i Jer. 17. 27. Hos. 8. 14.

I will send a fire: see chap. i. 4. *Judah;* the kingdom of the two tribes; Benjamin is to be included with Judah, as elsewhere hath been already often observed. *It shall devour the palaces:* see chap. i. 4. *Jerusalem;* the chief city of Judah's kingdom, the city of God, where was the temple of God, and where were the seats of judicature; the holy city, but now to be destroyed for its sins, as well as other incorrigible nations. Now this was fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar, about two hundred years after this prophecy of Amos.

6 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because [k]they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes;

k Is. 29. 21. ch. 5. 6.

For three transgressions: see chap. i. 3. *Israel;* the kingdom of the ten tribes, under the government of Jero-

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boam the Second at this time, against which the prophet was chiefly sent, though he began with Syria and others, by the threats against which nations he prepared both Judah and Israel to hearken and consider. *I will not turn away the punishment:* see chap. i. 3. *They;* those who by the appointment of the law had power to hear and decide causes between man and man; judges and witnesses, like the corrupt judges, *sold*, for bribes were their aim, and they would at any time sell justice to the highest bidder. *The righteous;* the innocent, or those who had a just and righteous cause, for the prophet here speaks of the justness of the cause, not of the exact justice or absolute righteousness of the person. *For silver:* money was the most current and prevailing commodity with these judges, but money's worth would do the feat too, if money were out of the way. *The poor:* when poor men went to law with poor men before these judges, and the thing they contended for was of small value, the contenders too had light purses, and could not give a considerable bribe; *a pair of shoes*, a very poor bribe, expressed here proverbially, would sway with these judges, who gaped still after somewhat of gain from all.

l Is. 10. 2. ch. 5. 12. m Ezek. 22. 11. ‖ Or, *young woman.* n Lev. 20. 3. Ezek. 36. 20. Rom. 2. 24.

7 That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and [l]turn aside the way of the meek: [m]and a man and his father will go in unto the *same* ‖maid, [n]to profane my holy name:

That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor; or swallow up, as the word is most frequently turned by our interpreters; and so perhaps more plainly is their cruelty and violence set forth, in that they make a prey of the poor, who walk with dust on their heads by reason of distresses that are upon them, and, without any compassion towards them, greedily, and as at once, swallow up and devour the poor, whom, by the law of God, and the office they bear as judges, they should deliver out of the hand of the oppressor. *Turn aside the way of the meek;* perversely and maliciously misinterpret the actions, words, and designs of the humble and meek, of the compassionate and merciful, who pity the poor in these straits and dangers. These corrupt judges and violent oppressors are also shameless adulterers and fornicators, they commit that lewdness which the better-tutored heathens abhor and forbear; a kind of incestuous pollution; the father and son keep the same harlot, and go in unto her. Thus they profanely dishonour me, by casting off my law, and doing that which is so shamefully indecent and unlawful; and giving heathens occasion to blaspheme my name, and either think, or say, Like people, like God.

o Ex. 22. 26. p Ezek. 23. 41. 1 Cor. 8. 10. & 10. 21. ‖ Or, *such as have fined*, or, *mulcted.*

8 And they lay *themselves* down upon [o]clothes [‖]laid to pledge [p]by every altar, and they drink the wine of ‖the condemned *in* the house of their god.

The Jews of old did not, as we, sit upright at their feasts, and meals, but in a posture of greater ease did lean, or lie on one side; so here *they lay themselves down*, i. e. put themselves in a feasting posture, *upon clothes laid to pledge*, of which the law had expressly said none should detain them all night, Deut. xxiv. 12, 13. *By every altar:* impudent sinners, who dare thus before the altar, where they suppose that God is present, bring their crying, inexcusable oppressions; and feast in sacred places, on sacred viands, with bloody minds and oppressive practices; and seek mercy from God when they show no mercy to the poor! *They drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god;* to complete their wickedness, they offer their drink-offerings in wine which they bought with the fines and pecuniary mulcts laid on the innocent and guiltless, and thus rejoice in their violence, whilst God hates robbery for a burnt-offering.

q Num. 21. 24. Deut. 2. 31. Josh. 24. 8 r Num. 13. 28. 32. 33. s Is. 5. 24. Mal. 4. 1.

9 ¶ Yet destroyed I the [q]Amorite before them, [r]whose height *was* like the height of the cedars, and he *was* strong as the oaks; yet I [s]destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath.

Yet destroyed I, whom they have ungratefully forgotten and forsaken, and set up idols in competition with me; nay, cast off my law and worship, and embraced idolatry, worshipped idols that never could do them good, nor destroy their enemies; this they did after I had destroyed their enemies. *The Amorite;* the mightiest nation of all the Canaanites, and therefore expressly mentioned as an instance of God's great mercy, and Israel's great ingratitude: by this nation mentioned all the rest of the Canaanitish nations are to be understood. These Amorites dwelt beyond Jordan, between that and Moab, and their land fell by lot unto Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. *Before them*, the children of Israel under the conduct of Moses, Deut. ii. 24, &c.; iii. 1—14, at the very sight of whom these mighty men fled, for God had struck them with terror that they might not stand before Israel. *Whose height was like the height of the cedars:* the Amorites were men of largest size, they were of the race of the giants, Numb. xiii. 32, 33. This is a proverbial speech, and sets out the Amorites, exceeding ordinary men in stature as much as the cedar exceeds ordinary trees in height. *Strong as the oaks;* another proverbial speech, denoting their great strength above the strength of other men. *I destroyed;* utterly rooted them out. *His fruit from above:* trees propagated by fruit are diminished by destroying the fruit which is the seed of them; so God cut off the children of the Amorites, and thereby prevented all succession. *His roots from beneath:* this refers to the destroying the old standards, that present generation: this last clause refers to the command God gave, Deut. vii. 2.

t Ex. 12. 51. Micah 6. 4. u Deut. 2. 7. & 8. 2.

10 Also [t]I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and [u]led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite.

You did not rescue yourselves out of the hands of your enemies, I did in mere mercy with a mighty arm save and rescue you, and *brought you up from the land of Egypt*, where you were oppressed servants, and exposed to ruin. *Led you*, as a shepherd leads his flock; nay, miraculously conducting by the pillar of a cloud and fire, and feeding with manna from heaven. *Forty years*, reckoning from their coming out of Egypt. *Through the wilderness:* they passed through many wildernesses, named in Scripture according as they were then called, but all these lay so contiguous to each other, that they all made up one great wilderness, as the many names given to parts of the sea make us know what particular part is spoken of, but all make one sea. *To possess*, as an heir possesseth that he hath an hereditary right to, *the land of the Amorite*, including all the rest of the accursed and dispossessed nations.

x Num. 6. 2. Judg. 13. 5.

11 And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for [x]Nazarites. *Is it* not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the LORD.

I raised up; gave prophetic endowments, stirred up their minds, commissioned them to prophesy, and carried them through by an undaunted courage given to them, that they should not fear to set upon, or faint in attending to, their office. *Of your sons for prophets;* did not employ strangers, whose affections you might with some colour of reason suspect, but your own sons, whose affections to you and to their own country are unquestionable, were sent prophets to tell you of your sins, to foretell your dangers, and to importune you to repent of your sins, and to prevent your dangers. *Your young men;* though that age be generally inclined to please their own fancies, to walk after the sight of their eyes, Eccles. xi. 9, yet did God change the mind of some of them in their youth, and inclined them to eminency in religion, to be examples to others. *Nazarites;* which were religious persons under vow bound to a very sober, abstemious, and holy life; either for some certain limited time, or for their whole life: see Numb. vi. 1, 2, &c. These were not to drink any strong or intoxicating liquors. *Is it not even thus?* God appeals to them in this matter whether he had not done this for them, given prophets to teach them, and Nazarites to be examples to them, in both which God showed his love and care of them. *Ye children of Israel;* apostatized Israel, you of the ten tribes. *Saith the Lord:* this is added to excite them to serious pondering what is said to them.

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12 But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, [y] saying, Prophesy not.

y Is. 30. 10. Jer. 11. 21. ch. 7. 12, 13. Micah 2. 6.

But ye, for whose benefit both Nazarites and prophets were raised, you who should have heard their word, and imitated their example, *gave the Nazarites wine;* importuned, urged, or it may be (as is the custom of excessive drinkers) forced them to drink wine, to violate their vow, and contemn God's law too, Numb. vi. 3, 4. *Commanded:* by this passage it appears that they were men in authority who did this; it is not probable that mean persons who had no authority would enjoin silence on the prophets, Isa. xxx. 10; chap. vii. 13; Micah ii. 6. It is evident Amaziah was chief priest in Beth-el, and by virtue of his jurisdiction there silenceth the prophet. *The prophets;* the true, faithful, and plain-dealing prophets, who rebuked their sins, required them to repent, and threatened judgments if they did not repent. *Saying, Prophesy not:* see Isa. xxx. 10; chap. vii. 13. Micah ii. 6, 11;

13 [z] Behold, ‖ I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed *that is* full of sheaves.

z Is. 1. 14. ‖ Or, *I will press your place, as a cart full of sheaves presseth.*

Hitherto the Lord by the prophet had declared the sins of the kingdom of the ten tribes, now he is about to pronounce judgment against them; he calls for their attention, and diligent weighing what he is about to speak. *I,* the Lord, who have so multiplied mercies to this people, *am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves:* some read this passage actively, and make this the sense, I will load you with these judgments as a cart is loaded, and you shall cry and groan under these judgments, as a cart heavy loaded makes a noise in its motion under such pressures. Perhaps sheaves, the loading of a harvest season, are mentioned, to intimate the ripeness of their sins, and God's reaping them or cutting them down by his judgments, and carrying them together to be thrashed by further judgments.

14 [a] Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his force, [b] neither shall the mighty deliver †himself:

a ch. 9. 1, &c. Jer. 9. 23.

b Ps. 33. 16. † Heb. *his soul,* or, *life.*

Therefore; because they first loaded God with their sins, and now he loads them with punishments, no way of escape shall be left. *The flight shall perish from the swift;* not by swiftness of foot fleeing from the judgments, for their enemies shall be swifter than they, Isa. xxx. 16. *The strong shall not strengthen his force;* natural strength of body shall not deliver; such, though they might do more than weaker men, yet shall not save themselves, for they shall not know how to use their strength, they shall want courage to do it. *The mighty,* the valiant, and man of greatest courage, shall not be able to *deliver himself,* his courage shall fail.

15 Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow; and *he that is* swift of foot shall not deliver *himself:* [c] neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself.

c Ps. 33. 17.

Neither shall he stand; though at distance from the enemies, yet shall not dare to keep his place. *That handleth the bow;* much used in the wars of those times, and used by strong and valiant men, but now both strength and valour should fail Israel's bow-men. *He that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself:* this is the same, and explains that in the 14th verse. *Neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself:* here the prophet foretells that the swiftness of the horse, which some will make use of, shall as little avail, nor his strength joined with his speed shall deliver the rider; neither the strength of the horse shall carry him through, nor his swiftness carry him away from the hand of the pursuer.

16 And *he that is* †courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith the Lord.

† Heb. *strong of his heart.*

This verse is not a bare repetition of what he had said before, to confirm it, but he doth foretell an inevitable ruin to those who were the most likely to escape, and a most shameful manner of flight. *Courageous among the mighty;* a description of the most famous warriors amongst Israel, such as were known for valour among the mighty and valiant ones, like David's worthies, such as had the heart of a lion. *Shall flee away naked;* either without his clothes and furniture, or without his weapons and arms, which were cast away to expedite his flight. *In that day;* when God will by the Assyrians, under the conduct of Tiglath-pileser first, and finally under the conduct of Shalmaneser, straiten these sinners, and besiege them in their cities. *Saith the Lord;* all confirmed under the seal of Heaven.

CHAP. III.

The necessity of God's judgment against Israel, 1—8. *The publication of it, with the causes thereof,* 9—15.

HEAR this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying,

Hear, with ear and mind, consider it well, for this is to hear indeed. *This word,* which is spoken, and the thing decreed too, of God. *The Lord hath spoken;* the Lord, who did show you greatest kindness, and whom you have repaid with greatest ingratitude, the everlasting God, who changeth not, hath determined and declared his determinate purpose; *against you;* or to, or concerning; for if menaces are words against them, yet advice, exhortations, and promises are to, and concerning, those to whom they are spoken. *O children of Israel;* subjects of Jeroboam the Second, now king of the ten tribes. *Against the whole family:* and let the two tribes consider too how far they are concerned in the prophet's reproving for sin, calling to repent of sin, and threatening if they do not repent. *Brought up from the land of Egypt:* see chap. ii. 10.

2 [a] You only have I known of all the families of the earth: [b] therefore I will †punish you for all your iniquities.

a Deut. 7. 6. & 10. 15. Ps. 147. 19, 20. b See Deut. 9. 12. Matt. 11. 22. Luke 12. 47. Rom. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 17. † Heb. *visit upon.*

You only have I known; chosen, made near to myself, adopted to be my peculiar ones, to be sons and daughters to me; to you only have I revealed my whole will, and given you my law for your rule and direction, and my promises for your encouragement, and required you to have no other gods before me. *Of all the families of the earth:* this possibly may intimate God's choosing them when they were but a small family, as in Abraham's day, and when other families were as considerable as that of Abraham was; the growth of which into a mighty nation was from the favour and blessing of God, performing his promises to their forefathers; and this will aggravate their apostacy from God, which in the next words he threatens to punish. *Therefore:* here is an elliptic speech, for God doth not punish his peculiar people because they are so near and dear to him, but for that, being so, they had forgotten their duty and obligations to God, and had abused all these his mercies. *I will punish you;* my hand shall punish certainly, whoever are the means, and whatever is the manner, of which you shall hear more, but I will certainly visit for it. *For all your iniquities;* all your idolatries, and sins against the precepts of the first table, and all your injustices, and sins against the second table; all your desertings of the law of piety and justice; none of their works shall ever be forgotten, chap. viii. 7.

3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Here the prophet threatens this people that God would begin his visitations and their punishments in his forsaking them, and doth by this interrogatory endeavour to convince them that they could not with any reason expect better from him; it could not be they should long have God's presence with them, or that he should walk among them and bless them, while they walk so contrary to him; they could not in reason hope that there should be any friendly commerce where was so little agreement and friendship; a retaliation they must expect from the Lord; he will forsake them who have forsaken him.

4 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion †cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?

† Heb. *give forth his voice.*

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In this verse, by a double similitude, Amos certifieth the Jews of near and inevitable punishment; first, by similitude of a lion roaring at sight of his prey, which seldom escapes when the lion roareth against it. The lion usually is so nigh to his prey when he roareth, that he leapeth on it presently, and teareth it: so here God would have sinning Israel know that their sins had provoked him to wrath, and that his judgments were near at hand. Nay, nearer yet; like a prey dragged by the old lion into the den for the young lions to feed on, so was their case, their enemies the Assyrians should as certainly devour them as the young lions in the den do devour the prey which is brought to them. If the departure of God from them affect them not, perhaps the fierceness of lion-like enemies may affect them.

5 Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin *is* for him? shall *one* take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all?

A bird; a sparrow properly, one kind put for all sorts. *Fall in a snare:* these are taken by nets spread on the earth for that end, and these nets are watched by the fowler, attending till the birds are within the shrape, then he draws the net over them: so here, For your sins, O Israel, God will spread his net, he will as a watchful fowler attend and keep his eye upon you, and cast the net over you. *Shall one take up a snare, and have taken nothing at all?* flatter not yourselves as if you should finally escape because you have so long been safe and prosperous; though the fowler doth long wait, he will not take up the snare before all the prey, or some of it at least, be taken in it: so the Lord, against whom you have sinned, and who hath spread his net for you, will certainly let it lie till you are taken in it.

‖ Or, *not run together.* c Is. 45. 7. ‖ Or, *and shall not the* LORD *do somewhat?*

6 Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people ‖not be afraid? [c]shall there be evil in a city, ‖and the LORD hath not done *it?*

Shall a trumpet be blown, when an alarm is sounded, by which notice is given of danger approaching, of an enemy invading the land, *in the city,* any city, but particularly in a frontier city, in which were watchmen on the walls and towers to give notice of an enemy, Isa. lii. 8; Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 7, *and the people not be afraid;* affected with the danger, to weigh how great it is, how near it is; whether it be best to prepare to resist it, or to flee from it? Such-like affections doth the alarm of war work in the minds of men ordinarily, and there is good reason for it: but though God hath sounded the alarm, yet brutish, stupid, and sinful Israel fear not, neither consult what is the best course to prevent the danger. *Shall there be evil,* of affliction and sorrow, such as plague, famine, &c., *in a city,* or any where else, *and the Lord,* the eternal, holy, and righteous Governor of all in heaven and on earth, *hath not done it,* either immediately by his own hand, or mediately by the hands of those he employs? the evil of punishment he will execute and bring upon Israel; he will by the hands of the Assyrians in due time execute it.

d Gen. 6. 13. & 18. 17. Ps. 25. 14. John 15. 15.

7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but [d]he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

Surely, since that, or, forasmuch as, *the Lord God will do nothing;* usually the Lord doth no great thing for or against his people, neither brings great judgments upon them for sin, nor bestows great good upon them for their encouragement to duty, *but he revealeth,* but he foretelleth the one and the other by his prophets to his people, that they may by repentance prevent the evil threatened, and by constancy in obedience attain the good promised. *His secret;* his purpose and determinate counsel, which would never be known aforehand if he did not reveal it. *Unto his servants;* who fear the Lord, and do his will in the midst of worst of times; they are holy men of God to whom the Lord revealeth his will. *The prophets;* by office called of God to this, and by gifts fitted for this, and by extraordinary assistance carried through this work.

e ch. 1. 2. f Acts 4. 20. & 5. 20, 29. 1 Cor. 9. 16.

8 [e]The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, [f]who can but prophesy?

The lion hath roared; God hath threatened; and, as a lion roareth when near his prey, so God hath terribly threatened what is near to be done. Amos lived and prophesied in Jeroboam's time, about A. M. 3150, and these threatened judgments began to come upon Israel when the conspiracies and usurpations of Shallum, Menahem, &c. filled all with blood and confusions, about A. M. 3177. *Who will not fear?* what wise man, who that is solicitous for his own good and safety, or that hath any affections for the good of others, will do less than reverence and fear, and prevent by a speedy repentance? *The Lord God hath spoken:* this is plainly what was before figuratively set forth, God had spoken to his prophets but dreadful things against Israel. *Who can but prophesy?* they dare not conceal them, Amos cannot but speak what he had heard, Jer. i. 17; Acts iv. 19; v. 25.

9 ¶ Publish in the palaces at Ashdod, and in the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say, Assemble yourselves upon the mountains of Samaria, and behold the great tumults in the midst thereof, and the ‖oppressed in the midst thereof.

‖ Or, *oppressions.*

Publish; you prophets whom I have sent to threaten the sins of my people Israel, now invite strangers to come and observe what just cause I have to do what I threaten. *In the palaces at Ashdod;* one of the principal cities of the Philistines, chap. i. 8; Zeph. ii. 4; let those that are in the court at Ashdod, and have a mind to travel a while out of their own land, let them know what strange sights they may see in their neighbour land. *And in the palaces in the land of Egypt;* let the young noblemen of Egypt come too, yea, let as many as will come. *Assemble yourselves;* by an appointment (if it may be) let them meet together, and make their observations, and then judge between their doings and their sufferings, my judgments and the causes of them. *Upon the mountains of Samaria;* either the whole kingdom of Samaria or the ten tribes, or else it may denote the great men and cities of Samaria; let Egyptians and Philistines in their travels up and down over the kingdom of Israel associate themselves with the great men, and converse in the cities. *Behold;* take an exact view of all done by them and in them. *The great tumults;* the seditious counsels and rebellious conspiracies, begun amongst them on the death of Jeroboam the Second, and continued one after another for many years, like madmen, bent on ruining one another, to the undoing of all: besides all former violences of Baashi, Zimri, Omri, and Jehu, who took the kingdom out of the hands of their masters; those of Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea, acted in the times Amos pointeth at. *The oppressed;* multitudes of oppressed ones in those times, when the usurpers took it to be their interest to crush all they feared or suspected. *In the midst thereof;* Samaria, the chief city of the kingdom, and in other cities; yea, rather through the whole kingdom of Samaria.

g Jer. 4. 22.

10 For they [g]know not to do right, saith the LORD, who store up violence and ‖robbery in their palaces.

‖ Or, *spoil.*

For they know not; those who oppress others do it as unlearned lawyers and judges do, they are shamefully ignorant of the law of God. *To do right;* what is equal between man and man they will not consider, nor do they care whether it be done or not. *Store up;* as men lay up wealth in their treasures, they fill their houses. *Violence;* perverting judgment, first condemning the innocent, next seizing all as forfeited by law; so they did, no doubt, in those times of rebellion and usurpations; sequestrations and decimations, &c. were then too. *Robbery;* the true name of all their proceedings, however palliated. *In their palaces:* this intimates to us that the greatest among them were chief actors herein; see Zeph. i. 9; but as they stored up violence, they also treasured up misery and desolation too, as the Hebrew elegantly imports.

11 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; [h]An adversary *there shall be* even round about the land; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoiled.

h 2 Kings 17. 3, 6. & 18. 9, 10, 11.

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Therefore; because of all the violence and rapine, with other crying sins, multiplied against God in the midst of them. *An adversary,* the Assyrian with united forces, *shall be even round about the land,* on all sides shall beset thee; the whole land shall be but as one besieged city, out of which none, or so few as next to none, shall escape. *He shall bring down thy strength from thee;* lay low all thy fortresses, break all thy power, kill thy valiant men, destroy thy armies, and by force take thy strong holds. *Thy palaces shall be spoiled;* where thou laidst up thy spoils gotten by violence and oppression, there thy enemy shall find them, and take them away as lawful plunder; and when thy riches are carried out, they shall burn the palaces themselves too.

12 Thus saith the LORD; As the shepherd †taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and ‖in Damascus *in* a couch.

† Heb. *delivereth.*

‖ Or, *on the bed's feet.*

In brief, this verse foretells how few and with what difficulty they shall escape who are not swallowed up of the approaching judgments, and it is elegantly expressed in the following similitude. *As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth;* as the shepherd doth hardly rescue a small part of a sheep or lamb, when the lion hath seized and torn it. *The lion;* the fiercest, strongest, and boldest creature, not a bear or wolf. *Two legs;* which are parts the ravening lion less regardeth and last eateth; *or a piece of an ear,* less considerable than the legs. *So shall the children of Israel,* some of the children of Israel, or some of the ten tribes, but the poorer, meaner, and more worthless of them, *be taken out that dwell in Samaria;* shall escape when Samaria is taken. *In the corner of a bed;* lying in some dark corner, and on a piece of a bed, as the poor do in most places. *In Damascus;* the chiefest city of Syria, taken by Tiglath-pileser much about the time when he wasted Israel in aid of Ahaz against Rezin and Pekah. *In a couch;* some few of the poorer among them also shall escape, pitied by the enemy when he findeth them weakly and sick upon their couch.

13 Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob, saith the Lord GOD, the God of hosts,

Hear ye; prophets. *Testify,* publicly declare and witness, make what proof you can of this thing, *in the house of Jacob;* to the ten tribes, as first and most nearly concerned herein, and to the two tribes also, who, as guilty of many and great sins, so are in danger of many and great judgments, and these hastening on them. *Saith the Lord God;* assure them the message comes from the Lord God. *The God of hosts,* who is Lord of all, and hath all power in his hand; when he commands, all the hosts of creatures attend to execute his commands, so that what he threateneth he will surely execute.

14 That in the day that I shall ‖visit the transgressions of Israel upon him I will also visit the altars of Beth-el: and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground.

‖ Or, *punish Israel for.*

In the day; in the appointed time, and within compass of a little time too; God will in his set time make quick work with them. *Visit the transgressions of Israel upon him;* the many and great transgressions of the ten tribes, these God will, as he hath foretold by his prophets, severely punish, and in particular their idolatry. *The altars,* erected unto the calves, and on which they offered sacrifices to those idols by Jeroboam's appointment at first, and by the continued commands of their idolatrous governors. It is possible there might be altars to other idols too: see 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4; Hos. viii. 11; x. 1. *Beth-el;* anciently called Luz, but afterwards Jacob, on his comfortable vision, did change its name into Beth-el; it was in the tribe of Benjamin, and one of the two places Jeroboam first set up his idolatry in. *The horns of the altar;* whether a more sacred part in their account I know not, but who fled to the altar, and laid hold on the horns of it, found them a sanctuary, 1 Kings ii. 28; but these now should not be safety to themselves. *Shall be cut off,* the altars shall be pulled down, *and fall to the ground;* be cast out as common, and trodden under foot with contempt.

15 And I will smite [i]the winter house with [k]the summer house; and [l]the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the LORD.

[i] Jer. 36. 22.
[k] Judg. 3. 20. 1 Kings 21. 39.

I will smite; by the greatness of the desolation it shall appear that God did smite, though by the Assyrian; or perhaps it may refer to the earthquake foretold two years before it came, chap. i. 1. *The winter house;* which probably was in the chief city, where the rich and great men retired in the winter time, as more for their delight than the country, horrid and cold, and stripped of its glory. *The summer house;* the houses of pleasure, where the nobles and rich men of Israel spent the summer time. *The houses of ivory;* not built with, but beautified with ivory, or the elephant's tooth, called here and elsewhere, by way of eminency, the tooth. *Shall perish;* by the violence of the enemies, these stately houses shall be ransacked first, and pulled down next, and left in rubbish. *The great houses;* or many, for the word includes both. The magnificent palaces of princes and the nobles of Israel *shall have an end;* shall cease for ever, either be utterly wasted, or cease to be theirs whose once they were. *Saith the Lord;* all this shall infallibly come to pass and be fulfilled in due time.

CHAP. IV.

Israel reproved for oppression, 1—3; *for idolatry,* 4, 5; *and for their incorrigibleness,* 6—13.

HEAR this word, ye [a]kine of Bashan, that *are* in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.

[a] Ps. 22. 12. Ezek. 39. 18.

This verse is an introduction to all that follows in this chapter. *Hear* attentively, and consider the consequences of it; weigh both what and whose it is that is spoken. *This word;* prophecy, or sermon of reproof and threatening: see chap. iii. 1. *Ye kine of Bashan:* so Amos, bred among cattle, compares the mighty, proud, wanton, and oppressive rulers of Israel to those full-fed, strong, and wanton beasts, which in the herds did push at, hurt, and disturb the weaker cattle. Some will by this understand the court ladies of Israel in those times; but this perhaps is too nice: though, as in Ahab's time Jezebel was at court, and a promoter of oppression and violence, so there might be in after-times some like her, and perhaps these may be intended secondarily; yet surely Amos intends the great men and governors, whom he calls kine of Bashan, a fruitful country, of which see Ezek. xxxix. 18; Nah. i. 4. *In the mountain of Samaria:* in a decorum to his first allusion he calls their places of power, authority, and office in the kingdom of Israel, *mountains;* for as those beasts grazing on mountains grew fat, so these men by their fees, perquisites, and bribes grew insolent and mischievous: see chap. iii. 9. *Which oppress the poor;* the meaner sort of the people, the commonalty, under their jurisdiction, by colour of law. *Which crush the needy;* by force and open violence break in pieces the afflicted, who have neither power nor friend to relieve them. *Which say to their masters;* husbands, say some, so the Hebrew will bear; or it may refer to some of the greatest officers in Israel, who had inferior officers under them, or the masters of the poor. *Bring;* get us commission, or bring them into our court and office. *Let us drink;* we will get by them to feast on and revel in drink.

2 [b]The Lord GOD hath sworn by his holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that he will take you away [c]with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks.

[b] Ps. 89. 35.
[c] Jer. 16. 16. Hab. 1. 15.

I have often told you that God had spoken, now I assure you that the mighty and eternal God hath sworn the thing, and you must therefore needs conclude it sure and certain

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He *hath sworn by his holiness*, by himself, as he is the holy God, and cannot lie: see Psal. lxxxix. 35. *The days* of darkness, slaughter, famine, desolation, and captivity, threatened against you, *shall come upon you*, oppressors that crush the poor. *He will take;* God by the Assyrian army under Shalmaneser, nay, before that time you shall be taken, as fish are taken with the hook, during the intestine wars that are coming upon you. *You*, who now live, and hear the word of Amos and Hosea, but notwithstanding do continue to act the same violence still. *With hooks*, or thorns, as the Hebrew, with which they did pierce the greater fish, before they had the skill of making iron darts, as some observe. *Your posterity;* the children of these oppressors. *With fish-hooks;* shall be taken as silly fish, and as easily carried away; the enemy shall with delight insnare and destroy them.

d Ezek. 12. 5, 12. ‖ Or, *ye shall cast away the things of the palace.*

3 And [d] ye shall go out at the breaches, every *cow at that which is* before her; and ‖ ye shall cast *them* into the palace, saith the LORD.

And ye, kine of Bashan, oppressors distressed by the just hand of God, and by the violent hand of your enemy, *shall go out*, endeavour to make your escape by flight, *at the breaches*, which the besieging enemy made in your walls, when Samaria is besieged. *Every cow at that which is before her:* it shall be a universal flight, and with great consternation, they not able to forecast where the safest, but taking which way is readiest. *Ye shall cast them into the palace;* either cast away all the riches and ornaments of your palaces, or the prey and bribes you had laid up there, or ye shall abandon the palaces ye dwelt in.

c Ezek. 20. 39. f Hos. 4. 15. & 12. 11. ch. 5. 5. g Num. 28. 3, 4. h Deut. 14. 28. † Heb. *three years of days.*

4 ¶ [c] Come to Beth-el, and transgress; at [f] Gilgal multiply transgression; and [g] bring your sacrifices every morning, [h] *and* your tithes after † three years:

Come to Beth-el, the known place of the *moscholatria*, calf-worship: see chap. iii. 14. *And transgress:* this clears it to be an irony, either throwing them up to their obstinate way of sinning, giving them over as hopeless and incorrigible sinners, or deriding their trust and dependence on idols, to which they sacrificed at Beth-el: See what will be the issue hereof, how you shall succeed herein. *At Gilgal multiply transgression;* Gilgal was a place also where much idolatry was acted: see Hos. iv. 15; ix. 15; xii. 11. Since you will not be warned, go on, try whether God likes your sacrifices there as well as you like them, and whether they will be a means to preserve from judgments, or sins hastening judgments on you. *Bring your sacrifices every morning:* in the same irony God doth by Amos express his own displeasure, reprove their sin, and threaten it, though they imitate the instituted worship at Jerusalem, Exod. xxix. 38, 39: Numb. xxviii. 3, 4. *And your tithes after three years;* God had, Deut. xiv. 28, commanded every third year that all the tithe of that year should be brought, and laid up in a public storehouse; to this law, with the same irony, doth the prophet allude here.

i Lev. 7. 13. & 23. 17. † Heb. *offer by burning.* k Lev. 22. 18, 21. Deut. 12. 6. l Ps. 81. 12. † Heb. *so ye love.*

5 [i] And † offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim *and* publish [k] the free offerings: [l] for † this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven; as all the rest of your will-worship, so this also is against the express law, Lev. ii. 11, but yet you will persist in it; and do so at your peril, try whether it end in good to you. *Proclaim and publish the free-offerings;* publicly, frequently, and earnestly persuade your people to voluntary sacrifices, in which you think to please me; but you offer them all to idols; this your religion is impiety. *This liketh you;* as you invented it, so it pleaseth you, and you will not be reclaimed. *Ye children of Israel;* ye idolatrous, apostate Israelites. *Saith the Lord God;* for these you shall be punished by the Lord your God.

6 ¶ And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: [m] yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

m Is. 26. 11. Jer. 5. 3. Hag. 2. 17. ver. 8, 9.

And I, the Lord, who gave many blessings to win you to repentance, hath also tried what might be done by judgments. *Cleanness of teeth:* this is a description of famine by one effect of it; where meat fails the teeth are not fouled, as where it is eaten. *In all your cities;* it was a general famine, and probably it was that long famine, 2 Kings viii. 1. *Want of bread in all your places;* if there were some bread, yet it was very scarce every where: this passage explains the former. *Yet have ye not returned unto me;* yet this starving people repented not of their idolatries, nor cast off their idols; left not their sins of oppression and cruelty, &c.; see Joel ii. 12, 13; what you did like returning was partial and hypocritical, and not lasting.

7 And also I have withholden the rain from you, when *there were* yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

I also have withholden the rain from you; your vanities could not, and because ye did so greatly sin against me I would not, give you rain; I forbade the clouds from above, and they, thus prohibited, did withhold their rain, as I threatened, Deut. xxviii. 23, 24. *When there were yet three months to the harvest;* at a season when your country most usually had, and as then it ever did most need, rain: see Joel ii. 23. Three months drought then, as it was unusual in the course of nature, so it was an extraordinary curse and punishment on them. That you might see my hand in it and be instructed, I gave rain to one city, and withheld rain from the next neighbour city; nay, one part of a field, the same field, was watered and flourished, another part dry and withered. All this to convince and turn you.

8 So two *or* three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: [n] yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

n ver. 6, 10, 11.

Two or three, a certain for an uncertain number, *cities*, the places for the inhabitants, by a usual metonymy, *wandered unto one city to drink water:* it seems to imply that they travelled at some uncertainty, as they do who wander and rove about. It is not unlikely but that in the prophet's times the story might be well known and fresh in memory, though here no mention is made of these cities. *But they were not satisfied;* either that city they went to had not enough for them, or durst not part with it; or, though they quenched their thirst, yet because they must return back to their own dry and waterless cities, or because God withdrew his blessing, they were never the better, or else not much or long the better. *Yet have ye not returned unto me:* see ver. 6.

9 [o] I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: ‖ when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, [p] the palmer-worm devoured *them:* yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

o Deut. 28. 22. Hag. 2. 17. ‖ Or, *the multitude of your gardens, &c. did the palmer-worm, &c.* p Joel 1. 4. & 2. 25.

To other judgments inflicted on you I have added this also, my hand hath been heavy upon you, *I have smitten you with blasting;* the excessive heat and drought have turned your corn into black and parched smut or ashes; *and mildew;* a bane to corn through too much wet; the seasons were extremely unkind, and all spoiled with it. *When your gardens*, about your houses for convenience and pleasure. *Vineyards;* planted for your support and to enrich you, to cheer your heart. *Fig trees;* which were excellent, of very great use and profit in those countries. *Olive trees;* a principal commodity arose from their olive-yards: all that was for delight, profit, and necessary use. *Increased*, when they were seemingly most fruitful. *The palmer-worm:* see Joel i. 3, 10—12. *Devoured;* eat up all, as is the manner of that worm.

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‖ Or, *in the way.*
q Ex. 9. 3, 6. & 12. 29. Deut. 28. 27, 60. Ps. 78. 50.
† Heb. *with the captivity of your horses.*
2 Kin. 13. 7.
r ver. 6.

10 I have sent among you the pestilence ‖ [q] after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, † and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: [r] yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

I have sent; you have died of plague, but I commissioned the disease, I sent it, and it swept you away in such manner that any observant eye might have seen the hand of God against you in it, and might have read the commission. *The pestilence;* arrow of God, that walketh in the dark, that wasteth at noon-day. *After the manner of Egypt;* in which there was somewhat extraordinary, it swept away both men and beasts, say some; probably it was this disease which by the stroke of the angel seized the first-born in Egypt. Others interpret this with particular respect to the death of them in going down to seek aid of Egypt, or in their return from Egypt, as if the prophet minded them of many that died on the way to or from Egypt; but the phrase *in the way* is better rendered by our translators *after the manner*. *Your young men have I slain;* God was their enemy, and slew their young men, the choice of their strength and hope. *With the sword;* in war, and by their neighbouring enemies in Jehoahaz's time, and Syrians since that too, 2 Kings xiii. 3, and xv., xvi., and xvii. compared. *Have taken away your horses;* not by murrain, but by what was worse to you, by the hand of those who did ride them; and these being slain the horses were taken by the enemy, and added to their strength, and your danger. *I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils;* so great slaughter hath been made in your camp, that there were not sufficient to bury the slain before they stunk and offended you.

11 I have overthrown *some* of you, as
s Gen. 19. 24, 25. Is. 13. 19. Jer. 49. 18.
t Zech. 3. 2. Jude 23.
u ver. 6.
God overthrew [s] Sodom and Gomorrah, [t] and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: [u] yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

Overthrown; utterly consumed and destroyed your houses and goods. *Some of you;* though it was a total consumption to those it fell on, yet it was but on some, who might be warnings to others, and by which others might see how easy it was for God to destroy them all. *As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah:* we no where else read of such fire from heaven, yet it is possible some such judgment might fall on some of their cities, and not be recorded; but I do rather understand it proverbially spoken, denoting most grievous and desolating fires, or judgments. *Ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning;* such of you as escaped were yet in very great danger, and as firebrands in midst of the fire, where you were with others burning till infinite mercy saved a remnant, and plucked you out.

12 Therefore thus will I do unto thee,
x See Ezek. 13. 5. & 22. 30. Luke 14. 31, 32.
O Israel: *and* because I will do this unto thee, [x] prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

Therefore, because none of my former methods have succeeded, as in reason might have been expected, *thus will I do unto thee,* in some more terrible manner will I now proceed against thee, *O Israel;* you of the ten tribes. *Because I will do this unto thee,* and therefore my last advice to you is to consider it well; if you think well of it, possibly you may see and prevent the threatened evil. *Prepare to meet thy God;* if you humble yourselves, and so return, it will be mercy to you; but if you proudly and sinfully refuse to return, know ye that you must perish, for you can never make good your cause against God, and yet you must meet him, for he will ere he hath done with you end the controversy. *Thy God;* who once was thy God, and whom thou still ownest for thy God, and who would yet be thine if thou repent.

‖ Or, *spirit.*
y Ps. 139. 2. Dan. 2. 28.
z ch. 5. 8. & 8. 9.
a Deut. 32. 13. & 33. 29. Micah 1. 3.
13 For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the ‖ wind, [y] and declareth unto man what *is* his thought, [z] that maketh the morning darkness, [a] and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, [b] The LORD, The God of hosts, *is* his name.
b Is. 47. 4. Jer. 10. 16. ch. 5. 8. & 9. 6.

To move them to act for their safety, the prophet tells them how great and dreadful God is, the most dreadful and terrible enemy, but the most desirable friend. *He that formeth the mountains;* when there was not a mountain or hill, or the least dust of either, thy God, O Israel, formed them; and it is wisdom to return to him, for he can remove difficulties and pressures were they as heavy as mountains, and so he can mend all with you quickly; and if your confidences in sinful ways were as strong as mountains, he can overthrow them: return therefore and repent. *Createth;* giveth being by an almighty will. *The wind;* which for its instability seems of contrary nature to mountains, which doth shake them and overturn foundations; that wind which we feel and hear, though we see it not, that makes hideous noises, and works dreadful effects. The storms you are threatened with, O Israel, are like the wind, dreadful, irresistible; but, as the wind, raised and ruled by God, who can soon with one word lay them all asleep: return therefore to him. *And declareth unto man what is his thought:* think not by any counsels to prevent what God determines against an impenitent and sinful nation, as his power is infinite in creating, his wisdom is infinite too and unsearchable, and he can and will take sinners in their incorrigible wickednesses and punish them: be wise, therefore, and return to him by repentance. *That maketh the morning darkness;* can as easily turn outward prosperity into extreme adversity as he can turn a glorious morning into a dark, dismal, and overclouded day, and so will do against you if you repent not; and can turn a cloudy morning into brightness, and misery into happiness, if you repent. *And treadeth upon the high places of the earth;* can tread under foot the idols that are worshipped on high places of the earth, and trample on high and mighty potentates, exalted above ordinary men as highest hills are above lowest valleys. *The Lord;* who alone am the Lord, the eternal and mighty God. *The God of hosts is his name;* whose sovereign power and command all creatures obey, and act for or against us as he willeth.

CHAP. V.

A lamentation for Israel, 1—3. *An exhortation to repentance,* 4—20. *God rejecteth their hypocritical service,* 21—27.

HEAR ye this word which I [a] take up against you, *even* a lamentation, O house of Israel.
a Jer. 7. 29. Ezek. 19. 1. & 27. 2.

This preface you have in the same words chap. iii. 1, and in part also chap. iv. 1; to which I now add, that the person here speaking may refer to the prophet and to the Lord who sent him, both speak this word. *A lamentation;* which is very sad and mournful to all concerned in it, woeful news to the kingdom of the ten tribes.

2 The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; *there is* none to raise her up.

The virgin: this name is given to her not for her purity and integrity, for she was an adulteress, but either ironically, or because her present riches, glory, and beauty seemed to be that of a virgin that had her portion, strength, and honour untouched; or else by a figure as properly may it be applied to Israel, as to Babylon, Isa. xlvii. 1, or to Egypt, Jer. xlvi. 11, to Zidon, Isa. xxiii. 12. *Is fallen;* or shall ere long fall, the thing put as done already because of the certainty of it. Or rather, is already falling by civil wars and conspiracies, which prepared way for the final ruin of Israel: it is possible this sermon of the prophet might be about the time that Shallum or Menahem usurped the throne. Or else it may refer to the times of Jehoahaz, when that of the third verse will appear to have been fulfilled; this seems most probable. *She shall no more rise;* though they might by repentance have risen again, yet the prophet, considering their obstinacy, speaks of it as a thing that should never be, as eventually it proved also, for Israel never recovered the fall by Shalmaneser. *She is forsaken upon her land;* broken to pieces upon her own land, and so

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left as a broken vessel; or she shall be by home divisions first broken, and afterwards carried captive. *There is none to raise her up;* none at home among all her princes, counsellors, and rulers, nor any friend among her allies; all leave her to sink.

3 For thus saith the Lord GOD; The city that went out *by* a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth *by* an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel.

Thus saith the Lord God: this solemnly attesteth the certainty of the thing. *The city that went out by a thousand,* that sent out one thousand soldiers as the quota they were assessed at to help against an invader, *shall leave an hundred;* shall lose nine parts of ten, so great shall the slaughter be which the prevailing enemy shall make upon Israel; and here the prophet useth a certain number to express an uncertain; or proverbially, scarce a tenth man shall escape. *That which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel;* the kingdom of the ten tribes; and this perhaps may refer backward to Jehoahaz's time, 2 Kings xiii.; to be sure it is fulfilled in the wars of Shalmaneser and the taking Samaria.

4 ¶ For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, [b]Seek ye me, [c]and ye shall live:

[b] 2 Chro. 15. 2. Jer. 29. 13. ver. 6.
[c] Is. 55. 3.

For, or yet, truly. *Thus saith the Lord;* amidst all those threats there is still a reserve, a conditional proviso, and the Lord here does by his prophet declare it. *Unto the house of Israel;* though apostate both in sacred and civil things, though polluted and defiled greatly, and this through many scores of years, yet after all repentance would help them. *Seek ye me;* inquire for my law, and repent of your despising it, obey it in all things for the future, inquire diligently what promises I have made and wait for them, believe, obey, and repent; for this is to seek the Lord, when a people have turned from the Lord, as you have done, O house of Israel. *Ye shall live;* it shall be well with you, your persons, families, and the whole kingdom shall prosper, as the Hebrew phrase importeth.

[d] ch. 4. 4.
[e] ch. 8. 14.
[f] Hos. 4. 15. & 10. 8.

5 But seek not [d]Beth-el, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to [e]Beer-sheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and [f]Beth-el shall come to nought.

But seek not Beth-el; consult not, worship not, depend not on the idol calf at Beth-el; or seek not God at Beth-el, but at Jerusalem, where he will be found; cast off idolatry, return to the true God and to his instituted worship, so shall ye live. *Nor enter into Gilgal;* a city of great idolatry, a place where God will not be sought nor found by you: see Hos. iv. 15; ix. 15; xii. 11, where it is more fully explained. *Pass not to Beer-sheba;* though God of old did appear there to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 24, though Abraham dwelt there, Gen. xxi. 31—33, and Jacob sacrificed there with acceptance, Gen. xlvi. 1—3, yet now God appointeth Jerusalem and the temple the only places of his solemn worship, and of your seeking him. *Gilgal;* the inhabitants of Gilgal, for the place could not go into captivity; it is a metonymy, the place put for the people. *Shall surely go into captivity;* Shalmaneser and his Assyrians shall certainly carry them away captives. *Beth-el,* both city and people, *shall come to nought;* shall be vanity and disappointment to all that trust to the idols of it.

[g] ver. 4.

6 [g]Seek the LORD, and ye shall live; lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour *it,* and *there be* none to quench *it* in Beth-el.

Seek the Lord, and ye shall live: the prophet repeateth his exhortation to repentance with the repeated promise of a good issue hereon: see ver. 4. *Lest he break out:* this is a new argument to persuade them to do their duty, for unless they do it God's judgments will break out upon them. *Like fire;* suddenly, with strength and prevalence, as the Hebrew word here rendered *break out* importeth. *In the house of Joseph;* the kingdom of the ten tribes, the chief whereof was Ephraim, who was the younger son of Joseph, and the first erecter of this kingdom was an Ephraimite, 1 Kings xi. 26. *And devour it;* utterly consume it, as fire useth to do where it gets head and prevaileth. *And there be none to quench it in Beth-el;* if once this fire break out from God, all your idols in Beth-el shall not be able to quench it; no tears from your eyes there shed, no blood of sacrifice there offered, shall quench it.

7 Ye who [h]turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth,

[h] ch. 6. 12.

Ye; rulers and judges. *Judgment;* the righteous sentence of the law, the equity of it, which is sweet and pleasing to just men, and safe for all. *Wormwood;* proverbially understood, bitterness, grief, injustice, and oppression. *Leave off righteousness;* make it to cease in your courts of judicature, and tread it under foot. *In the earth;* or among men, in the land: the latter part of this verse explains the former.

8 *Seek him* that maketh the [i]seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, [k]and maketh the day dark with night: that [l]calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: [m]The LORD *is* his name:

[i] Job 9. 9. & 38. 31.
[k] Ps. 104. 20.
[l] Job 38. 34. ch. 9. 6.
[m] ch. 4. 13.

Seek him; though this be not in the Hebrew, it is well supplied by our interpreters. *That maketh the seven stars;* a famous constellation, and whose rising about September was usually accompanied with rains and sweet showers, which, as chap. iv. 7, had been withholden, whence want of water and bread; now the prophet adviseth to seek the Lord, who can give them rain and corn by the kindly influences of that watery constellation, which as he made, so he guides and manageth. This I take to be the most natural meaning of the place. *Orion;* which rising about November brings usually cold rains and frosts, intermixed with much uncertainty, but very seasonable for the earth, to make it fruitful; this mentioned to persuade these people to repent, who were afflicted with such barrenness and unfruitfulness as brought famine with it. *Turneth the shadow of death into the morning;* proverbially, that turneth greatest adversity, which is here called *the shadow of death,* into as great prosperity, here called *the morning,* Psal. xxiii. 4. *Maketh the day dark with night;* metaphorically this expresseth a change of prosperity into adversity. Ye house of Israel, think well of it, you are in a dangerous state; be advised to seek him who can turn your morning into night, or your night into morning; who can on a sudden remove all evil from you, and bring all good upon you; seek him therefore, and seek not idols. *Calleth for the waters of the sea;* either to raise them to terrible swellings and rage, or rather calls up waters out of the sea, by commanding the vapour to ascend, which he turneth into rain; *and poureth them out upon the face of the earth;* and then poureth out from the clouds to make the earth fruitful. *The Lord is his name;* he only is God and the Lord. Who doth thus seek him?

9 That strengtheneth the †spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress.

† Heb. *spoil.*

That strengtheneth the spoiled; you have been exceedingly weakened and spoiled by your enemies; yet return, repent, seek God, for he can renew your strength, that you shall spoil your spoilers who are strong. *Against the strong;* the mighty, victorious, and insolent. *The spoiled,* those that had lost their strength, and were as conquered, *shall come against the fortress;* shall rally, re-embody, and form a siege against their besiegers: so God, whom you should serve, will soon turn all from dark and dismal into light and pleasing unto you and yours; in your apostacy all will be misery and darkness, but in your return all shall be well and prosperous with you.

10 [n]They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they [o]abhor him that speaketh uprightly.

[n] Is. 29. 21.
[o] 1 Kings 22. 8.

Either this is the prophet's complaint of them without further expecting their compliance with his advice, or he foretells what they will do, judges and people. *They hate him that rebuketh;* they both hate them that rebuke; judges

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hate the prophets, who rebuke corrupt judges; and the people hate impartial judges, if any such be among them. *In the gate;* where judges sat, and where the prophets did many times deliver their message. *They abhor him that speaketh uprightly;* they cannot brook any one that deals plainly and honestly with them, whether judge, prophet, or private person.

11 Forasmuch therefore as your treading *is* upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: [p] ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted † pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them.

p Deut. 28. 30, 38, 39. Mic. 6. 15. Zeph. 1. 13. Hag. 1. 6.
† Heb. *vineyards of desire.*

Your treading; their oppression was more than ordinarily proud and tyrannous, expressed here by treading. It was very heavy on the poor, an effect of fraud, and executed with tyrannical insolence, as the word and its paraphrase imports. *Is upon the poor,* who have not power to withstand your violence, nor money to buy your friendship. *Ye take from him,* receive when offered, and ye force them to offer, you extort from the poor, *burdens of wheat;* great quantities of best wheat, on which the poor should live, either making bread of it to feed them, or else making money of it to serve other occasions. It is not said what burden, but probably as much as the poor man was able to carry. *Ye have built houses;* perhaps these corrupt judges had built for their children; so one greedy and ravenous judge might build as many houses as he had sons, or these judges being many, had built many houses. *Of hewn stone;* intimating the greatness, beauty, and strength of them, and they flatter themselves that they and their posterity shall long dwell at ease and multiply in these goodly houses. *But ye shall not dwell in them;* you by oppression build, but God will by his just hand, and by the Assyrians' violence, turn you out of those houses, and make you captives in a land where your enemies please to carry you, you shall find that, Deut. xxviii. 30, fulfilled on you. *Pleasant vineyards;* most desirable for situation, for fruitfulness, for sweetness and goodness of the grape; every way delightful. *But ye shall not drink wine of them;* either they shall not bear, or the enemy shall devour, or you shall be carried away into captivity. The threat, Deut. xxviii. 39, shall be executed.

12 For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: [q] they afflict the just, they take ‖ a bribe, and they [r] turn aside the poor in the gate *from their right.*

q ch. 2. 26.
‖ Or, *a ransom.*
r Is. 29. 21. ch. 2. 7.

For; wonder not at the threatened severity, as if it were too rigorous; it is but proportioned to your sins. *I,* the Lord, whom you provoke, who have threatened you, *know,* clearly, fully, and in all the circumstances of them, what moves you to do so, what pretences of law you make: all your evasions are vain and foolish. *Your manifold transgressions;* the increased number of your sins, and the greatness of them too, as the word importeth. *Your mighty sins;* which mightily wrong and break the poor and needy. *They afflict,* besiege, or with hostile minds watch against, and gladly take any occasion to wrong and grieve, *the just;* not absolutely and sinlessly just, but such as are comparatively just, or those whose cause is just, or those that live with regard to all the commands of God, and follow righteousness: it was the mighty sin of the corrupt rulers in Samaria and Israel at that day, that they were enemies to all righteousness. *They take a bribe;* in civil causes bribes carried it; see chap. ii. 6; here bribes set criminals free, a ransom, as the word in the Hebrew, buys off the punishment appointed by the law against murderers, adulterers, &c. *They turn aside the poor in the gate;* the poor, who appear in their courts for justice, they turn them away, or delay to hear, or hear and judge unjustly, and so send them away wronged and crying. *From their right:* these words fully express the prophet's meaning, and are therefore well supplied in our version.

13 Therefore [s] the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it *is* an evil time.

s ch. 6. 10.

Therefore, because that men are so universally impatient of hearing reproof, and yet their sins so much abound, and so much deserve reproof; since they will sooner turn against the speaker, than turn from the sin spoken against. *The prudent;* the wise men; prophets, say some, but I rather think other private men are here meant, whose private capacity alloweth them to keep silence when others must speak. *Shall keep silence;* be forced to it, say some, they shall be silenced; this is true, but rather here is a voluntary, chosen silence toward vile corrupters of law and justice, who will nothing mend though reproved; or a silence before God, owning his justice in punishing such sinners. *For it is an evil time;* both for the sinfulness of it, which provoketh God to wrath, and for the sorrows, troubles, wars, and captivity of this people, by the Assyrians.

14 Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, [t] as ye have spoken.

t Mic. 3. 11

Seek good; turn to the law of God, study it, that ye may do the good it requireth in works of piety, justice, and charity. *And not evil:* you have devised evil, and done it in works of impiety, injustice, and cruelty. Or this may be the same with ver. 4—6, which see. *That ye may live:* see ver. 4. *The Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you;* the eternal glorious God, who is Lord of all, and can help you, having all the hosts of heaven and earth at his disposal; he will be with you to bless and save you yet, notwithstanding all your former sins. *As ye have spoken;* you have boasted his being with you, you think he is bound to be with you and own you; so he will indeed, but it is if you repent, cease from idols and violence.

15 [u] Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: [x] it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

u Ps. 34. 14. & 97. 10. Rom. 12. 9.
x Ex. 32. 30. 2 Kings 19. 4. Joel 2. 14.

Slight dislikes will do little in this case, you rulers and judges must heartily *hate,* and show that you hate, *the evil,* both ways, doings, contrivers, and abettors of the evil among the people and yourselves; *and love the good;* commend, encourage, defend, and reward all good in others, and do it yourselves; let your heart be toward good things and good men. *Establish judgment in the gate:* by this it is evident the prophet speaks to governors and judges among them: what the import of the phrase is see ver. 10, 12. Set up honest and upright judges in every gate, where judges did sit in those days. *It may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious;* possibly he will forgive, or abate or respite the evil days, possibly he may give you his gracious presence, and yet save *the remnant of Joseph;* what the invasions of enemies, or the civil wars, have spared, and left in Samaria and Israel, the ten tribes: see ver. 6.

16 Therefore the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus; Wailing *shall be* in all streets; and they shall say in all the highways, Alas! alas! and they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and [y] such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing.

y Jer. 9. 17.

The prophet foreseeing their obstinacy in their sins, and their refusing to obey his counsel from the Lord, doth proceed to denounce judgment against them. *The Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus:* that there might be no doubt made of the truth of the prophet's words, he doth in most solemn manner attest it to be from the Lord; and that he might awake them to repentance and humiliation, he proclaims the majesty and power of God who calls them to it. *Wailing;* lamentations uttered in words and gestures, Eccles. xii. 5; Jer. iv. 8; Zech. xii. 10, shall every where be seen and heard in the broad streets of your cities, as when the Assyrians prevailed and cut off the forces of Israel, besieged and took their strong holds. *Shall be in all streets* of great towns or cities. *They shall say in all the highways,* abroad in the country, and on the road, all shall cry out, as undone, dispirited, and hopeless men, *Alas! alas! They shall call the husbandman to mourning:*

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this sort of men are little used to such ceremonies of mourning, but now such shall their state be, that they shall be called upon; Leave your toil, betake yourselves to public mourning. *And such as are skilful of lamentation;* and to make all sound doleful, call in those whose art lieth in acting the part of mourners, and can move hardest hearts to lament and bewail. See these Jer. ix. 17, 18; Matt. ix. 23.

17 And in all vineyards *shall be* wailing: for [a] I will pass through thee, saith the LORD.

a Ex. 12. 12. Nah. 1. 12.

In all vineyards shall be wailing: in these places was usually the greatest jollity, and they gathered their vintage with joy; but now it is quite contrary, either vines are blasted, or eaten up, or destroyed of the enemy. *I will pass through thee,* as an incensed God, punishing all, every where, who have sinned against him; and therefore every place now shall be full of sorrow, because every place hath been full of sin.

18 [a] Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end *is* it for you? [b] the day of the LORD *is* darkness, and not light.

a Is. 5. 19. Jer. 17. 15. Ezek. 12. 22, 27. 2 Pet. 3. 4. b Jer. 30. 7. Joel 2. 2. Zeph. 1. 15.

That desire, scoffingly, or not believing any such day would come: the prophets had long threatened such a day, but these scoffers thought no such thing could overtake them, and if it did they would know the worst of it; alter their course they will not, whatever comes on it, and they are confident the prophets fright them with bugbears: but woe to such scoffers! *The day of the Lord:* see Joel i. 15; ii. 1; Zeph. i. 14. *To what end is it for you?* what do you think to get by it? what good can you expect when darkest calamities overwhelm you? *The day of the Lord is darkness;* all adversity, most black and doleful. therefore called in the abstract *darkness. And not light;* no joy, hope, or comfort in it.

19 [c] As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.

c Jer. 48. 44.

As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him: here proverbially is expressed the continuance and succession of evils one after another; it will be a long calamity, when your civil dissensions waste you first, next God's armies of locusts and palmer-worms, and the Assyrians too, until all ends in final captivity; you may escape one, but shall fall into another calamity, and worse than that you escaped; abroad your miseries shall be like a lion or bear. *Or went into the house;* at home you may hope for safety from such open dangers, but there other kind of mischief shall meet you. *And leaned his hand on the wall;* weary and faint, shall think to ease and support himself. *And a serpent bit him;* whose biting infuseth a deadly poison, which suddenly corrupts the whole mass of blood, and kills the man. If conspirators at home be lions, the Assyrians will be as bears to you.

20 *Shall* not the day of the LORD *be* darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

All these things considered, ye secure, profane, and atheistical scoffers, speak yourselves, will not that day be as dark as I have described, and as little to your comfort?

21 ¶ [d] I hate, I despise your feast days, and [e] I will not ‖ smell in your solemn assemblies.

d Prov. 21. 27. Is. 1. 11, —16. Jer. 6. 20. Hos. 8. 13. e Lev. 26. 31. ‖ Or, *smell your holy days.*

I hate, I despise your feast days; impure and unholy they are, whatever they seem to be, and therefore the Lord hateth them, they are abomination to him, Prov. xv. 8; Isa. i. 13, 14. Worthless and contemptible they are, and as such God rejecteth them, Isa. i. 10—12, &c. There is no goodness that I should value in them, there is all that vileness in them which attends deep hypocrisy, for which I do hate them. The apostate Israelites imitated the Jews in many things, amongst which they retained their festivals, in which they multiplied their ceremonial sacrifices; and yet God owns them not as his, but brands them with this, They are yours, therefore unwarrantable, will-worship, and displeasing to God. *I will not smell* a savour of rest or delight, I will not accept and be pleased with, Gen. viii. 21, *your solemn assemblies;* appointed, as you think, on very weighty reasons, and by sufficient authority, and celebrated with rich sacrifices, in mighty crowds, and in excellent order; all is yours, not mine.

22 [f] Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept *them:* neither will I regard the ‖ peace offerings of your fat beasts.

f Is. 66. 3. Mic. 6. 6, 7. ‖ Or, *thank offerings.*

Though ye, that have departed from my temple, law, and institutions, you of the ten tribes, *offer me burnt-offerings;* which was wholly burnt on the altar; no part due to any but God; of this these hypocrites had a high esteem, Micah vi. 6, because they accounted it an entire gift to God. *And your meat-offerings;* to your burnt-offering add the other, your meat-offering also, as Lev. ii. 1, 2; Numb. vi. 17. See Joel i. 13; ii. 14. *I will not accept them;* it may be a meiosis, I will hate them, as ver. 21. *Neither will I regard the peace-offerings;* your thank-offerings too, of which Lev. vi. 12; vii. 15, your praises for your prosperity, are no better pleasing neither. *Of your fat beasts:* in these peace-offerings, though you bring the best, the fattest, yet you bring nothing but a beast, for you leave your hearts with your sins; and you have no warrant from God to do this, nay, you are prohibited, for you are to offer only at Jerusalem, and at the temple.

23 Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.

The noise of thy songs; by way of contempt and loathing, God calls their songs noise; how harmonious, delightful, and ravishing soever they might be to their ears, they were not pleasing unto God. *Songs,* used in their sacrifices, and their solemn feasts; herein they imitated temple-worship, but all was unpleasing to the Lord. *I will not hear:* this is not to be taken absolutely, for God heard the noise; but it is taken in a qualified sense, he did not hear with delight and acceptance. *The melody,* the pleasing harmony, the sweet concent, *of thy viols;* this one kind of musical instrument put for all the rest: in a word, your hypocrisy, idolatry, and injustice spoil all your services, and make God weary of you and them.

24 [g] But let judgment † run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

g Hos. 6. 6. Mic. 6. 8. † Heb. *roll.*

But, Heb. *And. Judgment:* some interpret this of penal judgment, by God threatened against these hypocrites; but it is better understood of justice to be administered by rulers, whose office it was to determine between party and party. *Run down as waters;* freely, constantly, speedily, and for common benefit of all, as waters run. *Righteousness;* equity, relieving justice, the want of which hath been notorious among you. *As a mighty stream,* which bears down all that opposeth it: be hindered by none from doing every one right; do this, and you may yet be accepted.

25 [h] Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?

h Deu. 32 17. Josh. 24. 14. Ezek. 20. 8, 16, 24 Acts 7. 42, 43. See Is. 43. 23.

Their fathers and they, though at so great distance of time, are one people, and so the prophet considers them in this place. *Have ye offered?* did you not frequently omit to offer, and yet were not reproved or plagued for the omission, when your frequent removes, and many other difficulties, made it unpracticable? so little is sacrifice with your God! and yet, when you did offer, was it *to me* only? or did you not sacrifice to idols and false gods, and provoked me? Will-worship and idolatry have been hereditary diseases in your generations; and it is well known, too, that these idolaters fell in the wilderness, and are made admonitions to you. *Sacrifices* of beasts slain, as the word properly speaks. *Offerings: minchah,* in general, is any gift or present made, but particularly here it is a gift or present of fine flour, oil, and frankincense unto God with the sacrifice. *In the wilderness forty years:* it was a broken number of years in exact account, that is, thirty-eight years and eleven months; but, as is common in such cases, the full and round number is taken and so the account runs

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here, and in Acts vii. 42, forty years. *O house of Israel;* you of the ten tribes.

‖ Or, *Sicuth your king.* i 1 Kings 11. 33.

26 But ye have borne ‖the tabernacle [i]of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.

But ye, the idolatrous children of idolatrous fathers, *have borne*, carried along with you in the wilderness, *the tabernacle*, or little chapel, or shrine, or canopy, in which the image of their idol was placed. Though others conjecture this to be the proper name of an idol, I conjecture it is the name of the portable temple or chapel in which the supposed deity was placed. *Moloch;* the great idol of the Ammonites, as Jupiter was of the Greeks and Romans; some ancient king among them, who was a famous founder, or raiser, and benefactor to their nation, though we know not who this was. *Chiun:* perhaps if we understand the whole apparatus or storehouse of their images, we shall not err. Their grand idol was Moloch, whose image they kept, and carried about in a *sacellum*, or consecrated portable chapel, and with him the rest of their petit deities, in their images placed orderly, as they fancied, about their great deity. Others will have Chiun to be Saturn. *Your images:* whatever these were, it is plain God accounts them their inventions and their gods. *The star of your god:* what star this was we need not inquire; the idolaters appropriated the stars to their gods, and probably did in the roof of their gods' tabernacles frame the star over the image of their god: or, the star your god, or which you worship. *Which ye made to yourselves;* all which deities you have found out and established to yourselves.

27 Therefore will I cause you to go [k]beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, [l]whose name *is* The God of hosts.

k 2 Kings 17. 6. l ch. 4. 13.

Therefore, for all your idolatry and other sins in which you have obstinately continued, *will I cause you to go into captivity;* you shall certainly be subdued and captivated; and this shall be done so that my hand shall appear evidently in it. *Beyond Damascus*, into Assyria, and into parts beyond Damascus: it is not certain into what corners of the world they were sent, but probably to those parts that lay about the Caspian Sea, more remote from their own country than ever to hope they may get back again. Or thus, You shall be carried into a captivity more grievous, by Shalmaneser, than was the captivity of those whom Tiglathpileser led captive when he slew Resin, took Damascus, and wasted Israel in the days of Pekah, when some Israelites were carried captives; but this shall be a more grievous captivity.

CHAP. VI.

The voluptuousness of Israel, 1—6, shall be punished with desolation, 7—11. Their perversion of justice and vain confidence shall end in affliction, 12—14.

a Luke 6. 24. ‖ Or, *are secure.* b Ex. 19. 5. ‖ Or, *firstfruits.*

WOE [a]to them *that* ‖*are* at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, *which are* named [b]‖chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!

Woe! this compriseth many and great sorrows, all that God intends against these sinners. *To them that are at ease;* who live in abundance, eat, drink, sleep, and are secure, that think to-morrow shall be as this day, and neither fear nor believe the threatened judgments of God. *Zion*, by a synecdoche put for the kingdom of the two tribes, and principally the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Zion; the ten tribes were hitherto threatened, now the prophet warns the two tribes. *And trust in the mountain of Samaria;* woe to them also who rely upon the strength, wealth, and policy of the king, princes, cities, and kingdom of Samaria or Israel! *Which*, which two cities, Zion and Samaria, *are named chief of the nations;* accounted chief cities among the known cities of that part of the world. Others refer this passage to the nobles, wise men, and great men of each place, men that were heads among their own people. *To whom the house of Israel came;* to which places all Israel had recourse; so the two tribes went up to Zion, the ten tribes went to Samaria: or, to whom, i. e. to which nobles and rulers, the people of each kingdom did go on all occasions for judgment, counsel, or refuge.

c Jer. 2. 10. d Is. 10. 9. Taken circ. 794. e 2 Kings 18. 34. f 2 Chr. 26. 6. g Nah. 3. 8.

2 [c]Pass ye unto [d]Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to [e]Hamath the great: then go down to [f]Gath of the Philistines: [g]*be they* better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?

Pass ye unto Calneh; run over the history of that great and ancient city; as, Go to Shiloh, Jer. vii. 12. It was built by Nimrod, Gen. x. 10, and after a long growth to power, wealth, and security, through near one thousand three hundred years, was at last ruined, as is probable, in the civil wars which ended in the utter ruin of Sardanapalus by Arbaces, and Pul-belochus, grandfather to Shalmaneser who captivated Israel; the story of which, fresh in the days of Amos, is thus referred unto for warning to Israel. *And see;* consider well what befell that city built on Euphrates, rich, delightful, and, as you, full of sin. *Hamath;* head of the Syrian kingdom, lately overthrown by Tiglath-pileser; a very fresh instance of God's just indignation against secure sinners, and a very fit warning to Israel. *Gath;* the chief city of the Philistines, a few years before wasted by the arms and cruelty of Hazael, 2 Kings xii. 17; by these examples learn to amend your ways, or expect to perish in them. *Be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?* The reading this passage interrogatively renders it darker than if it were read assertively. Yet they were better, i. e. greater, than these kingdoms of Israel and Judah; and their borders, i. e. the bounds of those kingdoms, greater than these of Israel and Judah. But if you retain our version, it will amount to this; Are they, i. e. Israel and Judah, better, more just, thankful, and merciful than these kingdoms, that they should hope to escape? or is the border of these two kingdoms greater, that they should hope to stand by power?

h Ezek. 12. 27. i ch. 5. 18. & 9. 10. k ch. 5. 12. ver. 12. 1 Ps. 94. 20. ‖ Or, *habitation.*

3 Ye that [h]put far away the [i]evil day, [k]and cause [i]the ‖seat of violence to come near;

Woe to you that flatter yourselves that the day of darkness and misery foretold is far off! as Ezek. xii. 27, which see. These were great ones too, that the prophet here threateneth, who thus postponed the day of Israel's and Judah's calamities. *The evil day;* not as if it should be a short calamity, as a day; but it speaks the determinate, fixed time, and the haste wherewith the execution shall be made. *The seat;* the throne, or judgment-seat, which should relieve the oppressed, condemn the wicked, and acquit the innocent, this is made a *seat of violence*, where unjust judges condemn the just and take bribes. *To come near;* thus you draw the judgments of God on yourselves, by acting violence against the poor, and contemning the threats of the prophets.

‖ Or, *abound with superfluities.*

4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and ‖stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;

The woe is to be added to them that, either out of laziness or luxury, and to please the flesh, lay themselves to rest *upon beds of ivory;* on beautiful, rich beds, bought with the gain of bribes and oppression. *Stretch themselves upon their couches:* this somewhat explains the former; they did extremely indulge their pride and luxury, and on beds or couches laid themselves to feast, when God called them to mourn and weep. *Eat*, with excess, as Matt. xxiv. 37, 38; Luke xii. 19, 20. *The lambs out of the flock;* the very best in all their flock, and probably they chose them out first, before they set out lambs for sacrifices; or else these gluttonous judges and rulers eat the best lambs, not of their own, but out of poor oppressed men's flocks. *The calves*, those that were fattest too, *out of the midst of the stall;* kept on purpose to make them most delicious and nourishing meat.

m Is. 5. 12. ‖ Or, *quaver.* n 1 Chr. 23. 5.

5 [m]That ‖chant to the sound of the viol, *and* invent to themselves instruments of musick, [n]like David;

Woe to them that, in a time of deepest morning, do en-

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tertain themselves with songs, and with greatest skill sing to their musical instruments, as if they had no greater thing to mind! *Viol;* or lute, or gittern, one kind put for every one used in their feastings at this time of Amos. *Invent to themselves instruments of music;* not content with known, old-fashioned music, they find out new instruments, new songs and tunes. *Like David;* in imitation of David, as they profanely pretend, or else emulating his skill, and preferring their own feast songs and music before his temple music and songs. We may imagine what songs such ungodly, cruel, voluptuous men would sing, and what tunes they would set too, on such occasions, viz. loose, profane, and impure enough.

‖ Or, *in bowls of wine.*

o Gen. 37.25. † Heb. *breach.*

6 That drink ‖wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: °but they are not grieved for the †affliction of Joseph.

The prophet continues the woe still to these riotous feasters; the jovial, banquetting, dancing, and singing judges. *That drink wine in bowls;* not in little vessels, not in moderate glasses or cups, as beseemed sober men, but in great vessels, called bowls; and it is likely they drank these filled as full as they could hold too, and in design to drink each other down. *Anoint themselves with the chief ointments:* in those hot countries this anointing was needful to refresh and strengthen the limbs, and it was much used. But here the effeminate use of it, at such a time, and by such men, at feasts, is condemned as a great excess and provoking sin, which God will punish. *But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph;* nothing affected with or troubled for the public calamities of their country, though they were sore ones, brought on them by the Syrians, and by their own divisions and civil wars: both kingdoms of Judah and Israel were in a very low, afflicted state, but these rulers and grandees live, feast, sing, and dance, as if no sad occasion called for other carriage.

7 ¶ Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

Therefore; for this sin of unseasonable feasting added to all former sins; much like that Isa. xxii. 14. *Now shall they go captive,* who ruled others, and whose character you have ver. 1—3, &c., who put far from them the evil day, &c., these shall certainly be carried captive. *With the first that go captive;* and as they deserve by their sins, so shall they be carried away the first of any; God's hand in punishing them shall be as eminent as their hand was in sinning. *The banquet,* the feastings of voluptuous ones, shall cease. *That stretched themselves:* see ver. 4. *Shall be removed;* God will send the Assyrians to take away the banquet, and to bring in a bill, a reckoning, for these secure sinners, who shall be removed too, as well as their banquet is; they shall go into captivity, and there in sorrows dearly pay for all their luxury, inhumanity, and security.

p Jer. 51. 14. Heb. 6. 13, 17. q Ps. 47. 4. Ezek. 24. 21. ch. 8. 7. † Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

8 PThe Lord GOD hath sworn by himself, saith the LORD the God of hosts, I abhor qthe excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all †that is therein.

The secure, incredulous, and atheistical among the judges of Israel are here spoken to especially, and the prophet assures them that God had sworn by himself that they should be punished, and in the manner he had foretold. *Saith the Lord the God of hosts;* God assureth his prophet, that the prophet might attest it to his hearers. *I abhor,* I look with detestation, and remember with loathing, *the excellency of Jacob;* all that the seed of Jacob account a glory and excellency to them, and in which they do put their trust, all their external privileges and ceremonious worship. *And hate his palaces;* in which violence is stored up, in which luxury abounds. *I will deliver up the city;* Jerusalem, Samaria, and all the other cities. *With all that is therein,* both persons and things; Assyria first shall sweep away all out of Israel and Samaria, and Babylonians next shall carry away Judah, Jerusalem, and all in it.

9 And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die.

It shall come to pass; the thing is decreed, and shall take effect. *If there remain,* or escape the enemies' sword, or the famine of Samaria, besieged three years. *Ten men in one house;* many men, for it is a certain number expressed, though an uncertain be understood. *They shall die,* either of pestilence, or by some other stroke of God's hand; though they escape a while they shall not finally escape, 2 Kings xvii. 5.

10 And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that *is* by the sides of the house, *Is there* yet *any* with thee? and he shall say, No. Then shall he say, rHold thy tongue: *for ‖we may not make mention of the name of the LORD.

r ch. 5. 13. s ch. 8. 3. ‖ Or, *they will not,* or, *have not.*

A man's uncle, or some near kinsman, *shall take him up,* instead of those mercenaries who were wont to do this, and were paid for it; but now none of these to be had, the next to the dead must, as well as he is able, take him up on his shoulders, and carry him, i. e. the last of the ten, the other nine being dead. *He that burneth him:* though the Jews mostly buried, yet in some cases they burned the dead bodies, as in this of wasting pestilence, when they could not carry them out, either for fear of infecting others, or for want of help. *To bring out the bones out of the house;* all that remained: the flesh of the dead being consumed to ashes, the bones are reserved to be buried, and laid up in some sepulchre of their ancestors. *Shall say;* he that doth this office for the last of his dead friends shall inquire of one he seeth either dwelling near, and *by the sides of the house* out of which the bones are carried, or else of some that lay undiscerned in the corner of the house where so many died, *Is there yet any with thee?* is any one living in this your house, hath any one escaped? *He shall say, No;* the man of whom the uncle, or whoever carried out the bones, inquireth. *Then shall he say,* then shall the inquirer say, *Hold thy tongue;* either, Murmur not against God, or mourn not, for so sad is the time that the dead are happier than the living; or, Say nothing, lest all be rifled from thee; for such inhumanity was among them, that there were those who would dare to rifle infected houses. Or else, which suits the next words, Be silent under God's just displeasure. *We may not make mention of the name of the Lord;* now it is too late to seek God, who is executing his immutable decree and sentence, which we were advised to prevent, but did not in season.

11 For, behold, tthe LORD commandeth, uand he will smite the great house with ‖breaches, and the little house with clefts.

t Is. 55. 11. u ch. 3. 15. ‖ Or, *droppings.*

For, behold; consider this well: it seems to be the continued speech of him who took care of the dead, ver. 10. *The Lord commandeth;* God, provoked by our sins, hath sent out thy enemies; war, famine, and pestilence all come commissioned of God, and when the arrow is shot it will hit and kill. *He will smite the great house with breaches;* the palaces of great men, and their families, shall have great breaches made in them, by which they shall be ruined. *And the little house with clefts;* the cottages and lesser dwellings of poor men, with their families, shall by lesser strokes be ruined, their clefts shall be enough to do this. All shall be overthrown, and we must submit to it.

12 ¶ Shall horses run upon the rock? will *one* plow *there* with oxen? for xye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock:

x Hos. 10. 4. ch. 5. 7.

Shall horses run upon the rock? would it not be dangerous to horse and rider? If prophets and pious men exhort, threaten, or advise, they endanger themselves, it does no more good than if you would run your horse on the slippery precipices of rocks. Or, all is lost labour on these hardened sinners. *Will one plough there with oxen?* your hearts are hard as the rocks; my prophets' preaching, my lesser judgments warning you, all gentler means used, are but as a husbandman's ploughing the rocks. These shall therefore be torn up by the roots, your state and kingdom shall be

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utterly overthrown. *For ye*, you judges and governors in the ten tribes, and in Judah too, *have turned judgment*, see chap. v. 7, *into gall*, or poison; by those laws they took away life, and forfeited estate, which, had the laws been rightly executed, had saved both. *The fruit of righteousness*, all that fruit which equity and justice would have produced by due application of the law, hath been wormwood, grief, and complaints, by your wresting and perverting the law. *Into hemlock*, a deadly and pernicious weed; so the course of your courts have been.

13 Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?

Ye which rejoice, glorying with a joy and satisfaction, with hope and confidence, *in a thing of nought*; in your victories, alliances, fortifications, and idols, all which draw you away from God, and from seeking him as he will be found. *Which say*, tell the prophets that reprove you and foretell your downfal, you say to them, notwithstanding all that God threatens, *Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?* you have raised yourselves to dominion and greatness by your wisdom, courage, and success, and by the same you will maintain it, and so you put off the day of evil.

y Jer. 5. 15.

14 But, behold, [y] I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the LORD the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the [z] entering in of Hemath unto the ‖river of the wilderness.

z Num. 34. 8. 1 Kin. 8. 65.
‖ Or, *valley*.

But; notwithstanding all your boasts and carnal confidences. *Behold*; observe and weigh well what is said. *I will raise up*; awaken, call together, strengthen, succeed, and prosper in the attempt against you. *A nation*; Pul hath, and Tiglath-pileser hath, or now doth, afflict and break you, but Shalmaneser shall utterly destroy you; if his strength were not enough of itself, mine arm should strengthen him to bring all your hopes to nought. *O house of Israel*; kingdom of the ten tribes. *Saith the Lord the God of hosts*; who doth what he saith, who commands and it is done, whom none can resist. *They*, the Assyrians and their confederates, *shall afflict you*; distress you and press you hard on all sides, it shall be a great and a universal oppression of you. *From the entering in of Hemath*, a city of Syria bordering on the land of Israel north-east, and was an inlet into Syria from the north of Canaan, *unto the river of the wilderness*, which is Sichor, in the most south-west parts of Canaan towards Egypt. So all your country, Judah and all, shall be oppressed by that nation which I will raise and strengthen against you.

CHAP. VII.

The judgment of the grasshoppers, 1—3, *and of the fire, are diverted by the intercession of Amos*, 4—6. *By a wall and plumbline is signified the desolation of Israel*, 7—9. *Amaziah complaineth of Amos, and forbiddeth him to prophesy at Beth-el*, 10—13. *Amos showeth his calling*, 14, 15, *and the judgment upon Amaziah*, 16, 17.

THUS hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me; and, behold, he formed ‖grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, *it was* the latter growth after the king's mowings.

‖ Or, *green worms*.

Thus: sometimes this refers to what went before, here it refers to what the prophet saw and is about to declare. *Hath the Lord God showed unto me*: this is the first of five visions or prophetic representations of what was coming upon this people for their sins. The Lord gave Amos a clear sight of the future calamity by this vision. *Behold*; I could not but observe, and it is worthy your observance too. *He formed*: it is not said he called for them, but he formed or created them, probably intimating somewhat extraordinary in them, either in their bigness or number, or rather sudden appearing of them. So the plague signified by them should suddenly come upon them. *Grasshoppers*: in our country grasshoppers are not hurtful, but these in our text were locusts, and so rendered Isa. xxxiii. 4; Nah. iii. 17; and the word used by Amos here is paraphrased by the Hebrew critics by a word that properly notes locust. *It was the latter growth*: the shooting up of the first growth being too luxuriant, they did either mow off the tops, or eat it down with cattle, and this was done for preserving the corn and increase of the harvest; but if the second growth were cut off or eat up, it marred the whole harvest; and these devouring locusts were formed in such time as to do this, and so to bring a famine upon the land. *After the king's mowings*; it is supposed that the first mowing of the luxuriant corn in the blade was for the king's use, and after this the second springing grew up to the harvest. It may possibly intimate, that though the kings of Israel did as it were mow the luxuriant riches, yet they grew again; but when Assyrian locusts come all is devoured.

2 And it came to pass, *that* when they had made an end of eating the grass of the land, then I said, O Lord GOD, forgive, I beseech thee: [a] ‖by whom shall Jacob arise? for he *is* small.

a Is. 51. 19. ver. 5.
‖ Or, *who of (or, for,) Jacob shall stand?*

Either visionally, the whole scheme represented both locusts, grass, herbs, and corn, and it represented the grass as almost all eaten up, and the locusts ready to fall upon the corn, and all that remained. Or else really, it was acted, and the grass was devoured. Though the former seems most likely, I leave it to every one's judgment. Amos interceded by prayer for this people in this case; and he sueth for mercy, entreats for pardon, hereby justifying God's proceedings; and though this people for whom he prays is insensible of their condition, yet the prophet is deeply affected with it, and deprecates the displeasure of God, and implores his mercy; to God belongs forgiveness, to them nothing but shame. *By whom shall Jacob arise?* how shall any of Jacob escape? or if thou, O God of Jacob, dost cast him down, who will or can lift him up? he must needs perish if thou be still angry and show not pity. *For he is small*; weak in strength, few in number, not able to resist his enemies the Assyrians.

3 [b] The LORD repented for this: It shall not be, saith the LORD.

b Deut. 32. 36. ver. 6. Jonah 3. 10. Jam. 5. 16.

The Lord repented; this, spoke after the manner of man, is to be understood as becomes the immutability and omniscience of God; what a man when he repenteth doth, desisting from the thing, so God, desisting or suspending his own act, doth tell us he repenteth. *It shall not be*: this explains the former; that sore famine like to be caused by these locusts came not, Amos prevailed by prayer, and the judgment was diverted.

4 ¶ Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and, behold, the Lord GOD called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part.

Thus hath the Lord God showed, in vision or hieroglyphic: see ver. 1. *And, behold*: see ver. 1. *Called to contend by fire*; declared he would judge as by fire: literally, say some, God would from heaven by fire punish. Others say metaphorically, by drought which should scorch up all fruits of the earth, and dry up fountains and rivers. Or else by very sore, wasting, and irresistible judgments, that like fire should consume all, hereby denoting the Assyrian rage. *It devoured*; eat up, i. e. visionally, or in the emblem. *The great deep*; not literally, but as the other, ver. 2, in hieroglyphic; so it appeared to Amos. *And did eat up a part* of the land too; it seemed to seize on the earth: now this in vision awakens the prophet, as before, to pray earnestly.

5 Then said I, O Lord GOD, cease, I beseech thee: [c] by whom shall Jacob arise? for he *is* small.

c ver. 2, 3

6 The LORD repented for this: This also shall not be, saith the Lord GOD.

These two verses are almost word for word the same with ver. 2, 3, which see.

7 ¶ Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall *made* by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand.

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Thus he showed me: and, behold: see ver. 1. *The Lord;* the great God, who had long tried Israel, and often spared. *Stood upon a wall;* possibly it may denote his fixed purpose now to proceed to demolish this state. *Made by a plumbline;* strongly, regularly, and beautifully built, as art could build it. *With a plumbline in his hand;* ready, as an artist, to take the measures of this wall, to discover all the defects of it, and how much it was varied from what it was at first built. This shall be the last measuring it, and on this measuring, whatever is faulty shall be pulled down, though to the very foundation. This was visionally represented to the prophet.

8 And the LORD said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, [d]I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: [e]I will not again pass by them any more:

d See 2 Kin. 21. 13. Is. 28. 17. & 34. 11. Lam. 2. 8.
e ch. 8. 2. Mic. 7. 18.

The Lord, who did before show Amos the emblem in landscape or vision. *What seest thou?* this God asketh not as if he were ignorant what Amos saw, or as if he would be informed whether he saw aright, but it is introductory to what follows. *A plumbline;* or perpendicular, to which masons first build and frame walls of houses, and by which they do at any time measure them, whether they stand upright, or any way belly out and decline. *I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel;* I will exactly measure my people Israel, the whole fabric of the ten kingdoms. I will take a particular view of all, and how far it is right, or how far it is out of order. *I will not again pass by them any more;* I will no more forbear, but I will pull down all that is faulty, though I pull up the very foundations; and this is confirmed in what followeth.

9 [f]And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and [g]I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

f Beersheba, Gen. 26. 23. & 46. 1. ch. 5. 5. & 8. 14.
g Fulfilled, 2 Kings 15. 10.

The high places; the temples on high mountains built to idols, or for the worship of God, though he forbade them. *Of Isaac:* the father is here named, but his children are intended, all the seed of Isaac. I cannot, though some do, think the prophet alludes to Isaac's being offered upon a high mountain. *Shall be desolate;* shall be razed to the foundation, or left to moulder and fall with length of time, and assaults of storms and weather. *The sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste:* this explains the former, and, speaking after the custom of those times, the prophet calls the idol temples sanctuaries, whether in Dan and Beth-el or elsewhere. *I will rise;* God will, but not immediately, rise up: he will stir up some or other to do what he threatens. *Against the house of Jeroboam;* in the days of Zachariah, (son of Jeroboam,) murdered by Shallum. *With the sword,* first of a conspirator, Shallum, next of civil war.

10 ¶ Then Amaziah [h]the priest of Beth-el sent to [i]Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words.

h 1 Kings 12. 32.
i 2 Kings 14. 23.

Then; after that Amos had expressly and peremptorily foretold the ruin of idolatry and kingdom of Israel for their sins. *Amaziah:* it appears not what family he was of, nor is it much material we should know; it is probable he might be of some mean family, or possibly an apostate priest of the tribe of Levi. *The priest,* by way of eminency; no common priest, but the chief priest. *Of Beth-el;* to the calf at Beth-el; and it is like he was prefect or governor for the king in the civil affairs of that city and country. *Sent;* gave information by messengers sent. *To Jeroboam;* the second of that name, of Jehu's race, the third from Jehu. *King of Israel;* at that time living, and on the throne of Israel. *Saying, Amos hath conspired against thee:* he accused the prophet of high treason, and conspiring to raise war against his sovereign. *In the midst of the house of Israel;* openly and publicly, or hath endeavoured to raise all Israel into sedition or rebellion against their own king. *The land is not able to bear all his words:* either thus, If what he threateneth should come to pass, it will be ruin and utter desolation to all: or thus, The people are incensed so much against this prophet for his harsh predictions, that he must be made an example to quiet and content them. What he saith will come, if it doth come, will certainly ruin all, high and low, and a well-ordered government may not bear such a prophet. Thus far the general accusation.

11 For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land.

Thus Amos saith; so Amaziah falsely reports the prophet. *Jeroboam shall die by the sword:* he no where said so, nor did he insinuate so much, but spake of his house distinguished from his person, as ver. 9. *Israel shall surely be led away captive:* this indeed he foretold, but did no more contribute to it, or contrive it, than the physician doth who foretells the death of an uncounsellable patient, sick of a mortal disease. *Out of their own land:* this is added to signify the greatness of the captivity.

12 Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there:

Also Amaziah said unto Amos: it is probable enough that this arch-priest of Beth-el did send this advice, or gave it to the prophet so soon as he had accused the prophet to Jeroboam; and perhaps he thus intended to insinuate a great good-will towards the prophet, presuming the prophet knew nothing that Amaziah had accused him. *O thou seer:* whether this be spoken in scorn, or giving him the respect due to a prophet, I determine not. *Flee thee away into the land of Judah;* be advised, stay not here, but with all speed flee out of the kingdom, get thee into Judah whence thou camest, there thou mayst be safe. *There eat bread:* thou wilt never get thy bread here by this kind of preaching; in Judah it is likely thou mayst get thy livelihood by thy prophetic art; thither go, *and prophesy there;* there thou mayst freely declaim against our vices, and predict our fall, which we do as little as thou dost much believe.

13 But [k]prophesy not again any more at Beth-el: [l]for it *is* the king's ‖ chapel, and it *is* the † king's court.

k ch. 2. 12. l 1 Kings 12. 32. & 13. 1.
‖ Or, *sanctuary.*
† Heb. *house of the kingdom.*

Prophesy not again any more at Beth-el; as a friend I advise thou do not, and as having authority from the king I do declare thou shalt not, prophesy in Beth-el. *For it is the king's chapel,* where I am by the king's authority empowered to give licence, or impose silence, and to see that none but fit persons preach before the king, who doth there pay his devotions. *And it is the king's court,* where all his nobles attend him, and where no ordinary, obscure, and uncourtly doctor may appear: besides, such preaching so near to the king's court will be speedily punished; therefore, as thou lovest thyself, Amos, follow my advice, and let the king's court and this country hear no more of thee.

14 ¶ Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I *was* no prophet, neither *was* I [m]a prophet's son; [n]but I *was* an herdman, and a gatherer of ‖ sycomore fruit:

m 1 Kings 20. 35. 2 Kings 2. 5. & 4. 38. & 6. 1.
n ch. 1. 1. Zech. 13. 5.
‖ Or, *wild figs.*

Then answered Amos: so soon as this false accuser had under the vizard of friendship given advice, and withal intimated his resolution to use his authority to make Amos desist if he did not do it voluntarily, Amos gives him answer readily, boldly, and yet smoothly, and outshoots the court pontiff in his own bow. *Said to Amaziah;* not fearing his person or his power. *I was no prophet;* not originally, or by succession, or by study, or by any human designation and preparation, as many have been; *neither was I a prophet's son;* my father was no prophet, nor was I bred up in the school of the prophets, such as 2 Kings ii. 3, 5, 7, 15; iv. 38; vi. 1. Though you call me seer, whether ironically or seriously, I matter not, but assure you I am not such by art, or trade, or for a livelihood. *But I was an herdman;* by breeding, choice, and occupation I was and still am a herdman, and have my concerns in

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that mystery in or near Tekoa in Judah, on which I can live; though I prophesy without stipend or salary, I needed not to run into the prophet's work for my bread. *And a gatherer of sycomore fruit:* the tree and fruit is known by one name; Palestine abounded with both; and the fruit was sweet, not large, yet good for food for man or cattle, as some fruits are with us; on these I could still, as I formerly did, live, and be content.

† Heb. *from behind.*

15 And the LORD took me †as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.

The Lord, the great and jealous God, whom you oppose by idols, *took me;* by an extraordinary power of his Spirit took me off from my old, mean, and private employment and recess, and I could not withstand him. *As I followed the flock;* a description of a shepherd's employment. *The Lord said unto me;* commanded, whether by voice from heaven, or extraordinary irradiation of his mind, or impulse of the Divine prophetic Spirit, comes all to one, his authority is Divine. *Go* out of Judah. *Prophesy;* as a prophet instruct, threaten, promise, invite, and foretell. *My people Israel;* the ten tribes, which with like civility are called by Amos God's people as he is called *seer.*

16 ¶ Now therefore hear thou the word of the LORD: Thou sayest, Prophesy not

o Ezek. 21. 2. Mic. 2. 6.

against Israel, and °drop not *thy word* against the house of Isaac.

Now; when forbidden, Amos, undaunted, prophesieth to him that forbade him. *Hear thou,* Amaziah, who hast accused, yet pretendest to wish and advise my safety, *the word of the Lord,* who sent me, whom thou contradictest; from him I have somewhat to say to thee, and of much concern also to thee. *Thou sayest,* usest thy power to silence me, *Prophesy not against Israel;* preach not sedition, or what tends to it, under pretence that God speaks it against Israel: if thou canst speak good of us, and to us, this may be good for thee; but if thou wilt speak sad news against us, it will not be believed; it may hurt thee, it will do no good to others. *Drop not;* distil not: see Ezek. xxi. 2; Micah ii. 6. *Against the house of Isaac;* the posterity of Isaac: this explains the former, and is an hendiadis, or elegant ingemination.

p See Jer. 28. 12. & 29. 21, 25, 31, 32. q Is. 13. 16. Lam. 5. 11. Hos. 4. 13. Zech. 14. 2.

17 PTherefore thus saith the LORD; qThy wife shall be an harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou shalt die in a polluted land: and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land.

Therefore; because thou hast so directly and strenuously opposed the Lord. *Thy wife shall be an harlot,* which to a man of sense is a great affliction. *An harlot;* a common whore. *In the city;* a notorious one, that plays not the adulteress in secret at home, but so that all take notice of it, and brand her for it. *Thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword;* which in all likelihood doth intimate their slaughter by Shallum when he slew Zachariah, Jeroboam's son, with whom no doubt but his friends fell, among which this family was; or else by the sword of Menahem, who slew Shallum. *Thy land shall be divided by line;* thy estate, which no doubt was large, shall be shared among the soldiers and courtiers of Menahem. *And thou shalt die;* thy dishonour by a lewd wife, thy childless solitariness, and thy poverty, shall come on thee ere thou die; it is probable he fled to save his life. *In a polluted land;* among the heathen, where thou mayst be sure my word was true. *Israel,* the ten tribes, *shall surely go into captivity forth of his land:* see ver. 11.

CHAP. VIII.

By a basket of summer fruit is showed the near approach of Israel's end, 1—3. *Their oppression of the poor shall cause their joy to be turned into mourning,* 4—10. *A famine of God's word threatened,* 11—14.

THUS hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and behold a basket of summer fruit.

Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me: and behold: see chap. vii. 1, 4, 7. *A basket;* a hook, say some, with which the gatherer might either pull down the bough, or pull off the ripe fruit; or a basket into which the ripe fruit gathered was put to be carried away. *Summer fruit;* not the early ripe fruit, but that which, as it needed, so had the whole summer's heat to ripen it, and was gathered in at the end of the summer.

2 And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, a The end is come upon my people of Israel; b I will not again pass by them any more.

a Ezek. 7. 2. b ch. 7. 8.

Amos, what seest thou? the like question you have chap. vii. 8, which see. *A basket of summer fruit:* see ver. 1. *Then said the Lord unto me:* the meaning of this hieroglyphic not being very plain in itself, the Lord doth here explain it in the following words. *The end* of God's patience towards Israel, of their peace, growth, and glory; the end of their ripening, they are now as fruit fully ripe, in the end of the year, fit to be gathered. *My people Israel;* so they were once, so they boast themselves, so the nations about them account Israel to be the people of God. *I will not again pass by them any more:* see chap. vii. 8. God had with admirable patience spared and tried, but now he will with just severity punish, neither pardon nor spare.

3 And c the songs of the temple †shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord GOD: *there shall be* many dead bodies in every place; d they shall cast *them* forth †with silence.

c ch. 5. 23. † Heb. *shall howl.* d ch. 6. 9, 10. † Heb. *be silent.*

The songs; which were composed by choicest wits, and set to sweetest tunes, and chanted out by most skilful singers to the best musical instruments. *Of the temple;* either to take in Judah, and foretell the desolation of their temple; or else, by an irony, the idol temples; or else of the palace, as the word in the Hebrew. All court mirth and jollity, balls and music entertainments. *Shall be howlings,* Heb. *shall howl;* be turned into the hideous out cries of undone and despairing men. *In that day;* when God shall execute his judgments threatened, as he did begin on the death of Jeroboam, and continued that day of vengeance till Shalmaneser finished the work in the ruin of Samaria and its captivity. *Saith the Lord God:* this is added to assure Israel that what Amos did foretell should be accomplished, for God spake it. *There shall be many dead bodies;* so there were when Shallum slew Zachariah, so there were when Menahem slew Shallum, when he came with his army against Samaria, when he ripped up the women with child in Tiphsah, 2 Kings xv. 16, and when other usurpers pressed through blood and treason to the crown; beside the howlings when Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser cruelly wasted all. *In every place;* in cities, towns, and country, in palaces and temples too, in all which the bloody effects of enemies' swords, the wastes of famine and pestilence, should be seen. *They,* who howl, who see this, *shall cast them forth with silence;* either shall secretly bury them, so some, or, to rid themselves of that trouble, shall cast them out wherever they can, with silence, that none may observe them; so great calamitous mortality, that the living suffice not to bury the dead; or so great cruelty by the enemy used against them, that they dare not bury them, or if they do, it must be undiscerned: see chap. vi. 10.

4 ¶ Hear this, O ye that e swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail,

e Ps. 14. 4. Prov. 30. 14.

Though the prophet had several times told them what were the sins for which God would thus punish Israel, yet on a repeated threat he repeateth the rehearsal of the sins which draw down these judgments on their heads. *Hear this,* attend, and consider it, *O ye that swallow up,* greedily and cruelly devour, that do, like the greater fish, swallow up the lesser fry: in this one word the prophet includeth all the methods of their cruel oppression, wasting the poor. *The needy;* such as were objects of your mercy, had you

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been just and honest, as well as rich and great. *Even to make the poor of the land to fail;* either to root them out, or to enslave them, while their necessities force them to sell themselves for bread.

‖ Or, *month.* † Neh. 13. 15, 16. + Heb. *open.* ‡ Mic. 6. 10, 11. + Heb. *perverting the balances of deceit.* Hos. 12. 7.

5 Saying, When will the ‖new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and ‡the sabbath, that we may †set forth wheat, §making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and †falsifying the balances by deceit?

When will the new moon be gone? ye that could wish there were nothing to interrupt your marketing, your irreligious impatience, and your eagerness after the world, look on solemn times of Divine worship as very burdensome; such was the first day of every month, and the weekly sabbath. *That we may sell corn:* no servile work might be done on new moons, no markets kept, or corn brought forth publicly to be sold. *And the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?* they were also bound very religiously to observe the sabbath, and on that day they might not buy or sell; now they are weary of the sabbath, as of the new moon, and on the same account wish it over: here was irreligious gaping after gain. *Making the ephah small;* the ephah was a measure for dry things, and contained about half a bushel and one pottle English measure. Now these covetous corn-merchants measured the corn they sold by an ephah that was too little, the poor buyer had not his due. *And the shekel great:* they weighed the money which they received, and these rich men had no more pity and justice, than to make their shekel weight greater than the standard; so the poor were twice oppressed in the same way, had less than was their right, and paid more than they ought to pay; and thus they undid the poor, and ate him up. *And falsifying the balances by deceit;* deceitfully pervert the balances, that the money or shekel weighed, though of full weight, yet appeared too light on the balance, and they who paid it were forced to add more silver to it.

h ch. 2. 6.

6 That we may buy the poor for [h]silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; *yea,* and sell the refuse of the wheat?

That we may buy the poor: either it speaks the aim of these men in oppressing the poor thus, that they might at last buy their persons for servants and drudges, or else it speaks the reason why they would have new moons and sabbaths over, that they might to market to buy the poor. *For silver,* i. e. a little silver, at under value, as chap. ii. 6. *The needy for a pair of shoes:* this explains the former, and shows us that these cruel oppressors lay in wait for the needy to buy them for a very trifle; when these poor owed but for a very little and cheap commodity, as suppose a pair of shoes, these merciless men would take the advantage against them, and make them sell themselves to pay the debt. All which practices are most directly against the law of God. *Sell the refuse;* that which is fitter for hogs to mouth, or for horses to eat, the poor must either buy at dear rate or starve; and this another kind of oppression, corrupted wares at excessive rates, sold to those that were necessitous.

i ch. 6. 8.

k Hos. 5. 13. & 9. 9.

7 The LORD hath sworn by [i]the excellency of Jacob, Surely [k]I will never forget any of their works.

The Lord; who changeth not, whose words and purposes are immutably true and stedfast, who hath often told you, that unless you repent he will punish for your sins, now he *hath sworn* it, and sends you word by me, that he hath in most solemn and irrevocable manner determined, published, and expressly declared that he will visit all your sins upon you. *By the excellency of Jacob;* by himself, for God cannot swear by any greater, and he is called *the excellency of Jacob,* Psal. xlvii. 4. *Surely,* Heb. *If;* if I am a God, I will remember and punish. *I will never forget,* or let pass unpunished; I will never remit the punishment by an act of pardon, nor ever omit to punish by an act of forgetfulness. *Any of their works;* not one of all these their abominable injustices and irreligion, not one of these cruelties.

l Hos. 4. 3.

8 [l]Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, [m]as *by* the flood of Egypt.

m ch. 9. 5.

Shall not the land tremble? either literally, are not such sins and judgments enough to shake the very foundations of the earth? Or, metonymically, the land for the people of it, as after in the verse, they that dwell therein. *For this;* this that you have done, O house of Israel, in sinning, and this that God will do in punishing, enough to melt the earth, as Psal. xlvi. 6. *And every one mourn;* since every one hath sinned too much, and every one shall suffer in this approaching calamity, every one at the news may well mourn and lament; *that dwelleth therein;* in the land of Israel. *It shall rise up wholly as a flood;* or, by an interrogation, shall it not? i. e. shall not the judgment, the invading troops of Assyria, the displeasure of God, rise and grow as a mighty, wasting flood? or else thus, the whole land shall rise up; soaked in these judgments, it shall seem to swell and grow greater, ready, like an hydropic, to burst asunder: or else it is an hypallage, the land shall rise up, i. e. the flood shall rise over the land; or, which I rather incline to, the whole judgment shall rise as a flood. *It shall be cast out;* the land, the state, people, and what they have, shall be, as in a shipwreck, or mighty flood which breaks all down before it, tossed in the surges and waves; *and drowned as by the flood of Egypt;* and at last, by the continuance of this tempest, drowned all, as the overflowing of Nilus doth drown all the plains of Egypt.

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n Job 5. 14. Is. 13. 10. & 59. 9, 10. Jer. 15. 9. Micah 3. 6.

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, [n]that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:

It shall come to pass, most certainly it will be, *in that day,* when God begins to execute these his just and severe judgments on the ten tribes. *I will cause;* the great, just, holy, and terrible God, who is provoked by these sins, and hath denounced these judgments, my hand shall be evident in it. *The sun;* literally, say some, but erroneously; by *sun* I understand rather the settled state of their prosperity under their present government in the house of Jehu; or it may refer particularly to their king and court, which Jeroboam at his death left like the sun at noon in the height of their glory, as all know who know the history of those times. *To go down at noon;* so Israel's sun did as at noon set under the dark cloud of home-bred conspiracies and civil wars by Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea, till the midnight darkness drew on by Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser. *I will darken;* bring a thick cloud of troubles and afflictions. *The earth;* the common people, the whole body of the nation; so the sun speaks the royalty, nobility, and great ones of this kingdom, by an allusion well known in Scripture, and the earth speaks the common sort of people; and all are here threatened. *In the clear day;* when they did think (as in Jeroboam's time) all was safe, sure, and well settled, far from the night of sorrow and trouble, then will God bring all this he threateneth upon them.

o Tobit 2. 6.

p Is. 15. 2, 3. Jer. 48. 37. Ezek. 7. 18. & 27. 31.

q Jer. 6. 26. Zech. 12. 10.

10 [o]And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; [p]and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; [q]and I will make it as the mourning of an only *son,* and the end thereof as a bitter day.

I will turn your feasts, religious, though idolatrous in your temples, see ver. 3, and your ordinary civil feasts in your palaces, *into mourning:* see ver. 3. *And all your songs into lamentation:* this ingemination doth assure the thing, and forebode the sadness of their state. *I will bring up sackcloth;* as all inwardly shall be sadness, so all that appears outwardly shall speak their sorrow and sadness. *Upon all loins;* all sorts of persons should put on this mourning, and gird it close to their loins that it might afflict them the more, a custom very general in those times and places. *Baldness upon every head;* partly pulling off the hair of the head through anguish, or shaving the head

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and beard in sign of greatest sadness, as the Eastern people did: see Micah i. 16. *As the mourning of an only son:* this is accounted the greatest mourning, and seems proverbially to express such mourning, Jer. vi. 26; Zech. xii. 10, which see; so God will afflict this people with greatest sorrows, and fill them with greatest mourning. *The end;* you may hope these troubles will be over, and come to an end, but that will be little to your comfort; *a bitter day*, which you shall wish you had never seen, shall succeed your dark night, as indeed it doth to this day.

11 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but [r] of hearing the words of the LORD:

[r] 1 Sam. 3. 1. Ps. 74. 9. Ezek. 7. 26.

Behold; note well what now I shall declare to you, and consider it. *The days come, saith the Lord God;* surely, speedily, and according to the threats of God. *I will send a famine in the land;* by a signal hand of Divine displeasure it shall appear to be from God, that such a famine cometh upon them of Israel. *Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water:* a spiritual famine joined with a corporal famine; their bodies were pined with famine, destitute of bread and water; and this God sent too, but the famine of the soul is worse and more grievous. *But of hearing the words;* either the written word which Israel had among them till their captivity, but afterwards should ever want both it and those who should interpret it to them, or else the word of prophecy; now they despise it, though they have it, but then they shall desire it, and have it not. They shall hunt after prophets, to tell them when their troubles shall end, though now they hate prophets who warn them, that their troubles might not begin: now Israel despiseth a prophet's counsel, then they shall hunt for it, but not have a prophet to give them counsel, as Psal. lxxiv. 9.

12 And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find *it*.

They shall wander from sea to sea; search all places for a prophet or a preacher from the Syrian or Midland Sea to that of Tiberias, to the Dead Sea, and to the Red Sea. *From the north even to the east;* that mountainous tract whither persecuted Elijah fled, and perhaps other prophets in like circumstances retired; proverbially, they shall search all corners for a prophet. *They shall run to and fro;* shall diligently and speedily, on every report that a prophet is, on hearsays, in such or such a place, hasten thither, as Ahab in his search for Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. 10. *To seek the word of the Lord;* hoping to hear some good news of an end of their miseries from God by a prophet. *And shall not find it;* they persecuted and slew such as foretold the beginning of this misery, and now it is come they shall neither hear the news nor see the hopes of an end. God did tell them it would be utter ruin, and no prophet of God can tell them any better news.

13 In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.

It is probable these in their strength and vigour would seek earnestly to know what end they might expect, whether they should outlive this famine of the word, and the famine of bread and water, but both should faint with thirst and hunger; neither finding the word of the Lord for their comfort, they should faint with despair, nor finding bread and water, should faint and die with weakness: so Israel should be extinguished.

[s] Hos. 4. 15. [t] Deut. 9. 21. [+] Heb. *way:* See Acts 9. 2. & 18. 25. & 19. 9, 23. & 24. 14. [u] ch. 5. 5.

14 They that [s] swear by [t] the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The [+] manner [u] of Beer-sheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

They that swear by; who now do, as formerly they have done, trust in, sacrifice to, and swear by; who are obstinate idolaters, and trust to those lies. *The sin*, that which was the sin, the occasion of the sin, *of Samaria*, the calves at Dan and Beth-el. *And say*, think, profess, and swear too, *Thy god, O Dan, liveth;* the idol at Dan is the true and living God. *The manner of*, the idols at, *Beer-sheba*, to which the zealous, mad, and bigoted idolaters in Israel made their pilgrimages. *They shall fall*, be consumed by famine, sword, and captivity, *and never rise up again;* never return out of captivity, nor recover of this consumption.

CHAP. IX.

The certainty of Israel's desolation, 1—10. *The restoring of the tabernacle of David, and of the captivity of Israel*, 11—15.

I SAW the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, Smite the ‖ lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and ‖ [a] cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: [b] he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered.

‖ Or, *chapiter, or, knop.* ‖ Or, *wound them.* [a] Ps. 68. 21. Hab. 3. 13. [b] ch. 2. 14.

I saw: as before, chap. vii. 1, 4, 7; viii. 1; so here the prophet hath a fifth vision. *The Lord;* the great, glorious, just, and holy God, in some visible tokens of his majesty. *Standing;* either ready to execute sentence, or ready to depart, Ezek. ix. 3; x. 1, 4; indeed here he will do both, execute his own sentence, and depart from this people. *Upon the altar* of burnt-offering before the temple at Jerusalem: here the scene is laid, this altar and temple Israel had forsaken, and set up others against it; and here God in his jealousy appears prepared to take vengeance: possibly it may intimate his future departure from Judah too. There Ezekiel, chap. ix. 2, saw the slaughtermen stand. *He said*, commanded, *Smite the lintel of the door*, or the chapiter, knop, ornament that was upon the lintel of the door, which is supposed to be of the gate of the temple, or possibly the door of the gate that led into the priests' courts; and though the party that smites be not named, it is likely it was an angel; or possibly the prophet seemed to do it, for this is to do in vision. *That the posts may shake;* which were the strength and beauty of the gate. *And cut*, wound deep, *them*, the people which were visionally represented as standing in the court of the temple, *in the head*, that it may more fully signify the destroying of the chief of the heads of this sinful people. *All;* spare not one of these. *I will slay the last;* God will slay by the enemies' sword the meanest of them, or the last, i. e. the posterity of them. *He that fleeth of them shall not flee away*, or get out of danger. *He that escapeth*, for the present, out of battle or besieged city, *shall not be delivered;* shall yet at last fall into the enemies' hand, or by his sword.

2 [c] Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; [d] though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:

[c] Ps. 139. 8, &c. [d] Job 20. 6. Jer. 51. 53. Obad. 4.

When David would describe the omnipresence of God, Psal. cxxxix. 7—12, he doth it most elegantly in almost the same manner as our inspired herdman here doth. Wherever these seek to hide themselves from the pursuing vengeance, they shall be found; he is with them, from whom they hide. *Though they dig into hell;* the deepest recesses, the heart and centre of the earth or the grave; or literally, for so we may lay the supposition, were it possible to be done, to hide in the centre of the earth, or the depth of hell. *Thence shall mine hand take them;* for hell is naked to God, and the grave did not hide some of these sinners; when dead and buried, the rage of famine, or of the enemy, might dig some out of their graves. *Though they climb up to heaven;* could they fly up to heaven, they would be out of the reach of men; *thence will I bring them down;* but there they would meet an offended God, and he would cast them down.

3 And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight

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in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them:

Though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel; one high woody mountain, shelter and hiding-place for wild beasts, by a figure put for all the rest; if they think to be safe where wild beasts find a refuge, they are deceived, *I will search and take them out thence;* I will, saith God, hunt them out, and take them. *Though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea:* this is an irony, like brutish atheists, they think to hide themselves in the bottom of the sea. *Thence will I command the serpent,* crocodile or shark, some sea monster, *and he shall bite them;* devour them. Miserable Israel, to whom nor sea, nor mountains, nor heaven, nor hell will afford a hiding-place!

4 And though they go into captivity
[e] Lev. 26.33. Deut. 28. 65. Ezek. 5. 12. before their enemies, [e]thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them:
[f] Lev. 17. 10. Jer. 44. 11. and [f]I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good.

Though they go into captivity; those excluded from safety every where else may perhaps hope that yet the enemy may spare. Captives are the slaves, the possession of their conquering enemies; these make profit of them by selling them to others, or employing them in labour and service. *Before their enemies:* this seems to intimate some voluntariness in these people going before the conqueror, whom they hope hereby to mollify and sweeten, that he may use them well; yet this hope shall fail them too. *Thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them:* the enemy should, either out of cruel humour and hatred against them, or on any slight occasion and disgust, slay them as if they had commission from me so to do: neither propriety in them, nor service by them, nor profit in the sale of these poor and miserable captives, should be safety to them, they should be accounted as sheep for the slaughter. *I will set mine eyes upon them;* I will perpetually watch over them, and then be sure no opportunity will be let slip. *For evil,* to afflict and punish them, *and not for good,* for their benefit. Thus was the course of God's providence against them from the days Amos aimeth at unto this very day, and God hitherto hath, and still doth, make good his threat against this idolatrous, cruel, oppressing people.

5 And the Lord GOD of hosts *is* he
[g] Mic. 1. 4. that toucheth the land, and it shall [g]melt,
[h] ch. 8. 8. [h]and all that dwell therein shall mourn: and it shall rise up wholly like a flood; and shall be drowned, as *by* the flood of Egypt.

The prophet having foretold such sad, universal desolations, miseries beyond what this secure people could think possible, and such as the atheists among them censured, and derided as impossibilities, as ver. 10; now in this and the following verses to the 10th the prophet confirms his word, and the certainty of these future judgments.

The Lord; Adonai, the sovereign Lord. *God;* Jehovah, who speaks and doth, and need no more than will to work and accomplish; so he made, sustaineth, and disposeth of all. *Of hosts;* all the creatures are his army, and do what he commands them to do against his enemies. *Is he that toucheth:* a light touch of his hand, he needs not as man to take great pains to break and dissolve hard metals, a touch of his finger will do this. *The land;* either the inhabitants, or rather the land itself in which they dwelt, the land of Canaan; or more likely the whole earth, how firm and hard soever it seem to be. *And it shall melt,* as snow before the sun in its hottest influences, or as wax before a mighty fire. He who can do this, can do all that I have denounced against you, O Israel. The rest of the verse, see chap. viii. 8.

‖ Or, *spheres.* † Heb. *ascensions.* [i] Ps. 104. 3, 13 ‖ Or, *bundle.* [k] ch. 5. 8. [l] ch. 4. 13.

6 *It is* he that buildeth his ‖†[i]stories in the heaven, and hath founded his ‖troop in the earth; he that [k]calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: [l]The LORD *is* his name.

It is he that buildeth his stories in the heaven; he that threatens and will execute his just severities on you is that mighty, glorious King, whose palace inconceivably surpasseth all the royal palaces of the mightiest monarchs on earth; his chambers, as Psal. civ. 3, are in the heavens: he by a word of his mouth prepared and garnished those rooms of state, where is glory that ravisheth the mighty angels; how easily can he demolish and ruin your cells, and with the breath of his nostrils, by one command, blow away and scatter your little dust heaps, which you call cities, fortresses, and impregnable munitions! *And hath founded his troop in the earth;* he laid the foundations of this lower world, and can as easily shake or overturn as at first he laid them. All that is below the royal pavilions of God is but as a little bundle which he can soon untie and scatter about, nor are the things tied up of such worth and value that he should lose by doing it; how much more easy is it for him to destroy (as he hath spoken) your land and cities, which are a very small thing compared with the whole world, and this as a point compared with the unmeasurable greatness of the heavens! You set a value on yourselves, and are proud, and think that God will not lose such jewels; as if a king in his royalty should fear to lose a pin's head, or one atom of dust that lieth on his footstool. *Calleth;* the easiest way a man can take to get any thing done; nothing so easy for man to do, as it is easy for God to drown a sinful nation or world: possibly God by this may mind them what seeming impossibility he did when he called for the waters of the sea to drown the old world, and would hereby make them see that he can now do the like. *For the waters of the sea;* either by wholesale in judgment to drown, or by retail by vapours in mercy to give rain. *And poureth them out,* in storms and violence, or in gentler showers, to punish or refresh. *Upon the face of the earth;* either a particular nation, or the whole world. *The Lord is his name;* eternal, unchangeable, almighty, and just: see chap. v. 8.

7 *Are* ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the [m]Philistines from [n]Caphtor, and the Syrians from [o]Kir?
[m] Jer. 47. 4. [n] Deut. 2. 23. Jer. 47. 4. [o] ch. 1. 5.

Are ye not, who glory in your descent from Abraham, and are in truth the natural descendants of Israel, and think very highly of yourselves on this account, slighting all other nations, and presuming that God neither will nor can, because of his covenant, destroy you, whatever prophets say, *as children of the Ethiopians?* not that remote nation beyond Egypt, but those of Arabia Petrea, a wild, thievish, and servile nation, such as now inhabit those parts; base, bloody, and thievish Arabs, hated and despised of all their neighbours, and so by the Israelites their neighbours accounted at that day. *Unto me;* I did make them as you, they are my creatures as you; wherein soever you excel them you owe it to me, who made you both as creatures, and have distinguished you by my free mercy and rich grace, giving most to you, of which you boast, and giving less to them, for which you despise them. *Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt?* and whereas you boast my kindness to you, bringing you out of Egypt, and thereupon conclude God cannot leave you whom he hath so redeemed; you argue amiss, for these things aggravate your sin, and render you less capable of hoping or obtaining mercy since you abuse such grace. Remember chap. iii. 2. You think I cannot, must not now root you out of your land, because I brought you out of Egypt, as if you were the only people that ever were brought out of bondage; but Moses tells you the Philistines were captivated by the Caphtorims, who dwelt in their land; yet the Philistines were restored, and you found them in the land when you came to possess it. Their expulsion you read Deut. ii. 23, though I remember no particular mention of their deliverance in any history, yet this hint is enough to assure us of the matter of fact. *And the Assyrians,* an ancient people, inhabiting a large country, and known by several distinct names. *from Kir;* conquered by some potent enemies, probably the ancient Assyrians, and sent away to Kir, a city or country of Media, yet delivered at last. Should these nations, as you do, argue

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themselves to be out of danger of Divine justice and severe punishments, because I had done this for them? Certainly you would not allow such argument in them, nor will I allow it in you.

p ver. 4.

8 Behold, [p]the eyes of the Lord God *are* upon the sinful kingdom, and I [q]will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD.

q Jer. 30. 11. & 31. 25, 36. Obad. 16, 17.

Behold; consider things better, and argue more like men of reason. *The eyes of the Lord God;* God of infinite purity and knowledge, whose nature hateth all sin, and whose office it is to punish sinners, his eyes behold all the children of men, they run to and fro, as 2 Chron. xvi. 9. *Are upon the sinful kingdom;* every sinful kingdom, and on the kingdom of the ten tribes as notoriously the sinning kingdom, as the Hebrew. *And I will destroy it from off the face of the earth;* and I will ruin any such kingdom for their sins, that it shall cease to be a kingdom on earth. *Saving that I will not utterly destroy;* and so would I do with the kingdom of Israel, but that I have by covenant with their fathers engaged to be their God for ever, which promise I will keep to a remnant of their seed for ever. *The house of Jacob;* the seed of Jacob, which God will not utterly extirpate, though he do extirpate other nations, Jer. xxx. 11. *Saith the Lord:* this is added to confirm the gracious word concerning the remnant which shall be spared.

9 For, lo, I will command, and I will † sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as *corn* is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least † grain fall upon the earth.

† Heb. *cause to move.*

† Heb. *stone.*

For, lo: as this confirms what the 8th verse promiseth, so it requireth a very diligent and full attention of us. *I will command,* or give a charge to all nations whither these exiled persons shall come, and they shall observe the charge, it shall as surely be done as it is spoken. *I will sift the house of Israel among all nations;* though Assyrians and other nations be the means and instruments, yet God's hand is principal; whilst they would toss and scatter Israel with violence, yet God will hold the sieve, and guide their hands, and set bounds to their violence. *Like as corn is sifted in a sieve,* by a skilful and careful husbandman, who designs to separate the chaff from the corn; to preserve this, to tread the other under foot. *Yet shall not the least grain;* though covered under much chaff, though tumbled and tossed with the greatest violence, and without any regard to it, yet the smallest and least regarded good grain shall not be lost or destroyed with that fire which consumeth the chaff. *Fall upon the earth,* i. e. perish, or be lost; so the phrase 1 Sam. xxvi. 20; 2 Sam. xiv. 11; 1 Kings i. 52. Here is a promise of preservation as great and wonderful, and as hardly comprehended, as was the threatened punishment.

10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, [r]which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

r ch. 6. 3.

All the sinners of my people, the great, notorious sinners, idolaters, oppressors, perverters of law and equity, cruel and inhuman judges and others, *shall die by the sword;* either at home in the wars, or abroad by barbarous men that captivate them; as ver. 4. *Which say;* in their hearts thinking or hoping, or in their words discoursing, the impossibility of what Amos did foretell. *The evil,* the sad, miserable, and desolating end, *shall not overtake nor prevent us;* as a pursuing enemy, we will flee from it: see ver. 1. It is far off, we shall die first, and be safe in the grave; a kingdom in its prosperity, and well settled, as this kingdom was in Jeroboam's time, cannot soon be brought to such confusion; we shall never see it. This savoured rank of their atheism, and these shall certainly fall and perish, and never rise.

s Acts 15. 16, 17.

11 ¶ [s]In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and † close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:

† Heb. *hedge,* or, *wall.*

This promise I nothing doubt hath a double aspect, both to the return out of captivity, and to the Messiah's kingdom, and each part is to be considered by us: if we would duly explain this and the following verse, let us look first to the letter and historical reference, and next to the mystical and spiritual sense of the words.

In that day; a very usual phrase in Scripture, whereby a time fixed and certain, yet unknown to us, is intended in the set time which God hath prefixed. *I will raise up;* lay the foundation and build up, reduce out of captivity and re-establish in their own land. *The tabernacle of David;* the house of David, and those that did adhere to David's family, which are here called a tabernacle, partly for that it never did after the captivity rise to a free and independent kingdom, and partly because he would distinguish the Jews from the apostate Israelites, who did wholly forsake David's house. *That is fallen;* by a revolt of ten tribes in twelve, whereby their state is low, and as fallen to the ground. *And close up the breaches,* which are in it by that long division, since Jeroboam the First's time, which breaches shall, upon the return out of captivity, be made up by the voluntary union of the remnant of the ten tribes which shall return with the two tribes out of the Babylonish captivity. *I will raise up his ruins;* disposing the minds of the kings of Persia to advance David's line to the government of the restored captives, and continuing it in the Supreme power till Messiah's coming; and by rebuilding Jerusalem, and the temple, and settling true religion amongst them. *And I will build it as in the days of old;* much what it was before the sack of the city and temple, and the carrying the people captive. All which, as far as they are temporal concerns, do suppose and did require a sound turning to God; as did the like promises made by other prophets. And how far soever they fell short of these promises, it was through unbelief and other sins, as Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi complain in their prophecies. Now as it refers to Messiah's kingdom, it is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles, as appears Acts xv. 16, 17; of which no more here, because our work is to give the literal sense of the text: who would see more may consult larger commentators on this place, and on Acts xv. 16, 17.

12 [t]That they may possess the remnant of [u]Edom, and of all the heathen, † which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.

t Obad. 19.
u Num. 24. 18.
† Heb. *upon whom my name is called.*

That they; literally and historically the Jews, or they of the two tribes, and with them such of the ten tribes as did unite to them, and returned to Jerusalem. *May possess,* both the lands of Edom, and some of the posterity of Edom; these as servants, the other as their propriety. *The remnant,* left by Nebuchadnezzar, or that fled out of his reach and lived privately where they could find a hiding-place till Israel's return. *Of Edom;* the posterity of Esau, wasted by Nebuchadnezzar, and ruined so that they never did recover to be a kingdom, but who remained of them did shelter themselves as retainers to other nations, and among these some did betake themselves to the Jews, and lived under them. Though formerly they had been desperate enemies to the Jews, Edomites, who cried, Rase, rase, Psal. cxxxvii. 7, shall now assist as servants in laying the foundations, and building Jerusalem. *All the heathen,* i. e. round about, as Moabites, Ammonites, &c., by usual phrase called *all the heathen. Which are called by my name:* these words either must refer to heathen and Edomites proselyted, or they are by a trajection laid here, but in construction are to be joined with the foregoing words thus, *That they which are called by my name may possess,* &c. *Saith the Lord;* this immutably confirms the promise. *That doeth this;* who saith and doth, who willeth and effecteth, whose command is almighty. That this is a prophecy of setting up the kingdom of the Messiah, and bringing in the Gentiles, is very certain, but appertains to the mystic sense, not to the literal, which is our work.

13 Behold, [w]the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that † soweth seed; [x]and the mountains shall drop ‖ sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.

w Lev. 26. 5.
† Heb. *draweth forth.*
x Joel 3. 18.
‖ Or, *new wine.*

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Here is another promise made literally for assurance of abundant plenty to the returned captives, and mystically, of abundant grace poured forth in gospel days. But of the letter and history. *Behold*, mark well, ye poor captived Jews, *the days come;* the time will certainly come, nay, it hasteth, and whoso lives to return shall see this word performed. *The ploughman*, who breaks up the ground, and prepares it for sowing, *shall overtake the reaper;* shall be ready to tread on the heels of the reaper, who shall have a harvest so large, that before he can gather it all in it shall be time to plough the ground and prepare it for the seed for next year's crop. So God will take away the reproach of famine (in Ezekiel's phrase) from the mountains of Israel. *And the treader of grapes him that soweth seed;* so great shall their vintage be, that ere the treaders of grapes can have finished their work, the seedsman shall be sowing his seed against next harvest season. *The mountains:* the Jews did plant the mountains and hills of Canaan with vines, Isa. v. 1, there were their vineyards. *Shall drop sweet wine;* the vineyards shall be so fruitful, and new wine so plentiful, as if it did, like trickling streams, run down from the mountains; *and all the hills shall melt;* or as if whole hills were melted into such liquors. See Joel iii. 18. It is a lofty strain, and very elegantly expresseth the abundance of outward blessings promised to this people here spoken of. If any will object, It appears not that ever it was so. I answer, It is certain the sins of the returned captives did in very great degrees prevent these blessings, which are here promised under a tacit condition, which they never did fulfil.

y Jer. 30. 3. 14 [y] And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and [z] they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit *them:* and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

z Is. 61. 4. & 65. 21. Ezek. 36. 33,—36.

What is contained in this verse is an express promise of a return to captive Israel, and it is an implicit stating of the time when those former promises, ver. 11—13, should be fulfilled.

I will bring again: Cyrus was the person who proclaimed liberty of return to captive Israel, but God stirred up his spirit to do this, and it was God's eminent work; he was seen in it, as Psal. cxxvi. 3, 4. *The captivity of my people of Israel;* of those Shalmaneser carried captive and those Nebuchadnezzar carried captive, both falling under the disposal of Cyrus by his conquest over Babylon; by which means Israel, the remnant of the ten tribes, as well as the two tribes, had leave to return. *They shall build the waste cities*, of Judah and of Israel too, as well as Jerusalem, many of which we meet with in the latter histories of the Jews and their wars. *Inhabit them;* so they did from the time of their return till the Roman captivity, and were not by the space of six hundred years pulled out of their habitation. *Shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof;* be blessed in the increase of them and enjoy it, freed from that curse, Deut. xxviii. 39. *Shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them;* these, planted for delight, should be blessed too; both vineyards and gardens should be fruitful, and they that planted them should dwell in their houses safely, and eat the fruit of them.

15 And I will plant them upon their land, and [a] they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.

a Is. 60. 21. Jer. 32. 41. Ezek. 34. 28. Joel 3. 20.

I will plant, or settle them, as trees that are well rooted, *upon their land*, by ancient gift, and by late restitution to it by the Lord. *They shall no more be pulled up* by the violence of their enemies; which promise is an implicit condition that they seek, and not forsake the Lord, and was on God's part with admirable constancy and patience to that sinful nation performed through six hundred years, perhaps the longest time of freedom from captivity they ever knew. *Which I have given*, of free gift, without their merit. *Saith the Lord thy God;* God, thy God and thy Lord, will do it for his covenant's sake, therefore surely and fully will he do it.

OBADIAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS short prophecy will not need any long prefatory argument. He concealeth his nation, family, and place of his birth and abode, which he would not have done had it much concerned us to know, or would it have added any thing material to the authority and efficacy of his word. Yet perhaps we should be thought too slight, if we did not tell you, that some thought him to be a proselyted Edomite, filled with the prophetic Spirit, that he might be sent to declare God's judgments against Edom; but this suggestion will no more prove him an Idumean, than it will prove Jonah or Nahum to be proselyted Assyrians; or Isaiah, Amos, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel to be of so many different countries, because they prophesied against so many different nations. Some others will have him the same that was great with Ahab, but greater with God, hiding and feeding his prophets by fifty in a cave. But this is too early for this prophet, as is noted in the annotations. And that he was captain of the band of fifty whom, on his request, Elijah spared; or that he was one of those sent by Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xvii. 7, to instruct the Jews, as is said by some; hath more against than can be said for it. But it is certain he was a prophet sent of God, and that his diligence and faithfulness answered his name, *Obadiah*, i. e. *the servant of the Lord*, whose message he delivered, though we are not certain when, in what king's reign, or what prophets he was contemporary with: some guess he was contemporary with Jeremiah, and they think the 37th and 39th chapters, besides Lam. iv. 21, afford arguments to prove it; but if they did not live in the same time, they preached the same things against Edom, which were in due time fulfilled, though we cannot precisely define the time. It is indisputable, that Edom's cruelty, perfidiousness, pride, and rapine against Jacob were the principal causes of this Divine anger against Edom, and yet it admits some dispute when it was Edom did so barbarously lay wait for, cut off, or deliver up the fleeing Jews, whether when Shishak spoiled Jerusalem, or when Nebuchadnezzar sacked it and led the citizens captives. I rather think it had been a constant course observed by Edom to run in with all that invaded Judea, whether Philistines, Syrians, Assyrians, or Chaldeans, who were cruel enough, but yet Edom was more cruel; for this cause our prophet both threatens punishments upon them, and warns them of their approaching ruin. Some think the prophet warns Edom that they should not do what is here specified; I think he threatens because they had done it. In brief, the accommodating the particulars of this prophecy to their particular times and persons concerned, as it requires some good diligence and skill, so it will ever leave room for modesty towards those that it is likely will differ from us in accommodating them. Edom, type of all the church's enemies, shall be destroyed, and Christ's kingdom shall be set up; as Obadiah foretells, the church believeth, and so shouldst thou, reader.

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The destruction of Edom, 1, 2, *for their pride*, 3—9, *and for their unnatural behaviour in Jacob's distress*, 10—16. *The salvation and victories of Jacob*, 17—21.

B. C. cir. 587. a Is. 21. 11. & 34. 5. Ezek. 25. 12, 13, 14. Joel 3. 19. Mal. 1. 3. b Jer. 49. 14, &c.

THE vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord God [a] concerning Edom; [b] We have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle.

The vision, which the prophet received immediately from the Lord; so prophets are called *seers*, 1 Sam. ix. 9; Amos vii. 12; and their prophecy is vision, Isa. i. 1; Joel ii. 28. *Of Obadiah:* who this was appears not on any certainty, or when he prophesied. That it was not Obadiah who hid and fed the prophets of the Lord in Ahab's time is evident, for that the prophet doth threaten Edom for their cruelty against Jerusalem in the day it was taken and sacked, which was three hundred and thirty or forty years after Ahab's time; he began to reign about A. M. 3025, and Jerusalem was sacked about 3363. His name speaks a servant or a worshipper of the Lord. *Thus saith the Lord God:* this includes his authority, the certainty of the things he speaks of *concerning Edom*, or against Edom; both people and country are so called from their progenitor or founder, Esau, called *Edom*, Gen. xxv. 30. This country is called *Idumea*, Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6; Ezek. xxxv. 15, which see; it was a part of Arabia Petrea. *We have heard;* other prophets, as I, have heard this news to tell to Edom, or to send to them, Isa. xi. 14; Jer. xxvii. 3; Joel iii. 19; Amos i. 12. *A rumour;* not an uncertain and vain report, but it comes from God by his prophets. *An ambassador*, a herald, or muster-master, who should gather forces together for this expedition, *is sent*, by the Lord first, and next by Nebuchadnezzar, who executed on Edom what is here foretold. God stirred up the spirit of Nebuchadnezzar to make war on Edom, which was (as well as other nations) given up to Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxvii. 3, 6. *Among the heathen*, or nations, both those that were confederate with or subject to Nebuchadnezzar, whom all nations served, Jer. xxvii. 6, 7. *Arise ye:* this is a summons to them from Nebuchadnezzar, that they send in their proportions of soldiers. *Let us rise up against her in battle:* this seems the voice of soldiers willing to and desirous of the war.

2 Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised.

Behold, ye Edomites, lay it to heart, and consider it well; be not secure amidst such dangers. *I have made thee small;* thou art a small people for number, thy land mountainous, rocky, and barren, and it is little that which is of it, situate very incommodiously for any trade, which makes people great and famous; a country fitted for moss-troopers, or banditti; and as such outlaws and robbers, thou art proud, and promisest great things to thyself. *Among the heathen*, in comparison with other nations. *Thou art greatly despised*, by those that do hear of thee, who know thy situation, government, manner of life, and what thy forces are, and how usually employed. Whatever these Edomites had been, now they are despised, and ere long should be more despicable, when, as Jer. xlix. 20, the least of Nebuchadnezzar's army should pull them out of their caves, houses, and strong holds.

3 ¶ The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts [c] of the rock, whose habitation *is* high; [d] that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?

c 2 Kings 14. 7. d Is. 14. 13, 14, 15. Rev. 18. 7.

The pride of thy heart: the Edomites were, as most mountaineers are, a rough, hardy, and daring people; necessitated sometimes to extraordinary adventures, and many times succeeded in attempts which others would not venture upon; hence they did swell in pride and confidence, and their hearts were bigger than their achievements, and they proud above measure. *Hath deceived thee;* magnifying thy strength above what really it is. *Thou*, people of Edom, *that dwellest in the clefts of the rock;* houses, fortresses, towns, and cities, built upon inaccessible rocks, which neither could be undermined nor scaled. Or, dwellest in dark, deep, and unsearchable caves amidst the rocks. *That saith in his heart;* who think with themselves, and are upon report of an invasion ready to say, *Who shall bring me down to the ground?* it is not possible for armies to approach to us, nor bring their engines to shake or batter our walls. *Who shall?* i. e. none can.

4 [e] Though thou exalt *thyself* as the eagle, and though thou [f] set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.

e Job 20. 6. Jer. 49. 16. & 51. 53. Amos 9. 2. f Hab. 2. 9.

Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle: Edom boasted of his strength from the height of the rocks he dwelt on, ver. 3, but here he is answered, if he could build his nest as the eagles, which build and fly much higher than any other bird, neither the height of the nest should save the young ones, nor the height of his flight save the old one. *Though thou set thy nest among the stars;* nay yet, in a more lofty strain, suppose you could lodge your brood among the stars for safety, and there fly above the reach of man, yet should you not be out of the reach of danger. *Thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord;* God who is in the heavens would throw thee down; when men could not marshal armies against thee, stars should fight in their courses against thee. Nothing can stand which God will cast down. See Jer. xlix. 16, 17.

5 If [g] thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, [h] would they not leave ‖ *some* grapes?

g Jer. 49. 9. h Deut. 24. 21. Is. 17. 6. & 24. 13. ‖ Or, gleanings.

In this verse the prophet doth in an abrupt manner of speech, mixed of wonder and doubt, express the strange havoc and desolation made in Edom, as if he had said, Who have been here? or in what posture wast thou found, O Edom! that such strange desolation is found in thee? *If thieves* by day had spoiled thee, they would not have thus stripped thee. *If robbers*, which practise their violences in the night, had been with thee, they would have left somewhat behind them. *How art thou cut off!* here is either a trajection, this placed here which must be read first in the verse, or an exclamation of one as in haste to know whence such unexpected events; or an insulting derision of that pride which boasted so much and performed so little in self-defence. *Would they not have stolen till they had enough?* thieves and robbers take till they have what is sufficient for them at present and leave the rest, but here is nothing left. *If the grape-gatherers came to thee, would they not leave some grapes?* if Edom be a vine, and gathered, some gleanings would be left by grape-gatherers; but, alas, here have been those that have cut up the vine! and is all thy confidence and boasting come to this?

6 How are *the things* of Esau searched out! *how* are his hidden things sought up!

Esau; the father of this people, and here put for his posterity. All that the Edomites had laid up in the most secret places, in unsearchable caves, and deep abysses of hollow rocks, how are all his treasures found out, seized, and brought forth a prey to greedy soldiers! How durst they adventure here?

7 All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee *even* to the border: † [i] the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, *and* prevailed against thee; † *they that eat* thy bread have laid a wound under thee: [k] *there is* none understanding ‖ in him.

† Heb. *the men of thy peace.* i Jer. 38. 22. † Heb. *the men of thy bread.* k Is. 19. 11, 12. ‖ Or, *of it.*

All the men of thy confederacy; they who by league had bound themselves to assist with men and arms, who had made an offensive and defensive league. *Have brought thee even to the border;* either have conducted in honourable manner through their country the ambassadors thou didst send, concluded first a confederacy, and next conveyed home the ambassadors who made it; or else have counselled thee to meet the war before it entereth thy country, and have marched as confederates with thee until thou wert come to the borders of thy country, as if they would there fight for thee against the enemy. *The men that were*

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at peace with thee: this is ingemination, or repeating of the same thing before mentioned, unless *men of thy peace* be men that did make peace, and accept the terms thou didst propose for thy advantage. *Have deceived thee;* proved treacherous, nay, designed to betray thee. *Prevailed against thee;* either thus their plot took, or else they turned to the enemy, and under his colours destroyed thee. *They that eat thy bread;* thy friends, those thou hast maintained, the soldiers thou keptest in pay. *Have laid a wound under thee;* have laid a snare, armed with some sharp and piercing instrument, that wounds as soon as thou fallest on the snare. *There is none understanding in him;* either no prudence to foresee and prevent this, or to manage and lessen it.

1 Job 5. 12. 13. Is. 29. 14. Jer. 49. 7.

8 [1]Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise *men* out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?

Shall I not? this interrogation is a strong assertion, I certainly will. *In that day,* of war and desolation of Edom, when Nebuchadnezzar with his armies shall invade Idumea. *Destroy;* either by war or sicknesses take the wise men out of Edom, they shall die; or deprive them of places of trust where they might help to save Edom; or else turn their wisdom into foolishness, as Ahithophel's was. *The wise men;* men of sound counsel and good conduct in the affairs of peace and war. *And understanding out of the mount of Esau;* an elegant ingemination for illustrating and confirming the prediction. All Edom shall miserably perish, not a wise man left to foresee and prevent it.

m Ps. 76. 5. Amos 2. 16. n Jer. 49. 7.

9 And thy [m]mighty *men*, O [n]Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.

Mighty men; valiant commanders and soldiers, who were never blemished with cowardice, who formerly durst adventure on greatest dangers and encounter most formidable enemies, and were never daunted with a slow-approaching enemy, how much soever over number to them, nor with any sudden surprising accidents; men of invincible courage, and most ready minds. *Teman;* a principal city and munition of Idumea. See Ezek. xxv. 13; Hab. iii. 3; Amos i. 12. *Dismayed;* astonished and surprised with such fear as disableth from action and counsel, shall neither dare to resist, nor hope to escape, but tamely give up all to the enemy. *To the end that every one may be cut off by slaughter;* thus all shall be exposed to slaughter when they dare not fight, who should have saved themselves and defended others. Deplorable is their condition, who, surrounded every way with enemies, have neither strength nor counsel to resist their power or defeat their malice!

o Gen. 27. 11. Ps. 137. 7. Ezek. 25. 12. & 35. 5. Amos 1. 11. p Ezek. 35. 9. Mal. 1. 4.

10 ¶ For *thy* [o]violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and [p]thou shalt be cut off for ever.

For thy violence: though Idumeans were guilty of many other and great sins, they are here charged with this as the great crying sin, inhuman cruelty and perfidiousness; they did mercilessly spoil and basely betray the Jews, which will be particularly mentioned in the following verses. *Against thy brother:* Edomites, the posterity of Esau, and the Jews, the posterity of Jacob, are here called brothers, for that the fathers of both people were brothers, twins; and this nearness of blood should have been remembered, and kindness should have still run through the blood and kindred. It is a great sin to be cruel and false to any, but greatest sin to be so to a brother. *Jacob;* put for his children. *Shame shall cover thee;* contempt and reproaches shall by all men be cast upon thee, and cover thee as a garment, or swallow thee up. God and man shall pour shame upon thee, thy memory shall be retained with condemnation to shame, and thy end shall be in shame too. *Thou shalt be cut off for ever;* never more be a nation or kingdom; which was in a very great degree fulfilled in the cutting them off by the sword of Nebuchadnezzar. See Isa. xxxiv. 5, 10. Ezek. xxxv. 9, threatens the like desolation.

11 In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers ‖carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and [q]cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou *wast* as one of them.

‖ Or, *carried away his substance.*

q Joel 3. 3. Nah. 3. 10.

In the day; during the war which the Babylonians made upon Judea, or in the day of battle when Jews fought with Chaldeans. *That thou stoodest on the other side;* tookest up thy stand over-right them, observing with delight how they were worsted, slaughtered, and routed; or didst set thyself in battle-array against thy brother Jacob. *The strangers;* the Babylonians, and the mixed nations which joined with them. *Carried away captive;* first mastered the Jews, and then made them captives, and sent them away out of their own land, a sight which should have moved compassions in thee. *His forces;* his strength, his troops, or multitudes that survived and were taken, and their wealth and riches too. *Foreigners entered into his gates;* that invaded, slew the inhabitants, and forced the besieged places to open their gates; or took the fortresses by assault. *Cast lots;* so robbers divided their prey, and conquerors, Prov. i. 14; Joel iii. 3, which see. *Upon Jerusalem;* upon the citizens and their goods, which were found in Jerusalem when it was taken by the Chaldeans. *Even thou,* a neighbour, who wast not molested by Israel when they marched through other nations from Egypt to Canaan, who wast a brother by descent, ver. 10, *wast as one of them,* as merciless and insolent as any of those barbarous foreigners.

‖ Or, *do not behold, &c.* r Ps. 22. 17. & 54. 7. & 59. 10. Mic. 4. 11. & 7. 10. s Ps. 37. 13. & 137. 7. t Job 31. 29. Mic. 7. 8. Prov. 17. 5. & 24. 17, 18. † Heb. *magnified thy mouth.*

12 But ‖thou shouldest not have [r]looked on [s]the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have [t]rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have †spoken proudly in the day of distress.

Thou shouldest not have looked with secret joy and satisfaction to thy eyes and mind; if thou wouldst have looked, it should have been with tears and grief, not with joy and gladness at the sight: so the word, Psal. xxxvii. 34; liv. 7; Prov. xxix. 16. *On the day;* on the affliction and sad misery which fell upon thy brother Jacob; so *day* in Scripture, thus absolutely put, doth often signify, Psal. xxxvii. 13; Micah vii. 4. *Became a stranger;* having by the misery of war been made a captive, and lost his former right and liberty in his own country, was now looked upon as a stranger, i. e. one who had no more right to any thing in the land. *Neither shouldest thou have rejoiced:* this explains the former. *Children of Judah:* this expounds brother. *The day of their destruction:* this tells us what day meant. *Neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly,* vaunting over the Jews, insolently upbraiding and reproaching them with virulent words and exulcerated malice, *in the day of distress,* when Jerusalem was taken.

13 Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid *hands* on their ‖substance in the day of their calamity;

‖ Or, *forces.*

Thou shouldest not have entered, as an enemy, a conqueror, *into the gate;* by synecdoche, city is meant by gate. The Edomites warring among the Babylonians, did with them enter the gates of conquered Jerusalem, appeared a proud, insulting enemy of Judah. *My people;* thou shouldst have remembered that the Jews thy brethren were my people, my peculiar people. *In the day of their calamity;* when their city was broken up, their king imprisoned, and captive with his nobles and other subjects. *Thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction,* as before, ver. 12. *Nor have laid hands on their substance,* or strength, the word notes both: Edom seized the persons of the Jews, and made them prisoners, and they plundered the city, seized the goods of the citizens; this they did with delight, but God will punish for it.

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14 Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have ‖ delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.

‖ Or, *shut up.* Ps. 31. 8.

In the cross-way; or in the breaches, viz. of the walls, by which, when the city was taken, some might have made their escape from the enemy; thou didst, though thou shouldst not, spitefully and cruelly watch at such breaches, and preventedst their flight; or else thou didst post thyself at the head of the ways, where thou mightest seize fleeing Jews. *To cut off;* either kill if they would not yield, or cut off their hopes of escape by making them prisoners. *Those of his that did escape* out of the city, and were fleeing farther for safety. *Neither shouldest thou have delivered up,* reserved them prisoners, and brought them back into the hands of the Chaldeans, *those of his,* of thy brother Jacob's posterity, *which did remain,* survived the taking of the city, and were fairly like to escape; but thou foundest them and betrayedst them, *in the day of distress,* when they could no longer defend their city, nor had any hope but in a flight through all the secret ways they knew; but thou didst watch these ways, and didst cut off many who sought to flee through them.

u Ezek. 30. 3. Joel 3. 14. x Ezek. 35. 15. Hab. 2. 8. cir. 585.

15 ᵘFor the day of the LORD *is* near upon all the heathen: ˣas thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

For the day of the Lord, of just revenge from the Lord upon this cruelty of Edom, the time which the Lord hath appointed for the punishing of this and other nations, *is near upon all the heathen;* which God had given to Nebuchadnezzar, and which by this man's arms God would punish, as Jer. xxvii. 2—7; and that day may justly be accounted near, which shall come within the compass of one man's life, and that well advanced in years, as Nebuchadnezzar now was. *As thou hast done,* perfidiously, cruelly, and ravenously against Jacob, with a hostile, revengeful mind, *it shall be done* by thine enemies *to thee,* as ver. 7; and this came to pass on Edom within five years after Jerusalem was sacked and ruined; within which space of time Obadiah prophesied, reproving Edom, and threatening him for what he had done against Jerusalem and its inhabitants. *Thy reward,* the punishment or retribution of evil for the evil thou hast done to Jacob, *shall return;* by God's just hand, and by thy enemy's cruel hand, shall be poured out upon thee. *Upon thine own head:* thy chief men, chief in the cruelty, shall be chief in suffering, for the measure thou hast measured shall be measured to thee, as Psal. cxxxvii. 8; Ezek. xxxv. 15; Joel iii. 7, 8.

y Jer. 25. 28, 29. & 49. 12. Joel 3. 17. 1 Pet. 4. 17.

16 ʸFor as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, *so* shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, ‖ Or, *sup up.* and they shall ‖swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

This, with some, is a confirmation of what is threatened against Edom, yet others make this verse the beginning of the consolatory sermon to Judah, and either suits well with the context. *As ye,* O Edomites, or ye, O Jews. *Have drunk:* if you interpret this drinking as feasting, revelling, and carousing, it is to be applied to the Edomites and others, who triumphed first by their arms, next in their cups, over conquered Judah. *Upon my holy mountain;* either the whole land, or Jerusalem, or the temple, for all these are called by this name; and here these proud and insolent conquerors did drink confusion to the Jews. *All the heathen;* the nations, enemies to Edom, shall on Mount Esau conquer first, and then triumph in their revelling feasts, and *drink continually,* till they have swallowed up Edom. *And they,* Edomites, *shall be as though they had not been;* shall by this means perish utterly, and their memory cease with them; so it suits with Ezek. xxxv. 14, 15, which see. Others refer the words to the Jews, thus: Ye have drunk the cup of astonishment in your land, and in Jerusalem, my holy mountain; so now ere long the nations which afflicted you shall drink of the cup of astonishment long, yea, drink the dregs of it, so that they shall perish, and be no more, when your day of dark affliction shall end in a day of light and salvation; and when other nations do this, Edom shall much more, because most deeply guilty above others: see Jer. xlix. 17, 18, 21, 22.

17 ¶ ᶻBut upon mount Zion ᵃshall be ‖ deliverance, and ‖ there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

z Joel 2. 32. a Amos 9. 8. ‖ Or, *they that escape.* ‖ Or, *it shall be holy.* Joel 3. 17.

But, or *And,* Heb. *Upon Mount Zion;* historically, and in the letter, this refers to the people of the Jews, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and those who worshipped God in the temple. In the mystical sense or typical, it refers to the gospel church, and the setting up the kingdom of Christ, and the salvation and redemption of God's Israel. *Deliverance;* a remnant that shall escape the enemies' sword, and which, after seventy years' captivity, shall be delivered and restored by Cyrus: an hieroglyphic of Israel's redemption by Christ. *There shall be holiness;* or, it shall be holy, the temple, the city rebuilt, the people returned from captivity, shall be holy to the Lord; they shall obey his law, attend his temple service, and offer a pure offering to the Lord, &c. All this typical, and accomplished in the Christian church, though not fully and perfectly till the church is glorified in the heavenly Zion. *The house of Jacob;* literally the survivors of the two tribes in the Babylonish kingdom, and some others of the ten tribes, but including the elect of God, the house of Jacob in the extent of it, as taken in Isa. lix. 20; Rom. xi. 26. *Shall possess their possessions;* either the possessions of the heathen, their enemies, or rather their own ancient possessions, out of which the violence of their enemies did cast them when they were led captive, and dispossessed of all.

18 And the house of Jacob ᵇshall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be *any* remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken *it.*

b Is. 10. 17. Zech. 12. 6.

Besides what Nebuchadnezzar shall do upon his particular quarrel against Edom, bringing them to a very desolate condition, there shall, (though it be not owned,) intermixed, be the quarrel of God for Israel's sake, which the Chaldeans shall avenge; or else, after the return out of captivity, and some settled state in their own land, Israel himself shall destroy the remnant of Edom, Joel iii. 16, with 19; Ezek. xxv. 14. *The house of Jacob;* either the kingdom of the two tribes, or else the whole twelve tribes, the residue of the ten tribes joined with the two in their return from Babylon. *The house of Joseph;* the ten tribes, particularly here mentioned to comfort them, and assure them that they should not be cast off, though they were more notoriously guilty of idolatry, and a long apostacy. *The house of Esau for stubble;* as unable to resist or secure themselves as stubble is to resist the flame. *They shall kindle in them:* this was fulfilled in part by Hyrcanus and the Maccabees, 1 Mac. v. 3; but more fully to be accomplished in the mystical sense, when the Lord shall make his church as a fire to all its enemies, and Jerusalem a burdensome stone to all nations. *Devour them;* as flame eats up the stubble. *There shall not be any;* no considerable number or body of them, or none shall continue Edomites, but turn Jews, and be circumcised, be added to the church. *For the Lord hath spoken it;* however or whenever this is done, it shall be done, because the Lord hath spoken it; this assures us of the thing.

19 And *they of* the south ᶜshall possess the mount of Esau; ᵈand *they of* the plain the Philistines: and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria: and Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.

c Amos 9. 12. d Zeph. 2. 7.

They of the south; the Jews who lived in the south parts of Canaan, which was next to Idumea, shall, after their return and victories over Edom, possess his country, called here *the Mount of Esau. They of the plain the Philistines;* the Jews who dwelt in the plain country, which was next

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to Palestina, Josh. xv. 33, shall enlarge their borders, and possess the Philistines' country, together with their ancient inheritance. Now of the possession of Mount Esau by the Jews, saith Grotius, it was most fully accomplished by Hyrcanus. Josephus, lib. 13. chap. 17, reports the matter thus, that the Idumeans were commanded either to depart their country, or be circumcised. If this were the time of fulfilling the one, it was also the time of fulfilling the other also. *And they shall possess the fields of Ephraim;* and all the land which the ten tribes once did possess shall again be possessed by the Jews. *And the fields of Samaria;* the fields also about Samaria, how greatly soever wasted, shall be replanted, and that by the Jews too. *Benjamin,* either apart, or jointly with Judah, *shall possess Gilead;* a country beyond Jordan, assigned to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh, wasted by Hazael and Tiglath-pileser some time before Samaria was taken, but should be inhabited by the Benjamites; and probably Gad, Manasseh, and Reuben did enlarge upon the Moabites and Ammonites. Here is promised a larger possession than ever they had before the captivity, and it doth no doubt point out the enlargement of the church of Christ in the times of the gospel, and particularly when antichrist, typified in this prophecy by Edom, shall be destroyed: but we are to give the literal meaning, and think we do not miss of it.

20 And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel *shall possess* that of the Canaanites, *even* [e] unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, ‖ which *is* in Sepharad, [f] shall possess the cities of the south.

[e] 1 Kings 17. 9, 10
‖ Or, shall possess *that* which is in *Sepharad*.
[f] Jer. 32. 44.

The captivity of this host of the children of Israel, those of the ten tribes that were carried away captive by Shalmaneser, one hundred and thirty years before Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, *shall possess that of the Canaanites;* all the country they anciently possessed, with this addition also, that what the Canaanites held by force, and the Israelites could not take from them, shall now be possessed by these returned captives. *Zarephath,* called *Sarepta,* Luke iv. 26, near Sidon. *The captivity of Jerusalem;* the two tribes, carried captive when Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar. *In Sepharad;* the modern Jews call Spain Sepharad, but without any good ground, nor was it so called anciently, nor doth the Chaldee paraphrase so interpret it; nor do I meet with any thing better than a tacit confession, that most believe it is a city of Chaldea or Assyria, and toward the northern and farthest bounds of it, but where it was exactly they know not. *Shall possess the cities of the south;* all the cities, which were once their own, in Judea, which lay southward from this Sepharad, where the captives dwelt, and whence they return.

21 And [g] saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the [h] kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

[g] 1 Tim. 4. 16. Jam. 5. 20.
[h] Ps. 22. 28. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14, 27. Zech. 14. 9. Luke 1. 33. Rev. 11. 15. & 19. 6.

And, or *For,* so the Gallic version, printed at Rochelle, 1616. *Saviours;* deliverers; literally, the governors or leaders of those captive troops, who shall come up from Babylon to their own country, such as Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, of whom it was said he came to seek the good of the Jews, Neh. ii. 10, and successively after these many others, to the times of Hyrcanus and the Maccabees; mystically, Christ and his apostles, and other preachers of the gospel. *Shall come;* literally, with leave and commission from the kings of Persia, such as Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes, to manage the affairs of the returned captives. *Upon Mount Zion;* in Judea, at Jerusalem and the temple, and whatever might concern them, with their neighbours round about. *To judge;* to avenge Israel upon Edom, to fight, subdue, and give laws to them, as Hyrcanus did when the Edomites were glad to be circumcised to keep their country. *The Mount of Esau;* the whole country, so called from the father of that nation, who chose those mountainous countries for his habitation, as most suitable to his wild and rambling humour, which delighted in hunting. *The kingdom shall be the Lord's;* the government, called here *the kingdom,* shall manifestly appear to be set up, maintained, and prospered by a power, wisdom, and goodness greater than human. The God of Israel, who is Jehovah, shall be honoured, obeyed, and worshipped by them, and they shall not, as formerly, rely on idols, or foreign aids. All which most fully is accomplished by Christ the Saviour, and now known in the Christian church, who do believe he will, and pray that he would, save his Zion, and destroy Edom, i. e. antichrist and his kingdom.

JONAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

OUR prophet owns himself by both his father's name and by his country; of this latter no great doubt is raised, though it appear not whether he was born in Gath-hepher, or whether it was the place of his abode when he was called to go envoy to the great city Nineveh; of the former, some do inquire whether it be an assumed name, and carry in it the character of some grace or virtue which was eminently in the man, or whether it were the proper name of the person. *Amittai,* in the Hebrew, denotes truth, veracity, or faith, with the pronoun possessive of the first person, *My truth.* Though *Jonah,* a *dove* by name, denounce dreadful things against Nineveh, yet he doth it as God's prophet, and God tells us by Jonah's pen; he is the son of his truth. Whether Obadiah were his father, and had this significant name Amittai given him for his owning the truth of God, and his true prophets, in the times of Ahab's apostacy; and whether his mother were that widow, whose son Elijah did raise from the dead; and whether he were the person sent by Elijah to anoint Jehu, Elisha, and Hazael, as the Jewish writers affirm; is of no certain demonstrability, and if demonstrated would be of no great moment or use to us. It is clear that (though this be the only book left under his name) he was employed as a prophet in Israel before he was sent into Assyria; for, 2 Kings xiv. 25, he prophesied the future prosperous successes of Jeroboam the Second, enlarging and establishing the borders of Israel; yet is it not certain to us, whether he appeared a prophet before Jeroboam's time, or in the beginning of his reign. Not far from this time we are sure we may date his time, and range him among the first of the prophets who have left their entire volumes behind them. By this also we may guess who was the king of Assyria, who gave such a rare example of repentance to all succeeding monarchs: it admits a dispute, whether it was Sardanapalus or Belesus, otherwise Pul-belochus, and Pul in Scripture history; if the time do not best suit to the latter (as I think it may) rather than to the former, yet I am sure the unparalleled retiredness of Sardanapalus, reported in history, seems to me a reason why it must be some monarch that, more like a gallant man, lived more free, open, and of easy access, that the news might, as it is suggested it did, come to his hearing in the first day: such temper, it is like, Pul-belochus was of. Whoever was the king, Jonah little expected the success he did find; he thought so great a king and city would not mind him, or else would deride

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or punish him; or else if they believed him, then they would repent, God would spare them, and Jonah would be cried out on as a false prophet; upon this he declines the embassy, and till God taught him his duty in little ease he will not do it. When a miracle hath set him on his work, and succeeds it, he grows passionate, and will die; God spares and pardons him as well as Nineveh, (which yet falls to sin, and falls under the ruin foretold by Nahum,) and so leaves him a type of Christ's burial and resurrection, and an instance how far a good man may sometimes be from his duty, and that great passions may be in a prophet.

CHAP. I.

Jonah, sent by God to Nineveh, fleeth to Tarshish, 1—3: *he is overtaken by a tempest, and discovered,* 4—10, *thrown into the sea,* 11—16, *and swallowed by a fish,* 17.

B. C. cir. 862. 1 NOW the word of the LORD came unto [a] ‖ Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

a 2 Kings 14. 25. ‖ Called, Matt. 12. 39, *Jonas.*

Now. Heb. *And. The word of the Lord,* which is a usual description of prophecy; what God had to speak against Nineveh, he here does reveal to Jonah, with command that he publish it to those concerned in it. *Came unto,* or, was with, *Jonah;* called *Jonas,* Luke xi. 30, which signifieth *a dove;* he was of Gath-hepher, a town of Zebulun, 2 Kings xiv. 25, but no more is added, by which I conjecture it was some obscure place, to which Jonah gave more light than it could to him. *Amittai;* of what rank he was appears not.

b Gen. 10. 11, 12. ch. 3. 2, 3. & 4. 11. c Gen. 18. 20, 21. Ezra 9. 6. Jam. 5. 4. Rev. 18. 5.

2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that [b]great city, and cry against it; for [c]their wickedness is come up before me.

Arise; forthwith prepare thyself, and get all in readiness, and with hearty resolution set upon the work. *Go;* so soon as thou art ready, set forward on thy journey, make not any delay. *Nineveh;* the chief city or metropolis of the Assyrian kingdom, built by Asshur, Gen. x. 11, if that verse be not better translated thus, He (i. e. Nimrod) went out into Assyria, and builded Nineveh; so Nimrod was the founder and first builder. *That great city:* it may be easily conjectured a great city which was situate on such a river as Tigris is, had continued so many hundred years, from A. M. 1719, in which it was built, unto 3124, about which time Jonah was sent to preach against it; during which long growth it may be conceived as great as it is ordinarily described, one hundred and fifty furlongs in length, that is, eighteen miles and three quarters of our English measure, and eleven miles and one quarter of the same measure in breadth. *Cry against it;* earnestly and publicly preach against the sins, and denounce the sudden ruin of that city unless they repent; so cry that all may hear, or at least all may come to the knowledge of what is threatened. *For their wickedness is come up before me:* their many and great sins, as it is said of Cain's sin when he had slain Abel, Gen. iv. 10, and Sodom's sins, Gen. xviii. 20, 21, and the sins of oppressors, James v. 4, cry aloud, the cry enters heaven, and justice must no longer defer; yet I will give them warning; Jonah, go thou, and tell them plainly, their great sins shall be greatly punished.

d ch. 4. 2. e Josh. 19. 46. 2 Chron. 2. 16. Acts 9. 36. f Gen. 4. 16. Job 1. 12. & 2. 7.

3 But Jonah [d]rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to [e]Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish [f]from the presence of the LORD.

But, Heb. *And. Jonah rose up:* he was commanded to arise, ver. 2, so here Jonah did, but it was to run from his business, not to do it; it was a rising against God. *To flee:* whatever was the cause which moved Jonah to do this, it is strange that he should fall into a fixed opinion that he might, and a fixed resolution that he would, thus flee from his God and from his duty. *Unto Tarshish;* to sea, as some, but this seemeth too rambling a humour: to Cilicia, say others, and particularly to Tarsus, no mean city of Cilicia, Acts xxi. 39; others say it was Tunis or Carthage in Africa, to which Jonah minded to flee; either of these carry such probability with them, that we will not determine for our reader. *From the presence of the Lord:* I cannot suppose that Jonah dreamed of fleeing from the omnipresence of God, he knew how David described this, Psal. cxxxix. 7—12, and natural reason told him he could never flee from this; but this *presence of God* is to be interpreted of the place where God usually had showed himself present by revealing his word and will to his prophets, who are servants to the Lord, and as such did stand before the Lord ready to receive his commands: now this command to Jonah being displeasing to him, and yet whilst he was in his own country, the valley of vision, he is still put upon the work, now he resolves to shift off the work by shifting place; perhaps he might think God would not put him upon it when he was gotten into a strange and remote country, where were no prophets, nor prophetic impulses. *Joppa;* a well-known haven on the Mediterranean, now called Jaffa, anciently Japho, Josh. xix. 46. *Going;* bound for, and ready to set sail for, the place he designed. *Tarshish;* Carthage or Tunis, or Tarsus in Cilicia. *Paid the fare;* forthwith agreed with the master of the ship, and, though unusual, paid presently, staid not till he came to the port designed. *Went down into it;* immediately went a ship-board, and in a melancholy, discomposed humour gets into a cabin, or under deck, *to go with them;* waiting the time when they should go, that he might be sure to go with them. *From the presence of the Lord:* see above.

g Ps. 107. 25. † Heb. *cast forth.*

4 ¶ But [g]the LORD †sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship †was like to be broken.

† Heb. *thought to be broken.*

The Lord, the almighty and eternal God, from whose work Jonah fleeth, *sent out a great wind.* God keepeth the winds as in storehouses, or treasuries, and now brings one forth to fetch back a fugitive, and obstinate refuser of his command: the greatness of it, with the suddenness of its rising, and manner of its working, undeniably showed that it was supernatural, and from God, displeased with all, or with some one or other of them. *Into the sea;* the winds did not blow aloft over the sea and ship, but, as if they had intermixed with the very waters of the sea, and like an unheard-of hurricane, shook the very keel of the ship. *There was a mighty tempest in the sea;* that part of the sea where Jonah's ship was: this messenger soon finds out Jonah, and speaks in most dreadful manner to all in the ship, who all saw and owned it to be from Heaven, the finger of God. *The ship was like to be broken;* the master and mariners thought they, ship, and goods, and all should be lost; the Hebrew expresseth it as if the ship had sense of God's anger, as if the ship could think, and did think of its own weakness, and God's mighty hand.

h So Acts 27. 18, 19, 38. i 1 Sam. 24. 3.

5 Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and [h]cast forth the wares that *were* in the ship into the sea, to lighten *it* of them. But Jonah was gone down [i]into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

Then, when this preternatural tempest fell with all its violence into the sea, *the mariners;* passengers are not here named, who, unaccustomed to sea, might be too apprehensive of danger; but the men that were acquainted with the sea, and had seen many a tempest, and weathered many a storm, *were afraid,* heartily afraid, full of apprehensions that they should be wrecked. *Cried,* with loud voice and earnest petitions, as the manner of such men is, when danger awakens them to the duty they neglect whilst safe. *Every man;* not a man of them but feared, nor a man of them but cried out, by which it is evident it was a most dreadful storm. *Unto his god:* by this it appears that the ship's crew was a mixture of men who worshipped several gods, and every one doth now cry to the god whom he worshipped: whatever god it might be, it was not he that

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did raise nor could allay the tempest. *Cast forth the wares that were in the ship:* when prayer to their false gods doth no good, but their danger continued and threatened them with foundering in the sea, to prevent this they lighten the ship, as is usual in such cases, and cast the wares out; not as sacrifice to the god of the sea, or as repenting of piracy, by which the goods were gotten, though some conjecture so, but the text tells us it was *to lighten* the ship. that it may bear up its head, and work with the sea better than when heavy laden. *But Jonah,* the greatest weight. and only danger to ship and seamen, *was gone down into the sides of the ship;* was under the hold in some cabin or other in the side of the ship, whither he went before the storm arose; *and was fast asleep;* in a very deep sleep, as the word imports.

6 So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O
k Ps. 107. 28. Joel 2. 14. sleeper? arise, [k]call upon thy God, [l]if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

So the ship-master, who had the conduct of the vessel, and from whose mouth such a reproof was seasonable, *came to him;* missing him, when all the rest were toiled with labour, and had been crying mightily to their false gods, but Jonah appeared not. *What meanest thou, O sleeper?* a very decent yet sharp reproof to him: What metal art thou made of? or, What god dost thou fear? or, Art thou deaf to all the menaces of Heaven? *Arise,* awake, get up, *call upon thy God;* pray to that God thou worshippest, as we have already each done, for possibly thy God may be mightier than our gods, and may lay the tempest that lieth so heavily upon us. They had lost their labour seeking to other gods, yet think it advisable that Jonah should try his God too; *if so be, &c.:* see Joel ii. 14; and so Amos v. 15. *Will think upon us,* with pity, care, and favour, and do for us in this our strange distress, *that we perish not;* that ship, goods, and men too, may not be lost.

7 And they said every one to his fel-
m Josh. 7. 14. 16. 1 Sam. 10. 20, 21. & 14. 41, 42. Prov. 16. 33. Acts 1. 26. low, Come, and let us [m]cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil *is* upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

And they said every one to his fellow; after they had prayed, which was necessary in such cases, as being a religious means, and cast out the goods which loaded the ship, which was a proper natural means of safety, but none appeared, still the tempest, and their danger with it, continued, a shrewd symptom that there was one or other amongst them whose sins had provoked God to do this, and that it were fit to be known who this was; and whoever first moved for making the search, all agree in the expedient. It is like that it was upon the thoughts of many of them, and so expressed here. *Let us cast lots;* it is extraordinary danger we are in, all ordinary means fail, let us try that which hath somewhat extraordinary in it; though many times used, let the lot decide among us who is the cause of all this. Lots are an appeal to Heaven in doubtful cases, and therefore not to be used on trifling or unnecessary cases, but where the matter is great, difficult, or undeterminable in any other way, as Scripture instances of lots do inform us, Lev. xvi. 8, 9; Numb. xxvi. 55; Josh. xiv. 2; xviii. 6; xxi. 4, 5, &c.; 1 Sam. x. 20, 21, Saul chosen by lot; Neh. x. 34; xi. 1; Acts i. 26. *This evil;* very great, unusual, and preternatural tempest; not one among them but had deserved more, yet they surmise some notorious offender amongst them, or this had not been. *So they cast lots,* they act according to what was proposed, *and the lot fell upon Jonah;* God determines and singles out Jonah.

n Josh. 7. 19. 1 Sam. 14. 43. 8 Then said they unto him, [n]Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil *is* upon us; What *is* thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what *is* thy country? and of what people *art* thou?

Then said they unto him; when the lot pointed out Jonah, these mariners all are satisfied that he was the man, that Heaven had determined that grand inquiry, and accordingly they treat with him. *Tell us, we pray thee;* they try what fair means will do with him, and desire to have the account from his own mouth; so Joshua dealt with Achan, Josh. vii.: satisfied in the person, next they do, with commendable justice and calmness, inquire into the thing. *For whose cause this evil is upon us:* what hast thou done, for which God is so angry with thee, and with us for thy sake? sure thou canst not but know what it is, and now frankly tell us *what is thine occupation,* what course of life hast thou lived, or what employment dost thou now profess to follow, that we may guess by that whether thou art one of flagitious or of honest life. *Whence comest thou?* ere he give answer to this, probably another asketh whence he cometh, what company he had kept; by this they conjecture at the man. *What is thy country?* another starts a third inquiry, what country or nation he is of; to those ports persons of different nations flocked; possibly they hoped some or other in the ship might be his countrymen, and so fittest to examine him. *Of what people art thou?* this seems to be the same question repeated, or else an inquiry where he dwelt. These are the heads of the questions asked him.

9 And he said unto them, I *am* an He-
[Or, JEHOVAH. o Ps. 146. 6. Acts 17. 24. brew; and I fear ‖the LORD, the God of heaven, [o]which hath made the sea and the dry *land.*

And he said unto them; Jonah freely and readily gives account of himself. *I am a Hebrew;* one that am descended from Heber, whose offspring by Abraham are well known, and probably to these mariners: he saith not, a Jew, because he was not in strictness of speech, for he was of the tribe of Zebulun; nor an Israelite, distinguished from the Jew, lest he should seem to own himself of that idolatrous faction. *I fear;* I worship and serve the true God only; or possibly it may imply that his employment was in the immediate service of God, as a religious person that had abdicated the world, and dedicated himself to God. *The Lord;* the eternal and almighty God; yours are upstart gods, and have no power or might, nor can they do any thing. *The God of heaven;* who first made, now ruleth, and ever will rule the heavens, which none of your gods can pretend to, those heavens from whence you see this storm falleth. *Which hath made the sea;* that sea which now threatens you for my sake, and threatens me for my sin; my God hath raised the sea in his quarrel to contend thus furiously, and he can, and none but he can, command it to be still. *And the dry land;* a description of the earth: you would get thither, but all your gods cannot bring you thither, or give you to set one foot upon it, if my God say no. This is the sum of what Jonah declares, by which he intimateth his innocency from any flagitious crime, as they might imagine him guilty, and yet confesseth the greatness of his sin, which he had before told them, though they understood it not, or thought light of it, he fled from the presence of the Lord.

10 Then were the men †exceedingly
† Heb. with great fear. afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

Then; when Jonah had declared his God, whose power and wrath these mariners saw and heard in the tempest, and what sin of his was now punished, and how they had taken him into their ship, knowing that he did run away from this mighty God. *The men were exceedingly afraid;* their fear was doubled, every thing now represents horror to them, their own danger, Nineveh's approaching dismal ruin, which they believe by what they see, satisfied that he who so tremendously punished the refusal to deliver the message, was able and certainly would execute the sentence which he commanded should be delivered. *Why hast thou done this?* now they ask a reason for that of which no reason can be given: it was most unreasonable that Jonah had done, and we find no answer to this interrogatory, though the foregoing questions were answered. Others think it is a reproof of him for so doing; I rather think it mixed of both. It was a real reproof to himself while he more particularly explains the great sinfulness of this prank of his; and it is an inquiry made for satisfaction to them, who no doubt thought of Jonah's God as they did of their own, that it was no hard matter to be done, nor any great sin if done, to run

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from their presence. These likely were their thoughts of the thing when he first told them; but the dreadful storm that Jonah's God sent after this fugitive servant of his makes them more curious to know what great sin it was, and so Jonah explaining the whole, confesseth his sin, humbleth himself, and takes the reproof to himself, and informeth them aright. *The men;* the master of the ship, and the mariners. *Knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord:* in these words it is probable he told them; now though they knew this was the thing, yet they apprehended not what was in it, but did judge of this by their own gods, and their presence. *He had told them,* when they inquired the cause of his travels, as it is very like they would do, ere they took his fare.

† Heb. *may be silent from us.* ‖ Or, *grew more and more tempestuous* † Heb. *went.*

11 ¶ Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea †may be calm unto us? for the sea ‖ †wrought, and was tempestuous.

Then said they; when they heard all that Jonah had declared to them, and well weighed it all, and saw it looked all of one piece, most credible. *Unto him;* a prophet fittest in that respect to tell them what should be done, and a party so highly concerned in it. *What shall we do unto thee?* if thy God will by thee declare his will, and we do it, we shall not provoke him; and if thou submit to his will, and direct us, we shall not injure thee. *That the sea may be calm;* cease its rage, and return to its former calmness for us to make our voyage. *For the sea wrought, and was tempestuous;* though Jonah had recounted all, and given glory to God, taken shame to himself, and satisfied the seamen, yet the sea grew higher and higher, more tempestuous in itself, and more dangerous to them, and they were sensible that somewhat must be done with Jonah to quiet all. Their fear was lest they should mistake herein, and therefore they ask his counsel.

p John 11. 50.

12 And he said unto them, pTake me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest *is* upon you.

He said unto them; he readily gives them advice for their safety. *Take me up:* this he spake as a prophet directed of God, and not, as some Jewish rabbi thinks, choosing to die rather than to go to Nineveh. *Cast me forth into the sea;* throw me overboard into the sea; no other way must you deal with me than this, and this way I not only direct as expedient, but from God I give you it as a command, and you must do it; thus my God will punish my disobedience and contempt. *So shall the sea be calm unto you;* as a prophet I assure you the tempest shall cease, and you be safe, and by that you may know I being in the ship endangered you all. *I know;* I am assured of this, and though I have been your danger, and this was my fault, yet it shall not be my fault if you be drowned. *For my sake;* for my sin, which God will punish, but not by my own act, I must not leap overboard; it is a crime God will punish by that justice which is in this place. *This great tempest is upon you;* and will be, till you have executed God's sentence on me, which I willingly submit to.

† Heb. *digged.* q Prov. 21. 30.

13 Nevertheless the men †rowed hard to bring *it* to the land; qbut they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

Nevertheless, Heb. *And;* but rightly to the proper sense of the phrase rendered here *nevertheless:* Notwithstanding the lot fell on Jonah, he confessed his fault, directs them to cast him overboard, and in all this avoweth himself to be a prophet of God, and assures them of a calm sea if they do this; yet, very willing to save him, *the men rowed hard;* they contrived all ways, and are willing to be at any labour to save him; they ply their oars, and strain their strength, with deep strokes to force the ship to shore. *But they could not;* all was lost labour; God had given other order to his servants, the wind and sea; both obey him, and both keep Jonah a prisoner, self-condemned, and desirous of what the mariners were very unwilling to. *For the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them:* see ver. 11: the sea tossed itself more violently, and by unsteady motions, like some hurricane, every moment endangered them.

14 Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and rlay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, shast done as it pleased thee.

r Deut. 21. 8. s Ps. 115. 3.

Wherefore, since all their labour and skill to carry the ship to shore was successless, and they saw no remedy, but they must either follow Jonah's advice against himself, or drown with him, *they cried,* with importunity of mind, and with loud voices too in prayer, *unto the Lord;* not now, as in the beginning of the tempest, every man to his god; but, better instructed now, they all cry to Jonah's God, to Jehovah the true God. *We;* they all join in prayer. *Beseech;* sue to Mercy for mercy; they plead not innocency or merit, but pray for mercy, and that free. *Thee;* all sue to God, not to saints or intermediate demons. *We beseech thee;* it is repeated to note their vehemency in prayer. *Let us not perish for this man's life;* though he is pointed out by lot, hath advised us hereunto, yet if possible let the tempest cease, and we all be safe; let not him perish, nor we for him: so their first prayer is for safety to Jonah and all in the ship. *Lay not upon us innocent blood:* this is the next suit, that if God, by the continued tempest, do peremptorily and irreversibly require Jonah's life, a person innocent among them, and who had, since he came to them, so demeaned himself, that, should they throw him overboard before they had tried all kind of means for preserving him, they might not be justly accounted barbarous murderers, and God would certainly charge innocent blood upon them; this they deprecate with all earnestness and importunity. *Hast done;* sending the tempest, arresting the prophet by it, detecting him by lot, sentencing him by his own mouth, and confirming the condemning sentence by the continuance of the storm, and so leaving us to perish with this offender against thee, or to be thy executioners; this is thine own doing, and it is just because thou doest it. *As it pleased thee;* though it be secret to us, and strange in our opinion, yet it is very just and necessary we know, or it would not please thee it should be so.

15 So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: tand the sea †ceased from her raging.

t Ps. 89. 9. Luke 8. 24. † Heb. *stood.*

So, Heb. *And, they took up Jonah;* as he advised; with regret to themselves, though with full consent of Jonah, at last they yield. *Cast him forth into the sea:* see ver. 12. *And the sea ceased from her raging;* as Jonah had assured them, so they find the sea all on a sudden calm and friendly, which we must understand includes the wind sent into the sea, though it be not mentioned here.

16 Then the men ufeared the LORD exceedingly, and †offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows.

u Mark 4. 41. Acts 5. 11. † Heb. *sacrificed a sacrifice unto the LORD, and vowed vows.*

Then, when they saw God approved the thing, and confirmed Jonah's word, as of a true prophet, and had spared them, *the men,* the seamen, and all others, if any others were in the ship, *feared the Lord;* with a deep reverence of his power, wisdom, and justice against Jonah, and of his mercy towards them. What was the final effect of this, and whether they were by it thoroughly turned to God, I inquire not now; it may best become our charity, that as Jonah's casting overboard was type of Christ's death, so the effect it had upon the mariners might be a type of the conversion of the heathen from idols to God. *Exceedingly;* their fear before was exceeding great, but that was a fear of the danger, and for themselves a natural fear; but now they do fear the Lord and his majesty and mercy, it is a religious fear. *Offered a sacrifice;* what they had in the ship to offer to God, or how they could offer there, appears not to us, but the Scripture affirms they did sacrifice, not to idols, but to the true God: some suppose the words are to be interpreted that they would sacrifice at Jerusalem, where they now know that the God of Jonah was worshipped. *Made vows:* vows are a part of natural religion, and here these persons bind themselves by vows to recognise God's goodness in their deliverance. It is not impro-

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bable that here is a trajection, as many times in Scripture, that placed last which in construction is to be first. They vowed vows and sacrificed, i. e. vowed they would do it, would be proselytes, and ever worship him Jonah preached to them, Creator of heaven and earth.

17 ¶ Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And [x] Jonah was in the †belly of the fish three days and three nights.

x Matt. 12. 40. & 16. 4. Luke 11. 30.
† Heb. *bowels.*

Now, Heb. *And. Prepared;* created at first, say some; but what need that, when a mighty overgrown fish of a double age may do this; by God's will and appointment it attended the ship, and followed it in the storm, expecting a prey, and ready to receive the prisoner. *A great fish;* a whale, as we read, Matt. xii. 40; others say it was a shark, a fish common in those seas. *To swallow up;* not to chew upon him, but to take him down whole. *Jonah was in the belly of the fish,* in safe custody, *three days and three nights,* that he might rightly typify Christ's burial in the grave.

CHAP. II.

The prayer of Jonah, 1—9. *He is delivered out of the belly of the fish,* 10.

THEN Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,

Then, Heb. *And*, at that time when he lay by the heels a close prisoner in a prison, whence none before or since ever came out alive, *Jonah prayed;* sent his petition in all humble and submissive manner unto God: Jonah, wonderfully preserved alive, and in full exercise of his judgment and memory, now betakes himself to prayer, and in this exerciseth his graces; his soul follows hard after God, when he was shut up in this dungeon. *Unto the Lord,* that was angry, and now was punishing of Jonah; the Lord, who had committed him to this prison; the almighty God, who can do for Jonah all that he can need or desire. *His God;* though Jonah in his froward fit flees from his God, yet now, by the rod taught better, he flees to God, nay, as his God, and remembers his particular interest in God. If Jonah prays by faith grounded on God's almightiness, now he prays with assurance and hope of faith, looking to God as his God; if the power of the Lord and his mercy keep Jonah alive in the fish's belly, the same power and mercy can deliver him out of this danger, and the prophet believes he is kept there for an enlargement as miraculous as his confinement was. *Out of the fish's belly;* where he was a prisoner under many miracles, and all concur to awaken him to prayer and faith; he calls it *the belly of hell,* or the grave, ver. 2. He employed his time well there.

2 And said, I [a] cried ‖by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, [b] and he heard me; out of the belly of ‖hell cried I, *and* thou heardest my voice.

a Ps. 120. 1. & 130. 1. & 142. 1. Lam. 3. 55, 56.
‖ Or, *out of mine affliction.*
b Ps. 65. 2. ‖ Or, *the grave.* Is. 14. 9.

And said: the former verse was a general account that he prayed, this word in the front of this verse is a transition to a more full account of his prayer, what for substance, and somewhat of the words also. *I cried;* not with a loud voice of the tongue, as it was not ordinarily feasible in so close a prison, so nor was it necessary he should, where none were to hear but his God, who heareth the strongest desires, and accounts them the strongest cries; so Jonah cried with his whole heart. *By reason of mine affliction;* distress, or straits with which he was encompassed and close besieged; nor was there ever closer siege laid to any one, his body and mind both shut up, the one by the monstrous dungeon of the fish's belly, and the other by the terrors of the Almighty. *Unto the Lord:* it was in many respects fit Jonah should petition God, for he was committed by his special warrant, and none either had power or authority to deliver him but God. *He heard me:* though Jonah say not how God did hear, in what particular, yet he knew both how and in what; the support of his person, the exercise of his reason, the workings of his heart toward God, and a hope or assurance that he should be delivered, were part of the mercy God gave, and he prayed for. *Out of the belly of hell cried I; the grave,* so *Sheol;* so it was as dark to Jonah, and had been as destructive too, if mercy had not prevented. This is doubled, to intimate both the prisoner's earnestness, and the greatness of the mercy given to one that was as shut up in the grave. *Thou heardest my voice;* of his soul, whilst he was in that dismal dungeon; as above.

3 [c] For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the †midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: [d] all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

c Ps. 88. 6.
† Heb. *heart.*
d Ps. 42. 7.

For: this introduceth the account of his distress, mentioned ver. 2. *Thou,* the Almighty, offended by my frowardness and obstinacy, *hadst cast me into the deep;* though the mariners' hands heaved me overboard, it was thy hand that did it, and pressed me sore. *The deep;* the bottom of the sea; by what follows it is probable Jonah was cast into the sea far from shore. *In the midst of the seas,* or heart of the seas, but more literally and strictly *in the midst of the seas,* than that Ezek. xxvii. 4. *The floods;* either the mighty rivers which run into that sea, or the floods, the mighty currents, which the rolling sea and winds with tide made. *All thy billows and thy waves passed over me;* the surges of the sea, which explains what before he called *the floods.* Here is an elegant description of the violence and horror of the seas into which Jonah was cast, which tossed his body, and signified the terrors wherewith his soul was distressed from God's immediate hand, as Psal. xlii. 7. *Thy waves:* Jonah seeth God's hand and sovereignty in all this, intimating that he prayed for what he knew his God could do for him.

4 [e] Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again [f] toward thy holy temple.

e Ps. 31. 22.
f 1 Kings 8. 38.

Then: though this word with us ordinarily denoteth time, yet here it denoteth order and connexion; the Hebrew is *And. I said,* with myself, I thought in the midst of my fears and sufferings. *I am cast out of thy sight;* cut off from all hope of life among men; rejected, forsaken, and as it were forgotten of my God, and left by this death to pass to a worse death. Thus he was racked with sense of present danger from God's displeasure, and is almost carried away with a despair of ever seeing the face of God again with comfort, much as Psal. xxxi. 22; Lam. iv. 22. *Yet I will look again:* his faith begins to recover itself; he will not, as despairing ones, any more look toward lost hopes, but with reviving hope he will hope against hope, and never yield to such despairs. *Towards thy holy temple;* where the ark of the covenant, where the mercy-seat, where propitiatory sacrifices are offered, where is God's high priest, types of the great Redeemer, Mediator, and Saviour, by whom sin is expiated, sinners pardoned, grace and favour communicated, where God commands the blessing, life for evermore; he will look and hope to appear in the material typical temple, and to find there grace dispositive for, as well as significative of, glory in the heavenly temple; he hopes for both.

5 The [g] waters compassed me about, *even* to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.

g Ps. 69. 1. Lam. 3. 54.

The former part of this verse seems to be an ingeminating of what was said ver. 3, and bears the self-same meaning and interpretation. *The waters;* literally, the waters of the sea; metaphorically, afflictions; mystically, temptations; these last arising from his own guilt, and from the tokens of God's displeasure against him in so unusual a manner. *Compassed me about, even to the soul;* to the endangering his life, and were forerunners (as he apprehended) of worse miseries, the foretastes of an eternal damnation: it was a miracle of providence to preserve my life, it was no less wonder of free grace to save my soul. *The depth closed me round about;* he was carried to the bottom of the sea, lay as in the deepest hole of the sea. *The weeds were wrapped about my head;* not immediately, as some conjecture, by the fish pulling them from the bottom of the the sea and swallowing them down, where they wrapped Jonah's head; but mediately, when the fish swam amidst

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these: or rather it is a comparative speech; I was no more likely to escape drowning, than a man in the depth of the sea, wrapped up in, and held fast down by, the weeds in the bottom of the sea.

† Heb. *cuttings off.*

6 I went down to the †bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars *was* about me for ever: yet hast thou brought

h Ps. 16. 10. ‖ Or, *the pit.*

up my life ʰfrom ‖corruption, O LORD my God.

I went down, the fish carried him down, *to the bottoms of the mountains*; as deep in the sea as are the bottoms of the mountains, or into those depths out of which might be supposed that mountains were thence drawn out by the roots; an elegant description of fathomless depths, whirlpools of the seas. *The earth with her bars was about me for ever*; I seemed to be imprisoned where the bars that secured me were as great and durable as the rocks which they were made of. *Yet*, notwithstanding all these insuperable difficulties, and my own fears, *hast thou brought up*; by what was first my danger thou hast wonderfully secured me, what I thought should have been my grave was made a safety to me; by the fish Jonah is in due time fairly and safely set on shore. *My life*; his life of nature; his life of comfort, and peace, and joy too. *From corruption*, or the pit; a description of the state of the dead, whose bodies turn to putrefaction and stench. *O Lord*; O almighty and eternal Being, Lord and Sovereign over all. *My God*; mine, saith Jonah, by particular choice, faith, and hope, whom I had served and should not have disobeyed, to whom I prayed, who hath pardoned, whom I will adore, obey, and love for ever.

7 When my soul fainted within me I

i Ps. 18. 6.

remembered the LORD: ⁱand my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

When, so soon as, and so often as, *my soul fainted within me*, my heart was perplexed with variety of fears, sorrows, temptations, and difficulties; whenever I did forecast, and devise what way I might likely escape out of this forlorn condition, I was dispirited, my heart sunk within me, Psal. xxii. 14; xlii. 4; and I had fainted if I had not remembered the mighty, faithful, wise, and gracious God, who could save me, and on whose mercy I relied, who had promised the best of two deliverances, the eternal, whatever he did with me as to the temporal deliverance. *I remembered the Lord*, with faith and prayer, for it is not a bare recalling of God to his mind, but a recalling his mercy and promise to his mind. *And my prayer*, made in the fish's belly, in his prison more dismal than ever was that of Manasseh, *came in unto thee*; did enter the ears of the Lord, he heard and readily answered. *Into thine holy temple*; typically the temple at Jerusalem, to which Jonah looked; but principally heaven, the temple of his glory, whence God gives the command for his delivery, orders the gaoler to set him safe on shore.

k 2 Kings 17. 15. Ps. 31. 6. Jer. 10. 8. & 16. 19.

8 They that observe ᵏlying vanities forsake their own mercy.

Whoever they are that do, as the heathen mariners, seek to, depend upon, and wait for help from idols, false gods, whoever choose them for their assistance, and worship them, do depend upon most false grounds, wait for most lying and deceiving objects; and this of the prophet is true of, and applicable to, all our creature dependencies, to all trust reposed in any but God himself; these dig to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water, Jer. ii. 13. *Forsake*; turn away from, and do really and practically forsake, God, as he leaves the east who goeth on to the west; trust in God and idols are as opposite as is the east to the west. *Their own mercy*; the Lord, who is to all that seek him, and depend on him, the fountain of living waters, who is an eternal fountain of mercy, and flows forth freely to all that wait for him.

l Ps. 50. 14, 23. & 116. 17, 18. Hos. 14. 2. Heb. 13. 15. m Ps. 3. 8.

9 But I will ˡsacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay *that* that I have vowed. ᵐSalvation *is* of the LORD.

Jonah here doth intimate his adherence to God, his assurance that he should find God to be a fountain of mercy to him, that God would hear his prayer. *I will sacrifice*; in most solemn manner recognise the mercy I receive; I shall have just ground to do it, and I will certainly be just to the mercy of my God and do it. Who wait on gods that cannot deliver shall never have cause to sacrifice to them; if they do the thing, they do sacrilegiously rob God. *Unto thee*; excluding all others, who shall have as little share in the praise as they had in the thing for which praise is offered. *With the voice of thanksgiving*; including the heart also; for such is the sacrifice with which God is best pleased, Psal. l. 14, 23; cxvi. 17; Hos. xiv. 2; Heb. xiii. 15. *I will pay*: vows are, when made, debts we owe to God, and must, as just debts, be paid. *That that I have vowed*: it is not said what it was he had vowed, probably it was a more obedient heart and deportment, likely he resolveth to go to Nineveh and preach what God commandeth him; he will perform his promise to the Lord in all things he did engage to do. *Salvation*; power to save, and actual deliverance from all dangers, in all distresses: when none of the gods the mariners invoked, neither any one apart nor yet all together, could quiet the tempest, and save from the danger of the sea, Jonah's God could do both, he could by his own single power deliver Jonah out of the belly of hell. *Is of the Lord*; he only can save, none else can as he can, Psal. iii. 8; lxviii. 20.

10 ¶ And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry *land*.

And, or, as the particle is sometimes rendered, *Then*, i. e. after Jonah had prayed, and acted his faith, though in the whale's belly. *The Lord*, who made heaven and earth, and commandeth both, who is God of salvation. *Spake*; commanded, signified it to be his pleasure; as the same word prepared the fish, and brought it to give attendance to receive the prisoner, so now it doth discharge the keeper, and requires him to set his prisoner at liberty. *Unto the fish*: though fishes are destitute of reason, and understand not as man, yet they have ears to hear their Creator, and readily obey. *It vomited out Jonah*; it presently obeys the word, it could no longer keep Jonah a prisoner. *On the dry land*: the command required this, nor could it be a deliverance without this; had he been cast out of the whale's belly any where else in the sea he had been drowned, but now that which was his danger shall be his safety, a ship now to land him which before was like to be his grave. The Scripture doth not say where he was thus set on shore, but considering he was to go to Nineveh and preach repentance to them, it is a very obvious conjecture that any man might make, that the whale set Jonah on shore in some place of the Syrian shore nearest to Nineveh; and on view of the charts any indifferent geographer would conjecture that it was some where on the bay or gulf of Lajazzo, anciently the Sinus Issicus, or somewhat near to Alexandette, as the French, or Scanderoon, as the Turks call it, whence, though a long, yet by the maps appears to be the straightest journey to Nineveh. As for some who conjecture it was on the Euxine Sea, they consider not the strait passage of the Propontis, nor the length of one thousand six hundred miles from Joppa to that part of the Euxine which is next to Nineveh, nor the length and difficulty of the passage thence by land to Nineveh: but he that said Jonah was landed on Nineveh's shore was much wider out in his guess, and never considered that Nineveh was built on Tigris some hundreds of miles by land from Joppa, and if the fish brought him thither, it was by a compass of many thousand miles, which would require some months to run over, besides that the fish would be too great to swim up the river. Their conjecture biddeth fairest who confine it to some places of the Syrian sea, and not far from Scanderoon.

CHAP. III.

Jonah, being sent again, preacheth the overthrow of Nineveh, 1—4. *Upon their repentance,* 5—9, *God repenteth him of the evil,* 10.

AND the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

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And, after that Jonah had been well disciplined for his contumacy, and was set at liberty, *the word of the Lord came*; the command, or the prophetic Spirit: see chap. i. 1. *The second time*; the first time Jonah rebels against the command, now, better prepared and humbled, he is tried again, God doth give him the gift of prophecy, and by that signifies his reconciliation to him, and admits him into his old station.

2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city; see chap. i. 2; great in extent of grouud, in strength of its fortifications, height and breadth of its walls, and multitude of its towers; great in the multitude of its numbers, and riches of its citizens, and every whit as great in the multitude of its sins: but let nothing retard or discourage thee, arise and go. *Preach*, publicly, plainly, boldly; *cry*, chap. i. 2. *Unto it*, i. e. against it, publish the near approaching ruin of it, preach to them the necessity of their repentance, and awaken them to it by the terrors of the Lord. *The preaching that I bid thee*; either which I did bid thee at first, as chap. i. 2, or what I shall suggest and communicate to thee when thou art come thither.

3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an †exceeding great city of three days' journey.

† Heb. *of God*: So Gen. 30. 8. Ps. 36. 6. & 80. 10.

So, Heb. *And*; as God commands and directs, so Jonah with ready, resolved, and obedient mind sets about the work. *Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh*; though it was a long journey, yet three weeks' or three months' travel by land is more eligible than three days in the belly of hell. *According to the word of the Lord*; every way complying with the command of God, speeding thither resolved to preach whatsoever sermon God should put into his head, encouraged with assurance that God who did send would be with him whithersoever he was sent. *An exceeding great city*; the greatest city of the known world at that day; it was then in its flourishing state greater than Babylon, whose compass was three hundred and sixty-five or three hundred and eighty-five furlongs, but Nineveh was in compass four hundred and eighty, her walls a hundred feet in height, and broad enough for three coaches to meet and safely pass by each other; it had fifteen hundred towers on its walls, and these towers two hundred feet high; and one million and four hundred thousand men employed continually for eight years to build it, if our author be not mistaken. There is some difference in accounting how this city was *three days' journey*: if we account the length of it at one hundred and fifty furlongs, this will amount to eighteen miles and three quarters; this seems too little to be three days' journey, unless it be supposed the prophet accounts his leisurely progress, and takes in the many stops that would necessarily and unavoidably retard him in his walking and preaching such strange news; if we consider this, it is not unlikely six miles would be as far as he could go in a day, preaching to all and discoursing with many. Others will account it three days' journey to go through the streets and lanes of this city; but on the supposition it was eighteen miles in length, and eleven miles in breadth, it will be more than three days' journey, or a week's journey; for supposing in a mile's breadth but eight streets, from end to end, through eighteen miles' length, it will amount to four hundred and sixty-four miles. Others account by the compass of the walls sixty miles, and allow twenty miles to each day's journey, too far for any one to walk, preach, dispute or reason, and account for himself: the first account seems most probable.

4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and [a]he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

[a] See Deut. 18. 22.

The former verse gives us intelligence of Jonah's arrival at Nineveh; now, so soon as come, he preacheth. *Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said*; to walk through and to preach the dreadful threats of God against Nineveh, and he proclaimed openly and plainly what God commanded; he feared not to tell all what concerned all; he did it with earnestness, as deeply affected with what he spake from God against this mighty city. *Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown*; a very short time, some might think, for this great city; but it is more time than God was bound to give, or than they could deserve, or than God gave to Sodom and Gomorrah, the sins of which cities were no doubt found in Nineveh now Jonah preached, and grew ripe by that time Nahum came to foretell their ruin: see Nahum. The threat is express and peremptory in its form and words; though there be a reserve with God on condition of repentance, which operated in due time, and manifestly proved that God intended mercy to repenting Nineveh, though he threatened an overthrow to impenitent Nineveh. How it should be overthrown is not expressed; some conjecture by a foreign enemy, which carrieth unlikelihood with it; others guess by fire from heaven: but since it was not destroyed we need not inquire how it should have been, and had they not repented the event would have informed us fully.

5 ¶ So the people of Nineveh [b]believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

[b] Mat. 12. 41. Luke 11. 32.

So, Heb. *And, the people of Nineveh*; the inhabitants who heard; they first believed who first heard, and successively others as soon as they heard. *Believed God*, speaking by his prophet; they knew their own sins. Though Jonah were a stranger to them, yet because, coming in God's name, he did very particularly, fully, and to the life enumerate, decipher, and lay open their sins, with what they deserved, what might be expected, what God threatened from heaven, all which concurring wrought them to believe their danger, God's mercy, and the possibility of escape if they repent. Whether the fame of Jonah's deliverance came to Nineveh before him appears not, nor is it likely it should come so far and so fast, though it were known on the Syrian coast, and about Tyre and Zidon; possibly Jonah might publish it in Nineveh. *Proclaimed a fast*; every one called upon other to fast, or cried out it was high time to fast, repent, and supplicate God, so some think; but this passage is an anticipation, tells us what was done, and will tell us afterwards on what grounds, authority, and example it was done. *Put on sackcloth*; a ceremony very usual in mournings, private or public, in those countries, and a token of their true mourning; this all did, great and small, rich and poor.

6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered *him* with sackcloth, [c]and sat in ashes.

c Job 2. 8.

This now accounteth for the people's proclaiming a fast, ver. 5, they did it because it was commanded, and they had the king's example herein. *Word came to the king*: whether Jonah did particularly speak to his hearers to send word to the king, or whether the strangeness of the thing might move some or other to report it to the courtiers, and they to the king, is not specified; certain it is that the king had word brought him, and it was considered by him: nor is it said who this king was; Sardanapalus seems too early, Pul-belochus is with more probability thought to be this king. *Arose from his throne*; came down from his royal seat. *Laid his robe from him*; put off his rich, gorgeous, and luxurious apparel. *Covered him with sackcloth*; put on the rough and uneasy garments of a mourner. *And sat in ashes*, as Esth. iv. 3; Job ii. 8; xlii. 6.

7 [d]And he caused *it* to be proclaimed and †published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his †nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:

[d] 2 Chr. 20. 3. Joel 2. 15. † Heb. *said*. † Heb. *great men*.

And he, the king, *caused it to be proclaimed*; took a particular care to have speedily a fast ordered, and notified to the people by those public officers who were wont to proclaim the decrees and edicts of the king and his council. *And published*: this ingemination confirms the thing, and adds somewhat for showing the deep sense the king had

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both of his own and his people's sins, danger, and duty in this exigent. *By the decree of the king and his nobles;* it was an act of the king and council, and that which passed them with good liking, they relished the thing, as the Hebrew phrase importeth. *Let neither man:* men have sinned and provoked God to this high displeasure, it does most principally concern them to repent, fast, and mourn for their sins, that God may pardon and spare them. *Nor beast:* these, comprised in the threat, and likely to be involved in the common danger, are put under a fast; this the general, which is afterwards expressed more particularly, *herd* and *flock;* let none of these, whether at home in the stall, or abroad in the fold and herd. *Taste any thing:* this is referred by some to the strictness with which men were bound to keep this fast; but this may be a general prohibition, explained by what follows, let all, man and beast, forbear to eat or drink, that the fast might be most solemn, that the cry of man, seconded with the cry of hungry cattle, might enter the ears of God, who preserveth man and beast.

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto
e Is. 58. 6. God: yea, e let them turn every one from
f Is. 59. 6. his evil way, and from f the violence that *is* in their hands.

But let man, every man, from the greatest, the king on the throne, to the least, the beggar on the dunghill, put off his usual and softer habit, and afflict himself in coarsest garments. *And beast;* their horses, in which they gloried much, their camels also, both which they adorned with rich and costly clothing in their stables, and with as rich furniture for saddles, bridles, and trappings when they were used abroad, now all, in testimony of a hearty repentance, must clothe *with sackcloth;* the clothing of beasts must witness for men. *Cry mightily unto God:* beasts in distress and starving cry to God, as the young ravens and hungry lions, and so here beasts of the herd and flock cry. But it is to be referred to men lamenting their sins, deprecating judgments, imploring mercy with all earnestness and vehemency of desire, called here a crying mightily to God, as chap. i. 5. *Let them turn;* the inhabitants of Nineveh, whether traders, or who live at their ease and pleasure there, let them reform and amend their doings. *Every one:* the edict for ceasing from violence is as full and particular as the edict for fasting, all are commanded to be just and righteous. *From his evil way;* not cease from single acts only, but change the course and habitual manner of life, called here their *way:* every one was vicious, and each one almost had some particular method of sin, which was his way of sinning; this must they turn from. *Violence:* oppression and rapine, as a chief sin, is here particularly mentioned: compare this with Nah. iii. 1. *That is in their hands;* which acted by them is still in their hands, both in the guilt of it, the effects of it, and as publicly known as what is seen in a man's hands: see Psal. vii. 3.

g 2 Sam. 12. 22. Joel 2. 14. 9 g Who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

Here is the ground of the Ninevites' fasting and praying, there is a possibility that they may escape; there is fairly argued a probability, for why should the ruin beforehand be threatened, but to give warning so many days ere it come, unless it be to try us, whether we will fast, pray, repent, and amend? and though Jonah had no commission to promise them a deliverance, yet it is very like he acquainted them with the merciful and gracious nature of his God. This speech of theirs (see Joel ii. 14; 2 Sam. xii. 22) includes both faith and doubt, yet faith prevailing to the use of means. *Who can tell if God will turn and repent?* if we return by repentance, to which God would now call us by this minatory admonition, he may perhaps return to us in mercy, and by the event show it was not an irrevocable sentence passed against us. *And turn away from his fierce anger;* forbear to execute that terrible menace of overthrowing us in his just and hot displeasure against our sins: this explains that which he had called repenting before, which being here, as elsewhere it is, attributed to God after the manner of man's speaking, must be interpreted as becometh his immutability and majesty. *That we perish not;* suddenly, exemplarily, temporally, and eternally, all which impenitent sinners deserve, Ninevites were in danger of, and the provoked justice of God would have brought upon them if they had not repented.

10 ¶ h And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

h Jer. 18. 8. Amos 7. 3, 6

God saw; not only with naked and single intuition, but he saw and approved, was singularly well pleased with that he saw. *Their works:* works, not words, are sure signs of what men are: humbling themselves to the dust, extraordinary fasting, and crying unto God, these were some of their works; but God saw more than these external, professing works. *They turned from their evil way:* see ver. 8: they did heartily, presently, and universally turn from the ways of impiety against God, of injustice against man, from the ways of luxury and pride, from all their violence against man; without this all the rest had been not worth the observing, nor would God have regarded it. *God repented:* this is spoken as before, ver. 9, (and as his seeing is attributed to him,) after the manner of man, and must be applied unto our unchangeable God so as may not reflect any blemish upon his truth, constancy, or immutability. Though he is said to repent, it is not as man doth, who may, through frailty of his nature, lie; but our God is not a man, or as the son of man, that he should change or lie. *Of the evil* of punishment, *that he had said,* threatened by Jonah's mouth, *that he would do unto them;* to sinning Ninevites, who did rightly conjecture that it was possible this dreadful message might be a minatory warning, and might be big of a merciful condition of pardon if they repented, and there was no other way to make the discovery of this but that they took. For he will not deal with penitent sinners as with impenitent; though his justice would not have spared unrepenting citizens, his mercy is so great he will not destroy repenting sinners.

CHAP. IV.

Jonah, repining at God's mercy, 1—3, *is reproved by the type of a gourd,* 4—11.

BUT it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

But, Heb. *And, it,* the Divine forbearance sparing the great and sinful Nineveh, *displeased Jonah;* was very disagreeable to Jonah's hasty and fierce temper, to his love of his own credit, and it afflicted him to see Nineveh survive the forty days limited for their continuance. *Exceedingly;* it was a great affliction to him, so highly distempered is Jonah at God's goodness to a repenting city. *And he was very angry:* this kindled a fire in his breast which was made up of envy, indignation, and grief, for that it was not done, and desire that yet it may be done. Jonah would yet have Nineveh a sacrifice to God's justice, and an eternal monument of his truth who foretold its ruin.

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I a fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a b gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

a ch. 1. 3. b Ex. 34. 6. Ps. 86. 5. Joel 2. 13.

And he prayed; in a strange distempered humour sets about this work, and accordingly manageth it; when he designs to pray, his turbulent affections hurry him into unseemly contests and quarrels with God, yet since he fell on his knees with purpose to pray to God, the Scriptures report it as his prayer to the Lord. *And said;* either spake it out in words, or else thus reasoned within himself, and now leaves it recorded what were his words, or his thoughts. *I pray thee, O Lord:* this begins his complaint, or quarrel against the Lord. *Was not this my saying?* did I not think

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of this? was I not apprehensive that it would be so? I should preach avenging justice, and thou wouldst exercise pardoning mercy; thy pardon would contradict my preaching? *In my country;* either in Canaan, or Galilee, or in Gath-hepher, where had I died, and never been a prophet to Nineveh, I had ever had the reputation of a true prophet, but now at Nineveh I shall be reported a false dreamer. *Therefore I fled;* there was reason for what I did when I declined the message, and fled away from thy presence: he seems to justify that flight which God condemned in him by a miraculous punishment inflicted on him. *Unto Tarshish:* see chap. i. 3. *For I knew;* he might know it by God's dealings with so exorbitantly passionate a man as Jonah himself was, but he knew it from God's account of himself, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, and many other places of the Scripture. *That thou art a gracious God,* who hath bowels of compassion, a heart that is a fountain of tender mercy. *And merciful;* readily expressing his compassions toward sinners that need and sue for mercy. *Slow to anger;* who dost wait long for the sinner's return, and dost not hasten thy executions. *And of great kindness;* and when provoked thou art yet of an infinite goodness, lenity, and kindness, and forgivest the sinner that repenteth. *And repentest thee of the evil:* see chap. iii. 9, 10.

c 1 Kings 19. 4. d ver. 8.

3 [c]Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for [d]*it is* better for me to die than to live.

Therefore. Heb. *And, now;* now presently, let no time slip. *O Lord,* who art, as the only Author, so the great Arbiter of life; the mighty and eternal God. His sovereignty was enough to command Jonah's reverence, but Jonah forgets himself and his God. *Take, I beseech thee, my life from me:* in a peevish humour Jonah is weary of his life, and prays for death; yet in this request some mixture there is of grace with passion; somewhat of mercy from God to Jonah, in that he doth not give him up to his own passion; and Jonah, as weary as he is, yet will live till God will take away his life. *It is better for me to die;* it is more desirable to me to die and be buried, for then my prophesying that never came to pass will be soon forgotten; however, I shall never more blush at the rebukes the world will cast upon me. *Than to live,* disgraced and upbraided by atheists and hardened sinners, who will reflect the lie upon me or on my God.

‖ Or, *Art thou greatly angry?*

4 ¶ Then said the LORD, ‖Doest thou well to be angry?

Then, so soon as Jonah's haste had sinned against his God and his own life, *said the Lord;* either by voice audible to Jonah, or rather by his Spirit; that Spirit which gave Jonah order to go and preach, now takes order to debate the case. *The Lord,* who is now, as Jonah needed he should be, gracious, slow to anger, and of great kindness toward Jonah, else he had not lived a moment longer to repent him of his last sins in this matter. *Doest thou well to be angry?* is thy vehement anger warrantable? or will this anger of thine do good to thyself or others? Think well of it, whether thou dost act like a prophet, like one that feareth God, or like a man, in this thine anger?

5 So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

So, when the Lord had taken notice and reproved the passions of Jonah, and made some impression on his mind for the present, *Jonah went out of the city;* discontented in himself, and doubtful of the issue whether God would be more tender of the life of multitudes or of Jonah's credit, the prophet withdrew himself, and waits; how long we have not any ground of conjecture. *And sat;* put himself into a posture of waiting, and therefore, to repose himself, rather sat than stood. *On the east side of the city;* which in likelihood was some higher ground, the city standing on the east banks of Tigris; the further he went east, the higher the ground was, and the safer, from the uncertain manner of the city's overthrow. *Made him a booth;* some small and mean shed for shade and shelter, usually made of green boughs. *And sat under it in the shadow;* these boughs, thus pitched and made into a booth, afforded some shadow, in which Jonah reposed himself. *Till he might see what would become of the city:* by this passage it should seem the forty days were not fully expired, nor yet wanted much of expiring, and Jonah seems resolved there to expect the event of the city.

6 And the LORD God prepared a ‖†gourd, and made *it* to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah †was exceeding glad of the gourd.

‖ Or, *palmerist.* † Heb. *Kikaion.* † Heb. *rejoiced with great joy.*

Prepared; commanded that in the place where Jonah's booth stood, this herb, or spreading plant, should spring up to be a shade when the gathered boughs are withered. *A gourd:* it is not certain what this was; some say ivy; others say it was palma christi, or five-leaved, whose leaves are so set as to resemble a man's hand, or a wild vine or colocyntha; nor is it very material we should search further into the nature of this קִיקָיוֹן in the text, it was some wild plant with long and broad leaves, which suddenly grew, spread itself, and made a good shade. *Made it to come up;* God gave it a speedy growth, and directed the growth that it should cover the top of the booth, and be a shade to Jonah against the vehemence of the sun, which did shine very parchingly hot in those countries. *To deliver him from his grief;* to give some ease to his mind, refresh his natural spirits, much discomposed by the violence of his passions and by the violent heat of the sun. It is probable this grief was some extreme fit of continued head-ache. *Exceeding glad;* as vehement in his joy now as in his grief before; he was a man of great affections, whatever moved them. *Of the gourd;* his ease by the gourd made him glad of it, and I observe that here is no mention made of Jonah's seeing God in it.

7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

But God, by the same power which caused the gourd suddenly, and to Jonah's great joy, to spring, grow, and spread itself as a canopy, *prepared* also *a worm;* what, is not said, some contemptible grub that was not seen by Jonah; which early next morning, i. e. by break of day, bit the root, so that the whole gourd suddenly withered.

8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a ‖vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, [e]*It is* better for me to die than to live.

‖ Or, *silent.* e ver. 3.

And it came to pass, after all these passages both in chastising and refreshing Jonah, and after all Jonah's deportment under them, but more immediately after the withering of the gourd and the loss of the shadow. *When the sun did arise;* with the rising of the sun, so early in the morning as the sun arose. *God prepared;* by a particular command from God. *A vehement east wind;* a dry, scorching, blasting wind wherever it blows, but more than ordinarily so in those climates, and most so when sent out on such an errand by the Lord. *Silent,* saith the Hebrew. Ruffling winds usually cool the air, but the silent, which blow with even tenor, rather increase the heat of the air. However, this wind was sent to do so, and certainly did it. *The sun beat upon the head of Jonah;* did perpetually and vehemently shine, or point its burning beams, upon the undefended head of Jonah: no wind to cool, no shade to cover, scorched Jonah. *He fainted;* overcome by the heat, he was no longer able to stand, but as a fainting man fell down ready to die. His strength of body and his courage of mind also failed him. *Wished in himself to die;* in this weakness and pain, in this perplexity of body and mind, he comes once more to a downright impatience and weariness of life. *It is better for me to die than to live;* and here he will justify his passion, it is best of the two; but Jonah must be wiser, and humbler, and more merciful too ere he die. Before God hath done with him, he will teach him to value his own life more, and to be more tender of the life of others.

9 And God said to Jonah, ‖Doest thou

‖ Or, *Art thou greatly angry?*

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well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, ‖I do well to be angry, *even* unto death.

‖ Or, *I am greatly angry.*

Doest thou well to be angry? see ver. 4. *For the gourd:* God adds this to the same question before proposed, that Jonah might be his own judge, and at once condemn his own passions, justify God's patience and mercy, and submit himself with satisfaction in that God had spared Nineveh. *And he,* Jonah, *said;* passionately answers for himself: whereas he was silent, ver. 4, now he is out of all patience, and quarrels highly against God, who had spared Nineveh, which Jonah thought should have been consumed as Sodom, or as the old world; but he feels in himself a heat almost as devouring as he wished to the Ninevites; thus unexpectedly crossed he flies out against God himself. *I do well to be angry, even unto death;* if in the violence of this passion I should die, (as we know some have,) yet I were not to blame: thus he tacitly chargeth God with hardly using Jonah, and breaking his heart, though he had come a long journey to deliver a message he would fain have been excused from. So exorbitant and unreasonable is Jonah's anger.

10 Then said the LORD, Thou hast ‖had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which †came up in a night, and perished in a night:

‖ Or, *spared.*

† Heb. *was the son of the night.*

Then, when Jonah had showed his affection of love and pity to the gourd, *said the Lord;* showed Jonah the little reason he had to concern himself for the gourd, and the great reason God had on his side in pitying and sparing Nineveh. *Thou,* a man, of narrow and uneven compassions, *hast* both *had* and showed *pity on the gourd,* a common and worthless weed. *For the which thou hast not laboured;* it was not the work of thy hand to set it. *Neither madest it grow;* nor didst thou water, and give growth to it; it was not thine. *Which came up,* as a mushroom, was the birth of one night, *and perished,* died, and was only fit for the fire when withered, *in a night;* with equal suddenness withered.

11 And should not I spare Nineveh, [f]that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons [g]that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and *also* much [h]cattle?

[f] Ch. 1. 2. & 3. 2. 3.
[g] Deut. 1. 39.
[h] Ps. 36. 6. & 145. 9.

And should not; may not by virtue of my sovereignty, pity, spare, or pardon if I will? or is there not good reason to incline me to do it, and to justify my doing it? *I;* God of infinite compassions and goodness. *Spare Nineveh,* a mighty city: Jonah, thou hast pity on a sorry shrub, and shall thy God be by thee confined that he should not have pity on a vast and mighty city? *That great city;* a stately structure, which cost immense treasures, was the labour of almost one million and half of labourers, through eight years, the great wonder of that world. Thy gourd, Jonah, may not be named in the day with this; only in a passion this must be ruined to please thee, and thy gourd must not lest it displease thee. Is this equal? wouldst thou have me less merciful to such a goodly city, than thou art to a weed? *Wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand:* it was a single gourd Jonah pitied, and is angry that it was smitten; here are many hundred thousands of men and women, which I have pitied and spared. Here are more than sixscore thousand innocents who are infants, who are my creatures made for eternity, who grow slowly under my care and charge, whom I value as my own; and, peevish Jonah, wilt thou not allow me (who can) to show pity to mine own invaluable creatures, when thou pitiest what is neither thine nor valuable? Had it been thine, this might have required thy affection; had it been of worth, this might have excused thy earnestness for it; but all this aggravates thy fierce and cruel passion against Nineveh. *And also much cattle:* beside men, women, and children who are in Nineveh, there are many others of my creatures that are not sinful, and my tender mercies are and shall be over all my works. If thou wouldst be their butcher, yet I will be their God. I know what becomes me, God of prophets; and though once I hearkened to Elijah to send fire from heaven on contemptuous sinners, yet it is not meet to send fire from heaven upon repenting Nineveh. I know how to impress their minds with a continued belief that Jonah came from God to preach repentance, and that it was their repentance prevented their overthrow; I can salve thy credit, Jonah, and yet not humour thy cruelty. Go, Jonah, rest thyself content, and be thankful: that goodness, mercy, and kindness which spared Nineveh, hath spared thee in this thy inexcusable frowardness. I will be to repenting Nineveh what I am to thee, God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and I will turn from the evil thou and they deserve.

MICAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

IT is by custom become necessary, in writing the arguments on the several prophets, to tell of what country the prophet was; and where the Holy Ghost observes it we may not slight it. Our prophet was, no doubt, of the tribe of Judah, but of what note his family was for riches, authority, or credit appears not to us; these might be eminent for any thing I know, but not mentioned, because his call to, his abilities for, and his discharge of the prophetic office, needed no credentials or countenance from any such external advantages. It is unquestionable he came from God; and his whole prophecy is of Divine authority; Jeremiah gave testimony to it, and cites some considerable authority from the opinion of certain elders of that time who held him to be a prophet sent of God, Jer. xxvi. 17—19. He was not, as some were, confined to one kingdom, but had his commission enlarged to preach to the kingdom of Israel and Judah, which were now grown old in sin, and universally corrupted with idolatry and impiety, with inhumanity and cruel oppression, with falsehood and deceits, ingratitude to God and forgetfulness of him, vain confidences in the lying promises of false prophets and in their ceremonial services; all which Micah doth (as faithful in his office) openly, severely, and impartially discover, reprove, and threaten in princes, prophets, and all the people of both kingdoms; which are so closely joined by the prophet, that it requires a very steady and quick eye to discern which of the two is most directly concerned in the prophet's discourse, or whether both are equally intended, yet so as in order of time Israel first, and Judah next. His phrase, and connexions, and transitions are many times obscure, and fairly capable of different accounts, as every one will see, who can and will read the Hebrew text, and the paraphrases or commentaries of men learned in that kind of learning. The prophet's style is very lofty, as is his contemporary Isaiah, many times, and I little doubt they were acquainted and conversed with each other: his discourses have a very particular respect to the temper of those times he lived in, and will be clearest understood by those that do distinctly read over and digest the history of Israel and Judah,

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as they are reported in 1 Kings and 2 Kings, from the first apostacy of Israel from God and their revolt from the house of David. But more especially the stories of Judah, through the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; and of Israel, through the times of Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea; in which most of the sins here reproved and threatened did reign, and which were, whilst Micah lived, punished according to his word with sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity: he lived to see Israel made a desolation and a hissing, and survived this dead kingdom about ten years. Judah's calamity followed surely, and not slowly, for within one hundred and thirty or one hundred and thirty-three years Jerusalem was ruined and the Jews carried captives to Babylon. Many passages of our prophet have both their literal and historical reference, and their spiritual and mystical: in this latter I have been sparing, because the design of the present work was to give the plain literal sense, yet I have seldom (if ever) omitted to point out the mystery. If any one see more into this, and be larger in it than the author, let such one know, the author had his reasons why he said so little, though he saw more, of the mystical reference of the words to the Messiah, his birth, his kingdom, the redemption of the elect, the calling of the Gentiles, and other evangelical truths contained in our prophet, who did certainly preach the gospel as well as the law to his hearers.

CHAP. I.

The time when Micah prophesied, 1. *Micah showeth the wrath of God against Israel and Judah for idolatry,* 2—9. *A lamentation for them,* 10—16.

B. C. cir. 750. THE word of the LORD that came to [a] Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah, [b] which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

a Jer. 26. 18.
b Amos 1. 1.

The word of the Lord that came: thus Hosea begins his prophecy, chap. i. 1, and Joel, chap. i. 1, and Jonah, chap. i. 1, and Zephaniah, chap. i. 1, which see. *Micah:* though Hierom, Epiphanius, and Dorotheus are said to report this Micah to be the same with the son of Imlah, 1 Kings xxii. 8, yet R. Sol. Jarchi's reason why this could not be is satisfactory, for one generation and almost a half intervened between Ahab and Jotham; Ahab died about A. M. 3046, Jotham began to reign about A. M. 3190, by which it appears there were one hundred and forty-four years between Micaiah the son of Imlah and Micah our prophet. *The Morasthite:* whether Mareshah, rebuilt by Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xi. 8, (called also Beth-gebarim in after-time,) of which ver. 14 of this chapter, or whether Moresheth, of which ver. 15, gave him this surname, and whether because Micah was born there or else did dwell there, is not easily resolved, nor material if it were resolved. *In the days of Jotham:* it is not said what year of Jotham this prophet begun, it is probable it was about the beginning of Jotham's reign, A. M. 3190, of which we have this character, 2 Kings xv. 34, 35. *He did right,* &c., *yet the high places were not removed.* Religion was not wholly corrupted as in Israel, yet was it exceedingly abased with their own mixtures. *Ahaz;* the very worst of all Judah's kings, all things considered; he brought the Baalitical idolatry into Judah. *Hezekiah;* the best son of the worst father, who reformed Judah. How long Micah prophesied during his reign we can but conjecture, possibly till the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. So this prophet may be supposed to have prophesied sixteen years in Jotham's time, as many under Ahaz, and fourteen under Hezekiah, in all forty-six years, and survived the captivity of Israel ten years, which he lamented as well as foretold. *Kings of Judah;* Judah only named, but Benjamin is included. *Which he saw:* see Amos i. 1. *Concerning Samaria;* the metropolis of the kingdom of the ten tribes, and by a well-known figure put for the whole kingdom, as *Jerusalem,* chief city of Judah, is, by the same figure, put for the whole kingdom. As both had linked together in sinning, God doth link them together in suffering, and commands Micah to do so.

2 † Hear, all ye people; [c] hearken, O earth, and † all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD [d] be witness against you, the Lord from [e] his holy temple.

† Heb. *Hear, ye people, all of them.*
c Deut. 32. 1. Is. 1. 2.
† Heb. *the fulness thereof.*
d Ps. 50. 7. Mal. 3. 5.
e Ps. 11. 4. Jonah 2. 7. Hab. 2. 20.

Hear: the prophet here by proclamation requires earnest attention to his word. So Moses, Deut. iv. 26; xxx. 19; xxxii. 1; so the psalmist, Psal. l. 1, 4; and so Isaiah, chap. i. 2; xxxiv. 1. *All ye people;* either all the people of both kingdoms, all Israel and Judah, or else universally all people of all kingdoms whatever, both of that present age and all of future ages. *Hearken, O earth:* it may be taken for the meaner sort of people, the commonalty; but I rather incline to interpret it as both a tacit reproof of the deafness of this sinful and hardened people, with whom Micah now contends, and an appeal to the senseless creatures, or a summons to bring them in evidences for God against those kingdoms. *All that therein is;* animate or inanimate creatures, all that are on the earth. If we interpret earth for the meaner sort of people, then this fulness of the earth will be the whole multitude of the people. It is a lofty strain, such as those of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 1, David, Psal. l. 1, Isaiah, chap. i. 1, 2, and Jeremiah, chap. vi. 19. *Let the Lord God;* the mighty, holy, gracious, and faithful God, Lord of heaven and earth; who knows all your ways, who is a just judge, and a severe avenger of obdurate sinners. *Be witness against you,* by his word, the voice of his law, by his prophets whom he hath sent, by the judgments he doth execute according to his menaces; as by his sovereignty he is supreme judge, so by his omniscience and truth he is an authentic witness against you, O house of Jacob. *From his holy temple;* either from his temple at Jerusalem, or else from heaven, as Psal. xi. 4; Hab. ii. 20.

3 For, behold, [f] the LORD cometh forth out of his [g] place, and will come down, and tread upon the [h] high places of the earth.

f Is. 26. 21.
g Ps. 115. 3.
h Deut. 32. 13. & 33. 29. Amos 4. 13.

For, behold; there is great reason for my earnestness with all people, and therefore once more I advise you to consider it well. Behold, attend to what is said. *The Lord cometh forth;* who is Judge himself, Psal. l. 1, 4, whose holy majesty you have provoked to displeasure, who is a jealous God, and hath an almighty power to dash his enemies into pieces. He cometh forth as a judge prepared to hear, determine, and punish. Now when God, who is in all places at all times, is said to come forth, it is not to be meant of his leaving a place where he was, to come to a place where before he was not; but it is to be understood of his discovering his presence by some effects of it, which before in that place were not discovered. *Out of his place;* heaven, the place of his glorious throne. *Come down;* show by the effects of his power, justice, and wisdom that he is more eminently present there. *Tread upon;* trample under foot, stain, abase, and break. *The high places of the earth;* all that is high, excellent, and matter of your glorying, whether the flourishing state of your kingdoms, or the power of your kings, or strength of your fortresses, temples, and altars, or cities and palaces. In that day the haughtiness of man shall be laid low, and the pride of man shall be brought down, Isa. ii. 17. Your sins will procure this to you, O Samaria and Jerusalem, of which God is my witness I have plainly told you.

4 And [i] the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, *and* as the waters *that are* poured down † a steep place.

i Judg. 5. 5. Ps. 97. 5. Is. 64. 1, 2, 3. Amos 9. 5. Hab. 3. 6, 10.
† Heb. *a descent.*

The mountains shall be molten: if literally understood, we know it hath been so: when God will kindle that fire which shall burn up the earth, and the works of it, as he will when he cometh finally to judge the world, it shall be done again. But figuratively mountains are mighty states and kingdoms, flourishing with prosperity, and which do think the foundation of this sure as mountains. So chap. vi. 1, 2; Hab. iii. 6; Isa. ii. 14. Or possibly these mountains may be,

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by a synecdoche, put for those who dwell on them, mountaineers, who were usually more fierce, secure, hardy, and of difficult access, and therefore less regardful of threats and punishments. *Shall be molten under him:* which way soever you take mountains, yet the effect of God's powerful anger and justice shall be this, they shall be no more able to bear his indignation, or withstand it, than that which like wax melts before a strong fire. *The valleys;* which either are emblems of the lower sort of men, or the men that dwell in the valleys with their cities built there, which might hope to escape the storm, lying more under covert. But such shall be the sweeping, searching, and rapid storm of God's judgments, that no places, no persons shall either withstand or divert them. *Shall be cleft;* or rent in sunder, broken up, as the word Gen. vii. 11, and slide away. *As wax,* which doth easily and speedily dissolve, and run before the fire. *And as the waters that are poured down a steep place;* which immediately spreads itself and runs down the precipice, not able to keep together in one body, but scattered one part from other, loseth itself without remedy; so shall the glory and strength of Samaria melt away before the fire of God's displeasure executed by Shalmaneser, and by Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar on Judah.

5 For the transgression of Jacob *is* all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What *is* the transgression of Jacob? *is it* not Samaria? and what *are* the high places of Judah? *are they* not Jerusalem?

For the transgression; the singular for the plural, the many transgressions committed amongst them; but especially that flood of iniquity which, springing up in Samaria, did overflow the whole kingdom, idolatry, pride, luxury, cruelty, and oppression. *Of Jacob;* the sons of Jacob: the ten tribes most likely are here meant by Jacob. *Is all this;* all these, many and great, inevitable and irresistible, judgments of God foretold, and which will overtake and utterly ruin these sinners. *The house of Israel;* the people of the kingdom of Judah, called here by the name of Israel. Or else this and the former phrase may comprehend the twelve tribes, which were fallen from God's law and worship, and be an elegant ingemination to confirm the thing spoken. *What is the transgression?* or, *who is,* i. e. the spring and cause of that overflowing transgression? who brought in the abominable idolatry? *Of Jacob:* here is meant the kingdom of the ten tribes, the head of which was Samaria, where the kings of that kingdom had their royal residence, where they worshipped idols, whence they issued out their edicts, and which became example to the rest of the Israelitish kingdom. *What are the high places?* or, *who is,* i. e. cause of the high places, and the idolatry there practised? *Jerusalem;* which was chief city of that kingdom, and place where their kings dwelt; had the same influence on that kingdom as Samaria had on the ten tribes; there was the example they imitated, thence the laws they obeyed contrary to God's law.

k 2 Kings 19. 25. ch. 3. 12.

6 Therefore I will make Samaria [k] as an heap of the field, *and* as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will [l] discover the foundations thereof.

l Ezek. 13. 14.

Therefore; for these sins of Samaria, and the kingdom of Israel. *I will make;* not by an immediate hand from heaven, but by the Assyrians under the conduct of Shalmaneser, they shall do it as my servants, saith the Lord. *Samaria as an heap of the field;* much like Isa. xxv. 2; that beautiful city shall be made, and so left, as a ruinous heap in the field. *And as plantings of a vineyard:* in planting vineyards, they did dig up the earth, and cast it up in hillocks, cast out all the stones; so shall they make this city. *I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley:* the city was built on a high hill, and a deep valley beneath it; now when it was sacked by the Assyrians, they pulled down the buildings, and cast the stones thereof into that valley; so God did by them throw down the stones of Samaria. *And I will discover the foundations thereof;* raze the walls, fortresses, and public buildings of this city to the very foundations of it, nor leave one stone upon another, as Matt. xxiv. 2; Luke xix. 44; in a word, here is foretold an utter desolation upon Samaria for her sin, such a desolation as shall not leave the least footsteps of Samaria in the place where once it stood.

7 And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the [m] hires thereof shall be burned with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered *it* of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot.

m Hos. 2. 5, 12.

All the graven images; erected in honour to the idols they worshipped, which usually were the images or similitudes resembling their idols, their gods of silver, gold, or stone and brass, or wood. *Shall be beaten to pieces;* pulled out of their chapels, shrines, or repositories by the conquering Assyrians, who would, as was customary with such nations, deal with the gods as with enemies conquered, trample upon them, and use them most contemptibly; and when they break into pieces idols of rich materials, it was to carry them away with them as their booty; others were broken in contempt of them. *All the hires,* or rewards, or gifts, which idolaters thought their idols gave them, as Hos. ii. 5; or the rich gifts given for the honour and service of the idols by deceived idolaters; or all the wealth Israel got by leagues with idolaters. *Shall be burnt with the fire;* when their cities or temples are burnt, as no doubt many were burnt by the Assyrian before he could reduce them to obedience, in which conflagrations many rich donatives belonging to idols were consumed to ashes, or melted down. *And all the idols thereof will I lay desolate;* thus shall the idols of Samaria be made desolate, i. e. their temples burnt, their images either beaten in pieces in contempt, or to be carried away (if the materials they were made of were worth the carriage); however, they shall neither remain, nor be worshipped any more in Israel or Samaria, but be carried away captives with their captive worshippers. *For she,* the kingdom of the ten tribes, or Samaria. *gathered it,* their wealth, or the rich presents made to their idols, or both, *of the hire of an harlot;* as harlots get rich gifts of their lovers, so did this deceived people think, and say, that their idols gave them the wealth they had; or else as impudent adulteresses, that hire lewd men to come in to them; so this hire was that these blind idolaters (like shameless adulteresses) gave to their idols. *And they,* these rich presents, *shall return to the hire of an harlot;* shall be either turned by the Assyrians to the service and honour of their idols, presented as gifts in acknowledgment of their greatness and prosperity, to be the blessings their idols have given to them, as Hos. x. 6; or else thus, as what is got by harlots brings shame and a curse with it, and never continues long, but is as basely wasted as it was gotten, so shall it be with all the ill-gotten goods of these Samaritan idolaters, and all their wealth.

8 Therefore [n] I will wail and howl, [o] I will go stripped and naked: [p] I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the †owls.

n Is. 21. 3. & 22. 4. Jer. 4. 19. o Is. 20. 2, 3, 4. p Job 30. 29. Ps. 102. 6.

† Heb. *daughters of the wel.*

Therefore, because of those dreadful slaughters and devastations made in Israel and Samaria, *I will wail,* solemnly, as when they who are skilful in lamentation do at funerals bewail in most affective manner to stir up the like sorrow in others: see Amos v. 16. *And howl;* the same in a word of like sense, to ascertain the thing, and to intimate the doubled sorrow, the multiplied miseries of this people. *I will go stripped and naked;* as one spoiled of his clothes by force, or as one that in bitterness of passion hath cast off his upper garment, or as if discomposed in mind through the greatness of his vexations; now this the prophet either speaks as fellow sufferer with them, or as intimating what they should be reduced to at last: so Isa. xx. 2, 3: whether of these, or whether both, I determine not. *Dragons:* see Mal. i. 3: rather *jackals,* which haunt desolate places, and make great and hideous noise by night, by their wailing, or doleful cries, in which it is said they answer one another, and fill the air with the sound and travellers with fear: these creatures are between a fox and wolf for bigness, and seem somewhat like each in qualities, and probably their noise may be as mixed of the barking of the fox and howl

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ing of the wolf. It is possible the prophet by this kind of wailing would intimate the near approach of the Assyrian lion, hungering and thirsting, and pursuing the prey; as the jackal runs a little before the lion, so this wailing of the prophet should be followed very suddenly with the roaring of the lion. *Owls;* a melancholy creature, and loves night, and makes a most unpleasant noise, haunts desolate places, and so fitly is an emblem of Israel's doleful, desolate state: others render it ostrich, which makes a doleful cry in the deserts: either will fit the place.

‖ Or, she is grievously sick of her wounds. q 2 Kings 18. 13. Is. 8. 7, 8.

9 For ‖ her wound *is* incurable; for q it is come unto Judah; he is come unto the gate of my people, *even* to Jerusalem.

Her wound is incurable; the wounds of Samaria and the ten tribes; her own sins, God's just displeasure, and the enemy's rage have deeply wounded her, she is senseless, impenitent, and furious against her Physician, and she shall at last die by sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity. *It is come unto Judah;* the contagion of her sins, and the indignation of God against it, and the enemy's successes, viz. Sennacherib's, or Nebuchadnezzar's, like a flood have reached to Judah also; and this is the reason why the prophet foretells such mourning, and is willing to personate it to awaken both kingdoms to repent and turn to God. *He is come;* the insulting, conquering, and cruel enemy, or, in the neuter gender, it, i. e. the evil, is come, i. e. in the prophetic style, will certainly and suddenly come. *Unto the gate of my people;* either signifying the Assyrians besieging Jerusalem, as Sennacherib son of Shalmaneser did some few years after the sack of Samaria, or else by *gate of my people* is meant the city where the sovereign court of judicature to the whole kingdom is, denoting the victories of the Assyrian over the rest of the kingdom of Judah, or else the victories of Nebuchadnezzar. *Even to Jerusalem:* this seems added to explain the former phrase.

r 2 Sam. 1. 20. ‖ That is, *dust.* s Jer. 6. 26.

10 ¶ r Declare ye *it* not at Gath, weep ye not at all: in the house of ‖ Aphrah s roll thyself in the dust.

Declare ye it not at Gath; do what you can to keep your griefs to yourselves, let them not be public, that the Philistines, your bitter enemies, should know how sad it is with you and rejoice at it. Gath was a principal city of the Philistines, and though this only is mentioned the rest are understood: such phrase you have 2 Sam. i. 20. *Weep ye not at all;* you that are of Israel or Judah, make no public weeping, that your cries and tears should inform your enemies in Palestine how deplorable your state is, let not your griefs be their joys. *In the house of Aphrah:* we render it as a proper name of some city or town; though of no great note, yet we meet with one, 1 Sam. xiii. 23, in the tribe of Benjamin; a second we find in Manasseh's lot, and was the place where Gideon's father dwelt, Judg. vi. 11: these towns were somewhat remote from the Philistines, and there the prophet does direct them to weep with the greatest expressions of it, and to keep it private from the Philistines. Others account the word to be a common name denoting *dust*, and so give the sense, in the *house of dust* roll thyself in *dust*. *Roll thyself*, or, *I have rolled myself*, viz. in compassion to the miserable Israelites, or as a pattern to which they shall conform; so the word as written, but as by direction of the Masorets it is read, and as here it is rendered, *roll thyself*, it directs and foretells; it foretells what they shall do at last, and directs what they should do at present. They shall be brought to sit, nay, to wallow in the dust, and in foresight of this it would become them to sit in the dust now.

‖ Or, *thou that dwellest fairly.* † Heb. *inhabitress.* t Is. 20. 4. & 47. 2, 3. Jer. 13. 22. Nah. 3. 5. ‖ Or, *the country of flocks.* ‖ Or, *a place near.*

11 Pass ye away, ‖ thou † inhabitant of Saphir, having thy t shame naked: the inhabitant of ‖ Zaanan came not forth in the mourning of ‖ Beth-ezel; he shall receive of you his standing.

Pass ye away: the imperative is here put for the future, and the prophet does here foretell and threaten what shall befall this people, they shall go before the enemy into captivity. *Saphir* denotes either the beautiful and pleasant habitation, and so may be applied to any pleasant seat, such as were many in Judea; such were Samaria and Jerusalem, which perhaps are here intended. Or else it is the proper name of some particular town or city: who read Eusebius will meet with such a village in the mountains between Ashkelon and Hebron, or (as later it is called) Eleutheropolis. *Having thy shame naked;* stripped by thy conquering enemy, so that thou shalt not have so much left as shall cover thy nakedness; with shame shalt thou be thus led into captivity, and change all thy beauty into shameful nakedness. *Zaanan;* a place rich in pastures and sheep, say some; others take it for the proper name of a particular place in the tribe of Judah; it is likely at this time it might be some considerable garrison full of people and soldiers. *Came not forth;* neither sent out succours to relieve their neighbouring besieged town Beth-ezel, but stood on their own guard, nor yet durst send out any to condole the captive state of their neighbours. *Beth-ezel;* a strong town taken and wasted by the Assyrians, the people carried captive under the eye of the inhabitants of Zaanan, who mean time dare not stir or make many signs of sorrow. *He;* the invading enemy, say some, others say it is the inhabitant of Zaanan. *Shall receive of you his standing:* who refer this to the enemy make this the sense, viz. That the enemy should make his stay among them till he had conquered, spoiled, and captivated them; or, that he should by severe dealing make them pay dear for their obstinacy in defending their town against his forces, that he should strip them of all to recompense his expenses of treasure, time, and blood in taking them. But they that refer this to Zaanan and its inhabitants make this the sense, That they should take their measures, and judge what the enemy would do against them by that which he had done against Beth-ezel their neighbour.

‖ Or, *was grieved* u Amos 3. 6.

12 For the inhabitant of Maroth ‖ waited carefully for good: but u evil came down from the LORD unto the gate of Jerusalem.

For; yet, or certainly, as the Hebrew particle is often to be rendered. *The inhabitant;* one put for all, because all should fare alike. *Maroth:* some say it is by transposing the letters put for Ramoth; others say it is, as the word imports, the *grieving*, imbittered cities; others take it for the proper name of some lesser place in Judah. *Waited carefully;* long, earnestly, and patiently. *For good;* for peace, prosperity, and what might make them happy. *Evil;* of trouble, sword, famine, and pestilence, all sorts of evil comprised in this one. *Came down*, in mighty tempests, or as a sweeping rain. *From the Lord;* by his special command and charge, and as a punishment inflicted on them from heaven. *Unto the gate of Jerusalem;* the flood of affliction by the Assyrian swallowed up other towns and cities, and swelled high to the head city Jerusalem, as partly by Sennacherib's invasion, but more fully by Nebuchadnezzar's besieging and taking Jerusalem, and carrying the citizens captive to Babylon.

x 2 Kings 18. 14, 17.

13 O thou inhabitant of x Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast: she *is* the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion: for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee.

Lachish; a very strong fortress on the confines of Judah towards the kingdom of the ten tribes, and which, as it did to the last stand out against Sennacherib, so it is very probable they did boast of their strength and valour. *Bind the chariot to the swift beast;* either to flee from the sword of the enemy, and to seek safety in another country, forsaking their own; or else by way of derision, You will be besieged and cooped up by the Assyrian, and then you may harness your horses or mules to carry you in chariots about your own streets; or else the prophet foretells Sennacherib's commanding post-chariots to carry his messengers to summon Jerusalem to yield up all to him. *She*, Lachish, *is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion;* from thence idolatry spread itself into Judah and Jerusalem. Lachish, nearest to idolatrous Israel, took the infection of them, and conveyed it to Judah, or Jerusalem, here called *the daughter of Zion. For the transgressions*, not only the idolatry, but other sins also, *of Israel*, of the ten tribes, *were found*

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in thee; thou didst receive and worship the same idols that Samaria did.

y 2 Sam. 8. 2. 2 Kings 18. 14, 15, 16. ‖ Or, *for.* ‖ That is, a lie. z Josh. 15. 44.

14 Therefore shalt thou ʸgive presents ‖to Moresheth-gath: the houses of ‖ᶻAchzib *shall be* a lie to the kings of Israel.

Therefore; forasmuch as thou hast imitated Israel in sin, and been at least an occasion to Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah to commit the same sins. *Shalt thou,* Lachish, *give presents:* though I do not remember the sacred story reporting this in matter of fact, we read not what presents were given, or by whom sent, or when; yet as it was foretold by the prophet, so no doubt it was fulfilled, and the inhabitants of Lachish courted the assistance of the Philistines against the Assyrian, and possibly against the Babylonian. *Moresheth-gath;* a known city or town of the Philistines, called here Moresheth-gath to distinguish it from a town of the same name in the tribe of Judah and in the valley of Zephathah, where Asa smote Zerah, the Ethiopian king, who invaded Asa with a million of men. *Achzib:* this was also a city of the Philistines not far from Mareshah, Ashkelon, and Gaza; it was a maritime town and strong. There was another city of that name toward Tyre also, but of this the prophet doth not speak in this place. *A lie;* a lying refuge, or a prop that should break under them that leaned upon it, as Egypt proved a broken reed to Judah when trusted to: in the Hebrew there is an elegant allusion, which the translation cannot express. *To the kings of Israel;* some say it is meant of the kings of Judah, but we find not that Hezekiah made any use of the houses of Achzib when Sennacherib invaded him. It is more probable the kings of the ten tribes are meant, and that Hoshea did rely on Gath, Achzib, &c., and on the friendship of the rest of the Philistines, to join with the Egyptians, or to give them a quiet passage through their country to help Israel against the Assyrian.

a Josh. 15. 44. ‖ Or, *the glory of Israel shall come, &c.* b 2 Chron. 11. 7.

15 Yet will I bring an heir unto thee, O inhabitant of ᵃMareshah: ‖he shall come unto ᵇAdullam the glory of Israel.

Yet will I bring; the Lord will cause the Assyrian to rise up and prosper in his wars, to the subduing and possessing of the cities of Israel and the Philistines. *An heir;* the Assyrian, who in the right of conquest shall possess, and account himself heir of what he possesseth. *Mareshah;* most think the prophet speaks of Mareshah in his own country, but I think the Assyrian did not inherit that, though he might inherit that of the Philistines. *Adullam;* famous for its strength, say some; but I rather think it better known for the cave where David lay hid, 1 Sam. xxii. 1. It was made a town of defence by Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xi. 7. It was once a royal city, and had several villages belonging to it, Josh. xii. 15. *The glory of Israel;* ironically (say some) called thus, minatorily threatening that the glory of Israel should be brought as low, into as mean condition, as Adullam. Others think it should be read, *and to the glory of Israel,* that is, Jerusalem; so there should be an ellipsis of (עד) the particle conjunctive. Others think it is the prophet's deep sigh at the thoughts how the glory of Israel is laid in the dust. Others think it was then considerable enough at that time to be called *the glory of Israel,* though we know not how.

c Job 1. 20. Is. 15. 2. & 22. 12. Jer. 7. 29. & 16. 6. & 47. 5. & 48. 37. d Lam. 4. 5.

16 Make thee ᶜbald, and poll thee for thy ᵈdelicate children; enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; for they are gone into captivity from thee.

Make thee bald; O Judea and Israel, in token of sorrow for these wasting judgments, tear off thy hair with thine own hands. *Poll thee;* shave off with the razor and by others' hand what thou canst not tear off. *For thy delicate children;* for the loss of them, some being slain, others starved or swept away with pestilence, and the residue carried captive; express thy deep sorrow for these miseries conformably to the custom of bitter mourning, Job i. 20; Isa. iii. 24; xv. 2; Jer. vii. 29. *Enlarge thy baldness;* make thy baldness greater than usual, for the occasion does require and will justify it. *As the eagle;* which loseth at once her strength, courage, and beauty, and languisheth in her baldness. *For they,* thy delicate children, *are gone into captivity from thee;* never to return more, or not till a long captivity expire.

CHAP. II.

God's judgment against oppression, 1—3. *A lamentation for the removal of his people,* 4—6. *A reproof for their injustice and delight in false prophets,* 7—11. *A promise of restoration,* 12, 13.

WOE to them ᵃthat devise iniquity, and ᵇwork evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because ᶜit is in the power of their hand.

cir. 730. a Hos. 7. 6. b Ps. 36. 4 c Gen. 31. 29.

The prophet now denounceth judgment against oppressors in particular, of which sort of men Judah had too many, and Israel had many more at that day. *That devise iniquity;* contrive and frame mischiefs to others, how they may be ruined, as appears ver. 2, and all the gain that can be made of their fall may be brought into the hand of the contrivers; which was the sin of the great ones in Israel, who for near forty years together were plotting to undo one another. *And work evil:* here is a dislocation of the words, unless the prophet would intimate to us, that in God's account the resolving to do evil is doing it. *Upon their beds;* when they should rest from making trouble to others, as well as rest from their labour and troubles of the day, when they should praise God for their own ease, safety, and rest, then their inhumanity and cruelty is forecasting how to grieve, vex, and swallow up others. *When the morning is light;* so soon as they rise, and that is early; when such practices are in design, these cannot sleep till they make them fall on whom they fix their designs. *They practise it;* finish or execute their mischievous purposes. *Because it is in the power of their hand;* they care not whether there be either justice or reason for what they do; if they have power enough to do, they will take confidence to do it, and never blush.

2 And they covet ᵈfields, and take *them* by violence; and houses, and take *them* away: so they ‖oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.

d Is. 5. 8. ‖ Or, *defraud.*

And they, who devised mischief, ver. 1, *covet fields;* first set their minds upon their meaner neighbour's estate, think how convenient it lieth to theirs, as Ahab thought Naboth's did for him. *And take them by violence;* by power wrest the estates out of their hands, at their own rate; or, if they will not so part with them, these mischievous oppressors will act a Jezebel's part with Naboth, which was no hard matter to do in Israel, during the times that ran parallel with those of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. *Houses,* in which their poorer and innocenter neighbours dwelt; but perhaps these houses spoiled a prospect, or straitened the great ones, who, right or wrong, will have them, that they may enlarge their own houses, orchards, or gardens. *Take them away;* they tear, devour, and swallow up the poor man. *His house;* his family, which by this means is left to poverty and beggary. *His heritage:* this explains the former, and addeth somewhat to the greatness of their sin, that this is done against ancient right and possession, which the oppressed plead, nay, in a case where God hath forbidden them to sell their heritage, Lev. xxv. 23; Numb. xxxvi. 7; 1 Kings xxi. 3.

3 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against ᵉthis family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: ᶠfor this time *is* evil.

e Jer. 8. 3. f Amos 5. 13. Eph. 5. 16.

Therefore; for this great, inhuman, cruel oppression. *Thus saith the Lord;* the Lord by his prophet declareth what he will do, and adviseth them to consider it, for it is a most manifest retaliation or punishing the offenders, so that every one may see God deals with them, as they deal with their oppressed neighbours. *Against this family do I devise an evil;* they devised, now God will devise; theirs was evil against others, God will devise evil against them; theirs was evil of sin, God's is an evil of just punishment.

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against their family, as they devised evil against the family of their poor neighbours. God will bring the Assyrian power upon them. *From which ye shall not remove your necks;* they laid snares where open force would not suffice, so that the poor could not get out of their hands, but were empoverished and enslaved; so God will deal with them by the Assyrian, from whose power they shall not escape. *Neither shall ye go haughtily;* you have made others hang the head, so shall you now. *For this time is evil;* you great ones have made it an evil time, evil for sin against me and the innocent, and for cries and griefs to the poor; I will make it an evil time, full of penal calamities and miseries on the whole family or posterity of Jacob.

g Hab. 2. 6.

h 2 Sam. 1. 17.

† Heb. *with a lamentation of lamentations.*

i Ch. 1. 15.

‖ Or, *instead of restoring.*

4 ¶ In that day shall *one* [g]take up a parable against you, and [h]lament †with a doleful lamentation, *and* say, We be utterly spoiled: [i]he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed *it* from me! ‖turning away he hath divided our fields.

In that day; when God shall retaliate, as ver. 3, when he shall by the Assyrian captivity fulfil what here is threatened by the prophet. *Shall one take up;* there shall be taken up, or be in common ordinary use among those that know what is befallen you. *A parable;* or taunting, scorning proverb; this tells them how their Assyrian conquerors should reflect reproach and shame upon captive Israel, much like that Psal. cxxxvii. 3, which the Babylonians used toward captive Judah. *Lament with a doleful lamentation;* your friends for you, and you for yourselves, shall mourn most bitterly, as the import of the Hebraism is, *lament with a lamentation of lamentations.* So though all are not alike affected, yet every one shall carry it towards miserable Israel according as they are affected, condoling their sad state, or insulting over them. *We be utterly spoiled:* this is the sum of their mournful lamentation over their own state; Our land wasted, our friends slain, our cities taken, plundered, and sacked, our houses and goods either taken away from us or burnt, and our persons no more our own, but captives, under the power and will of our enemy; thus spoiled, nothing is any longer ours. *He;* the Assyrian, say some; God, say others; indeed God did it by the Assyrians. *Hath changed the portion;* the estate, wealth, plenty, freedom, safety, joy, and honour, into poverty, famine, servitude, danger, grief, and dishonour. The land of Canaan was the inheritance, and all the conveniencies it afforded were part of the portion of Israel; but, O doleful change! these all taken away from Israel, and given to others. *My people;* it is either the prophet, who calls them his people, or rather, every one of Israel that useth this lamentation, who saith *my people. How hath he removed it from me!* how dreadfully hath God dealt with Israel! removing their persons into captivity, and transferring their right and possession to enemies! *Turning away he hath divided our fields;* either, thus turning away from us in displeasure, God hath divided our fields among others, given them to the enemy, and he hath divided them to whom he pleaseth, to his own people and soldiers; or else this word *turning away* may be rendered *returning*, and be spoken of the enemy, when he returned he did divide our fields; or, as the margin of our Bibles, *instead of restoring* our fields, which we hoped, and our mistaken leaders promised, God hath given the enemy success and power to divide our fields, and to allot them to others.

k Deut. 32. 6, 9.

5 Therefore thou shalt have none that shall [k]cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the LORD.

Therefore; because your sins, so great, universal, and incorrigible, have provoked God to frame and design this desolation against you, and because he will punish you according to your ways. *Thou;* either oppressor, spoken thus as to one, that it might comprehend every one of them, who are described ver. 2, or else this *thou* is the whole family, spoken of ver. 3; perhaps both these may best be meant here. *None that shall cast a cord by lot;* none that shall ever return to this land, to claim an inheritance there, or to see it allotted by line, and given to them to possess it. The prophet here alludes to the manner of dividing fields and inheritance of old in use among them, as in Joshua's time. So both the whole family in general, and the great ones, oppressors and extortioners, are more particularly menaced with an utter and perpetuated exclusion out of the land in which they sinned, and whence they are carried captives; whoever do, neither they, nor their posterity, shall possess inheritances in it. *In the congregation of the Lord;* they should no more be the congregation of the Lord, nor should their children be so, or stand in the congregation of the Lord at any time hereafter, to claim their portion among God's people. Thus they are rejected and disinherited, and this to this day is verified on the main body of this people.

‖ Or, *Prophesy not as they prophesy.*

† Heb. *Drop, &c.*

6 ‖†Prophesy ye not, *say they to them that* prophesy: they shall not prophesy to them, *that* they shall not take shame.

Ezek. 21. 2. 1 Is. 30. 10. Amos 2. 12. & 7. 16.

Prophesy ye not; it is manifest that our version here intends this as an interdict, or prohibition, laid upon the true prophets, whose hearers were so far from amending and turning unto God in compliance with his counsel, and obedience to his commands given out by his prophets, that rulers and people agree to silence the prophets, and expressly forbid them to distil or drop their severe predictions against the kingdom. *That prophesy* faithfully, as Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, and Micah now did. *They,* or my true prophets, saith God, *shall not prophesy to them;* shall cease from further troubling and terrifying these people, who fear not my judgments, and will not by repentance prevent their miserable captivity and shame. So God doth in his displeasure grant their desire, and gratify the interdict in judgment against them. *That they shall not take shame;* that they may, as they seem resolved to put off all blushing and shame, go on without checks or rebuke, till they be utterly ruined: they are impatient of that shame they should take to themselves for their sins, and therefore would not hear the truth; so it shall be, and they shall not be shamed to repentance, but they shall be ashamed in their ruin. This seems the meaning of the words in our version, and I will not add any other, though there are several versions which somewhat vary from ours.

‖ Or, *shortened?*

† Heb. *upright?*

7 ¶ O *thou that art* named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the LORD ‖straitened? *are* these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh †uprightly?

Named; you are in name, not in truth, you call yourselves, and would be called by others, the seed and posterity of Jacob. *The house of Jacob;* you glory in Jacob, whom God blessed, guided, and preserved, and you think he should so bless you; but you nothing think how Jacob feared, obeyed, and worshipped God, you are not honest, plain-hearted, and upright with God as he. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened?* the power, goodness, wisdom, and kindness of God is not less now than formerly, he is as merciful to design good, as gracious to promise, as great and good to perform his word; but the reason he doth not promise good to you, but threatens punishment upon you by his prophets, is all from yourselves; it is for your sins; you do the things that must be discountenanced, and if you would hear better things by the prophets, you must do better, you must do what God requires by them. *Are these his doings?* are these severer proceedings against you the doings your God delighteth in? Doth he choose to take this way? Doth not mercy better please him? He would be more pleased to speak comfortably to you: do you as Jacob did, and God will deal with you as he did with him. *Do not my words do good?* my words promise all good, and my prophets declare good to those that are indeed the house of Jacob. All the ways of God are in an even tenor, mercy and truth to such as keep his covenant and testimonies to do them, as Psal. xxv. 10. *To him that walketh uprightly;* that with honest hearts walk in the ways of God; but froward sinners, and dissembling hypocrites, cannot with reason expect the same usage from God, who will give peace and show mercy to Israel, whilst the workers of iniquity are led out to punishment. This whole verse is excellently cleared by the prophet Isaiah, chap. lix. 1—3, &c.

† Heb. *yesterday.*

8 Even †of late my people is risen up

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† Heb. over against a garment.

as an enemy: ye pull off the robe †with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war.

This verse to me seems to be designed as a proof of the perverseness and iniquity of this people, and consequently a justifying of God, and his prophet, threatening severity against them: they flattered themselves, and were angry with the prophet; but God doth in these words convince them that they could not with reason expect better tidings. For from a long time since they have revolted from me, and *of late* they have renewed, with addition of new violence to their old. All of them have *risen up*, and acted hostilities among themselves; Israel against Judah, and Judah against Israel, and of late the ten tribes have conspired against one another, subjects against their kings, and great ones against the meaner sort; all places are full of the sins and woeful effects of civil seditions, and the treasonable practices of violent men. *Ye pull off the robe with the garment*, you strip those to their skin, take away their clothes, and leave them naked, *that pass by securely;* that in peace, and fearing no evil, go about their private affairs, *as men averse from war;* disliking such rebellious, bloody, and oppressive courses, and wishing every one might enjoy his right without plunderings, sequestrations, confiscations, and decimations, for not being of their party. All which we may easily believe attended the factious and rebellious times which succeeded after Jeroboam's death, briefly mentioned 2 Kings xv. 8, &c., which read with this verse, and diligently consider how it paints out those times of Israel's sinning.

‖ Or, wives.

9 The ‖women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever.

The women; the poor disconsolate widows, whose husbands you had first slain with the sword of war, or unjustly condemned to death; or else the wives of husbands whom you had oppressed, and by perverted judgment had condemned to forfeit their estates. *Of my people:* this aggravates the sin, that this was done against Israelitish women, not strangers, against those that were by peculiar provision of God's law to be tenderly and mercifully dealt with, Exod. xxii. 22. *Cast out;* disseised, and turned out, as if unworthy to dwell longer in their old habitations, which they pretend forfeited, as Paradise by Adam, who was therefore in this very word *cast out*, Gen. iii. 24, or as Hagar out of Abraham's family, Gen. xxi. 14. *Pleasant houses;* either pleasant for situation, such seats were to these as dangerous as Naboth's vineyard was to him, or else pleasant to them because they were their own, where they enjoyed their husbands and children, and wished no more preferment, content with their beloved habitation and domestic conveniencies. *From their children have ye taken away;* you have by your violence and oppression ruined their posterity, turned their children out of houses and estates, which were secured by the law of God from any legal alienation and sale beyond the jubilee; you have confiscated them for ever. *My glory;* which was the glory of my bounty to them, in use of which they did give glory to me, and by continuance of which they might have lived above contempt. *For ever;* either continually you have done this, or what you have done you intend to stand for ever.

10 Arise ye, and depart; for this *is* not *your* [m]rest: because it is [n]polluted, it shall destroy *you*, even with a sore destruction.

m Deu. 12. 9.
n Lev. 18. 25, 28.
Jer. 3. 2.

Arise ye, and depart; you inhabitants of Israel, especially you oppressors, bestir yourselves, and prepare for your departure out of this land; for, will ye nill ye, so it is, you shall be carried away: the words also may fairly be applied to the oppressed, to lessen the troubles they were under, and to advise them to retire out of this land. *This is not your rest:* though it was given this people for a rest under God's wing, yet it was on condition of continued obedience; but since they do not observe the condition, they shall never find the expected rest; one trouble shall succeed another, until the captivity sweep them all away, both oppressors and oppressed; these therefore should grieve the less at their present trouble, nor grudge to transplant themselves. *Because it is polluted,* with many, and great, and old sins, *it shall destroy;* spew them out as a burden intolerable to the earth that bears them, as Lev. xviii. 25; this polluted land shall be destroyed. *A sore destruction;* such as may well require a lamentation, such as ver. 4; a grievous desolation, such as never shall be repaired.

‖ Or, walk with the wind, and lie falsely.
o Ezek. 13. 3.

11 If a man ‖[o]walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, *saying*, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people.

This people were weary of true prophets, and silenced them, ver. 6, but they were fondly taken with the false prophets, and what these promised them; and these, as here described, are by a dreadful judgment on this people permitted, or left to deceive them. *If a man walking in the Spirit and falsehood;* a prophet that pretends to walk in the Spirit, i. e. to have the Spirit of prophecy, and on that pretence takes the boldness to promise pleasing things in God's name, whereas he never received such promises of good from God. *Do lie,* against God, and to the people. *I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink:* Micah, and his mal-contented brethren, foretell scarcity, war, dismal calamities, and an Assyrian captivity of all for ever; I tell you these are idle dreams, you shall have plenty, and good days, and may eat, drink, and be merry; such times of evil you shall never see. *He shall even be the prophet,* by a just and dreadful judgment from God, as well as by an unhappy and fatal choice of the people, 1 Kings xxii. 6, 10—12, with ver. 34; Ezek. xiii. 3, 10. *Of this people;* doomed to unparalleled misery by God for their sins, and pulling it upon themselves by their obstinate impenitence and blindness.

p ch. 4. 6, 7.
q Jer. 31. 10.
r Ezek. 36. 37.

12 ¶ [p]I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together [q]as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: [r]they shall make great noise by reason of *the multitude of* men.

There are three different interpretations of this verse, of which it is hard to say which is most agreeable to the intent of this scripture; I will propose all three, and leave each reader to choose for himself. First, Some will that these words be a continuation of the false prophet's preaching prosperity and good days. So the words are a promise made to them contradictory to the menaces of the Lord by Micah; he foretold all would end in destruction; the false prophet foretells the assembling of all the seed of Jacob into their land and cities, and bringing back the remnant of the captive Israelites carried away by Tiglath-pileser, and their safety in their own fold as the flock of Bozrah, and should make great noise of joy and rejoicing in their multitudes. All which, spoken by the false prophet, Micah refutes in the 13th verse. Secondly, Others make it an evangelical promise of the restitution of Israel by the Messiah, and many Jews agree with Christian expositors herein, though the Jews refer it to a temporal restitution, not yet fulfilled: the Christians refer it to a spiritual, partly fulfilled, yet more fully to be accomplished hereafter; and suitably to this hypothesis they interpret all the passages of this text and the 13th verse; both which will very fairly bear the sense by these put upon them, and may be the mystical sense of the words, but we, who inquire into the literal meaning, think it advisable not to swell the volume by long digressions. A third opinion ought to be considered ere we can choose which we shall adhere to. Now the third opinion, in expounding the text, makes it a commination or dreadful threat against this people, and thus suits it: *I,* i. e. God, offended with them. *Will surely assemble;* by his providence will cause to come together. *O Jacob;* he calls to the house of Israel to consider it. *All of thee;* all who were fleeing, upon hope of what their false prophets promise, to return to their own land and cities. *I will surely gather the remnant of Israel;* the same thing in little different words, repeated to assure us the truth of the thing.

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I will put them together; all that remain of the ten tribes (for some were before carried away by Tiglath-pileser) shall most assuredly be gathered together, that they may all be in one covey covered with the Assyrian net. *As the sheep of Bozrah;* in multitudes like those flocks. *As the flock in the midst of their fold;* whence none of the sheep can get out and make their escape: so should this people be enclosed and taken. *They shall make great noise* of cries and lamentation for their distresses and lost condition. *By reason of the multitude of men;* such great multitudes cooped up, shall hideously lament their own condition, like multitudes that suffer shipwreck together: all this God will bring upon them by the multitude of the Assyrian soldiers which come up against them.

13 The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone
s Hos. 3. 5. out by it: and [s]their king shall pass be-
t Is. 52. 12. fore them, [t]and the LORD on the head of them.

In the opinion of those who account the 12th verse to be part of the flattering discourse of false prophets, this verse is the prophet Micah's reply to those false teachers; so far is it from truth that God will restore the remnant, and establish them, that he assures them the contrary will surely and suddenly befall them; and these do in the same manner expound the words as they of the third opinion, mentioned ver. 12, thus: *The breaker;* the Assyrian with his mighty host, i. e. Shalmaneser and his army. *Is come up;* the *present* put (after the style of the prophets) for the *future*, because the thing was near, and very certain. *Before them;* the people of Israel might see them, would they open their eyes; the preparations for this expedition are visible to all that will observe what is doing abroad. The mighty army of the Assyrian king shall ere long approach the confines, enter the land, invest the cities, yea, the metropolis of Israel. *They have broken up;* no frontiers shall be strong enough to keep them out of the land. *Have passed through the gate;* no cities so strong with walls and gates, which the Assyrian shall not take and possess, and enter in through the gates, as of his own cities. *And are gone out by it;* and securely go out too. *Their king,* Shalmaneser, *shall pass before,* in triumphant manner, *them,* his own army, and the captive Jacob. *And the Lord,* offended with the Jews, *on the head of them;* leading and succeeding the Assyrians in this war.

CHAP. III.

Micah reproveth the cruelty of the princes, 1—4, and the falsehood of the prophets, 5—7. His zeal in showing the sins of the princes, priests, and prophets, and their ill-grounded security, 8—12.

B. C. 710. AND I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of
a Jer. 5. 4, 5. Israel; [a]*Is it* not for you to know judgment?

And I said: in further discharge of his prophetic office, and his direction from the Lord, the prophet proceeds to preach. *Hear;* attend diligently, and give good ear. *I pray you:* being to address to governors, he entreats their attention, as we have the Hebrew particle here rendered, which might have been rendered *now*, and so the Gallic version doth render it, and the particle signifieth both. *O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel;* you that are by birth heads of the families, and by office princes and rulers in Israel and Jacob, i. e. in the kingdom both of the ten tribes, and more particularly the two tribes, as appears from the last verse of this chapter. *Is it not for you?* are you not bound by office? do not men expect? doth not God require? doth not the public weal engage you to be well skilled in the laws of God? *To know judgment;* understand, approve, conform to and rule by equity, and the just laws of your God. You, princes, magistrates, and ruling officers, ought to know and do judgment and justice; you of all men should know and do right.

2 Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones;

Who hate the good: in practice and affection these rulers were directly contrary to what they should have been and done, they hated not only to do good, but they hated the good which was to be done, and those that did it; and what kind of men may we judge they were who hated good men, and what was good, and by consequence hated also God himself? *Love the evil;* choose, embrace, encourage, delight in, and prefer both evil works and evil workers, and take pleasure to do evil yourselves: the worst character that can be given of any sort of men. *Who pluck off their skin from off them:* you by office are shepherds, and should feed, guide, heal, protect, and love the flock, but you use them as cruelly as the shepherd, who, instead of shearing of the fleece, would pluck off the skin, and flay them. *And their flesh from off their bones;* another proverbial speech of the same import, and chargeth highest injustice and inhumanity upon these princes and rulers: see Ezek. xxii. 27; Zeph. iii. 3.

3 Who also [b]eat the flesh of my people, b Ps. 14. 4.
and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and [c]as flesh within c Ezek. 11. 3, 7.
the caldron.

Eat; maintain themselves and their followers, nay, live in luxury and excess, revelling in banquets and feasts, as the word is many times used, Amos vi. 4. *The flesh;* the estates, goods, and livelihood of their subjects, neighbours, and brethren. *My people;* whom I have chosen, maintained, and allotted an inheritance unto, of whom I once said, Who toucheth them toucheth the apple of mine eye, Deut. xxxii. 10; Zech. ii. 8. *Flay their skin from off them;* with barbarous cruelty and unheard-of injustice strip off (as butchers strip the sheep they kill) the very skin; or as hunters, which having taken the prey, wearied and worried first by their dogs, do strip off the skin to sell, and eat the flesh in feasts and riotous banquetings. *They break their bones;* an allusion to wolves, bears, or lions, which devour the flesh, tear the skin, and break the bones of the innocent, weak, and defenceless lambs or sheep; thus our prophet tells these rulers plainly what they were, did, and how barbarously cruel and wicked. *Chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron:* these bloody murderers, princes, and chieftains are here compared to cooks, and the subjects, weak neighbours, are compared to the bare bones which the cook doth by his art prepare for the pot, and to the flesh cut small for the caldron, that all might be boiled and extracted out to make pottage, and delicious broths or jellies: thus the great ones used the meaner sort, who lived under their jurisdiction. Possibly the prophet may aim at the bloody, cruel, and devouring times under Shallum, &c., or to that reported of Menahem, 2 Kings xv. 16, when probably much of this was done according to the very letter.

4 Then [d]shall they cry unto the LORD, d Ps. 18. 41. Prov. 1. 28. Is. 1. 15. Ezek. 8. 18. Zech. 7. 13.
but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Then; when that time and those miseries which Micah foretells shall come upon them, chap. i. 6—8; ii. 3, when God shall retaliate and pay these great ones in their own coin. *They;* the cruel oppressors, these tyrannical judges, that pitied none, devoured all, and feared not the Divine vengeance. *Cry unto the Lord,* as if they were his, and as if he were bound to deliver; they then shall own he can, and none else can deliver them, and they will expect a saving hand after all their rebellions against and contempts of God. *But he will not hear them;* as they heard the cry of the oppressed, but would not hear; so God will hear the cry of their distresses, but not hear the requests they make; he will do no more for them than as if he did not hear them, he will be as a stranger to their case. *He will even hide his face from them;* they turned away their face from beholding and pitying the poor, now God will turn away his

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eye from them, and, as if unconcerned, leave them to their own distresses, and their enemies' rage and cruelty. *At that time:* this is added to assure them they should have least respect from God when they need it most; so they shall receive what they gave, judgment without mercy, as it is James ii. 13. *As they have behaved themselves ill in their doings:* this speaks both the reason why, and the manner how, God will thus leave them to the oppressor; the greatness of their sin deserved this, and such was the quality of their sins, that nothing fitter than a retaliation to punish the sin, convince the sinner, teach the world righteousness, and to vindicate God.

e Is. 56. 10, 11. Ezek. 13. 10. & 22. 25.
f Ch. 2. 11. Matt. 7. 15.
g Ezek. 13. 18, 19.

5 ¶ Thus saith the LORD [e]concerning the prophets that make my people err, that [f]bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and [g]he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him:

Thus saith the Lord: now Micah in the name of the Lord foretells what shall become of false prophets, he had frankly dealt with the seculars, now he deals as plainly with the ecclesiastics. *Concerning the prophets that make my people err:* though he give them the title they assume to themselves, yet he doth very fully describe them, and shows they are false prophets; they err, and make others to err with them. Israel is too apt to mistake his God, and his ways; these false prophets make them err more, both concerning their former ways of religion and civil policy, and concerning their present danger and duty, and concerning future judgments and punishments. *That bite with their teeth,* when they are furnished with gifts, and well fed. *And cry, Peace;* they promise great prosperity, they pretend to give assurance from God that all shall go well with Israel, and none of the dismal woes threatened by Micah and such-like prophets should ever be verified on them. *And he that putteth not into their mouths;* but those who will not feed these false prophets, that bid them not welcome to their tables, nor make good cheer for them, *They even prepare war against him;* they do threaten with war, and all calamities that attend it; or else, as enemies prepared, they work them all the mischief they can, and show what god they serve, even the god of this world, and their own bellies.

h Is. 8. 20. 22. Ezek. 13. 23, 24. Zech. 13. 4.
† Heb. *from a vision.*
‡ Heb. *from divining.*
i Amos 8. 9.

6 [h]Therefore night *shall be* unto you, †that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, †that ye shall not divine; [i]and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.

Therefore; because of their irreligious and atheistical pretences to Divine revelations, and to come from heaven with promises directly contrary to God's purpose and word, even when their consciences told them they did lie herein. *Night* of ignorance, and loss of gifts; but since they had none such as they pretended to, I see not how they could lose them. I rather take this *night* to be a night of distresses, a time of great calamities upon these prophets more than ordinary, and upon all the people they seduced. *Unto you;* deceivers, and false prophets. *Ye shall not have a vision;* you shall no more pretend to have a vision, you shall not dare any more to foretell any thing to this people. *It shall be dark unto you;* a very calamitous time to all, but most to you who lived upon lying visions, and now shall starve for want of them. *Ye shall not divine;* have neither skill nor will any more to set up for yourselves in that trade; being found great impostors, and such as have seduced this people into sin first, and misery next, they will be enraged against you, and you shall not safely appear among them. *The sun shall go down over the prophets;* a proverbial speech, and contains much the same that night and dark do contain. Perhaps this intimates the visible hand of God extraordinarily against them, and making their sorrows the more dreadful, as darkness by the sun going down at noon, would speak itself an extraordinary judgment, and most terrify the world. *The day shall be dark over them;* the best circumstances any of them shall be in shall be so sad and woeful, that they shall not know which way to take for themselves or direct for others.

7 Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their †lips; [k]for *there is* no answer of God.

† Heb. *upper lip.*
k Ps. 74. 9. Amos 8. 11.

Then; in the days of this calamity, which shall confute all the flattering promises of these prophets. *The seers,* who called themselves, were accounted by others, and were advised with as men that had visions from God, were prophets in name and repute with the deceived people. *Be ashamed;* their impostures being detected, they shall be covered with shame, the people shall talk what they are, and tell them to their faces wherever they meet them that they are false and lying varlets, not worthy to live, and the very consciences of these men shall then fly in their faces and upbraid them. *The diviners confounded;* diviners here are seers, and being confounded the same with ashamed; this ingemination adds to the thing spoken, at least a fuller verification of it. *They shall all cover their lips;* so lepers did, Lev. xiii. 45; and men ashamed and mourners did thus, Ezek. xxiv. 17, 22. So these shall mourn and pine in their shame. *For there is no answer of God;* God doth not answer them; rather, because the answer they had formerly given and pretended to be from God now appears not to have been from him, they should therefore by the sentence of the law be stoned, Deut. xiii. 10; Zech. xiii. 3: so Elijah dealt with Baal's prophets, and it is like these false prophets detected might fear the like from those they had deceived.

8 ¶ But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, [l]to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

l Is. 58. 1

But truly, notwithstanding this shame and silence covering these false prophets, yet, saith Micah, *I am full of power;* courage, vivacity, and ability, becoming a prophet of God. *By the Spirit of the Lord;* not from himself, but from the Spirit of God given to him, and duly qualifying him to the faithful discharge of the prophetic office; and without fear, flattery, by-respects, or self-seeking, I have already, and still do, and will declare the sins, duties, and dangers of this people, that they may repent and be saved, or my God may be justified when he judgeth, and this people may know the difference between a false and true prophet. *And of judgment;* a spirit of judgment to discern aright times and seasons, to discern right from wrong, truth from lies, and pure worship of God from idolatry, and what are the consequents of all these to a people who decline from the way of truth and purity, or adhere to it. *And of might;* resolution, undaunted in speaking God's word to the greatest of men; as I have dared, I still do dare to tell the heads of Jacob and princes of Israel what they do against God, and what God will do against them. *To declare unto Jacob his transgression;* with impartial reproofs, with severe menaces from God, to preach against Jacob's transgressions. *And to Israel his sin;* the same repeated. All the twelve tribes have sinned, and God will visit.

9 Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

This verse is word for word the same in the former part of it with the former part of the first verse of this chapter; we refer thither for explication of it. The prophet having asserted his Divine call, and avowed his faithfulness in the prophetic office, ver. 8, he here gives us one more proof of it, dealing roundly with the magistrates in both kingdoms, Israel and Judah. *That abhor judgment;* whereas judgment should be their great delight, as it is of every good magistrate, these had hearts that detested it, were weary of the directions of God's law in their polity, and hated to be controlled by it. *And pervert all equity;* where you can, you wrest the law to countenance your unequal proceedings, and wrong those you should right, and acquit those you should condemn. And there is many a woe denounced against such.

10 [m]They build up Zion with [n]†blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

m Jer. 22. 13. Ezek. 22. 27. Hab. 2. 12. Zeph. 3. 3.
n Heb. *bloods.*

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They; heads, princes, judges, and great ones among them. *Build up;* enlarge or beautify, and fortify. *Zion;* the houses in Zion, or perhaps may be meant the temple and its buildings, and the royal palace of the kings of Judah. *With blood;* with wealth and gifts which these builders made themselves masters of by violence, taking away the life of the owners, or else fining and amercing them. By this course they wrested part of their estates from them, by the other they seized all; they also for gain sometimes acquitted the guilty, and freed them in capital cases, and so sold the blood of the innocent. *And Jerusalem with iniquity;* by such injustice Jerusalem was brought to ruin at last, though some particular persons and families did raise themselves, their houses and palaces, to a present largeness and stateliness.

o Is. 1. 23. Ezek. 22. 12. Hos. 4. 18. ch. 7. 3.
p Jer 6. 13.
q Is. 48. 2. Jer. 7. 4. Rom. 2. 17.
+ Heb. *saying.*

11 °The heads thereof judge for reward, and ᵖthe priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: ᑫyet will they lean upon the LORD, †and say, *Is* not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.

The heads thereof judge for reward; whereas the judges were God's deputies, to hear and determine causes, as the merit of the causes were found, without respect of persons, they should have been careful to give such judgment as God would give; for the judgment is the Lord's, and he sits in the midst of the judges. These corrupt judges attended little to the cause, but much to rewards, and with them the greatest bribe made the justest cause, and he was most guilty who was poor and could not, or honest and would not, give the expected reward. This was most directly against the law of God, Exod. xxiii. 8; Deut. xvi. 19, and expressly cursed, yet it was the common course and practice with them. *The priests thereof teach for hire:* these men should have impartially declared the law of God to all, told them what was clean or unclean, what was prohibited, what permitted, what commanded; what was safe to them, being pleasing to God, and what dangerous to them, being offensive to their God: but these for hire would direct them how to please themselves, and though they broke the law, not be guilty; to extort, yet not be guilty of usury; to kill an enemy, yet not be guilty of murder, nor break the sixth commandment; to be unnatural to parents, yet not sin. Who paid them well, should find them most excellently skilled in the casuistical divinity the Jesuits at this day are masters of. *The prophets thereof divine for money;* which being extraordinary persons raised of God, and sent by him to deliver his message impartially to all his people, to all ranks of men among them, without fear, flattery, prejudice, or any by-respects; there were in this people at this day a sort of men called prophets, but were indeed mere fortune-tellers, as we call a vagabond sort of persons among us, and these made a trade of divining, and as if it were in their power to frame future things to the mind and humour of men, for a good round sum of money they would sell prosperity to them; for they never told great good to come to any but such as gave a great reward, and little money with them never purchased the news of a great advantage; and whoso had first the misery to be poor, that they could not buy, or else were wiser than to believe these impostors, these were sure to be told a sad story of troubles and afflictions. There were many disciples of Balaam, 2 Pet. ii. 15, they loved the wages of unrighteousness. *Yet will they lean upon the Lord;* whilst magistrates, priests, and prophets are thus abominably corrupt, yet they will presumptuously lean upon the Lord, and flatter themselves that he is present with them, that he owneth them as his peculiar people. *And say;* yea, they boast so. *Is not the Lord among us,* as our God, our Shield? whereas he was among them, but provoked to be their enemy, though they will not believe it. *None evil can come upon us;* so they do falsely conclude, against all the word of God, and against all his true prophets' admonitions, no evil of affliction, such as war, famine, and captivity, can come upon them. Thus far these corrupt Jews.

r Jer. 26. 18. ch. 1. 6.
s Ps. 79. 1.

12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ʳplowed *as* a field, ˢand Jerusalem shall become heaps, and ᵗthe mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

t ch. 4. 2.

By this it appears that this sermon was preached to Judah and its governors, priests, and prophets, who were thus wicked in Ahaz's time, and probably continued so in the beginning of Hezekiah's time. Jeremiah puts this out of all doubt, chap. xxvi. 18, saying that Micah spake these words to all Judah. As for the time, it was in all likelihood before the thirteenth year of Hezekiah, say some; I rather think it was in the very beginning of Hezekiah, and that this might awaken them of that age to comply with Hezekiah in the reformation. Zion here is threatened as endangered, nay ruined, by the sins of magistrates, priests, and prophets: they thought that Zion should be their safety, however they sinned; God by his prophet assures them the quite contrary, their sins should be the danger and destruction of Zion. *For your sake;* because your sins are so great and many. God would have spared Sodom for the sake of righteous men, these may be safety to a city; but God will not spare the wicked for any place's sake, nor shall a temple be more security to a wicked people than heaven was to sinning angels. Though these flagitious men cried out against Micah, and such-like men, as a public danger, truth is, the injustice, idolatry, and inhumanity of public persons were the great danger. *Ploughed as a field;* either by the enemy and conqueror, thereby forbidding it to be ploughed without his leave, or by such as remained after the body of the people were carried captive. *Jerusalem,* one of the goodliest cities of the world, proud in its lofty and beautiful buildings, the city of the great King, *shall become heaps;* shall all lie in rubbish, its stately buildings shall be demolished and lie buried in their own ruins. *The mountain of the house,* holy mountain, on which the temple, one of the wonders of the world, did stand, beautified with rarest buildings, *as the high places of the forest;* shall lie so long waste as to be run over with wood as a forest, and be a lodge of wild beasts.

CHAP. IV.

The establishment of Christ's kingdom, 1, 2; *the peace of it,* 3—5. *The restoration,* 6—10, *and victory of the church,* 11—13.

BUT ᵃin the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.

a Is. 2. 2, &c. Ezek. 17. 22, 23.

But: this particle, which ushers in the following promise, doth also bid us look to somewhat before spoken, of a very different complexion; that was news of a total and a long-continued desolation, but this is of a happy restitution, which doth refer both to a temporal deliverance out of Babylon's captivity, and to a spiritual deliverance out of ignorance, superstition, and all other ways of false worship. This latter is the principal, the former is typical, and so shall we consider them. *The last days;* or the latter days, at the expiring of the seventy years' captivity, (near two hundred years from Micah's time,) as type of the days of the Messiah's kingdom, which are most usually called *the last days. The mountain of the house of the Lord;* the city Jerusalem; or, more particularly, the mountain on which the temple did stand, called *the house of the Lord;* the hieroglyphic of the church of Christ in gospel times. *Shall be established;* literally, and in the type, fulfilled when the second temple was built by the Jews returned out of captivity. Spiritually, and in the antitype, accomplished when Christ did establish his church by the preaching of the gospel, and laid the foundations of it so that the gates of hell should never prevail against it, and made it this promise. *It shall be exalted above the hills;* as the mountain or hill on which the temple stood was by this honoured above other mountains and hills, so shall it, after desolation and reproach of seventy years, be honoured with the temple rebuilt upon it for God's true worship, whereas

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on other hills the heathens worship idols. So the gospel church and the way of worship to God shall excel all modes of religion. *People;* the Gentiles as antitype, those who came up with Israel out of Babylon, said to be servants and maids, Ezra ii. 65, above seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven, many, if not all, of them proselyted to the Jewish religion, and a type, as well as first-fruits, of the Gentiles to be converted in the times of the Messiah. This number we are sure of; as for that Josephus reports of four thousand and seventy-four of a mixed multitude, we look on with no more credit given than to his report of four millions six hundred and twenty-eight thousand of Judah and Benjamin, Antiq. lib. 11. cap. 4. *Shall flow unto it;* come in freely, continually, and in multitudes, which in the type was fulfilled, partly at the return out of Babylon, and partly in after-days when Darius Hystaspes favoured the Jews and encouraged them, as Josephus reports, Antiq. lib. 11. cap. 4, consonant with Ezra vi. 3—12; and we have reason to believe that God so disposed Darius's mind to favour them, that it might occasion some to embrace the Jewish religion. But all this type was eminently fulfilled in the conversion of those multitudes we read of brought in to Christ by the preaching of the gospel in the apostolical times.

2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

This was in part, and as a type, fulfilled when so many proselyted and circumcised servants of several nations, amassed in the Babylonish kingdom, left their native country, and in love to their Jewish masters, and more to the God of the Jews and his law, came up with them to Jerusalem and the temple. Afterwards, when the wonderful deliverance of the Jews, and the advancement of their countryman Mordecai in the Persian court, brought the people and their religion into request and credit, many turned Jews, through the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, Esth. viii. 17, were circumcised, became proselytes of righteousness. And in the times succeeding through the reigns of five kings, for ninety years, the Jewish affairs and religion continued in a tolerably good condition. In Alexander's time, and under the Maccabees, also, this prophecy was partly fulfilled, when Ishmaelites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Idumeans submitted to the Maccabees, and by Hyrcanus's command, and with their own consent, the Idumeans were circumcised; as Josephus, Antiq. lib. 13. cap. 17. This, notwithstanding the words, had a fuller accomplishment, and still shall have, under the gospel days in these times of the Messiah, to which, as to the antitype and principal mark, they are levelled, no doubt. *Come;* so the captive Jews, by the decrees of Cyrus and Darius released from captivity, did certainly call, persuade, and encourage each other to leave the strange lands in which they had been captives, and to go up to Jerusalem, and to build that and the temple, and to restore the worship of God; and zealous proselytes did, as the eunuch lord treasurer to queen Candace came up to Jerusalem to worship. So that we meet many proselytes at Jerusalem, Acts ii. 5, 10, 11, whither they were wont to come before the gospel was published. Now as this was a fulfilling of this prophecy in part, so the conversion of the multitude of the Gentiles to Christ is much more eminently a fulfilling of it. *To the mountain of the Lord;* to the temple at Jerusalem, type of Christ and the gospel church. *To the house of the God of Jacob:* this explains the former passage, and doth, as that, respectively look to the worship of God at Jerusalem, and in gospel days. *He will teach us of his ways,* out of his law, both in points of worship and judicature, by such as Ezra and Nehemiah, by such as Zechariah and Haggai, and by scribes acquainted with the law of God; this to last till Elias, forerunner to Christ, should prepare his way, and the Messiah should come to teach his people, and publish the gospel of the kingdom, by apostles and succeeding preachers. *We will walk in his paths;* as was the duty of returning captives, and as, indeed, many of them did after their return walk more exactly in the ways of God, and especially kept themselves from idolatry; yet this was a fulfilling of this prophecy in type, presignifying what hath been done this one thousand six hundred years and more, under the preaching of the gospel; before Jacob only, now all nations see the salvation of God. *For the law shall go forth of Zion;* in Jerusalem and Zion is declared the only way of worshipping God before Messiah comes, and from thence the only law of right worshipping God shall go forth, when Messiah is come. *And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem;* an elegant ingemination of the same thing in somewhat different words, which as they respect both type and antitype, so must be applied to each respectively.

3 ¶ And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into [b] plowshares, and their spears into ‖ pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, [c] neither shall they learn war any more.

[b] Is. 2. 4. Joel 3. 10.
‖ Or, scythes.
[c] Ps. 72. 7.

And he; God, by those governors, high priests, and prophets (taking his word for their rule) set up of God, types and servants of the Messiah, who in due time and in a fuller accomplishment of this prophecy shall by himself, during the days of his dwelling in flesh, and by his Spirit, and word, and officers he hath appointed, unto the end of the world. *Judge;* rule persons, determine controversies, appoint ordinances, enlighten minds, convince sinners, and convert them, as Psal. ii. 8. *Among many people;* as the knowledge of God, and the worship of God, after the restitution of the captivity, was somewhat more extended by the coming in of many proselytes, as is noted ver. 1, 2, and this as a type prefiguring the largeness of the kingdom of the Messiah or the gospel church, so when Christ set up his visible kingdom, and commissioned his apostles, it was to teach all nations, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. *Rebuke strong nations afar off;* by the captive Jews he did convince some of those mighty nations among whom the Jews did live seventy years; and though they were far off from God, his law, his temple, and true worship, he brought them over, they were made proselytes to the true God; so now much more is this fulfilled in the turning the mighty nations, the Roman empire and many other nations, from dumb idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, 2 Thess. i. 9, 10. *They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks;* all that do heartily embrace the gospel shall be of a peaceable disposition both in their private and public capacities, and shall, as much as in them is, follow peace with all men. They shall gladly see wars cease, and turn their weapons of war and slaughter into instruments of husbandry, Isa. ii. 4. *Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation;* those which receive and obey the gospel shall not, unless necessitated to it, enter into a course of war and bloodshed. *Neither shall they learn war any more,* to make it the employment of their life for their maintenance, or the chosen way to riches and honour.

4 [d] But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make *them* afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken *it.*

[d] 1 Kin. 4. 25. Zech. 3. 10.

But they, the redeemed of the Lord, redeemed from Babylonish captivity, and brought back into their own land, the type of a greater redemption by Jesus Christ, *shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree:* the planting vines and fig trees was one part of that husbandry which the Jews made great profit by; to this husbandry they were much addicted in times of peace, 1 Kings iv. 25, and when peace, security, and riches or plenty are promised, among other ways of expressing it, this is one: so Zech. iii. 10. So in the type, the Jews returned (whilst they walked in the ways of the God of Jacob) did enjoy safety and plenty, as Ezek. xxxiv. 25—28; xxxvi. 8, 9, &c. This was made good in the gospel days more universally and fully, both in outward and inward peace under the Messiah. *None shall make them afraid;* those that were once enemies shall be friends; the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, Isa. xi. 6—9. These proverbial allusions do assure us that they who were

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redeemed out of Babylon, and the servitude of sin, should enjoy their own with great safety and security, which literally was performed to the returned, resettled captives, and spiritually or mystically is made good among those that are redeemed by Christ, and who embrace the gospel. *For the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it:* this gives us the greatest confirmation and assurance of the future accomplishment of the prediction and promise; the merciful, wise, faithful, and almighty God hath spoken it; he hath promised it, whose word spoken, commanding it should be, can make their state what he saith it shall be.

e Jer. 2. 11. f Zech. 10. 12.

5 For [e]all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and [f]we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

For: this is either a reason why they should be so safe, or else a declaration of their resolution to take this course, that it may be so with them, and so the Hebrew particle may certainly be rendered. *All people will walk every one in the name of his god;* it is a received rule that they ought, and it is a constant practice with the nations, they will pray to, depend on, and serve their gods, and think by this course to receive their expected blessings; they are constant to their gods, Jer. ii. 11. *We will walk in the name of the Lord our God;* seek the Lord, embrace his law and worship, wait on him as the Fountain and Giver of all good: as he is the Lord who can give us vines and fig trees, and can give us safety under them; as he is our God, and engaged by promise to do all this for us; in his name we will walk, and so shall we be safe and enjoy all good from him; we will have no other lovers, nor go after them, though we have done so, Hos. ii. 6, or 7. This was in letter and in part fulfilled, when upon their return out of captivity they did abandon all false gods, and worshipped God alone. And it is fulfilled more eminently in all the Israel of God, who turn from dumb idols to serve the living and true God. *For ever and ever;* unchangeably, through the succession of ages, among the restored Jews and the redeemed Gentiles.

g Ezek. 34. 16. Zeph. 3. 19. h Ps. 147. 2. Ezek. 34. 13. & 37. 21.

6 In that day, saith the LORD, [g]will I assemble her that halteth, [h]and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted;

In that day; called *last* or latter *days*, ver. 1; in the day wherein I shall restore my captived people, and in the day I shall redeem mine elect. *I will assemble;* first, and in part, by the edicts of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, for the release of the captives, their return to Jerusalem, and for the rebuilding the temple, and for restoring the worship of God; but more fully by the preaching of the gospel, publishing salvation by Christ, to whom the gathering of the Gentiles was to be, Gen. xlix. 10. *Her that halteth;* see Zeph. iii. 19; weakened with the hard usages of oppressing conquerors; who were as lamed ones, unable to walk: such were the impoverished Jews in the Babylonish captivity, utterly unprovided for so long a journey; and it is likely they were unresolved, too, whether to go or not go, halted between a desire of going and a fear of the difficulties that would unavoidably attend their poverty. Now the bounty and favour which God moved in the Persian kings toward the Jews was such, that these poor were encouraged to set forward on the journey. This word is to this day fulfilled, in that Christ doth by the power of his word and Spirit make his people a willing people, determines their resolution, and enables them to perform it, and to give up themselves to God. *I will gather her that is driven out:* in this phrase, *I will gather*, does God by Ezekiel, chap. xxviii. 25, promise the recovery of his people from captivity; and so does Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. 8, almost in the same manner promise the restoring of captive Judah. Here they are said to be *driven out*, i. e. of their own land, into a strange land, where they are captives, Jer. viii. 3; xvi. 15; xxiii. 3; xxiv. 8, 9; xxix. 14; Ezek. iv. 13. The Lord will by his power and goodness gather those whom Nebuchadnezzar scattered through his kingdom, and Christ will much more gather to his fold those who were captives to Satan. *Her that I have afflicted:* this in the letter refers to wasted and impoverished Israel, on whom God laid an affliction of seventy years.

7 And I will make her that halted [a]a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD [k]shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.

a 1 ch. 2. 12. & 5. 3, 7, 8. & 7. 18. k Is. 9. 6. & 24. 23. Dan. 7. 14, 27. Luke 1. 33. Rev. 11. 15.

Her that halted: see this phrase opened, Zeph. iii. 19, and in this chapter, ver. 6. *A remnant;* which, as they were preserved for a seed, so they should as fruitful seed take root and increase, and continue to the coming of the Messiah. *That was cast far off;* that was cast off by God, and by the hands of Babylonians were carried away captives into remotest parts of the Babylonish kingdom. *A strong nation;* so the Jews did grow up in multitudes and strength, as appears by the Jewish wars which were by them waged in the days of the Maccabees. *The Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion;* the true God, Lord of heaven and earth, shall be their God alone, him they shall obey in his worship, law, and temple in Jerusalem. *From henceforth, even for ever,* i. e. to the end or period fixed for the Mosaic and legal institutions, for a very long time, not simply for ever. This was partly fulfilled to this people in their return, and re-establishment in their own land and in Jerusalem; but the final, full, and eternal accomplishment hereof is now fulfilling, and shall continue so, under the Messiah, till fulfilled in the gathering all the elect to Christ in grace on earth, and in glory in heaven.

8 ¶ And thou, O tower of ‖the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.

‖ Or, *Edar:* Gen. 35. 21.

O tower of the flock: some refer this to that tower Edar, in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, built there for the shepherds' more convenient watching over their flocks. The prophet may possibly allude to this. In the church, Christ's flock, there is a tower built for defence of his flock, but it is that name which is a strong tower, to which the righteous run, and are safe. But there was a tower of this denomination in Jerusalem, through which tower the flocks of sheep were driven into the sheep market; this one tower, by synecdoche, put for the whole city Jerusalem. *The strong hold;* Ophel, as it is in the Hebrew, and perhaps were better rendered a proper name of that impregnable fort, 2 Chron. xxvii. 3; another considerable part put for the whole. *The daughter of Zion;* or, O daughter of Zion; so it will be an explication of what the prophet before meant by the tower Edar and Ophel, i. e. O Zion, O Jerusalem, both in the typical and in the mystical sense. *The first dominion;* the former dominion, not in outward splendour, but because the government and supreme dignity among this people was restored (after seventy years' captivity) to the former royal family, and continued in it till Shiloh came. This in the type was fulfilled upon the settlement under Zerubbabel and his successors; but the whole antitype concerns the Messiah's kingdom, and the gospel Jerusalem, and is fulfilled in the spiritual glory of it. Christ's kingdom is the ancient, supreme, and most glorious kingdom; and by his redeeming us from the bondage of hell, is set up, and shall be continued firm and unmovable, more than Edar, Ophel, Zion, or Jerusalem typical, as Luke i. 32, 33, and more large than ever David's or Solomon's kingdom, Dan. vii. 14, and therefore greater in glory, for Christ is King of kings, Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16. This spiritual kingdom came first to the Jews, Acts xiii. 46. It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you. The gospel was to be preached first to the daughter of Jerusalem. There the preachers of repentance and remission of sins were to begin, and thence they were to publish it to all nations, Luke xxiv. 47. This text, and such like, the blinded Jew doth take in a literal sense only, as if it promised a temporal dominion over all nations, and worldly kingdom to the Messiah, in which they expect a large share; but what is literal, and concerned the Jews alone, was limited to them that came out of the Babylonish captivity, and hath been fulfilled to them.

9 Now why dost thou cry out aloud? [l]*is there* no king in thee? is thy coun- l Jer. 8. 19.

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sellor perished? for [m]pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail.

m Is. 13. 8. & 21. 3. Jer. 30. 6. & 50. 43.

Now; now that I have from the Lord promised such great good things to you, after the seventy years' captivity, and in the days of the Messiah, *why dost thou cry out aloud?* as if this case were desperate, or as if it would be ever night with thee, or as if thy hopes would not outweigh thy fears, or thy future joy would not counterbalance thy present griefs. *Is there no king in thee?* thou hast lost thy king Zedekiah, and now art become tributary, but thy God, thy King, is with thee, and will be with thee to preserve, restore, establish, enlarge, enrich, and beautify thee with salvation, and to reign over thee in Mount Zion for ever, ver. 7. Thy loss at present is great, but thy future advantage may well stop these outcries. *Is thy counsellor perished?* hast thou none among thy wise counsellors left in thee? Hath Nebuchadnezzar cruelly slain all he took of them, and are the rest fled? Yet the wonderful Counsellor is with thee, doth consult and resolve that thou shalt not be undone, and perish for ever. Messiah, the wisdom of his Father, hath the conduct of thy sufferings, deliverance, and re-establishment, in which thou mayst at last glory. *For pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail:* this great distress of spirit appears by thy outcries, like those of a woman in travail; of which no great reason can be given, all things considered, no more than of those of a woman at her full time, and bringing forth the fruit of her womb, to the present increase and future honour of the family; whose pains end in joy, John xvi. 21.

10 Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go *even* to Babylon; there shalt thou be delivered; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.

Be in pain, and labour to bring forth; it may be read, *Thou shalt be in pain, and thou shalt labour,* &c.; so it will be a prediction of the troubles, sorrows, and dangers that they shall meet with in the wars against the Babylonians, and in their captivity under them. *O daughter of Zion;* all the house of Judah, particularly you that dwell in Jerusalem and near Mount Zion. *Like a woman in travail;* whose sorrows are very sharp, but somewhat mitigated by expectation of a good delivery, and the birth of a living child: let your hopes so mitigate your sorrows too. *For now;* ere long, within a few years, you will see or hear that Israel is carried captive (which Micah lived to see): this may be an admonition, it is certainly a token that you shall be captives too; and this came upon them one hundred and thirty years after, when in Zedekiah's time the daughter of Zion was deplorably wasted, conquered, and captivated by Nebuchadnezzar. *Thou shalt go forth out of the city;* forced thereto by the prevailing power of the Babylonians, who took Zedekiah and those that accompanied him when they stole out of the city: these did go out when they could keep in it no longer. *Thou shalt dwell in the field;* as conquered, made prisoners, and held so in the fields under a strong guard, until all the conquered were brought together, that they might in one body be led away. In their journey to Babylon they were forced to lodge in the fields, also exposed to all the inconveniencies of heat in the day and of cold in the night, weary, hungry, thirsty, and faint near to death. *Thou shalt go even to Babylon;* O daughter of Zion, thou shalt certainly be carried captive to Babylon, where thy dwelling shall be little bettered, thou shalt dwell by the river, without the city. *There shalt thou be delivered;* by Cyrus first, and by Darius Hystaspes next, and by Artaxerxes in Nehemiah's time; all this as type of a greater deliverance. *The Lord;* the everlasting God, thy God, whose servants the Persian kings that favoured the Jews were, and by whose motion they did incline to release them. *Shall redeem;* the Hebrew word points out a redemption by the next kinsman, and so fairly minds us of the Messiah, the great Redeemer of the church. And to him, and the redemption of the church by him, do these deliverances ultimately and principally point. *From the hand of thine enemies;* who would have detained the people of God longer in slavery, or who would have hindered the rebuilding of the temple, and the re-establishment of the worship of God. Proportionably to this type doth the antitype answer, Luke i. 74, 75.

11 ¶ [n]Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye [o]look upon Zion.

n Lam. 2. 16.

o Obad. 12. ch. 7. 10.

Now, i. e. ere long, the time is near at hand. *Many nations;* many for number and great for name, mighty in power, all that were at that time confederate with or feudatory to Sennacherib king of Assyria, or else to the king of Babylon. *Are gathered against thee;* the present tense for the future, in the prophetic style, to express the certainty and the nearness of the judgment; they will all of them assemble and come up against Judah and Jerusalem, as Sennacherib did when he besieged Jerusalem, or as Nebuchadnezzar did when he took it. *That say;* propose it as their design, hope for it as their end, and boast of it as easy. *Let her be defiled;* let us use her contemptuously, tread her under foot as a common and polluted thing, let us destroy her with such spite and scorn as a defiled thing deserveth: so the phrase 2 Kings xxiii. 8: let her be polluted with blood, and without respect to her former holiness let us enter, sack, and destroy her temple and palaces. *Let our eye look,* delighting ourselves in the ruin; let us feed our envious, revengeful eye. *Upon Zion;* upon Jerusalem, the royal palace, and the sacred temple, buried in their own rubbish.

12 But they know not [p]the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them [q]as the sheaves into the floor.

p Is. 55. 8. Rom. 11. 33.

q Is. 21. 10.

But they, the gathered confederate nations, Zion's enemies, *know not,* neither discern nor consider, *the thoughts of the Lord;* the design of the holy, just, gracious, and faithful God, who is the God of his people, of Israel; who will humble, but not extirpate; who will purify by, but not consume in, the furnace; God's thoughts to Israel are, to give him an expected end. *Neither understand they his counsel;* the same thing in somewhat different phrase: this elegancy is ever added to confirm the thing foretold. *He shall gather them;* by his secret, just, and effectual providence disposing all things to facilitate their gathering together, that they shall do, and yet God also shall do it; he as the first cause, they as the second; he moves according to his own pleasure, they move as they are second and dependent agents; they shall as a fire purge out the dross, or as a wind blow away the chaff and lightest corn, which is that God intendeth; but they consult only to extinguish the people, to cut them off that they be no more a nation. *As the sheaves into the floor;* a plain and very intelligible simile. The husbandman gathers the sheaves into the floor to thrash them; so God gathers, i. e. in due time he will do this, and bring his enemies and his church's enemies together, that they may be bruised, broken, and destroyed utterly. This seems to look to Sennacherib's gathering his power against Jerusalem, and the circumstances well enough suit this; yet is not this to be confined or restrained to Sennacherib, but perhaps to the slaughter made on the enemies in one hundred and twenty-seven provinces in Esther's time, looking to somewhat that is further off, indeed running through all ages of the church, and shall be finally accomplished in the ruin of the antichristian kingdom: then shall that of Zech. xii. 3 be fulfilled, when though all nations gather themselves against Jerusalem, yet it is that they may be cut in pieces; when the vine of the earth shall be gathered into the wine-press of God's wrath, Rev. xiv. 19, 20; xix. 15—21.

13 [r]Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt [s]beat in pieces many people: [t]and I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto [u]the LORD of the whole earth.

r Is. 41. 15. 16. Jer. 51. 33.

s Dan. 2. 44.

t Is. 18. 7 & 23. 18. & 60. 6. 9.

u Zech. 4. 14. & 6. 5.

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Arise: this imperative may be read in the future tense, and so be an express promise; it is, however, an implicit promise made to the daughter of Zion, the Jewish church, type of the gospel catholic church, that she shall be raised out of a captive, low, and oppressed state, and this shall be by the reviving power of her God. *Thresh;* so in a decorum to the metaphor, ver. 12, used to express the gathering of the enemy into the floor to be broken: the future strength of the church, employed successfully (more by the arm of her Redeemer than her own) in the subduing and breaking her enemies, is here foretold and promised, as it is also Isa. xli. 15. Christ will thus punish his enemies. So Babylon typical, as threatened Jer. li. 33, was beat to pieces; and so shall antitypical Babylon in due time be broken as straw that is thrashed into smallest pieces like chaff. *I will make thine horn iron:* some taking this for the horny part of the hoof of the ox which did tread out the corn, make it to be in sense the same with the hoofs made brass; but they that take it as our version doth, for the horn properly taken, with which the horned beasts do push and thrust down, break, or wound, do express the power and strength of the church firm as iron to beat down her enemies. *I will make thy hoofs brass:* by this figurative speech is the strength of Zion expressed, by which she treads under foot, and breaks the power of enemies into pieces that it shall never be repaired, as straw that is thrashed in the floor and broken like chaff. *Thou shalt beat in pieces;* in the times after the rebuilding of Jerusalem the Jews grew to such strength, that in their wars they did, especially in the Maccabees' time, break their enemies in pieces. But here is a mystical and spiritual sense of these words, as they refer to the Messiah's kingdom, in which he will break hard hearts by the power of his word, and convert sinners to himself; and by the power of his almighty arm will defend and support his own subjects, whilst he doth by invincible strength throw down and trample into dust his and their enemies. And this power he hath sometimes evidently exercised already, in the various deliverances he hath wrought for his people, which stand recorded in the church histories. Of this strength you may truly say what is reported of the inscription in the cross appearing to Constantine, *In this thou shalt conquer. Many people;* such as were enemies in disposition and carriage towards the Jews, though neighbours in their situation; these were both many and mighty enemies: such Christ's church hath to contest with, and such Christ will conquer for his church, for he it is who *goeth forth conquering and to conquer*, Rev. vi. 2; and all his enemies shall be made his footstool, Psal. cx. 1. *I will consecrate:* some refer this to the church, and so it may well enough be applied: the redeemed of the Lord should by their own act and deed become the Lord's. Others refer it to the Lord, he will consecrate; this is best: but both together, the Lord will, and therefore the church will; God requires it, they consent to it. *Their gain;* the spoils of their conquered enemies, what they get out of their hand. So the tabernacle was enriched with the spoils of Egypt, and the temple built with that which David did dedicate of the spoils of enemies; and Persian bounty built the second temple. *Unto the Lord;* to the true God, for his honour and in his service. *Their substance;* their power, glory, and wealth, all they have and are. *Unto the Lord of the whole earth;* with humility and low thoughts of all we do, as done to him that doth not need it, being Lord of all.

CHAP. V.

The birth of Christ foretold, 1—3; his kingdom, 4—7; his complete conquest over his enemies, 8—15.

NOW gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall [a] smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

[a] Lam. 3. 30. Matt. 5. 39. & 27. 30.

This verse is, say some, a sharp sarcasm against Israel's enemies. Others will have it to be a repetition of the evils, and a description how far those evils should prevail, that were ere long to come upon Judah and Jerusalem, by either Sennacherib and his Assyrians, or by Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonians, to whom God's people seem thus to speak: We have heard what we must suffer for a time, and how we shall be delivered and triumph at last; and since that is the order, first afflictions, afterwards salvation, delay not, O thou enemy, but *now gather thyself in troops;* summon in thy forces, appoint thy rendezvous, bring thy spoiling, wasting troops, thy merciless and bloody troops, and form thy army, O Assyrian: of whom much like this doth Isaiah prophesy, Isa. viii. 6—10. And this passage of Micah may also further refer to the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar, under the violence of both which they were to suffer, and from both which the Jews should have a glorious deliverance ere long. *O daughter of troops;* O Nineveh, daughter of troops: from her first founder she was a city full of troops, that spoiled, cut off, and destroyed, and had been more than ordinarily so under Pul, Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, and Sennacherib for ninety-five years together, in the successive reigns of these four monarchs. Babylon also in her time was as troublesome to Judah, and must be this daughter of troops also. *He;* that is, the enemy, either Assyrian, which had taken all but Jerusalem, and did invest Jerusalem too; or Babylonian, which afterward besieged and took Jerusalem, sacked the city, burnt the temple, and captivated the people. *Hath laid siege against us;* hath in prophetic style, certainly will lay siege against the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the only people of God at that time; both king, judges, and citizens were all enclosed in the siege. *They,* the proud, successful, and oppressive enemy, *shall smite the judge,* the king, supreme judge, *of Israel;* not the ten tribes, though they are usually called by this name, but the two tribes that adhered to David's family. *With a rod upon the cheek:* this is a proverbial speech, expressing a very contemptuous usage of the person spoken of, and it was fulfilled partly when Sennacherib's general Rabshakeh did so vilify good Hezekiah, and not content herewith vilified the God of Israel also, as 2 Kings xviii. 19, &c.; Isa. xxxvii. 23. It was more fully and literally accomplished when Zedekiah, his children, his counsellors, and his officers of state, were most barbarously used by the insulting Babylonians, 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13, 17, 18, &c.; Jer. lii. 6, &c. Since all this must be done against us, make haste, O thou proud enemy, and do it, for it will end in our deliverance and thy ruin.

2 But thou, [b] Beth-lehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little [c] among the [d] thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be [e] ruler in Israel; [f] whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from †everlasting.

[b] Matt. 2. 6. John 7. 42.
[c] 1 Sam. 23. 23.
[d] Ex. 18. 25.
[e] Gen. 49. 10. Is. 9. 6.
[f] Ps. 90. 2. Prov. 8. 22, 23. John 1. 1.
† Heb. *the days of eternity.*

But, Heb. *And. Beth-lehem;* not in the tribe of Zebulun Josh. xix. 15, but in the tribe of Judah, styled therefore Beth-lehem of Judah, Matt. ii. 1, 6. *Ephratah;* so called, say some, from Caleb's wife; but that is not probable, for it had the name long before Caleb's wife was thought of, as appears, Gen. xxxv. 19. It is more likely to be called Ephratah from the richness and fruitfulness of the land where it was situate, the Hebrew word whence this is derived importing fruitfulness, whence also it was called Beth-lehem, the house of bread. *Though thou be little:* some read this as an interrogation, Art thou little? which ought to be resolved by a negative, Thou art not little, and so reconcile Matt. ii. 6 to this of the prophet. Some read it in the neuter gender, *It is a little thing for thee to be among the thousands,* to have a captain, or ruler of a thousand in Judah; it is much greater honour which shall be put upon thee; out of thee shall come he that is to be chief Ruler and Head of all the people of God, the Messiah. Much like phrase is that 2 Kings xx. 10; Isa. xlix. 6; there is an exposition of the word *Tsair* in the text, as denoting the contrary to our usual notion of it: so Jer. xlviii. 4. The Chaldee paraphrase explains it by sultans or princes, but I question whether one instance from the Scriptures can be given in which *Tsair* signifies great, notable, or chief; our translators have better rendered it with supplying the adversative *though*, and make the sense plain and easy: As for Beth-lehem Ephratah, she is so little that she is scarce to be ranged among the cities of Judah which go out by a thousand, or are led out by one that is head, prefect, or cap-

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tain of a thousand. *Among the thousands of Judah:* this was the royal tribe from which the Messiah was to rise; this (as other tribes) was divided into thousands, and a head appointed to each thousand; and of these the thousand, or, in our language, the regiment, of Bethlehem was one of the least to the eye. *Out of thee shall he come forth;* out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the city Bethlehem, shall he come, i. e. be born. *Unto me;* for to do that great work God hath designed to do by the Messiah. *That is to be ruler,* King and Sovereign, *in Israel;* amidst the Israel of God, the whole Israel, as well that after the faith as that after the flesh. Christ the Lord in the midst of them, chap. iv. 7. *Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting;* whose generation, as he is the Son of God equal with his Father, is eternal: this asserts the eternity of his Divine nature.

3 Therefore will he give them up, until
g ch. 4. 10. the time *that* [g]she which travaileth hath
h ch. 4. 7. brought forth: then [h]the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

Therefore, or nevertheless, as the particle will bear, *will he,* God, the God of Israel, *give them up,* to the Chaldeans, to be wasted by them, and to be led into captivity, and to be afflicted there for their sins committed in their own land against God, *until the time,* until seventy years be expired, the time appointed for the punishing the Jews. *that she which travaileth,* the daughter of Zion, compared here to a woman in travail, *hath brought forth;* be delivered out of captivity, compared here to a woman's bringing forth, as chap. iv. 9, 10. *Then the remnant of his brethren,* i. e. the brethren of the Messiah, those of Judah and Benjamin who were carried captive, *shall return unto the children of Israel;* being set free by Cyrus, shall return to their own land, and be there established; and they shall return *with* Israel rather than *to:* all this referring in the letter to their redemption out of Babylon, (which was the effect of the Messiah's power and mercy towards them, as chap. iv. 10; v. 2.) hath a further reference to a more glorious redemption, and to intervening afflictions which should fall upon the Jews, from after their restitution and resettling in Canaan, unto the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, when born of the Virgin; and that of Isa. vii. 14 shall be fulfilled, when Messiah, Ben David, shall set up his kingdom, and deliver the whole Israel of God from their captivity under ignorance, sin, and hell, and shall bring in the Gentiles, that remnant of his brethren, and unite them to the true Israel, and make them one church to God.

‖Or, *rule.*
i Is. 40. 11. & 49. 10. Ezek. 34. 23. ch. 7. 14.
k Ps. 72. 8. Is. 52. 13. Zech. 9. 10. Luke 1. 32.

4 ¶ And he shall stand and ‖[i]feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now [k]shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

He, the Ruler born in Bethlehem, the Messiah, *shall stand:* sometimes this posture denoteth the ministry of a servant, but here it speaks the readiness, cheerfulness, firmness, and stability of both the ruler, his government, and kingdom. *Feed;* as a Shepherd that does diligently watch over, guide, preserve, and feed his sheep, or as rulers are called shepherds. Christ is that good Shepherd, John x. 14; and he is the righteous and holy Governor, and his government shall have no end, Isa. ix. 7. *In the strength of the Lord;* in the assistance which God shall give him, for Christ-man was carried through this great work, redeeming, setting up, establishing his church by the power of the Father, who was with him, and upheld him, as was promised, Isa. lxi. 1—3. All power in heaven and earth was given to Christ our Mediator, who being eternal God, of equal power with his Father, doth in his own strength overcome all enemies, removeth all difficulties, gathereth and governeth his church, and will do so to the end of the world; such visible, convincing tokens of a Divine power and glory working in him, and with those he sendeth to preach the gospel, I mean apostles, and all managed to the glory of God. *In the majesty of the name;* by commission from the Lord, in whose name Christ came, preached, wrought miracles, and instituted his gospel church. *Of the Lord his God,* i. e. God the Father. *They shall abide;* his sheep, his subjects, his redeemed Israel, his church made up of converted Jews and Gentiles, shall continue, the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. *For;* the church is so redeemed and established, that Christ the Messiah might be glorified; God will give him a glorious name, therefore these things are disposed in this manner. *Now,* either ere long, or in due time, at the set time, *shall he,* Messiah, *be great unto the ends of the earth;* whose redeeming grace shall be published to the ends of the earth, and his dominion, his spiritual kingdom, shall be enlarged wide as the world itself. All here spoken in this verse is too great any way to be applied to Zerubbabel, as some Jews themselves confess.

5 And this *man* [l]shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight †principal men.
l Ps. 72. 7. Is. 9. 6. Zech. 9. 10. Luke 2. 14. Eph. 2. 14.
† Heb. *princes of men.*

This verse, as the former, is abstruse, and the particulars are not easily accommodated to times and things.

And this; so the Hebrew, and it may be read as the neuter gender, and be referred to time, or thing, or both, following in the text, thus: At that time this thing shall be our peace, viz. when the Assyrian shall invade us, we shall raise by our prayers sufficient strength against him, here expressed by seven shepherds, &c. Our version supplies the defect of the substantive with *man,* i. e. the Messiah the Ruler, who stands and feeds in the strength of the Lord. *Shall be the peace,* which is promised to and expected by the people of God, all their preservation and deliverances are not only for the sake, but effected by the power, of the Messiah. *When the Assyrian shall come into our land;* as Sennacherib did within a few years after this prophecy was delivered; and then by the power and authority of Messiah was Sennacherib and his army defeated, and Judah's peace was secured. *When he shall tread in our palaces;* which the Assyrian did in all the cities of Judah, except Jerusalem, against which he could do nothing, because God-man the Messiah was with Hezekiah and Jerusalem, as foretold, Isa. viii. 8—10; xxxvii. 32—35. *Then shall we;* Hezekiah, and with him the prophets and people, by prayer to God, shall prevail with God to send deliverance and salvation to them. *Raise against him seven shepherds:* the number is certain, but put for an uncertain; and the quality of those raised is expressed by shepherds, in a decorum to the representation of the people of God by the metaphor of sheep, or flock, of which shepherds do particularly take care. *And eight principal men:* here again a determinate number is put for an indeterminate, and for a sufficient number, that the effect may be sure. God will raise a sufficient number of deliverers for his people: this is the import of this phrase, as elsewhere six troubles and seven, Job v. 19. Thus in the letter and historical reference I suppose the words do look to the wonderful deliverance of Hezekiah and Jerusalem from the Assyrian, but I doubt not they have a mystical and spiritual reference, and contain a prediction of that peace Christ did make, and doth maintain, for his churches against all enemies, typified by the Assyrian. Besides this exposition given, I must not pass over that note, viz. The word rendered peace signifieth also recompence, and so might be rendered: This shall be the recompence of the Assyrian by the seven shepherds, rendered for his invading and spoiling Judah, and for attempting against Jerusalem.

6 And they shall †waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of [m]Nimrod ‖in the entrances thereof: thus shall he [n]deliver *us* from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.
† Heb. *eat up.*
m Gen. 10. 8, 10, 11.
‖ Or, *with her own naked swords.*
n Luke 1. 71.

And they, the seven shepherds and eight principal men, i. e. those great, wise, and successful instruments of God's revenge, and of his church's deliverance, *shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword:* this passage seems to point to the Babylonians, who did invade, waste, and subdue the Assyrian kingdom under the conduct of Merodach-baladan, king of Babylon, called also Berodach, 2 Kings xx. 12. He

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sent the congratulatory embassy to Hezekiah, newly by miracle cured of his mortal disease, and delivered from the Assyrian, Isa. xxxix. 1, 2. This Merodach taking the opportunity of the weakness of the Assyrian kingdom, partly by the great slaughter of Sennacherib's army, and the murder of that mighty, daring monarch, and partly by the civil wars which ensued between the regicides and Esarhaddon, took arms, and succeeded in the attempt, subduing the Assyrian kingdom with force and bloodshed enough. *The land of Nimrod;* the same, say some, with the land of Assyria; but others, perhaps with better reason, refer this to Babylon, and the kingdom thereof, which by Nebuchadnezzar's hand destroyed the Jews, Jerusalem, and temple, and was afterwards destroyed by the Medes and Persians, whom God raised to punish Babylon and release the Jews. *In the entrances:* as we read, it denoteth the fortified frontiers, the garrisons which keep all the entrances of the kingdom; it denoteth also their cities, through the gates of which was great entrance, or their courts of judicature, which were kept in the gates: both their military power should be reduced and their civil power also by the prevailing conqueror. *Thus shall he;* in this manner shall he, i. e. the Messiah, *deliver us*, the Jews his people, *from the Assyrian;* both as type of all other enemies, and he an enemy to the people of God. *When he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth in our borders:* see this explained ver. 5. I add, that what is rendered *when* might be rendered *because*, and note the reason why the Lord Messiah doth so deal with Assyria first and Babylon next.

o ver. 3.

7 And °the remnant of Jacob shall be
p Deut. 32. 2 Ps. 72. 6. & 110. 3.
in the midst of many people ᵖas a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

The remnant of Jacob; both the remnant which surviveth the sacking and burning of their city and temple, and, carried captive, live in a scattered condition; and the whole remnant, according to the election of grace, whether of Jacob after the flesh or after the Spirit. *In the midst of many people;* either among the several people under the Babylonish dominion, which may well be called many, when it is said of Nebuchadnezzar, that God gave him all nations and kingdoms, Jer. xxvii. 6—8; or else, amidst the nations, their neighbours, after their return and re-establishment in their own land. This remnant, wherever they are, *shall be as a dew;* either subsisting and multiplying as the dew; or else, as the dew refresheth the grass, and is beneficial to it, so where this remnant is, it should be a blessing to those about them that use them friendly; so Hos. xiv. 5. *From the Lord;* it shall be the peculiar work of God; as dew hath no other father or fountain, so the blessings on Jacob, and the blessing by him on others, shall be from the Lord. So God blesseth those that bless Abraham's seed, Gen. xii. 3. So Cyrus received his blessings, and his Persians with him, Isa. xlv. 1—4. *As the showers upon the grass;* the same thing in a different, but very apt expression; nations kind to Jacob should for this spring and flourish, as the grass doth by the dew and showers. *That tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men;* it shall be the only work of God, he shall by his immediate hand bless such, as he alone, without the help of man, giveth dew and showers. As this was fulfilled in the type, before the gospel of the kingdom was preached to all nations, so it hath been, now is, and ever shall be fulfilled in ages to come. God's remnant shall be a blessing to the places they live in, and the persons they live with, as Jacob was to Laban, Gen. xxx. 27, and Joseph was to Potiphar, and to the keeper of the prison.

8 ¶ And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks
‖ Or, *goats.*
of ‖sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

In the midst of many people; see ver. 7; who are enemies, that do injure them. *As a lion* for strength and courage, which *the beasts of the forest* dare not oppose, and cannot resist, so should this remnant; much like that Lev. xxvi. 8. *As a young lion among the flocks of sheep;* a second allusion of the same import, but yet with some greater emphasis; in the former comparison, the greater cattle, called behemoth, in this sheep, much lesser and weaker cattle, are compared with the lion and young lion. *Treadeth down;* overbeareth, and throws down by his strength, and treads under foot with as much ease as a man would tread on worms, or tread down straw for the dunghill. *Teareth in pieces;* to devour, satisfy his hunger, and repair his strength for a new assault on his prey. *None can deliver;* that dares attempt a rescue; but the prey is left under the lion's paw, to satisfy the hungry beast: so shall Israel be after their return out of captivity, and while they keep the ways of the Lord; so they were in Esther's time, against such as would have destroyed them; so in the Maccabees' time, when they subdued the nations about them. But the conquering power of the word, the rod of Christ's strength, doth greater wonders than the sword of the Maccabees ever did. It is the mighty conquering power of the gospel that is here shadowed forth to us.

9 Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.

Thine; Messiah, or a people of God, nay both, forasmuch as whatever these can do, they do it, not in their own power, but in Christ's power. *Thine hand;* thy strength and power, for so does the Scripture usually express strength or might. *Shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries;* shall be greatly exalted, and shall be wonderfully successful against enemies, who in great multitudes did set upon the people of God; such were those who fought the Maccabees, and were defeated by them. *All thine enemies*, who do obstinately hold on in the enmity of their natures, ways, and doings, *shall be cut off;* finally, certainly, eternally, and dreadfully perish. This hath a partial fulfilling now, but its full completion will be when Christ will appear the Judge of quick and dead, when all his enemies shall be made his footstool, Psal. cx. 1.

10 ᵠAnd it shall come to pass in that
q Zech. 9. 10.
day, saith the LORD, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots:

In that day; when the threats against the enemies, and the promises to the people of God, shall be made good. *Saith the Lord:* this is added for assuring the performance of the things foretold. *I will cut off thy horses;* not in judgment, but in mercy, for there shall be no such need of them, nor shall the church of God any more rely on them: so Hos. xiv. 3, *We will not ride upon horses;* though we have put confidence in them, we will do so no more. *I will destroy thy chariots;* warlike chariots, prepared for war: as God alone is, so they will make him, their only trust.

11 And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds:

And I, the Lord thy God, and thy Saviour, *will cut off the cities;* cut off the occasion of thy fortifying thy cities as heretofore thou hast done, thou shalt dwell in unwalled towns, and need no other defence than what I am to thee. *And throw down all thy strong holds;* demolish all thy forts, and watch-towers, and frontier guards. These here mentioned are means of defence against enemies' assaults, in which Israel had too much trusted; the others beforementioned, ver. 10, are offensive preparations for annoying the enemy; but in the day of that peace here spoken of, there should be no enemy should invade the people of God to put them on their defence; nor should they have any need to attempt upon their enemies; and though these means are lawful to be used, yet shall it be the happiness of God's people not to need them, for their God, their Lord, is their Saviour in the midst of them, and he will cut off enemies round about them; so that virtually this is a promise to Israel that his adversaries should be destroyed, and so his fears disappear.

12 And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no *more* ʳsoothsayers:
r Is. 2. 6.

In this verse the Lord foretells the downfal of all unlaw

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ful arts which had been in use, though forbidden by the law of God, Lev. xx. 27. Though Israel should have consulted with God alone, yet they did consult with sorcerers. So did Manasseh, and before him, 2 Kings xvii. 17. *Thou shalt have no more soothsayers;* the very art shall be out of use, and none shall openly, as formerly, consult with them, or they make profession of foretelling events, or what a lucky day or hour to set upon an enterprise, or to curse, as Balaam would have done, an enemy to make way for victory; no more of these; the oracles ceased when Christ was born: much to this purpose Zech. xiii. 2; Mal. iii. 5. God will, in mercy to his people, take away these stumbling-blocks, these occasions of sin.

[a] Zech. 13. 2. 13 [a]Thy graven images also will I cut
[‖] Or, *statues.* off, and thy ‖standing images out of the
[t] Is. 2. 8. midst of thee; and thou shalt [t]no more worship the work of thine hands.

Thy graven images; which were for the matter of them made of wood or stone, smoothed, and fashioned to the images, which the blind idolater thought did well represent his god. *Standing images:* statues erected in places chosen for the purpose, fixed that they move not, had this different name from their posture, the matter still the same. *Out of the midst of thee,* O Israel, in the type, and, O Israel, antitype: this is verified among the Jews, who to this day hate images for Divine uses, and learnt this in their captivity; and it is verified in the church of Christ, which condemns all religious use of images. *Thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands:* it was once the great sin of the Jews to worship and rely on idols; but when God shall by the Messiah redeem both his Israels, they shall no more sin thus, Hos. xiv. 3, for they shall know he is the only true God, and there is no Saviour beside him.

14 And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee: so will I destroy
[‖] Or, *enemies.* thy ‖cities.

I will pluck up thy groves: the groves where some of them abused in downright idolatrous worship, others of them used superstitiously, thus beside the word; the other way, quite against the word: but after the return from Babylon, there was a great reformation in this point, and after the appearing of the Messiah there hath been a greater eradication of idolatry. *So will I destroy thy cities,* or thine enemies; for the word, here used indifferently, signifieth both, and they will either agree to this place. If cities, they are those devoted to idolatry, which, Deut. xiii. 15, were to be destroyed; if you interpret it enemies, it is either an argument to confirm them that they shall not need horses and chariots, or defenced cities, or a further blessing promised upon the reforming from idolatry; this an effect or fruit of it, God will destroy their enemies when they have destroyed these idols which are his enemies.

[u] Ps. 149. 7. 15 And I will [u]execute vengeance in
2 Thess. 1. 8. anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

I will execute vengeance: God speaks to our capacity, he will proceed, or act, as the Hebrew word signifieth. He is supreme Judge, to whom vengeance belongeth, and when he hath passed the sentence, and his instruments execute it, he takes it to himself: so when the Babylonians avenged the wrongs by the Assyrian done to the Jews, and when Cyrus with his Persians and Medes avenged the injuries of Babylon, this prophecy was partly fulfilled, and in succeeding times it was further fulfilled, and is now fulfilling, and so will be, until the final destruction of the wicked. *In anger and fury:* this spoken after the manner of man; it includes the greatness of God's just displeasure, and the effects of it, which are resembled to what we do when furiously angry, act with utmost strength, and in the most terrible manner we can; so God will, with as great severity and terror as flesh and blood can bear, proceed against these heathens. *Upon the heathen;* literally, the nations under the Assyrian monarchy first, next the nations under the Babylonish kingdom: in the full import of the words, all the nations that are enemies to the Lord, to his Christ, and to his peculiar people, who know not God, nor obey the gospel. *Such as they have not heard;* with unparalleled terror; and so they shall be made warning-pieces to others.

CHAP. VI.

God's controversy with his people for ingratitude, 1—5. *What service is acceptable to him,* 6—9. *He reproveth them for their injustice,* 10—15, *and idolatry,* 16.

HEAR ye now what the LORD saith;
[‖] Or, *with.* Arise, contend thou ‖before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice.

Hear ye: see chap. i. 2. *Now;* whilst the Lord is willing to debate with you, before it be too late for you. *What the Lord saith:* though it is a man like yourselves who speaketh, yet he comes from the Lord, and with the Lord's message, and it is the Lord who speaketh by Micah. *Arise:* this is God's command to Micah, who is bidden to arise; so Jonah, chap. i. 2, which see. Prophets, as other men, could be content to sit at ease, and neither be troubled by others or troublesome to others; and perhaps the little success of Micah's preaching had occasioned him to retire and sit down; now God rouseth him, Get up, prepare thyself, *contend thou;* plead, Micah, the present cause, argue the case that is between thy God plaintiff, and thy people delinquents. *Before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice;* plead openly, vehemently, let there be witnesses to hear the case, which is so clear on God's side, and so full against thy people, that the very mountains and hills, on which they have sinned against me notoriously, on which I have blessed them abundantly, had they eyes, and ears, and voice, would testify that I have planted them with vines, olives, fig trees, and clothed them with grass and flocks, and stored them with springs, and beautified them with cedars, oaks, and all pleasant trees of the forest; this I have done upon the mountains and hills for my people, and there they have made their groves, set up their idols, sacrificed to devils, and committed other lewdnesses not to be named. O Micah, speak as if thou wouldst make mountains hear thee to testify for me, Deut. xxxii. 1; Isa. i. 2.

[a] Deu. 32. 1. Ps. 50. 1, 4. Is. 1. 2. [b] Hos. 12. 2. [c] Is. 1. 18. & 5. 3, 4. & 43. 26. Hos. 4. 1. 2 [a]Hear ye, O mountains, [b]the LORD's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for [c]the LORD hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel.

Hear ye, O mountains: in the first verse God directs Micah to take the mountains and hills for witnesses; now in this verse he doth call upon those mountains to hear: it is a prosopopœia, an elegant personating of hearers and witnesses, as Deut. xxxii. 1; Isa. i. 2; ii. 2. Some by *mountains* understand princes and nobles, and by *strong foundations of the earth* inferior magistrates, as Psal. lxxv. 3; but it may as well, or better, be an appeal to these creatures in so just a cause for their Creator. *The Lord's controversy,* whose sovereign Majesty may well command what he pleaseth, and expect to be obeyed, and whose unparalleled goodness to Israel ought to have been uncontroverted motives to obey him in all things; yet the sovereign goodness is slighted and disobeyed; on which he now impleads his people, brings his action against them. *Ye strong foundations of the earth;* called before hills: it is an explanation of the former, mountains; or it may be an appeal to those deep foundations which are hid from any eye, and which seem most remote from what is done on earth; but the ill carriage, the disobedience, and sin of Israel is so notorious, that the whole creation may be subpœnaed witnesses against them. *The Lord hath a controversy with his people;* covenant, redeemed, and only people, as Amos iii. 2. *He will plead with Israel;* no longer put off the cause, nor forbear to punish them and right himself, he will bring the cause to hearing judgment, and execution too.

[d] Jer. 2. 5, 31. 3 O my people, [d]what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.

O my people; you whole house of Israel, my people chosen in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, multiplied in Egypt, and by many miracles owned, redeemed, and carried through the wilderness, and settled in the Promised Land. *What have I done unto thee?* if I have done only good, why art thou

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weary of me? if thou know any evil I have done, declare it, say what iniquity hast thou found in me, as Jer. ii. 5, 31. *Wherein have I wearied thee?* what grievous or burdensome impositions, that thou mightest justly groan under? *Testify against me;* speak, declare, spare not; thou who canst not recount all the good I have done for thee, and who canst not find out one evil I ever did to thee, declare what it is hath caused thee to be weary of me.

e Ex. 12. 51. & 14. 30. & 20. 2. Deut. 4. 20. Amos 2. 10.

4 e For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

Look as far back as thy coming out of Egypt, near seven hundred and forty years agone; *for I brought thee up*, with an out-stretched arm, *out of the land of Egypt*, where by servants thou wert oppressed, where thy oppressors did plot thy utter extirpation, where thou servedst in the iron furnace. *Redeemed thee;* delivered thee by mighty power, and gave Egypt for thy ransom; I made them pay dear for their detaining thee, and ill using of thee. *Out of the house of servants;* being offspring of Canaan, they were in their father's curse doomed to be servants, and were (as servile minds are) most barbarously cruel to Israel, as appears by the bloody edict against the male children, and by requiring brick without straw; their bondage was a cruel bondage under which they groaned. *I sent before thee Moses;* a man excellently qualified to be a conductor to them, a very learned, martial, and experienced man; he improved his forty years by the advantages of a royal education first, and next by the great employments which such persons are called to: for his wisdom and learning, his might and valour, you have witness, Acts vii. 22; the Hebrew tradition is, that he fought and got many battles, in which he commanded as generalissimo for Pharaoh. Moses was beside this admitted to extraordinary consults with God: by this means their model of polity was made very exact. *Aaron;* a person called to the exercise of the highest office in the priesthood, to offer sacrifice, and make atonement for the sins of the people, and to be a type of the great Intercessor. *Miriam;* a prophetess, to be assistant to her brothers last mentioned, to be example and counsellor to the women: God furnished them with magistrate, priest, and prophet.

f Num. 22. 5. & 23. 7. & 24. 10, 11. Deut. 23. 4, 5. Josh. 24. 9, 10. Rev. 2. 14. g Num. 25. 1. & 33. 49. Josh. 4. 19. & 5. 10. h Judg. 5. 11.

5 O my people, remember now what f Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from g Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know h the righteousness of the LORD.

O my people, remember now; O Israel, think well of it, what I did then was worthy of a grateful remembrance to this day. *What Balak king of Moab consulted:* this man, though a great and warlike prince, yet would not adventure by plain force to set upon Israel; he wished their ruin, he contrived it, and had he succeeded in his first attempt to bring Israel under a curse, he was resolved next to attack them by force. *And what Balaam*, a man accounted to be a prophet and a holy man, able to blast any by his curse, and able to advance any affairs by his blessing, but really he was a soothsayer, and a man of pernicious counsels, *answered him;* forced against his interest and inclinations to bless Israel, Deut. xxiii. 4, 5; Josh. xxiv. 10, and to confess he could not prevail with God to curse Israel; so also remember how Balaam counselled Balak to draw your fathers to sin, how this snare took, and how it cost twenty-four thousand lives. The story at large you have Numb. xxii.—xxv. *From Shittim:* this the place where Balak began by fair but lewd women of Midian to debauch Israel as Balaam had counselled, and so continued to Gilgal all along the borders of his dominion: or else thus, Remember, O my people, how I spared thee in the matter of Baal-peor, for which thou deservedst to be destroyed at Shittim; remember also the mercies I gave under the conduct of Joshua after Moses's death, which fell out whilst you abode at Shittim, Josh. iii. 1. *Gilgal;* where Israel first took possession of the Promised Land, and saw visibly the faithfulness of their God. *That ye may know the righteousness of the Lord;* the mercy, justice, uprightness, veracity, as it signifies; but here it rather denotes the right on God's side in this controversy with his people.

6 ¶ Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, *and* bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves †of a year old? † Heb. *sons of a year?*

In the foregoing part of the chapter you have God's resolution to have a hearing, ver. 1, 2, and his plea for himself against an ungrateful people, ver. 3—5. Now in this verse you have the result, which is either an unfeigned submission, and justification of God's just proceedings, made by some of the best of this people, or else an inquiry made by men among them, who did yet retain some opinion of their own integrity; much like those Isa. lviii. 3, they were ready to say, We have offered sacrifices as required, &c.; what would God have us do more? Or else it is an inquiry what the prophet would further direct them to do in this case, with an intimation that they were ready to offer any sacrifices God should require of them. Or else this verse is the prophet's supposition, that some among them would be ready to inquire how they should in this case behave themselves, and so this prosopopœia fairly makes way for further direction to this people.

Wherewith? Heb. *With what?* what preparation shall I make for a due and right address unto God? *Shall I*, in the person of all the people, or else in the person of the most thinking among them: this *I* is the people of the Jews. *Come before the Lord:* it is a temple phrase, and contains the solemn attendance on God in his worship; well paraphrased in the Chaldee paraphrase, With what shall I serve before the Lord? *And bow myself before:* this is exegetical to the former phrase, When I come to bow myself and worship the Lord, with what shall I appear? *The high God;* such was the God of Israel, heaven his throne, the earth his footstool; idols are dunghill gods, our God alone is the God who dwells on high. *Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings?* shall these suffice for testimony that I owe my all to God, or appease his displeasure, which justly might devour me as the fire the sacrifice? *With calves of a year old:* it is probable this repeats (as is usual in Scripture, to confirm and affect us the more) the thing before mentioned.

i Ps. 50. 9. & 51. 16. Is. 1. 11. k Job 29. 6. 1 2 Kings 16. 3. & 21. 6. & 23. 10. Jer. 7. 31. & 19. 5. Ezek. 23. 37. † Heb. *belly.*

7 i Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, *or* with ten thousands of k rivers of oil? l shall I give my first-born *for* my transgression, the fruit of my †body *for* the sin of my soul?

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams? the law did direct the offering of rams, single beasts for single sacrifices; if this be too little, they shall be multiplied, we will give many, very many; for the phrase is an hyperbole. *With ten thousands of rivers of oil:* oil was required too in their sacrifices, in the meat-offerings of them, but in no great quantities, a log, or hin, i. e. half a pint, or three quarts; but we know such gifts are infinitely short of the Divine goodness bestowed on us; he who is our God is worthy of rivers of oil, multiplied to thousands; had we such store it should be all his. Such-like hyperbole you meet with in Isa. xl. 15—17. *Shall I give my first-born?* this is proposed not as a thing practicable by any rule of reason or religion, but as a proof of their readiness, as Abraham, to offer up their first-born, as he did offer up his Isaac to God. It is much to part with any of our children, but it is more to part with the strength, and glory, and hope of our families; yet, like hypocrites, or like unnatural heathen, this they would do, rather than what would please the Lord. *For my transgression;* to appease the anger of the Lord for my sins; would these be expiatories? *The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* the question is repeated to affect us the more: the words would bear this reading, Shall I give my first-born? *This would be* my sin. The fruit of my body? *These would be* the sin of my soul.

m Deut. 10. 12. 1 Sam. 15. 22. Hos. 6. 6. & 12. 6. n Gen. 18. 19. Is. 1. 17. † Heb. *humble* thyself *to walk.*

8 He hath m shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but n to do justly, and to love mercy, and to †walk humbly with thy God?

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The prophet answers the inquiry made ver. 7 otherwise than these inquirers did expect: You who make this inquiry might have spared this pains. *He*, God himself, hath already plainly enough told you this. *Thee*, O Jews, every one of you, might from the law of God know what would please your God, and with what you ought to come before him; you might have read, 1 Sam. xv. 22, that he delighteth in your obeying his word; and more early, Deut. x. 12, 13, 20, the same practical rule was laid down. *What is good* in itself for you, and well-pleasing to your God; from his own mouth your holy and righteous fathers did know, and so might you, what is that good with which you should appear before God. *What doth the Lord require of thee?* what so much? or what without? or doth he require any thing without? It is a question that must be resolved in a negative, comparative, or absolute; the Lord doth not require sacrifice without moral duties, nor doth he require sacrifice so much as such duties after mentioned. *To do justly;* to render to every one what is their due, superiors, equals, inferiors, to be equal to all, and oppress none, in body, goods, or name; in all your dealings with men carry a chancery in your own breasts, and do according to equity. *To love mercy;* be kind, merciful, and compassionate towards all that need your kindness, do not use severity towards any; though the laws of man did not require you to remit of your pretences, and if you exacted all your right you did not break the laws of men, yet you should have respect to the law of love, and show mercy with delight in showing it, Rom. xii. 8; 2 Cor. ix. 7; Heb. xiii. 16. *To walk humbly with thy God;* in all duties which immediately refer to the precepts of the first table, in all religious exercise and deportment toward God, keep the heart sincerely humble toward God; think highly of him, his laws and determinations, murmur not against the final determinations God by his providence makes, complain not of any of his precepts; know and own it, thou art an unprofitable servant if thou hast done all, Luke xvii. 10.

9 The LORD's voice crieth unto the city, and ‖*the man of* wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.

‖ Or, *thy name shall see that which is.*

The Lord's voice; either by his judgments, each of which is the Lord's voice, he speaks by them; or rather by his prophets; and whether people hear it, or forbear, the Lord himself is concerned in it. *Crieth,* as to deaf or to sleepy and secure men, who will not hear the milder and softlier calls; the prophet must cry to them in the loudest manner he can speak. *Unto the city;* to every city in Israel and Judah, but principally to Jerusalem and Samaria, places of greatest concourse, and where the men of greatest sense may reasonably be supposed to dwell, who should hear and consider. *The man of wisdom: man* is supplied to make the sense entire, but without that supply the sense might have run plain, *and wisdom will hear,* which must have been resolved some way like to our translation, and I know none that better fits than that our learned translators have supplied. I know not but that the abstract, used here for the concrete, may express a superlative degree, wisdom, i. e. the wisest, will hear, &c. *Shall see thy name;* rightly apprehend and duly reverence the holiness, justice, and necessariness of the proceedings of the Lord, with his power and majesty in the execution of his just displeasure on brutish, hardened sinners. *Hear;* consider well and discern. *Ye;* citizens both of Jerusalem and Samaria, and every other city in the twelve tribes. *The rod;* the punishments that God is now sending, by which he will plead his cause. These are called *the rod,* either because they are from God, who once was, and still would be, a Father to them, or because it is a comprehensive word, which takes in the various punishments inflicted. *And who hath appointed it;* hath commissioned it, handleth the rod, hath chosen it out, and strikes with it, whether it be Assyrian, or Babylonian, or both, at several times. This is the plain literal sense; others there are, which are omitted because they suit not the design of this work.

‖ Or, *Is there yet unto every man in house of the wicked, &c.*

10 ¶ ‖Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the †scant measure °*that is* abominable?

† Heb. *measure of leanness,* Amos 8. 5. ° Deut. 25. 13,—16. Prov. 11. 1. & 20. 10, 23.

Are there yet? after so many express laws peremptorily forbidding, so many examples of punishments on such, after so many reproofs, menaces, and exhortations by so many prophets, dare you still do so unjustly? *Treasures of wickedness;* gotten by injurious, oppressive courses, ill-gotten wealth; the wickedness wherewith they raked their wealth together is laid up with their wealth, as the like is said, James v. 3. *In the house of the wicked:* none have thought of restoring their ill-gotten goods; the wicked fathers, who heaped them together, laid them up in their houses, and the children retain them; the house, i. e. family, of these do as their fathers, store up violence, and so do directly contrary to the first rule, ver. 7, *to do justly. The scant measure,* which is less than standard; see Amos viii. 5; by which these unrighteous ones did both offend against God, and cozen their chapmen. *That is abominable;* God abhors such injustice, Prov. xi. 1; xx. 10, 23; Deut. xxv. 13—16. It is most hateful in his sight.

11 ‖Shall I count *them* pure with ᵖthe wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?

‖ Or, *Shall I be pure with, &c.* p Hos. 12. 7.

Shall I? it may have some reference to the prophet, as speaking of himself, appointed of God to be a reprover and impartial censurer of the sins of this people; When I am so to judge of them by their doings, shall I flatter them, and say they are better then they are? but it better refers to God himself. *Count them pure;* approve, justify, or acquit them, as if they were righteous, and not worthy to be punished? Shall I let them escape who are such unjust persons? This question implieth a strong negation. *The wicked balances:* this kind is put for all the rest, wherewith things bought and sold were apportioned, and by which buyers and sellers were ascertained how much they bought. *The bag;* in which they both kept their weights at home, and carried them about with them. *Deceitful weights,* Heb. *stones of deceit;* they did (as in many places with us men do) use stones for weights, and this unjust people did cheat both at home and abroad, both the balance and its weights were deceitful, and condemned, Lev. xix. 35, 36; Deut. xxv. 13—16.

12 For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and ᵍtheir tongue *is* deceitful in their mouth.

g Jer. 9. 3, 5, 6, 8.

For: this is given as an evidence of the truth of the charge, and of the justness of the resolution God had declared to punish them. *The rich men;* who of all men had least temptation to deal unjustly; they were so well provided for, that without a trade they might live, and in trading they should have been content with honest gain; they should have been examples of charity and bounty, but these are the men deepest in this guilt. *Thereof;* of Jerusalem, Samaria, and of every traded city in the land. *Full of violence;* full of principles, practices, and fruits of violence and rapine, their minds inclined to cheatings and dishonesty, their practices managed with fraud and falsehood, and their riches heaped up through violence. *The inhabitants:* the disease is universal, not some few rich men, but they that dwell in the city, are wholly oppression; or perhaps thus, who come to dwell among them, soon catch the disease, and learn these ways. *Thereof;* of all the cities of the land of Canaan. *Have spoken lies;* have accustomed themselves to speak falsehood, there is no truth in their affirmations or negations. *Their tongue is deceitful in their mouth;* there is not a man of plain-heartedness, integrity, and honesty among them. So David complains of his times, Psal. xii. 1, 2.

13 Therefore also will I ʳmake *thee* sick in smiting thee, in making *thee* desolate because of thy sins.

r Lev. 26. 16. Ps. 107. 17, 18.

Therefore, for these many sins of violence, frauds, and lies, *also will I make thee sick in smiting thee;* some read, I have begun to smite thee, so it suits well with the history of the wars, rapine, captivity, or desolation by the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, &c. brought upon Israel and Judah, which were the beginnings of their sorrows, and God's just punishments; but as we read it *sick in smiting,* it will as well suit with the grammatical construction of the words,

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with the history too, and thus it will give the greater emphasis to the words; God will ere long so smite, that the strokes of his rod should reach the very heart, and make Israel heart-sick of his wounds, inflicted on him by the Lord. *In making thee desolate:* this was fully accomplished, when the kingdom of the ten tribes was overthrown by Shalmaneser, and the kingdom of the two tribes captivated by Nebuchadnezzar. *Because of thy sins;* multiplied, aggravated, obstinately retained, and not repented of.

[a] Lev. 26.26. Hos. 4. 10.

14 [a]Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied; and thy casting down *shall be* in the midst of thee; and thou shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver; and *that* which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword.

Thou shalt eat; both literally and figuratively taken, for using what they have. So God threatens, Lev. xxvi. 26. So God did punish the Jews, Hag. i. 6, which see. *But not be satisfied;* not be filled with sweetness or strength in the eating, or using of what thou hast; thy sins shall bring either bitterness or insufficiency upon all thou hast, by both all shall be made useless to thee. *Thy casting down;* thy destruction, partly by thy dissensions, conspiracies, and violences within thyself, and partly by the enemies breaking in upon thee, and bringing the war into thine own bowels. *Shall be in the midst of thee;* thou shalt be weakened at home by thine own hands, and be wasted utterly by thine enemy, besieging thee in thy cities, and taking them. *Thou shalt take hold:* though there is some variety of readings here, yet the plainest and most obvious sense is as we render it, whether you refer this *laying hold* to persons, as wife, children, or friends, whom (though they endeavour to save out of the enemies' hand, yet) they shall not be able to save; or if referred to things, goods, their most valuable and most portable goods and wealth: as men in distress, and fleeing out of the reach of enemies, pack up their best movables, lay hold on their children, and carry them away into some remoter place, or strong hold; so it is likely this people did when invaded, Jer. xxxv. 11. *But shalt not deliver:* where thou lodgest thy children, and layest up thy wealth, thither the enemy shall pursue thee, there besiege thee and thine; or if thou flee into other countries, it shall not be a safe refuge to thee. *That which thou deliverest;* which thou dost for a little while, for a few weeks or months, preserve from the enemy, that thou thinkest is safe. *Will I give up,* by unexpected and unthought-of accidents to you, yet guided by the unerring and unresistible hand of Divine wisdom and power; shall be given up, fall into the hands of enemies, so that any considerate eye may see God's hand in it. *To the sword;* to be cut off by either domestic and civil wars, or by the invading, conquering, and wasting troops of the Assyrians.

[t] Deut. 28. 38, 39, 40. Amos 5. 11. Zeph. 1. 13. Hag. 1. 6.

15 Thou shalt [t]sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine.

Thou shalt sow, be at great pains and cost in tilling and sowing, *but thou shalt not reap;* it shall either not thrive to a harvest, or, if it does, an enemy shall reap it. *Thou shalt tread the olives,* lay out thy labour and weary thyself in it, plant the tree, gather the fruit and tread it, *but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil;* when thus prepared to use it, an enemy shall rob thee of it. Oil in those countries was much in use, because of the great refreshment it gave to the whole body. *And sweet wine:* here is an ellipsis, and must be thus supplied, thou shalt tread the grapes which afford sweet wine. *But shalt not drink wine;* in this, as in the other two, thou shalt be disappointed, thou shalt not enjoy thy labour, nor shall thy heart be cheered with new wine, nay, thou shalt be sick with vexing, to see thine enemies' hearts glad with the wine thou hadst prepared for other guests.

‖ Or, *he doth much keep the, &c.* [u] 1 Kings 16. 25, 26. [x] Hos. 5. 11. [y] 1 Kings 16. 30, &c. & 21. 25, 26. 2 Kings 21. 3. [z] 1 Kings 9. 8. Jer. 19. 8. ‖ Or, *astonishment.*

16 ¶ For ‖the statutes of [u]Omri are [x]kept, and all the works of the house of [y]Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee [z]a ‖desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people.

[a] Is. 25. 8. Jer. 31. 31. Lam. 5. 1.

The statutes of Omri; of which you read, 1 Kings xvi. 25—28. He built Samaria, to be a royal city, and seat of religion brought in by Jeroboam; thus he both strengthened and put more credit upon the idolatrous worship, which was set up by Omri in a royal city, whereas by Jeroboam it was set up in places of meaner account. *Are kept;* diligently, very much. *All the works of the house of Ahab;* summed up, in establishing Jeroboam's idolatry, introducing the idolatrous worship of Baal, 1 Kings xvi. 31—33, cutting off the prophets of the Lord, 1 Kings xviii. 4; xix. 10, 14, and abolishing the true worship of God; besides the barbarous contriving the death of the innocent, and seizing the estate, 1 Kings xxi. 8, 9, &c. *And ye,* of the house of Israel, though under the government of families which had no great reason to value the house of Ahab, yet you have done their works of idolatry and oppression, and you also of the house of Judah have degenerated and done like their works. *Ye walk in their counsels;* literally fulfilled in Jehoram's reign, acts, and counsels, 2 Kings viii. 17, 18; and in Ahaziah's, who was son of Jehoram, and grandson of Jehoshaphat, 2 Kings viii. 27; and so did Jehu, and his successors, all persist in the idolatry of the calf-worship, and in oppression of the poor: thus instead of walking humbly with God, they did openly depart from him, contrary to what God required of them. *That I should make thee, &c.:* eventually this was the end, or in necessary tendency it could not end otherwise, though they did not intend this, nor did God will them to do so that it might so end. *A desolation;* an utter waste, such as should astonish those that saw it. *The inhabitants thereof,* of the city or land, *an hissing,* in token of abhorrence and derision. Deut. xxviii. 37; Jer. xxv. 9, 18; xxix. 18. *Therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people;* the reproach threatened in the law, if my people forsake me; or, Jerusalem shall be as much reproached as Samaria; or as Ezek. xxxvi. 20.

CHAP. VII.

The church, complaining of the scarcity of good men, 1, 2, *and the general corruption,* 3, 4, *putteth not confidence in man, but in God,* 5—7. *She triumpheth in hopes of restoration after affliction,* 8—13. *She prayeth to God,* 14. *God answereth her with promises of confounding her enemies,* 15—17. *God's mercies to his people,* 18—20.

WOE is me! for I am as †when they have gathered the summer fruits, as [a]the grapegleanings of the vintage: *there is* no cluster to eat: [b]my soul desired the firstripe fruit.

† Heb. *the gatherings of summer.* [a] Is. 17. 6. & 24. 13. [b] Is. 28. 4. Hos. 9. 10.

All are agreed in the scope and meaning of these words, that they are designed a complaint for the great scarcity of men that feared God, did justice, and loved mercy; and so the prophet begins with a pathetical complaint, *Woe is me!* ordinarily this phrase is minatory, but here it is lamentation, as every eye may see who discerns the propriety of the Hebrew. *For I;* either the prophet in his own person, or else in the person of the good man; or, by a usual figure, the land may be brought in, complaining, that whereas it was once well stored, now it hath few right good in it. *Am as when they have gathered the summer fruits;* all the fair, goodly, and ripe fruit gathered, none left, or none but evil fruit, such as the labourers thought not worth gathering up. So is the harvest of Israel and Judah too; though I and other prophets have sown good seed abundantly, yet goodness comes up very thin and scarce: so Isa. xxiv. 13, 16. *As the grape-gleanings of the vintage:* the same complaint in a like elegant metaphor, drawn from the vintage-gatherer, who leaves but few scattering single grapes. So Israel and Judah, which in bringing forth good men should have been as a fruitful vine full of clusters, but barren they have been, and are; and good men, i. e. just, compassionate, and humble men, are as grapes after the vintage is gathered. *There is no cluster to eat;* such good men's converse would as much delight, refresh, and encourage me, as a fair cluster of grapes doth a thirsty and hungry person, but there is not one such cluster. *My soul*

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desired; it speaks a vehement desire. *The first-ripe fruit;* it is an ellipsis or aposiopesis, and to be supplied thus, *but there was*, or *I found, none.*

c Ps. 12. 1. & 14. 1, 3. Is. 57. 1. ‖ Or, *godly*, or, *merciful.* d Hab. 1. 15.

2 The c‖good *man* is perished out of the earth: and *there is* none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; d they hunt every man his brother with a net.

The good man; who loves and is kind to men in need, and is so from the sense of God's goodness, and in a designed imitation of God, is godly in the frame of his heart and course of life towards God, and beneficent to men for God's sake. *Is perished;* is dead and gone, and left no heir of his godlike virtues. *Out of the earth;* out of Israel and Judah too, though Hezekiah was (probably) now their king. *None upright;* an honest, plain-hearted man, who thinketh no deceit, but speaketh the truth, that is, without crooked and perverse designs; such a one may possibly, but not easily, be found among the people of the ten and of the two tribes. *They all lie in wait for blood:* this proves the prophet's charge against this people, for the good and upright man imagineth not evil against any, but it is evident that in Israel (and Judah too) the temper of the most was sly, designing, and watching to do mischief, to the ruining of families, the murdering of innocents, and seizing their estates, Ahab like, 1 Kings xxi.; Prov. i. 19. *They hunt;* they proceed with all diligence, craft, and power, as a hunter that hath set his toils, and is now by all his arts endeavouring to bring the prey into the toils, that he may make his advantage by it. *Every man his brother;* were they strangers they so hunted it were barbarous, but this is inhumanly barbarous, these bloody men hunt and destroy their brethren, the seed of Jacob, the worshippers of the God of Jacob, their own circumcised brethren. *With a net;* which is spread beforehand, and laid close; so it is secret, premeditated cruelty and rapine they do universally exercise against each other.

e Hos. 4. 18. f 1 s. 1. 23. ch. 3. 11. † Heb. *the mischief of his soul.*

3 ¶ That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, e the prince asketh, f and the judge *asketh* for a reward; and the great *man*, he uttereth †his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up.

That they may do evil with both hands earnestly: as we render the words, their plain sense will be, that all their diligence, that with both hands they can use, is to set forward evil and mischief. Possibly this clause might bear this reading, *Both hands are towards evil;* and then the following clause thus, *To do good the prince asketh. The prince;* the chief ruler, who commissioneth the judge, and should awe him from perverse judging, who should charge the judges as Jehoshaphat did, 2 Chron. xix. 5, 6; but, contrarily, here the prince set a price upon his own act in evil. *The judge;* the inferior magistrate, commissioned to be judge. *Asketh for a reward:* shameless injustice! to sell the innocent, and condemn their cause and persons, and to acquit the guilty, and pronounce them just! for a bribe to make God's authority which is in them to act so directly against itself, is abominably wicked, for God's authority to them is given that they might relieve the poor oppressed, and acquit innocency, but here innocency must buy its safety, or else is sold to danger. *The great man;* either the advocates in their courts of judicature, or the great man of interest at court, who can do what he will there. *He uttereth;* is bold to speak plainly what bribe he will have, he makes his own demand, whereas they did (whilst a little modest) treat by others, and a servant or under-officer must make the bargain. *His mischievous desire;* his unjust, oppressive design and purpose, knowing that his greatness and interest will bear him out in whatever violence he attempts against poor, weak, and unbefriended innocence; he dares for gain set any thing forward. *So they*, all three, prince, judge, and great man, *wrap it up*, or twist it together, consent each to other, and jointly promote violence and bloody cruelty.

g 2 Sam. 23. 6, 7. Ezek. 2. 6. See Is. 55. 13.

4 The best of them g*is* a brier: the most upright *is sharper* than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen *and* thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity.

The best; among all naught, who is least naught passeth for best; and so must it be here, not one good, but the least evil man is by the prophet called the best. *Of them;* of people, prophets, judges, great men, and princes. *Is a brier;* mischievous and hurtful to all that meddle with them; and perhaps the prophet alludes to briers infolded in each other, that shall so be devoured at last. *The most upright;* in the same sense upright as they are said to be best. *Is sharper than a thorn hedge;* the same in different words, i. e. hurtful and mischievous to all. *The day of thy watchmen;* literally taken for such as on the watch-towers observe whether enemies approach; the day in which they shall give the affrighting intelligence, and sound the alarm. Or else figuratively, watchmen, i. e. governors, prophets, and teachers, either good and faithful, or evil and unfaithful. The day which the true prophets foretold would come, which faithful teachers confirmed, good governors believed, feared, and, as Hezekiah, endeavoured to prevent, will certainly overtake you, that day of evil which your sins have provoked God to appoint. Or else, that day of good, which your false prophets have promised, your corrupt princes, judges, great men do expect and hope for, shall be a day of *visitation*, grievous punishment, by which the falsehood of flattering prophets shall be discovered, and the truth of Micah, and Isaiah, &c., true prophets, be confirmed. *Cometh*, i. e. surely, speedily, and unavoidably on impenitent ones, how many or how great soever. *Now;* when the day is come as to Samaria in its captivity by the Assyrian tyrant, and to Jerusalem in the Babylonish captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, and in many other *nows* intervening between the time of Micah's minatory predictions and the full accomplishment of them. *Shall be their perplexity;* the astonishing, overwhelming sorrows, fears, and confusions which shall wreck these great, notorious, and impudent oppressors, hunters, and sellers of justice. They shall be perplexed because the sore evils foretold by the true prophets of God shall overwhelm them, and because the peace and prosperity promised by the false prophets is unexpectedly turned into troubles, desolation, and utter ruin to their state, cities, and families.

h Jer. 9. 4.

5 ¶ h Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

Trust ye not in a friend: most prodigiously treacherous were the people of that age, and since none upright, all lay in wait for blood, and were turned hunters of brethren, it is but necessary caution that they trust no friendship. *A guide*; either a governor, who ought to guide; or equal, who being of intimate familiarity usually do guide; or a husband, as the word imports. *Keep the doors of thy mouth;* watch thy words, let not thy tongue discover any secret or utter any words which may be danger to thyself, or give an advantage to thine enemy. *From her that lieth in thy bosom;* a periphrasis of a wife in honest times; but whether in debauched times, as these are of which the prophet did speak, it may not import somewhat like that Prov. v. 20, I will not say: a wife, one may rationally suppose, will never disclose a husband's secrets to ruin him; yet such were the treacheries of that corrupt age, that it would be imprudence to trust a wife.

i Ezek. 22. 7. Matt. 10. 21, 35, 36. Luke 12. 53. & 21. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 2, 3.

6 For i the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies *are* the men of his own house.

For: the prophet here gives us a reason of his advice to be wary how and whom they trust. *The son;* who received his being, maintenance, education, and inherits the honour as well as estate of his father; the son, obliged by most inviolable laws to please, preserve, and honour his father, *dishonoureth*, seeks to accuse, vilify, endanger, and ruin *the father;* whose dishonour and loss, or ruin, is also the son's dishonour and ruin; yet unnatural treachery will be so rife in those times, that the father had need keep his

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guard upon his very son. *The daughter*, whose love and affection are usually more tender than the sons' towards parents, yet will forget their duty. *Riseth up against her mother*, that bare them, that nursed them, that, more than fathers, tend, indulge, and bear with them. So monstrous shall the perfidiousness of that age be. *The daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law:* in consanguinity there was not any faithfulness, in affinity much less may you expect it. *A man's enemies*, the worst and most perilous enemies, who will be most ready and most able to do them mischief, *are the men of his own house;* among relations and retainers, who by law of God and nature should have been faithfullest friends. So it fell out through the civil wars of the Jews, in their seditious and in their calamitous days. Much like to this is that of Christ, Matt. x. 21, 35, 36.

k Is. 8. 17. 7 Therefore [k]I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.

Therefore, since times are so calamitous, and all sorts of men are so perfidious, since no sure comfort or relief from those that are nearest relations, and should be dearest friends, *I will look;* as one set in a watch-tower looks round about, and diligently observes all that stirreth; so will the prophet, speaking in the person of the faithful, the Israel of God; so did they who in Israel and Judah feared the Lord and walked with him; *unto the Lord*, the God of mercy, power, truth, and wisdom, who can and will help. *I will wait for*, though he do not presently appear for me, saith the church, I will with patience expect, *the God of my salvation;* who only can, and who graciously hath promised to save his church. *My God will hear me;* he doth hear my cry, and will deliver me.

l Prov. 24. 17. Lam. 4. 21. m Ps. 37. 24. Prov. 24. 16. n Ps. 27. 1. 8 ¶ [l]Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: [m]when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, [n]the LORD *shall be* a light unto me.

The prophet in this verse personates the church, and brings her in bespeaking the enemy in this manner: *Rejoice not;* let it be no pleasure or matter of glorying to thee, that the day of calamity hath overtaken me. *Against me;* Israel of God, the remnant, the faithful, which are the church of God. *O mine enemy;* O Assyria, Edom, or Babylon. *When I fall*, into a low condition, into deepest distresses, *I shall arise;* I shall not always lie in them, God will raise me out of them. *When I* (the prophet intends the good, the few righteous ones among those degenerate multitudes) *sit in darkness*, when affliction, war, famine, and captivity, as a dismal cloud, shall cover us, and benight the daughter of light, when fallen as low as a captive, *the Lord shall be a light unto me;* shall support, comfort, and deliver me, his presence and favour shall, as the sun rising, dispel the darkness of the night. This is spoken more especially concerning Judah.

o Lam. 3. 39. 9 [o]I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute
p Ps. 37. 6. judgment for me: [p]he will bring me forth to the light, *and* I shall behold his righteousness.

I will bear, patiently and submissively, *the indignation of the Lord;* the just and chastising anger of the Lord, in the effects of it upon me. *Because I have sinned against him*, greatly, continually, both against his law and the precepts thereof, and against his love and the effects thereof. Judah was guilty of idolatry, ingratitude against God; and of injustice, unfaithfulness, and unmercifulness against one another; and these sins deserved sorer punishments than they suffered, therefore the righteous ones here justify God, and humble themselves. *Until he plead my cause* against mine enemy, for that he will ere long do, as well as now he doth plead his own cause against me. He will be as well a just judge against mine enemies, to avenge me on them, as he is a just God, by my sins provoked to chastise me. *And execute judgment for me;* when that day comes, he will certainly and evidently declare his judgment to be against mine insulting adversaries, my cruel enemies, and that he doth so punish them for my sake, as Psal. cxxxvii. 7; Isa. x. 5, 12; Jer. xxx. 8; Zech. i. 12, 15. *He*, the great and glorious, the holy and just God, who now chastiseth me, *will bring me forth to the light;* as a prisoner brought out of a dark prison or dungeon into the light, is set at liberty, advanced and beautified, so shall the church be delivered and made to prosper. *I shall behold his righteousness;* the truth and riches of his promised salvation. This made good, partly in the restitution of the captivity, rebuilding of Jerusalem by order of Cyrus and Darius, and partly before this in Hezekiah's rescue from Sennacherib's pride and rage.

10 ‖Then *she that is* mine enemy shall see *it*, and [q]shame shall cover her which said unto me, [r]Where is the LORD thy God? [s]mine eyes shall behold her: now †shall she be trodden down [t]as the mire of the streets.

‖ Or, *And thou wilt see her that is mine enemy, and cover her with shame.*
q Ps. 35. 26.
r Isa. 42. 3, 10. & 59. 10. & 115. 2. Joel 2. 17.
s ch. 4. 11. † Heb. *she shall be for a treading down.* t 2 Sam. 22. 43. Zech. 10. 5.

Then; in the time of this hoped deliverance, when God shall, as I expect he will, plead my cause. *Mine enemy;* what nation or people soever, whether Assyria, Edom, or Babylon, or whoever. *Shall see;* as they did when Hezekiah was miraculously saved, and Jerusalem with him, out of the hand of the Assyrian, and as in the return out of Babylon, when the heathen said among themselves, *The Lord hath done great things for them*, Psal. cxxvi. 2. *Shame*, reproach and confusion, self-condemning reflections, *shall cover her;* shall on all sides be cast upon her for her pride, cruelty, and inhumanity against the Israel of God. *Which said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God?* which with insulting pride and atheism derided my faith and my God. So the heathen either denied the omnipresence and omnipotence of the true God, or preferred their idols above him, and as if he had been a conquered and captived God, as well as his people were a captive people. So Psal. cxv. 2; Joel ii. 17. *Mine eyes:* the church speaketh assured of the truth of God's avenging her upon her enemies. *Shall behold her;* with delight, or well-pleasedness, the people of God shall see their enemies laid as low for their cruelty against them, as ever God suffered the enemy to lay his people low for their sins against him and his mercies. See the like expression, Psal. lix. 10; chap. iv. 11. *Now shall she;* either shortly she shall; or else, when that time of full deliverance is come, the church shall in that day rejoice in her God, and say *Now. Be trodden down as the mire of the streets;* be accounted and used as most contemptible and useless, the conquering enemy shall then tread the Babylonians in the dirt, and use them despitefully, and without more regard than that we have for the dirt under our feet; and this was accomplished by the Medes and Persians in their conquest of Babylon.

11 *In* the day that thy [u]walls are to be built, *in* that day shall the decree be far removed.

u Amos 9. 11, &c.

These words are variously expounded, but the plainest and most suiting with the letter and history to me seems to be this: *In the day that thy walls are to be built;* O Jerusalem, the days shall certainly come, that thy walls, overthrown and razed by the Babylonians, shall be rebuilt; which was first in part fulfilled under Cyrus, but more fully under Darius Hystaspes, and Darius Longimanus, who commissioned Nehemiah to repair the walls of Jerusalem. *Shall the decree;* either the decree of Artaxerxes, who is also called Cambyses, and who forbade the building of the temple, or else the decree of Darius Hystaspes, reviving Cyrus's decree for the return of all the Jews that would return. *Be far removed;* for ever cease; if referred to Cambyses's decree, this shall no more hinder; or else, shall be dispersed far and wide among all the provinces, if you mean Cyrus's decree that all may return.

12 *In* that day *also* [x]he shall come even to thee from Assyria, ‖and *from* the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and *from* mountain to mountain.

x Is. 11. 16. & 19. 23, &c. & 27. 13. Hos. 11. 11.
‖ Or, *even to.*

In that day, after the Jews' return out of captivity, and Jerusalem rebuilt, *he*, he who is of Jewish race, and pro-

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selyted Gentile, *shall come even to thee*, O Jerusalem, seat of God's solemn worship, type of the gospel church, restored to thy promised glory. *From Assyria;* in which many Israelites were found captives when the Babylonian kingdom swallowed up the Assyrian, and were continued in that servitude by the Babylonians till the Medes and Persians overthrew the Babylonians, and proclaimed a release to all captive Jews; then from Assyria did captive Israel, i. e. some of them, go up to Jerusalem. *From the fortified cities;* in which it is probable many Jews were kept for servile works: Shalmaneser did place the captivity of the ten tribes in the cities of the Medes, which, for aught I know, may be the cities here spoken of. *From the fortress:* one mentioned for all the rest, and I suppose these fortresses might be frontier garrisons made for defence of the country, where the Jews were in policy placed by the Assyrian; from these places, and through all the country, *even to the river;* to Euphrates or Chebar, where also were of the captive Jews. *From sea to sea;* from the Caspian to the Persian and to the Midland Sea. *From mountain to mountain;* on which many of the dispersed Jews did in all likelihood settle themselves in process of time for security and retirement, as the persecuted Waldenses and Albigenses settled in the mountainous parts bordering on France, Savoy, and Italy. Or from Mount Taurus to Mount Libanus or Carmel. In brief, from all parts of their captivity they shall return to their own country, a singular type of the redemption of the church by Christ, the bringing in the Gentiles, and enlarging the Messiah's kingdom.

‖ Or, *After that it hath been.*
y Jer. 21. 14. ch. 3. 12.

13 ‖Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, [y]for the fruit of their doings.

Notwithstanding, Heb. *And*, but well rendered here *Notwithstanding*, viz. these promises of restitution, and gathering in the dispersed Jews, &c., which took not place till more than two hundred years after they were first made by the Lord to his people; accounting thus, one hundred and thirty-three years from the captivating of Samaria to the captivating of Jerusalem, seventy years the Babylonish captivity lasted, to which add the years to Darius Hystaspes ere the temple was built, and the years to Darius Longimanus ere the city was built and the walls repaired, it will amount to a considerable sum of years. *The land*, of Canaan, *shall be desolate;* laid so by Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar in the ruins of this last seventy years. *Because of them*, the sinful Jews, *that dwell therein;* which now in Micah's time did, or hereafter shall dwell in it, in Canaan. *For the fruit of their doings;* as punishment for their evil doings.

‖ Or, *Rule.*
Ps. 28. 9. ch. 5. 4.
z Is. 37. 24.

14 ¶ ‖Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily *in* [z]the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed *in* Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.

That this verse contains good tidings to the people of God, both to his ancient people, type of his church in gospel days, and to the church of the converted Gentiles, is agreed on all hands, for they are either a direction and command to those God doth appoint by office to be shepherds over his flock, or a prayer to God that he would please to take the care of them, which doth include somewhat more than the bare petition for the blessing. Or it is a prediction of what shall be done for them after their return out of the Babylonish captivity, or a promise made to assure and comfort them during their captivity.

Feed; so Christ directs his officers, or God appointeth Christ to do this; or so the prophet for the people, or the people for themselves, pray to God that he would be their shepherd and feed them. Or the prophet doth in the imperative, instead of the future, tell them what shall be, which is a promise express enough for their support and comfort. *Thy people;* literally, Israel after the flesh, returned out of captivity; mystically, the whole Israel of God, redeemed out of a worse captivity; both a people peculiar to God through grace by covenant, and through Christ. *With thy rod;* in allusion to the usage of shepherds, who guided their sheep by a pastoral staff: the peculiar and gracious providence of God over his sheep is hereby expressed, and desired or promised. *The flock of thine heritage;* they are as sheep, weak, not able to defend or provide for themselves, a flock of innocent ones compared with their enemies; and, however they have been scattered, they are thine heritage still, which thou, O Lord, hast purchased of old: let them be so still, and do thou both possess, rule, feed, and preserve, Deut. iv. 20; xxxii. 9; Psal. c. 3. *Which dwell solitarily in the wood;* feed, graciously protect and guide, those that in their present captive state are solitary, compassed with dangers from wild beasts; so thy people are in danger by cruel enemies, worse than wild beasts. *Carmel;* a fruitful place and well inhabited, whether you take it for Carmel which Elijah frequented, or where Nabal dwelt, and where was rich pastures and safe feeding. *Bashan;* a place of note for fruitfulness in Canaan. *Gilead;* equal with any of the others for plenty and safety. *As in the days of old;* before the sins of the people caused their captivity; own them for thine and prosper them. O Lord, in their own land: a much like promise or prediction you have Jer. l. 18, 19; Ezek. xxxiv. 25.

15 [a]According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous *things*.

a Ps. 68. 22. & 78. 12.

These words are by all looked on as the answer made to the prayer made in the 14th verse. You Jews do often reflect on the wonders your fathers saw in Egypt some hundreds of years since, and some of you think that such wonders would both establish your hope and engage your obedience for ever to God, you pray that you may be fed as in days of old; it shall be so, according to what I have done I will again do. There I slew the first-born ere they would let thee go free; that stroke of the angel I will parallel with the destruction of Sennacherib's host in one night, and so I will preserve my people and city. Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red Sea, and the Babylonish kingdom shall be swallowed up by Medes and Persians to make way for my ransomed ones. *Show unto him;* the person changed, as is usual in Scripture. *Marvellous things;* as indeed the rescuing Jerusalem from the Assyrian power was marvellous, and the bringing Israel out of Babylon was a marvellous work of God, stirring up the spirit of Cyrus and Darius and others to release, and set free, nay, to furnish this captive people with necessaries for their journey, and for the work they were to do. So Psal. cxxvi. 2, it was a work all wondered at; by those passages, Jer. xvi. 14, 15; xxiii. 7, 8, it seems more wonderful; but the great redemption by the Messiah here typified is a most wonderful fulfilling of this.

16 ¶ The nations [b]shall see and be confounded at all their might: [c]they shall lay *their* hand upon *their* mouth, their ears shall be deaf.

b Is. 26. 11.
c Job 21. 5. & 29. 9.

The nations; the heathen, enemies to the Jews, as Psal. cxxvi. 1—3. *Shall see and be confounded;* amazed at what they see and know done amongst these nations for the deliverance of his people. The enemy shall neither be able to bear the sight, nor deny the certainty of the thing; it will make them enviously look on the prosperity of the good and godly among the Jews. *They shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf:* as men seldom fail to hear the first report of what they desire, and as seldom open their ears to that they like not; so shall it be here, though they will not speak of it, nor desire others should speak of it, yet they should, to their great grief, see their poor captives raised out of depth of shame to the height of honour, from a contemptible remnant to a mighty nation. As this had its typical complement in the reduction of Israel out of Babylon, so it had its antitypical completion in our redemption by Christ. As 1 Cor. ii. 9.

17 They shall lick the [d]dust like a serpent, [e]they shall move out of their holes like ‖worms of the earth: [f]they shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of thee.

d Ps. 72. 9. Is. 49. 23.
e Ps. 18. 45.
‖ Or, *creeping things.*
f Jer. 33. 9.

They, the proud and cruel enemies of Israel, the Babylonians, *shall lick the dust;* in the most submissive, servile manner testify their subjection, promise to serve and honour the Jews released out of captivity: it is an expression which

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alludes to the servile manner of those Eastern complimenters, Psal. lxxii. 9; Isa. xlix. 23, and was fulfilled in the days after the return, when the kings of Persia favoured the Jews, and (as the manner of courtiers is) in compliance with their kings the grandees forwarded the prosperity of the Jews, as may easily be conjectured from the 6th and 7th chapters of Ezra. *Like a serpent;* condemned to eat the dust and perpetually to crawl on the dust; it seems to intimate the perpetuity of slavery and subjection that the enemy should fall under, and that it should be on them as a curse like that on the serpent. *They shall move out of their holes*, so the strong holds and fastnesses of the Babylonians, who kept Israel in captivity, are called, *like worms of the earth;* which do with trembling and haste wriggle themselves out of their holes when the earth is shaken about them, or as when ants tumultuously in their fright run about from the ant-hill scattered with the foot; so should these enemies of Israel flee out of their holds, and leave them to conquering Persians, as Isaiah foretold, chap. xlv. 1—4. *They shall be afraid;* a panic fear, expressed by the loosening of the loins of kings, Isa. xlv. 1; so did the conquering Cyrus proceed in the course of his victories, as Isa. xli. 2. 3, God strengthened his arm, and left the heart of Babylonians sinking within them. *Of the Lord our God;* who did powerfully work for Cyrus in order to the delivering us out of captivity. It was our God, (saith the prophet in the person of Israel,) for his promise' sake made to us, who did those great things by Cyrus and for us. *And shall fear because of thee;* so that the name of Jews, their power and greatness, shall be terrible to their enemies.

g Ex. 15. 11. 18 [g]Who *is* a God like unto thee, that h Ex. 34. 6, 7. Jer. 50. 20. [h]pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the i ch. 4. 7. & 5. 7, 8. transgression of [i]the remnant of his heritage? k Ps. 103. 9. Is. 57. 16. Jer. 3. 5. [k]he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy.

Lest what hath been spoken of this wonderful change in the affairs of the Jews should on one hand be thought to be made for the righteousness or worthiness of this people, or else on the other hand should seem too great to be done for a sinful people, and so any should doubt whether it should be done at all, the prophet, in this and the two following verses, proposeth the ground of all this, laid on the unparalleled grace of God toward his people, who pardoneth their unrighteousness, and then of free mercy delivers them from their afflictions and distresses, changing their darkness into light.

Who is a God like unto thee? some observe that *El* here used signifieth the mighty God, and so render it thus, the French, *le Dieu fort;* none but the sovereign, mighty God can or doth forgive iniquity, it is a flower of the crown of Heaven, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; Numb. xiv. 18; Mark ii. 7. This interrogatory and admiration is a strong negation. *Pardoneth iniquity;* taketh away the guilt and punishment too by his pardon. *Passeth by;* a form of speech used amongst us when we promise not to pursue an offence, or not to exact the punishment of it, or as if we either saw it not, or voluntarily winked at it, being resolved that we would not make it a cause of quarrel or breach. *Transgression:* it will not suit our brevity to inquire the difference between iniquity and transgression, or whether they are here synonymous, and explicatory of each other; God passeth by the forfeits we make, and strips us not of our mercies. *Of the remnant of his heritage:* this intimateth the reason why God doth, as well as to the person to whom he doth, pardon sin; that grace which made them his heritage, and reserved them to himself in the common destruction, the same grace doth as freely pardon and pass by, that it may do them good. No worthiness in them to whom it is done, and yet greatest certainty it shall be done, as Rom. iv. 16. *He retaineth not his anger for ever;* though in his just displeasure God did send them into captivity, yet because he doth not retain his anger for ever, their captivity shall not be for ever, he will chastise his remnant, but not consume them, Zech. i. 3. *Because he delighteth in mercy;* all from the exceeding riches of his mercy; it is his delight to show mercy, and we need inquire no further: our God is so wonderfully merciful that it is his pleasure to show mercy, and if a man sometimes may give this as a reason why he doth a thing, surely our God may well expect that we should acquiesce in this account of his doing so. He delighteth to do it, Psal. ciii. 8, 9; Isa. xliii. 25; lvii. 16; Jer. iii. 5, 12; Rev. iv. 11.

19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

He will turn again; spoken after the manner of man, who in his anger went away resolved to right himself, but on second thoughts, laying aside his anger, turns again to be reconciled and forgive. So the next words explain these. *He will have compassion upon us;* with tender bowels he will show himself gracious to us, Jonah iii. 9. *He will subdue our iniquities;* as our enemies and his, God will break the power, abolish the dominion of sin, which whilst it reigned provoked God and undid us, it polluted and ruined us; but God will pardon the guilt and abrogate the law of sin, and so restore his people, suitable to that Ezek. xxxvi. 29—34. *Thou wilt cast:* here is an hypallage of the person from the third to the second person, yet without any lessening the sense in strength or clearness. *All their sins;* a usual expression in Scripture to set forth the full and eternal pardon of sin; here it is emphatical, *all their sins. Into the depths of the sea;* whence ordinarily we account things can never rise or be found more.

20 [l]Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, *and* the mercy to Abraham, [m]which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

l Luke 1. 72, 73. m Ps. 105. 9, 10.

Thou, O God of mercy, wisdom, power, and faithfulness, whoever are honoured with being thine instruments and servants in doing somewhat herein, the work is thine, thou wilt raise up a deliverer, Cyrus shall be thine anointed to do this great work. *Wilt perform*, Heb. *give*, actually bestow what thou hast in mercy promised. *The truth;* nothing so certain as the word of God, it is the truth by way of eminency, his promise is yea and amen. *To Jacob;* the posterity of Jacob; he was that plain-hearted man who now gives name to all the upright and honest among his seed, which God will never finally cast off; though now carried captive, they shall be restored, rebuilt, and re-established, shall flourish, as ver. 10—12, and this as they are a type of a more gloriously redeemed people. *The mercy:* it was mere grace in God to promise Abraham and his seed such excellent privileges, which Abraham's natural seed did inherit; but both this seed and this mercy looked beyond the natural descendants of Abraham, and beyond their return to the land of Canaan whence they were carried. The mercy to Abraham was, that in his seed all nations should be blessed and holpen, Luke i. 54, 55, 68. *To Abraham;* not only as father to Israel after the flesh, but to him as father of the faithful. *Which thou hast sworn;* not that there was on God's part any need of such confirmation, but that on our part all doubt might be removed, and we by the immutable things of God might have strong consolation, as Heb. vi. 18. *Unto our fathers;* because this mercy was frequently repeated in the promises to the fathers after Abraham's time, by which promises a mercy to be perpetuated in Abraham's seed, till the redemption of the Israel of God by the Messiah, (of which all temporal deliverances of Israel were figures,) should be effected. *From the days of old;* ever since Abraham's days, and God's gracious adopting his seed to be the peculiar people of God: into this we do, as Israel did, resolve our assurance of final deliverance. Amen.

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NAHUM.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE prophet Nahum is one of those prophets whose family and country are concealed, and it would be more labour than profit to spend time on the inquiry after the one or other. He is styled *the Elkoshite*, and possibly born and bred in Elkosh, a town of Galilee, an obscure place, of which perhaps we had heard no more, had it not been written that this man was born there, to allude to that of the psalmist, Psal. lxxxvii. 5. The time of his appearing in public to discharge his prophetic office is much more material, being a key to the whole prophecy. Now it is certain that Nahum was a prophet in office whilst the kingdom of Assyria was not only standing, but whilst it was standing in its glory and entire strength, whilst it was dangerous and terrible to its neighbours. It is to me evident that Nahum prophesied before the destruction of Sennacherib's army, for he foretelleth the death of Sennacherib, chap. i. 14. It is certain also he appeared after Hoshea and the ten tribes were carried captives by Shalmaneser. This was either in A. M. 3229, as Helvicus, or 3283, as Archbishop Usher and Doctor Lightfoot, in the ninth year of Hoshea, which was the sixth of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 10, and some few years before the death of Shalmaneser, whose son Sennacherib succeeded, and invaded Egypt and Judah in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, eight years after Samaria was taken and the ten tribes were captivated; within which time, and probably toward the fifth of those eight, Nahum is sent a prophet to quiet, support, and encourage Hezekiah and his subjects against all the threats and power of the Assyrian tyrant, who threatened to destroy Judah and Jerusalem, from accomplishing whereof the tyrant shall be so far that God will turn it to his ruin; and here, as a very fit season, the prophet declareth the final and utter ruin of the Assyrian empire and its capital city Nineveh, as a just revenge for all their oppressions of their neighbours, but especially in revenge of their reiterated violence against Israel and Judah: on account of which good tidings the prophet hath his name *Nachum*, which in the Hebrew is from a word signifying *to comfort;* and also *to repent;* indeed repentance is preparatory to comfort; and though his preaching against Nineveh be the comfort of Jerusalem, no doubt he called Jerusalem to repent, which is probably collected from chap. i. 15, *O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows.* This whole prophecy, except the 15th verse of this chapter, is directed against Nineveh, head city of the Assyrian kingdom, and against the whole kingdom; which, with all sorts of men and women in it, are threatened with very sore and heavy judgments, with final desolation, or captivity, for their sins; all which was fulfilled by the Lord, using the Babylonian and Median power to overthrow this power of Assyria, and particularly by the joint forces of Nabopollassar and Astyages, as is by the most learned Archbishop Usher observed, in A. M. 3378. Yet others tell us the final ruin of the Assyrian kingdom, foretold by Nahum, came much sooner, and that in the death of Esarhaddon, or Assaradinus, the Assyrian monarchs did expire. But though I determine not the number of years during which this threatened monarchy did stand, yet, be they fewer or more, Nahum's prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of Nineveh and the subversion of the Assyrian monarchy, and the Jews were no more infested by the Assyrian though they were by the Babylonish kingdom. The things then spoken of by Nahum do in the letter and historical part of them concern the times between the twelfth or fourteenth of Hezekiah and the end of the Assyrian monarchy. And a skilful observer of the histories of those times would be best able to interpret this prophet, nor shall any do it tolerably well without recourse to those histories, which, though not cited here at large, (which brief annotations admit not,) yet have not been quite neglected; and what errors in applying the histories and computation of times are here committed, all will candidly excuse who know the obscurity and uncertainty of those times.

CHAP. I.

The majesty of God in goodness to his people, and severity against his enemies.

B. C. cir. 713. THE burden [a]of Nineveh. The book of
[a] Zeph. 2. 13. the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

The burden: when the prophets were sent to denounce future judgments against a nation or city, the word was usually called the burden of that nation or city; as, the burden of Moab, Isa. xv. 1; of Egypt, Isa. xix. 1; of Babylon, Isa. xiii. 1; of Damascus, Isa. xvii. 1. So here the calamities foretold are called *the burden of Nineveh. Nineveh* was the mother city of the Assyrian kingdom, and so, by a synecdoche, is here to be interpreted as including the whole kingdom, which is threatened with destruction in the destruction of Nineveh. It was a city very ancient, built by Asshur, son of Nimrod; repaired and enlarged by Ninus, giving name to the city he repaired, Nineveh, A. M. 1905, or 1908. *The book;* either because written and sent to Nineveh, or else because written and left to be read by posterity. *The vision,* or prophecy, for prophets were of old called seers, 1 Sam. ix. 9, and their prophecies were called visions; or it may include the manner in which Nahum was informed what was coming upon Nineveh, God revealed, and the prophet foresaw the things. *Nahum;* his name speaks *a comforter,* but it is to God's people, to whom he gives notice of the destruction of their oppressors. His family, place of birth, and time of prophesying, are somewhat uncertain; perhaps he might prophesy in the time of Hezekiah, when the ten tribes were carried captive by Shalmaneser. *The Elkoshite:* whether this speaks Nahum's family, or town where born or his country in general, is not certain, but probably it is the village Elkosh in Galilee, by which he is here called.

2 ‖God *is* [b]jealous, and [c]the LORD re- ‖Or, *The LORD is a jealous God, and a revenger, &c.*
vengeth; the LORD revengeth, and †*is* furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies.

[b] Ex. 20. 5. & 34. 14. Deut. 4. 24. Josh. 24. 19.
[c] Heb. 10. 30.
† Heb. *that hath fury.*

God; the mighty God, so the French version, and the Hebrew ‫אל‬ implieth it. *Is jealous;* his love is fervent for his people, his displeasure hot against his and their enemies, whose idolatries he will not long bear against himself, nor their cruelties and rage against his people; but, as jealous for his people's good, and for his own glory, he will appear and act: so Isa. xlii. 13; Ezek. xxxix. 25; Zech. i. 14; viii. 2. *The Lord;* Jehovah, the everlasting and unchangeable God, the same always towards his people. *Revengeth;* as supreme Governor, who by office is, and accounts himself, bound to right the oppressed, and to punish the oppressor; so vengeance is the Lord's, and he will repay. *The Lord revengeth;* it is repeated for confirming the truth, and to affect the wicked with terror, and to awaken them to a timely repentance; to affect God's own people with joy and hope, that they may wait on him till they see the vengeance from God, mighty, judge, zealous, unchangeable, and eter-

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nal. *Is furious*, Heb. *is Lord or Master of fury;* not like furious men, who cannot command or govern their anger, but grow suddenly furious, and as suddenly pour it forth, whether seasonably or unseasonably they regard not; but God, who here threatens enemies, and comforts his friends, is as much Lord of his anger, as he is Lord of power and wisdom to execute his displeasure in fittest time. *Will take vengeance;* when it is most seasonable he should do it he most certainly will do it. *He reserveth wrath:* this explains the former phrase, *Lord of fury;* God restrains and keeps in his own anger, which grows greater by the sufferings of his people and sins of his enemies.

d Ex. 34. 6, 7. Neh. 9. 17. Ps. 103. 8. Jonah 4. 2. e Joel 2. 4. f Ps. 18. 7, &c. & 97. 2. Hab. 3. 5, 11, 12.

3 The LORD *is* [d]slow to anger, and [e]great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked:* [f]the LORD *hath* his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds [f]*are* the dust of his feet.

The Lord is slow to anger; not slack, as some count slackness, 2 Pet. iii. 9, either in performing promise, or executing threats; but very wisely patient and long-suffering, which is ever tempered with great mercy, and both are joined together in his providence and in his word: see Exod. xxxiv. 6; Numb. xiv. 18; Neh. ix. 17; Psal. ciii. 8; cxlv. 8; Joel ii. 13; Jonah iv. 2. *Anger;* just displeasure conceived and expressed: the Lord doth not presently entertain resentments of displeasure, nor make sinners feel them; he doth now, as he long hath, forborne you, O sinful Ninevites, O cruel Assyrians! but consider it, his slow anger will be the heavier when it falls on you. *Great in power;* most mighty in power, which restrains the rage of enemies, defends and supports his oppressed ones, and in a moment can destroy those that have deserved, yet fear not his anger: that the Assyrians are not yet destroyed is the effect of patience, not of impotence, in the God of Israel. *And will:* this is spoken to awaken the secure kingdom, in which many, it is like, were as the scoffers, 2 Pet. iii. 4, ready to say, All things do continue as they were, there will be no change, no judgment against the wicked. But our prophet assures such, that as there is great power with God, he can, so there is exact justice and stedfast resolution, he will judge. *Not at all acquit;* neither pronounce them innocent by sentence of judgment, nor let them escape as if innocent by a perpetuated forbearance in the course of his providence; but, sooner or later, in due season the wickedness or righteousness of men shall be upon them. *The wicked;* the incorrigible, hardened, and persisting sinner. *The Lord hath his way;* either the methods of his providence, his usual path; or else his way, intimating the unerring steadiness of providence, the straight and known path; however to us it may seem, yet certainly God knows and keeps the right way. *In the whirlwind;* which riseth suddenly, and with violence beareth before it all things that stand in its way; which none can prevent, which no man can calm, which is attended with terror and amazement, Job xxvii. 20; Isa. xvii. 13; xxix. 6; Amos i. 14: so will destruction from the mighty and just displeasure of God come upon his adversaries, and on you Ninevites and Assyrians, when you shall fall before this whirlwind and tempest; so all impenitent sinners perish, Prov. i. 27. *In the storm;* the Hebrew speaks a dreadful tempest, which makes men full of horror; it is an elegant ingemination of the same thing, to affect hearers the more. *The clouds are the dust of his feet;* though he be surrounded with darkness, yet as an army afar off is discovered by the dust that their feet raise, so will God at last appear as an enemy with great power marching against his enemies, and from above, as well as from the darkness of clouds, destroy them. This is spoken after the manner of man, and must be applied as beseems God.

g Ps. 106. 9. Is. 50. 2. Matt. 8. 26. h Is. 33. 9.

4 [g]He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: [h]Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.

He rebuketh: he once did rebuke, as Exod. xiv. 21; he still can, as a lord rebuketh his servant, or a general rebukes his soldier, by word or look, Isa. l. 2. *The sea;* literally understood, or figuratively, it imports still that he can deliver his people, and destroy his adversaries, as of old he did. *And maketh it dry;* his word or will doth as speedily do this thing, as it doth proceed from God; he commands, and it is done. *And drieth up all the rivers:* so Jordan saw or heard the rebuke of our God, and fled, or was driven back, Josh. iii. 15, 16; Psal. cxiv. 3: and what he once did upon Jordan, that he can do on all other rivers: and so are we to understand the words. *Bashan;* it lay eastward of Jordan, was the kingdom of Og; it was famous for oaks, Ezek. xxvii. 6; for cattle also, as bulls, Psal. xxii. 12, and rams, Deut. xxxii. 14; and was given to the half tribe of Manasseh. *Languisheth;* grows barren, as if under a consumptive languishing, is not longer sufficient to feed the cattle that were wont to feed and grow fat upon it. *Carmel;* a very fruitful mountain, either in the confines of Zebulun and Asher northward, Josh. xii. 22, where Elijah by fire from heaven contended with and convicted the Baalites; or else this Carmel might be that where Nabal dwelt, 1 Sam. xxv. 2, famous for its rich pastures; this was more southward than the other, and not far from Hebron. *The flower;* whatever flourished and was beautiful, trees, their blossoms, and the flowers which were wont to be the glory of it. *Lebanon;* a mountain that runs from the coast of the Phœnician Sea westward, for one hundred and twenty-five miles more or less eastward; and verging toward Arabia, it is the north boundary of Judea, and divides it from Syria; famous for its fruitfulness, as for its height. *Languisheth;* loseth its strength and virtue; both the product, and the very soil that produceth too, soon fall into a consumption.

5 [i]The mountains quake at him, and [k]the hills melt, and [l]the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

i Ps. 68. 8. k Judg. 5. 5. Ps. 97. 5. Micah 1. 4. l 2 Pet. 3. 10.

The mountains; the more known mountains of that country were mentioned ver. 4, now the prophet doth extend his speech to all mountains, how great soever, and how fast soever their foundations are laid. *Quake;* tremble at his rebuke; not only are shaken by earthquakes from natural causes, disposed by God's power and wisdom, but are shaken and tremble under the effects of his extraordinary presence, Judg. v. 4; Job ix. 5; Psal. xxix. 6; Jer. x. 10. *At him;* by his power, or at his displeasure, or indeed at his presence, Psal. lxviii. 8, and so the Chaldee paraphrast. *The hills;* the lesser hills, distinguished from mountains, or else it is a confirming ingemination of what he had said. *Melt:* God's rebuke is as fire; mountains and hills, like wax, melt down before it, Psal. cxiv. 6—8. *The earth,* which seems to be secure against the fury of the fire, yet proves combustible under the fire of God's wrath. *Is burnt;* or else, is taken away, withdraws itself, lifts up itself, as sometimes in earthquakes; or, as the Gallic version, mounteth up in fire; the Hebrew imports all these. *The world;* the habitable world. *All that dwell therein;* whether they be far off, or near to Israel; both men, and all the rest of the creatures, whose abode is on earth, are wonderfully shaken, affrighted, and overwhelmed at the tokens of God's rebuke.

6 Who can stand before his indignation? and [m]who can †abide in the fierceness of his anger? [n]his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.

m Mal. 3. 2. † Heb. *stand up.* n Rev. 16. 1.

Who can stand before his indignation? since God can do all this, who among the Assyrians, who among the Ninevites, what kingdom or monarchy, is mighty enough to resist or defeat the counsel and power of this God, who will ere long rebuke, and pour out his indignation upon them? *Who can abide;* be able to endure, or continue in flourishing, peaceful, safe, or joyful state? It is much the same with standing, before mentioned. *The fierceness of his anger:* this explains the former; the heat of his anger is his indignation, and no creature can bear it. *His fury:* fury in man speaks somewhat culpable and blameworthy, but in God it cannot be so, it is the intenseness of his just and wise displeasure. *Is poured out,* with most righteous and wise direction by God himself, who is as ver. 2, which see. *Like fire;* not in the unsteadiness and unruliness, but in the vehemency, spreading nature, and irresistible force of it, as in Sodom's overthrow. *The rocks are thrown down by him;*

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though foundations do support other things, yet they cannot support themselves against their God when once angry.

o 1 Chron. 16. 34. Ps. 100. 5. Jer. 33. 11. Lam. 3. 25.

7 °The LORD *is* good, a ‖strong hold in the day of trouble; and ᵖhe knoweth them that trust in him.

‖ Or, *strength.* p Ps. 1. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 19.

The Lord is good; though so terrible to his enemies, to obstinate sinners, yet he is as gentle, kind, and good to his people, to Israel; so the Chaldee paraphrast. *Is good;* in his just severity he continueth to be good. None of that consuming anger comes from any want of goodness in God; yea, it is as much an effect of his goodness, as just punishments on incorrigible malefactors are the effects of goodness in a judge or magistrate. But here the prophet intends rather the kindness and grace of God towards his people, to whom he doth good, and will do more, Psal. lxxiii. 1; cxix. 68. *A strong hold;* it might have been rendered, good to be a strong hold, as the Hebrew affix imports, and is sometimes rendered. Though Israel seems to be exposed to the violence of enemies, and to be without any munition or fortress, yet verily the Lord their God is for a defence and fortress to them, Psal. xxxi. 3; lxi. 3; Prov. xviii. 10, and is their strength also in that fortress. *In the day of trouble;* at all times of affliction and danger, when outward pressures fill us with anguish and fears. *Knoweth;* discerneth, approveth, owneth, and will make it appear that he doth preserve, that he may deliver his peculiar ones. He knows the wicked, and will restrain, rebuke, and destroy them; he knows the good, and will protect, rescue, and save them. *Them;* whether you consider them in a body and community, or by themselves apart, or singly. *That trust;* believe, depend, and wait on God, they that depend by faith, and wait with hope. *In him;* on God, or on Christ, or on the word and promise of God. So God was to those that trusted in his word of promise in Hezekiah's time.

q Dan. 9. 26. & 11. 10, 22, 40.

8 ᑫBut with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.

But, or *And,* or *Therefore,* since God is so good to Israel oppressed by Assyria, and so terrible, just, and mighty to punish oppressors. *With an overrunning flood;* his judgments, like a mighty flood that overfloweth all banks, and scorns all that might check it, shall swallow up Assyria and Nineveh, which was in part effected by Phraortes about A. M. 3312, and in part by his son Cyaxares, who broke the Assyrian kingdom, and took Nineveh. *He,* the Lord, by the Medes, *will make an utter end,* will destroy, so that it shall never recover or be rebuilt, *of the place thereof;* of Nineveh, that is, Nineveh itself. So in Scripture sometimes the place is said to perish when the thing itself doth, as Dan. ii. 35; Rev. xii. 8; xx. 11. *Darkness:* troubles, desolating afflictions, extreme evils, in Scripture style, are called *darkness,* Job xv. 22; xvii. 12; Psal. xxxv. 6; lv. 5; Eccles. v. 17; Isa. xlii. 7; lix. 9, &c.; Joel ii. 2. *Shall pursue;* not a single calamity, which is soon at an end, but indeed a succession of calamities, a continued course of them, shall pursue: so Phraortes began, Cyaxares continued, Scythians helped on, and Astyages finally, with four hundred thousand men, finished the pursuit in the sack and ruin of Nineveh after two years' siege. *His enemies;* the Ninevites and Assyrians.

r Ps. 2. 1. s 1 Sam. 3. 12.

9 ʳWhat do ye imagine against the LORD? ˢhe will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.

Having declared the dreadfulness of God's power and anger against the wicked, his goodness towards his people, and denounced future destruction against the Ninevites and Assyrians, he doth now expostulate with them, would know what it is they think of God, what it is they design against him, and on what ground they flatter themselves into such an attempt. *Against the Lord,* the God of Israel; for however you, O Ninevites and Assyrians, will look only upon a poor, afflicted people, (weakened by many wars,) and design to swallow them up, yet they are the people of the Lord, and you design against him what you design against them. *He will make an utter end;* he will make your utter desolation to be the issue of your projects, and the punishment of your sins: see ver. 8. *Affliction shall not rise up the second time;* when that storm which shall overthrow you is past, no other shall arise, because you shall be no more; as if the prophet had said, God will at once and for ever destroy your empire and city.

10 For while *they be* folden together ᵗ*as* thorns, ᵘand while they are drunken ᵗ*as* drunkards, ˣthey shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.

t 2 Sam. 23. 6, 7. u ch. 3. 11. x Mal. 4. 1.

This gives us account how this desolation shall be effected. *While they be folden together as thorns;* they should be like thorns easily burnt, and like thorns folden together, which burn together, and help to destroy each other, or are all together cast into the fire. *While they are drunken as drunkards;* as men drunken, and unable to help themselves, are easily destroyed, so shall the Assyrians be; or, drunk with pleasures and pride, they shall be surprised, and ruined, and easily overthrown. *They shall be devoured as stubble fully dry:* this fully expresseth the speedy, irresistible, and total destruction that the anger of God will bring upon them; as the fire burns up all the dried stubble, so shall the wrath of God destroy the enemies of Israel and of Israel's God.

11 There is *one* come out of thee, ʸ*that* imagineth evil against the LORD, †a wicked counsellor.

y 2 Kings 19. 22, 24. † Heb. *a counsellor of Belial*

There is one: this is a very usual dialect to express an uncertain number; several are contained in such *one;* though if you will determine it to one single person, it is very like it may be Sennacherib or Rabshakeh. *Come out:* from Nineveh he set forth on that expedition against Judea in the days of Hezekiah. *Of thee;* Nineveh. *That imagineth evil against the Lord;* consulteth, hath formed, and resolved upon it. So it is evident by his blasphemies against the Lord, Isa. xxxvi. 7, 18, 20; xxxvii. 10, 24, 29; 2 Chron. xxxii. 14, 15, 17, 19. And he imagined evil against the people of the Lord, 2 Chron. xxxii. 1. *A wicked counsellor;* one whose counsels and projects are without any regard to right and equity, who by injustice and oppressions, who by frauds and deceits, by blood and slaughter, designs his own greatness, and the ruin of his neighbours.

12 Thus saith the LORD; ‖Though *they be* quiet, and likewise many, yet thus ˣshall they be † cut down, when he shall ᵃpass through. Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more.

‖ Or, *If they would have been at peace, so should they have been many, and so should they have been shorn, and he should have passed away.* x 2 Kings 19. 35, 37. † Heb. *shorn.* a Is. 8. 8. Dan. 11. 10.

Thus saith the Lord: this addeth weight to his prediction, it comes under the great seal of Heaven. *Though they be quiet, and likewise many;* or, If they would have been quiet and peaceable towards my people, Israel, they, i. e. the Assyrians, should have been many, &c.; but I think it is nearer to the intent of the place to retain our version. *Though they,* citizens of Nineveh, and people of Assyria, *be quiet,* be secure, and fear no danger, because of their strength and victories, *and likewise many;* as appears by the mighty army with which they besieged Jerusalem, in which one hundred and eighty-five thousand were cut off in one night. *Yet thus,* irresistibly, suddenly, and universally, as is foretold ver. 10, *shall they be cut down:* the prophet varieth his phrase, for, ver. 10, he speaks of it as done by fire, here he speaks of cutting down, intimating that it was the sword which should cut them off. *When he shall pass through;* either God, the mighty and terrible One, passing over as a flood, as it is ver. 8; or else the angel of the Lord, as 2 Kings xix. 35. *Though I,* the Lord, who am good to my people, *have afflicted thee,* O Israel, *I will afflict thee no more;* chastised by the Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, hast thou been, O my people, but I will no more use that rod; for they should soon cease to be a nation that ruleth, and be conquered and oppressed by others.

13 For now will I ᵇbreak his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder.

b Jer. 2. 20. & 30. 8.

The Lord confirms the prediction, by declaring how it should be done. *Now;* ere long; and in few years after this was done, though we cannot precisely determine how

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soon it was. *I will break*, as that which is broken into pieces, *his yoke*, Sennacherib's, or rather the tyranny and oppression of the Assyrian kingdom, *from off thee*, O Israel, and Jerusalem. *And will burst thy bonds;* those unjust impositions and edicts, which, as strong bonds, fastened his heavy yoke upon thy neck. They are the bonds of Assyria, as laid upon Israel; they are Israel's bonds, as borne by Israel.

14 And the LORD hath given a commandment concerning thee, *that* no more of thy name be sown: out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image: [c]I will make thy grave; for thou art vile.

c 2 Kings 19. 37.

The Lord, God of Israel, against whom thou imaginest evil, *hath given a commandment;* determined with himself, and given charge to the Medes, which in due season they will observe, and, with assistance of the Chaldeans, will fully execute. *Concerning thee*, or against thee, Sennacherib; thy royal family, and the whole kingdom of Assyria. *That no more of thy name be sown:* though Esar-haddon, son to this Sennacherib, did succeed his father, yet may it be rather said he was never sown, he never took root, but was like seed that, falling on the surface of the earth, there withers and dies; or else, none shall bear thy name and title, but hereafter thy kingdom shall be swallowed up by the power, and silenced in the name, of the Babylonian or Chaldean monarchy. *The house of thy gods;* temples built for their heathenish worship. *Gods;* idols, intimating the number of them, and the chiefest of them. *I will cut off;* destroy and abolish; so idolatrous conquerors were God's servants to cut off idolatrous worship and idols of the conquered nations: so did this Sennacherib destroy the idols of the conquered, 2 Kings xviii. 33, 34; Isa. xxxvii. 19; so should they do against the Assyrian idols, who were appointed of God to waste Nineveh. *Cut off the graven image:* either it respecteth the universal destruction of the idols, all cut off, not one left; or rather some one more noted, depended on, worshipped, called *Nisroch*, Isa. xxxvii. 38, by some thought to be the sun; but nothing in particular is elsewhere recorded of this idol, or its worship. *And the molten image:* added either to intimate that all idols should fall in the future ruin of the kingdom, or to let us know that neither the worth of the metal of which the image was made, and the curiosity of the work, nor yet the pretext of sacred as a god, should be any safeguard to it. *I will make thy grave;* thou shalt not have a royal, magnificent tomb made by thy successor, or such as honour thee, but thou shalt be either buried in obscurity, or else thy tomb shall relate thy vileness, as it is reported it did by this inscription under Sennacherib's statue in an Egyptian temple, Εἰς ἐμὲ ὁρῶν εὐσεβὴς ἴστω, Learn to fear God who lookest on me. *For thou art vile;* despised since thy defeat before Jerusalem; or rather hast been a vile, profane despiser of God, whom thou hast blasphemed and reproached, and an oppressor of men, whom thou hast slain or enslaved, unworthy of life, and unworthy of a grave when dead.

d Is. 52. 7. Rom. 10. 15.

15 Behold [d]upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, †keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for †[e]the wicked shall no more pass through thee; [f]he is utterly cut off.

† Heb. *feast.*

† Heb. *Belial.*

e ver. 11, 12.

f ver. 14.

Behold: as this speaks some unexpected thing, so it calls for our heeding and minding of it. *Upon the mountains;* over which he must needs come that either came from the Assyrian camp, where the miraculous slaughter was made, or from Nineveh, where the fugitive defeated tyrant was slain; many mountains environing Jerusalem, and lying dispersed in Judea, over which the messengers came, who brought news of Sennacherib's death, or downfal of the Assyrian kingdom. *Good tidings;* good news indeed to an oppressed and weakened people, at which they might well rejoice indeed, if it be considered what this tyrant intended, (see Isa. x. 5—34,) now he is dead who designed the mischief. *Publisheth;* proclaimeth, and tells to every one he meets. *Peace;* not by league or friendship with the Assyrian, but as the consequent of his death, and overthrow of his kingdom. *Keep thy solemn feasts;* be careful to serve God and worship him, ye that are his people. *Perform thy vows*, made in thy deep distress, when all seemed lost and forlorn. *The wicked;* that wicked counsellor, ver. 11, the violent oppressor, proud Sennacherib, who shall fall by the sword, or rather is fallen by it, in his own land, when this messenger of glad tidings came, Isa. xxxvii. 7, 37, 38. *Shall no more pass through thee;* neither as a conqueror who beareth all down before him, nor as a triumpher glorifying in his acquists which in progress he takes view of. *He is utterly cut off;* murdered by his sons, his kingdom shaken by intestine troubles arising on the slaughter of his army, and an anarchy, or interregnum, whilst the two brethren parricides warred with the third for the crown, and all three were in that juncture, as in an opportune season, invaded, subdued, and destroyed by Merodach-baladan king of Babylon: see Isa. x.

CHAP. II.

The fearful and victorious armies of God against Nineveh.

HE ‖[a]that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: [b]keep the munition, watch the way, make *thy* loins strong, fortify *thy* power mightily.

‖ Or, *The disperser, or, hammer.*

a Jer. 50. 20.

b Jer. 51. 11, 12. ch. 3. 14.

He: some by mistake refer this to Sennacherib; it is more rightly referred to the Medes or Scythians, or to the Chaldeans, all which did somewhat against the Assyrians. *That dasheth in pieces;* that as a heavy and strong hammer breaks into pieces, and then with his arm scattereth the broken pieces; so shall the destroyer of Nineveh do, as a *maul*, (so the word Prov. xxv. 18,) or as the wind scatters smoke, so the word Psal. lxviii. 2. *Is come up before thy face*, against thee, and is within sight, from thy watch-towers on thy frontiers thou mayst descry his avant-guards. *Keep the munition:* the prophet derides Nineveh, and foretells all will be to no purpose; she shall never be able to withstand, so as to conquer; re-enforce thy garrisons, yet they shall fall. *Watch the way;* know which way he comes, that thou mayst barricade the way, or set ambushes. *Make thy loins strong;* encourage thy soldiers, and make them valiant as thou canst, choose out the ablest and most undaunted. *Fortify thy power mightily;* gather up all thou canst for the war, increase thy armies, fill up thy companies, engage assistance from abroad; nothing shall avail thee.

2 [c]For the LORD hath turned away ‖the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel: for [d]the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine branches.

c Is. 10. 12. Jer. 25. 29.

‖ Or, *the pride of Jacob as the pride of Israel.*

d Ps. 80. 12. Hos. 10. 1.

This confirms the prophet's threat, either declaring that now, since God had sufficiently punished Jacob and Israel, he would next punish the proud Assyrian, as Isa. x. 12; or else it is a confirmation by argument from the greater to the less; Israel and Jacob were more to God, yet he did punish them, much more will he punish Nineveh. *Turned away;* laid low, or captivated, as no doubt Sennacherib did when he took so many fenced cities, he did not slay all, he sent many into captivity, and threatened Jerusalem's citizens with the like, Isa. xxxvi. 17. *The excellency;* the wealth, the valiant men, the wise men, all that Jacob could, (with any colour of reason,) and had (with sin more than enough) gloried in. *Of Jacob;* the two tribes. *As the excellency of Israel;* the ten tribes spoiled, conquered, and captivated by Shalmaneser. *The emptiers;* Assyrians, who invaded, plundered, and robbed them, both Israel and Jacob. *Have emptied them out;* quite exhausted them. *Marred;* either corrupted them in religion and manners, as 2 Kings xvii. 24, &c.; or destroyed and cut up the race of Israel, to destroy them utterly. *Their vine branches:* it may literally be meant that the Assyrians did cut up the vines to impoverish the vine-dressers, or else figuratively for the nation, which is often compared to a vine, so the branches are men and women.

3 The shield of his mighty men is made *red, the valiant men *are* ‖in scarlet: the

e Is. 63. 2, a

‖ Or, *dyed scarlet.*

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chariots *shall be* with ‖ flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken.

‖ Or, *fiery torches.*

The shield; one part for the whole of the armour and furniture, or harness. *Of his,* Medes' or Chaldeans', *mighty men;* soldiers, more particularly the brave and stout ones, who were the choice men of the army. *Is made red;* either coloured red by the dyer, or else dyed red with the blood of the slain. *The valiant men are in scarlet:* this explains the former; they used this colour much, either to terrify the enemy, or to conceal their own wounds when the blood on other colour would have disclosed them. *The chariots;* much used in the wars of those countries, and the great men usually fought in them in those days. *Shall be with flaming torches;* either because they did force fire out of the stones by their swift motion over them, or rather because there were torches always carried in them, to light them that rode in them by night, and to be in readiness to fire the houses of cities or tents in the camp they did break into. *In the day of his preparation;* when he shall muster his armies, and bring together his magazines, and prepare his engines. *The fir trees shall be terribly shaken;* by axes cutting them down for several uses in the war, for torches, for lances, for building forts, and many other uses. This is parallel with Isa. xiv. 8. Whole forests were sometimes destroyed by great armies, which cut them down for their service.

4 The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways: † they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.

† Heb. *their show.*

The chariots of the Chaldean army, or the riders in the chariots, by their fierceness and carriage, by their cries and calls, heartening one another, and threatening the Assyrians. *Shall rage;* shall seem to be more like madmen than well-ordered soldiers, and act as if they were possessed with furies, do more than man can do. *In the streets,* either of the towns they pass through, or rather of Nineveh when taken. *They shall justle;* by reason of their multitude, haste, and fury, they shall hit one against another. *In the broad ways;* where is most room, shall be most of these chariots, and yet scarce room for them to move in. *They shall seem like torches;* what with sparkling fire, caused by their horses and chariots shod with iron, and what with the glittering of the polished irons about the chariots, and what with the light of flaming torches carried in them, the chariots shall look like so many great flambeaus, very dangerous and terrible. *They shall run like the lightnings,* both for speed, irresistibleness, and terror, against which no defence, from which no flight or hiding.

5 He shall recount his ‖ worthies: they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the † defence shall be prepared.

‖ Or, *gallants.*

† Heb. *covering,* or, *coverer.*

This verse may indifferently refer either to Nineveh and its king making their defence, or to the Chaldeans and their king maintaining the siege; both act with vigour and diligence. *Recount;* muster, and give orders. *Worthies;* approved officers and commanders. *They shall stumble;* show such forwardness, make such haste, that they shall not stand to pick their way; and there shall be so many, that they shall stumble for want of room. *They shall make haste to the wall;* the Assyrians to defend, the Chaldeans to assault, the walls of Nineveh. *The defence;* what might defend the besieged, and what might defend the besiegers; all shall be ready on both sides, and what men can do, both will do.

6 The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be ‖ dissolved.

‖ Or, *molten.*

The gates of the rivers; of the city toward the river. *Rivers,* for river, or because of the greatness of Tigris, upon which Nineveh stood. *Shall be opened:* it is reported by Diodorus Siculus, Biblioth. l. 3. c. 7, that when the Chaldeans besieged Nineveh, a mighty deluge of waters overthrew the walls of Nineveh, by the space of twenty furlongs, or two miles and half, through which breach the besiegers made their entrance: so chap. i. 8. Usher Annal. ad A. M. 3257. The overrunning flood may be literally understood: here the prophet expressly declares how Nineveh shall be ruined. *The palace;* either the royal stately palace of the Assyrian monarch, or the more stately temple of Nisroch, or Jupiter Belus, or some mighty bulwark raised there for defence. *Shall be dissolved,* as if melted; it shall drop to pieces, and they that were in, whether servants of the court, or votaries to the idol, or soldiers for defence of the fort, shall in haste, with fear of the danger, flee away.

7 And ‖ Huzzab shall be ‖ led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead *her* as with the voice of † doves, tabering upon their breasts.

‖ Or, *that which was established, or, there was a stand made.*

† Or, *discovered.*

f Is. 38. 14. & 59. 11.

Huzzab: this is variously taken, but the most probable guess is, that it is meant of the queen, who kept close in the palace, or temple, as where she might be most safe in the strength and supposed sacredness of the place. *Shall be led away captive;* without due respect to her royal dignity, shall be hurried into a strange land with other captives, and (as they) be exposed to danger and insolence. *Her maids,* ladies that waited on her in her royal state, now shall be her companions in captivity. *Shall lead her;* support their sorrowful, weary, and fainting queen, spent with such travel as she had not been used unto. *As with the voice of doves;* sighing out the complaints they durst not speak out. *Tabering upon their breasts;* these maids of honour should now in captivity strike on their breasts, but with such caution and fear of being discovered in their lamenting their state, as should be but like the noise of a taber lightly struck; or else, instead of musical instruments on which they were used to play, and to which they were used to sing, now they strike their own breasts, and sigh out their sorrows.

8 But Nineveh *is* ‖ of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, *shall they cry:* but none shall ‖ look back.

‖ Or, *from the days that she hath been.*

‖ Or, *cause them to turn.*

Nineveh is of old; a very ancient city, of great renown and strength. *Like a pool of water;* very populous, like a pool of water which hath been long breeding of fish, and is full of them. *Yet they,* yet these multitudes, shall not be a safety or protection to Nineveh, they *shall flee away* discomfited and terrified. *Stand, stand;* as officers call to fleeing soldiers, and it is doubled to show the earnestness of the commanders desiring the soldier to stand and fight. *Shall they cry;* the chieftains, and most valiant among the Ninevites. *But none shall look back;* a panic fear shall so possess them, that none of them shall dare to turn again, nor to look back upon the enemy.

9 Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: ‖ for *there is* none end of the store *and* glory out of all the † pleasant furniture.

‖ Or, *and their separate glory, &c.*

† Heb. *vessels of desire.*

Take: God speaks by his prophet, commanding that it be done, and foretelling that it certainly shall be done; and Scythians, Medes, and Chaldeans, or whoever else did associate in the war, and sacking of Nineveh, may be supposed to encourage one another in the plundering of the city. *Ye,* conquering soldiers, you that come together in hope of this booty. *For* here is enough for you all; Nineveh hath been long gathering, and hath gathered much treasure, it is uncountable; therefore take all you can lay hands on: possibly it may be the foretelling of the chief commander, his giving his soldiers leave to take what they could, forasmuch as after all they would leave enough, a great treasure for him. *Store* of all sorts, both for use and luxury, both for necessity and superfluity. *Glory;* splendid and rich furniture in their temples, palaces, public edifices, and private houses; their rich vessels, costly hangings, and gaudy apparel in their wardrobes, in their closets, and in their shops; all delightful to the eye, and rich in the real value.

10 She is empty, and void, and waste: and the [g]heart melteth, and [h]the knees smite together, [i]and much pain *is* in all loins, and [k]the faces of them all gather blackness.

g Is. 13. 7, 8.
h Dan. 5. 6.
i Jer. 30. 6.
k Joel 2. 6.

She, Nineveh, taken, and under the proud insultings of the barbarous soldiers, *is empty,* though once full of all

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store, yet now she is empty enough, many hands have been employed to spoil her, *and void*, citizens are either slipped away, or carried captives, *and waste*, desolate, and shall continue so. Here is a threefold expression, to ascertain the thing, and to intimate the greatness of Nineveh's desolation. *The heart melteth;* this devastation hath broken the hearts of the Ninevites. *The knees smite together;* not able to go steadily, ready to fall through weakness and faintness of spirits. *Much pain*, acute pains and griefs, caused by their troubles, losses, dangers, and frights, *is in all loins;* which, in those that are well, are their strength, and which, to diseased and broken bodies, are the seat of pains and griefs. *The faces*, which were wont to be haughty and scornful, and as it were sparkle with briskness of spirit, *all gather blackness;* now are clouded, sorrowful, and dejected, every one may see their desperate state in this symptom.

l Job 4. 10, 11. Ezek. 19. 2,—7.

11 Where *is* the dwelling of [l]the lions, and the feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, *even* the old lion, walked, *and* the lion's whelp, and none made *them* afraid?

This is the insulting or deriding speech of all that see and note it. *The dwelling of the lions;* Nineveh, compared to a lion's den. *Lions;* tyrants and bloody warriors, as Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser. *The feeding-place of the young lions;* Nineveh. *Young lions;* princes, the children of those tyrannical kings. *The old lion*, the king of Assyria, *walked* in his pride, in safety, and his princes with his rapines about him, which none durst disturb.

12 The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin.

The prophet continues the metaphor; this *lion* is the king of Assyria. *Did tear in pieces;* formerly did fall upon his neighbour nations, broke their strength, and robbed their treasuries and store-houses, and broke them in pieces. *For his whelps;* the young brood of the Assyrian royal family. *Lionesses;* queens, concubines, or ladies in the Assyrian court. *Filled his holes;* his treasuries, magazines, and royal seats, called dens in a decorum to the speech he had used. *And his dens;* ingeminating what was before spoken. *With ravin;* spoils which his ravenous mind and hand could lay hold on; all was prey that he could take.

m Ezek. 29. 3. & 38. 3. & 39. 1. ch. 3. 5.

13 [m]Behold, I *am* against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of [n]thy messengers shall no more be heard.

n 2 Kings 18. 17, 19. & 19. 9, 23.

Behold: this calls for our attention. *I*, the God of Israel, whom thou hast despised and blasphemed, *am against thee*, Assyrian kingdom, and Nineveh, *saith the Lord of hosts*, whose command all must obey. *I will burn her*, Nineveh's, *chariots in the smoke;* in wrath, or suddenly; or what if, when the city, first plundered, then burnt, these chariots were burnt in that smoke. *The sword*, of the conquering enemy, *shall devour thy young lions;* young princes, that either are found in arms, or else are cut off in the places of their retirements for safety. *I will cut off thy prey;* cause thee to cease from making a prey any more, or destroy all thou hast gotten by thy prey. *Thy messengers;* either ambassadors sent forth, or tribute-gatherers, or muster-masters to enlist soldiers, or heralds to proclaim edicts. *Shall no more be heard;* none shall concern themselves with one or other of them. None obey or fear thee.

CHAP. III.

The miserable ruin of Nineveh.

+ Heb. *city of bloods.* a Ezek. 22. 2, 3. & 24. 6, 9. Hab. 2. 12.

WOE to the †[a]bloody city! it *is* all full of lies *and* robbery; the prey departeth not;

Woe! a comprehensive threat of many and great calamities coming. *To the bloody city;* Nineveh, the chief city of the Assyrian kingdom: see chap. i. 1. *It is all;* every part, officers and rulers, traders, both buyers and sellers, shops, houses, judicatories, all filled with falsehood and lies. *Lies;* cheating in their trades, and false witnesses before the judges. *Robbery;* their gain, though they count it honest, is no better in God's account than robbery or rapine, as is that the lion taketh, teareth, and devoureth, as the word in the Hebrew implies. *The prey;* unjust acquists by fraud and force; extortions and violent taking away what was not theirs. *Departeth not;* as they did so long since, they continue still so to do, no change from injustice to justice.

2 The noise of a whip, and [b]the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the pransing horses, and of the jumping chariots.

b Jer. 47. 3.

The French reads this verse with a negative distributive, and so links this and the next verse with the former negative, ver. 1; thus, The prey departeth not, nor the noise of the whip, nor, &c., intimating the long continuance of the Chaldeans insulting over the Ninevites. *The noise of a whip*, with which the charioteer roused and animated the horses which drew the warlike chariots. *The noise of the rattling of the wheels*, by the swift motion of the horses, *and of the pransing horses*, in the chariots proudly and stately trampling, *and of the jumping chariots*, made to jump by the swiftness and strength of the horses which drew them.

3 The horseman lifteth up both † the bright sword and the glittering spear: and *there is* a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases; and *there is* none end of *their* corpses; they stumble upon their corpses:

+ Heb. *the flame of the sword, and the lightning of the spear.*

The horseman; the Chaldean and Mede, or their confederates in the war. *Lifteth up;* hath his sword not only drawn, but in a posture ever ready to smite, wound, or kill. *The bright sword:* these warriors kept their weapons in such manner, that they were fit both to cut and kill, and also to dazzle the eye and affright. *And there*, in Nineveh, and the streets of it, *is a multitude of slain*, by the sword of the prevailing besiegers. *A great number of carcasses;* the slain lay in the streets unburied. *There is no end of their corpses;* none knew the numbers of the slain. *They*, both invaders and invaded, all within the city, *stumble upon their corpses*, are ready to fall at them, not able to avoid them.

4 Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, [c]the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.

c Is. 47. 9, 12. Rev. 18. 2, 3.

Because, &c.; God is just, Nineveh hath deserved all this. *The multitude of the whoredoms;* her crafts and her policies, in which she resembled those lewd women; as they by their wiles abuse and deceive men, so did Nineveh, or the Assyrian kingdom, deceive, impoverish, and enslave nations by state policies: so Isa. xxiii. 17; Rev. xvii. 2. Or else, by whoredoms here may be meant idolatries, which were multiplied by the many people that served the Assyrian idols, or by their multiplying of idols, which probably they did by taking into the muster-roll of their gods those idols which the conquered nations worshipped: or whoredoms literally understood; for this sin undoubtedly did abound where wealth, luxury, ease, and long continuance of these, were to be found. *Well-favoured;* the glory of their state and government, or the splendour of their idols, temples, and sacrifices, or the comeliness and beauty of the lewd and whorish women among them. *Witchcrafts;* bewitching policies, and enchanting counsels, confederacies, and promised favours; or it may be literally taken for witchcrafts or necromancies, which sin abounded no doubt among the Assyrians. *Selleth;* disposeth of them as imperiously and absolutely as men do slaves which they buy; or else, drawing them into the wars for pay, exposed them to slaughter by the enemies' sword, as if they had bought their persons to sell their lives, that there-

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by their own countrymen and citizens might be spared and escape. Or *selleth*, i. e. occasioneth them to abound in sin, for which God in his just judgment selleth them into the enemies' hand. *Nations;* whole kingdoms. *Whoredoms:* see above. *And families through her witchcrafts:* either it is an elegant illustration of the former passage, or perhaps it may intimate the seducing of some particular and eminent families to engage themselves in an hereditary and perpetual service to the Assyrian idols, or to witchcrafts, in which the devil imitated God's institution, in taking a family to his service; so the chief families had the authority of ruling, and the burden of an idolatrous priesthood. Gr. Tholosun. de Rep. lib. 4. sect. 9, and lib. 8. c. 2. sect. 6, 8.

d ch. 2. 13.
e Is. 47. 2, 3. Jer. 13. 22, 26. Ezek. 16. 37. Mic. 1. 11.
f Hab. 2. 16.

5 [d]Behold, I *am* against thee, saith the LORD of hosts; and [e]I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, [f]and I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame.

Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts: see chap. ii. 13. *I will discover:* Nineveh as a harlot had been proud, and appeared beautiful and gay in the gifts of her lovers; but now God will deal with her according to her ways, and (as men provoked use to do with harlots) strip her naked, and expose her to greatest infamy, or deal with her as inhuman soldiers do deal with captive women: see Annot. in Ezek. xvi. 37. *The nations,* which once did reverence thy greatness, shall now abhor thy nakedness which they behold. *Thy nakedness;* thy vileness and thy shame, as in the next words.

g Mal. 2. 9.
h Heb. 10. 33.

6 And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and [g]make thee vile, and will set thee as [h]a gazingstock.

I will cast, by the Chaldean and Medish army, which God will stir up against the Assyrian monarchy, *abominable filth upon thee;* as is done to lewd women. *Make thee vile:* Nineveh had made herself morally evil and vile by sinning; now she shall be made penally vile. *And will set thee,* O Nineveh, *as a gazingstock;* at which they shall wonder and be astonished, some shall take warning too: so Sennacherib's tomb was a standing monument to put men in mind that God is to be feared, and that men looking on it may reflect on their insolence, and decline it. So Sennacherib's tomb-stone with his statue, of which chap. i. 14.

i Rev. 18. 10.
k Jer. 15. 5.

7 And it shall come to pass, *that* all they that look upon thee [i]shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: [k]who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?

It shall come to pass; it will most certainly be. *All they that look upon thee,* so soon as ever thou art seen and discovered, O Nineveh, in thy vileness, *shall flee from thee,* with hatred, loathing, and abhorrence for thy former pride and wickedness, and for thy present miseries. *And say,* with wonder, scorn, rejoicing, and spreading the news, *Nineveh is laid waste;* taken, sacked, emptied of inhabitants, yea, utterly subverted, that it may be no more a rival with Babylon: it is certain that it is not now where it once stood. *Who will bemoan her?* whose bowels will be moved for her that had no bowels for any one; who will move foot or hand toward her relief? *Whence?* from what place? She hath wronged all her neighbours, and ruined some of them; from amidst these surely not one may be fetched to speak comfortably to her; these do with reason upbraid her former cruelty and pride, and rejoice in her present calamity and ruin, and strangers will not be concerned for her.

l Amos 6. 2.
‖ Or, *nourishing.*
† Heb. *No Amon.*
m Jer. 46. 25, 26. Ezek. 30. 14,—16.

8 [l]Art thou better than ‖†populous [m]No, that was situate among the rivers, *that had* the waters round about it, whose rampart *was* the sea, *and* her wall *was* from the sea?

Art thou, O Nineveh, *better than populous No?* it is generally supposed that this was what we now call Alexandria, a city full of people, and as full of luxury and uncleanness, the sins whereof had brought it to ruin. though the history of it do not specify time, person, or means, &c. Art thou greater, stronger, and wiser, more able to resist an enemy, and preserve thyself? Yet all her power was broken, her riches spoiled, and her glory buried in ruins. This, known in those days, was a fit example to be set before the Ninevites; and though some conjecture the prophet foretells what should befall populous No, to awaken the Ninevites, yet it seems incredible that the prophet should take an instance to terrify secure Ninevites from somewhat to come to pass in after-ages. *Situate among the rivers;* in a place where the seven streams of Nilus very fairly might be accounted so many rivers, and near to one of these streams, toward the sea, was this mighty and rich city seated. *The waters round about it;* though at some distance, yet at no great distance. *Whose rampart,* or defence of its walls on one side, *was the sea;* that part of the Midland Sea which was *Mare Egyptiacum,* and was northward from the city. *Her wall was from the sea;* a mighty strong wall built from the sea, on the parts landward, where need was.

† Heb. *in thy help.*

9 Ethiopia and Egypt *were* her strength, and *it was* infinite; Put and Lubim were †thy helpers.

It is not very probable that this *Ethiopia* should be that remote country that lay south of Egypt, though in truth it is possible, and while Egypt was in friendship with No Amon, or Alexandria, the aids might in length of time come from Ethiopia, or Abyssinia. But there was a Cush, an Ethiopia, in Arabia, near to Egypt and Alexandria, whose people were likest to undertake the assistance of Alexandria their neighbour. See 2 Chron. xiv. 9; Ezek. xxx. 4, 5; Hab. iii. 7. This No, or Alexandria, was either a city subject to, and was part of Egypt, or if (as some conjecture) it was a free city, it was in league with Egypt. *Were her strength;* furnishing soldiers and warlike assistance on all occasions to Alexandria, which relied on these confederates. *It was infinite;* they never made an end of their confederacies and warlike provisions. It is reported, that when Amasis reigned Egypt reckoned twenty thousand cities, and when Zerah king of Ethiopia came against Asa it was with an army of ten hundred thousand men, and three hundred (thousand) chariots; these were the associates of Alexandria. *Put,* or Phuteans, or the Moors, who lie along westward of Alexandria. *Lubim;* the people that inhabited the parts of Africa, and thought to be that which is now called Cyrene: see Ezek. xxx. *Were thy helpers,* O Alexandria.

n Ps. 137. 9. Is. 13. 16. Hos. 13. 16.
o Lam. 2. 19.
p Joel. 3. 3. Obad. 11.

10 Yet *was* she carried away, she went into captivity: [n]her young children also were dashed in pieces [o]at the top of all the streets: and they [p]cast lots for her honourable men, and all her great men were bound in chains.

She was carried away: it is probable this might be about thirty years before; for about A. M. 3207, as Calvisius, or 3277, as Archbishop Usher, Sabacon king of Ethiopia invaded Egypt, took Bocchoris, and burnt him, which was not likely to be done without slaughter of men and sacking of towns, among which time No might be ruined. Now, as Calvisius and Helvicus account, about A. M. 3238, or as Usher, 3307, Nahum appears and flourisheth. *She went into captivity:* this ingemination confirms the certainty of the thing, and intends to affect the Ninevites the more. *Her young children;* their innocent age was no safeguard to them. *Were dashed in pieces;* first barbarously murdered, and then trod under foot in the streets, as was usual with those cruel, bloody soldiers, 2 Kings viii. 12; Psal. cxxxvii. 9; Isa. xiii. 16. *They cast lots;* either to put a scorn upon them, or else to prevent any contest about them, being taken among many others together, and none could say, This is my prisoner. *Honourable men;* citizens of note, or some officers or governors. *Great men;* great in place, strength, valour, wisdom, and so likely to do the conqueror a displeasure, should they not be secured. *Were bound in chains* of iron, or manacled, used as worst slaves.

q Jer. 25. 17, 27. ch. 1. 12.

11 Thou also shalt be [q]drunken: thou shalt be hid, thou also shalt seek strength because of the enemy.

Thou, O Nineveh, *shalt be drunken;* not only taste, but

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drink deep, yea, be drunk with the bitter cup of God's displeasure and thine enemies' rage, Isa. xxix. 9; Obad. 16. *Thou shalt be hid;* either hide thyself, or be so weakened and diminished, that thou shalt no more appear; or else be as contemptible, laid by in some obscure place; fear and shame shall cover thee. *Thou also,* O Nineveh, as well as Alexandria, *shalt seek strength,* shalt sue for and entreat assistance, *because of the enemy,* or from the enemy; i. e. either thus, in thy distress thou shalt seek for strength from such as are really thine enemies, though they make a league with thee; or thus, thou shalt beg protection from thy enemy that hath captivated thee, and rely on the mercy of him against the rage of others.

12 All thy strong holds *shall be like*
r Rev. 6. 13. [r]fig trees with the firstripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater.

All thy strong holds, castles and fortified places, not one or two, but all of them, *shall be like fig trees,* easily shaken, *with the first-ripe figs,* whose weight and ripeness will bring them quickly to the ground. *If they be shaken,* if but very lightly touched, *they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater;* into the hand of devouring and hungry ones.

s Jer. 50. 37. & 51. 30. 13 Behold, [s]thy people in the midst of thee *are* women: the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine ene-
t Ps. 147. 13. Jer. 51. 30. mies: the fire shall devour thy [t]bars.

Behold; this may seem strange, but attend diligently, thou shalt see how this will be. *Thy people;* those thou hirest, and are thine for pay; those that are born thine, all thy warriors. *In the midst of thee;* where very cowards use to be valiant, or where necessity makes cowards valiant, where they should show most valour. *Are women;* weak, afraid, flee away, and hide themselves, Jer. xlviii. 41; li. 30. God would fill them with terror, and they shall not dare to keep their gates shut against the enemy. *The gates of thy land,* the cities, but especially the strong fortified frontiers which should keep out the enemy, *shall be set wide open;* shall either through fear or treachery be opened, wide opened to admit the enemy. *Thine enemies;* Chaldeans, and their confederates. *The fire shall devour;* when the enemy is thus admitted, he shall burn either the city or the gates and bars, he will never trust nor spare thee. *Bars;* with which the gates were both shut and strengthened, 1 Sam. xxiii. 7; Psal. cxlvii. 13.

u ch. 2. 1. 14 Draw thee waters for the siege, [u]fortify thy strong holds: go into clay, and tread the morter, make strong the brick-kiln.

Draw thee waters, fill all thy cisterns, and make more that thou want not for drink, yea, draw the waters into the ditches about every fort, *for the siege,* which thine enemies will lay against thee. *Fortify;* repair all decays, and strengthen all that is weak. *Go into clay, and tread the mortar;* set thy brick-makers on work to prepare store of strongest bricks. *Make strong the brick-kiln,* that the materials for thy fortifications may be firm and good. All this is spoken with an irony, or derision of their fruitless labour.

15 There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat
x Joel 1. 4. thee up like [x]the cankerworm: make thyself many as the cankerworm, make thyself many as the locusts.

There; in the very fortresses. *The fire;* either literally, or figuratively, the wrath of the enemy hot as fire, or the pestilence, or all together. *The sword* of the Chaldeans, their wars, (after all that the Scythians have done against thee,) these shall utterly destroy thee. *It shall eat thee up:* this tells us the manner how the Ninevites shall be destroyed, they shall be eaten up. *Like the canker-worm;* either the enemy shall as easily eat thee up as the canker-worm eats the green herb, or thou shalt as soon be devoured as canker-worms are destroyed by storms, rain, fire, or change of weather. *Make thyself many as the canker-worm;* they are innumerable, be thou so if thou canst be, all will be to no purpose. *Make thyself many as the locusts:* the same irony repeated: when Ninevites have done all they can, they shall as fully and suddenly be destroyed as these vermin are.

16 Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the canker-worm ‖ spoileth, and fleeth away. ‖ Or, *spreadeth himself.*

Thou hast multiplied for number; and, as the word may import, thou hast greatened them, thou reliest on their purse and interest. *Thy merchants;* either literally, or figuratively, thy great men, princes, and rulers, which sold and bought, ver. 4; or thy confederates, who by virtue of such leagues have free commerce with thee; and this is most likely to be the meaning. *Above the stars;* proverbially taken for a very great number. *The canker-worm spoileth, and fleeth away:* this seems an abrupt speech, and may be thus made up: Whatever thou thinkest of these, which thou both multipliest and magnifiest, I tell thee, O Nineveh, they are like the canker-worm and locust, which spoil wherever they come, and do the greater mischief where they are greater in number, for they come for spoil; while they get by thee they continue with thee, and when no more is to be gotten, they take wing and fly away, leaving waste and stench behind them: so will these serve thee, O Nineveh.

17 [y]Thy crowned *are* as the locusts, y Rev. 9. 7.
and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, *but* when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they *are.*

Thy crowned; thy rich and wealthy citizens, or thy confederate kings and princes, or thy tributary princes; *thy captains;* hired, or homeborn, rather the former, commanders and officers; for number and briskness, are like locusts and great grasshoppers, but it is all for show, nothing for help to thee. *Which camp,* as if they would guard the grounds about which they settle. *In the cold day;* this lasts while the season suits them. *But when the sun ariseth,* when trouble, war, and danger, like the parching sun, scalds them, *they flee away;* they shift from the hedge they eat up. *Their place is not known;* thou shalt never know where to find them when thou needest, and they should help thee.

18 [z]Thy shepherds slumber, O [a]king z Ex. 15. 16. Ps. 76. 6. of Assyria: thy ‖ nobles shall dwell *in* a Jer. 50. 18. Ezek. 31. 3, &c. *the dust:* thy people is [b]scattered upon ‖ Or, *valiant ones.* the mountains, and no man gathereth b 1 Kings 22. 17. *them.*

Thy shepherds, subordinate magistrates, rulers, and counsellors, or officers set over the kingdom, *slumber;* are remiss, or mistake, or are heartless or dead, they cannot or will not mind the public concerns. *O king of Assyria;* his name I meet not with; Asaradinus, or, as the Scripture calls him, Esarhaddon, may possibly be the name and man intended. *Thy nobles,* the brave, valiant, and famous men, *shall dwell in the dust;* either be buried as dead, or lie in the dust as faint and weary, or be trampled on as worthless and useless. *Thy people,* thy citizens and subjects in their great numbers, *is scattered,* partly through fear, shame, and astonishment, partly by violence of the invading enemy, *upon the mountains,* where is neither safety, nor provision against danger and want. *No man gathereth them;* no one that will concern himself to preserve thy dispersed ones; so thou and they are left hopeless and ruined, for the shepherds are some dead and cannot, the rest slumber and will not, lay to heart their condition.

19 *There is* no †healing of thy bruise; † Heb. *wrinkling.*
[c]thy wound is grievous: [d]all that hear c Mic. 1. 9. d Lam. 2. 15. Zeph. 2. 15. See Is. 14. 8, &c.
the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

There is no healing of thy bruise; in a word, thou, Nineveh, must die, thy bruise he will not heal who gave it, and others cannot. God by the Chaldeans hath wounded thee, and thy friends cannot bind up the wound. *Thy bruise;* shivered and broken state. *Thy wound is grievous;* hath

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brought a weakness on thee, thou art sick with thy wound, and faintest, not able to bear a cure. *All that hear the bruit of thee*, of thy former carriage and present calamities, *shall clap the hands;* insulting and rejoicing over thee. *Upon whom hath not;* no kingdom, state, city, or family almost round about thee; not one can be named. *Thy wickedness;* thy sins, thy idolatry, luxury, &c.; thy tyranny, pride, oppression, and cruelty; thy illegal, unprecedented violence. *Passed*, without any bounds, and in most vehement and fierce manner. *Continually;* either always treading down and trampling upon those whom thou hadst subdued, or else having conquered and spoiled one state, didst forthwith fall upon some other. Thus all suffered by thee, and all rejoice at thy utter downfal; and as none have cause to befriend thee, so none will find hearts to pity thee, or hands to help thee, but every one is ready to wish, that all who are, as thou wert, enemy to mankind and justice, may, as thou, perish without help or pity.

HABAKKUK.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE prophecy of Habakkuk seems to be an exact stating of that perplexed case, touching the seeming unequalness of the proceedings of God in the government of the world, in which the good suffer evil, and the evil rejoice in prosperity; the more righteous are afflicted, and the more unrighteous prosper; nay, the worst domineer over the best, among men. This case baffled the wise among philosophers, and it much troubled David and Jeremiah, Psal. lxxiii. 2, 3, &c.; Jer. xii. 1, 2; and hath ever been matter of some wonder to the best and wisest of men, as here it was to Habakkuk, who lived in the times of great impieties against God, and of great injustice amongst men. It is most probable he lived and prophesied in the days of Manasseh, when the wicked devoured the man that was more righteous than himself; and this is the subject of his complaint, chap. i. 1—4. Those grievous sins which then abounded, he declareth shall be punished by the Chaldeans, at which he again wondereth: it grieveth him to see, in Judah, the best afflicted by the worst; and it is as much grief to him to foresee the wicked nation of the Chaldeans prosper in the ruins of a more righteous nation, (from the 5th to the 11th verse of the first chapter,) which God commandeth him to foretell. On this he proposeth the case expressly, from verse 12 to the end of the chapter, and which God resolveth for him in the second chapter, where the sins of Judah and the sins of the Chaldeans are enumerated, and at once both are threatened with punishment; when the Chaldeans have punished Judah's sins, the Medes and Persians shall punish the same sins in the Chaldeans. In all which the unspotted righteousness and the admirable wisdom of God is seen, in the government of his church, chastised for her sins against God; and in his government of the world, sinning highly against God, and with greater wickedness acting the same or worse things than those for which by their means God had before punished his church. In fine, the prophet, with steady faith and fervent prayer, addresseth to God, and in most elegant manner recounting God's mercy and faithfulness to his people, chap. iii., leaves it both a foundation to our hope and pattern for our practice. He doth resolve, as we should, to wait for, rejoice in, and submit to the Lord, in greatest distresses and darkness of providence. An excellent subject for our meditations at this day, as well as in the days of our prophet, whose name seems to imply his wrestlings with these difficulties, or his laying hold, embracing of God; our safest course in such circumstances being to adhere to God. We can but guess at the time of his prophesying, and that we think is rather in the time of Manasseh, than of Hezekiah, or Josiah, though possibly he might live and be a prophet in the first part of Josiah's reign. What tribe or what family he was of we pretend not to tell you, since we cannot pretend to know; but we are sure he was not the pretended messenger that carried a mess of broth out of Judea into Babylon, for Daniel's dinner; and we think it a wonder any thinking man should now believe it, as it would at that day have been, if really done.

CHAP. I.

Unto Habakkuk, complaining of the iniquity of the land, 1—4, is showed the fearful vengeance by the Chaldeans, 5—11. He complaineth that vengeance should be executed by them who are far worse, 12—17.

B. C. cir. 626. THE burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

The burden; see Nah. i. 1; to which we may here add, as proper to this time and place, that the prophet seems to speak of the grievous things here intended as a burden to himself, a trouble he did feel and groan under. *Habakkuk:* here we might, as others, guess at his country, parentage, and tribe; but no certainty appears in these: his name may perhaps intimate somewhat, either actively one that embraceth, or passively one embraced, and so may refer to God, or to his people, and intimate good to a people, whom God will ere long embrace; or it may speak one that is puzzled with the intricacy of affairs, and therefore expostulateth, as ver. 2, 3. *The prophet;* not he that is mentioned in the apocryphal book, but a prophet called and sent of God. *Did see;* not only in the future certainty of it on others, but did also feel in the present trouble and perplexity wherewith it affected him.

a Lam. 3. 8. 2 O LORD, how long shall I cry, [a]and thou wilt not hear! *even* cry out unto thee *of* violence, and thou wilt not save!

O Lord: unto God alone he makes his application, as only able to redress all grievances. *How long!* it may be some years he had preached, and in preaching had complained and cried out against wickedness. *Shall I cry,* unto men in thy name, and unto thee in prayer and supplication. *And thou wilt not hear;* give answer by correcting or punishing the bad, and by rescuing and delivering the good; by appearing a just Arbitrator and Judge of both. *Cry out,* with submission, not murmuring, not impatient, not distrusting the justice or mercy of God. *Unto thee,* who art more displeased than I or any one else can be disquieted with that I complain of, who art by office and word bound to restrain violence, &c. *Of violence;* the unjust and wicked oppressions which I see, others feel, and all good people are endangered by. *And thou wilt not save;* by changing the bad, or restraining them, or by overthrowing them, and setting up just and upright men in their room, both in Jerusalem and in Judea, and every where else.

3 Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause *me* to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence *are* before me: and there are *that* raise up strife and contention.

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Why dost thou show me? it is a most unpleasing sight, and that which troubles me and every good man, to see unjust and injurious men without control, and unpunished, to act their iniquity; and yet, O God, thou not only permittest it to be done, but to be done in sight, and to the grief of thy servants: thus God showeth it, and it is not without just cause, though the cause be hidden. *Iniquity;* men of iniquity and vanity, unrighteous toward men, and vain in their thoughts and practices of religion toward God. *And cause me to behold:* this explains the former. *Grievance:* so it is in regard of the effect it hath upon beholders, and such as suffer by this iniquity; it is grief and sorrow to them, it is a grievance they groan under. *For spoiling,* such as wasteth, and undoeth them that fall under it, *and violence,* perverting judgment, and turning it into wormwood; or else it is a Hebraism, *spoiling and violence,* that is, most violent robbing and spoiling each other. *Are before me;* every where I see it, to the breaking of mine heart. *There are that raise up strife;* or, and there is strife, that is, little else but strife among men, occasioned by these oppressive practices. *And contention:* so it will be a Hebraism, expressing endless contentions. It would bear, *and judgment is taken away,* which suits the next verse.

4 Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the [b]wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore ‖wrong judgment proceedeth.

b Job 21. 7. Ps. 94. 3, &c. Jer. 12. 1.
‖ Or, *wrested.*

Therefore; because the wicked go on with impunity, and the punishment they deserve is deferred. *The law* of God, given to this people by the hand of Moses, the whole law, moral, ceremonial, and judicial. *Is slacked;* is slighted, weakened, and little studied, and less obeyed by all sorts. *And judgment;* not only private men neglect the law, but magistrates, judges, and public officers pervert, or divert, or obstruct it also. *Doth never go forth,* Heb. *to the end,* or, *unto victory,* with prevalence to restrain the unjust, and to protect the innocent, which is the end of magistracy, Rom. xiii. 3. *The wicked;* the unjust and violent man. *Doth compass about;* as it were besiegeth, surroundeth, with design to oppress and ruin by false witness, interest, or bribery. *Wrong judgment;* perverse judgment, wherein innocence is condemned and the guilty are acquitted: so the judges are swords in the bowels, when they should be shields over the bodies of the righteous.

5 ¶ [c]Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for *I* will work a work in your days, *which* ye will not believe, though it be told *you.*

c Is. 29. 14. Acts 13. 41.

Behold ye: here God begins to answer the prophet, and calls for a very particular and exact consideration of the thing; see and ponder. *Among the heathen;* what judgments, what punishments have been executed upon the heathen, for like sins. *Regard;* weigh it well in all its tendency and consequence, for it is a warning to you, it assures you judgment will overtake you also. *Wonder marvellously;* as astonished at judgments, too great to be expressed in words, and so strange that it will seem too much to be believed. *For I,* the great and glorious God, the just and supreme Judge, *will work a work;* begin, continue, and finish a work; a work I am working, a work of equal severity and justice. *In your days;* it shall no more be deferred, Ezek. vii. 5, &c. *Ye will not believe;* you wicked violent oppressors will not believe, though the Lord by his prophets foretell it. *Told you;* described how, and by whom, and when.

6 For, lo, [d]‖I raise up the Chaldeans, *that* bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the †breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces *that are* not their's.

d Deut. 28. 49, 50. Jer. 5. 15. ‖ Fulfilled, 2 Chr. 36. 6. † Heb. *breadths.*

For lo: now the prophet declares particularly what it is that the Lord will work. *I raise up;* awaken to action, animate them in it, and strengthen them to accomplish their design. *The Chaldeans,* who had subdued other nations, and had already ruined the Assyrian monarchy. *Bitter;* cruel, and without mercy, Jer. vi. 23; xxi. 7. *Hasty;* speedy and quick in executing their merciless purposes, as Isa. v. 26, 27. *Which shall march,* Heb. *walk without fear,* and in order, as a conqueror doth in his conquests. *Through the breadth of the land;* through all parts of the land, no corner shall escape his search or cruelty. *To possess;* not to spoil and be gone, but to take and keep possession, as lord and proprietor in the right of conquest. *The dwelling-places;* houses, towns, cities, Jerusalem itself, which they had no right to, till Jewish sins gave occasion for the dispossessing of the Jews, and the introducing of the Chaldeans.

7 They *are* terrible and dreadful: ‖their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

‖ Or, *from them shall proceed the judgment of these, and the captivity of these.*

They are terrible and dreadful: to affect the incredulous Jews with greater fear, it is doubled, they are of all nations most terrible; in the fierceness wherewith they assault, and cruelty with which they use their captives. *Their judgment,* the law they observe, is their own will, and what they please you must submit unto, nor complain of wrong done, forasmuch as they do it. *Their dignity;* their authority and superiority, for which you must reverence them; the lordliness of their deportment toward you, or the right they assume to send you captives; all is from themselves, without respect to any other law or rule whatever. How miserable are you like to be, when enslaved to such a barbarous cruelty, and unbounded pride!

8 Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more †fierce than the [e]evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; [f]they shall fly as the eagle *that* hasteth to eat.

† Heb. *sharp.* e Jer. 5. 6. Zeph. 3. 3. f Jer. 4. 13.

Their horses also are swifter; they will be sooner upon you than you think, and when once among you, they will be swifter than you can flee from, Isa. xxx. 16; Lam. iv. 19. *Than the leopards;* a fierce creature, ravenous as the lion, and much swifter, a watchful and sly beast, from which it is very hard to shift. *More fierce,* more eager after, and more cruel to the prey, *than the evening wolves;* which with long fasting in the day, do come out in the evening more fierce on every thing that may be a prey for them: see Jer. v. 6; Ezek. xxii. 27; Zeph. iii. 3. *Their horsemen;* excellent riders, that can manage the speed and fierceness of these horses. *Shall spread themselves* all over the land, so many shall they be, and so active, and all strong and hale, as some think the word implieth. *Shall come from far;* as far from liking your customs, pitying your persons, or understanding your language, as they are far remote from your country; men that will make you pay the charge of their long and tedious journey. *They shall fly as the eagle;* lest you should dream of escape by flight, your enemies (O miserable Jews) shall be so swift, you will think they flew on wings, on eagle's wings, the swiftest of flight, and quickest in espying her prey. *That hasteth to eat;* hunger makes her flight the quicker, and her seizure of the prey more bold and daring, Job ix. 26; Ezek. xvii. 3: so shall your enemies be to you.

9 They shall come all for violence: ‖†their faces shall sup up *as* the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand.

‖ Or, *the supping up of their faces, &c.* or, *their faces shall look toward the east.*

† Heb. *the opposition of their faces toward the east.*

They, Chaldeans, and in particular these fierce and swift horsemen, *shall come all,* with one purpose, on the same design, to enrich themselves by making a prey of all. *Their faces shall sup up as the east wind:* either thus, their very countenances shall be as blasting, pestiferous, and dangerous as is the east wind in those countries; or thus, all they can sup up, or lay hold on, they will carry eastward; or thus, when you are devoured, they shall set their faces eastward to devour others in those coasts. *They shall gather the captivity;* prisoners or captives, called here the captivity, to express the extremity thereof. *As the sand,* both for easiness of gathering, and the multitudes of captives gathered.

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10 And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it.

They, both the king of Babylon and his soldiers, *shall scoff*, deride and contemn, *at the kings*, which either confederated with the Jews, or else opposed the designs of the Chaldeans; as the kings of Egypt, of Tyre, &c.; or the kings of the Jews, as Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. *The princes*, governors, counsellors, valiant commanders, and officers, *shall be a scorn unto them*, to the whole army of the Chaldeans. *They shall heap dust, and take it;* by mighty mounts cast up, or by filling up the trenches about your cities and fortresses, shall master them.

11 Then shall *his* mind change, and he
g Dan. 5. 4. shall pass over, and offend, g *imputing* this his power unto his god.

Then: it notes both the time and cause of what happened; extraordinary successes, and a continued series of them, attending the designs and attempts of the Chaldean kings, at last made them so haughty and proud, as to trample on kings, ver. 10; and when their pride was at this height, it stops not here. *His mind;* the *spirit* or *wind*, as the Hebrew, and so some think the prophet does foretell the change of his prosperous gales, his downfal; but it is more natural to understand it of the change of mind in the prosperous Chaldean, he will think other thoughts of himself, his affairs, and of other men. *He shall pass over;* break over the bounds of all sober and modest sentiments, exceed in his value of himself, and of his achievements, as Sennacherib first did, 2 Chron. xxxii. 17—19, and next Nebuchadnezzar, surnamed the Great, Dan. iv. 29, 30. *Offend:* this pride was a great sin, and highly provoked God; for the insolent tyrant idolized himself. *Imputing this his power*, the strength by which he had done all his great exploits, or the might and power to which he had advanced himself, *unto his god:* this at first seems a little tolerable, it seems to savour somewhat of religion, yet it is a great offence thus to ascribe his grandeur to a dumb idol, but it is worse to reckon his strength to be his god, as the words will express it in the Hebrew. See Dan. iv. 29, 30.

h Ps. 90. 2. & 93. 2. Lam. 5. 19. 2 Kings 19. 25. Ps. 17. 13. Is. 10. 5, 6, 7. Ezek. 30. 25. † Heb. *rock.* Deut. 32. 4. ‡ Heb. *founded.*

12 ¶ h *Art* thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, i thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O †mighty God, thou hast ‡established them for correction.

Art thou not from everlasting? in being, thou art that God who art not like the gods of the nations, upstart and novel, but before the mountains were brought forth thou wast God; thou hast permitted, borne with, restrained, overthrown, and punished such proud, bloody, and sacrilegious wretches. In thy works of old, before this proud Chaldean monarch was thought of, thou wert as now, wonderful, just, and good, and thy saints found support in the remembrance thereof, Psal. lxxiv. 12; lxxvii. 5, 11; cxliii. 5; Isa. xlv. 21. In covenant with thine Israel, which covenant is not of late years, it is an ancient covenant, and as it hath, it still shall be kept for our good. *O Lord;* the Sovereign Lord and Ruler of the world, who only art Jehovah. *My God;* Judge and Vindex by office; as Judge, engaged to defend, rescue, and avenge the oppressed; and my God or Judge. Whether the prophet speaks only in his own, or in his people's name, he hath a respect to that peculiar relation he or they had to God, much like that Isa. lxiii. 19. He refers to the ancient covenant relation which God had taken them into, and implies his hope and expectation of help from God, their Judge and Vindex. *Mine Holy One;* holy in thy nature, law, and government, in thy mercies, and in judgments, who dost intend to make thy holiness appear in due time by saving us; though thou seem to forget, or at least to delay the work, yet thou art the Holy One in the midst of us, Isa. xii. 6, and we wait for thee. *We*, who are thine, and oppressed, threatened, and exposed to the avarice and cruelty of the Chaldean, *shall not die;* be utterly cut off and destroyed, for the death of a nation is the destruction or desolation of it. Thou who hast made us thine by an everlasting covenant of mercy, wilt show us such mercy that we shall outlive the rage of our enemies. *O Lord:* with humble veneration he doth look towards God, and discerneth what quieteth his spirit, and confirms his faith and patience. *Thou hast ordained*, set up, maintained, and designed, *them*, the Chaldean kingdom, as ver. 6. *for judgment;* to execute this judgment, which is ever attempered with mercy, which ever betters, never destroys thy people: see Isa. x. 5, &c. Babylon, as Assyria, was the rod of God's indignation, &c. *O mighty God:* this he repeats for confirmation and illustration, and intimateth God to be his people's rock and refuge. *Thou hast established*, strengthened and fortified, *them for correction;* to chastise and discipline, not to destroy.

13 k *Thou art* of purer eyes than to
k Ps. 5. 5. behold evil, and canst not look on ‖iniquity: l wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, *and* holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth *the man that is* more righteous than he?

‖ Or, *iniquities.* l Or, *fore-seest.* Jer. 12. 1.

Thou, O Lord, who hast raised and increased the Chaldean kingdom. *Art of purer;* of infinite purity and holiness. *Eyes*, ascribed unto God to express his knowledge; so his eyes run to and fro, and his eye is upon the righteous. *Than to behold:* his omniscience doth behold all things, and so David expresseth it, *Thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it*, Psal. x. 14; but he doth not, will not, cannot, see with delight, with approbation, *evil*, of sin and violence. *And canst not look on iniquity;* the same thing repeated to confirm us. All this the prophet doth lay down as most undoubtedly true, and on which he stays himself (though he be amazed with the darkness of providences); and by this he will repress all undue murmurings, when he debates with God about his providences: most just and holy; but why thus or thus? *Wherefore lookest;* seest all the violence done, and bearest with them that do it; why doth not thy hand remove and avenge what thine eye is offended at, and thy heart abhorreth? *Them that deal treacherously;* the Chaldeans, who were a perfidious nation, and ruined many by their treacheries; fraud and force were both alike to them. And it is likely they dealt very falsely with the Jews. *Holdest thy tongue;* seemest unconcerned in such a degree as to be silent and say nothing. *When*, or whilst; it might seem a fit season to speak, when the violent are about their violence, when the prey is between the teeth and not swallowed. *The wicked;* the Chaldean, an oppressor, bloody and treacherous against men, an atheist or idolater against God. *Devoureth;* swalloweth down whole, as the word imports, Numb. xvi. 30; Psal. cxxiv. 3. *The man;* the Jew, or almost every one of us, as the phrase imports. *More righteous than he:* though the Jews were a very corrupt nation, yet, compared with the Chaldeans, they were the better, and of the two the Jew was the less evil. Now this riddle he desired might be unfolded, Why is the juster oppressed by the unjuster?

14 And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the ‖creeping things, *that* *have* no ruler over them?

‖ Or, *moving.*

Makest; not infusing cruel, ravenous, and unsatiable appetites, but permitting them to act according to such appetite which was already in them. *Men;* who should be just to all, and wrong none, who were once framed for mutual help in civil societies, and whose life should be beneficence. *As the fishes;* of which the greater live on the lesser, and do greedily and all the day long feed on the smaller fry. *Of the sea;* where the devourers are more for number, of greater bulk, and swallow greater numbers of the lesser. *As the creeping things;* which in the waters are food for the lesser fry; so the world, like the sea, is wholly oppression. *No ruler;* none to defend the weak, to restrain the mighty, and to give law to all.

15 They m take up all of them with
m Jer. 16. 16. Amos 4. 2. the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their ‖drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad.

‖ Or, *fine net.*

They; either more generally oppressors every where, or else particularly the Chaldeans. *Take up;* draw them out slily and craftily, when they are taken by his bait. *All of*

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them, without distinction, all alike, good or bad. *With the angle:* it may refer to the delight these oppressors took in these courses, or to the more private way of destroying. *They catch them in their net;* another method of the Chaldean rapine, like catching of fish, not singly and one by one, but destroying many together. *And gather them;* as if they could never have enough, these Chaldeans do, fisher-like, drive men into their nets and snares. *In their drag:* this is a third way of destroying fish. The Chaldeans would use all ways to devour the Jews. *Therefore they*, the greedy and cruel Chaldeans, *rejoice*, both in their own gain and in the Jews' ruin. *And are glad:* it is doubled to show the certainty of the thing, and probably to intimate the double joy they took in their prosperous oppression.

n Deut. 8. 17. Is. 10. 13. & 37. 24, 25.

16 Therefore [n] they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion *is* fat, and their meat ‖ † plenteous.

‖ Or, *dainty.* † Heb. *fat.*

Therefore, because they prosper and thrive, in which they should see and acknowledge thy wise and mighty providence, *they sacrifice*, idolize and pay Divine honours, ascribe the praise of their victories and acquired glory, *unto their net;* to their own contrivances, diligence, and power, as if the fisherman should make his net his god, and offer sacrifice for a good draught of fishes taken to the net that took them. *And burn incense*, another part of Divine honour, and mostly used in giving thanks and praises, *to their drag;* to their policy and power, their own counsel, conduct, and arms, expressed in the metaphor of a fisherman's drag. *Because by them their portion*, state, condition, or interest, *is fat;* great and flourishing. *Their meat;* the revenues of the kingdom in general, and the revenues of particular subjects, especially of the commanders and military officers, those who help to spread, draw, and empty the net. *Plenteous;* abundant, that it might seem a sufficient provision, as well as a pleasant mess, sufficient for quantity as sweet in quality. It is likely these self-admirers did not only eat the fat of the land they wasted, but laid up in store for themselves.

17 Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?

Shall they? the Chaldeans, Nebuchadnezzar and his armies. *Therefore;* shall former success be pledge of future? they have prospered, and they think they shall; wilt thou confirm this to them? *Empty their net;* as fishermen empty the full net to fill it again, and cast out what they had taken to take in more; shall these proud and cruel Chaldeans do so still? *And not spare continually;* shall they as endlessly as mercilessly waste? *To slay*, murderer-like, kill, *the nations;* not single persons, but whole kingdoms and people at once: wilt thou, O most just and mighty God and Judge, suffer these things always? The prophet by the question intimates to us that God most certainly will not suffer it always. The Lord will in fit time arise and break the oppressors' arm, and save the oppressed church and people of God.

CHAP. II.

Unto Habakkuk, waiting for an answer, 1, *is showed that he must wait in faith,* 2—4. *The judgment of the Chaldeans for insatiableness,* 5—8, *ambition,* 9—11, *cruelty,* 12—14, *treacherous dealing,* 15—17, *and idolatry,* 18—20.

a Is. 21. 8, 11. † Heb. *fenced place.* b Is. 65. 8. ‖ Or, *in me.* ‖ Or, *when I am argued with.* † Heb. *upon my reproof*, or, *arguing.*

I WILL [a] stand upon my watch, and set me upon the † tower, [b] and will watch to see what he will say ‖ unto me, and what I shall answer ‖ † when I am reproved.

I will stand: the first chapter ended with that difficult and perplexed question, why God suffers the wicked so long to prosper in their oppressions of the righteous? This chapter represents the prophet waiting and musing, studying with himself what account he might give to himself, and waiting what account God would give him of it. He will stand in a posture of meditating, observing, and waiting. *Upon my watch:* possibly the prophet may have respect to the manner of the Jews, who in their solemn prayers and waiting on God had their stations and watches (as Buxtorf observeth in *verbo* עמד) in their synagogues, or at Jerusalem. But I rather think the prophet resolveth to be like one that is to be a watchman, as prophets are, Ezek. iii. 17, for the people of God. Or passively, in my watch, i. e. where my adversaries, like besieging enemies, observe and watch me. It contains his diligent and persevering expectation and observing. *And set me;* fixedly and with resolution not to leave my station, as the Hebrew implieth; it is the same thing more emphatically expressed than in the word stand. *Upon the tower;* either watch-tower, or besieged tower, or within a circle, out of which I will not stir till I receive an answer. *And will watch*, most attentively observe, *to see what he*, the Lord, chap. i. 12. *will say unto me*, or signify unto me; waiting for mine own satisfaction, and for the information of others. *And what I shall answer:* there are many that are perplexed at the intricacy of providence, and some inquire to be instructed; some propose doubts and fears; and others do quarrel, and perversely wrangle with God and his prophets; and how I may answer these from the word of God is that I wait for, saith our prophet. *When I am reproved;* when called to give an account of the mysteriousness of providence; when either to satisfy doubters, or to silence quarrellers.

2 And the LORD answered me, and said, [c] Write the vision, and make *it* plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

c Is. 8. 1. & 30. 8.

And the Lord, on whom he waited, and who ruleth all affairs, *answered me;* did hear my desire, and gave direction what I should do. *Write;* what is only spoken is soon forgot, but what is written is more lasting, therefore write thou the vision showed to thee. *The vision;* the things thou seest, or which thou shalt see. *Make it plain;* make the writing very plain, engrave it, as was their manner, *upon tables;* what was of public concern, and therefore to be published, was anciently written or engraven upon tables, smooth stones, or wood, and then hung up in a public place to be read. *That he may run that readeth it;* that none may need to make a stop, but hold on his course; in the greatest haste of business, every one may plainly and clearly discern what is written.

3 For [d] the vision *is* yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will [e] surely come, it will not tarry.

d Dan. 10. 14. & 11. 27, 35. e Heb. 10. 37.

For; the reason why it must be written is because it should not be forgotten, whilst the appointed time is somewhat afar off; write it that it may be preserved in memory. *The vision;* the accomplishment of the things showed unto thee, what thou seest is coming, and what thou foretellest to them, will take effect. *For an appointed time;* determined and fixed with God, though unknown to men. *At the end;* when the period appointed of God shall come, then, and not till then, it will be accomplished. *It shall speak;* be accomplished, and fully made good. *Not lie;* not disappoint your expectation. *Though it tarry*, from the time of the prophet's seeing it, which was about Manasseh's time, or from about the time of captivating the ten tribes, until Cyrus's time. *Wait for it;* expect it, then it will speak out, that every one who hath an ear may hear it. *It will surely come*, when the ruin of Babylon, never to be more built, shall proclaim the justice of God against his and his church's enemies, and what difference there is between corrections on his people and destruction upon enemies. *It will not tarry;* not beyond the appointed time, which, reckoned from the captivity of the ten tribes, was one hundred and sixty years, or from Manasseh's captivity, was about one hundred and twenty years, more or less, to the destruction of Babylon by Cyrus, when the riddle was fully unfolded.

4 Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the [f] just shall live by his faith.

f John 3. 36. Rom. 1. 17. Gal. 3. 11. Heb. 10. 38.

Behold; note it: there are two sorts of persons who concern themselves in this puzzling question of the Divine providence; some object and quarrel, contest with God, proudly, discontentedly, and impatiently; others inquire humbly, submitting themselves to God, and waiting for

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him. *His soul*, the heart and mind of every such one, *which is lifted up;* that proudly contests with the justice and wisdom of the Divine Providence, that slights promises of deliverance at so great a distance, and provides for his own safety by his own wit; *is not upright;* is very corrupt and wicked, full of (not only distrusts, but) positive conclusions against God's future punishing the wicked: such a one is so wicked that he thinks God will not punish the violent and bloody, the superstitious and idolatrous Babylonian. *The just;* the humble, upright, and comparatively righteous one, who adores the depth of Divine providence, and is persuaded of the truth of Divine promises, and doth approve the season God chooseth. *Shall live;* supports himself, and quiets his own heart, whilst he foreseeth the approaching deliverance of Zion. *By his faith;* his well-grounded dependence on a persuasion of the truth of God's promises touching the relief of the faithful servants of God, whose deliverance he believes to be certain, and so waits for the performance of promises made to him and them.

‖ Or, *How much more.*

5 ¶ ‖ Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, *he is* a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire [g] as hell, and *is* as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:

g Prov. 27. 20. & 30. 16.

Yea also, or *moreover, furthermore, because he*, the king of Babylon, or every one of them, *transgresseth by wine;* which vice destroys kings and kingdoms, and in the excesses of luxury the Babylonian king Belshazzar, his city and kingdom of Babylon, fell a prey to Darius and Cyrus. *A proud man;* insolent in his behaviour towards all, both retainers, subjects, strangers, and conquered enemies: such pride shall have a fall. *Neither keepeth at home;* is ever abroad warring upon some or other, which though it enlarge his countries, it weakeneth his kingdom, and gives advantage to malcontents and conspirators, besides that it exposeth him to imminent and continual dangers. *Enlargeth his desire as hell;* is most insatiably greedy to devour all, as far from saying It is enough as the grave is. *Is as death;* as pernicious and ravenous. *Cannot be satisfied;* all is too little for him, and there is no possibility to satiate his appetite. *Gathereth*, addeth one after another, *unto him*, to his kingdom, *all nations*, that are round about him; all he knows are designed upon, and he purposeth to engross them. *Heapeth unto him all people;* another expression of the same import. Now all this, foretold of the future temper of the Babylonish kings and kingdoms, is a sure presage of their no long continuance in grandeur, but that shortly Divine vengeance will overtake them. This might be an answer to disputers.

h Mic. 2. 4.

6 Shall not all these [h] take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, ‖ Woe to him that increaseth *that which is* not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!

‖ Or, *Ho, he.*

Shall not? the prediction is moulded thus in a question, to give it emphasis, and make it more affective. *All these*, who have been oppressed, contumeliously used, and perfidiously deceived; all the people who have feared the power and policy of Babylon. *Take up a parable;* turn him and his state into a by-word and scorn. *Against him;* the king of Babylon, awhile since the terror, now the scorn of nations. *Taunting;* short, but smart, wounding scoffs; and whereas men usually bewail and condole the mishaps of great, brave, and just kings or kingdoms, all people shall exult and triumph in the miseries of this oppressive, luxurious, and base kingdom. *Woe!* either it is a threat of like vengeance on all such transgressors, or it may be a publishing the miseries come upon Babylon. *To him that increaseth;* by rapine, frauds, and injurious dealings multiplieth his treasures, as the king of Babylon did. *Not his;* it was not his though he had it; it was not his right though it was in his possession. Or else thus, one misery of the Babylonians shall be, they increase wealth, but not for themselves, but for the Medes and Persians. *How long?* this seems to be the sigh of the oppressed, who think it long ere the oppressor fall. *To him that ladeth himself;* woe to him that is a burden to others, while he burdens himself with amassed treasures gathered by extortion, and grievous, unjust taxes! *With thick clay;* gold and silver, so called to lower the over-value of them, and perhaps to mind the tyrant of a clay-bed.

7 Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?

Shall they not? this question doth more fully ascertain the thing. *Rise up;* either grow up, or else, as men who resolve to do a thing thoroughly, get upon their feet and stand to it. The Medes and Persians were growing to power, and would ere long rise up to ruin Babylon. *Suddenly;* and surprise it in security, so they were down ere they did perceive themselves falling; and such sudden ruin is most dreadful. *Bite thee;* devour and eat thee up. *And awake;* thou, O Belshazzar, (and Babylon with thee,) wilt in drunken slumbers (unable to resist) fall into the hands of the awakened Medes and Persians. *Vex thee;* as thou hast been, O Babylon, vexation to others by thy proud and insolent behaviour, by scoffs and cruelties, so others shall now be a vexation unto thee. *Thou shalt be for booties;* not only your lands, houses, and goods, but your persons, and those of your relations, shall be booties, taken and sold for slaves, to the profit of *them*, Medes and Persians.

8 [i] Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; [k] because of men's † blood, and *for* the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

i Is. 33. 1.

k ver. 17.

† Heb. *bloods.*

The prophet proceeds to give account of the reasons on which the Divine nemesis moves in this affair, and these may convince and confirm us in it. *Thou hast spoiled many nations;* slain their people, sacked their cities, robbed their treasuries, led captive the subjects, and deposed kings, and done this to many nations, whose cry is come up to heaven. Jer. xxv. 9, and xxvii. 3, recounts some six or seven nations. It is likely all the nations that lay round about this kingdom were spoiled by it. Now shalt thou be paid in thine own coin. The remnant of the nations unspoiled by thee, shall combine against thee, and execute the Lord's just sentence, and spoil the spoiler. *Thee*, O Babylon. *Because of men's blood;* either shed by private murders which cried to Heaven for vengeance, or shed by ill application of the sword of justice, or continual needless wars upon her neighbours. *And for the violence*, injustice and oppressions, *of the land;* of the whole land of Chaldea, if you understand it actively, or else, if passively taken, it is the violence done by Babylon to the land of Judea especially. *Of the city;* either Babylon, which oppressed Jerusalem, or Jerusalem, oppressed by Babylon. *And all that dwell therein:* this also, as understood actively or passively, is applicable to either Babylon's or Jerusalem's citizens and inhabitants.

9 ¶ Woe to him that [l] ‖ coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may [m] set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the † power of evil!

l Jer. 22. 13.

‖ Or, *gaineth an evil gain.*

m Jer. 49. 16. Obad. 4.

† Heb. *palm of the hand*

Woe! it is a general and comprehensive threat against all tyrants and oppressors. *To him;* every one that is guilty of the sin. *That coveteth an evil covetousness;* or driveth a trade of oppression, to gain by what means soever, right or wrong. This is evil of sin, and will end in evil of trouble. *To his house;* his family, which he would enrich and greaten by raising it on the ruins of oppressed innocents. *That he may set his nest on high;* a proverbial speech, in allusion to birds of prey, which build their nests in the greatest heights, Obad. 4. Greatness and an advanced estate gotten by rapine and prey may seem, but never can be, a security to any monarch. *On high;* higher than God and justice set him. *That he may be delivered;* kept secure, and out of danger from all below him. *From the power of evil*, Heb. *from the palm of the hand of evil*, that no evil may fasten on, though it may attempt against them.

10 Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned *against* thy soul.

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Thou, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, ***hast consulted shame;*** hast mistaken thy measures, thoughtest to advance thy glory, and to illustrate thy name; but it is in very deed the shame of thy reign that it hath been bloody. *To thy house;* or family, thy royal family. *By cutting off many people;* destroying and impoverishing multitudes of men and cities. *Hast sinned;* it was thy sin, whatever thou didst think of it. *Against thy soul;* or life of thy person, and posterity, this blood and cruelty will surely ruin thy house.

‖ Or, *piece, or, fastening.* ‖ Or, *witness against it.*

11 For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the ‖beam out of the timber shall ‖answer it.

For the stone, the strength of thy house, accuseth thee. *Shall cry out;* as if it had a voice, it crieth to God for vengeance. *The beam*, on which thy chambers are laid, *shall answer it;* confirms the charge against thee; and that fabric cannot be long a safe or a beautiful habitation, whose stones and beams are shaken with the strong cries of innocent blood, and families ruined by the oppression of the builder.

n Jer. 22. 13. Ezek. 24. 9. Mic. 3. 10. Nah. 3. 1. † Heb. *bloods.*

12 ¶ Woe to him that buildeth a town with n†blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!

Whosoever he be that lays foundations in blood, is here threatened, and none so great as to keep off the woe, deserved and menaced. *A town*, Heb. *city*. *With blood;* in the guilt and with the cruelty of murdering the innocent, it is the worst cement which is tempered with blood of murdered men, women, and children. *And stablisheth;* goeth about or thinketh to establish the foundations of a city. *A city;* Babylon in particular. *By iniquity;* by force and fraud, by riches extorted from the just possessor.

o Jer. 51. 58. ‖ Or, *in vain.*

13 Behold, *is it* not of the LORD of hosts othat the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves ‖for very vanity?

Behold: the prophet calls for attention, and that we observe who it is will execute vengeance on bloody cities and kingdoms. Babylon is a mighty city, and the kingdom is over-match to any kingdom, and perhaps it may be thought none can give Babylon blood to drink, or kindle a fire in her, that shall consume her. *Is it not of the Lord of hosts?* though men cannot, the Lord of hosts can; and is not this vengeance his? will not he repay? *The people shall labour in the very fire;* either Babylonians and their confederates labour for that the fire shall consume; or the adversaries of Babylon shall be able to endure a service for God against Babylon hot as if they laboured in the fire. Either literally taken or figuratively will well consist with the text. *The people*, either Medes and Persians against Babylon, or the Chaldeans for Babylon, *shall weary themselves*, spend their strength and life, *for very vanity;* the one to preserve what shall never profit them, which they laid up in vain, the other to destroy all (though they lose their booty by destroying it) in the fire; yet all this from the Lord of hosts, justly punishing Babylon for all her cruelties.

‖ Or, *by knowing the glory of the LORD.* p Is. 11. 9.

14 For the earth shall be filled ‖with the pknowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

The earth; the land of Chaldea, of the Medes and Persians, and their confederates, the lands oppressed by the Chaldeans, but Judea more particularly. *Shall be filled;* every eye shall see, or ear hear, or tongue speak what they know. *With the knowledge*, sight and sense, *of the glory*, just and glorious proceedings of God against Babylon; for when God shall appear to execute his just judgments upon his own and his church's enemies, he will appear glorious indeed. *The Lord;* the God of Israel, their Holy One, as chap. i. 12. *As the waters cover the sea:* it is a proverbial speech, expressing the general notice and deep sense all should have of God's justice, truth, power, and zeal against mighty oppressors, such as Babylon was full of.

q Hos. 7. 5. r Gen. 9. 22.

15 ¶ Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy qbottle to *him*, and makest *him* drunken also, that thou mayest rlook on their nakedness!

Another public and crying sin of this Chaldean kingdom was excessive drinking, and making one another drunk, and for this God will severely punish. *Puttest thy bottle to him;* forcing them by importunity or threats to drink by greater measures then they can bear. *Makest him drunken also;* never givest over till thou hast made him vile and loathsome, as well as senseless in his drink. *That thou mayest look on their nakedness;* designing to put the greatest abuse on them, exposing them to view, scorn, and derision, or to beastly or not to be named uncleanness, which vice the Babylonians are charged with by Herodotus and Ctesias.

‖ Or, *more with shame than with glory.* s Jer. 25. 26, 27. & 51. 57.

16 Thou art filled ‖with shame for glory: sdrink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing *shall be* on thy glory.

Thou, O king of Babylon, *art filled*, shortly shalt be, and it is as sure as if already done, *with shame for glory;* as much filled with shame by the contempt they shall cast upon thee whom thou didst once vilify and contemn; thy shame shall be greater than ever was thy glory, as the Hebrew seems to import. *Drink thou also:* thy sin was that thou didst drink, and madest others drink to shameless excess too; now thy punishment shall be to drink of the cup of God's wrath, which will fill thee with astonishment and calamities. *Let thy foreskin be uncovered;* let thy shame be laid open before all; this retaliation is just and necessary. *The cup;* a Scripture phrase, expressing the just judgments and corrections of sinners. *Of the Lord's right hand;* it is said to be in his right hand here, and in his hand, Psal. lxxv. 8. *Shall be turned unto thee:* they turned the cup of pleasure about, God will carry the cup of indignation about also, and make them drink deep of it, they shall not escape. *Shameful spewing shall be upon thy glory;* then shalt thou be as much loathed as a shameful drunkard is in his vomit.

t ver. 8.

17 For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, *which* made them afraid, tbecause of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

The violence of Lebanon shall cover thee: this is added to all the rest, that God's people might know this was the time of recompences for Zion, that the violence by Babylon done to Judea and its inhabitants should be avenged and no longer deferred, but now should overwhelm Babylon, in which should be made as great devastations as ever she made in the fruitful and beautiful mountain Lebanon, supposed, in Deut. iii. 25, to express the land of Canaan; or else by Lebanon may be meant the temple, and house of the sanctuary, (as the Chaldee paraphrast,) because it was built of the cedars of Lebanon. *Thee;* Babylon. *The spoil of beasts;* such spoil as by hunters is made among wild beasts, when they endeavour to destroy the whole kind of them, such havoc, and by all the ways and methods that art and subtlety can invent to extirpate them, such wastes shalt thou suffer; for thou art to be destroyed. Or else thus, such desolations shall thine enemies make in thee as wild, ravenous, and insatiable beasts make where they prevail, they shall tear and devour all they seize, and seize all that peep abroad, and this shall make all men afraid continually. *Because of men's blood, &c.:* see ver. 8.

u Is. 44. 9, 10. & 46. 2. x Jer. 10. 8, 14. Zech. 10. 2. † Heb. *the fashioner of his fashion.* y Ps. 115. 5. ‖ Cor. 12. 2.

18 ¶ u What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a xteacher of lies, that †the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make ydumb idols?

Here the prophet removes the confidences of Babylon; she would boast of her gods, and depend on them, but this will be vain and unprofitable, it is not imaginable that these idols should help these persons. *The graven image;* carved in wood, or stone, for of such materials did these idol-makers sometimes make their gods. *The maker:* it is brutish folly in any one to value, or desire to be helped, by such lifeless idols, but it is greatest folly for him that makes the image, that remembers how it was hewed, planed,

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tumbled about, and all this without the least degree of sense or feeling of what it suffered; and can that be sensible of my sorrows which feels not any thing itself? *The molten image;* idols made of gold or silver, or any other fusile metal, were framed out of the metal first melted, and are therefore called molten images. *A teacher of lies;* but whether graven or molten, yet all such images are but teachers of lies, Jer. x. 8, 14. They withdraw the mind from God, our true and only helper, and bewitch men to trust to idols, in which is no help, which ever proved lies to all that trusted on them. *That the maker;* who knows, for he saw that there was no life, strength, or wisdom in one or other; it is shameless in any, but most in him that made the idol, to worship his own work, and rely upon that which he knows hath no eyes, or hands, or ears, but what his tool framed for it. *His work;* his own work, and yet his god! the product of his art, and yet the hope of his soul! O brutish folly, self-contradiction! *Trusteth therein;* resteth confident of defence, and rescue from evil, by it. *Dumb idols;* which neither can answer a question, nor give a direction in a strait; can neither promise good to a friend, nor denounce a threat against an enemy.

19 Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it *is* laid over with gold and silver, [a]and *there is* no breath at all in the midst of it.

[a] Ps. 135. 17.

In the former verse the prophet declared the uselessness and unprofitableness of the idols of Babylon, now he threatens the idolaters. They sinned greatly by placing their confidence in them, and they should suffer the more for it. *The wood;* whatever shape art may give it, or whatever veneration blind idolaters may bear to it, it is still wood, no better; a log, a worthless block. *Awake:* this expresseth the idolater's prayer to his idol. Awake; what! is he a sleepy god? No, not so much, it is a lifeless log, and its eyes never did see. *The dumb stone;* another sort of their useless idols, senseless as the stones, and still as unable to rise or help as before they were graven and carved; it is a stone, no god. *Arise;* another form of praying to this idol; and when the idol can rise Babylon shall be helped, till then it must abide its sorrows. *It shall teach:* sottish men! in misery to hope that lifeless idols shall counsel and direct. What! dumb, and without sense, and yet teach! *Behold;* look, ye self-deceiving idolaters, consult your own senses, see what matter they are made of. *It is laid over with gold and silver;* see the facings or plates are different from that which is under, and can that be a god that is made up of such different materials? it were more like men to pull off the gold and silver, and with these to purchase your safety. *There is no breath at all;* not so much as the soul of a brute in them.

20 But [a]the LORD *is* in his holy temple: †[b]let all the earth keep silence before him.

[a] Ps. 11. 4. † Heb. *be silent all the earth before him.* [b] Zeph. 1. 7. Zech. 2. 13.

But the Lord: what idols are, he had already showed, a doctrine of lies, impotent and lifeless statues; but the God of Israel is not like them. He is Jehovah, fountain of being, life, power, and salvation to his people; he can do all he will for or against a people. *Is in his holy temple,* or palace of his holiness; he is in his temple and in heaven, every where at all times; though his people be in Babylon, yet he is where he doth hear, see, and discern their state, and whence he promised to relieve and help them. *Let all the earth;* both Chaldea the oppressive, and Judea the oppressed, and Medes and Persians and all their confederates, let all these nations *keep silence before him;* fear, submit, pray, wait for, and depend on him: let his enemies be silent, fear, make their peace, and prevent his displeasure; let his people be silent, reverence, hope, pray, and wait for him, who will arise and have mercy on them, and destroy their enemies; who will make it to be well with the righteous, and again will make it ill with the wicked; who will fully and satisfactorily solve the doubts and unfold the riddles of his own providence.

CHAP. III.

Habakkuk's prayer, 1, 2. *He describeth God's majesty, and wonders wrought in his people's behalf,* 3—16. *He professeth his unshaken trust in God,* 17—19.

A PRAYER of Habakkuk the prophet [a]‖upon Shigionoth.

[a] Ps. 7. title. ‖ Or, according to variable songs, or, tunes, called in Hebrew, Shigionoth.

A prayer: the prophet required the earth should be silent before God, and now gives them example; he waits on and prays to God in his holy temple: some say it is a prayer of intercession, and that the word carrieth it so. *Habakkuk the prophet:* see chap. i. 1. *Shigionoth;* a musical note, say some, and such note as the Jews have no certain knowledge of. Others say *Shigionoth* is ignorances, which the prophet doth confess, and sueth for the pardon of; both he and the people had erred, were offended at the darkness of Divine providences, and needed pardon as well as instruction: or it may be a prayer on occasion of the many and great changes Providence wrought in the affairs of the world and the church.

2 O LORD, I have heard †thy speech, *and* was afraid: O LORD, ‖[b]revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.

† Heb. *thy report, or, thy hearing.* ‖ Or, *pre serve alive.* [b] Ps. 85. 6.

I have heard; received answer to the inquiry made chap. i. 13—17, whether by voice from heaven, or by inward illumination or irradiation of the mind, or any other way of impression from the prophetic Spirit, needs not be inquired. *Thy speech;* the report or declaration God made to him concerning the future corrections of his own people, and the devastations Babylon would make among them; and next, the destruction which should fall upon the Babylonians by the Medes and Persians, which is summarily set down, chap. ii. *Was afraid;* trembled at the apprehension of these sad things, which both we and they were to suffer; he saw them as certain and grievous. *Revive;* not only keep alive, but somewhat refresh, renew, give some new strength to thy church and people, who wait for thee. *Thy work;* thy church, called, Isa. xlv. 11, as here, God's work, in an eminent manner, above other people; so the apostle, *We are his workmanship,* Eph. ii. 10: or else by work may be meant, the returning of the captivity, and restoring them to their own land, which was the great thing God did promise to do for them; and the prophet prays for some kindness from the Lord, that may be a revival of the hope, assurance, and joy of it. *In the midst of the years:* it is not needful we report the different account of these years, and the precise midst of them assigned by some; perhaps it may point to that time when Evil-merodach exalted Jehoiachin out of prison, which, 2 Kings xxv. 27, was in the 37th year of their captivity; but I rather think it is more vulgarly to be taken for any time within the term of the sad and troublesome days which would last seventy years. *Make known:* it is an affectionate request, and (as such often are) somewhat abrupt; make known either thy truth, or wisdom, or power, or compassion, or all; make it known that thou art our God, and we thy people, that thou still hast a care of us: or what next follows makes the sense full. *In wrath,* whilst thy just displeasure burns against us for our sins, *remember mercy;* make it appear thou hast not forgotten to be gracious, let thy people see thou rememberest mercy towards them.

3 God came from ‖Teman, [c]and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.

‖ Or, *the south.* [c] Deut. 33. 2. Judg. 5. 4. Ps. 68. 7.

God, the God of our fathers, our God, *came;* appeared, discovered himself, for that is his coming, who, since he fills all places at all times, cannot be said to come by any change of place. *Teman;* either appellatively, the south, or else as a proper name of a mountain or country, so called from Teman, son of Eliphaz, and grandson of Esau. It is also called Seir, or is one particular hill among those many which make up Mount Seir. It was not far from Mount Sinai, where the law was given, and the prophet hath re-

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spect to that Deut. xxxiii. 2, where God appeared in a manner equally glorious and terrible, *The Holy One* of Israel. *Mount Paran;* which was a name to wilderness, plains, and a mountain, of which the prophet here speaketh, and in Deut. xxxiii. 2 it is said God shined thence. This the prophet mentions as a support of his faith, as an encouragement to others, as a motive why God should renew his work among them, since he so gloriously appeared among their fathers, and made a covenant with them. *Selah:* to the argument he addeth this to awaken us to attention. *His glory;* lightnings and thunders, and fire and smoke, tokens of the power, majesty, and greatness of God, at the sight whereof Moses himself trembled. *Covered,* overspread, intercepted, and obscured, *the heavens;* that part of the visible heavens under which Israel then encamped. *The earth,* that part of the earth where this was done, *was full of his praise;* of works which deserved then, and still do deserve, to be had in remembrance, with praise to God who did them.

4 And *his* brightness was as the light; he had ‖horns *coming* out of his hand: and there *was* the hiding of his power.

‖ Or, *bright beams out of his side.*

His brightness, that lustre in which God appeared, that unparalleled splendour which shined from him, *was as the light;* pure, clear as the sun, but much more dazzling and overcoming. *Horns:* some read it beams or rays of light, and so the Hebrew will bear, and thus it is plain. *Out of his hand:* our God is all glory and light; Moses's face shined; the face, yea hands, of our God shine with glorious light; he dwelleth in light. *There;* either in that place where he thus appeared, or in that light wherewith he appeared. *Was the hiding of his power:* one would think his brightness should have discovered, not hid his power; it did both, it discovered much of it, but hid much more; it was light inaccessible, and therefore a hiding light. *Power;* strength or might: by what was there done it did evidently appear, God, who was there, could do much more, but it could not appear how much he could do.

5 [d]Before him went the pestilence, and ‖[e]burning coals went forth at his feet.

[d] Nah. i. 3.
‖ Or, *burning diseases,* Deut. 32. 24.
[e] Ps. 18. 8.

Before him: when God was leading the Israelites out of Egypt into Canaan, he made the pestilence to go before him, so preparing room for his people. *The pestilence,* which wasted the inhabitants of Canaan, swept them out. *Burning coals;* burning fevers, and other distempers of fiery and destructive nature, which destroyed the accursed nations. ‖*Vent forth;* as sent, and observing the way he directed. *At his feet;* kept even pace, or waited on him, were his immediate forerunners. All this mentioned as arguments to prevail for somewhat like these for Israel, and against Israel's enemies. O God, revive some such work amidst us.

6 He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; [f]and the [g]everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways *are* everlasting.

[f] Nah. 1. 5.
[g] Gen. 49. 26.

He stood; gave his presence with Joshua and others, as one that stood by while the work was done. *Measured:* he divided to them their inheritance, and did this without toil or difficulty, his very presence with his people was enough to make it known what he allotted to them. *The earth;* the Promised Land. *He beheld;* looked with a frowning countenance, with anger in his eye. *Drove asunder;* cast them out, or caused them to flee, as many did out of that country; his eye did this, for he looked on them and did this. *The nations;* the cursed nations. *The everlasting mountains were scattered;* either literally understood, as Nah. i. 5, and may relate to that the psalmist minds, Psal. cxiv. 4, 6, when the whole mount, all the mountainous parts of Sinai, tremble, Exod. xix. 18, &c.; or figuratively, the state of these nations, seeming as immovable as mountains, yet soon shook and dissolved, before the rebuke of the Lord. *The perpetual hills did bow;* an elegant immutation of the phrase, to illustrate and confirm the same thing. *His ways are everlasting;* the wisdom, goodness, justice, holiness, faithfulness, and power of God, which he showeth in the methods of his governing his church and people, are everlasting, they are the same, and where the same circumstances concur the same effects of his power may be hoped for. So the prophet pursueth the argument; they are everlasting loving-kindnesses with which he embraceth his church.

7 I saw the tents of ‖Cushan ‖in affliction: *and* the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.

‖ Or, *Ethiopia.*
‖ Or, *under affliction, or, vanity.*

I saw; not with the eye, but with his mind and understanding, in reading the history of Israel's travels. *The tents,* for the people that dwelt in them. *Of Cushan;* some say of Cushan-rishathaim, in Othniel's time, and under his victories over them; but I rather think it is meant of the Ethiopians, on the confines of Arabia, that land of Cush, near whose borders Israel's march through and encampings in the wilderness had very often lain. *In affliction;* in fear and pain, lest that mighty people, under the conduct of their general, (famed for miracles,) should, as a violent storm, fall on them and despoil them. *The curtains,* for those that dwell within them; these people dwelt in tents, and these made up on the sides with curtains. *The land;* people of the land. *Midian;* a people sprung from one of Abraham's sons by Keturah, who gave his name Midian to the land, as well as to the people. *Did tremble;* were sore afraid of the arms of Israel, which at last, by God's express direction, were employed against Midian, and cut off five kings, and destroyed the country. These terrible things our God, whose ways are everlasting, hath done to carry our fathers from Egypt to Canaan: let him, who is our God, still revive his work, &c.

8 Was the LORD displeased against the rivers? *was* thine anger against the rivers? *was* thy wrath against the sea, [h]that thou didst ride upon thine horses *and* ‖thy chariots of salvation?

[h] Deut. 33. 26, 27. Ps. 68. 4. & 104. 3. ver. 15.
‖ Or, *thy chariots were salvation.*

The prophet recalls to memory the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea and Jordan, when God divided them to make a passage for his people, when by a miracle he made the devouring element to be a safeguard to his people, when it was not displeasure against the sea or the river, but favour to Israel, that moved him to do this. The prophet repeats the question, to impress the mind of the captive Jews with deeper apprehensions of the mercy of their God. *The rivers:* see Nah. i. 4. *The sea;* the Red Sea. *Didst ride,* as a general at the head of his army, leading them forward on some great exploit. *Upon thine horses;* alluding to the manner of men, with whom horses are of greatest, strongest, and stateliest preparations against an enemy; but these were not designed against the sea as against an enemy. *Thy chariots of salvation:* but with these horses are joined (for the decorum of the figure) chariots, that are chariots of salvation for his people: cheer up then, the Lord hath the same love and power still.

9 Thy bow was made quite naked, *according* to the oaths of the tribes, *even thy* word. Selah. ‖[i]Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.

‖ Or, *Thou didst cleave the rivers of the earth.*
[i] Ps. 78. 15, 16. & 105. 41.

Thy bow; one part of armour put for the whole; or else the Lord here is represented as armed, in readiness to smite through all enemies, having his bow in his hand. *Was made quite naked;* the case taken off, that when it was to be used there might be no delay. *According to the oaths of the tribes;* in pursuance of his oath made to our fathers: he promised, and confirmed the promise by oath, that he would drive out the Canaanites, and this oath is here called *oaths,* because repeated and renewed at several times; and it is *oaths of,* i. e. to, *the tribes,* to raise their hope in their present low condition: not Abraham here mentioned, lest they should be upbraided with degenerating and losing the right to the promises; but it is *tribes,* the right is in them. *Even thy word* of promise. *Selah;* note it well. *Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers:* when they were to march through a dry and thirsty land where no water was, how should they subsist? What good to be defended from perishing by the sword of an enemy, and be left to perish for want of refreshing waters? This then is added to complete the mercy; our God made rivers in the desert for them, and satisfied them with streams out of the flinty rock

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k Ex. 19. 16, 18. Judg. 5. 4, 5. Ps. 68. 8. & 77. 18. & 114. 4. l Ex. 14. 22. Josh. 3. 16.

10 k The mountains saw thee, *and* they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, *and* l lifted up his hands on high.

The mountains; literally taken, it is an elegant hyperbole, expressing to us the glorious effects of God's power and presence; and thus Sinai and the contiguous hills, the whole mount, Exod. xix. 18, are intended: or if you take it figuratively, these are kings and states, whose hieroglyphics in Scripture are mountains. *Saw;* were sensible of, showed they were sensible of his approach and presence. *Trembled;* were grieved; so it will well suit to mountains metaphorically taken, it was grief to the kings and states to see God own, conduct, and prosper Israel, Numb. xxii. 3; Josh. ii. 9—11: or *trembled*, i. e. were shaken as with an earthquake, Exod. xix. 18; Psal. lxviii. 8; cxiv. 4, 6; so it suits the letter of the text. *The overflowing;* the inundation, which at that season was wont to be very great, the mighty floods on Jordan. *Passed by;* passed away, i. e. at the word of God the waters below flowed and ran away from those above, which stood on a heap, to make a path for Israel. *The deep;* either the deep channel in which Jordan flowed, the very bottom of the river, appeared; or *the deep*, i. e. the Red Sea. *Uttered his voice;* with dreadful roaring, like a mighty voice, parted its waters; divided, but with great and terrible noise, in this unusual commotion. *Lifted up his hands;* testified its obedience to the command of God, as by lifting up the hand one doth at distance signify his ready compliance with the command, or direction: or *hands*, i. e. sides; so when the upper waters stood on a heap, both in Jordan and the Red Sea, they appeared as with sides or flankers unto the Israelites. *On high;* like a mountain, visible and conspicuous to all.

m Josh. 10. 12, 13. ‖ Or, *thine arrows walked in the light.* n Josh. 10. 11. Ps. 18. 14. & 77. 17, 18.

11 m The sun *and* moon stood still in their habitation: ‖ at the light of thine n arrows they went, *and* at the shining of thy glittering spear.

The sun and moon stood still: though the sun rejoice as a giant to run his race, and had constantly come out of his chamber to run it about two thousand five hundred years past, yet now he stops his course, and with his stay puts stop to the motion of moon and stars, at the command of God's minister and Israel's captain, Josh. x. 12, 13. *Habitation;* so the psalmist, Psal. xix. 4, speaks of a pavilion or tabernacle pitched for the sun, where at Joshua's word, seconded with the word of Joshua's and Israel's God, he makes a halt as it were, stands at the door of his tabernacle to behold and forward the strange work, the miraculous overthrow of the five conspiring kings. *At the light of thine arrows they went:* as we read the words they seem somewhat obscure and perplexed, yet very intelligible in this paraphrase: *at the light*, according to the light which thine arrows gave by their glittering heads, polished shafts, and bright feathers; in their flight thine arrows, O God, for these were the arrows of Israel and thine arrows too, as the sword of Gideon was the sword of the Lord. *They*, i. e. sun and moon, *went*, directed their course, and took their way compliant with the flights of these arrows, not hastening to the place of their going down whilst Israel had arrows to shoot, or enemies that day to discomfit, whilst they were to lift up a spear against any enemy that day. The marginal reading of these words is much plainer: *thine arrows walked in the light*, (which was miraculously continued,) and thy spears walked in the brightness of the lightning (as I venture for once to read the words from the Hebrew); so dreadful was that day to the enemy, so joyful to Israel. O let some such day arise on captive Jews, revive thy works of old: so the prophet prays.

o Jer. 51. 33. Amos 1. 3. Mic. 4. 13.

12 Thou didst march through the land in indignation, o thou didst thresh the heathen in anger.

Thou, our God, *didst march*, as the victorious Conqueror leading still thine armies, the tribes of Israel, *through the land* of Canaan, to subdue the remainders of thine enemies and theirs, and to give thine Israel possession of the Promised Land. *In indignation* against them for their sins. *Thou didst thresh*, break to pieces, *the heathen*, the nations devoted to destruction; these were cut in pieces by the sword of Israel.

p Josh. 10. 24. & 11. 8. 12. Ps. 68. 21. † Heb. making naked.

13 Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, *even* for salvation with thine anointed; p thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, † by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah.

Thou wentest forth: pursuant of his metaphor, the prophet speaks of God as marching on before his people; or it may refer to the ark, a token of God's presence before the people. *For the salvation;* to complete the salvation begun in bringing them out of Egypt, and carrying them through the wilderness, and to be finished in settling them in Canaan. *Of thy people;* thy chosen people, the tribes of thine inheritance. *Even for salvation:* it is repeated for confirmation, and to affect us with the greatness of the mercy. *With thine anointed;* or, for thine anointed, i. e. all Israel; or under the conduct of thine anointed, Joshua, type of the Messiah, by whose hand all these great things were done. *Thou woundedst the head;* gavest a deadly wound to the princes and kings of Canaan, enemies to Israel, who were cut off, and their families utterly destroyed. *Out of the house;* royal palaces, or ancient dwellings, and settled habitations; of which slaughter of Canaanitish kings, see Psal. cxxxvi. 17—20. *Of the wicked;* the courts of these kings were houses of greatest wickednesses, for which they were destroyed. *By discovering the foundation unto the neck:* razing the foundations of their power, and destroying all from foot to head. *Selah:* all which is to be heeded, and well minded.

† Heb. were tempestuous.

14 Thou didst strike through with his staves the head of his villages: they † came out as a whirlwind to scatter me: their rejoicing *was* as to devour the poor secretly.

Thou, O God, *didst strike through with his staves;* either meant of the staves or arms of the Canaanitish kings which they lifted up against Israel, thereby provoking Israel to fight, in which being overcome, they perished by their own arms taken from them; or it may be meant of the weapons of Joshua and Israel, called staves, for that they were arrows and spears, which are armed staves: or it might be translated tribes; so with the tribes of Israel, the tribes of God's anointed, or by them, were these Canaanites destroyed. *The head of his villages;* all the cities, and all the unwalled towns; for so Israel destroyed the daughters with the mothers, i. e. the villages with the cities. *They;* the inhabitants of Canaan, but particularly the five kings, ver. 11; of whose conspiracy you read Josh. x., which see. *Came out as a whirlwind;* with violence invading every side; a tempest made up of contrary winds and exhalations, moving as violently as irregularly. *To scatter;* to disperse and drive away from the earth. *Their rejoicing was as to devour;* the joy they took was such as is the joy of men who take the spoil of enemies, and come to feast, not fight; they dreamed of nothing else but eating up God's people as they would eat bread. *The poor;* helpless and friendless as they seemed to be, poor Israel. *Secretly;* either by secret conspiracy, or by secret execution of the plot they laid against Israel.

q ver. 8. Ps. 77. 19. ‖ Or, *mud.*

15 q Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses, *through* the ‖ heap of great waters.

Thou, O God, or thou, O Israel, notwithstanding all plots and opposition, *didst walk;* heldest on thy way, and walkedst from thy entering on the east of the land to the west thereof; from Beth-el, Jordan, and Jericho on the east, where they entered the land that lay within Jordan. *Through*, rather to, (as Junius, Tremellius, and Grotius,) *the sea*, the most western parts of all the land God gave; they took possession from east to west, to the great sea, the western sea, the mightiest sea the Jews of that time knew, called here by way of eminency *the heap of great waters;* called *the great sea*, Ezek. xlvii. 10, 15, 19, 20, as Josh. ix. 1. So was fulfilled what was promised, and they took pos-

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session of that was estated on them, Josh. i. 3, 4. I rather refer this 15th verse in this manner, than, with most interpreters, to the Red Sea, which is to me a repetition unseemly for so short and elegant an enumeration of God's wonderful deliverances and blessings to Israel, from their leaving Egypt to their settling in Canaan.

r Ps. 119. 120. Jer. 23. 9

16 When I heard, [r]my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will ‖ invade them with his troops.

‖ Or, *cut them in pieces.*

When I heard, what dreadful desolations God threatened against Israel, chap. i. 5—11. for of those he now speaketh and meditateth, having finished his elegant description of God's wonderful works of mercy toward Israel of old, and left them as a foundation of comfort and hope. *My belly*, or heart, or bowels, or inward parts, Prov. xx. 27, *trembled*; another effect and sign of surprising fears and astonishment. *At the voice*; at the mere report. *Rottenness entered into my bones*; a consumption and decay of all my strength; a languishing of my spirits, and a declining of my vigour: a very usual effect of great fears. *I trembled in myself*; I was all shaken, as with an earthquake, no part was free or unshaken. *That I might rest in the day of trouble*; these fears awakened my remembrance of that God, and those wonders which I have recounted; these fears have occasioned my search into this mystery of Providence, that, understanding it I might, as I do, betake myself to God, and his covenanted mercies, that I may rest in him, who will make it go well with the righteous, even with those righteous who shall live to see and feel the troubles of those days. *When he cometh up*; the king of Babylon, with all his bitter and cruel nations, bent on violence and rapine. *Unto the people*; against the Jews, my people, saith the prophet. *He will invade them* with mighty force, and cut in pieces, make most bloody work among them. *With his troops*; with numerous armies, and spoil in troops, where what one leaves another will take; where none escape the fury of some or other in the troops: see this accomplished 2 Kings xxv.

17 ¶ Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* fruit *be* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall †fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and *there shall be* no herd in the stalls:

† Heb. *lie.*

To war foreseen the prophet supposeth famine, and describeth the most grievous, as indeed it fell out. *Although the fig tree*, which was in that country a very considerable part of their provision to live upon, *shall not blossom*; not give the least sign of bringing forth fruit. *Neither shall fruit be in the vines*, which were also the riches and provision of those countries. *The labour of the olive*; either labour bestowed upon the olive, or the fruit which the olive brings forth, called here *labour* by an allusion to our labour. *Shall fail*; disappoint the expectation of both dresser and eater. *The fields*, ploughed and sown, *shall yield no meat*; corn for bread. *The flock* of sheep, kept out in the field, *shall be cut off*, either by wolf, murrain, or by the wasting Babylonians, *from the fold*; where they were wont to be safe, now they are in greatest danger, and that because they may be swept away all at once. *No herd in the stall*; greater cattle kept in the stall for labour, or for feeding.

18 [s]Yet I will [t]rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

s Job 13. 15. t Is. 41. 16. & 61. 10.

As for my part, *I will*, saith the prophet, *rejoice*; look for joy, expect matter of rejoicing *in the Lord*, who will preserve a remnant and redeem them, who will rebuke Babylon, and will very strangely destroy it. *I will joy in the God of my salvation*: the prophet renews his own faith, and confirms ours. All shall end in salvation to him and believers.

19 The LORD God *is* [u]my strength, and he will make my feet like [x]hinds' *feet*, and he will make me to [y]walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my † stringed instruments.

u Ps. 27. 1. x 2 Sam. 22. 34. Ps. 18. 33. y Deut. 32. 13. & 33. 29. † Heb. *neginoth*, Ps. 4. title.

The prophet had in his own, and in the name of all the godly, made a full profession of his faith, and resolution to behave himself with joy in midst of troubles, ver. 17, 18; now he gives us account on what ground he speaks so, it is not in his own strength he can do it, but it is because the Lord God is his strength. *He will make my feet like hinds' feet*; that I may escape to God my refuge to that safe mountain of salvation, that I may at last flee from Babylon to Judea, to Jerusalem. *He will make me to walk upon mine high places*; to my native country, to my beloved city, and thy more beloved temple, which were built like high places to that munition of rocks, &c., Deut. xxxii. 13: Isa. xxxiii. 16. My God will return my captivity, and when I am set at liberty, as I shall be, by Cyrus, my God will be my strength, that, as a hind let loose, I may hasten to the mountains of Israel. *To the chief singer*; let this be kept on record for public use, this be a pattern for others as well as it is a declaration of my faith, hope, desire, and prayer.

ZEPHANIAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS prophet, by a somewhat larger account of his pedigree, gives us ground to guess of what family he might be; the last named may possibly be the good king Hezekiah; the names are the same in chap. i. 1, and 2 Kings xviii. 1. By his freedom with princes and the king's children, reproving them and threatening them, chap. i. 8, with the loftiness of his style, may fairly be admitted a conjecture at somewhat more than ordinary in his descent: but whether of royal blood or not, he came with a Divine warrant, and with a prophetic spirit, sharply reproving all ranks of men for their sins; of which in particular idolatry, apostacy, and neglect to inquire for the true religion and the true God, and the sinful fashions of great ones in their habits, and the violent oppression of the great ones, are named, chap. i. 5, 6, 8, 9; which sins, and many others which then abounded amongst them, are threatened with severe punishments, and with utter desolation, which had already befallen some of the neighbouring nations named; and proposed as examples to the Jews, to move them to consider, repent, amend, and prevent the threatened judgments, which, unless they repent, will come suddenly. The prophet therefore affectionately exhorteth and presseth them to repentance, chap. ii., by examples of those he mentioneth, whose impenitence, added to their sins, ruined them. By promises, and encouragements to expect mercy upon their hearkening to his counsel, he foretells the coming of the Messiah, the calling of the Gentiles, the preserving of a remnant of them amidst all the troubles and wasting judgments that should follow them, and a return out of captivity, with the re-establishing them as the church and people of God; which promise closeth his prophecy, and for which he calls on them to be thankful to and rejoice in their God, who in the midst of their sins, and his wrath for those sins, yet remembered his own mercies and covenant for them

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CHAP. I.

The time when Zephaniah prophesied, 1. *God's severe judgment against Judah for divers sins,* 2—18.

B. C. cir. 630. THE word of the LORD which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

The word; the declaration of the purpose of God, either spoken audibly, or clearly manifested by signs. *Of the Lord,* God of Israel; here is the Divine authority of this prophecy with which the prophet's word is seconded. *Which came:* the precise manner how it came we need not inquire into; Zephaniah did not hammer out of his own brain any such news, he received from God what he communicated to them. *Zephaniah;* by derivation of the name, it is one *hidden of the Lord,* whom God doth hide, or God's secretary; or else one that is God's watchman, whom God hath set over the house of Judah, as Ezekiel is said to be, chap. iii. 17. *The son of Cushi, &c.:* his pedigree here gives us no certainty what his progenitors were, whether prophets, or only eminent known men; or whether he were, as some think him, the great-grandson of Hezekiah, the name being the same. *In the days of Josiah;* before the captivity; he was then contemporary with Jeremiah and Ezekiel. prophesied before the captivity, and foretells much like what Jeremiah or Ezekiel did. *Amon;* whose reign was very full of impiety and idolatry, and hastened the captivity upon Judah. This Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which Manasseh had made, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 22.

2 †I will utterly consume all *things* from off †the land, saith the LORD.

† Heb. *By taking away I will make an end.* † Heb. *the face of the land.*

I will utterly consume, Heb. *Gathering up I will gather up,* or take up, intimating particularly the manner how all should be consumed, i. e. swept away as a prey to the Babylonians. *From off the land* of Judah, the two tribes. *Saith the Lord:* this is added to confirm and assure the truth hereof.

a Hos. 4. 3. 3 [a]I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and b Ezek. 7. 19. & 14. 5, 4. 7. Matt. 13. 41. ‖ Or, *idols.* the fishes of the sea, and [b]the ‖stumbling-blocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.

The former verse denounced the future desolation in general terms. This verse specifieth what desolation in particular God would bring upon the land. *I will consume man and beast;* man shall be consumed for his own sin, and the beasts consumed for man's sake; men by the pestilence and famine, the beasts by murrain, and devoured by multitudes of hungry soldiers, that shall make greater havoc than any murrain ordinarily doth. *The fowls of the heaven;* either by some unknown disease among them, or else by a distaste at the stench of putrefying carcasses, they fled away, so that none, or very few, appeared, insomuch that it looked as if all were consumed. *The fishes of the sea:* by sea, some understand ponds, lakes, or smaller seas, such as that of Gennesareth and Tiberias, the waters whereof might be made noisome to the fish by the streams of blood and carcasses which might possibly be cast into them; or God might destroy the fishes by some consuming disease too. He hath ways to do it, who hath once said he will do it. *The stumbling-blocks;* the idols. *The wicked;* the idolatrous priests, and others who worshipped them. *I will cut off man,* all shall disappear, *from off the land* of Judah.

4 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and [c]I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, *and* the name of [d]the Chemarims with the priests;

c Fulfilled, cir. 624. 2 Kings 23. 4, 5. d Hos. 10. 5.

I will also, Heb. *And I will,* or, *And I have;* so prophets speak of what shall most certainly be as if already done. *Stretch out mine hand:* this seems to intimate some immediate stroke from God, he speaks so in Jer. li. 25; Ezek. vi. 14; xiv. 13; xxv. 13. *Upon Judah;* Benjamin is included, though Judah only is named. *Upon all the inhabitants;* it will be universal destruction of them, either by sword, famine, pestilence, or captivity; both citizens and sojourners, all shall perish, or suffer by some or other of these ways. *Of Jerusalem:* though it was the holy city, beautified with the temple of God, yet all should not secure it, Jer. vii. 4; Ezek. ix. 6. *I will cut off the remnant of Baal;* whatsoever remains of the idolatry of Baal, both the idols, their temples, sacrifices, priests, ornaments, and worshippers: whether this refers to times after the reformation by Josiah, or to times before it, needs not scrupulously be inquired into. *From this place:* this idolatry had filled Jerusalem itself. *The names;* both the persons, and the memory of them also, for names includeth both. *The Chemarims;* either called so from their black garments they went in, or from their swarthy colour occasioned by the black smoke of incense, which they were almost continually in; or door-keepers, sextons of Baal; or voluntary servants; or such as the popish monks, some ministers of Baal distinct from the priests. *The priests;* either the priests of Baal, or the apostates of Aaron's house, who (though priests by birth and office) should have been stedfast to, but had fallen from the true God and his worship to Baal and his worship.

5 And them [e]that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; [f]and them that worship *and* [g]that swear ‖ by the LORD, and that swear [h]by Malcham; e 2 Kings 23. 12. Jer. 19. 13. f 1 Kings 18. 21. 2 Kings 17. 33, 41. g Is. 48. 1. Hos. 4. 15. ‖ Or, *to the LORD.* h Josh. 22. 7. 1 Kin. 11. 33.

And them that worship; those among the people that adhered to this idolatry. *The host of heaven;* the sun, moon, and stars, frequently in the Scripture called the host of heaven. *Upon the house-tops;* openly, as the manner of those idolaters was, either because they thought those deities they imagined to dwell in the body of those stars better saw them, or were better pleased thus, or because these places were nearer heaven. On the flat roofs of their houses they were used to have their altars and worship. *That swear by the Lord,* or, to the Lord, (as the Hebrew bears,) *and by Malcham;* persons that mix idol worship and the worship of the true God; that devote themselves to God and Baal, or Malcham; called Milcom, and Molech, and Moloch, Amos v. 26; probably it was their chief idol, fancied to be king of gods and men.

6 And [i]them that are turned back from the LORD; and *those* that [k]have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him. i Is. 1. 4. Jer. 2. 13, 17. & 15. 6. k Hos. 7. 7.

Them that are turned back; apostates, who have forsaken the Lord and his worship, or that are turned atheists, or that in matter of religion have taken up not what is purest and truest, but what is nearest and most in fashion. *That have not sought the Lord;* sluggishly neglected to examine pretended religions, according to the law, which they might and ought to have done, and who have embraced a false religion instead of the true. *Nor inquired for him:* though the prophets have preached against this apostacy, and called the priests and people to forsake the idols, and inquire after God, yet they would not inquire; these also are here doomed to destruction.

7 [l]Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: [m]for the day of the LORD *is* at hand: for [n]the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath †bid his guests. l Hab. 2. 20. Zech. 2. 13. m Is. 13. 6. n Is. 34. 6. Jer. 46. 10. Ezek. 39. 17. Rev. 19. 17. † Heb. *sanctified,* or, *prepared.*

Hold thy peace; thou that murmurest in discontent, or disputest out of frowardness against God, his worship, and his government, that thinkest of him but little better than of Baal or Malcham, cease all thy quarrels and disputes, stand in awe. *At the presence of the Lord God;* who is almighty, omniscient, who ruleth and will avenge. *The day of the Lord;* a day of vengeance from the Lord. *The Lord hath prepared a sacrifice;* the wicked among the Jews, whom he will sacrifice by the Chaldean's sword. *He hath bid his guests;* summoned in beasts of the field and fowls of the air, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of slain Jews, whom the Babylonians slew.

8 And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD's sacrifice, that I will †pun- † Heb. *visit upon.*

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o Jer. 39. 6. ish °the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

It shall come to pass; it shall most certainly be fulfilled, what I threaten I will most surely execute. *In the day of the Lord's sacrifice;* of slaughter to be made by the Babylonians, called here a day of sacrifice, that we might see clearly the just and exemplary proceedings of God; these people sinned in sacrificing to strange gods, and God will punish them, making them a strange sacrifice to his anger. *I will punish;* the punishment shall appear to be from my hand, as he threatens often by Ezekiel. *The princes;* nobles about the court, the great ones, who dreamed of shifting better than others, but fell with the first, 2 Kings xxv. 19—21. *The king's children;* sons and grandchildren too of good Josiah. Jehoahaz died a captive in Egypt, 2 Kings xxiii. 34. Jehoiakim died on the way, or in Babylon, buried with the burial of an ass, Jer. xxii. 18, 19. Jeconiah, carried to Babylon, sped somewhat, yet but little, better; there he died a captive. As for Zedekiah and his children, these were slain before his face, then his eyes put out, and he led into miserable captivity. *Clothed with strange apparel;* some say the strange apparel of idolatrous priests; others say, and more likely, the garb of foreigners, imitated by the wanton Jews.

9 In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

In the same day; not to be taken for a single day, but more largely for that time wherein God would visit and punish. *That leap on the threshold;* insolently, and with rage, break open the doors of such whose goods they seize, upon pretence of forfeitures or fines; a sin that Ezekiel both taxed and threatened, chap. viii. 17; xii. 19; xlv. 9. *Their masters;* either the oppressing kings, whose officers these were, or public officers and judges, whose servants thus did (to enrich their masters) spoil the poor and the oppressed. *With violence;* goods taken away by force, and kept as much against right, as at first taken away without right; *and deceit,* by false accusations, and by suborned evidence for proof, and by perjuries.

10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, *that there shall be* the
p 2 Chron. 33. 14. noise of a cry from ᵖthe fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills.

In that day: see ver. 9. *Saith the Lord;* to assure us of the certainty of the thing. *The noise,* Heb. *the voice, of a cry,* i. e. a very great outcry and lamentation, *from the fish-gate,* which was on the west side of Jerusalem, through which gate they brought in fish from Joppa and other sea towns on the west sea, or great sea, now the Mediterranean, at which gate the Babylonians are said first to enter into the city when they took it: thus it will be a prediction at what gate the enemy should enter. *An howling,* the great, horrid, and confused lamentations of desperate and undone multitudes, crying out and bitterly bemoaning themselves, *from the second* gate, which was in the second wall of Jerusalem, which on that side was fortified with three walls; or second part of the city, or the middle city, for it was divided into three parts. Others read *second* as a proper name, and make it the school, college, or university, and so render, the howling of the university, i. e. of students either slaughtered or captivated by Chaldeans. *A great crashing;* breaking in pieces, or the noise of what is broken into shivers; possibly the noise of doors, windows, closets, and chests broken up, or burning, in the houses of nobles, likened here to *hills;* or, more literally, *in Gareb* and *Goath,* on which the fleeing Jews, pursued by the Chaldees, lost what they carried with them, and their life too: so all places were full of miserable slaughter and outcries.

q Jam. 5. 1. 11 ᵠHowl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off.

Howl, cry aloud, and bitterly, *ye inhabitants of Maktesh:* some read it appellatively: the mortar in which of old, before the corn-mill was known and used, they did pound and beat their corn for bread; they also pounded spices. Others say it is the lower town, or valley of Cedron in Jerusalem, a deep valley that surrounded the mountain of the temple, to which, fancied like a deep mortar, they gave the name Maktesh. *All the merchant people;* who were wont either to lodge in this place when they came to trade, or, if Jewish merchants, dwelt there, which was much to the advantage of the place; but now, by the invasion of the land, and by the siege, all trade is cut off, and many merchants either slain or made slaves. *All they that bear silver,* that brought it with them to pay for what they bought up, and so enriched the inhabitants of this Maktesh, all that traded and paid ready money, *are cut off.* Others say the money-changers or bankers are here meant by them *that bear silver,* persons that furnished all sorts of people with silver for goods laid to pledge or bartered. *Are cut off,* i. e. shall be as surely as if it were already done.

12 And it shall come to pass at that time, *that* I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are
† Heb. *curdled,* or, *thickened.* r Jer. 48. 11. Amos 6. 1. s Ps. 94. 7. †ˢsettled on their lees: ʳthat say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.

At that time; it was *day,* ver. 10, which see. *I will search Jerusalem with candles:* God speaks after the manner of man, who searcheth dark places with candles in hand. God's omniscience seeth all things, and needs no help for discovery, but by this expression he foretells how fully he would both discover and punish. It is like enough this was literally fulfilled when the Chaldeans did search the vaults, and cellars, and sewers of Jerusalem for men or goods hidden in them. *Settled on their lees;* in allusion to liquors, which, not being poured out from vessel to vessel to refine them, grow thick and settled; so men that have known none or little changes settle in security, and fear no menaces. *Say in their heart;* entertain an opinion, or begin to flatter themselves into thoughts. *The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil;* no Providence to countenance the good, or to punish the bad; no God, or none that regardeth what is done on earth; or as they, Ezek. viii. 12, think God hath forsaken the earth. These atheists God will punish severely, as the sin well deserveth; they shall see it shall be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked.

13 Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but ᵗnot in-
t Deut. 28. 30, 39. Amos 5. 11. habit *them;* and they shall plant vineyards, but ᵘnot drink the wine thereof.
u Mic. 6. 15.

Therefore; as a punishment for other sins, so for this secure, atheistical denial of Providence; though they have denied, they shall feel, and confess, that the evil they suffer is both just, and from my hand too. *Their goods;* stores in their shops and warehouses, furniture in their chambers, and wardrobes. *A booty;* a prey divided among the Babylonish soldiers, invading, prevailing, wasting villages and cities. *Their houses a desolation;* that they may remember the curse threatened in the law, executed on them, and acknowledge that he who gave the law rules by it. *Build houses, but not inhabit them, &c.;* according to that Deut. xxviii. 30, 39.

14 ˣThe great day of the Lord *is* near, x Joel 2. 1, 11. *it is* near, and hasteth greatly, *even* the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

The great day; not the day of general judgment, but the day in which the great God will bring his great armies against Judah and Jerusalem, and do great things by those armies. *Of the Lord;* appointed, foretold, and now actually brought on them by the Lord. *It is near;* very near; it is doubled to show the nearness of it, and to assure us it is so. *And hasteth greatly;* your enemies' eagerness for the prey, your sins and security, and the Lord's justly provoked anger, hasten this day. *The voice;* it is within hearing, the sound of it is in mine ears, methinks you might hear it also. *The mighty man;* the valiant and stout-hearted among the Jews, they who should support others, shall be ready to sink themselves, and as much need a cordial

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themselves. *Shall cry there bitterly;* their courage broken, they shall cry out most vehemently, or like hopeless women.

[f] Is. 22. 5. Jer. 30. 7. Joel 2. 2, 11. Amos 5. 18. ver. 15.

15 [f]That day *is* a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

That day, great day, ver. 14, *is a day of wrath*, from the Chaldeans, and from the Lord, actively, upon the Jews, passively. *A day of trouble and distress:* here the prophet heapeth up words of much the same sense, to express the grievousness of the troubles of those times which shall suddenly come upon them; most distressing trouble, none knowing how to bear it, or where to hide from it. *Of wasteness and desolation;* most desolate wasteness in city, villages, and fields; every where the spoiling soldier shall lay waste, carrying away all he can, and destroying what he cannot carry away. *Of darkness and gloominess;* possibly it might be so as to the temper of the air, dark and gloomy, but figuratively I am sure it was so. *Of clouds and thick darkness;* either literally, from the heavens clouded over them, or (if it refer, as it may, to the day of sacking Jerusalem, and effects of it) darkness, gloominess, clouds, and thick darkness, arising from the smoke and fire of the city every where fired by the enemy; but metaphorically these speak the most unparalleled calamities.

[g] Jer. 4. 19.

16 A day of [g]the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.

The trumpet; God's trumpet calling the Chaldeans, the Chaldeans' trumpet also gathering together their troops. *Alarm*, threatening and affrighting, *against the fenced cities* of Judah. *The high towers;* stately palaces and strong munitions, fortified with high towers, built at the angles of walls, and therefore the Hebrew calls them high corners; it may mean also the great men, which, as corners well built are the strength and beauty of a wall, so they of a state, Judg. xx. 2; Zech. x. 4.

17 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall [a]walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and [b]their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh [c]as the dung.

[a] Deut. 28. 29. Is. 59. 10. [b] Ps. 79. 3. [c] Ps. 83. 10. Jer. 9. 22. & 16. 4.

I will bring distress; cast them into, and surround or besiege them with distress, calamities which shall greatly trouble and perplex. *Upon men;* the chiefest among them, the richest, and who think themselves safest; the mighty men, as ver. 10, *like blind men*, shall neither know what to do nor where to flee, neither be fit for counsel nor action. *Because they have sinned against the Lord;* all this for their great sins against the Lord; these men of note have been as much greater in sin as in state above others, and shall be as much deeper in distress. *Their blood shall be poured out as dust;* as freely, abundantly, and as contemptibly, as dust in the highway. *And their flesh as the dung;* shall be spread as dung on the face of the earth to fatten and improve it; their life shall be of no more value than dust, their honour no more regarded than dung, and they shall be so used after death.

[d] Prov. 11. 4. Ezek. 7. 19.

18 [d]Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be [e]devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for [f]he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

[e] ch. 3. 8. [f] ver. 2, 3.

Neither their silver nor their gold: sometimes these have purchased friends, and redeemed a life at the hand of greedy soldiers, who have spared on promise of money; but now it shall not be so, neither silver nor gold shall help. *Shall be able to deliver;* to pacify the enraged sultan of Babylon, who had been formerly appeased with presents and tribute money, but will no more. Nor shall his soldiers dare to spare or save any when they are charged to slay man, woman, and child, as in the taking of Jerusalem it is probable they were charged, Psal. cxxxvii. 7—9. *The Lord's wrath:* were it the wrath of man only, gifts might appease it; but it is the wrath of God, who is a righteous Judge, and receives not gifts. *Shall be devoured;* utterly ruined, its wealth carried away, its provisions eat up, its stores exhausted, and its stock (which should continue their provision) utterly destroyed, as ver. 2. *By the fire of his jealousy;* to which their sins provoked the Lord, which their sins enkindled, and now it burns that none can quench it; see Deut. xxviii. 15, to the end of the chapter; all which God will now make good against them. *For he shall make even a speedy riddance:* though he had with wonderful patience waited and forborne, now he would wait no longer, but with speedy executions fulfil his threats and accomplish his wrath; which he did within less than twenty years after this prophecy, as is most likely, on the accuratest computation we can make of the times of Zephaniah's prophesying and Nebuchadnezzar's taking the city.

CHAP. II.

An exhortation to repentance, 1—3. *The judgment of the Philistines*, 4—7. *of Moab and Ammon*, 8—11, *of Ethiopia*, 12, *and Assyria*, 13—15.

[a] Joel 2. 16. ‖ Or, not desirous.

[a]GATHER yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation ‖ not desired;

Gather yourselves together; call a solemn assembly, as Joel i. 14, proclaim a fast. Let all have notice given to meet on this work, and, being gathered together, search yourselves, your hearts and ways, and repent. *Gather together;* repeated to affect them the more, and to hasten them to it, and make them serious in it. *O nation* of the Jews, yet a people, yet my people, though next door almost to being no people. *Not desired;* neither desirous to return, nor desirable in your return; foolishly unwilling to return, and utterly unworthy to be received on your return: yet gather together, search your ways, and try what you may do for your safety.

2 Before the decree bring forth, *before* the day pass [b]as the chaff, before [c]the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger come upon you.

[b] Job 21. 18. Ps. 1. 4. Is. 17. 13. Hos. 13. 3. [c] 2 Kings 23. 26.

Before the decree, the word of the prophet which declares the purpose of God against this sinful people, *bring forth:* the degree is pregnant, nay, hath gone a great while, but is now like a woman near her full time, ready to bring forth: be you speedy in your repentance, lest your miseries break forth of the womb of Divine vengeance and destroy you. *Before the day*, the day of your calamities, Babylon's rage, and God's just displeasure, *pass as the chaff;* carry you away as the wind carrieth chaff away for the fire, while the good grain is gathered and preserved. *The fierce anger;* the heat of anger. It was jealousy like fire, chap. i. 18, and here it is the heat of that fire, intimating the greatness of the anger. *Come upon you;* as a storm from on high, with violence irresistible and destructive; and the warning is doubled to make them take it.

3 [d]Seek ye the LORD, [e]all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: [f]it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.

[d] Ps. 105. 4. Amos 5. 6. [e] Ps. 76. 9. [f] Joel 2. 14. Amos 5. 15. Jonah 3. 9.

Seek ye the Lord; turn to him with sound and true repentance, pray for pardon, engage in new obedience, inquire in the law what is your duty, and do it; fear, worship, depend on the Lord alone. *All ye meek;* ye humble ones, who have not hardened yourselves with the stubborn, proud, idolatrous hypocrites, but have trembled at the word of the Lord. *Of the earth;* of Judea, which is here spoken of, as chap. i. 2. *Which have wrought his judgment;* obeyed his precepts; so doth the Scripture express obedience to the law of God by doing judgment, Deut. iv. 5; Psal. cxix. 121. *Seek righteousness;* inquire and know the righteousness which God commandeth, which you ought to persist in, and continue ye in it. *Seek meekness;* carry it humbly towards God, and patiently under his corrections; so wait

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on the just and merciful God. *It may be:* this is sufficient to raise hope; if it be not sure, if it be hard, yet it is not impossible. *Ye shall be hid;* under the wing of Divine protecting Providence kept safe from, or in, these troubles, they shall be either averted or abated.

g Jer. 47. 4, 5. Ezek. 25. 15. Amos 1. 6, 7, 8. Zech. 9. 5, 6. h Jer. 6. 4. & 15. 8.

4 ¶ For [g]Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod [h]at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up.

For; it is time to seek some refuge, high time to seek it in God, for your neighbours, as well as you, shall be destroyed, there shall be no refuge for you among your neighbours. *Gaza;* a chief city of the Philistines, very strong by its situation, and by art fortified; a frontier toward Egypt, and not full three miles from the sea. *Shall be forsaken;* when the conquering army of the Chaldeans shall come against it, shall be forsaken either by the flight or captivity of the inhabitants. *Ashkelon;* another of the strong cities of the Philistines, which fell to the tribe of Dan, and was a maritime town. *A desolation;* utterly wasted, so the abstract doth imply. *They;* Babylonians: see Ezek. xxv. 15—17. *Shall drive* into captivity, cast them out of their own and force them into a strange land. *Ashdod;* a strong fortified city of Palestina, called in after-times Azotus. *At the noon-day;* it shall be taken by force at noon, or the citizens led away captive in the heat of the day, and under parching heats. *Ekron;* famous for its infamous idolatry, where Baalzebub was worshipped, the chief seat of devil-worship. *Shall be rooted up;* utterly extirpated, no more to spring up: see Jer. xlvii. 4, 5: it shall be as a tree pulled up by the roots; or maimed, as horses that are houghed, as Josh. xi. 9.

i Ezek. 25. 16.

5 Woe unto the inhabitants of [i]the sea coasts, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the LORD *is* against you; O k Josh. 13. 3. [k]Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.

Woe unto the inhabitants! now all the Philistines are threatened, whereas before he named only those four cities. *Of the sea-coasts;* the coasts of the great or western sea, now the Mediterranean, on which the Philistines of old did dwell. *The Cherethites,* or destroyers, men that were stout, but fierce, and perhaps terrible to neighbours and foreigners that had the hard hap to be forced on their coasts by violence of sea. They were great soldiers, and lived Switzer-like, guards to David, it may be to other kings also. *The word of the Lord;* his purpose, his threats too by his prophet. *Canaan;* that part that the Philistines did by force keep from the Jews. *I will even destroy thee:* though the Chaldeans be the men that shall destroy, yet the Lord will do it also; they his servants, he chief, in doing it. *There shall be no inhabitant;* no more cities, nor citizens to dwell therein.

6 And the sea coast shall be dwellings *and* cottages for shepherds, l and folds for flocks.

l See Is. 17. 2. ver. 14.

This confirms the former, tells us what shall be in those parts; instead of cities full of rich citizens, there shall be cottages for shepherds watching over their flocks.

m Is. 11. 11. Mic. 4. 7. & 5. 7, 8. Hag. 1. 12. & 2. 2. ver. 9. ‖ Or, where, &c. n Ex. 4. 31. Luke 1. 68. o Ps. 126. 1. Jer. 29. 14. ch. 3. 20.

7 And the coast shall be for [m]the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: ‖ for the LORD their God shall [n]visit them, and [o]turn away their captivity.

The coast, the sea-coast, the land of the Philistines, *shall be for the remnant,* either that escaped, as some did, or else survived the captivity, *of the house of Judah;* the two tribes, one named, both included. *They shall feed thereupon;* their flocks. *In the houses of Ashkelon,* in places where houses of Ashkelon formerly stood, *shall they lie down in the evening;* both shepherds and flocks too. *The Lord,* the everlasting Jehovah, *their God,* from their fathers by covenant, *shall visit them,* in mercy remembering his covenant with them, *and turn away their captivity,* or shall send to receive their prisoners or captives; or return their captivity, and by the command of Cyrus give them liberty of returning into their own country.

p Jer. 48. 27. Ezek. 25. 8. q Ezek. 25. 3, 6.

8 ¶ [p]I have heard the reproach of Moab, and [q]the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and [r]magnified *themselves* against their border.

r Jer. 49. 1.

I have heard: either the prophet for himself, or for the people, speaks this; or else, more likely, in the name of God, assures the Jews that God had heard, observed, resented, and was highly displeased with that he heard. *The reproach of Moab;* a people of near kin to the Jews, born of Lot's daughter, seated eastward of Canaan, upon the Dead Sea and Jordan, a powerful people, and as proud; whose pride broke out on all occasions against the Jews, as appears from first to last: Isa. xvi. 6, and Jer. xlviii. 29, 30, brand them as very proud. *The revilings of the children of Ammon;* a people as near as Moab to Jewish blood, and as bitter against them, Neh. iv. 2, 3, bitter scoffers and jeerers. *Whereby they have reproached my people;* either in the war, or at the taking of Jerusalem, or when the captive Jews were led by their borders into captivity: Ezek. xxv. 3 puts these all together. *Magnified themselves;* either boasting what they themselves were, or what they would have done, or what they will do against Israel, recovering their old pretended right and estate. *Against their border;* invading their frontiers, and spoiling them with insolence.

9 Therefore *as* I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely [s]Moab shall be as Sodom, and [t]the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, [u]*even* the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: [x]the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.

s Is. 15. Jer. 48. Ezek. 25. 9. Amos 2. 1. t Amos 1. 13 u Gen. 19. 25 Deut. 29. 23 Is. 13. 19. & 34. 13. Jer. 49. 18. & 50. 40. x ver. 7.

As I live; the most solemn oath, fit for none but God himself to use: see Ezek. xiv. 16. *Saith the Lord of hosts,* who have all things at my disposal, and can arm all creatures against these proud revilers. *The God of Israel,* who by covenant am Israel's God, and Israel is my people, in whose reproaches I am reproached. *Shall be as Sodom:* this is a proverbial speech in Scripture phrase to speak great destruction, as Isa. i. 9. Moab and Ammon were not destroyed by fire, as Sodom and Gomorrah; but the next words are an explication of these. *The breeding of nettles;* not cultivated, but run over with nettles, as if it were only to breed them. *And salt-pits;* a salt, dry, barren earth, fit only to dig salt out of. *A perpetual desolation;* never more to be manured and inhabited, or not for a long, a very long time. *The residue;* either the few left with Gedaliah, or the remnant that returned out of Babylon. *Shall spoil them;* provoked by the injuries of Moab and Ammon, shall take arms, overcome, and spoil them. *Shall possess them;* settle upon their lands, and dwell in those parts that are fit for habitation.

10 This shall they have [y]for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified *themselves* against the people of the LORD of hosts.

y Is. 16. 6. Jer. 48. 29.

This shall they have; this grievous ruin like Sodom's, this just retaliation; they insulted over Israel, Israel shall tread on them. *For their pride;* haughty mind and carriage: see ver. 8. *Reproached;* defamed, spoken lies and scandals against the Jews, lessening them. *Magnified themselves;* their persons and exploits. *Against the people of the Lord of hosts;* against the only people of the Lord of hosts, who suffered reproach with his people and in them, for Moabites and Ammonites, as others, boasted of their gods above the true God.

11 The LORD *will be* terrible unto them: for he will †famish all the gods of the earth; [z]and *men* shall worship him, every one from his place, *even* all [a]the isles of the heathen.

† Heb. make lean. z Mal. 1. 11. John 4. 21. a Gen. 10. 5.

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The Lord will be terrible; or, the Lord, who is to be feared, is against or above them, and will make it appear that he is terrible in his doings. *Unto them;* Moabites and Ammonites, and their gods, of whom they gloried. *He will famish;* starve; though now their altars are filled with sacrifices, and their bowls run over, as if they designed to make their gods fat; but they shall want their sacrifices and drink-offerings, these shall be few or quite cease, and their priests grow lean. There shall be a consumption among them all. *All the gods,* idols, heathen gods, *of the earth;* of those lands, Dagon, Chemosh, Molech, &c., that are gods no where else but on earth, and among the deceived; or *gods of the earth,* as sons of the earth, vile, spurious gods. *Men shall worship him;* men of that country whose gods are undone, or all men, shall know, own, and worship the God of Israel. *Every one from his place,* where he dwelleth, not only at Jerusalem, or in this mount, but every where. *All the isles;* either literally, as we now see it fulfilled, or as the Jews interpret isles to be transmarine places. So they wait for his law, as foretold Isa. xlii. 4. *Of the heathen;* of all nations in all parts of the world. This is eminently fulfilled by the prevailing of the gospel.

b Is. 18. 1. & 20. 4. Jer. 46. 9. Ezek. 30. 9. c Ps. 17. 13.

12 ¶ [b]Ye Ethiopians also, ye *shall be* slain by [c]my sword.

The prophet doth not speak of the African Ethiopians, south of Egypt, but of the Arabian Ethiopians, much nearer to Canaan, whose country was called Cusæa, with the addition Ethiopia Cusæa. See Hab. iii. 7. *Ye shall be slain,* punished by war, and your people cut off, *by my sword;* Nebuchadnezzar and his Chaldeans, called here God's sword, for God employed and prospered them.

13 And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and [d]destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, *and* dry like a wilderness.

d Is. 10. 12. Jer. 50. 31. Nah. 1. 1. & 2. 10. & 3. 15, 18.

And he, the Lord God of Israel, or the Chaldean monarch as God's servant herein, *will stretch out his hand,* engage all his power, and use it to the utmost, *against the north,* i. e. as follows, Assyria, which lay northward of Judea, but more due north from Babylon, if I mistake not. *Destroy Assyria;* overthrow that great and ancient kingdom of Assyria, of which more at large in Nahum. *Nineveh;* chief city of that kingdom. See Nah. i. 1. *A desolation;* most desolate, Nah. iii. 10—12. *And dry like a wilderness;* will turn those well-watered places into dry, thirsty, and barren land, as a wilderness.

e ver. 6. f Is. 13. 21, 22. ‖ Or, *pelican.* g Is. 34. 11, 14. ‖ Or, *knops,* or, *chapiters.* † Or, *when he hath uncovered.* h Jer. 22. 14.

14 And [e]flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all [f]the beasts of the nations: both the ‖[g]cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the ‖upper lintels of it; *their* voice shall sing in the windows; desolation *shall be* in the thresholds: † for he shall uncover the [h]cedar work.

Nineveh shall be so razed that *flocks* of cattle *shall lie down in the midst of it,* as before of the Philistines, ver. 6. *All the beasts of the nations;* all sorts of beasts which are found in those countries, the tame under the guard of watching shepherds, and wild ones seeking their prey, will attend about those places. *The cormorant and the bittern;* birds that are solitary, and delight in desolate places, in reedy fens, where they seek their food, and are looked on as unlucky birds. *Shall lodge in the upper lintels;* shall either make their nests there, or seek and choose their lodging there; they shall roost there in the night upon the pillars, or turrets, or pinnacles. *Their voice shall sing in the windows;* these doleful creatures shall make a more doleful noise, that shall be all the music to be heard in their desolate windows. *Desolation shall be in the thresholds,* the lowest part of their houses; from top to bottom nothing but wastes and ruin; instead of beautiful ladies looking out at windows and doors, and singing, now cormorants and bitterns, and their doleful notes. *For he shall uncover the cedar work;* or, when the Babylonian hath burnt the houses, or beat down the curious roofs and coverings of cedar, the beauty and the defence of their houses.

i Is. 47. 8. k Rev. 18. 7.

15 This *is* the rejoicing city [i]that dwelt carelessly, [k]that said in her heart, I *am,* and *there is* none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her [l]shall hiss, *and* [m]wag his hand.

l Job 27. 23. Lam. 2. 15. Ezek. 27. 36. m Nah. 3. 19.

This is the rejoicing city: we may suppose the prophet, or the Jews, or all passengers, standing still and wondering, nay, upbraiding Nineveh, all mirth and jollity once, but now all sorrow and grief. *That dwelt carelessly;* in so great confidence and security, as if it had been impossible she should ever have fallen from her glory. *That said in her heart;* persuaded herself into an opinion very ill becoming any but God himself. *There is none beside me;* none that can contend with me, that will be so hardy as to attempt against me, none able to overthrow me. Somewhat like Tyre, Ezek. xxviii. 12, &c. *How is she become a desolation!* she thought none was like her in glory, power, and wealth; now there is none like her indeed, but it is for misery and desolations. It may be either the speech of one that laments and wonders at it, or of one that rejoiceth at it. *A place for beasts to lie down in:* where palaces for princes stood, now are places for beasts; where nobles dwelt, now do ignoble cattle couch. *Shall hiss and wag his hand;* deride their arrogancy, and condemn their ungodly pride and security, yet with some pity toward this desolate city.

CHAP. III.

A sharp reproof of Jerusalem for divers sins. 1—7. *An exhortation to wait for the restoration of Israel* 8—13; *and to rejoice for their salvation by God,* 14—20.

WOE to ‖† her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!

‖ Or, *glorious.* † Heb. *ere*

The prophet showed us Nineveh in ruins for her sins; from this doleful spectacle he brings us to take a prospect of what would come upon Jerusalem, which ere long will be full of woes, because now full of sin. *Filthy;* loathsome in her sins, so foul they are, and so abominably acted. A city, that, like an infamous woman, is branded for her impudence in sin. Or, Woe to the great *crow!* as pointing out the gluttony of Jerusalem literally, and their swallowing the poor who were a prey to the great ones. *Polluted;* greatly polluted by this means. *To the oppressing city;* or the city foolish and seduced, as a silly dove; so the Hebrew will bear: but our version is to be preferred; it is come to that pass, Jerusalem is a city that doth nothing but oppress, Jer. vi. 6; Ezek. xxii.

2 She [a]obeyed not the voice; she [b]received not ‖ correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God.

a Jer. 22. 21. b Jer. 5. 3. ‖ Or, *instruction.*

She obeyed not the voice, of the law, her prophets or her faithful priests, (which were too few, yet some there were,) nor of God, by his mercy and judgments crying loud, warning, inviting, persuading to return. *She received not correction,* or instruction, did not learn, would not be instructed; there is a meiosis in the words, she hated instruction, as that wicked one, Psal. l. 17; Prov. v. 12; xiii. 18. *She trusted not in the Lord;* put her confidence in Egypt and Asshur, in any carnal refuges, rather than in her God; in her kings, princes, counsellors, warriors, and confederates, &c. *She drew not near to her God;* when revolted did not return, when in distress did not seek him, did not draw near with prayer, &c.

3 [c]Her princes within her *are* roaring lions; her judges *are* [d]evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.

c Ezek. 22. 27. Mic. 3. 9, 10, 11. d Hab. 1. 8.

Her princes; persons of principal place and authority about the king, chief officers in civil matters, and, which is worse, her own princes, born and bred among them, who should have been most tender and just. *Are roaring lions;* which hunt for prey, are ever tearing or threatening, affrighting or devouring. Such the Assyrian princes were, Nah. ii. 11, 12. Such, and no better, are the princes in Judah and Jerusalem. *Her judges;* elders of cities, ma-

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gistrates of lower rank; or it may be the sanhedrim. *Evening wolves;* most hungry, insatiable, and cruel, like wolves of the evening whetted with hunger and fasting, Hab. i. 8. *They gnaw not the bones till the morrow;* they leave nothing to be eat on the morrow, they devour all presently.

4 Her [e]prophets *are* light *and* treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done [f]violence to the law.

e Jer. 23. 11, 32. Lam. 2. 14. Hos. 9. 7.
f Ezek. 22. 26.

Her prophets; by education, profession, and unwarranted practice called so, false prophets; such Zedekiah, and probably Chenaanah, &c., were. *Are light;* unstable and inconstant, ready to comply with humours which they should have reproved, 1 Kings xxii. 13. *Treacherous persons;* men of treacheries, whatever pleasing temper they seem to be of, yet still they design treachery; the Hebrew seems to run it higher, treacheries in the abstract. *Her priests,* of the house of Levi, of the stock of Aaron, *have polluted the sanctuary;* bound by office to keep holy the sanctuary, have defiled it, and all that is holy. *Have done violence to the law;* wresting it by perverse interpretation to what sense best serveth a corrupt mind.

5 [g]The just LORD [h]*is* in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: † every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but [i]the unjust knoweth no shame.

g Deu. 32. 4.
h ver. 15, 17. See Mic. 3. 11.
† Heb. *morning by morning.*
i Jer. 3. 3. & 6. 15. & 8. 12.

The just Lord is in the midst thereof: though unjust princes, judges, prophets, and priests do not think so, yet the Lord who is most just is in the midst of them; possibly the sanhedrim; he observeth all, condemneth their violence and injustice, he is sovereign as Lord, and just as Judge. *He will not do iniquity;* to him it appertaineth to judge all, therefore the unjust shall be punished as well as the just approved. *Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light;* daily he discovereth his displeasure against the wicked, and punisheth them. *He faileth not;* lets not one fit season slip to convince and awaken secure sinners, by public and visible punishments, or judgments. *But the unjust knoweth no shame;* but the wicked Jews proceed impudently, without shame, and without fear or amendment: there is no hope of better where is no shame for worst of doings, Jer. iii. 3.

6 I have cut off the nations: their ‖ towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

‖ Or, *corners.*

I have cut off the nations; of old the Canaanites, lately the ten tribes, later yet the Assyrians and others, have been cut off for their sins. *Their towers;* either metaphorically, magistrates and great men, as chap. i. 16; or literally, strong towers built on the angles of walls or palaces. *Are desolate;* razed and demolished. *I made their streets waste;* I overthrew their houses, that there were no streets. *None passeth by;* or none walked through them. *Their cities,* small or great, capital or not capital, *are destroyed;* taken, plundered, burnt, and ruined. *There is no man;* all fled, or slain, or starved, or swept away with pestilence, or carried into captivity, not an inhabitant left in the places.

7 [k]I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, *and* [l]corrupted all their doings.

k So Jer. 8. 6
l Gen. 6. 12.

I said; I thought, (speaking as man would,) I concluded what was likely, what I might expect. *Surely thou,* O Jerusalem, O Judah, *wilt fear me,* for the many and great judgments executed upon others in thy sight; thou wilt fear, by sinning still, to provoke me. *Thou wilt receive instruction;* wilt learn thy duty, to do it; thy danger, to prevent it; thy sins, to repent of them; thy ways, to amend them. *So their dwelling,* houses, villages, Jerusalem, *should not be cut off,* sacked and burned, *howsoever I punished them;* whatever I had done against them, however I had chastised them, had they been bettered, humbled, and amended, I would have spared, not destroyed utterly. *But they rose early;* but they grew worse, more eager in the pursuit of their vile courses; as if the day would be too short for their sins, they rise early, and begin betimes. *Corrupted all their doings;* designedly and out of set purpose did worse and worse, when smitten they revolted more and more, Isa. i. 5.

8 ¶ Therefore [m]wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination *is* to [n]gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth [o]shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

m Ps. 27. 14. & 37. 34. Prov. 20. 22.
n Joel 3. 2.
o ch. 1. 18.

Therefore, since you will not be amended by all, since you grow worse and worse, *wait ye upon me;* ye refractory and incorrigible Jews, rulers, and people, attend my resolution, for I am resolved what I will do, and have set a day for it. *Until the day that I rise up to the prey;* until I, as an enemy, rise up to destroy first, and next to take the spoil: you by your sins continue to be mine enemies, and I will by my judgments, by the Chaldeans, who shall rise up against you, and destroy and spoil you, show myself in arms against you, as an enemy to you. *My determination;* my fixed purpose, that which I have unalterably resolved upon. *The nations;* all that are subjects to the Chaldean monarchy. *The kingdoms,* which are confederate with or tributary to the Chaldeans: these thus gathered, listed, and marshalled in a mighty army, *to pour upon them mine indignation;* upon the obstinate, incorrigible, and impious Jews first; (afterwards I will punish Babylon;) *even all my fierce anger,* which by their sins they have kindled against themselves. *All the earth,* the whole land of Judea and her cities, *shall be devoured,* consumed as if burnt up, *with the fire of my jealousy;* that jealousy wherewith God is jealous for his own glory, for his ordinances and statutes, which Jewish people, princes, and their prophets and their priests had notoriously violated.

9 For then will I turn to the people [p]a pure †language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one †consent.

p Is. 19. 18.
† Heb. *lip.*
† Heb. *shoulder.*

For then, or, then, *afterwards,* i. e. when my judgments have been executed, and have cut off the wicked, *will I turn to the people a pure language;* I will give them a pure way of worshipping me, in prayer, praises, and the issue of a purified heart, Ezek. xi. 17—20; xxxvi. 26. *Call upon the name of the Lord;* perform all religious service, all religion being expressed thus by calling on the name of the Lord. *To serve him,* the Lord their God, not idols, *with one consent;* with one heart, and according to his own law and will; with one *shoulder* shall they bear the yoke of the law, alluding to porters that join shoulder to shoulder in carrying great burdens.

10 [q]From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, *even* the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

q Ps. 68. 31. Is. 18. 1, 7. & 60. 4, &c. Mal. 1. 11. Acts 8. 27.

From beyond the rivers; the coasts which lie beyond the rivers of India, saith the Chaldee paraphrast, but I doubt whether the captive Jews were carried so far. *Of Ethiopia,* in Arabia, bordering on Egypt, whither it is easy to conceive many Jews might betake themselves, who are here called *dispersed,* or dispersion, somewhat distinguished from captives. *My suppliants;* praying to me, saith one version. *The daughter of my dispersed:* this explains who the suppliant is; the praying remnant of the scattered Jews, who had gotten into those parts of Arabia that were coasting along the rivers which divided Ethiopia Cusæa from the rest of Arabia. *Shall bring mine offering;* shall return to their land and bring themselves an offering unto the Lord, which was done when Cyrus, in league with these Ethiopians, procured their favour for the dispersed Jews, that they might return to Jerusalem, meet their captive brethren, and offer a gift to God.

11 In that day shalt thou not be ashamed

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for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that [r]rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty †because of my holy mountain.

r Jer. 7. 4. Mic. 3. 11. Matt. 3. 9. † Heb. *in my holy.*

In that day; when pardoned captives and dispersed ones shall return and serve the Lord with one consent, mourning for their sins, and seeking the Lord. *Not be ashamed,* with a shame of reproach and confusion: when sin is pardoned, and sinful hearts are purified, reproachful shame may well cease, Isa. liv. 4, 5. *Thy doings;* which are expounded in the following words: the prophet speaks of the sins they formerly committed against the Lord. *Them that rejoice in thy pride;* hypocrites, proud formalists, that placed all religion in the gaudy outside; these removed, and those that worship the Lord doing it in sincerity gathered together, the Lord will accept and beautify them. *Thou shalt no more be haughty;* thou, O nation of the Jews, formerly full of haughty thoughts of yourselves, your sacrifices, and your privileges; but you shall no more boast, or glory, or vaunt yourselves herein. *Because of my holy mount;* either the city, or rather the temple, on which proud hypocrites did bear themselves high formerly, when they lived in notorious sins, and yet cried, *The temple of the Lord,* &c., Jer. vii. 4, with 9, 10.

s Is. 14. 32. Zech. 11. 11. Matt. 5. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 27. 28. Jam. 2. 5.

12 I will also leave in the midst of thee [s]an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.

I will also leave: the Chaldeans had spared none if the Lord had not preserved a remnant; it is he, rather than they, which did leave a remnant. *In the midst of thee;* to return and dwell in Judea and Jerusalem. *An afflicted people;* or a people of a broken spirit, a meek, humble-spirited people, instead of that proud heart which was once among them. *Poor;* not so much in outward respects as poor in spirit, such a people as the Lord can delight in. *They shall trust in the name of the Lord;* not in city or temple, but in the Lord, and in his mercy, faithfulness, and power.

t Mic. 4. 7. ch. 2. 7. u Is. 60. 21. x Is. 63. 8. Rev. 14. 5.

13 [t]The remnant of Israel [u]shall not do iniquity, [x]nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for [y]they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make *them* afraid.

y Ezek. 34. 28. Mic. 4. 4. & 7. 14.

The remnant of Israel, preserved in captivity and dispersion, purified in the furnace of affliction, and now returned to their own land, *shall not do iniquity;* shall not commit the sins they formerly committed, not provoke God with their abominations as before: it is not a prediction of a sinless, but of a reformed state; they shall be righteous, and taught of God, no more idolaters. *Nor speak lies;* they shall love truth, and speak truth, or, in a larger sense, shall be honest and upright amongst men. *A deceitful tongue;* a false accuser or witness, like Doeg, or Jezebel's evidences against Naboth; according to that, Psal. xv. 2; xxiv. 4. *For they shall feed;* or, they shall feed also, &c.; so it will be a blessing added as a crown of their piety and truth. Or if you read it, *for they shall feed,* &c., it gives you a reason why they shall not by frauds and lies, as formerly, sin against one another; they shall have a sufficiency by honest ways, and from God's blessing, and shall not be under any great temptation to dishonesty and lying. *None shall make them afraid:* frights made David, Abraham, and others to forget truth; here none should fright them, and they should not fear to speak the truth: their lips pure, ver. 9; they trust in the Lord, ver. 12; therefore shall not lie. Here is a cluster of spiritual promises with the temporal.

z Is. 12. 6. & 54. 1. Zech. 2. 10. & 9. 9.

14 ¶ [z]Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

For all these mercies the church is enjoined to be thankful, and to rejoice, and it is trebled, *Sing, shout, and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, Israel, and daughter of Jerusalem:* the same persons, the same duty, but differently expressed, but the whole heart required in all.

15 The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: [a]the king of Israel, *even* the LORD, [b]*is* in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

a John 1. 49. b ver. 5, 17. Ezek. 48. 35. Rev. 7. 15. & 21. 3, 6.

The Lord; who kills and makes alive, acquits or condemns, and none can reverse the judgment. *Hath taken away thy judgments;* abolished and put an end to thy sufferings, the judgments thy sins brought upon thee; he hath pardoned thy sins and ended thy sorrows. *He hath cast out;* cast the Babylonian out of the throne, and placed the Persian in it. *Thine enemy;* the Babylonian who held thee captive, and placed in his room Cyrus mine anointed, and thy friend, who shall let thee go free, Ezra i. 1. *The King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee:* thus it is evident that the Lord, who is thy King, O Israel, is with thee; that he taketh thy part, is returned to redeem and govern thee. *Thou shalt not see evil any more;* no more such great evil as thou hast seen; whilst thy carriage is as becometh thy mercy received, and my presence with thee, thou shalt neither fear nor feel like evils.

16 In that day [c]it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: *and to* Zion, [d]Let not thine hands be ‖slack.

c Is. 25. 9. d Heb. 12. 12. ‖ Or, *faint.*

In that day; the day or time of restitution, when the captivity returned shall be settled in their land. *It shall be said;* by prophets, or by friends, congratulating them, or by each to other. *To Jerusalem;* inhabitants of Jerusalem, the place being put for the people. *Fear thou not;* disquiet not yourselves with fears, though you may apprehend some dangers from Sanballat and Tobiah, &c., though troublous times, as Neh. iv. 1, 2; Dan. ix. 25. *Let not thine hands be slack,* in the work of the Lord, building the city and temple, and restoring the worship of God; take heart, O ye returned captives, for God your King is with you.

17 The LORD thy God [e]in the midst of thee *is* mighty; he will save, [f]he will rejoice over thee with joy; †he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

e ver. 15. f Deut. 30. 9. Is. 62. 5. & 65. 19. Jer. 32. 41. † Heb. *he will be silent.*

The Lord; the everlasting One, who changeth not. *Thy God;* thine in covenant, never to be forgotten or repealed. *Is mighty;* can do all he will, can restrain and destroy enemies, can support and defend his own people. *He will save,* from thy fears, and thine enemies' rage. *Will rejoice over thee with joy;* will greatly rejoice in thee. *Will rest in his love;* will take content and satisfaction in this his love. The love he showeth to thee shall be rest to him; not thy loveliness, but his own love shall satisfy him. *Will joy over thee with singing;* will show greatest love and joy in most affectionate manner: all expressions borrowed from the entirest love of man toward dearest relations, Psal. ciii. 11, 13; Isa. lxii. 5.

18 I will gather *them that* [g]*are* sorrowful for the solemn assembly, *who* are of thee, *to whom* †the reproach of it *was* a burden.

g Lam. 2. 6. † Heb. *the burden upon it was reproach.*

This promise removes an objection which might be made by dispersed ones: How can we return? I will gather you, saith God. *That are sorrowful for the solemn assembly;* mourn in their distance from the solemn worship of God, as David, Psal. xlii.; that are troubled more for want of God's ordinances than for any thing; which three times every year in great solemnity they celebrated, but now for seventy years had wanted them. *Are of thee;* these longing mourners are thy children indeed, Israelites in whom is no guile. *The reproach;* the taunts of enemies and triumphs over God and religion, such as Psal. xlii. 3, 10. *A burden;* heaviest burden, or a sword in their bowels.

19 Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that [h]halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and †I will get them praise and fame in every land †where they have been put to shame.

h Ezek. 34. 16. Mic. 4. 6, 7. † Heb. *I will set them for a praise.* † Heb. *of their shame.*

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Behold; mark well. *I will undo;* I will deal with them, do their work for them, as we say, I will break their power and dissolve their kingdom. *All that afflict thee;* Babylonians who afflicted the Jews, and who were undone by Cyrus and his Persians. *I will save her that halteth;* who is in great trouble and ready to fall, as Psal. xxxviii. 16, 17; who is under greatest distress, and hath least strength to bear, or get out. *Driven out;* by force of the enemy, carried away captives, and scattered into far remote countries. *Get them praise and fame;* vindicate them, as a people that are not rejected of their God, as the people of the great God of heaven and earth, as Psal. cxxi. 2. *In every land;* among all people with whom they dwelt as strangers. *Where they have been put to shame;* were scorned and reproached as slaves and abjects, whose God could not, or would not, help them, or had cast them off, and none other would take care of them. But now, gathered together by the Lord, they shall appear to be still his peculiar people and his delight.

20 At that time [i] will I bring you *again*, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.

[i] Is. 11. 12. & 27. 12. & 66. 8. Ezek. 28. 25. & 34. 13. & 37. 21. Amos 9. 14.

This verse is a repetition of the promise for the greater assurance of it, and seems to add but little to what was before promised, unless it be the speediness of what God doth for them, and the comprehensiveness of it; he will *turn back* their *captivities*, Heb. plural, whether under Manasseh, or Jehoiakim, or Jeconiah, or Zedekiah; all which is confirmed with the broad seal of Heaven, *Thus saith the Lord.* Believe, then, and rejoice in it.

HAGGAI.

THE ARGUMENT.

HAGGAI is the first prophet that appears in the name of the Lord of hosts, to awaken, reprove, direct, exhort, and encourage both the governor, high priest, and people, returned out of captivity, to the restoring and settling the worship of God, to the rebuilding the temple, whose foundations, together with the altar of burnt-offering, had been laid seventeen or eighteen years ago; but the finishing of the temple prohibited by Cambyses all the time of his being viceroy to his father Cyrus, and during his own reign; and neglected near two years in Darius Hystaspes's time, through the covetousness of many, the coldness of some, and the cowardice of others among the Jews, who were all bent on their own private concerns, and pleaded it was not time to set about the building of God's temple, and who in all probability would have deferred it much longer had they been let alone: now therefore the Lord doth, in zeal for his own glory, and in mercy to his people, send his servant Haggai to awaken them to their duty, which was this, the building the temple, and restoring the pure worship of God. He reproves them for neglecting this; tells them this sin was the cause of the penury and scarcity which afflicted them these fifteen or sixteen years past; assures them that, so soon as ever they begin the work, their ground, their cattle, their vines and olives, should wonderfully increase their store; promiseth God's presence with them, and with it a supply of gold and silver, which are his, and he will, as he did by the bounty of Darius and the contributions of others, bring in to them; and though the external glory of this temple were less than that of the first temple, yet this second temple should exceed the first in glory for so much as their expected, longed-for, and the blessed Messiah should appear in it. All which, as they were weighty arguments in themselves considered, so, through the co-operation of the Spirit of God, they prevailed with his hearers, who set about the work; and when opposed by their enemies, who sent to Darius to solicit him to renew the prohibition, he on the contrary confirms and enlargeth their charter granted by the grand Cyrus, and annexeth severe penalties on all that dare hinder this work; all which particularly, and at large, are set down in the sixth and seventh chapters of Ezra. And so in four years' time the temple is finished, the feast of dedication is celebrated, and the final issue answers to the name of the prophet who, sent of God, set it forwards, Haggai, who hath his name from the word that signifieth *a feast*, as if we should call him *Festivus*. He closeth all with a close prediction of many and long wars and seditions to come among the Gentiles, to the overthrow of the enemies of the Jews.

CHAP. I.

The time when Haggai prophesied, 1. *Haggai reproveth the people's delay in building the temple,* 2—6. *He inciteth them to set about it,* 7—11. *He promiseth them, being forward of themselves, God's assistance,* 12, 13. *The work is set forward,* 14, 15.

B. C. cir. 520. IN [a] the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD † by Haggai the prophet unto [b] Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, ‖ governor of Judah, and to [c] Joshua the son of [d] Josedech, the high priest, saying,

[a] Ezra 4. 24. & 5. 1. Zech. 1. 1. † Heb. *by the hand of Haggai.* [b] 1 Chron. 3. 17, 19. Ezra 3. 2. Matt. 1. 12. Luke 3. 27. ‖ Or, *captain.* [c] Ezra 3. 2. & 5. 2. [d] 1 Chron. 6. 15.

Darius: of this name there were seven, Darius Medus, Hystaspes, Longimanus, Nothus, Ochus, Arsames, Codomanus; one before Cyrus, viz. that Darius which is distinguished from the other by Medus, the Mede; the next Darius was son of Hystaspes, and third king of Persia, (if we leave out Smerdis the cheat, who on Cambyses's death counterfeited the true Smerdis, slain by Cambyses's order, got into the throne, but was discovered and slain at seven months' end,) of whom the text speaketh; unless you can think Joshua high priest through one hundred and forty-four years, and some considerable number of Jews to have lived one hundred and ninety-six years, and the returned captives to have wanted a temple for one hundred and twelve years at least, which incredible things attend them who will have this Darius to be Nothus. *The king;* as being the greatest of that time, and by way of eminency above others. *In the sixth month;* Elul, answering to part of our August and September. *The word of the Lord;* the command or direction what they should do, and reproof for what they had omitted to do. *Haggai:* we read nothing of his parentage or country in the Scripture; he doted that thought him an angel. *The prophet;* inspired, sent, approved, and assisted of God in his office. *Zerubbabel;* whose name speaks either his birth in Babylon, or his interest and power there as some conjecture: probably his birth in Babylon might be ground of trusting him with the government of Judah, to which he had right. *Son of*

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Shealtiel; adoptive son to Shealtiel, being of the royal line, probably he was the chief branch thereof, uncle to him; but by nature, or by generation, son of Pedaiah; or else there were two Zerubbabels, sons of two brothers, Pedaiah and Shealtiel. *Governor of Judah;* appointed to this by the Persian king, under whose power the Jews were now fallen, and at whose pleasure governors were placed or displaced over the remnant returned out of Babylon, and once at last settled in the land of Judah. *Joshua;* a type of the great Deliverer; one Joshua leads them into Canaan, another restores the temple. *Josedech;* whose name did portend good to this people, and bespoke God's righteousness; his father Seraiah was high priest and slain by Nebuchadnezzar. *The high priest,* by lineal descent according to the law, chief of power in church matters, as Zerubbabel was chief in civil things: to these the prophet is sent to stir them up to the building of the temple.

2 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built.

Thus speaketh, by way of reproof, and to awaken the drowsy Jews; he who knew their heart tells them what they both thought and spoke. *This people,* whom mercy preserved in, redeemed out of Babylon, and brought into their land on purpose to build the temple. This people, whom Cyrus by proclamation sent to do this, who seemed to long for a temple when they were in Babylon. *Say;* discourse thus among themselves, and discourage all that were forward. *The time is not come;* the proper season of rebuilding the house of God seems to be not come, for since the prohibition by Cambyses in the days of Cyrus, and through all the time of Cambyses, and in the first year and part of the second of Darius, we have no commission to do it, but are required not to do any thing in this affair without further order, Ezra iv. 21.

3 Then came the word of the LORD
• Ezra 5. 1. [e]by Haggai the prophet, saying,

Then; when the people were thus sluggish, made excuses, and delayed doing their duty, then at that time *came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet:* see chap. i. 1.

f 2 Sam. 7. 2. Ps. 132. 3, &c.

4 [f]*Is it* time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house *lie* waste?

Is it time? you think it full time to build your own houses, you judge it seasonable enough to lay out much cost on adorning them, what pretence can you make that it is not seasonable to build my house? *For you,* Jews, who were by a king (that knew not your God) sent to build my house, you unthankful and forgetful ones. *To dwell;* to settle yourselves securely, and for continuance with stateliness. *Ceiled;* arched and with cedar wainscot, curiously carved and covered, and as richly adorned as if you were full of treasures. *Houses:* it seems to intimate some of them had more than one house, a city and a country house, and whilst God's house lay waste; they thus lavish out their wealth on private worldly conveniences, but grudge the charge on God's house. Can you thus live without a temple, an altar, a sacrifice, and yet cannot live without stately houses? Do you owe so much to yourselves, and so little to your God? so much to your bodies, so little to your souls? *Lie waste;* in its rubbish, or in bare, naked foundations without any superstructure.

† Heb. *Set your heart on your ways.* g Lam. 3. 40. ver. 7.

5 Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; †[g]Consider your ways.

Now therefore; or, *And now,* or, *But now.* Heb.; it is time for you to consider, to set your heart to that I propose. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts;* the great God speaks, hearken therefore. *Consider your ways;* ponder well the course you have taken and the success of it, what you have designed, how you have succeeded, what care, and what disappointment, what labour, and how fruitless your labour hath been; consider how you have carried it toward God, and how God hath carried it toward you.

h Deut. 28. 38. Hos. 4. 10. Mic. 6. 14, 15. ch. 2. 16.

6 Ye have [h]sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and [i]he that earneth wages earneth wages *to put it* into a bag †with holes.

i Zech. 8. 10. † Heb. *pierced through.*

The prophet doth help them, or directs them what in particular they ought to consider, and so debateth it with them: Your labour, care, and charge hath been great in ploughing and sowing, that you are sensible of; but what harvest have you had? O, your barns have been far from full, you have reaped and brought in little; this is evident to all. *Ye eat,* you feed on the fruit of your labour and product of the earth, *but ye have not enough;* but what you eat doth not nourish you, it doth not suffice; you are hungry and meagre still. *Ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink;* the like emptiness and unprofitableness in your drink; your water quencheth not your thirst, your wine does not refresh your heart or revive your spirit; or you dare not eat or drink sufficiently for fear you should not have enough, lest your store should fail you. *Ye clothe you, but there is none warm;* your wool and flax is not what it used to be, sufficient to defend you from the cold, it will not warm you. *He that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes;* who labours or trades to gain and lay up loseth all his labour, it runs from him as money put into a purse or pocket that hath no bottom, that cannot hold it. This fruitless labour you will soon discern, if you consider your ways: and what think you may be the cause of this?

7 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

See ver. 5. Debate it with yourselves, both as to what is already past, and what will be for time to come; it hath not been a chance, or an evil which none can tell whence it proceeds, it is from your neglect of God, his temple and worship.

8 Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

Go up, delay no longer, speed ye up. *to the mountain;* Moriah, or Zion, better Lebanon, where best and greatest store of cedars were to be had, whence came the goodly cedars which built Solomon's temple, 1 Kings v. 14, 15, and where they had (before the building was forbidden) furnished themselves, Ezra iii. 7. *Bring wood;* provide all sorts of timber for this future edifice. *Build;* go on with the work, the foundation whereof hath been laid some years, but the superstructure omitted. *The house* of God, the holy temple. *I will take pleasure in it:* this a very gracious promise revived, an assurance that God will dwell in it, and afford his presence there; I will meet you there, and there I will bless you, there I will accept your offerings, hear your prayers, forgive your sins, and satisfy you with the fatness of my house: much the same promise with that, 1 Kings viii. 29; ix. 3. *I will be glorified;* show my majesty, and account myself glorified by you also.

9 [k]Ye looked for much, and, lo, *it* *came* to little; and when ye brought *it* home, [l]I did ‖ blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that *is* waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.

k ch. 2. 16. l ch. 2. 17. ‖ Or, *blew it away.*

Ye, O Jews, you toiled, and were at great cost, as ver. 6. *Looked for much;* expected, hoped, promised yourselves a great increase, a plentiful harvest. *And, lo, it came to little;* but you saw, discerned, and were sensible that it answered not expectation; all dwindled into a very little, you were losers by all, went backward still. *I did blow upon it:* had your little been as the righteous man's little, you might have lived on it, and rejoiced in it; but it had not such a blessing upon it; it was blasted, and so was weak, and empty, and heartless, it profited little. *Because of mine house that is waste;* all this curse on your estate and labour was for your ungodly neglect of my house, leaving it waste. *Ye run;* did with eagerness carry on your own particular buildings, spared not care or cost for them; you stir not a foot about my house, you run with greatest earnestness about your own. *Every man to his own house,* domestic affairs and concerns, in which not one or two, or some few, but every one is culpable, scarce any free from this fault.

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m Lev. 26. 19. Deut. 28. 23. 1 Kin. 8. 35.

10 Therefore [m]the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed *from* her fruit.

Therefore; for your great intolerable neglect of God, his house and worship. *The heaven,* Heb. *heavens. Is stayed;* shut up, sealed, prohibited; God, whose they are, hath forbidden them, they drop not one pearl of dew; and the earth must be barren, when dry without the fructifying influences of heaven.

n 1 Kings 17. 1. 2 Kings 8. 1. o ch. 2. 17.

11 And I [n]called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon *that* which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and [o]upon all the labour of the hands.

This verse is a particular narrative of what was more generally expressed in the former verse, and all things mentioned herein are very plain.

I, your God whom you neglected, *called for;* commanded or willed, which is call powerful enough to bring together any of his armed soldiers, to punish rebellious and contumacious sinners. *Upon the land;* either the whole land, or, in distinction to mountains, the lower grounds and valleys. *Upon the mountains;* which in Canaan were fruitful in pasturage, and rich in vines, and olives, and corn; all which, for want of rain, dried up and withered, languished and came to nothing; so the condition of these people was very desolate, a just punishment for a temple desolate by their negligence. *Upon men;* the very blood, humours, and constitutions of men were strangely changed hereby, and many diseases afflicted them. *Upon cattle;* murrain, leanness, and death among the brute beasts. *Upon all the labour of the hands;* whatever man's industry planted, as trees and plants, were under this curse, and languished, died, and were burnt up.

p Ezra 5. 2.

12 ¶ [p]Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the LORD.

Then; so soon as they heard this convincing and awakening sermon. *Shealtiel;* who is called *Salathiel,* 1 Chron. iii. 17; Matt. i. 12. *Joshua the son of Josedech:* see chap. i. 1. *The high priest;* the twenty-fourth from Aaron, as some reckon, (Alsted. Chron.,) but the first after the captivity. *With all;* either none were deaf to the Lord's reproof and counsel, or else none durst appear so, when the chief rulers in state and church were so forward in obeying the prophet. *The people;* the common people, the meaner sort. *Obeyed the voice of the Lord;* acknowledged that it was the sovereign Lord who spake, who ought to be obeyed, because he is the Lord. *Their God;* and therefore they ought to do his will, that they might receive the blessings which he, as their God, had promised to them. As God made this an argument to obedience, so do these now; We are thy people, thou art our God. *The words of Haggai:* this interprets the former, the voice of the Lord was the words of Haggai, he added nothing of his own to them. *As the Lord their God had sent him;* according to all for which the Lord had sent and commissioned him, or particularly in all that concerned the speedy building of the temple. *The people did fear before the Lord:* this speaks the right religious frame of heart in this people at this time.

13 Then spake Haggai the LORD's messenger in the LORD's message unto the people, saying, [q]I *am* with you, saith the LORD.

q Matt. 28. 20. Rom. 8. 31.

Then; when the people showed their obedience, and the willingness of their minds, then God encourageth them by his prophet. *Messenger;* legate or envoy, the Hebrew word signifieth also an angel; but this is not sufficient to prove their opinion, who dream that Haggai was not a man, but an angel in the form of a man; the word here used (arising from a word that signifieth to send, and paraphrased by a word that primarily signifieth to send as messengers are sent) doth speak an angel from his office and work, as he ministereth before the Lord, and runneth swiftly on his errand; it speaketh not the nature or essence of angels, as they are spirits. The French version (which I use, printed at Rochelle, 1616) reads it, like ours, ambassador. So Haggai was God's messenger or ambassador to his people; no angel. *In the Lord's message;* as becometh an ambassador, in the words of his master, so Haggai delivered the Lord's message. *Unto the people;* not excluding the governors; but the people are only mentioned, for that the prophet spake to the whole assembly, or because the Lord would encourage them most, who most needed encouragement. *I am with you;* a great promise, and which contains all they can need or desire; it insureth God's presence always with them, and his assistance always to them, and his blessing always upon them. He will be always for, as well as always with them, and then Tatnai, Shethar-boznai, Sanballat, and all other conspirators with them, shall not prevail to hinder the work. Such a promise as this, see Exod. iii. 12; iv. 11—13; Matt. xxviii. 20; Rom. viii. 31; 2 Cor. xii. 9. *Saith the Lord:* this solemn attestation addeth weight to the promise.

r 2 Chron 36. 22. Ezra 1. 1. s ch. 2. 21.

14 And [r]the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, [s]governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; [t]and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,

t Ezra 5. 2, 8.

The Lord stirred up: this is the first notable effect of God's presence with them, a sensible performance of his promise. God inclined their minds, fixed their resolutions, and inspired them with courage for this work; whereas the stoutest of them before had no mind to set on this work, now the weakest are forward to it, and bold in it. *The spirit;* the heart, mind, or inclination. *Shealtiel:* see ver. 12. *Governor:* see ver. 1. *Josedech:* see ver. 1, 12. *The remnant:* see ver. 12. *They came,* immediately, without delay, and unanimously, without any visible dissent. *Did work;* every one set their hands to it in such manner as was fit for them; governors did oversee, direct, and encourage the workmen; artificers framed and prepared, and the people all laboured. *In the house;* which was now to be built upon the old foundations, laid some seventeen years before, when Cyrus gave the Jews leave to return and build their city and temple. *The Lord of hosts;* by which name he delights to be known among the returned captives; and it was a name best suited to their present state, compassed on all hands with enemies, and in perpetual danger by them. *Their God:* see ver. 12.

15 In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

It appeareth then that Zerubbabel and Joshua, with the people, did resolve on the matter quickly; for in three weeks and three days they are at the work, as is evident; on the first day Haggai preached, chap. i. 1, on the twenty-fourth day of the month the people are at work, ver. 15.

Darius: see ver. 1. Now this Darius was not Darius Nothus, but Darius Hystaspes, as will appear by considering well the following scheme of years, from the captivity to the particular years of each of these two Dariuses. Suppose we therefore the computation of these years, according to either of these schemes, it will appear that there is no likelihood this Darius in the text should be Darius Nothus.

	Helvicus.		Usher.
Captivity	3350	. .	3398.
Temple burnt	3360	. .	3416.
Cyrus's decree	3420	. .	3468.
The decree of Darius, Nothus	3529	Hystaspes	3485.

This latter account begins the captivity at the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the former begins it at the first of Jeconiah's reign, as Ezekiel also doth, chap. i. 2; xl. 1. Hence that difference which is in the account of the years between the

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beginning of the captivity and the burning of the temple; the former account makes it eleven years, the latter makes it eighteen, for it begins seven years sooner. In what follows, we shall find both agreeing well enough to clear the unlikelihood of Darius Nothus being the king intended here.

Both accounts make the captivity to end in the seventieth year, according to the Scripture. But now the former account makes it one hundred and nine years between Cyrus's decree and Darius's decree; all which time the temple by this account lay desolate, without a prophet to stir them up to their duty of building the temple. Now is this probable? can it be reasonably supposed that the temple should so long lie waste after they were sent out of Babylon purposely to build it? or that they should be so long in that condition without a prophet? But now the latter account reckons seventeen years between Cyrus's and Darius's decree for building the temple, a space of time easily conceived likely to pass while the Jews did not build; nay, were forbidden by Cambyses, (in Scripture called Artaxerxes,) viceroy to his father Cyrus, (engaged in foreign wars,) all the time Cyrus lived after he gave out the decree, which some make more, some less, but those who make the likeliest guess, for aught I know, make it five years. Whether Cyrus, taken up with these wars, did know of this prohibition, or thought not good to take it off till he returned conqueror, I know not; but he died and left this bar on the work, which continued all Cambyses's reign, and unto the second year of his successor Darius Hystaspes. Now if this were seventeen the most, some say but fifteen, others but twelve years, it is very probable, whereas one hundred and nine years is utterly improbable. Besides this, let us view what age those many or few were of, by these different accounts, who lived to see the temple re-edified. If in Darius Nothus's time, they could be no less than one hundred and eighty-five, allowing them to be sixteen at the burning of the temple, thus; sixteen when the temple was burnt, thence sixty to Cyrus's decree, and thence one hundred and nine to Darius Nothus's decree. But by the latter account their age amounts but to ninety-five years, which appears thus; sixteen at the time the temple was burnt, thence sixty to Cyrus's decree, thence seventeen to Darius Hystaspes's decree; in all ninety-five, which though a great age, yet not improbable at that time, though the other (one hundred and eighty-five) be improbable. Besides, how few through one hundred and sixty-nine years can distinctly remember what they saw and took notice of at sixteen, or could make that judgment of the disproportion between the two temples! chap. ii. 3. Or can it be supposed that Zechariah (chap. i. 12) would have accounted but seventy years' desolation, when he might have more than doubled the years, and have reckoned one hundred and sixty-nine years? would not the argument thus have been more moving?

CHAP. II.

Haggai encourageth the people to the work, by promise of greater glory to the second temple than was in the first, 1—9. *Under the type of things holy and unclean he showeth that their sins had kept back God's blessings, which he promiseth them from that time,* 10—19. *God's promise to Zerubbabel,* 20—23.

IN the seventh *month*, in the one and twentieth *day* of the month, came the word of the LORD † by the prophet Haggai, saying,

† Heb. *by the hand of.*

The seventh month, which the Hebrews called Tisri, and Ethanim, and it answers to part of our September and to part of October. *The one and twentieth day;* some seven weeks after the first, mentioned in the first chapter, and about one month after they began to build, or at least prepared for building the temple. *Came the word of the Lord by the prophet Haggai:* see chap. i. 1.

2 Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying,

Speak now; once again acquaint them with what I now impart for their encouragement. *To Zerubbabel, &c.:* see chap. i. 1, 12.

3 [a]Who *is* left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? [b]*is it* not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?

[a] Ezra 3. 12.

[b] Zech. 4. 10

Who is left among you? there are surely some that are of that age as to have seen the temple which our father's sins, God's just displeasure, and the Chaldean malice burnt; who are they? and where may they be found? This question implieth there were such, and by Ezra iii. 12. 13 it appears there were many, for the cries and sobs of them equalled the shouts of the younger, who rejoiced to see the foundations of the second house laid. *That saw;* took notice of it then, and remember it now, that were of such age and knowledge as to remember what was standing in its glory one hundred and fifty years ago, if some conjecture aright, but, what is nearer to truth, who remember some fourscore years past, who are about one hundred years of age. *This house;* the house of God, the temple built by Solomon. *In her first glory;* in the stately structure of it, in the rich adornings of it, in the unparalleled skill and curiosity of its workmanship, when it was the glory of the world. *How do ye see it now?* do you see the same glorious structure going forward? have you expectation of one equal to the former temple? You cannot but recall the former to mind, and make your judgment of this by that. *Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?* do you not judge this second nothing comparable with the first? you are ready to say, (in proverbial speech,) It is nothing to it.

4 Yet now [c]be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I *am* with you, saith the LORD of hosts:

[c] Zech. 8. 9.

In this juncture, though old men weep for the disproportion of the two temples, *yet now be strong;* be of good courage yourselves, O Zerubbabel, and thou, O Joshua, and encourage others by your example, animate each other, that all the people of the land may take heart with you. *And work;* forthwith set about the building of the temple. *For I am with you,* both to defend you from enemies, to supply you with necessaries, to bless and accept you: see chap. i. 13.

5 [d]*According to* the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so [e]my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.

[d] Ex. 29. 45, 46.

[e] Neh. 9. 20. Is. 63. 11.

The word; either the word of promise to give them his presence, and to carry them through all opposition, or, the Word, the Son of God, promised to them and us; so it refers to Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. *That I covenanted with you;* in solemnest manner reduced to the form and model of a covenant, that it might be sure and firm to you, as to your fathers, in whose time I made this covenant, and with you in them. *When ye came out of Egypt;* when I brought you out of Egypt, the house of bondage. *My spirit,* of strength and courage, of wisdom and understanding, of zeal and fervency, to carry you through this work, *remaineth among you;* still doth dwell in you, shall be continued to you, and give direction and success. *Fear ye not;* let no discouraging surmises settle in your mind or weaken your hands. There were as many improbabilities lay in bar to your getting out of Egypt, yet my word, covenant, and Spirit overcame all; fear not therefore, I am the same, and with you, as with your fathers.

6 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; [f]Yet once, it *is* a little while, and [g]I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry *land;*

[f] ver. 21. Heb. 12. 26.

[g] Joel 3. 16.

Yet once; after many repetitions and confirmations of the new covenant, one more repetition, and but one more, rests to be made. * *It is a little while;* comparatively it was little: though five hundred and seventeen years from the second of

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Darius Hystaspes to the incarnation of Christ, a long time to us, who are short-lived, and short-sighted, but a little time compared with that between the first promise to Adam and Christ's coming; or take any other shorter period, as between Abraham or David and Christ, this last period is short, a little while. *I will shake;* whether it be metaphorical or literal, it was verified at the time of Christ's coming into the world. After the return of the captivity, what with the commotions among the Grecians, Persians, and Romans, which began soon after this time, (the prophet points at this,) it was metaphorically fulfilled, all states were shaken either with invasions from abroad, or intestine dissensions among themselves: literally it was fulfilled by prodigies, and earthquakes, &c., as some have observed and recounted, at the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ. *The heavens;* either states and governments of the world, or church affairs, which in Scripture are called the heavens; or the material heavens, and the firmament. *The earth,* which, either figuratively or literally taken, will agree well with the text, and the history of times. *The sea;* one part of that which is called earth, this lower globe. *The dry land,* the other part of this inferior world; and both may, as former words, be literally or figuratively taken, and which better I do not undertake to determine.

h Gen. 49.10. Mal. 3. 1.

7 And I will shake all nations, [h]and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

I will shake all nations; which was literally fulfilled in the overthrow of the Persian monarchy by the Grecians, in the civil wars and succeeding troubles among Alexander's successors, the growth of the Roman power by the subduing their neighbours, and their dissensions and homebred wars, all hushed by Augustus a little before Christ's birth. These convulsions began a little after this prophecy, and continued long, in which the Jews, under the Maccabees, had their share. *The Desire of all nations shall come;* Christ, the most desirable, because the most helpful to all nations, which some proselytes in all ages did come to the knowledge of, and did earnestly desire; and who was desired by all that knew their own misery, and his sufficiency to save them, who was to be the light of the Gentiles as well as the glory of his people Israel. The Messiah's coming (the Jews do own) is foretold in this text, yet will they not see how this *yet a little while* is long since past, and the true Messiah long since come. *I will fill this house,* which you now build, this second temple. The first had a fulness of glory in its magnificent structure, rich ornaments, and costly sacrifices, but this was a worldly glory; that which is here promised is a heavenly glory from the presence of Christ in it. He that was the brightness of his Father's glory, who is the glory of the church, appeareth in this second temple. *With glory,* of my presence, preaching, healing, and comforting, saith the Messiah, the King of glory, who entered these everlasting doors, Psal. xxiv. 7, 8. This was before the desolation of this temple by the Romans, a demonstration that the Messiah should come whilst this second temple stood. But now the hardened Jew seeks to evade this text. *Saith the Lord of hosts:* this is a solemn sealing the certainty of the thing in this prophet, and Zechariah, and Malachi, who style him Lord of hosts near a hundred times.

8 The silver *is* mine, and the gold *is* mine, saith the LORD of hosts.

The right as indisputable, the treasures of both as full and large, doubt not therefore but I will give enough to build this house; and I could beautify it with these as much as the first temple, but I intend a greater glory. I am the Proprietor, others but trustees; I have the full disposal of all.

1 John 1. 14.

9 [i]The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the

k Ps. 85. 8, 9. Luke 2. 14. Eph. 2. 14.

LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give [k]peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

The glory, which God intends to put upon this temple. Solomon, and a rich people, with incredible spoils taken from conquered nations, gave a glory to the first house, but God himself will give the glory of this house. *This latter house,* which poor captives and feudatory governors do build, this second temple: the prophet speaks of it as if it were already a house, whereas it was now to be built. What God accounts a glory, must be somewhat better than silver and gold. *Greater than of the former;* more truly glory, and in higher degrees; the least of Christ is greater glory than all the magnificence of Solomon. There were no more but two houses built by God's appointment, into the latter of which the Messiah was personally to come, as Mal. iii. 1; therefore he came before that latter temple was destroyed, that is, 1684 years ago, when at two months old he was presented in the temple, embraced and confessed by Simeon, some seventy years before the temple was burnt by the Romans. *In this place;* in my house, type of Christ, and who is the glory of it. *Will I give peace;* a spiritual, internal, and heavenly peace, in pardoning guilt and destroying sin, which displeaseth God, and disquieteth man himself. Christ made peace on his cross, preached or published it to the world, and gives it to them by the power of his Spirit. *Saith the Lord of hosts;* solemnly avowed by the Lord of hosts, who cannot deceive, or be deceived.

10 ¶ In the four and twentieth *day* of the ninth *month,* in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,

This tenth verse is an introduction to the fourth solemn discourse or sermon the prophet makes to this people, and there is nothing difficult in it but what hath been opened already.

In the four and twentieth day of the ninth month; two months and two days after the third sermon, ver. 2. *The ninth month,* Heb. *Casleu;* part of our November and December. *Darius;* which Darius this was, see chap. i. 1, 15. *Haggai:* see chap. i. 3.

11 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; [l]Ask now the priests *concerning* the law, saying,

l Lev. 10. 10, 11. Deut. 33. 10. Mal. 2. 7.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts: the prophet comes with his double parable, or problem, but not of his own head, but in the name of the Lord of hosts. *Ask;* consult with, desire the solution of the following case. *The priests;* whose office bound them to study the law, and to answer all cases of conscience, their lips should retain knowledge, Mal. ii. 7. *Concerning the law;* what the law saith in the case; not what the church, but what the Scripture saith.

12 If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No.

If one, any one, *bear,* carry away from the altar, or the priest's hands, *holy flesh,* part of the sacrifice, legally and ceremonially sanctified, or made holy by the altar on which the whole was sanctified, of which a part is supposed to be carried away *in the skirt of his garment,* in the lap of his garment, or in any other cloth or napkin, and this cloth touch any common thing, as *bread,* &c., shall that common thing by such contact become legally or ceremonially holy? *The priests answered:* who these priests were is not mentioned, but it is likely that there were some among the people who did by the prophet's persuasion go and propose the case, and they received the answer as here in the negative, for neither mediate nor yet immediate touch of holy things could make common things or unholy persons holy.

13 Then said Haggai, If *one that is* [m]unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.

m Num. 19. 11.

Now the second case is proposed for resolution, &c. *If one that is unclean;* ceremonially or legally polluted, and unclean. *By a dead body;* for such touch, though at unawares, did pollute, Numb. xix. 13. *Touch any of these;* bread or pottage, wine, or oil, or meat. *Shall it be unclean?* shall that which the unclean (by touch of the dead) doth touch become unclean, or no? Though a mediate touch of what is holy will not make holy, yet will not a mediate touch of what is polluted defile whatsoever it toucheth? *It*

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shall be unclean; it is resolved affirmatively, It shall be polluted.

14 Then answered Haggai, and said, n Tit. 1. 15. [n]So *is* this people, and so *is* this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so *is* every work of their hands; and that which they offer there *is* unclean.

Now is the case applied. As common things touched by holy things are not sanctified, and as polluted persons touching what is clean pollute it; as holy things did not by touch and bodily application make him legally holy who was common, but a polluted person made all he touched and handled unclean; so unsanctified and polluted Jews polluted God's ordinances, while the outward performing of legal and ceremonial duties, such as bringing, offering, eating, dragging about their legal sacrifices, left them as unholy in themselves and as unacceptable to God as they were before. Somewhat more then is to be done. The soul is first to be purified, that they and we may offer up a pure offering. *So is the people;* the body of the Jews, or the most part of them. *So is this nation:* this ingeminateth the same thing, to intimate to us how God resenteth it, and how we should be affected with it. *Before me;* in God's account, or in his sight, who seeth indeed what men are, and what their actions are. *So is every work of their hands;* whatever they do in sacred or civil matters, they make a shift to pollute all by polluted hands, by leprous touches. *That which they offer there,* what they do bring to the altar with impure hearts and hands, is more polluted by them than sanctified by the altar. *Is unclean;* really impure; though it seem externally clean and holy, it is unsuitable to the purity of a holy God. In sanctified actions all is spoiled by unsanctified hearts. Thence it is that uncleanness is derived on their best works, and consecrated rites do not, cannot sanctify profane spirits.

o ch. 1. 5. 15 And now, I pray you, [o]consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD:

And now; furthermore consider. *I pray you:* he affectionately entreats them to observe. *From this day;* this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, ver. 10. *And upward,* through past years; trace year after year, and your successes and disappointments in them, observe all years past before you would set upon the rebuilding of the temple after you had intermitted it; some years passed, ten, or fifteen, or twenty, or forty, (or more say some,) between your surceasing from the work and beginning to rebuild. *Before a stone was laid upon a stone;* the prophet meaneth either before they began to lay one stone upon another in the foundation laid in Cyrus's time, or before they began to lay the foundation of the walls of the courts and outward edifices. *In the temple;* either strictly taken for the house of God, or more largely for the rest of the buildings about the house: this tacitly reproves their sloth; it was the temple they neglected, which they did long for in Babylon. *Of the Lord;* so much the greater their sin, for that it was the Lord's temple was slighted.

p ch. 1. 6, 9. Zech. 8. 10. 16 Since those *days* were, [p]when *one* came to an heap of twenty *measures*, there were *but* ten: when *one* came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty *vessels* out of the press, there were *but* twenty.

Since those days; all that while the temple lay neglected, and you were contented with maimed and half worship, men were disappointed half in half. *When one came to an heap,* which he expected would prove *twenty measures,* ephahs, or bushels, or what other measure you please, *there were but ten;* it proved but half your hopes; thus your corn failed: but your oil much more failed, and you found but two where you expected five: this barrenness you cannot be ignorant of.

q Deut. 28. 22. 1 Kin. 8. 37. ch. 1. 9. Amos 4. 9. r ch. 1. 11. s Jer. 5. 3. Amos 4. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11. 17 [q]I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail [r]in all the labours of your hands: [s]yet ye *turned* not to me, saith the LORD.

I smote; my hand was visible in your losses, scarcity, and disappointments. *You;* the persons put for their labours, their corn, vines, and olives. *With blasting;* burning and scorching winds, that blasted all. *With mildew;* with too much clammy moisture, that like glue cleaves to fruits, and turns to a corrupting of them. *With hail;* which in these colder countries many times by its violence destroys corn, fruits, and trees, but in those countries doth it oftener. Now here was in these somewhat more of the hand of God, and so the punishment was, as more grievous, so more visible. *All the labours;* in your ploughing and sowing for harvest, in planting of olives and vines for a vintage. *You turned not to me;* you did not see my hand, though you felt it, you did not repent of your sinful neglect of me, my worship, and temple, nor thought of building my house. *Saith the Lord;* this attested with God's own hand for witness hereto.

18 Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth *month*, *even* from [t]the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider *it*. t Zech. 8. 9.

See ver. 15. Make you observation from the day when you began to build on the old foundation laid many years ago in the time of Cyrus. *Consider it;* let that be the precise day from which you begin your reckoning. By this the prophet excites them to believe and wait, since he doth in the name of the Lord so expressly promise a blessing, and tells them when it shall begin to come unto them, and would have them observe how truly he speaks.

19 [u]Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless *you*. u Zech. 8. 12.

Your seed for the next harvest is yet in your barns, unsown, and no one can make any conjecture yet, whether next year's increase shall be great and blessed, or whether it shall be blasted and little; I do not speak, saith Haggai, on conjecture, but in the name of the Lord foretell and promise you, that it shall be a plentiful harvest to you. Nor have your fruit trees yet put forth, no sign yet appears what vintage you shall have, what store of wine, oil, figs, and pomegranates, which are your choice and rich fruits; but in the word of God I tell you, you shall be blessed in them all, and have a large produce, a joyful vintage. *From this day:* see ver. 10, 15. *I will bless you,* in all your labour; as before you were blasted in all because you neglected, so now you shall be blessed in all because you diligently build, the temple of the Lord.

20 ¶ And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth *day* of the month, saying,

See ver. 10, 15.

21 Speak to Zerubbabel, [x]governor of Judah, saying, [y]I will shake the heavens and the earth; x ch. 1. 14. y ver. 6, 7. Heb. 12. 26.

Speak my word, and in my name, saith the Lord. *To Zerubbabel governor of Judah:* see chap. i. 1, 12. *I will shake the heavens and the earth:* see ver. 6.

22 And [z]I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and [a]I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. z Dan. 2. 44. Matt. 24. 7. a Mic. 5. 10. Zech. 4. 6. & 9. 10.

I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms: now Babylonians are subjected to the Persian power, and this standeth on the strength of many kingdoms, and seems to be one throne secured by all the power of the known world, and can hardly be hoped to be hereafter better than an enemy and opposer of the Jews, and their restoring of the worship of God: for comfort in this case here is foretold God's overthrowing them, in case they oppose. *I will destroy the strength:* this seems an explaining of the former, and a confirming it too. Though the Gentiles of many kingdoms,

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united in all their strength, set to hinder this work, this shall succeed so contrary to their expectation, that not you, but they shall find destruction as the end thereof; which was verified in the successive ruin of the Persian, Grecian, and Syrian kingdoms, all which oppressed the church, and were destroyed for it. *Every one by the sword of his brother:* this passage foreshows that God will, by suffering civil wars to arise among these nations, ruin them by themselves, as in truth they did: now whilst those commotions and overthrows perplex and hurt the Jews, yet they were an occasion sometimes of some respite to them; their enemies were engaged on other designs, and could not mind mischief to the Jews.

23 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, [b]and will make thee as a signet: for [c]I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.

b Cant. 8. 6. Jer. 22. 24. Ecclus. 49. 11.
c Is. 42. 1. & 43. 10.

In that day; during those days of troubles, wars, and destruction, and particularly towards the end of them. *I will take thee;* advance, honour, defend, and own. *O Zerubbabel:* personally understood it respecteth the beginning of those days. Politically understood, it refers to all those times in which God promiseth he would, and indeed did, preserve, guide, and honour such governors of his people, who were as Zerubbabel was; somewhat of which promise and performance you may observe in the times succeeding unto, and through, the Maccabees' times. Typically this refers to Christ, and the setting up of his kingdom, shadowed out by the government of Zerubbabel. *My servant:* the style changed seems to point to him who was God's most beloved servant, Isa. xlii. 1; lii. 13. *The son of Shealtiel,* who was one of the progenitors of the Messiah, Matt. i. 12; Luke iii. 27. *Will make thee as a signet:* which is very highly valued, carefully kept, and used to confirm and ratify gifts, edicts, and patents, Dan. vi. 17. So shall the antitypical Zerubbabel, the Messiah, be advanced, loved, and inviolably preserved King, and supreme over his church, for he is the chosen One, the beloved One, in whom God was well pleased, as the Chaldee paraphrast, and Matt. iii. 17.

ZECHARIAH.

THE ARGUMENT.

ZECHARIAH is the second prophet who cometh from God to the returned captives, and his errand to them was both to second Haggai's exhortations, and to reveal more fully than he doth all the future revolutions and events, to the final desolation of Jerusalem and the second temple by the Romans, and the rejection of the Jews for their sins against all the mercies of their God, and for their rejecting and murdering of the Messiah; who, rejected of the Jews, taketh in the Gentiles, and establisheth his church amongst them; which is revealed unto Zechariah, and communicated to the Jews by him; with a declaration of the future ruin of the Persian kingdom by the Grecians, and also of the wars of the Seleucidæ and Lagidæ, and their overthrow by the Romans; during the series of which times, the Jews shall be grown numerous, wealthy, and powerful, and, so long as they keep their covenant with God, shall do wonderful things, and be eminently owned of God, and be either wonderfully secured amidst these troubles, or more wonderfully victorious over those that trouble them. And indeed what Zechariah foretold, or promised to them, was in its time made good amongst them; his predictions were punctually fulfilled; if the promises were not, it was because the Jews by their sins cut themselves off from the promises, which may be observed in those intervals of times between Zechariah's prophesying and the coming of the Messiah. Now the first interval was above two hundred years, to the death of Alexander the Great; during which time the Jews enjoyed the common peace with the subjects of the Persian empire, and the particular favour of Alexander the conqueror during his life. These years were years of growth to the Jews. The next interval, through the wars of Alexander's divided captains, and between the Seleucidæ and the Lagidæ, was an interval of some great troubles, and yet of greater preservation to the Jews. The next interval is that of the Maccabees, during which those victories were gotten which do almost exceed our belief. But whilst thus times were changed, the Jews continued much the same, unthankful to God, cold in religion, and added to their sins daily; till at last God delivered them into the hands of the Romans, whose general, Pompey the Great, deposed Hyrcanus from the throne, and restored the high priesthood to him. From henceforth the Jews' sins and miseries grow together, till that was accomplished, chap. xiv. 2, the city Jerusalem taken, the houses rifled, &c. Thus by various intermixture of providences, God did try the Jews, whether they would, as became his people, repent of former sins, amend their future doings, believe his promises, and obey his precepts, that he might bless them; so should all the good foretold by this prophet have crowned them. But if they failed (as they did) in those points of duty, then all the evil threatened should (as it did) overtake them, and, as Zechariah foretold, continue on them, as it doth to this day. This prophecy then contains the revolutions of the Jews, and the empires of Persia and Greece, and the Romans; in whose times the Jews, by killing the Lord of life, filled up their measure, and by whose hands God punished them, destroying their polity, razing their city, burning their temple, and captivating the people, which lasteth to this day. The better to represent all these at once to your view, take this following scheme.

Zechariah doth,
- 1. Exhort to present repentance and reformation, chap. i., ii., vii., viii.
- 2. Promise
  - Present blessings, chap. i., ii.; viii. 9—15.
  - Future mercy, and that
    - Under Persian government, chap. viii. 3—7.
    - Alexander and the Grecians, chap. ix. 8.
    - In the Maccabees' times, chap. ix. 12—15; xii. 6.
- 3. Encourage
  - Joshua, chap. iii.
  - Zerubbabel, chap. iv.
- 4. Threaten
  - The enemies of the Jews, chap. i. 21; ii. 9; ix. 1—8; xii. 1—4, 9.
  - The sinful and impenitent Jews, chap. iv.; xi. 1; xiv. 1, 2.
- 5. Foretell
  - The Messiah's coming, chap. iii. 8—10; vi.; viii. 19—21; ix. 9, 10; xiii. 7.
  - The Jews' rejecting him, chap. xi. 10—12, &c.
  - God's
    - Avenging this sin on the Jews, chap. xiv. 1, 2.
    - Calling in the Gentiles, chap. viii. 20—23; xii. 10; iii. 8, 9; vi. 12, 13, &c.
    - Continued protection of the church of Christ among the Gentiles, chap. xiv. 3, to the end.

All which, either in dark, yet significant, types or emblems, or else in plain and easily intelligible words, is represented to us by this prophet.

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CHAP. I.

Zechariah exhorteth to repentance, 1—6. *His vision of the horses and their angelic riders,* 7—11. *At the prayer of the angel comfortable promises are made to Jerusalem,* 12—17. *The vision of the four horns, and the four carpenters,* 18—21.

B. C. cir. 520. IN the eighth month, [a]in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD [b]unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

a Ezra 4. 24. Hag. 1. 1.
b Ezra 5. 1. Matt. 23. 35.

In the eighth month; called both Marchesvan and Bul by the Hebrews, and answers to part of our October and November. Two months after Haggai began to encourage the Jews to build the temple. *Darius;* son of Hystaspes, and the third Persian monarch: see Hag. i. 1; and again ver. 15, at large. *Came the word of the Lord:* here is his warrant and Divine call, the Lord communicated to him what he was to communicate to others. *Zechariah:* his name bespeaks him a remembrancer of God, or it may speak God remembering him, and the rest of this people. *The son;* the Jews called the descendants in right line sons, though they were grandsons, or great-grandsons; and in this sense some say Zechariah is the son of Baruch, and the son of Iddo. This Zechariah is not he that is mentioned 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, this is too early by many years; nor is this Zechariah the father of John Baptist, this is as much too late; but most likely it is that Zechariah whom the Jews slew between the temple and the altar, Matt. xxiii. 35. *Berechiah:* this name is expressly mentioned Matt. xxiii., and his time exactly suits the time pointed at by the evangelist. *Iddo:* one of this name you have 2 Chron. ix. 29, but this is too old to be this in the text, for there will be found (as Wolphius in Ezram notes) four hundred and fifty years' distance between Iddo the seer and this Iddo mentioned in the text. *The prophet;* whether Zechariah or Iddo I determine not.

† Heb. *with displeasure.*

2 The LORD hath been †sore displeased with your fathers.

The Lord, the holy, the mighty One, your God, the just Governor of the world, *hath been sore displeased;* so long provoked, that his displeasure at last enkindled within his breast, and broke out into that flame which hath consumed your land, city, and temple. *With your fathers;* all that were progenitors, forefathers to the returned captives, from their entrance into Canaan, but especially since the apostacy in Jeroboam's time; for many hundred years your predecessors have provoked God by their notorious sins, even to the days of their captivity.

c Jer. 25. 5. & 35. 15. Mic. 7. 19. Mal. 3. 7. Luke 15. 20. Jam. 4. 8.

3 Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn [c]ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.

Therefore, Heb. *And. Say;* command and require. *Unto them* of the captivity who are returned to their own land. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts;* in my name, by the authority I have over them as Lord of hosts, require they hear and obey. *Turn ye unto me;* repent ye of all your sins, leave them, set your hearts on my law to obey it, on my worship to give me it, on my temple to re-edify it. *Saith the Lord of hosts;* who can punish your refusal, who can protect you in your return, and reward your obedience. *I will turn unto you,* with blessings, with all blessings, which my presence brings to a repenting people. It was woe with you, and your fathers, when I departed from them, but it shall be as well with them when I return unto them. *Saith the Lord of hosts;* that you may be assured hereof, I promise it to you, and will be engaged to perform, as Lord of hosts, as having all things at my disposal.

d 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16.

4 Be ye not as your fathers, [d]unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; [e]Turn ye now from your evil ways, and *from* your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD.

e Is. 31. 6. Jer. 3. 12. & 18. 11. Ezek. 18. 30. Hos. 14. 1.

Be ye; you who have seen the sorrows of a long captivity, who are wonderfully brought back, who are under the teachings of rod and staff. *The former prophets;* all the former prophets, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16. *Cried;* preached earnestly, frequently, and compassionately. *Turn ye now from your evil ways;* now, to-day, yet before it is too late, O turn from vicious, sinful courses and ways; from your atheism, idolatry, murders, oppressions, and adulteries. *And from your evil doings:* it is repeated that it might be more impressive upon them. The prophets importunately entreated them to cease from evil, Isa. i. 16; xxxi. 6; Jer. iii. 12; Ezek. xviii. 30; Hos. xiv. 1. *They did not hear;* they did not because they would not, they regarded not what I said by my prophets, neither could they be persuaded to it. *Nor hearken unto me:* this obstinate disobedience is twice together charged on them, to make their sin appear in its greatness.

5 Your fathers, where *are* they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?

Your fathers, where are they? but where are your disobedient fathers? Are they not buried in a strange land? Did they not die of those diseases? Were they not consumed with famine and the sword, as was menaced against them? *And the prophets:* some apply this to the false prophets who promised peace, but where are they now? But it is better understood of the true prophets, who died as others; they do not nor must live always to warn you.

f Is. 55. 1.

6 But [f]my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not ‖ take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, [g]Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.

‖ Or, *overtake.*
g Lam. 1. 18. & 2. 17.

But my words, the dreadful menaces which I spake by my prophets, *and my statutes,* the decreed judgments which my provoked justice resolved to execute on them, *which I commanded my servants the prophets;* which by my prophets as my heralds I proclaimed and published. *Did they not take hold of your fathers?* overtake as a pursuing enemy overtakes and seizeth on his enemy, and spoileth him; have not my judgments thus taken hold both on your fathers and on you? *They returned and said:* by this it should seem that Zechariah gave them time to consider what answer to give. *So hath he dealt with us;* it is true, as God said he would do, so he hath done against us, our fathers, our families, our cities and temples. God's words have not failed, they died not, though our fathers did. This may be an abstract of their repentance.

cir. 519.

7 ¶ Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which *is* the month Sebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

Sebat, which answers to part of our January. *Darius.* see Hag. i. 1, 15. *Came the word of the Lord, &c.:* see ver. 1. The first sermon Zechariah preached was three months before this, and that sermon was reproof, which probably had good effect, as ver. 6.

h Josh 5. 13. Rev. 6. 4.

8 I saw by night, and behold [h]a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that *were* in the bottom; and behind him *were there* [i]red horses, ‖ speckled, and white.

i ch. 6. 2, 7.
‖ Or, *bay.*

I saw: in a vision God communicates his word, mind, or will to the prophet. *By night;* either literally, it was by night that Zechariah had this vision, or with this it may note the obscurity and mysteriousness of the vision, for it may be emblematical, as the myrtles and the bottom are. *Behold;* mark well what I saw, as now I relate it to you. *A man;* one in a human shape, Christ Jesus in shape of a man; so he appeared to Ezekiel, chap. i. 26; xl. 3, and to Daniel, chap. vii. 13. *Riding;* in a posture of readiness, speed, and resolution to help his people, and to appear for them in some tokens of greatness and majesty, Psal. xlv. 4. *Upon a red horse:* both the beast is noted, a

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horse, bold, strong, speedy, and gallant; and the colour is noted also; in the same colour he appeared to Isaiah, chap. lxiii. 1—3; and Rev. vi. 4. This colour is a symbol of his coming to avenge his own just quarrel, and the unjust dealings of his and his people's enemies. *He stood among the myrtle trees;* he posteth himself in a convenient place to observe and be ready, (as needful,) among humble, verdant, fragrant, pleasant, and much-valued trees, emblem of the flourishing, fruitful, and excellent saints and servants of God. *In the bottom:* this bottom or low valley, in which the myrtles grew, (probably on some river's bank,) is an emblem of the church in a low, mourning, afflicted state; then it is most verdant, and fragrant as these trees, or as spices bruised in a mortar. *Behind him;* Christ was, as beseems a captain, in the head; the rest, as his soldiers or servants, are behind attending on him. *Red horses;* horses of the same colour, not without their riders, though they are not expressed; but it is a synecdoche, horses and horsemen are both intended, and these are angels, ver. 10. Now the colour of these horses is, 1. *Red*, denoting probably the bloody condition of states and kingdoms by wars one against another, either when God punisheth his church, or when he avengeth himself and his church on his enemies and hers; which will appear on a survey of the times past, when Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, or Roman empires did successively by wars do God's work, his strange work, &c.; Isa. x., xiv. 2. *Speckled;* a mixed colour, made up of white, red, and black, as some guess, an emblem of affairs of different complexion; not all prosperous, nor all unprosperous; not all dark, nor all light, as the day the prophet describes neither day nor night; such times did the Jews know, during the seventy prophetic weeks, from the beginning of them to the Messiah's coming. 3. *White;* an emblem of the best days and state the church should be in, so Rev. xix. 11, 14, and the empire too with it.

9 Then said I, O my lord, what *are* these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these *be*.

Then; so soon as he had seen and observed. *Said I;* Zechariah. *O my lord:* this was Christ the Lord of hosts. *What are these?* what is the meaning of these appearances or visions? *The angel;* Christ, the Angel of the covenant; so I take this Angel, that promiseth to inform the prophet, to be the same that appears as a man on the red horse among the myrtles.

10 And the man that stood among the
[k] Heb. 1. 14. myrtle trees answered and said, [k] These *are they* whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.

The man that stood among the myrtle trees: see ver. 8. *Answered;* gave answer to what I asked. *These;* horsemen. *They whom the Lord hath sent;* a periphrasis of angels, who are servants and ministers of the Divine Providence in the government of the world. *To walk to and fro through the earth:* God is pleased after the manner of men to speak of his managing the affairs of the world; men must employ others, because they need them, God will employ angels, though he needs them not. *The earth;* the empires which his churches were either helped or injured by: these were, partly by the pride of their emperors, partly by the flattery of their servants and ministers, and partly by the ignorance of the world at that time in matters of geography, thought to be the whole earth; and the Scripture sometimes useth phrases used and well known among men, though there be some impropriety in them.

[l] Ps. 103. 20, 21. 11 [l] And they answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.

They; the ministerial angels, signified by the horses and horsemen. *Answered the angel of the Lord;* or rather, the Angel the Lord, the uncreated Angel, who sent them out, and receives account what they had done. *We have walked to and fro;* as men who would give an exact account, survey every part, so we have searched all nations and kingdoms, walked the length and breadth of them. *Through the earth;* the world, but chiefly through the Babylonish empire, which accounts itself lord of all the earth. *Behold;* it is wonderful to be seen, and therefore we beseech thee, O Lord, to behold and consider this. *All the earth sitteth still;* as having ended their toil, or weathered the storm, composed their differences, and sheathed their swords; are full of peace, and sit still to take their ease. *And is at rest;* either the same thing repeated, to heighten the quiet of these states, or to confirm the truth of the thing, or to express the inward quiet of mind the people had with their outward quiet. The public peaceable, and every one's mind satisfied, this is the state of the earth, the empire which at that time ruled all.

12 ¶ Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, [m] O LORD of hosts, [m] Ps. 102. 13. Rev. 6. 10. how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation [n] Jer. 25. 11, 12. Dan. 9. 2. ch. 7. 5. [n] these threescore and ten years?

Then, when the surveying angels had made their report of the prosperity of the heathen, *the angel of the Lord,* the Angel, the Lord Christ, Mediator of the church, and Head of the church, *answered and said;* prays as one interceding. *O Lord of hosts:* Christ speaks to his Father, speaks as one much affected with the state of his afflicted church. *How long wilt thou not have mercy?* it is the expostulation that well befits a praying soul; it is not the inquiry of a discontented mind, but the request of one longing for mercy. So David, Psal. xiii. 1, 2; and the souls under the altar, Rev. vi. 10. *On Jerusalem,* thy chosen mountain, heir of promises to be re-edified; *and on Judah's cities* too, of whose rebuilding, peace, and prosperity thou hast, O Lord, spoken great things, Jer. xxx., xxxi., xxxii., xxxiii., and Ezek. xxxvi., xxxvii., &c. *Thou hast had indignation;* they have felt thine anger and hot displeasure, it was just, and is so still; but it is not to be perpetual. Thine anger hath smoked against the sheep of thy pasture. *These threescore and ten years;* the term prefixed for the captivity is fully come, it is the seventieth year of their miserable captivity; now show mercy, build Zion, and glorify thyself in doing it, for the set time is come. It is now seventy years since thy temple was burnt, and Jerusalem sacked; and full eighty years since Jeconiah with many of thy people were carried captive into Babylon, and somewhat more since many were carried with Jehoiakim, from which to the second of Darius are much about eighty-eight or nine years.

13 And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me *with* [o] good words [o] Jer. 29. 10. *and* comfortable words.

The Lord, God the Father, *answered the angel;* Christ, the uncreated Angel, Lord of angels and Redeemer of Israel. *That talked with me;* who had first talked by signs and visions, and next by explaining the mind and meaning of them, and answering the inquiries Zechariah made. *Good words;* suitable and seasonable. *Comfortable words:* the words ministered comfort to Jerusalem and the captives, the words imported deliverance and blessings.

14 So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am [p] jealous [p] Joel 2. 18. ch. 8. 2. for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.

So, i. e. when the Father had heard the Son and answered him; this is spoken to our apprehension, and so must be understood. *The angel* of the covenant, the Lord Christ. *That communed with me:* see ver. 13. *Cry thou;* now publish what thou hearest, preach by commission from me, and assure my poor captive, impoverished church, that God, my God and her God, will do good for her. *Saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts;* publish what God, Lord of hosts, and Father of his people, promised to do for them. *I am jealous;* I have been jealous against, but now am jealous for Jerusalem; my love is now heightened to a very high degree of compassion for my people, and of indignation against her enemies and oppressors. *For Jerusalem;* the city called by my name. *For Zion;* where my temple stood; those gates of Zion, which I loved more than all the dwellings of Jacob. *With a great jealousy;* that zeal I

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bear, and now will show for them, is great to a wonder; it is the zeal of a God who infinitely loves and pitieth his people.

15 And I am very sore displeased with
q Is. 47. 6. the heathen *that are* at ease: for [q] I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.

And I; the Lord of hosts, God of Israel, *am very sore displeased with the heathen;* exceedingly angry, and will show it, that they may see and feel it, my displeasure is grown up to the highest against them. *At ease;* secure in their strength, sing a requiem to themselves and trouble to Israel. See ver. 11. *I was but a little displeased* with mine own people, i. e. in comparison with the anger I bear against the heathen it was little, Psal. cxxxvii. *And they,* the heathen, Babylonians, *helped forward;* attempted to destroy whom I would but correct, Isa. x., xiv. I whipped to smart, you wounded to blood; I did wound to bind up, you did wound to kill, &c. It is an anthropopatheia. *The affliction:* it was more than they could do to provoke me more against them than their own sins did; but what I permitted for a while they did, and added to the affliction of Israel. I would prune, but they struck at the root.

r Is. 12. 1. & 54. 8. ch. 2. 10. & 8. 3. 16 Therefore thus saith the Lord; [r] I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the
s ch. 2. 1, 2. Lord of hosts, and [s] a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.

Therefore; because the enemy hath so barbarously and inhumanly added affliction to the afflicted, it is time to save and relieve. *I am returned:* when I was departed, and had withdrawn my presence, thus cruelly were my people handled; but now I will return, I will be with them, my presence shall restrain the violent and protect the innocent. *With mercies;* with tender, abundant, and promised mercies now they shall be comforted indeed. *My house;* the temple of God, the excellency of Jacob. *Shall be built in it;* shall be finished, the impediments shall be removed, what glory I have promised by Haggai, chap. ii. 9, I will put upon this house of mine in Jerusalem. *Saith the Lord of hosts:* this confirms the promise, and establisheth our faith, if we know the import hereof. *A line,* the builder's measuring line, shall be stretched out, to mark out walls, gates, palaces, streets, and houses in Jerusalem, that they may be built again in beauty and strength, with skill and art; and shall be once more the glory of the earth, and joy of Israel.

17 Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the
† Heb. *good.* Lord of hosts; My cities through † prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; [t] and
t Is. 51. 3. u Is. 14. 1. ch. 2. 12. & 3. 2. the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and [u] shall yet choose Jerusalem.

Cry yet: the prophet's commission is either enlarged, or more full instructions given to him, to raise the hope and stablish the faith of the people of God. *My cities:* Jerusalem and the cities of Judah are mine, saith the Lord, and as mine I will build, beautify, enrich, fortify, defend, and enlarge them. *Through prosperity,* through increase of families and persons, they shall send forth colonies, and plant new towns and cities; and through increase of wealth and cattle be able to build their cities, and stock their colonies. *Be spread abroad;* swarm as bees, and send out their young ones. *The Lord,* their God, *shall yet comfort Zion,* Zion his church, with comforts fit for a church. *Choose Jerusalem;* type of the civil state as here joined with Zion; the kingdom shall be blest in itself, and be a blessing to others, much like that Hos. xiv. 4, 5: all this an effect of my choosing it, and dwelling in it.

18 ¶ Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns.

Then; after I had seen those things, and heard those comfortable words, and received commission to publish all the good news I had heard. *I lifted up mine eyes:* he was so intent before, that he looked on nothing else; now he lifts up his eyes. *Saw;* clearly, certainly, and distinctly. *Behold four horns;* emblems of the enemies of the Jews, for strength, fierceness, and pride, and for their number, from all parts of the world.

19 And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What *be* these? And he answered me, [x] These *are* the horns which
x Ezra 4. 1, 4, 7. & 5. 3. have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

The prophet prays for information from the Angel, from Christ, who is the best Teacher. *What be these?* what may be the meaning of these horns, which I see, and know to be horns, and four in number? *These are the horns,* powers, states, and kingdoms, which have from all sides pushed at, broken, and tossed my people, sorely bruised some and destroyed others: these horns are probably, on the north, the Syrians, Assyrians, and Babylonians; on the east, the Moabites and Ammonites; on the south, Edomites and Egyptians; on the west, the Philistines; all which had many a time spoiled the Jews. *Judah;* the two tribes, which were the kingdom of Judah. *Israel;* the ten tribes, carried away by Shalmaneser; or the relics of Israel, which adhered to the house of David.

20 And the Lord shewed me four carpenters.

The Lord; Jehovah, who before is the Angel, i. e. Christ, he is the eternal One, the great God. *Showed me;* both proposed the thing to be seen, and gave eyes to see and discern it. *Four carpenters;* known by their garb and tools to be carpenters, or smiths, as the Hebrew bears it.

21 Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These *are* the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which [y] lifted up *their* y Ps. 75. 4, 5 horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.

Then, so soon as I could propose the question, immediately upon sight of the carpenters, *said I,* Zechariah, *What come these to do?* he saw they were men, inquires not who they were, but what was their business and design: perhaps it is fittest for us to rest also in the knowledge of what they are to do, and inquire no further who they were. *And he spake;* the Lord Christ informed the prophet. *These are the horns which have scattered Judah:* Christ doth in order to satisfy the inquiry first point to the four horns, of which ver. 18, 19, as if he should have said, Look you, there are four horns which have done mischief to Judah. *So that no man did lift up his head;* kept them so under, none had either strength or courage to lift up the head, and thus these horns proudly and cruelly destroyed my people. *But these,* these carpenters or smiths, are emblems of those instruments God will employ in breaking these destroyers. Here are four carpenters to break the four horns. *To fray them;* to strike a fear into them first; these kingdoms, signified by horns, shall lose their courage. *To cast out the horns;* then their authority and power shall be cast out easily. *The Gentiles;* heathen round about Judea. *Which lifted up their horn over,* have employed their arms and strength against, *the land of Judah,* the whole kingdom of Judah, God's people, *to scatter it,* to drive them out of God's inheritance. See ver. 19.

CHAP. II.

The vision of an angel sent to measure Jerusalem, and its flourishing state under God's protection foretold, 1—5. *The people warned to quit Babylon before its fall,* 6—9. *The promise of God's presence,* 10—13.

I LIFTED up mine eyes again, and look- 519.
ed, and behold [a] a man with a measuring a Ezek. 40. 3. line in his hand.

I, Zechariah, *lifted up mine eyes again:* this is the third emblem or vision he had seen. *Looked* very diligently and intently. *A man;* one in form of a man; some say it was Christ, others say a type of Nehemiah; it was an emblem of some master-builder to be sure, and it is probable the prophet took him for no more than a man. *With a measuring line in his hand;* he appeared ready and prepared to lay out the platform of Jerusalem for extent, form, and beauty.

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2 Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, [b] To measure Jerusalem, to see what *is* the breadth thereof, and what *is* the length thereof.

b Rev. 11. 1. & 21. 15, 16.

Whither goest thou? it is evident the prophet did not in so bold a manner inquire before, which may possibly be for that he apprehended this man to be one lesser than an angel; nor doth he ask the meaning of this hieroglyphic, but, understanding what it meant, the prophet inquires only where the platform was to be laid. *To measure;* to take the exact dimensions of it, that it may answer God's promise, and be capable to receive its inhabitants. *Jerusalem;* the city, which was to be built hereafter, but first the temple is to be built.

3 And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him,

The angel that talked; the great and glorious Angel, i. e. Christ Jesus himself, which had so long talked with Zechariah. *Went forth,* from the midst of the myrtle trees, where he was first seen: whither he is going is not said; perhaps to stand by, direct, and encourage the person that was going to measure Jerusalem. *Another angel went out to meet him;* a created angel, or a ministerial angel, as became his office, offers his service to Christ, who is Lord of angels.

4 And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, [c] Jerusalem shall be inhabited *as* towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein:

c Jer. 31. 27. Ezek. 36. 10, 11.

And said unto him; or, *And he said;* or, as the French, *Lequel lui dit, Which said unto him:* so it is plain that the Angel which now was going forth spake to that angel which came to meet him, or gave him orders what to do. *Run;* since you came so seasonably, hasten with all diligence, and from me tell that *young man,* Zechariah. *Jerusalem,* which hath so long lain in rubbish, which I once delighted in, which now seems desolate and hopeless, *shall be inhabited,* filled with inhabitants, *as towns without walls;* the suburbs of it shall be as towns unwalled for greatness of extent, and for safety and freedom from enemies and danger: their own multitudes of men shall be some safeguard to them; and they shall have my presence, a better safeguard. *Cattle,* brought thither for sacred uses, for sacrifices.

5 For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her [d] a wall of fire round about, [e] and will be the glory in the midst of her.

d Is. 26. 1. ch. 9. 8. e Is. 60. 19. Rev. 21. 23.

What was promised or foretold in the former verse is ratified in this by an account how it should be performed. *For I, saith the Lord;* that a thing so much above the hope of a present dejected people, so much too great for so weak and so few a people, might be believed and expected, God engageth he will perform the word. *A wall of fire;* which cannot be scaled, it would consume them that attempt it; nor undermined, none could come so near it: such a wall as once was Elisha's guard, 2 Kings vi. 16, 17, to which this place may possibly refer. Or it is an allusion to the manner of shepherds and travellers in those countries full of wild beasts, to make fires in the night to secure themselves. *Round about;* no part shall be unguarded, or open to the enemy. *And will be the glory in the midst of her;* my presence and favour shall make her glorious, Isa. iv. 5, 6.

6 ¶ Ho, ho, *come forth,* and flee [f] from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have [g] spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD.

f Is. 48. 20. & 52. 11. Jer. 1. 14. & 50. 8. & 51. 6, 45. g Deu. 28. 64. Ezek. 17. 21.

Ho, ho: since Jerusalem shall be safe, rich, and glorious by the presence and blessings of her God, the prophet calls to the sleepy Jews, as men that need be awakened. *Come forth;* set upon your journey for your own country and city, come out from your captive prisons. *And flee;* make all the haste you possibly can, and flee as men do who are pursued with danger, as men that are earnestly bent to get out of harm's way, as the manslayer to the city of refuge. The Hebrew hath only *and flee,* but our translators have by that guessed at what might fill up the expression, and read, *come forth,* &c. *From the land of the north;* Babylon, which lay north to Canaan. *For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven:* as I executed my threats in scattering you, so I will perform my promise, and gather you from all quarters of the world; arise, come away, therefore.

7 [h] Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest *with* the daughter of Babylon.

h Rev. 18. 4.

Deliver thyself: the proclamation for free return is published; up, then, and be gone. *O Zion;* O ye people who should dwell in Zion, ye daughters of Zion. *Dwellest;* keepest in Babylon when thou mightest go to Jerusalem. *With the daughter of Babylon:* perhaps this intimates that which kept many Jews in Babylon, wives or mistresses.

8 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that [i] toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.

i Deu. 32. 10. Ps. 17. 8. 2 Thess. 1. 6.

Some refer this to what went before, as a reason why the Jews should return, for God hath commanded it. I think it is an encouragement to the Jews to return, because God had promised to make them a glory, and now assures them that he will take a very particular care of them, therefore sends his Son, as a Judge or Vindex against the nations that had spoiled the Jews; or God sends his Son to them to inform them that it is their interest to unite with the Jews, and become the people of God, and be partakers of the glory and safety of God's Israel; however, to let them understand that it will be dangerous to do violence to Israel, as it would be dangerous to any one to violate what is most dear to him that can destroy the offender; to tell them Israel is the apple of God's eye.

9 For, behold, I will [k] shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and [l] ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me.

k Is. 11. 15. & 19. 16. l ch. 4. 9.

I will shake, or lift up, *mine hand,* my power and strength, *upon them;* against the nation and kingdom that doth violence to the people who are my glory, and I am theirs, saith the Lord. *They,* those people who comply not with him whom God sendeth, *shall be a spoil,* shall be overthrown and spoiled, and become a prey, *unto their servants;* the Jews, who were first spoiled by and then made servants to the nations who conquered, captivated, and hardly used the Jews; and indeed this was fulfilled in Esther's days, and in the Maccabees' times. *And ye,* either Jews, or heathen, or both, *shall know,* be convinced and own it, *that the Lord of hosts,* the great and faithful God, *hath sent me,* hath commissioned Christ to inform them, who are to make their choice what to do herein.

10 ¶ [m] Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I [n] will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD.

m Is. 12. 6. & 54. 1. Zeph. 3. 14. n Lev. 26. 12. Ezek. 37. 27. ch. 8. 3. John 1. 14. 2 Cor. 6. 16.

Sing and rejoice: now Christ calls them to rejoice in the goodness showed to them, and to sing forth the praises of him who showed it. *O daughter of Zion;* the whole nation of the Jews, the peculiar, redeemed, and restored people of God; they that had been in great and long captivity. *I come,* to execute judgments on thine adversaries, to complete thy deliverance and salvation; I come as foretold and promised, in the dispensations of Providence among the nations, in the performance of promises to you my people. *I will dwell in the midst of thee;* pitch my tabernacle, nay, build my habitation and house, and reside in it, give you my ordinances, my blessing, and my presence. This was fulfilled in part presently, and so through near five hundred years till Christ came, and ever since to his gospel church.

11 [o] And many nations shall be joined to the LORD [p] in that day, and shall be [q] my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and [r] thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

o Is. 2. 2, 3. & 49. 22. & 60. 3, &c. ch. 8. 22, 23. p ch. 3. 10. q Ex. 12. 49. r Ezek. 33. 33. ver. 9.

Many nations, and *great,* Heb.; it implieth both multitudes and greatness of nations; or, heathen and Gentiles, as the word beareth. *Shall be joined to the Lord;* become

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proselytes, inquire for, adhere to, and worship the God of Israel. *In that day;* when God shall lift up his hand for his people against their enemies, as Esth. viii. 17; when Christ shall be come in the flesh, and shall take down the partition wall. *Shall be my people;* covenant people, to love, fear, worship, and obey Christ. *I will dwell in the midst of thee:* see ver. 10. *Thou shalt know:* see ver. 9. *The Lord of hosts,* the sovereign Lawgiver, and Almighty Ruler of heaven and earth, *hath sent me,* the Messiah, and Zechariah his servant, *unto thee,* Jew and Gentile.

s Deu. 32. 9. t ch. 1. 17.

12 And the LORD shall [s]inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and [t]shall choose Jerusalem again.

The Lord; Jehovah, the God of Abraham and of his seed, who had cast off Judah, and seemed to quit his claim in his ancient inheritance, by a disseisin of seventy years. *Shall inherit;* claim, recover, possess, and delight in, as a man doth in his paternal inheritance. *Judah;* all his Israel; this tribe mentioned, but all the rest included. *His portion;* his treasure and peculiar people, his lot and part. *In the holy land,* Heb. *upon:* holy, not by any inherent holiness, but holy and selected, and set apart for a holy people consecrated to God. *Shall choose Jerusalem again;* the Lord will, as of old, choose Jerusalem for his seat.

u Hab. 2. 20. Zeph. 1. 7. v Ps. 68. 5. Is. 57. 15. † Heb. *the habitation of his holiness.* Deut. 26. 15. Is. 63. 15.

13 [u]Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up [v]out of †his holy habitation.

Be silent; murmur not, you that love not Zion; dispute not, you that think these promises are too good, too great; but, in silence, reverence and adore God in all his excellences and ways; wait, and expect the accomplishment of all by him who never utters more than he can and will do for his people. *O all flesh;* both Jew and Gentile; you are weak, short-sighted, and worthless; you are flesh, be silent and wait. *Before the Lord;* the wise, mighty, gracious, and faithful One; who never suffered a word of his to fall unfulfilled, nor will let any of these promises to fail. *He is raised up:* he speaks to our capacity; God is said to be raised in allusion to men who get up, or rise up, and set about what they will do; so here God is on this work already. *Out of his holy habitation;* either heaven, or his temple.

CHAP. III.

Under the type of Joshua the high priest receiving clean garments, 1—5, *and a covenant of promise from God,* 6, 7, *Christ, the Branch and Corner-stone, is foretold,* 8—10.

a Hag. 1. 1. b Ps. 109. 6. Rev. 12. 10. ‖ That is, *an adversary.* † Heb. *to be his adversary.*

AND he shewed me [a]Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and [b]‖Satan standing at his right hand †to resist him.

And he; the Lord of hosts, whose servant Zechariah was, and in whose name he spake. *Showed me;* in vision represented to me, Zechariah. *Joshua the high priest;* for that office was by hereditary right descended on him, and how mean soever his state was, yet still he was that great officer of the church. *Standing;* either as accused, and to make his defence; or rather ministering in his office, according to his duty. *Before the angel:* this angel was Christ, whose minister, or servant, the high priest was, as well as type of him. *Satan;* that adversary, as we might render the word, either Satan the devil, or some instrument of his stirred up by him, Sanballat, or, &c. *Standing at his right hand;* either because the accusation was true, or to hold his working hand from its work. *To resist him;* Joshua.

c Jude 9. d ch. 1. 17. Rom. 8. 33. e Amos 4. 11. Rom. 11. 5. Jude 23.

2 And the LORD said unto Satan, [c]The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that [d]hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: [e]*is* not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

The Lord said, i. e. Christ, the great Redeemer, Restorer, Lord, and Mediator of the church. *The Lord;* the great God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who as Mediator rather chooseth to rebuke him in his Father's name than in his own, though this he could have done. *Rebuke thee;* he who was accused was God's high priest, and to minister in the temple at Jerusalem, the city which God had chosen, in which respect it was sure that God would take cognizance of the matter and judge aright; he would prohibit Satan's attempts. *Is not this,* this man, this Joshua, *a brand plucked out of the fire?* like a brand half burnt, or all smutty with long lying in the fire of affliction? Reject him not for this.

f Is. 64. 6.

3 Now Joshua was clothed with [f]filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

At the time Zechariah saw this vision he saw also in what a mean, dirty, and tattered garb he was who represented the high priest. It was the hieroglyphic of Joshua, not Joshua himself. *Filthy garments;* emblem of a poor or sinful state, or both. *Stood:* see ver. 1. *Before the angel;* the Lord Christ, called the Angel.

g Is. 61. 10. Rev. 19. 8. Luke 15. 22.

4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, [g]and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

And he; the Lord Christ, who purifieth his church, who purgeth away her sin, and clothes her with rich and clean garments. *Answered;* so the Hebrew, and so this prophet speaks, though no question went before. It is an idiom of that language. *Spake;* commanded. *Those that stood before him;* some of the attendants, those ministerial angels, who were Christ's servants, and as such are represented standing before him. *Take away the filthy garments;* remove, or cause them to be removed, from him, as altogether unbeseeming his person, office, and employments. These filthy garments those angels took away, but another hand takes away what is signified by this emblem. *From him;* from this high priest Joshua. *He,* Christ, the Lamb of God, *said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee:* what angels could not take away, Christ did; he removed the filth of sin, the guilt and stain of it. *I will clothe,* adorn and beautify, *thee,* O Joshua, *with change of raiment;* clean and rich, emblem of graces and spiritual excellencies given to him.

h Ex. 28. 6. ch. 6. 11.

5 And I said, Let them set a fair [h]mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.

And I said: Zechariah takes the boldness to desire that for Joshua which might add to his veneration and authority; and he asks the thing of Christ, or rather Christ commandeth this be done. *Let them,* who minister before Christ, *set a fair mitre;* a rich and beautiful ornament for the head of the high priest; not a crown, which is for royal heads, but a tire, a pontifical ensign. *So they set,* as they were commanded by Christ at the request of the prophet. *And clothed him with garments;* all the garments which did appertain to the high priest, of which you read Exod. xxviii. 4, which probably were put on, though they are not expressly mentioned here. *The angel,* who is the Lord Christ himself, *stood by;* withdrew not till all this was done.

6 And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying,

The angel of the Lord, the Lord Christ, *protested;* solemnly declared and averred it, gave him to know.

i Lev. 8. 35. 1 Kings 2. 3. Ezek. 44. 16. † Or, *ordinance.* k Deu. 17. 9. Mal. 2. 7. † Heb. *walks.* 1 Tim. 4. 14. & 5. 5.

7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt [i]keep my ‖charge, then thou shalt also [k]judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee †places to walk among these that [l]stand by.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; the Father, whose will Christ reveals to us. *If thou,* Joshua, *wilt walk in my ways;* obey the precepts and holy commands of the law. *Wilt keep my charge;* the special charge and office of the high priest. *Thou shalt also judge my house;* be chief and

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ruler in the temple, and in the things that pertain to the worship of God there. *And shalt also keep my courts;* not as a door-keeper or servant, but as the chief, on whom others may wait and give attendance; and at last shalt have place among glorious angels, Heb. xii. 22.

m Ps. 71. 7. Is. 8. 18. & 20. 3. † Heb. men of wonder, or, sign. 44 Ezek. 12. 11. & 24. 24. n Is. 42. 1. & 49. 3. 5. & 52. 13. & 53. 11. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. o Is. 4. 2. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. & 33. 15. ch. 6. 12. Luke 1. 78.

8 Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they *are* m† men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth n my servant the oBRANCH.

Hear now; hitherto thou hast been entertained with emblems and hieroglyphics, but now, O Joshua, hear what these mean. *And thy fellows;* the other priests, thy associates in the priestly office, though inferior to thee. *That sit before thee;* as assessors or coadjutors in a council or assembly; the high priest as president, the other as members of the council sat with him; to let them know what these types mean. *They are men wondered at;* the worldly, profane, unbelieving, and ignorant sort of Jews wonder at them, and their hopes; at their labour and expenses in attempting to build such a house, with so little helps to raise such a structure out of rubbish. *I,* God the Father, *will bring forth* a much more wonderful work. *My servant the Branch;* Christ, Messiah, the Branch, Isa. iv. 2; xi. 1; Jer. xxxiii. 15.

p Ps. 118. 22. Is. 28. 16. q ch. 4. 10. Rev. 5. 6. r Jer. 31. 34. & 50. 20. Mic. 7. 18, 19. ch. 13. 1.

9 For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; pupon one stone *shall be* qseven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and rI will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

Here is an ellipsis, and to make it up we must repeat that of the 8th verse, *Hear now,* &c. For behold, (pointing to a particular stone,) that stone which I have laid, saith God, in the sight of Joshua, or which he saw laid in the building of the temple; on that one stone are seven eyes; and Joshua and his fellows are commanded to observe it, the meaning of which the angel will suggest to them presently. It is not improbable this one stone might be a corner-stone, and a principal corner-stone, and the eyes engraven on it so placed that they might look many ways; so it will be a more exact emblem of Christ the chief Corner-stone, and of his perfect knowledge and wisdom, fitting him to govern his church and provide for it. *I will engrave the graving;* the engraving engraved, i. e. most artificially, lively, and with excellent contrivance. *And I will remove;* or, and I have removed, I have pardoned the iniquity of this land at once. Thus the emblem or type, which I shall once more set before you in plainer words than those of our version. Hear now, O Joshua, thou and thy fellows, for behold there is one stone, and on that stone seven eyes, most curiously engraved, and this laid in thy sight, and in the sight of thy fellows: this learn by it, that the temple, founded on such a corner-stone, built by the wisdom of the chief Builder, guarded and watched over by all-seeing Providence, is the blessing and honour of that people, whose sins are all forgiven. The further spiritual meaning discovers the Messiah the chief Corner-stone, the gospel church founded thereon, guided by perfect wisdom, and preserved by never-erring Providence, and blest with the pardon of all her sins, taken away in one day, by the meritorious death of her Redeemer.

s ch. 2. 11. t 1 Kings 4. 25. Is. 36. 16. Mic. 4. 4.

10 s In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour t under the vine and under the fig tree.

In that day of building my temple, when it is finished, and in the day of removing the sins of my people, literally referring to the returned captive Jews; mystically, to the whole church in gospel days, when Christ, the chief Corner-stone, shall have purged away sin, and established his church. *Shall ye call every man his neighbour;* invite with love and peace, such as becomes neighbours, who are partakers of the same grace of God, and blessings of a Redeemer. *Under the vine;* to feast or refresh themselves under the pleasing shadow, and with the sweet, delicious fruit of the vine and fig tree, of both which there were ever greatest store, and of choicest taste, when the people of God, the Jews, did obey, worship, and fear the Lord, and long for the Messiah, and loved each other.

CHAP. IV.

By the golden candlestick is foreshowed the good success of Zerubbabel's foundation, 1—10; *by the two olive trees the two anointed ones,* 11—14.

a ch. 2. 3. b Dan. 8. 18.

AND a the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, b as a man that is wakened out of his sleep,

The angel that talked with me; Christ, who for some time had left Zechariah, and bestowed some time on new dressing, and cleansing, and adorning Joshua, the high priest. *Came again:* this is the fourth time of Christ's revealing his mind to this prophet by vision. *Waked me;* either roused him out of a drowsy fit and bodily sleep, or out of an ecstasy, or wonder, that surprising him, he was as if asleep; or shaked him out of a sluggish negligence, or an observance of these things.

c Ex. 25. 31. Rev. 1. 12. † Heb. with her bowl. d Ex. 25. 37 Rev. 4. 5. ‖ Or, seven several pipes to the lamps, &c.

2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold c a candlestick all *of* gold, † with a bowl upon the top of it, d and his seven lamps thereon, and ‖ seven pipes to the seven lamps, which *are* upon the top thereof:

What seest thou? what dost thou discern, of that thou didst before, half asleep half awake, see, but didst not observe? *I have looked;* since awakened and roused, I have very diligently viewed and observed, and I see. *A candlestick:* by God's appointment there was a candlestick to be made, as a utensil and ornament of the temple, Exod. xxv. 31. *All of gold;* so was the candlestick to be for the temple, all of pure gold, Exod. xxxvii. 17. *A bowl,* or basin, or round and large oil cruet, capable of so much oil as would suffice to feed all the lamps in the candlestick. *Upon the top of it;* on the highest part of the candlestick, on the top of the candlestick on the top of the shaft, or on the head of the candlestick. *Seven lamps;* either so many, because the temple candlestick had just so many, or because of some perfection supposed to be in this septenary number. *Seven pipes;* one pipe to each lamp, the mouth of which pipe joined to the bowl or basin, and received oil from it; the other end of the pipe fastened to the lamp conveyed oil into the lamp. *To the seven lamps;* so each of the seven lamps had a pipe reaching from it to the bowl or basin. *On the top thereof:* these lamps were so set as to stand somewhat higher than the body of the candlestick.

e ver. 11, 12. Rev. 11. 4.

3 e And two olive trees by it, one upon the right *side* of the bowl, and the other upon the left *side* thereof.

Two olive trees; some say branches; better trees, which, well rooted, will continue, and perpetually supply the bowls, and that will supply the lamps. *One;* not more, or fewer than two. *Upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof;* so placed that the candlestick stood between them, and each tree stood at distance from the candlestick, on the right and left hand thereof, that they might distil their oil into the bason or bowl: all which is an emblem of the church, both what it is made of, pure gold; what made for, to be light in the world; to shine as lamps that continually burn, maintained with pure oil, distilled from the olive trees, not pressed out by man, but continually, freely, and abundantly dropping or flowing from these olive trees.

4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What *are* these, my lord?

So, after that I had seen and discerned, *I answered:* see chap. iii. 4. *Spake to the angel that talked with me:* see chap. i. 19; ii. 3. *What are these?* see chap. i. 9.

5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

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Then; when the prophet had inquired into the meaning of these emblems. *The angel that talked with me:* see chap. i. 19. *Knowest thou not?* it is not a question either to upbraid the prophet as an ignoramus, Christ doth not reproach his for not knowing deep and dark mysteries at first sight of them; nor is it the question of one that was uncertain about the thing inquired into, Christ knew the prophet's ignorance though he ask the question; but it is to excite him to attend and learn. *And I said, No;* Zechariah freely confesseth he knew not, he pretends not to know what indeed he did not know. *My lord:* he owns the greatness and sovereignty of Christ.

6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This *is* the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, [f]Not by ‖ might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

[f] Hos. 1. 7. ‖ Or, *army.*

Then; so soon as Zechariah had owned his nescience. *He;* Christ. *This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel;* or, This word of the Lord is to Zerubbabel, it is particularly designed to him, and in an emblem prefigureth what a church, how precious as gold, how full of light, how framed, how maintained it should be by God himself. This hieroglyphic is a representation of what the church should be. *Zerubbabel;* the governor, on whose hand much of the care and trouble of building the temple did lie; yet let him not be discouraged, for this work lieth on God. *Not by might;* or, by an army, as the word bears, Hebrew; you may think you shall need an army to defend you in carrying on this building, which ill-will of neighbours about you hindereth, but I tell you there is no need of an army. *Nor by power;* courage and valour, all which make arms considerable; no need of this neither. Or might and power here may be of the same import, and added only for elegancy and assurance of the thing. *But by my spirit;* which garnished the heavens and can beautify the church; which moved upon the darkness in the creation, and brought forth a beautiful and mighty structure, and can do as much now. By spirit we may understand either the Third Person of the Trinity engaged in building the church, with the Father and the Son; or by spirit you may understand the power of God. Either is encouragement enough, and secureth the future effect, and promiseth a future state of the church, pure and precious as gold, full of knowledge in the doctrines of God, as this candlestick with seven lamps, full of holiness from abundant measures of grace, persevering in it by continued supplies from the Spirit of grace in ordinances, &c.

7 Who *art* thou, [g]O great mountain? before Zerubbabel *thou shalt become* a plain: and he shall bring forth [h]the headstone *thereof* [i]*with* shoutings, *crying*, Grace, grace unto it.

[g] Jer. 51. 25. Matt. 21. 21. [h] Ps. 118. 22. [i] Ezra 3. 11, 13.

Who art thou, O great mountain? the angel having resolved the question about building the temple, either himself doth deride all the power of opposers, or the prophet doth triumph over it, Who art thou? Sanballat and confederates, or Satan, or Babylon, or all put together, what are you all, compared with the power of God, the Lord of hosts, who by his Spirit will finish this work? *Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain:* thou standest in the way of my servant, and thinkest his weakness and poverty cannot remove thee; but if he cannot surmount thy height, I will bring it down and make thee as a plain, and my servant shall as easily go on with my work as a traveller goeth over a way plained before him. *And he,* Zerubbabel, as the servant of Christ, *shall bring forth the head-stone;* shall, as is usual, assist at the laying of the last finishing stone, as well as he saw and assisted when the first foundation stone was laid. *Thereof;* of the second temple. *With shoutings;* with loud acclamations, the signs of great joy and satisfaction in the thing done. *Crying, Grace, grace unto it;* praying, and wishing all prosperity, and a long continuance of it, to the temple, and those that are to worship God in it; as grace and favour of God began, and finished, so may the same grace ever dwell in it, and replenish it.

8 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Either at another time, or else at the same time, was added what now Zechariah declares.

9 The hands of Zerubbabel [k]have laid the foundation of this house; his hands [l]shall also finish it; and [m]thou shalt know that the [n]LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.

[k] Ezra 3. 10 [l] Ezra 6. 15. [m] ch. 2. 9, 11. & 6. 15. [n] Is. 48. 16. ch. 2. 8.

The hands; perhaps (as is customary) he did lay the first stone with his own hands; or rather, his direction, and command, and under his conduct. *Have laid the foundation,* in the second year of Cyrus, perhaps forty years ago, likelier seventeen, but be those years more or less, he *shall finish it:* thus the prophet expressly promiseth from the Lord, both continuance of Zerubbabel's life, care, and power, as also his success in this work, to encourage both him and the Jews. *And thou,* whoever thou art that dost hear me, both Zerubbabel and all among the Jews, *shalt know,* shall be fully assured, and certainly know, *that the Lord of hosts,* God of truth and mercy, our God from our fathers, who remembers his covenant, *hath sent me,* commanded me to preach these things, *unto you,* returned captives, and poor builders of this stately and magnificent house.

10 For who hath despised the day of [o]small things? ‖for they shall rejoice, and shall see the †plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel *with* those seven; [p]they *are* the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

[o] Hag. 2. 3. ‖ Or, *more than even* the eyes of the LORD *shall rejoice.* † Heb. *stone of tin.* [p] 2 Chro. 16. 9. Prov. 15. 3. ch. 3. 9.

And now for those that despised small beginnings; who they are is well known, and to them I say, and promise what they expected not. *Despised the day of small things;* of which Hag. ii. 3. *For,* or *but,* notwithstanding they so much undervalued the meanness of the second temple, yet when finished *they shall,* with many others, *rejoice* in it. *The plummet;* the perpendicular with which Zerubbabel shall try the finished work, or the work near finishing. *With those seven;* in subordination to and co-working with the Divine Providence, expressed emblematically by the seven eyes, which were on that stone, of which chap. iii. 9. Though Zerubbabel were prudent in managing all the affairs of the Jews, Jerusalem, and the temple, yet not his prudence, but the infinite wisdom of God, gave success; and when the success appears in the finishing of the temple, then shall it be acknowledged an admirable work of the Divine wisdom, and the Jews shall confess that *the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth,* have been upon them in this work for good, and that God hath showed himself on their behalf.

11 ¶ Then answered I, and said unto him, What *are* these [q]two olive trees upon the right *side* of the candlestick and upon the left *side* thereof?

[q] ver. 3.

In this verse the prophet proposeth a question to which no answer is given, but he doth immediately proceed to ask one more question, though somewhat, yet not much, different from the former, and in the answer of this latter question the prophet acquiesceth. The explication of this verse you have ver. 3 of this chapter.

12 And I answered again, and said unto him, What *be these* two olive branches which †through the two golden pipes ‖empty †the golden *oil* out of themselves?

† Heb. *by the hand of.* ‖ Or, *empty out of themselves* oil into the gold. † Heb. *the gold.*

I answered; I went on to discourse, which is the signification of the Hebrew phrase here used. *Again,* Heb. *a second time. Said unto him,* the angel that talked with the prophet. *What be these two olive branches?* two principal branches, one in each tree, fuller of berries, higher than the rest, and hanging over the golden pipes. *Which through the two golden pipes:* these were fastened to the golden bowl, on each side one, with a hole through the sides of the bowl, to let the oil that distilled into them from those olive branches run into the bowl, and out of that bowl it was, through so many golden pipes, conveyed into the seven lamps. *Empty;* freely, without any violence offered, drop the oil out of themselves, yet so that still they are full of

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oil for perpetual supply to the lamps. *Golden oil*, because of its preciousness, or from its colour. *Out of themselves*: a supernatural work, and emblem of supernatural grace: these branches, filled from the true olive tree, ever empty themselves, and are ever full; so are the gospel ordinances, filled by Christ, always filling his members, true Christians, and ever full for all believers.

13 And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these *be?* And I said, No, my lord.

See ver. 5.

r Rev. 11. 4. † Heb. *sons of oil.* s ch. 3. 7. Luke 1. 19. t See Josh 3. 11, 13. ch. 6. 5.

14 Then said he, [r]These *are* the two [†]anointed ones, [s]that stand by [t]the Lord of the whole earth.

Not Enoch and Elias, nor the two witnesses, nor Peter and Paul, nor the two churches of Jew and Gentile; nor principally Zerubbabel and Joshua, though perhaps the exposition may glance upon them, and the two orders, magistracy and ministry, in them; as these are types of Christ in his two offices, King and Priest, or Christ and the Comforter: in this I determine nothing.

CHAP. V.

By the flying roll is showed the curse of thieves and of false swearers, 1—4. *By a woman in an ephah, pressed under a weight, and carried away to Shinar, is denoted wickedness, and the judgment of it,* 5—11.

THEN I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, a Ezek. 2. 9. and looked, and behold a flying [a]roll.

Then, or *And*, Heb. i. e. after I had seen those comfortable visions, and been instructed in the true meaning of them. *I turned;* changed his posture, though the occasion of it be not mentioned, nor the posture into which he put himself. *Lifted up mine eyes;* looked up into the air where the vision appeared. *Looked*, very diligently, and discerned clearly. *A flying roll;* a volume, or book, which in those days were not written as now our books are printed and bound, but were written, as deeds are now, on large or long parchments, and rolled up upon a neat round stick, or else rolled upon themselves; such the roll here seen: much as our large geographical maps are rolled upon rollers, and lodged in a convenient cavity, so were their books of old. But probably here now the roll was spread out at large, flying in the air swiftly, perhaps with some noise, that might make the prophet look about him.

2 And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof *is* twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.

And he; the angel, chap. iv. 1, 5. *What seest thou*, O Zechariah? *The length thereof is twenty cubits;* that is, ten yards long; by this it appears the roll was spread out, for had it been rolled up he could not have seen the length, though he did the breadth, five yards.

3 Then said he unto me, This *is* the b Mal. 4. 6. [b]curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for ‖every one that stealeth shall be cut off *as* on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off *as* on that side according to it.

‖ Or, *every one of this people that stealeth holdeth himself guiltless, as it doth.*

Then said he; the angel, which instructed the prophet. *This is the curse;* this roll or book containeth the curse, the menaced punishment due to sinners, of which too many were still among the Jews. *That goeth forth;* that goeth speedily, for it flieth. *Over the face of the whole earth;* either the whole land of Judea, or over all the world; wherever these sins are found, this curse will come upon the sinners, unless they repent. *Every one that stealeth:* theft is here first mentioned, a sin that had abounded among them, and from which they were not free then; they robbed one another, and they robbed God, they were sacrilegious. *Shall be cut off;* shall be punished with an extermination of his house, as well as with cutting off his life. *According to it;* according to the just threats of the law. *Every one that sweareth*, profanely, or falsely, the perjured person, *shall be cut off* too.

4 I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of [c]him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and [d]shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.

c Lev. 19. 12. ch. 8. 17. Mal. 3. 5.

d See Lev. 14. 45.

I will bring it forth; so exemplarily will I execute this judgment, that it shall appear I do it, my hand, saith God, shall be seen in it. *It shall enter*, none shall be able to keep it out, this curse shall come with commission from me, *into the house of the thief*, where he laid up that he got by theft, and thought to rejoice in it; or by *house* understand all his estate and goods, with his family and posterity. *The thief;* the robbers of God and of their neighbours, and every other notorious transgressor of the precepts of the second table. *And into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name:* this doth explain that of the third verse, and it is plain that the perjured person is here threatened, every one that dares call God to witness to a falsehood, and imprecate themselves if they speak not truth. *It shall remain;* this curse shall be a long curse, it shall stick close to them and theirs, like Gehazi's leprosy. *In the midst of his house;* as in the heart and centre of their house, like a sword in the midst of the bowels, or like a disease that seizeth the heart. *Shall consume it;* though it do not destroy suddenly, it shall destroy surely. *With the timber thereof, and the stones thereof;* the strength of it, nothing shall remain, as when both timber and stones of a house are consumed and wasted. Such execution shall be done on those, whose name and place shall be blotted out.

5 ¶ Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what *is* this that goeth forth.

Went forth; or went on, proceeded, or, as we read it, went forth from some more retired place, though he do not tell us what it was, or where he was with the prophet when the last vision appeared. *Lift up now thine eyes:* now the prophet was come forth with the angel, he is commanded to look up and observe what he seeth going forth from Jerusalem or the temple.

6 And I said, What *is* it? And he said, This *is* an ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This *is* their resemblance through all the earth.

And I said, What is it? Zechariah knew not what this was he saw, so far was he from knowing what it meant. *And he*, the angel, *said, This is an ephah;* the greatest, say some, of measures with the Hebrews, but their corus was much greater: it was a great measure, and many times taken for any measure; when strictly taken, it held some three bushels. *That goeth forth*, out of the temple of Jerusalem. *He said moreover;* having told the prophet what the thing was, the angel addeth once and above, *This is their resemblance through all the earth;* this, how dark soever it may seem to be, is a clear emblem of this people every where. Thus there is a limited time and measure for them; whilst they sin and are filling up the ephah with their sins, they will find that the ephah of wrath is filled up also to be poured out upon them. Or as the Hebrew, This their eye; as the Gallic version, This the eye I have upon them, &c.: i. e. God's eye observes how they fill their ephah with sin, that he may suitably punish, that his ephah of wrath may fill also.

7 And, behold, there was lifted up a ‖talent of lead: and this *is* a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah.

‖ Or, *weighty piece.*

Here is another part of this vision. *There was lifted up*, either lifted up from out of the ephah, or brought thither to cover it, *a talent of lead;* a large piece of lead of a talent weight, large as the mouth of the ephah. *This is a woman;* a woman, the third in the vision or emblem. *That sitteth*, secure, shameless, and resolved of her way in increasing in sin.

8 And he said, This *is* wickedness. And he

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cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof.

And he said; the angel unfolds the riddle. *This,* this woman that sits in the ephah, represents the sinful nation of the Jews, is emblem of their wickedness. *Is wickedness,* in the abstract, to express the greatness of the Jews' wickedness, they will grow up to be most wicked. *He cast it;* the angel cast down this woman, wickedness, from the seat she sat on, ver. 7. *And he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof;* and now she is down the weight of lead, which she can never lift up, or remove, is laid upon the mouth of the ephah, she is shut up, as in a prison, to suffer the punishment of all her sins. This is their resemblance.

9 Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind *was* in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven.

Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked: see ver. 1. *There came out,* from the same place whence the ephah came, *two women:* the sinful nation was resembled to a woman, and now, to keep a decorum in the vision, they who are to be God's executioners, to punish that wicked woman, are called women: it is like enough to be meant of the Romans, a warlike and stout nation. *The wind was in their wings:* they are set forth as having wings like the wings of storks, large and strong, and as flying before the wind with great swiftness; so should Divine vengeance swiftly follow and certainly overtake the Jewish nation, when, after their return out of captivity, they shall corrupt themselves, and fill up the measure of their sins. *They lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven;* the judgments came thus flying, and so bare away with them those that are to be punished: it is a secret intimation of a future deportation or carrying the Jews into captivity again for sin.

10 Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah?

Then, when I saw the ephah, woman imprisoned, and lead too, on the wings of those two women in motion, *said I,* Zechariah, *Whither,* to what place, and how far, *do these bear the ephah?* not as a nurse carrieth the child, but as criminals are carried to punishment.

c Jer. 29. 5, 28. f Gen. 10. 10.

11 And he said unto me, To [c]build it an house in [f]the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.

The angel gives him an answer fuller than his question, and first tells the prophet what was to be done with it. *To build it an house;* not in mercy, but in judgment, as intending the next deportation should not be, as the first, for seventy years, but for ever, they should never return. *In the land of Shinar;* of Babylon, whither many of the Jews fled, and so by voluntary exile fulfilled this prophecy; whither others of them were forced by the Romans. *It shall be established, and set there;* there they shall be confined without hope of release. *Upon her own base;* not on the foundation of God's promise and covenant, but the base of their sins.

CHAP. VI.

The vision of the four chariots, 1—8. *By the crowns of Joshua the high priest are showed Christ the Branch, and his church and kingdom,* 9—15.

AND I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains *were* mountains of brass.

And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes: see chap. v. 1. *There came four chariots:* the appearance or emblem is plain enough, we can easily conceive that; but the things signified hereby are most difficultly found out, and perhaps not found when we think they are: here then, if any where, all are bound to write modestly, and all are bound to read carefully, and to judge candidly. Whether by these chariots are meant, 1. The various changes made by wars in the nations; the chariots, as some say, were chariots for war, and drawn by several-coloured horses, and thus wars and mutations thereby might be signified: or, 2. The four monarchies, of different temper and carriage toward the Jews and others, whom they ruled, as very many learned expositors think: or, 3. The four Gospels, with the apostles and preachers of the gospel sent by Christ, as others: or, 4. Angels, who are sometimes styled chariots of God, and who are by the prophets, Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and by the Apocalypse, introduced as great ministers and servants of Christ in the affairs of his church,—I determine not; though perhaps all these might fairly be woven into one web, in which angels, as employed in the affairs of church and empire, act their part in the revolution and changes of things, be these of what temper soever they will in both, till the gospel be preached by the Messiah and his apostles. *Out from between two mountains;* out of a deep, shady, and dark valley, which here is laid between two mountains; so God's *judgments are a great deep,* whilst his *righteousness is as the great mountains,* Psal. xxxvi. 6. *The mountains were mountains of brass:* these mountains appear to the prophet very wonderful, for they were of brass, to denote the immovable decrees of God, his steady executions of his counsels, the insuperable restraints upon all empires and councils, which God keeps within the barriers of such impregnable mountains, whence not one can start till he open the way; and possibly it may import the pressures, difficulties, and distresses of the times signified hereby.

2 In the first chariot *were* [a]red horses; and in the second chariot [b]black horses;

a ch. 1. 8. Rev. 6. 4. b Rev. 6. 5.

There is no distinction made between chariot and chariot, nor any mention made of the drivers of these chariots, though these are included in the chariots. Now by the different colours of the horses doth the prophet distinguish the chariots, and possibly that is all intended by the various colours, though generally interpreters do guess by the colour of the horses what should be the quality and temper of the times pointed at; of which a little: *red horses* may signify bloody times, a fiery execution of wrath, Rev. vi. 4; *black,* a time of mortality, and wasting diseases, Rev. vi. 5.

3 And in the third chariot [c]white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and ‖ bay horses.

c Rev. 6. 2. ‖ Or, *strong.*

White horses; joyful and prosperous affairs: see chap. i. 8. *Grisled and bay;* state of affairs mixed of good and bad: see chap. i. 8.

4 Then I answered [d]and said unto the angel that talked with me, What *are* these, my lord?

d ch. 5. 10.

See chap. i. 19; v. 6.

5 And the angel answered and said unto me, [e]These *are* the four ‖ spirits of the heavens, which go forth from [f]standing before the Lord of all the earth.

e Ps. 104. 4. Heb. 1. 7, 14. ‖ Or, *winds.* f 1 Kings 22. 19. Dan. 7. 10. ch. 4. 14. Luke 1. 19.

These are, signify, or are the emblems of, *the four spirits,* Heb. *winds,* to which the empires are compared, Dan. vii. 2, and for the bustlings of them may be well compared so; and forasmuch as they are raised by the Lord, and are under his command, may properly enough be called *winds of the heavens,* which blow as God orders. Or, *spirits,* i. e. angels of heaven, who have, as ministers of the Divine Providence, a great share in the management of affairs both of church and states. Or, the impulses of God's Spirit moving as he pleaseth in the kingdoms of men, and in his church. Indeed this is the great spring which moves angels, and sets them on work about what is to be done by them, either for or against states and kingdoms, especially in reference to the church of God. *Of the heavens,* which, as they reside in heaven till employed, so go thence when employed, and observe the will of their God in heaven; and, having done their work, return thither again. *Standing before;* they stand as servants attending the will and command of their Lord. *The Lord of the whole earth:* their God is Lord of all, and their business to do his will in all the earth, not in one part only, but every where, whithersoever they are sent

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6 The black horses which *are* therein
g Jer. 1. 14. go forth into [g]the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth toward the south country.

The angel signified by *the black horses* the executioners of God's just displeasure against sinners. *Which are therein;* in the second chariot, for nothing is said more of the first, (the red horses,) say some, because that bloody and cruel state was expired; but the sad things portended by the black horses are to come next on the scene. *Go forth into the north country;* Babylon, the whole kingdom of Babylon, which lay so much north from Judea, and because the metropolis lay north the whole kingdom is called the north country; which must feel the effects of these black horses, which was executed by the hands of the Medes and Persians, assisted by that squadron of angels which appeared in the second place. *The white go forth after them;* ministers of goodness, mercy, and kindness, went after the black, and their business was, say some, to dispose affairs for the benefit and joy of God's people in Babylon, whither these were sent to preserve them, to conduct them, and bring them back; and here was great work in this, for many staid behind till Ezra's and Nehemiah's time. *The grisled go forth;* the angels signified by these, and whose business, as some guess, lay in managing the Roman power, which was a mixture of many different people, and which were sometimes favourable, sometimes fierce and severe, to those they had to do with. *Toward the south country;* Egypt and Arabia, which lay south of Judea, and which the Romans did, though late, subdue; it may perhaps point at their invading Africa too, whose punishments were mixed somewhat with kindness and mercy more than the punishments of Babylon were.

7 And the bay went forth, and sought
h Gen. 13. 17. ch. 1. 10. to go that they might [h]walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth.

The bay went forth, from the place where the prophet saw them at first standing as at the starting-place, *and sought to go,* either asked commission or waited for it, *that they might walk to and fro through the earth:* they had a larger commission, say some, the whole earth; or a particular commission to keep their rounds in the land of Judea, and to take care of their affairs for the comfort of that people. *He said,* Christ, who hath all power in heaven and on earth, *Get you hence;* stay no longer here, hasten to your charge; as you have desired, so do. *So they walked to and fro through the earth;* they obey immediately, and do his commands. These bay horses are here represented as attempting, or making essay, which at first seems to take little effect, though at last, by a full commission empowered, they do succeed in the attempt. This might give ground to suppose here is some kingdom aimed at, which made some attempts to enlarge itself through all the earth, but failed in its attempt, which no wonder, since the angels which were to assist were not commissioned to walk through the whole earth, and they keeping to their commission gave no further help, for want of which the design failed. How far this may concern Goths and Vandals, or any more late empires and kingdoms, I have neither skill nor will further to inquire. Nor yet to inquire whether these bay horses were not emblems of angels employed by the Lord, in the government of the rest of the kingdoms of the world remote from Judea, but not remote from God's wise and sovereign providence governing all the earth. The known empires here are supposed to have been managed by particular angels, represented according to the analogy between the colours of the horses and the complexion of the kingdoms. And it may seem likely that the rest of the world was not left without some to have care of them.

8 Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted
i Judg. 8. 3. Eccles. 10. 4. my [i]spirit in the north country.

Then, when the prophet had been informed about the former vision, *cried he;* the Angel that talked with the prophet, i. e. the Lord Christ, spake aloud, and called to him. *These that go,* or are gone, for he speaks of what was already past; it is likely he meaneth the red horses. *Toward the north country;* into Babylon. *Have quieted my spirit;* either by doing what I appointed them against the cruel Chaldeans, in revenge of my people's injuries, or bringing my people back out of Babylon into Canaan.

9 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

And: it appears not that this next thing hath any necessary connexion to that which the prophet last saw. *The word;* the direction or command for the prophet to do something out of hand.

10 Take of *them of* the captivity, *even* of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah;

Take, gold and silver, of those that are come out of Babylon lately, to make their oblation to the Lord, or to bring the oblation of them who yet were in Babylon, but remembered Jerusalem and the temple. *And come thou;* go fetch them if they lodge elsewhere, and bring them in thy company. *The same day;* the same day in which they come, or else in the same day that I speak unto thee, delay not. *And go into the house of Josiah:* some say he was a goldsmith, others, that he was treasurer for the temple, and that these persons before named had brought a rich present to him for the temple and the service of the Lord.

11 Then take silver and gold, and
k Ex. 28. 36. & 29. 6. Lev. 8. 9. ch. 3. 5. make [k]crowns, and set *them* upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;

Then take silver and gold: this reiterating the command both confirms and explains the former command. *Make crowns;* two, the one of silver, the other of gold. *Set them,* put both of them, i. e. one after the other, *upon the head of Joshua,* who now in this circumstance stands a type of Christ, King and Priest for ever for his people, and this extraordinary act was to represent something extraordinary in the Messiah.

12 And speak unto him, saying, Thus
l See Luke 1. 78. John 1. 45. m ch. 3. 8. ‖ Or, *branch up from under him.* n ch. 4. 9. Matt. 16. 18. Ephes. 2. 20, 21, 22. Heb. 3. 3. speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold [l]the man whose name *is* The [m]BRANCH; and he shall ‖ grow up out of his place, [n]and he shall build the temple of the LORD:

Speak unto him; Joshua, but in hearing of others, and in the name of the Lord. *Behold;* consider thoroughly the import and meaning of this unusual ceremony. *The man;* thou, Joshua, art the type or figure, but he that is the man signified by thee, is that great person God hath promised, and you do expect, and who shall come. *Whose name is the Branch;* whom you know by the name of the Branch, who was called so long since, Messiah Ben David; this wonderful person is the man that is crowned, as King and Priest, by proxy, or in effigy: thou, O Joshua, art the portrait; he is the Branch itself, chap. iii. 8. *He shall grow up;* though you may perhaps suspect the root dry or dead, yet assuredly it is not, the Branch will spring up, Messiah, King and Priest, shall be born in due time. *Out of his place;* of the same tribe and family, and in the same place, foretold. *He shall build the temple;* he it is, though unseen, that stands by you, that builds the material temple: neither Zerubbabel nor Joshua, nor all the Jews, could do any thing without Christ in the present building, which is yet far inferior to the spiritual temple, which Christ will build, beautify, and preserve, and dwell in for ever.

13 Even he shall build the temple of
o Is. 22. 24. the LORD; and he [o]shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and [p]he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.
p Ps. 110. 4. Heb. 3. 1.

Even he shall build: the promise is repeated to settle the

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Jews in the assured expectation of the thing. *The temple of the Lord;* your material temple as type, and the spiritual temple as antitype. *He shall bear the glory* of both kingly office and priestly, the glory of both those crowns shall abide on him, the only person worthy of it. *He shall sit;* which speaks both his royal magnificence and the perpetuity of it. *And rule;* though he shall have many attendants and officers, yet he shall rule, give laws, distribute rewards, and punish offenders. *Upon his throne;* his by birth, by donation, by purchase, and by conquest, his most undoubtedly by best right. *He shall be a priest;* the great High Priest, to offer the great sacrifice to God, to make reconciliation, to intercede for his people: this is that meant by the crowns set on thy head, O Joshua. *The counsel of peace shall be between them both;* the peace made for God's people shall rest upon these two, the kingly and priestly office of Christ: by his priestly office he shall make their peace with God, by his kingly office he shall deliver them from spiritual enemies; by priestly operation he shall expiate our sin, by the power of his kingly office he shall extirpate sin; as Priest he makes, as King maintains, peace; purchase as a Priest, protect as a King.

14 And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to
[q] Ex. 12. 14. Mark 14. 9. Hen the son of Zephaniah, [q] for a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

The crowns; those two crowns before mentioned, made of the gold and silver brought from Babylon, ver. 11. *Shall be to Helem, &c.:* these persons we know no more of with any certainty but their names. *For a memorial,* of their incredulity, say some, of their liberality, say others; but these crowns were certainly to be memorials of the Messiah's certain and speedy coming, and to be reserved *in the temple* as a memorial of this solemn typical inauguration of Joshua, or Messiah in him.

[r] Is. 57. 19. & 60. 10. Eph. 2. 13, 19. [s] ch. 2. 9. & 4. 9.

15 And [r] they *that are* far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and [s] ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And *this* shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

This verse hath certainly a double reference, one to the Jews, and the building of the material temple, which is the literal and historical sense; the other mystical, and refers to the bringing in of the Gentiles.

They that are far off; such Jews as do now abide in Babylon and Persia, or other remote parts. It is also the character of the Gentiles, Acts ii. 39; Eph. ii. 13, 17. *Shall come and build in the temple;* the Jews did so with their gifts, came to Jerusalem and built with their brethren; the Gentiles are come in and build the spiritual temple. *Ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you;* the accomplishment of this shall prove my words to be God's word, and that I am sent of him. *This shall come to pass;* the literal part shall come to pass in your day, *if ye will obey the voice of the Lord your God* speaking by me. The mystical part shall come to pass also; and, if you will believe and obey, the Gentiles shall come in and be your brethren, make up one church with you, and help to build the temple, the spiritual temple; but if you obey not, you shall be cast out, and the Gentiles be taken in, to be God's people, and to build his temple.

CHAP. VII.

The Jews having sent to inquire concerning the set fasts, 1—3, *Zechariah reproveth the hypocrisy of their fasts,* 4—7. *They are exhorted by repentance to remove the cause of their calamity,* 8—14.

518. AND it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, *that* the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah in the fourth *day* of the ninth month, *even* in Chisleu;

It came to pass; a most usual form of speech, introductory to what shall afterwards be spoken. *In the fourth year;* when the Jews had now been two years in building the temple, and probably it was in good forwardness. *Of king Darius;* son of Hystaspes, about A. M. 3487, as Archbishop Usher in his Annals. *In Chisleu;* part of our November and December, when half the time of building the temple was spent.

2 When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezer and Regem-melech, and their men, [†] to pray before the LORD,

[†] Heb. *to intreat the face of the LORD:* 1 Sam. 13. 12. ch. 8. 21.

When they, either the captives which still continued in Babylon, or the Jews returned out of captivity, but who dwelt in the country at distance from Jerusalem, *had sent unto the house of God;* the temple, which now, half built, began to be frequented by priests and people, and where Haggai and Zechariah might be found true prophets. *Sherezer and Regem-melech:* it appears not who these were, but no doubt they were eminent in dignity and piety. *And their men;* a train either of friends that accompanied them, or of servants that waited on them. *To pray before the Lord,* in most solemn manner, and with sacrifices no doubt, for the altar was set up long ago. Now these come to entreat the face of the Lord by prayer, in the house of prayer, for pardon of what was past, and acceptance of them at present, and for answer to their inquiry.

3 *And* to [a] speak unto the priests which *were* in the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in [b] the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?

[a] Deut. 17. 9, 10, 11. & 33. 10. Mal. 2. 7. [b] Jer. 52. 12. ch. 8. 19.

To speak unto, to consult with, *the priests:* they were to be the ordinary casuists, and ought to be able and ready to answer all cases of conscience, as Mal. ii. 7. *Which were in;* had their residence in or about the temple. *And to the prophets:* these were extraordinary casuists, who might be supposed able to satisfy the inquiry, if the priests could not. These prophets were Haggai and Zechariah. *Should I weep,* i. e. fast, of which weeping was a part, 1 Sam. i. 7; Matt. ix. 15. *In the fifth month;* in sad remembrance of the burning of the temple on the 10th day of that month. *Separating myself* from worldly cares and designs, and afflicting myself. *As I have done:* this intimateth their former practice, and seems to include in it some little boasting of it. *These so many years:* it had been easy for them to have reckoned up the exact number of years, but they choose rather to express it thus, to greaten their performance.

4 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying,

Then, when these men had proposed their case, and expected the priests' answer, *came the word of the Lord;* an answer from God, which follows in the 7th and 8th chapters of this book at large.

5 Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye [c] fasted and mourned in the fifth [d] and seventh *month*, [e] even those seventy years, did ye at all fast [f] unto me, *even* to me?

[c] Is. 58. 5. [d] Jer. 41. 1. ch. 8. 19. [e] ch. 1. 12. [f] See Rom. 14. 6.

Speak unto all the people, i. e. either by their messengers who came in their name, or to all the Jews that were at Jerusalem. *Of the land;* by which it seems to be not the loiterers in Babylon, but the returned in Judea, that sent. *And to the priests:* some of these perhaps doubted; and others might overvalue and dote on these voluntary services, and needed, as well as deserved, a reproof. *When ye fasted and mourned:* who prescribed this your fast? and since you needs would, (as it was at liberty you might fast and mourn,) who was better for it? or did you do it to please me, when you displeased me by other, your sinful courses? *In the fifth month:* see ver. 3. *And seventh;* for the murder of Gedaliah, slain by Ishmael, Jer. xli. 1. *Even those seventy years;* so many they were since Gedaliah's death to this time of inquiry, which is made now as many years after the return as Gedaliah was slain after the beginning of the captivity. *Did ye at all fast unto me?* whatever was in it, there was very little in it from me, no command, no honour; as you ordered it, you pleased yourselves in it, not me; you wept more for the inconveniences of the thing than the sinfulness of it. Had you fasted to me, you

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would have abstained more from sin, which I forbade, than from meats, which I did not forbid. *Even to me;* as if God had said, I put it once more to you, did you indeed fast to me?

6 And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, ‖ did not ye eat *for yourselves*, and drink *for yourselves*?

‖ Or, be not ye they that, &c.

I was as little minded by you in your fasts as in your feasts, and I was as little pleased with your fasts as feasts; self was all in both, you looked no higher. Such fasting commends none to God; you had not been the worse if you had forborne such fasts, nor are you the better for such ill-managed abstinence.

7 ‖ *Should ye* not *hear* the words which the LORD hath cried † by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when *men* inhabited [g] the south and the plain?

‖ Or, Are not these *the words.* † Heb. *by the hand of, &c.*

g Jer. 17. 26.

Should ye not hear the words? you needed not have thus inquired had you heeded the word written. Should you not remember, or have you not read, what Isaiah, chap. lviii. 3—7, determines in this very case? *Which the Lord hath cried,* openly and loudly spoken, *by the former prophets;* who have given you the true value of obedience to the great and momentous precepts of the law, who have called for repentance and sincere love to God and man, and have on just balance showed how light and under weight formal services have been. *When Jerusalem was inhabited, and in prosperity:* did such observances preserve Jerusalem in its prosperity? Did they prevent the desolation of the cities round about her? Were they sufficient to save the men, the multitudes, that inhabited the south of the plain? Did they, or could they, do no good when things were all safe and well? and do you fondly imagine they can profit you now all is in ruins? Can they restore a fallen state that could not support it falling?

8 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying,

See ver. 4.

9 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, [h] †Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

h Is. 58. 6, 7. Jer. 7. 23. Mic. 6. 8. ch. 8. 16. Matt. 23. 23. † Heb. *Judge judgment of truth.*

Thus speaketh, or did speak, i. e. to your fathers, and thus he doth speak to you now. *Execute true judgment:* God required former judges, and he requireth present judges, without hatred, prejudice, partiality, or bribery, to give true sentence. *Show mercy and compassions;* be kind and beneficent to such as need; wrong none if you could; do good to all you can, with tenderest and most abundant pity, with a heart that feels their miseries. *Every man;* as this is every man's duty, let it be every one's practice. *To his brother,* i. e. to every one that needs you.

10 And [i] oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; [k] and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

i Ex. 22. 21, 22. Deu. 24. 17. Is. 1. 17. Jer. 5. 28. k Ps. 36. 4. Mic. 2. 1. ch. 8. 17.

Oppress not; do not first misreport their persons, their actions, and their cases, and on that pretence do them wrong, and oppress them: it is double oppression, to oppress by false information, and then condemn; the first is an oppression of righteousness, the next is oppression of the righteous. *The widow, &c.:* a catalogue of helpless ones, who are under the peculiar tutelage of God, Exod. xxii. 21, 22; Deut. x. 18; xiv. 29; xxiv. 17, 19; Isa. i. 17, 23, &c. *Let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart;* neither think ill of, nor wish ill to, nor plot evil against, one another.

11 But they refused to hearken, and [l] †pulled away the shoulder, and † [m] stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

l Neh. 9. 29. Jer. 7. 24. ll ch. 4. 16. † Heb. *They gave a backsliding shoulder.* † Heb. *made heavy.* m Acts 7. 57.

But they refused to hearken; they wilfully were ignorant, would not consider nor understand. *Pulled away the shoulder;* next they shift from doing their duty, withdraw their shoulder from the yoke of the law, Neh. ix. 29; Hos. iv. 16. *And stopped their ears;* and to make it highest contempt, they act the deaf man, stop their ears, and so turn their backs on God. *That they should not hear;* all this out of an obstinate resolution to be unacquainted with God's will and their own duty.

12 Yea, they made their [n] hearts *as* an adamant stone, [o] lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit † by the former prophets: [p] therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

n Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 26. o Neh. 9. 29, 30. † Heb. *by the hand of.* p 2 Chron. 36. 16. Dan. 9. 11.

They made their hearts as an adamant: though the heart of itself is far from taking impressions, and receiving kindly the law of God, yet these desperate sinners think it is too pliable, they study how to harden it, and this was the fault of many of them. *An adamant;* the hardest of stones. *Lest they should hear the law;* which was peremptorily required of them, and they as peremptorily resolved against it. *The law* of God by Moses, of whom they boasted, whilst they despised his law. *The words,* counsels and commands, *which the Lord of hosts,* their God, spake; nay, though they knew he spake they would not hear. *In his spirit;* by his Holy Spirit, in clear evidences, piercing convictions, powerful operation, and dreadful threatenings; yet they opposed and resisted, and sinned against his Spirit. *By the former prophets:* all of them acted by the same Spirit, pressing them to the same duties, and foretelling the same miseries, and promising the same blessings, but all would not prevail. *Therefore,* for this great obstinacy, *came a great wrath,* which consumed the whole land, and burned against them seventy years together in Babylon. *From the Lord of hosts;* in all which the hand of the Lord was most evidently seen, dealing to them according to their ways. Such were your fathers, such their ways, such their sufferings, all which is well known to you who start such queries, and meanwhile run away from the great commands of the law.

13 Therefore it is come to pass, *that* as he cried, and they would not hear; so [q] they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:

q Prov. 1. 24,—28. Is. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11. & 14. 12. Mic. 3. 4.

Therefore it is come to pass; this is the very cause, and it is just too. *As he cried;* my Spirit by the prophets called, warned, entreated, and urged them to repent, obey, and live, but *they would not; so they cried,* by fasting and howling in their deep but chosen distress, in the miseries they fell under after Gedaliah's death, yet *I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts.* Is it not most just I should disregard their tears for Gedaliah, when after his death they pretended to inquire that they might obey my word, Jer. xlii. 2, 3, 5, 6, yet then they gave my prophet the lie, and contemptuously resolved to do contrary to my word by him, Jer. xliii. 4? Thus you know my resentments of your fasts held on with your sins, saith the Lord.

14 But [r] I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations [s] whom they knew not. Thus [t] the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid [u] the † pleasant land desolate.

r Deut. 4. 27. & 28. 64. Ezek. 36. 19. ch. 2. 6. s Deu. 28 33. t Lev. 26. 22. u Dan. 8. 9. † Heb. *land of desire.*

But I scattered them; when they had so provoked me, I cast them out of their habitations, pursued them with the tempest of wrath that scattered them as I threatened. *With a whirlwind;* irresistibly, suddenly, and tearing all into pieces, as whirlwinds do. *Among all the nations;* all the heathen, that hated them and their ways. *Whom they know not;* where they could have no pity, nor any relief, nor common commerce; but as barbarous usage as fierce and unintelligible enemies can give them. *Thus the land,* once flowing with milk and honey, once full of cities, men, and cattle, now waste as a wilderness, *was desolate after them;* either the Jews cast out, or the Chaldeans who cast them out. *No man passed through nor returned:* it was not fit to make a road through a land so void of all necessaries, so full of wild and ravenous beasts, so unwholesome as to the air, &c. *For they,* sinful Jews by their sins, fierce

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Chaldeans by their sword, and God by his just displeasure, *laid the pleasant land* most *desolate* and waste.

CHAP. VIII.

The restoration of Jerusalem, 1—8. *The people are encouraged to build the temple by a promise of God's blessing,* 9—15. *Truth and justice required of them,* 16. 17. *Joy and enlargement of the church promised,* 18—23.

AGAIN the word of the LORD of hosts came *to me*, saying,

Again, or *And*, Heb.; as the word of reproof in the former chapter, so the word of consolation in this chapter, was from God. *The Lord of hosts:* hereby God assureth the Jews that what he promiseth he can perform, and therefore in this chapter, where so many things, so great, are promised, this name is very many times repeated, viz. eighteen.

[a] Nah. 1. 2. ch. 1. 14.

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; [a] I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.

I was; I have been in time past, in days of old before the captivity, and I have been so since the captivity for some years past. *Jealous for Zion:* properly it is the passion of a lover or husband, mixed of love, care, and anger in their highest degrees for the beloved, and against all that is hurtful to it; so God had greatly loved Zion, had been careful of her honour and welfare, and displeased with her sins, which first hurt her, and then with the Chaldeans, which violated her. *With great jealousy;* with great care that she should not, as formerly, sin against my love and her own welfare, and with a great love to do her good now, and to rescue her from her enemies. *I was jealous for her;* on her behalf, and not as formerly against her, I am jealous in favour to her, as the Hebrew phrase importeth. *With great fury;* with heat of anger against her enemies, as chap. i. 14, 15, which see.

[b] ch. 1. 16. [c] ch. 2. 10. [d] Is. 1. 21, 26. [e] Is. 2. 2, 3. [f] Jer. 31. 23.

3 Thus saith the LORD; [b] I am returned unto Zion, and [c] will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem [d] shall be called a city of truth; and [e] the mountain of the LORD of hosts [f] the holy mountain.

I am returned; I did in anger depart from sinful, and incorrigible, and unhumbled Israel, and sent them into a long captivity, and a far distance from my house; but now I am pacified, they punished, and I will be no longer absent from them; I am returned, not by change of place, but by change of my dealings with them. *Unto Zion;* literally, to my place of ancient residence, where the temple and city of David stood; spiritually, to the church, wheresoever it was humbled in distresses. *And will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;* once more, as of old, I will fix my residence and afford my presence there, as 1 Kings vi. 13; Psal. lxviii. 16, according to promise repeated to my people. Jerusalem shall be my dwelling-place. *Jerusalem shall be called,* it shall be, for I will make it, *a city of truth;* her citizens shall love the truth and speak it, shall worship me in truth of heart as well as in the true manner prescribed to them, and they shall inherit the truth of my promises too: much like to this is that of Ezek. xxxvii. 23—28. *And the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain;* either Jerusalem shall be called *the mountain of the Lord of hosts;* or Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, shall be called, and be, *the holy mountain,* for that the temple is rebuilt there, and the holy worship of God restored there; impure idols, which were worshipped there by your impure fathers, and thereby was the mountain defiled, shall now be cast out, and none but the holy God worshipped in his holy temple.

[g] See 1 Sam. 2. 31. Is. 65. 20, 22. Lam. 2. 20, &c. & 5. 11,—14. † Heb. *for multitude of days.*

4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; [g] There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand †for very age.

Old men; very old men, and very old women: formerly war, or famine, or pestilence and wasting diseases, or wild beasts, did cut off men and women before they grew to old age; but now it shall be otherwise, I will bless with health and long life in a peaceful state. *Old women;* though naturally the weaker, though by child-bearing further weakened, yet there shall be many of these very old; or possibly it may intimate a very long life with their beloved mates, and so old men will be ancient husbands, old women their ancient wives. However, this old age shall be a crown of honour to this city. *Every man,* every one, as the Hebrew will bear it, *with his staff in his hand for very age;* through multitude of days; it shall not be from weakness and diseases that they lean upon their staff, but very age shall bring them to it.

5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.

The streets; every street. *Shall be full of boys and girls;* have many young ones healthful, strong, brisk, and lively, the present joy and future hope of all; so will I fulfil the promise of multiplying your children. *Playing in the streets:* Jerusalem shall be in that peace, health, and plenty, that parents shall neither fear danger to their children abroad, nor need their labour at home. So shall that Psal. cxxviii. be fulfilled to them.

6 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be ‖marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, [h] should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts.

‖ Or, *hard, or, difficult.* [h] Gen. 18. 14. Luke 1. 37. & 18. 27. Rom. 4. 21.

If it be marvellous: these things promised may perhaps seem very strange and difficult, if not impossible. *In the eyes;* in the judgment and opinion, or rather, to the unbelief of this people. *The remnant of this people:* few in number, exceedingly poor, and perpetually surrounded with dangers. *In these days;* which are days of small things. *Should it also be marvellous,* impossible, or so much as difficult, to me? *Saith the Lord of hosts:* the Almighty God will do this.

[i] Is. 11. 11, 12. & 43. 5, 6. Ezek. 37. 21. Amos 9. 14, 15. † Heb. *the country of the going down of the sun:* See Ps. 50. 1. & 113. 3. Mal. 1. 11.

7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, [i] I will save my people from the east country, and from †the west country;

Thus saith the Lord of hosts: here again God engageth his almighty power to make good his promise. *Behold;* consider well what power is to do this. *I will save my people,* bring them safe, *from the east country;* Persia and Media, which lay east from Jerusalem, and, being now masters of Babylon and the captive Jews, they are said to be brought out of the east, though otherwhiles they are brought out of the north; both very consistent. *And from the west country:* no doubt some of the Jews were carried westward; the trade of selling men was known in those days, and Tyre is noted and threatened for it by Ezekiel, chap. xxvii. 13, beside other sea-towns west of Canaan, which would be ready to buy captive Jews, and convey them westward. But if this promise should look to the Roman empire, and secure the Jews a return from that captivity, it is plain how their empire lay west from the Jews. Or perhaps it is a synecdoche, these two parts of the world mentioned, but all parts intended, as Psal. l. 1; cxiii. 3; Mal. i. 11.

8 And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: [k] and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, [l] in truth and in righteousness.

[k] Jer. 30. 22. & 31. 1, 33. ch. 13. 9. [l] Jer. 4. 2.

I will bring them; though many things interpose to hinder, none shall keep them from returning; I will lead the way, I will guard them in it, I will supply their necessities, I will give strength to the weak and cheer up the dejected, I will gather and carry too. *They shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;* settle their habitation in Jerusalem. *They shall be my people;* a peculiar people to obey and honour me; it contains very much, Jer. xxx. 22; xxxi. 33; xxxii. 37, 38; Ezek. xi. 20. *I will be their God;* I will own them, perform all my promises to them. *In truth and in righteousness,* both on God's part and on their part; on God's in truth, on theirs in righteousness, in obedience to God's righteous law.

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m Hag. 2. 4. ver. 18.

9 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts; [m]Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of [n]the prophets, which *were* in [o]the day *that* the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built.

n Ezra 5. 1, 2.
o Hag. 2. 18.

Let your hands be strong; be of good courage, and hearten on each other to the expectation of God's promise, and the doing your duty. *Ye,* you returned captives, *that hear:* this is an argument to revive their courage, they hear God by his word very fairly proposing great things. *In these days;* in these days of Darius Hystaspes, some twelve, or fifteen, or perhaps eighteen years since the time I point at. In these days of hope from Darius favourably helping, but most from God assisting and blessing. *These words,* promises, exhortations, and counsels, *by the mouth of the prophets,* Haggai and Zechariah. *In the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid;* in the second year of Cyrus, which if reckoned from his succeeding of his father Cambyses in the Persian crown, and his father-in-law Cyaxares in the crown of Media, which happened near about A. M. 3467, unto the second of Darius Hystaspes, A. M. 3485, that is eighteen years ago, will make it likely that Haggai and Zechariah are intended here: but to lay it so that this re-edifying of the temple be in the second of Darius Nothus, is to make these two prophets either to be silent one hundred and twelve years together, or to preach with little success and less complaint, for I do not remember that either of them chargeth this people with this particular fault. *That the temple might be built,* according to God's command and your duty.

‖ Or, *the hire of man became nothing,* &c.
p Hag. 1. 6, 9, 10. & 2. 16.
q 2 Chron. 15. 5.

10 For before these days ‖ there was no [p]hire for man, nor any hire for beast; [q]neither *was there any* peace to him that went out or came in because of the affliction: for I set all men every one against his neighbour.

For before these days, for eighteen years together, *there was no hire;* reward or recompence, no profit by the labour of man or beast, sowing or planting: see Hag. i. 6—11; ii. 15—17; Mal. iii. 10, 11. Or else, though the poor Jew laboured and received wages, it profited him not, God blasted it. *Neither was there any peace;* no safety, or content, and rest, at home or abroad; nothing prospered as might be hoped, in field or house; if they went out it was trouble to see all unprosperous there, if they came home it was not one whit better: perhaps it may intimate troubles by war, but I incline to interpret אין שלום as I have done, with respect partly to the Hebrew, partly to the 12th verse. *Because of the affliction;* distress, or straitness, and want, through such great barrenness as attended all their labour. *For I;* God just and holy. *Set all men every one against his neighbour;* let out or took off the restraints which kept men in some order: and when they were thus let out, they did discompose all, fell into seditions, and taking of parties, and breaking their own and others' peace.

11 But now I *will* not *be* unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the LORD of hosts.

But now; since this people go about building the temple and restoring my worship with some cheerfulness. *I will not be unto the residue of this people:* God changeth not, his not being what he was to this people is a change of his providence and his dealings with them. Our affairs will be to us as God is to us. *As in the former days:* see ver. 10.

r Hos. 2. 21, 22. Joel 2. 22. Hag. 2. 19.
† Heb. *of peace.*
s Isa. 65. 6.
t See Hag. 1. 10.

12 [r]For the seed *shall be* † prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and [s]the ground shall give her increase, and [t]the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these *things.*

For the seed, which before brought nothing, or very little, forth, shall now prosper into a plentiful harvest, such as Mal. iii. 10. *The vine shall give her fruit:* this was very much the wealth and support of that people; this had been blasted, as Hag. i. 11, now it shall be blest, and bring forth her expected fruit. *The ground shall give her increase;* summarily, the ground you plant shall abundantly bring forth her fruit to your satisfaction. *The heavens shall give their dew;* the heavens, which before were as brass, and made your earth as iron, hard, barren, shall now drop down their rain, and make the earth fruitful. Much like that Psal. lxxii. 3; Hos. ii. 18. *I will cause,* by my special, singular providence, and blessing on them. *To possess;* to enjoy, have the things, and the comfort of them; whereas before, though they ate, they were not satisfied, had not enough, Hag. i. 6.

13 And it shall come to pass, *that* as ye were [u]a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and [x]ye shall be a blessing: fear not, *but* [y]let your hands be strong.

u Jer. 42. 18.
x Gen. 12. 2. Ruth 4. 11, 12. Is. 19. 24, 25. Zeph. 3. 20. Hag. 2. 19.
y ver. 9.

As ye were a curse; as threatened Deut. xxviii. 37; Jer. xxiv. 9; xxix. 18, all which came upon them in this seventy years' captivity, and the miseries that preceded. *Among the heathen;* nations who knew the misery which they heaped on the Jews, nations among whom they were scattered. *House of Judah;* two tribes. *House of Israel;* ten tribes, or rather some of them which escaped Shalmaneser's hand, and adhered to Judah; or some that from the division of the tribes did keep close to the house of David, and the temple worship. *So will I save you;* in such a manner will I save you, so wonderfully, so graciously. *Ye shall be a blessing;* a form or model of blessing, as Zeph. iii. 19, 20. *Fear not, but let your hands be strong;* be not discouraged, neither slack your hands, in the building of the temple, and restoring the worship of God, for God will be with you, and finish all by and for you.

14 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; [z]As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, [a]and I repented not:

z Jer. 31. 28.
a 2 Chro. 36. 16. ch. 1. 6.

As I thought, determined first, then declared my resolution, in my threats and many warnings given, *to punish you,* Jews, the body of that nation; you, one with your fathers. *When your fathers provoked;* highly, obstinately, and till there was no remedy, my wrath being kindled and continually increased by increase of your fathers' sins and yours. *I repented not;* I did not fail to do as I said I would, I neither changed my mind, for I am not a man, nor changed the course of my providence, but executed my threats.

15 So again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.

So again; so with like steadiness of mind, with an equal unchangeableness, I have purposed and promised to do well to you, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and house of Judah. *Fear ye not;* for if in punishing, which I love not, I was constant, in blessing, which pleaseth me, I cannot but be constant.

16 ¶ These *are* the things that ye shall do; [b]Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; † execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:

b ch. 7. 9. ver. 19. Ephes. 4. 25.
† Heb. *judge truth, and the judgment of peace.*

These are the things that ye shall do; you to whom I am returned, whom I have promised to bless, you have something to do that the blessing may come upon you, and look you do it. Beside building the temple and restoring public worship in sacrifices, these things ye must do. *Speak ye every man the truth;* be true of your word, and lie not one to another, as becomes such a people, Psal. xxiv. 4; Prov. xii. 19; Hos. iv. 1. *To his neighbour;* to all men: it hath been the sin of your fathers, they have lived, deceived, and cheated, not strangers, but brothers and neighbours; but do not ye so; every one you deal with is your neighbour, do you speak truth to every such one. *Execute the judgment of truth:* see chap. vii. 9. *And peace;* that may restore, settle, and promote peace among you, as righteous judgments will do. *In your gates;* either referring to the

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places of judicature, where the judges sat; or more generally and comprehensively through the whole land, Exod. xx. 10.

c Prov. 3. 29. ch. 7. 10. 17 [c]And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and d ch. 5. 3, 4. [d]love no false oath: for all these *are things* that I hate, saith the LORD.

Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour: see chap. vii. 10. *Love no false oath:* see chap. v. 4: you that must not lie to a man, must not swear to a lie before God, Psal. xv. 4; Ezek. xvii. 18, 19. *For all these are things that I hate;* so that I cannot be reconciled to them; so that I must not, will not let them go unpunished. If you will be blest as I promise, look you do as I prescribe. This is reason enough why you should not do them.

18 ¶ And the word of the LORD of hosts came unto me, saying,

e Jer. 52. 6, 7 f Jer. 52. 12, 13. ch. 7. 3, 5. g 2 Kings 25. 25 Jer. 41. 1, 2. h Jer. 52. 4. i Esth. 8. 17. Is. 35. 10. ‖ Or, *solemn, or, set times.* k ver. 16. 19 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; [e]The fast of the fourth *month*, [f]and the fast of the fifth, [g]and the fast of the seventh, [h]and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah [i]joy and gladness, and chearful ‖feasts; [k]therefore love the truth and peace.

This 19th verse is a final decision of the proposed case, and the whole of this verse stands on a proviso or condition, that they do those things required, ver. 16, 17; then shall their fasting cease, and turn into joy and feasts. *The fast of the fourth month;* wherein the city was taken by the Babylonians, who on the ninth day of this month broke into the city, Jer. lii. 6, 7. *Of the fifth;* of which on the tenth day the temple was burnt. *Of the seventh;* wherein Gedaliah was killed, Jer. xli. 1. *Of the tenth;* on the tenth day whereof the king of Babylon's army sat down before the city and besieged it. *Shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness;* good days, in which they shall rejoice for all the goodness that God hath showed them in their private affairs. *And cheerful feasts,* for public; these days of fasting shall be turned into solemn and public festivals, days of thanksgiving to the Lord, for turning back their captivity, and restoring church and state. *Therefore love the truth and peace;* let your hearty affection be set on truth in all concerns of religion, and on peace in all converse with your neighbours.

20 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; *It shall* yet *come to pass*, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities:

Thus saith the Lord of hosts: this solemn attestation, that it is the Lord of hosts who will do that great thing next promised, calls both for our heeding and believing of it. *It shall yet come to pass;* how low soever the state of my church doth appear, and really is, yet a time shall come when it shall be more considerable. *There shall come people;* that is, multitudes of people, for they shall be *inhabitants of many* and great *cities*, which is added to explain what was more obscure in that one word, *people*. The Gentiles shall be added to the church, and increase her greatly.

l Is. 2. 3. Mic. 4. 1, 2. ‖ Or, *continually.* †Heb. *going.* ‡ Heb. *to intreat the face of the LORD.* ch. 7. 2. 21 And the inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another, saying, [l]Let us go ‖†speedily †to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also.

The inhabitants of one city shall go to another; great was the zeal and forwardness of primitive converts to bring others into the church, and to acquaint them with the doctrine of Christ; and this is here foretold under the zeal and forwardness of the Jews to gather one another, and to ascend thus to the temple. *Let us go speedily;* in going let us go, set forth presently, hold on constantly and cheerfully, Isa. ii. 3; Micah iv. 2. *To seek the Lord of hosts;* to call upon his name, entreat his favour, or *face*, as it is in the Hebrew, one part of religious worship put for all, and explained by seeking the Lord for counsel and supply, for grace, comfort, and glory. *I will go also:* this foretells a readiness in the invited, they shall with as much zeal embrace the motion as others made it.

m Is. 60. 3, &c. & 66. 21. 22 Yea, [m]many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD.

This verse is both confirmation and illustration to the former; there it was *people*, here it is *many people*, and mighty, or great; not the poor, and contemptible, and few, but people of a greater figure in the world. The gospel first spread itself through the Roman empire, and triumphed in Rome the lady of the world. *Strong nations* submitted to the gospel. *Shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem;* literally understood you have the first-fruits of them mentioned in Acts ii. 9—11. Mystically, Jerusalem is the church of Christ, or the state of it in the times of the gospel, Psal. cx. 2; Isa. ii. 3. *To pray;* to perform all gospel worship to the Lord.

n Is. 3. 6. & 4. 1. 23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days *it shall come to pass*, that ten men shall [n]take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard [o]*that* God *is* with you.

o 1 Cor. 14. 25.

The Lord seems delighted with the reporting what should be done in those days of the building up his Jerusalem, and therefore he bids his prophet report it again, as he doth in this last verse of the chapter.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts: once more the Lord avows this as his design, so his work as his purpose, so he would effect it. *In those days it shall come to pass;* in the days which shall be the shadow of better, that shall be brought to pass which shall be proportioned to them: thus in the deliverance of the church from Haman's conspiracy, many in the provinces of that mighty kingdom became Jews; but in the gospel days it shall be more full. *Ten men,* that is, many men, *shall take hold;* as children lay hold on the nurse's or mother's skirt to go with them. *Out of all languages;* no nation any longer excluded. *Of him that is a Jew;* to whom the gospel was first preached, nay, who were the first preachers of it, as the apostles, and the seventy disciples. *We will go with you;* we will go, that we may learn your religion, and be of it. *For we have heard,* and now see, believe, and are assured, *that God,* the true God, the only true God, whom to know is life eternal, *is with you.* Our gods are vanity, a doctrine of lies, and a pernicious cheat; we will cast them off, and no more trust to lies: God is with you only, and we must be with you, and of you, that God the Saviour may be with us too: having hold on you, we will not let you go without us; we seek your God and our God.

CHAP. IX.

Amidst the judgments of the neighbouring nations God will defend his church, 1—8. *Zion is exhorted to rejoice for the coming of Christ, and his peaceable kingdom,* 9—11. *God's promises of victory and defence,* 12—17.

THE [a]burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach, and [b]Damascus *shall be* the rest thereof: when [c]the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, *shall be* toward the LORD.

cir. 587. a Jer. 23. 33. b Amos 1. 3. c 2 Chron. 30. 12. Ps. 145. 15.

The burden, i. e. the heavy, sad, and grievous, the menacing prediction of future evils coming upon a people; so *burden* in prophetic style, Isa. xiii. 1; xv. 1; Nah. i. 1; Hab. i. 1, signifieth. *The word;* in which from God's own mouth Zechariah threateneth. This might be read in apposition thus, The burden the word, for when the word of the Lord threateneth sad afflictions, they will come as a heavy burden, which they cannot decline without repentance, nor shake off by their own strength. *Of the Lord* of hosts, the God of Israel, who determines what he will do against Israel's enemies, and none can alter his purpose. *In,* or, *on, against,* Heb., *the land of Hadrach;*

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not Messiah's land, as some, nor the land of an idol called Hadrach, i. e. the sun, as others, nor yet the land or countries that lie round about Judea, as others, nor yet is Arabia here meant, as others; but it is the name both of a city in Cœlosyria, and here signifieth the country also. This town was not far from Damascus, and about twenty-five miles distant from Bostra, a sea town of Phœnicia, which is not far from Byblos, now called Giblee, or Gibelletto, says my author; no further mention is made of it in Scripture. It was likely an enemy to the Jews, and had sinned therein, and now must account for it and be punished. *And Damascus;* chief city of that part of Syria; and whether Abel were slain there or not, or whether that murder gave it the name, or whether the etymology be rightly given, (*dam*, blood, *sack*, a bag,) I say not; but it was no friend to God's people, Isa. vii., and here it is threatened among other their enemies: the country is intended here as well as the city. *Shall be the rest thereof;* this burden shall lie long as well as heavy on Damascus. *When;* rather, *for*, Heb. *The eyes*, Heb. *eye:* as we read it, it is of some difficult interpretation, but more easy if read, as it may be, thus, *for unto the Lord is the eye of man, and of the tribes of Israel;* i. e. unto the Lord it belongeth to look to, and by his providence to dispose of, all men as well as of Israel, and all men's appeals in cases of wrong are to Heaven; so they who have been wronged by Syrian injustice look to Heaven for right, and to be avenged, and God will do it.

d Jer. 49. 23. e Is. 23. Ezek. 26, & 27, & 28. Amos 1. 9. f 1 Kin. 17. 9. Ezek. 28. 21. Obad. 20.

2 And [d]Hamath also shall border thereby; [e]Tyrus, and [f]Zidon, though it be very [g]wise.

g Ezek. 28. 3, &c.

Hamath; a principal noted town of Syria, once called Epiphania; it was near neighbour to the Jews, for it was a boundary of the Land of Promise. *Shall border thereby;* shall be so near to this storm which cometh, that they shall be the worse for it. The country called by this name, in which Riblah was, and where the barbarous murder of many nobles of the Jews, the murder of Zedekiah's children, and his eyes were put out; all which cruelty and such-like Hamath must suffer, for now God rides his circuit, and judgeth. *Tyrus;* a famous mart as ever the world had, on which Ezekiel bestows his 26th, 27th, and 28th chapters, which see. *Zidon;* another mart, and on the same sea, more ancient than Tyrus, and as much an enemy to the Jews; threatened, as here, so by Ezekiel, chap. xxviii., Tyrus, ver. 2, Zidon, ver. 21, which see. *Though it be very wise;* each of them, i. e. the people, the governors, and counsellors of both these cities are subtle, and think by craft to save themselves, but this shall not be, God derides their wisdom, Ezek. xxviii. 3.

h Job 27. 16. Ezek. 28. 4, 5.

3 And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and [h]heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

Tyrus; which was naturally a strong hold, situate on a great rock in the sea. *Did build herself a strong hold;* fortified herself mightily, and then thought herself impregnable. *Heaped up silver;* gathered treasure, and laid it up, so that there was no end of it. *As the dust:* it is a proverbial speech, and speaks the very rich stores of their gold and silver, by which they might buy their peace, or maintain their war. So that here is wisdom, strength, and treasure, the master sinews of war, yet all these cannot profit them in the day of their calamities approaching.

i Is. 23. 1. k Ezek. 26. 17.

4 Behold, [i]the LORD will cast her out, and he will smite [k]her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

Behold; observe it, for I tell you truth; though strange, it will be so. *The Lord will cast her out;* the Lord will do this, he will eject and cast her out of her inheritance, as the word in the Hebrew, and he will *inherit* her, as the word also bears. God will do both, he will seize into his hand by some or other, and so put them out of all. Her fortifications shall not be able to secure her possession. *He will smite her power in the sea;* the Lord declares how he will do what he threatens against Tyre, where their strength lieth; he will break them, take away their shipping, and then both treasures will waste, trade will fail, and auxiliaries will not be gotten. *And she*, Tyre, probably Zidon with her, *shall be devoured with fire;* that is, by the enemy in the siege, or at the taking of her. All which was done about A. M. 3672, one hundred and eighty-five years after this prophecy, when Alexander the Great mastered Tyre at sea with a fleet of one hundred and ninety or two hundred ships, took the city, slew many thousands of them, and, as Curtius reports, burnt the city.

1 Jer. 47. 1, 5. Zeph. 2. 4.

5 [l]Ashkelon shall see *it*, and fear; Gaza also *shall see it*, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

Ashkelon, threatened by Zephaniah, chap. ii. 4, which threat was executed by the Babylonians soon after the Jews' captivity, when Nebuchadnezzar wasted the sea-coast, and besieged and took Tyre; but this threat of Zechariah was fully executed by Alexander the Great, as is most likely. *Shall see it;* as cities see the fall of neighbouring cities, they shall have the news of it, and know it; perhaps some Ashkelonites may be there, and see the siege, and tell it. *And fear;* as men that have no power to defend themselves, nor means left of fleeing from the enemy. *Gaza;* another strong town, a principality of the Philistines, enemy to Israel; which in Nebuchadnezzar's time suffered with Tyre, Zeph. ii. 4, and shall again so suffer in Alexander's time, as here foretold. *Be very sorrowful;* at the news of Tyre's fall shall take a fright, and fall into sorrows of a travailing woman, as the word imports. *Ekron*, a city famous for idolatry, see Zeph. ii. 4, shall as much fear and grieve as Ashkelon or Gaza. *Her expectation*, her hope that Tyre would break Alexander's power, or hold out against it, and be a refuge to her citizens, who could not hope to withstand the conqueror, *shall be ashamed;* turned into shame and confusion. *The king shall perish from Gaza;* the government be overthrown; and perhaps this literally was fulfilled when Alexander the Great took Gaza after two months' siege, and two slight wounds received, and finding Bœtis, the king or roitelet, advanced to that dignity by Darius, thought good to put him to a cruel death, as Curtius, l. 4. *Ashkelon shall not be inhabited*, i. e. for some years it shall be as waste, or as it was laid by the Babylonian, according to Zeph. ii. 4.

m Amos 1. 8.

6 And a bastard shall dwell [m]in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

A bastard; some say Alexander the Great was by Olympia's confession declared to be a bastard, and that he is here pointed at; but I think rather strangers, who have no right of inheritance, yet did dwell here, are meant, called bastards because not the rightful heirs, but intruders. *Ashdod;* Azotus, now a strong town, a city of the Philistines, but still of the same temper with the rest against the Jews, and now, as before, Zeph. ii. 4, must suffer with them. *I will cut off the pride of the Philistines:* in these strong cities did the Philistines glory, and boast themselves as having been too hard for the Jews, even at their first coming to Canaan, who could not take their cities from them; but now the fatal change is foretold, God will cut off this pride of theirs, as he did in the times of the Grecians, the Seleucidæ, and the Maccabees.

† Heb. *bloods.*

7 And I will take away his †blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, *shall be* for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.

I will take away his blood out of his mouth; though proud and warlike nations have delighted to shed blood, nay, (if some judge aright,) to eat the blood of their slain enemies; yet now God will restrain, nay, overthrow their power, and take the prey out of their mouth, they shall neither breathe out slaughter, nor act it with their hands. *And his abominations from between his teeth:* this may possibly be explanatory of the former, but I think it rather is meant of their abominable sacrifices which they offered and feasted on: so the word in Deut. vii. 26, with 25; 1 Kings xi. 5, 7;

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2 Kings xxiii. 13; and by Hosea, chap. ix. 10. God will punish for these sins, idolatries, and by his destroying the people and cities of those abominations will remove them for ever. *He that remaineth, even he;* the remnant, even that (so it might be read): if so read, it points out that small select number who escape the sword, and are reserved to be for God, to worship, obey, honour, and love him; such a remnant as Isa. iv. 3, or as Isa. xvii. 6, or xxiv. 6. *Shall be for our God;* those few Jews whom God preserved from the rage and cruelty of these bloody idolaters shall be the Lord's peculiar ones. *As a governor,* for respect and honour which shall be given to them; it is not said they shall be governors, but they shall be as like governors. *And Ekron as a Jebusite;* the city for the people, and this one city and people for all the other: all the Philistines shall be as Jebusites, servants to the people of God, or slain.

n Ps. 34. 7. ch. 2. 5. 8 And [n]I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him o Is. 60. 18. Ezek. 28. 24. that returneth: and [o]no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now p Ex. 3. 7. [p]have I seen with mine eyes.

I will encamp about; pitch, not the tents of travellers and shepherds, but of an army, God in the midst of his own hosts, and angels among them, guardians, too. *Mine house;* this material temple, but as it is an emblem of the church. *Because of the army;* of the Persian and Grecian army, whose march lay either through or near to Judea and Jerusalem. Armies are very troublesome, costly, and dangerous in all their marches; the people of God, his city, and temple, shall be as garrisoned and fortified, as if secured by an host; God will have angels pitch their tents round about those that fear the Lord. Judea was a thoroughfare to the Egyptian and Syrian armies, to the Grecian and Persian; an unadvised attempt to stop Pharaoh-necho in his passage through once cost Josiah his life; but God will be a guard to his people, whilst their enemies are moving. All this was accomplished in the times of Alexander and his successors; in midst of those wars, though the Jews suffered somewhat, yet they were mightily defended by their God. *No oppressor shall pass through them any more;* as formerly, when they had ingress, egress, regress at their pleasure, as if lords of the soil, and of the people too. *For now have I seen with mine eyes;* I ever saw it, but now I manifest that I take notice of it purposely to redress it: I see how vilely they use my people; they shall do so no more. I behold *mischief and spite, to requite it,* as Psal. x. 14.

q Is. 62. 11. ch. 2. 10. Matt. 21. 5. John 12. 15. r Jer. 23. 5. & 30. 9. John 1. 49. Luke 19. 38. ‖ Or, saving himself. 9 ¶ [q]Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, [r]thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and ‖having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Rejoice greatly: the prophet calls for such a joy as expresseth itself in outward gesture, as indeed the daughters of Zion did in their hosannas, when this had its accomplishment. *Daughter of Zion;* Jerusalem's inhabitants, or the church. *Shout;* proclaim aloud your joy at the news I now tell you. Before it was *daughter of Zion,* now it is *daughter of Jerusalem,* both the church and state among the Jews had great cause to triumph at this. *Thy King;* the Redeemer, expected, promised Messiah, Son of David, the only restorer of your lapsed state. *Cometh unto thee;* Christ cometh to thee, to redeem and save thee; he cometh for thee, as well as to thee. *He is just;* the righteous One, who cometh to fulfil all righteousness, and to be our righteousness. *Having salvation;* designs to save, and hath that in his eye, that he can save, it is in his power; he can save us as he did save himself, by raising himself from the dead. *Lowly;* low and mean of state, and meek or lowly of mind. *Riding upon an ass;* a beast of no state or price, an emblem of his outward state. *And upon a colt the foal of an ass:* in this some footsteps of sovereignty appeared in the colt's taking and bearing him quietly, Luke xix. 35.

s Hos. 1. 7. & 2. 18. Mic. 5. 10. Hag. 2. 22. 10 And I [s]will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak [t]peace unto the heathen: and his dominion *shall be* [u]from sea *even* to sea, and from the river *even* to the ends of the earth.

t Eph. 2. 14, 17. u Ps. 72. 8.

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim: when the Messiah comes and sets up his kingdom, he will need no external force, he will do that by the power of his Spirit; chariots of war are for other kind of kings and kingdoms, but in promoting of his own kingdom he will make no use of such force. *And the horse from Jerusalem;* either literal or typical. *The battle bow;* another instrument of war, but not useful to the Prince of peace; neither bow nor sword brought salvation to him, nor shall they be mentioned in the day of his conquest. *He shall speak peace unto the heathen;* make peace for them, and then publish it to them; that on the cross, this in the gospel; the Gentiles shall through him be reconciled unto God and one another, Eph. ii. 16. *His dominion;* how mean soever on the ass, yet he hath a large dominion, is King of the universe. *From sea even to sea;* from the Red Sea, and from the Arabian Gulf, to the Syrian Sea. *From the river,* Euphrates, utmost bound east, *to the ends of the earth;* to the utmost end of Canaan, toward the Mediterranean sea; a type of all the world to be the inheritance of Christ. These things promised here are of a spiritual nature, and are blessings of a spiritual kingdom.

‖ Or, whose prisoners art in by blood. x Is. 24. 22. Heb. 10. 29. & 13. 20. 11 As for thee also, ‖by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy [x]prisoners out of the pit wherein *is* no water.

x Is. 42. 7. & 51. 14. & 61. 1.

As for thee, O Zion, and Jerusalem, thou Jewish church: these words are Christ's words to her, not the prophet's words to Christ, though papists would have it so, to countenance a *limbus patrum. By the blood,* by my blood, saith Christ, *of thy covenant,* in which thy covenant is confirmed: it is God's covenant as made by him, it is Zion's covenant as made for her, it is Christ's also as made in him. *I have sent forth thy prisoners;* I have delivered and released. Cyrus indeed by his edict sent the Jews home, but in this he was Christ's servant, and Christ was mindful of the covenant, and, to perform this, brought them up. *Out of the pit wherein is no water;* Babylon, compared to a pit in which no water was, wherein the Jews must have perished, had not mercy from Christ visited them; here is no *limbus patrum,* though some say so among the popish commentators.

y Is. 49. 9. 12 ¶ Turn you to the strong hold, [y]ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare *that* [z]I will render double unto thee; z Is. 61. 7.

Turn you: the prophet exhorts the Jews, both those in Babylon still, and those already in Canaan, to hasten up *to the strong hold;* to Jerusalem, say some, which had been a strong hold, and which was now to be built again, as the high places of the earth; or to Christ, who is the salvation and high tower of his church. *Ye prisoners of hope;* captives in Babylon, yet under a promise from God, and under an edict from Cyrus, that you shall return; this gives you hope, this maketh you prisoners of expectation. *Even to-day,* in this day of lowest distress, *I declare that I will render double unto thee;* either more than thy fathers ever received, or double, that is, twice as much, good enjoyed as ever was thy evil suffered, as Isa. xl. 2.

13 When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

When I have bent Judah for me; in the days when Judah shall have recovered strength and courage, and be in my hand as a strong bow, ready bent. *Filled the bow with Ephraim;* Ephraim, the remainder of the ten tribes, (which returned with Judah,) shall be for supply of warriors; as the quiver filled is supply of arrows to the bow-man. *And raised up thy sons, O Zion;* explicatory to the former. *Against thy sons, O Greece;* against the Grecians, or Ionians, the sons of Javan, who had formerly oppressed the Jews, and bought them for slaves, and did again oppress them in the reigns of the Seleucidæ and the Lagidæ, against whom the Jews took arms and courage under the conduct of the

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Maccabees, to whom Christ made good much of this promise. *And made thee*, O Zion, or Jerusalem, you, O Jews, *as the sword of a mighty man*; a sharp sword of a mighty man or giant, who cuts down all that stands in his way, as the Maccabees did.

14 And the LORD shall be seen over
[a] Ps. 18. 14. & 77. 17. & 144. 6. them, and [a]his arrow shall go forth as
the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall
[b] Is. 21. 1. blow the trumpet, and shall go [b]with
whirlwinds of the south.

The Lord, the Almighty God, the God of Israel, Lord of hosts, *shall be seen over them*; shall manifestly appear for them by his works of power against their enemies. *His arrow*; alluding to warriors, that then used the bow: God's judgments, which slew his church's enemies, were swift, irresistible, and sudden in striking and killing them. *Shall go forth as the lightning*; which breaks forth with violence, and runs from east to west in a moment, which is very terrible many times. *The Lord God*; their God, the God of Israel, *shall blow the trumpet*, give the alarm to them to provide for the war, sound the call to bring them together, and the march also for their moving, and sound the charge too: God will infuse new courage, and give directions. *And shall go*, in the head of them as Captain-general, *with whirlwinds*, with fury and strength like that of whirlwinds, *of the south*, in which the mightiest whirlwinds are raised; or whirlwinds of Teman: some think the prophet alludes to the tempest about Sinai at the delivery of the law, when all Israel, and Moses too, quaked for fear, Deut. v. 23—25; yea, quaked exceedingly, and desired to see no more such sight.

15 The LORD of hosts shall defend
‖ Or, *subdue the stones of the sling.* them; and they shall devour, and ‖ subdue
with sling stones; and they shall drink,
‖ Or, *shall fill both the bowls, &c.* *and* make a noise as through wine; and
[c] Lev. 4. 18, 25. Deut. 12. 27. they ‖ shall be filled like bowls, *and* as
[c]the corners of the altar.

The Lord of hosts shall defend them; in the most dangerous attempts the Jews, under their captains in the wars against the Grecians, were preserved to a miracle, according to this promise. *They shall devour*; a few of them destroy many of their enemies. *Subdue with sling-stones*: as we read this passage, it seems to refer to the slaughter of Goliath with a sling, by David, a stripling; so weak means, in the hand and under the blessing of the great God, shall do mighty things: others read the words, they shall subdue the sling-stones, that is, conquer the Grecians, who in their wars used the sling, and that with great dexterity and success. *They shall drink*, in their festivals, when they offered sacrifices of thanksgiving for their victories. *Make a noise*, shout with shouts of triumph, make a great noise, *as through wine*; as men do whose hearts are glad with success, and cheered with wine. *They shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar*; rather, they shall fill, i. e. with the blood of the sacrifices they offer, both the bowls and corners of the altars, all shall be full of the blood of eucharistical sacrifices.

16 And the LORD their God shall save
them in that day as the flock of his peo-
[d] Is. 62. 3. Mal. 3. 17. [e] Is. 11. 12. ple: for [d]*they shall be as* the stones of a
crown, [e]lifted up as an ensign upon his
land.

The Lord their God, as in covenant with them, not only as Lord of hosts by his power, but as their God in mercy and faithfulness, *shall save them*, fully deliver them, i. e. the sons of Zion, *in that day*, in the day of their contest and wars with the sons of Javan, *as the flock of his people*; as a shepherd saves his flock, as David saved his. *For they shall be as the stones of a crown*; or, seeing that they are precious, and of value with me, as the stones of a royal crown, or as the stones of trophy set up in memory of some noble achievement; *lifted up as an ensign upon his land*; which are as an ensign lifted up, to which whoso repair may give thanks and rejoice in their deliverance; a form of which, for aught I know, may follow.

[f] Ps. 31. 19. 17 For [f]how great *is* his goodness, and
how great *is* his beauty! [g]corn shall
[g] Joel 3. 18. Amos 9. 14. make the young men ‖ chearful, and new
‖ Or, *grow*, or, *speak.* wine the maids.

For how great is his goodness! infinite goodness is the fountain of all that good done for this people; the prophet admires it, and suggests what is fit to be done by those that come and view those stones set up for trophies. *How great is his beauty!* how wonderful the beauty of Divine Providence in all the great effects of it in Israel's deliverance and salvation! *Corn shall make the young men cheerful*; plentiful harvests shall make the young men cheerful in sowing, reaping, labouring in harvest work, as well as in eating the fruits thereof. *And new wine the maids*; such plenty of wine, that all, young and old, shall be cheered with it.

And now these are the sweet fruits of temporal salvation, but the fruits of spiritual, shadowed out by these, are much more glorious, refreshing, and worth our praise and wonder.

CHAP. X.

God is to be sought unto, and not idols, 1, 2. As he visited his flock for sin, so will he save and restore them, 3—12.

ASK ye [a]of the LORD [b]rain [c]in the time
[a] Jer. 14. 22. [b] Deu. 11. 14. [c] Job. 29. 23. Joel 2. 23. of the latter rain; *so* the LORD shall
‖ Or, *lightnings*, Jer. 10. 13. make ‖ bright clouds, and give them
showers of rain, to every one grass in
the field.

Ask: it was a time of great scarcity with the Jews while the temple and city lay waste, and the prophets from God assure them it is for neglecting to rebuild the temple, to which work the Lord does earnestly call by Haggai and Zechariah, with promises of great blessings, which forthwith God would give to them, if they set to this work, and seek the Lord by prayer, to which duty he doth direct them in this chapter: to the building of city and temple they must add prayer, for the blessing is prepared, and shall be given when asked. *Ye* Jews, returned from Babylon, settled in your city, and returned to the worship of God, and to whom many excellent promises are made; you must pray. *Rain in the time of the latter rain*; which usually came about spring to fill the eared corn, and to bring forth the grass, to make the trees and plants with their fruit to be full and large: this latter rain made plenty of all provision, and is proverbially used to signify a great blessing, Hos. vi. 3. *The Lord shall make*; by making the vapours ascend from the earth, he will cover the heavens with clouds: see how Job, chap. xxxviii. 28, doth elegantly describe this work of God. *Bright clouds*; clouds which bring rain, and pour it out abundantly, when they are opened with thunders and lightnings, which do as it were broach the clouds; they unstop these bottles: and they are bright clouds through the lightnings which break from them, Job xxviii. 26; xxxviii. 25, 26. *And give them*, the Jews, his people, *showers of rain*; plentiful showers of rain, that shall fatten the earth, and make it fruitful. *To every one grass in the field*; none shall miss it, nor the effect of it on corn or grass; corn for man, and grass for the beast.

2 For the [d]† idols have spoken vanity,
[d] Jer. 10. 8. Hab. 2. 18. † Heb. *teraphims*, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have
told false dreams; they [e]comfort in vain:
[e] Judg. 17. 5. [e] Job 13. 4. therefore they went their way as a flock,
‖ Or, *answered that*, &c. they ‖ were troubled, [f]because *there was*
[f] Ezek. 34. 5. no shepherd.

The idols; images which before the captivity they venerated, and at them consulted their idols about plenty or barrenness, and concerning future events, Judg. x. 14; Isa. xix. 3. *Have spoken vanity*; their predictions were vain, nothing of certainty in them. *The diviners*, soothsayers, and consulters with familiar spirits, *have seen a lie*; foretold good, when all issued in evil, no good came. *And have told false dreams*; they pretended a revelation from heaven, but it was a dream of their own head, or a cheat put on them by the father of lies. *They comfort in vain*; their lies for the present comfort the deceived, but the vanity of these comforts soon appears in the disappointment which

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followeth. *Therefore they;* either they that consulted, or those who sent them, indeed almost all the Jews were thus foolish in consulting and believing these liars, and so, confounded at last, fell into all the misery they thought to escape. *Went their way;* they went into captivity into Babylon. *They were troubled,* miserably oppressed and afflicted, *because there was no shepherd;* without guide or protection; without ecclesiastical or civil governors, that would faithfully do their duty; and this was one reason that they were so afflicted and captivated.

3 Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, [g] and I † punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts [h] hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and [i] hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.

g Ezek. 34. 17.
† Heb. visited upon.
h Luke 1. 68.
i Cant. 1. 9.

Mine anger was kindled; though it was justly kindled against all, yet it was more hot and fierce against the chief sinners among them. *Against the shepherds;* officers in church and state, who neglected to keep the flock from straying, who were ringleaders in idolatry and soothsaying. *I punished the goats;* the wanton, lustful, and petulant officers among them, which, like he-goats, push, and wound, and trample under foot the feebler cattle, as Ezek. xxxiv. 16, 17: these were more grievously punished, Jer. xxix. 22; xxxix. 6. *Hath visited his flock,* in favour and mercy. *Hath made them as his goodly horse;* with change of state hath changed their sheepish weakness and cowardice into strength, courage, and gallantry, like that of a goodly horse: this appeared in the Maccabees' wars. *In the battle;* when all his courage is stirred up, and he appears, as Job brings him forth, with neck clothed with thunder, Job xxxix. 19—26.

4 Out of him came forth [k] the corner, out of him [l] the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.

k Num. 24. 17. 1 Sam. 14. 38. Is. 19. 13.
l Is. 22. 23.

Out of him, or out from him, from Judah, rather from the God of Judah, *came forth the corner,* which in buildings is strength and beauty; here it is the prince or ruler, which is in a polity as a corner-stone in buildings. *Out of him the nail;* from God the nail which fastens the tents of war, or fastens the timber together in a house. *The battle bow;* all warlike provision both of men and arms, synecdochically expressed by bow. *Out of him every oppressor,* or officer, exactor, collector of tribute. It was from God that Nebuchadnezzar mightily prevailed, and in the course of his victories oppressed Israel; and it is from God also that Judah is at last made free, grows up to such power as to be able to cope with his adversaries, to beat them, and to impose tribute on them. He sets up and pulls down as he pleaseth, Psal. lx.

5 ¶ And they shall be as mighty *men,* which [m] tread down *their enemies* in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the LORD *is* with them, and ‖ the riders on horses shall be confounded.

m Ps. 18. 42.
‖ Or, *they shall make the riders on horses ashamed.*

They, the Jews under the conduct of their captains, such as the Maccabees, *shall be as mighty men;* shall be valiant, mighty warriors, shall take cities, and beat down those that oppose them, and, as usual in such cases, tread the conquered as mire in the streets: *they shall fight* thus valiantly and successfully, *because the Lord is with them,* fighteth for them and against their enemies. *The riders on horses shall be confounded:* this is the character of the Jews' enemies, they came with armed men, and a mighty cavalry, as Antiochus and others did, in which they trusted; but this availed little, these horsemen were confounded, beaten, or fled away from a beating: when God was with Judah's enemies, so they behaved themselves, and trod down Judah; now he is reconciled to Judah and fighteth for Judah, Judah shall behave himself, and succeed against his enemies, as before they did against him.

6 And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and [n] I will bring them again to place them; for I [o] have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I *am* the LORD their God, and [p] will hear them.

n Jer. 3. 18. Ezek. 37. 21.
o Hos. 1. 7.
p ch. 13. 9.

I will strengthen the house of Judah: God will give both courage and strength, courage to attempt, and also strength to go through and finish the attempt; in this they of the house of Judah were famous in the wars of the Jews against the Seleucidæ, in which wars they had wonderful difficulties, and as wonderful courage and success. *I will save the house of Joseph;* the remnant of the kingdom of Israel, the residue of the ten tribes, called the house of Joseph, for that Ephraim and Manasseh, part of that kingdom, were the sons of Joseph. *I will bring them again,* both Judah and Joseph, out of Babylonish captivity, *to place them;* to settle them in their own land, and in their own cities: how far this doth warrant the expectation of a universal gathering of this people I do not undertake to determine. *I have mercy upon them;* I pity them in what they have already suffered, and my mercy is not clean gone from them; I have yet rich mercy for them, and will show it when they have built city and temple, and restored religion. *They shall be as though I had not cast them off;* in every respect they shall so multiply, thrive, and prosper, that though they remember it with grief and shame, yet the generations to come shall discern no sad marks of a rejected people. *I am the Lord their God,* in a perpetual covenant, which I never can nor will break: I am and will be their God; they should, yea shall, be my people, as chap. viii. 8. *And will hear them:* they will pray, and I will hear, for they are mine, they will seek me as their God, and I will save them as my people.

7 And *they of* Ephraim shall be like a mighty *man,* and their [q] heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see *it,* and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.

q Ps. 104. 15. ch. 9. 15.

Ephraim: see ver. 6. *Shall be like a mighty man:* see ver. 5. *Their heart shall rejoice as through wine;* which warmeth the blood, cheereth the spirits, and adds life greatly, where a good and joyful success concurreth, as here it doth. *Their children shall see it, and be glad;* either thus, in the days of your children this shall be; or rather, when the time comes for these things they shall continue through your generations to children that shall be born. *Their heart shall rejoice in the Lord;* the goodness, power, wisdom, and faithfulness of God shall be the cause of this joy, and many of these people shall indeed rejoice in the Lord, and in the Messiah.

8 I will [r] hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: [s] and they shall increase as they have increased.

r Is. 5. 26.
s Is. 49. 19. Ezek. 36. 37.

I will hiss for them; though they are now scattered far off, I will cause them to return; I will whistle, as a shepherd, and they, as scattered sheep, shall run with speed back to the flock: I called their enemies so once, and they came, Isa. v. 26; vii. 18, 19; and my people will come when thus I call to them. *And gather them;* this shall be enough to bring them together; or it shall be done as soon as spoke, so soon as I whistle they shall return. *I have redeemed them;* I have been at the care and charge of redeeming, I raised Cyrus to do it; I bestowed all nations and kingdoms on him, and afterwards on Darius Hystaspes, to do this, to restore my exiles, to replant Judah, to rebuild the city and temple; and I will do this also, which is much less, I will, as a shepherd with his pastoral whistle, call them in. *They shall increase as they have increased;* a promise made Jer. xxxiii. 22, and Ezek. xxxvi. 10, 11, 37, 38, which see.

9 And [t] I will sow them among the people: and they shall [u] remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again.

t Hos. 2. 23.
u Deu. 30. 1.

I will sow them: it might seem impossible the Jews should so increase, but to satisfy us herein God promiseth to sow them, so their increase should be like the increase of rich soil that hath much seed cast on it, Jer. xxxi. 27;

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Hos. ii. 23; that land shall soon be full of men and cattle, when God sows both. *Among the people;* the heathen; where dispersed, there they should multiply. *They shall remember me;* there they shall think of me, and long for me, and desire to return to Jerusalem, and to my temple. *In far countries;* whithersoever they were driven in the farthest parts of the Persian empire. *They shall live with their children;* though captives and poor, yet they nor their children shall starve; nay, their children born to them shall live, and grow up with them; this young fry shall fill the earth. *Turn again* to me, my temple, their city, and country. That this may also refer somewhat to the conversion of the Jews to the gospel, and to their spreading the gospel unto others for multiplying of the seed of Israel according to the faith, as I doubt not, so neither shall I particularly inquire, since the letter so fairly suits with history and matter of fact, as is evident from the multitudes that were gathered to the passover, when Titus Vespasianus cooped them up in a close siege.

10 [x] I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and [y] *place* shall not be found for them.

x Is. 11. 11, 16. Hos. 11. 11.

y Is. 49. 20.

I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt; into which doubtless some hasted by an early flight from the Babylonians before they wasted Canaan, and others fled though forbidden, Jer. xliii.; where also in after-days some Jews sought a repose, and where they wonderfully increased, if Josephus's story be true, of one hundred and twenty thousand Jews set at liberty by Ptolemy Philadelphus, when he procured the seventy-two elders to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek. These Egyptian Jews shall be brought back. *And gather them out of Assyria;* in which many yet did linger, loth to depart, but when God hisseth for them they shall come. *I will bring them into the land of Gilead,* which was the eastern frontier of the land of Canaan, *and Lebanon;* this was the north frontier of the land, and both fruitful and pleasant: they are here mentioned as part for the whole, as before, chap. viii. 7. *And place shall not be found for them;* the land should be too narrow for them, so Isa. xlix. 20; liv. 2, 3, which was in part fulfilled according to the historical and literal part, but fully in the spiritual part.

11 [z] And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up: and [a] the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and [b] the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.

z Is. 11. 15, 16.

a Is. 14. 25.

b Ezek. 30. 13.

The former part of this verse might be read in the preter-perfect tense, reporting what God hath done, and perhaps more agreeably with the context and design, which is no doubt to confirm the promise, and make it credible, though so many and great difficulties render it unlikely to reason: I will, saith God, ver. 10; I promise, who am he that hath passed through the sea, the Red Sea, and brought my people through: who hath done this can do what he now promiseth. I am he that dried up the deeps of Jordan (when at deepest by the floods, which were then upon the river); I can remove obstacles were they as great as these, and as easily lay low the pride of enemies, or remove their sceptres, as I did to Assyria and Egypt. So the whole verse is an allusion to what God had done in the two famous deliverances of his people under the hand of Moses and Joshua, bringing them out of Egypt through the Red Sea, and through Jordan, and destroying the Egyptians; and delivering them out of Assyrian bondage, and in order thereto destroying that kingdom.

12 And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and [c] they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.

c Mic. 4. 5.

I will strengthen them: see ver. 6. *In the Lord,* their God, in Christ, say some; and it is true enough, whether these words so mean or no, God and Christ are the strength of the church, and of all believers. *They shall walk up and down,* shall manage all their affairs, civil and military, secular and ecclesiastical, *in his name;* by authority derived from him, by power received of him, by wisdom given from above, to the glory of our God and our Redeemer. Thus far the great things promised to the Jewish church, and which were to be fulfilled in the time from the rebuilding the temple and city to the coming of Christ, through some four hundred and ninety years; in which times if aught fell short of promise, it was because the sins of the people provoked God to alter the course of his providence toward them.

CHAP. XI.

The destruction of Jerusalem, 1—3. *Under the type of Zechariah is showed Christ's care for the flock, the Jews; and their rejection for ingratitude and light estimation of him,* 4—14. *The type and curse of a foolish shepherd,* 15—17.

OPEN [a] thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars.

a ch. 10. 10.

This chapter is minatory, and foretells the ruin of Jerusalem and the temple, this second temple, by the Romans, and the captivity of the Jews under them, for their rejecting of Christ; so the times of this chapter must be laid about the death of Christ and downwards.

Open thy doors, O Lebanon; either the temple, because built with cedars of Lebanon, so the temple is called, Ezek. xvii. 3; Hab. ii. 17; or Jerusalem, or Judea, whose boundary northward this mountain was: if all these do not fully suit with the text and context, perhaps this added may. Lebanon, a high and great mountain, boundary between Judea and its neighbours on the north, is here spoken to to open its gates, its fortifications, raised to secure the passages, which through the hollownesses of the mountain, the deep and dismal straits, lead into Judea, and would be first attempted by the enemy that first invades the northern parts of Judea. These garrisons or fortresses are foretold like to be easily taken, as if they opened of themselves, and the Romans would have easy entrance by this means into Judea. *That the fire;* either figuratively, the rage of the enemy, or the wrath of God; or literally, fire by the enemy kindled in the houses and buildings in Judea, and in Lebanon itself. *May devour thy cedars;* palaces built with cedars, or else figuratively nobles, princes, and eminent men.

2 Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the ‖ mighty is spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; [b] for ‖ the forest of the vintage is come down.

‖ Or, *gallants*
b Is. 32. 19.
‖ Or, *the defenced forest.*

Howl, fir tree; either mean men, or houses and towns built with firs. *For the cedar is fallen;* the greater and better escape not, much less shall the meaner and worse. *Because the mighty is spoiled;* howl because the mighty men, cities, fortresses, and munitions are taken, sacked, and ruined; or else held by enemies, which is worse, and of defences and safety to us, are become our greatest annoyances and dangers. *Oaks of Bashan;* oaks either literally, as they were used in that country, for building palaces, cities, towns, and fortresses; or else figuratively, the great men of that country, a land very fruitful and pleasant, of which Nah. i. 4. *The forest of the vintage;* either all strong places which were for guarding and defending the vineyards; or Jerusalem itself, compared to a forest in regard of the many and tall houses in it; this best pleaseth most interpreters. In short, all are called to weep, and cry, and howl for the miseries that will come upon all sorts, high and low, on them and theirs. *Is come down;* is laid desolate.

3 ¶ *There is* a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled.

There is; it is as certain as if present, as sure all these shall howl, as if the things for which they do howl were already acted. *A voice of the howling,* a most bitter, loud, passionate, and dismal howling, *of the shepherds:* literally thus; The enemy having broken in hath driven away or eaten up their flocks of sheep, their herds; and they, undone, howl most bitterly on the mountains, where the echo

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more doubles the horror than the noise. Or figuratively, shepherds are governors, magistrates, and civil officers, together with priests and prophets, who are over the people as shepherds over the flocks. *For their glory is spoiled;* what was their honour, their safety, their joy, is spoiled, taken from them and given to others. *A voice of the roaring,* the dismal outcries, *of young lions;* of men in authority among the Jews, who should have been shepherds to defend, but were as lions to tear and devour, and which lurked in Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judea, wheresoever they could lie in wait to tear the poor and weak. *For the pride of Jordan is spoiled;* the great forests on the banks of Jordan, called here *the pride of Jordan,* either because of the stately situation of them; or, because the prophet would keep the decorum of his allegory, he calls these *the pride of Jordan,* for that the young lions were wont to walk proudly, to range over it without fear. So did these men-lions securely prey in Jerusalem and its fellow cities; but these are cut down, and now they must no more range through to seek a prey: so all from the north to the east of the land of Canaan is represented as made a spoil.

c ver. 7. 4 Thus saith the LORD my God; [c]Feed the flock of the slaughter:

Thus saith the Lord my God; God the Father. *Feed;* O Zechariah, feed, comfort, rule: but rather the Father speaks to Christ the Son, and appoints him who is the eternal Shepherd to feed his sheep. *The flock of the slaughter;* appointed to the slaughter by different hands, and for different causes. It speaks of the people of the Jews, who were killed by many hands; during four hundred and fifty years they were a flock of slaughter to the Egyptians, Chaldeans, &c.; afterward to the Romans, who ruined their commonwealth, slew their citizens, and burnt their city.

d Jer. 2. 3. & 50. 7. e Deu. 29. 19. Hos. 12. 8. 5 Whose possessors slay them, and [d]hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them [e]say, Blessed *be* the LORD; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not.

Whose possessors slay them; either their own governors, or the Romans who in right of conquerors are their possessors; which way soever they got them into their hands, they ruined them, destroyed them both in body and estate. *And hold themselves not guilty;* think they do not sin in doing this; so low thoughts they had of this people, such extravagant thoughts they had of their own power and authority. *They that sell them;* betray their persons, or liberty, or estate for profit, or sell them for slaves to foreigners; *say, Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich;* with profane, ungodly hearts do give God thanks that they thrive by the most barbarous methods of cruelty and oppression, by bloody murders, as if these were ways of his appointing to gain wealth, as if he blessed them. *Their own shepherds pity them not;* who by birth, call, and office were their proper shepherds, the governors of this poor people, the princes, the priests, had no pity on them in their slavery or blood; looked on as unconcerned, it may be glad, that either they got a booty, or were rid of a disaffected subject.

† Heb. *make to be fonnd.* 6 For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD: but, lo, I will †deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver *them.*

For I will no more pity: their great sins have turned away God's compassions from them, and men show no mercy where God withdraws his. *The inhabitants;* the generality of the nation, the body of this sinful people. *I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand;* leave to a turbulent, cruel, seditious, and fraudulent temper one against another, to make parties against each other, to rob, imprison, banish, or kill each other, as in the latter times of their state it is known they did. *Into the hand of his king;* the Roman Cæsar, called here the Jews' king, for that they had chosen him to be so. Or else the head of the faction. *They shall smite the land;* their king and his armies shall destroy the land: it may point to Vespasian and Titus, who sacked Jerusalem, burnt the temple, captivated ninety-seven thousand persons, and slew six hundred thousand at least, though Josephus reckons eleven hundred thousand. *Out of their hand I will not deliver them;* they shall never more be by my hand delivered, or I will cast them off for ever; and so their captivity under the Romans continueth to this day.

f ver. 4. ‖ Or, *verily the poor* g Zeph. 3. 12. Matt. 11. 5. 7 And I will [f]feed the flock of slaughter, ‖*even* you, [g]O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called ‖Bands; and I fed the flock.

‖ Or, *Binders.*

And, or *But,* as the Hebrew particle is sometimes read: As for the greatest part, they are so corrupt and obstinately disobedient, I will cast them off; *but I will feed,* &c. O therefore, so then, because it is the will of God that the flock of slaughter should be fed, I will feed, &c.: the French version seems this way inclined. *Je me suis donc mis à paître les brebis exposées à tuerie:* I am sent then to feed the sheep that are exposed to slaughter. *The flock of slaughter;* either by the violence of their enemies, or by the monstrous negligence of their shepherds. *O poor of the flock:* this is explicatory of the former, and by the ingemination of it shows us that God doth in his charge to the prophet typically, and in his charge to Christ antitype, distinguish clearly between people and people among the Jews, between those that were poor and forlorn, and those that were tyrannical, proud, cruel, and made a prey of them; these are left out of the pastoral charge, the other are taken care of. *I took unto me two staves:* thus he enters on the actual exercise of his office, and takes two staves to himself, at the meaning whereof we can but guess. Two, say some, to signify the twofold way of Christ's governing his people, by lenity and severity. Or, say others, to note his singular care and diligence in his office; when other shepherds content themselves with one, Christ takes two. Or what if hereby Christ would be provided with one to guide the flock, with another to repel such as would slaughter them, to protect against violence and to direct such as are meek: Christ hath his golden sceptre for his loyal and obedient subjects, and his iron rod for refractory rebels and violent enemies. *The one I called Beauty;* or pleasantness, sweetness, and loveliness; this lay in the holiness of his precepts, the excellency of his comforts, the glory of his reward. This is the first, and answers to the character of the ways of wisdom, Prov. iii. 17; they are pleasantness. The ordinances of God, and the enjoyment of them, are the beauty of the Lord, and our beholding it, as David, Psal. xxvii. 4. *The other I called Bands;* either alluding to the lines wherewith the portion of the Holy Land was meted out to every one according to their lot; or referring to the obligations Christ lays on men to hold together in peace and unity. The beauty of grace and glory, the bands of love and peace. *And I fed the flock;* with these in hand the shepherd undertakes to feed and rule this flock.

h Hos. 5. 7. † Heb. *was straitened for them.* 8 Three shepherds also I cut off [h]in one month; and my soul †lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me.

Three, put for many, a definite for an indefinite number. *Shepherds,* negligent or greatly faulty. *I cut off;* put out of office, or, by discovering their faults, made them lie hid and conceal themselves. *In one month;* in a little time. *My soul loathed them;* hated their treachery and idleness. *Their soul also abhorred me:* disgraced and turned out, they hated him; in which these shepherds had too many of the Jews that sided with them, and that bore a hatred to the true Shepherd and to his impartial executing severity on the wicked shepherds.

i Jer. 15. 2. & 43. 11. † Heb. *of his fellow, or, neighbour.* 9 Then said I, I will not feed you: [i]that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh †of another.

Then; after that time of his patient and vigilant feeding

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the flock, and after his cutting off the three unfaithful shepherds, and after the ill resentment he met with for it; when he deserved love and thanks for it, he is repaid with disdain and hatred by the people, as well as by the shepherds; when he saw all this, *then*, &c. Thus they rejected Christ, the true Shepherd. *I will not feed you;* next he rejecteth them, he will no more take care of them, or provide for them. *That that dieth, let it die;* that which is ready to die, and will not be cured, but hath rejected the Shepherd's love and skill, let it die; it is like that, *If ye believe not, ye shall die in your sins. That that is to be cut off, let it be cut off;* either the same repeated, to confirm and affect them more, or else it intends to leave them naked and unguarded to their enemy, to cut them off by the sword or famine, &c. *Let the rest eat every one the flesh of another;* either live to be besieged till hunger and famine make the living eat the dead, or cruelly kill that they may eat, as threatened, Deut. xxviii. 52—58; or else by seditions and bloody intestine quarrels destroy each other: all which happened to them in the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans.

10 ¶ And I took my staff, *even* Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people.

And I took my staff, even Beauty; which I gave that name to, which was the beauty and glory of them, the covenant of God with all the blessings of it, his presence with them, his love to them, and his protection of them, and his blessing on them. *That I might break my covenant;* signify and declare that they had rejected God and his favour, and refused his covenant, and that now God would hold it for nulled, and not obligatory to him. This somewhat illustrates the staff Beauty, which while unbroken the covenant between God and the Jews was whole and unbroken; and it is to be noted, Christ calls it his covenant, for he was the Mediator of it, to bring us to God in duty and holy walking, and to reconcile God to us in mercy and grace, which is the most beautiful and sweetest object we can see. *Which I had made with all the people:* here again *all the people*, that is, the generality, in distinction to the poor and meek, the little remnant, with whom the covenant stood firm, though the body of the nation were rejected and cast off, for God nor Christ have either of them ever cast away his people whom he foreknew, Rom. xi. 1, 2.

11 And it was broken in that day: and ‖so [k]the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it *was* the word of the LORD.

‖ Or, *the poor of the flock, &c. certainly knew.*
[k] Zeph. 3. 12. ver. 7.

It was broken; the covenant was abrogated by the Jews' obstinate refusal of it, and the Mediator of it. *In that day:* it is not to be wondered it was done in one day at last, for the unthankful, unbelieving Jew had been through many generations breaking it: now a day doth it, when it came to that, *Not this man, but Barabbas;* and, *We have no king but Cæsar;* and, *Crucify, crucify him. The poor of the flock that waited upon me;* who knew the Messiah, believed in him, and obeyed him, observed his doctrine, miracles, and life. *Knew that it was the word of the Lord;* saw and owned God in all this; that he had justly cast off the nation of the Jews for their sins, their bloody murder of the Lord of life, and refusing his government: they saw God would by the Roman power punish the Jews, and lay waste their land, city, and temple for this and their other sins; all which was both according to his wise counsel and express word: these understood what among others this prophet had four hundred and ninety years before written of these things.

12 And I said unto them, †If ye think good, give *me* my price; and if not, forbear. So they [l]weighed for my price thirty *pieces* of silver.

† Heb. *If it be good in your eyes.*
[l] Matt. 26. 15. See Ex. 21. 32.

And I said unto them; upon parting, Christ seems after the manner of men to mind them of his pains and care for them, and would have them reckon with him. *If ye think good:* he puts it to them whether they thought he deserved aught at their hands, and what it was. *Give me my price;* though I need not your money or pay, I deserve more than you will give, and therefore do in this as liketh you. *So they,* the rulers of the Jews, the high priest, chief priests, and Pharisees, *weighed,* which was the manner of paying money in those days, *thirty pieces of silver;* which amounts to thirty-seven shillings and sixpence, the value of the life of a slave, Exod. xxi. 32: this was fulfilled when they paid Judas Iscariot so much to betray Christ, Matt. xxvi. 15; xxvii. 9.

13 And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the [m]potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty *pieces* of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

[m] Matt. 27. 9, 12.

The Lord, God the Father, with detestation of so vile an affront and undervalue of his Son, *said unto me;* to Zechariah, in this theatre personating Christ sometimes. *Cast it unto the potter;* as being so little it would hardly purchase any thing but what was cheapest among them, a little earthenware. *A goodly price that I was prized at of them:* in an irony God upbraids the shepherds of his people, who prized the great Shepherd no higher. *I took;* Zechariah, who in this part now emblematically doth what Judas will with horror do when he hath sold innocent blood and betrayed it. *Cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord;* or rather, cast them into the house of the Lord for the potter, all which the Jewish rulers act over in their prosecuting Christ unto death.

14 Then I cut asunder mine other staff, *even* ‖Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

‖ Or, *Binders.*

Then; so soon as I saw what value they put upon me, or presently after the casting them off from the covenant, and unchurching them. *I;* Christ did it really, the prophet did it in the type. *Cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands;* took no further care to keep them in civil peace among themselves, but left them to their seditious humours and inhuman animosities. Religion, which is true, is the best bond of peace, friendship, and love; when the Jews cast off religion, and murdered their Lord, next they fall to murdering one another. *That I might break;* declare it broken, leave them to show it was broken. *The brotherhood;* that friendship which had been among them. *Between Judah,* the two tribes, *and Israel,* the remnant of the ten tribes, which fell into most unnatural seditions after the death of Christ, till the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans.

15 ¶ And the LORD said unto me, [n]Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd.

[n] Ezek. 34. 2, 3, 4.

Take unto thee, O Zechariah. *The instruments;* put on the garb and personate once more a shepherd, quite different from him thou hast represented. *Of a foolish shepherd:* this foolish people have rejected the wisest and best shepherd; let them see what one they will choose, in seeing what part thou now actest.

16 For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, *which* shall not visit those that be ‖cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor ‖feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces.

‖ Or, *hidden.*
‖ Or, *bear.*

I will raise up a shepherd; as a just punishment of their sin in refusing Christ, the wise and good Shepherd; his government they would not accept to their salvation, that they choose shall be to their ruin. *Which shall not visit those that be cut off,* or, that are hidden; it is a foolish shepherd who seeks not out those that are lost to bring them home. *Neither shall seek the young one;* which are aptest to perish through weakness. *Nor heal that that is broken;* but leaves it to die of its wounds. *Nor feed that that standeth still;* either not able to go forward, or, hungry, stops to eat, but the shepherd will not wait while this is done. *But he shall eat the flesh of the fat,* will feast on the fattest of the flock, *and tear their claws in pieces;* and with cruelty extort all from them, tear off their skin to the very nails. In brief, a sluggish, negligent, covetous, riotous, oppressive,

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and cruel government, shadowed out by a foolish shepherd, is the punishment of the sins of the Jews.

o Jer. 23. 1. Ezek. 34. 2. John 10. 12, 13.

17 °Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword *shall be* upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.

Woe to the idol shepherd! to every one of them that are but the images of shepherds, worthless and useless. *That leaveth,* casts off the care of, *the flock,* Jer. xxiii. 1; Ezek. xxxiv. 2. *The sword,* of the enemy, *shall be upon his arm,* to break his strength, *and upon his right eye;* blind and befool his counsels. *His arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened;* power and policy shall fail him: such shall be their governors.

CHAP. XII.

Jerusalem a cup of trembling, and a burdensome stone, to the confusion of her adversaries, 1—5. *The victorious restoring of Judah,* 6—9. *The repentance of Jerusalem,* 10—14.

a Is. 42. 5. & 44. 24. & 45. 12, 18. & 48. 13. b Num. 16. 22. Eccles. 12. 7. Is. 57. 16. Heb. 12. 9.

THE burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, [a]which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and [b]formeth the spirit of man within him.

The burden of the word of the Lord: see this whole passage chap. ix. 1. *For Israel;* or touching, concerning, as the Gallic version; upon, against, the Hebrew bears it; and some take it in one, some in the other sense, though I think the main of the chapter persuades it is to be rendered, for, in the behalf of Israel, i. e. the church of Christ among the Jews until their rejection, and among the Gentiles ever since their vocation; both have their concern in the things here foretold. *Saith the Lord;* who giveth out promises of great things to a people in a very low state, and therefore to raise their hope tells them by his prophet what he hath done. *Which stretcheth forth the heavens,* as a curtain, saith Isaiah, chap. xl. 22; who did more easily spread abroad the heavens, than any creature can spread forth a curtain about your bed, or a canopy over your head; by an almighty power going along with the act of his will, saying, Let it be, all that immense body of the material, visible heavens immediately spread forth itself. *And layeth the foundation of the earth,* upon his own almighty word; on that the chief corner-stones thereof do lie, Job xxxviii. 4—6; Isa. li. 13. *Formeth;* in admirable wisdom, and with more especial artifice, framed, so the Hebrew imports, as Isa. xliii. 7; xlvi. 11. *The spirit;* the immortal soul, that spiritual being which animateth us. Who hath done all this he can do all that is here promised for Israel, and threatened against Israel's enemies.

c Is. 51. 17, 22, 23. ‖ Or, *slumber,* or, *poison.* † Or, *and also against Judah* shall he be *which shall be in siege against Jerusalem.*

2 Behold, I will make Jerusalem [c]a cup of ‖trembling unto all the people round about, ‖when they shall be in the siege both against Judah *and* against Jerusalem.

I will make Jerusalem; that weak, unwalled, poor, and thinly inhabited city, type of the church; and much more the church, which is antitype to Jerusalem. *A cup of trembling;* they shall drink their own bane whose swords be drinking the blood of the inhabitants of this Jerusalem; there is poison mixed in the cup of the wrath of God, which he will put into the hands of such wicked ones, and they must drink it off. *Unto all the people round about;* to the heathen round about, to all of them; all have more or less at one time or other molested Jerusalem, and God remembers it, and hath provided for them a cup of astonishment against the day in which they besiege her, thinking then to finish all their attempts against Jerusalem. *When they shall be in the siege:* strange siege laid against a whole country, and mighty powers will be little enough to do this, it requires a most extraordinary provision; now when all this is in readiness and no visible means of escape, then will God make them drink the wine of astonishment and cast them into a dead sleep. *Against Judah;* the land of Judah. *Against Jerusalem;* typical and mystical, the church of Christ.

d ver. 4. 6, 8, 9, 11. & ch. 13. 1. & 14. 4, 6, ver. 9, 12. e Mat. 21. 44.

3 ¶ [d]And in that day will I make Jerusalem [e]a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

In that day; in the times of the heathens afflicting the church, from the repair of Jerusalem till Christ's coming in the flesh, and in succeeding times since; but the day of the full accomplishment of this prophecy is a day known to the Lord. *A burdensome stone;* too heavy for them, though many join together to remove it. *For all people;* though all people of this known world should burden themselves with her. *Shall be cut in pieces:* they would be crushed to pieces, as a man that falls under a weighty and massy stone. *Though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it:* many nations have been confederate, now if you would suppose all through the whole world in league against Jerusalem, yet they could not stand under the weight of his displeasure, who is provoked by such attempts, he would grind them to powder.

f Ps. 76. 6. Ezek. 38. 4

4 In that day, saith the LORD, [f]I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.

In that day: see ver. 3. *I will smite every horse:* horses are of very great use in wars; they were the main strength of Antiochus Epiphanes, his best preparations. *With astonishment;* a dull, sottish fear and perplexity. *And his rider with madness;* an impotency of mind both in the understanding, which is folly and imprudence, and in the will and resolution, which is either cowardice or unconstancy, like madmen that neither know how to resolve or act. God will turn all their counsel into foolishness, their strength into weakness, their courage into fear, and so overturn them all. *I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah;* a while I seemed as one that slept or winked at the proceedings of my church's enemies, yet now I will open mine eyes, and see all that is going forward against them, and I will watch over my people for good; against their enemies, to confound and destroy them and their enterprises: this eye of God open upon his people is his wise, powerful, gracious providence for them, Psal. xxxi. 22; Jer. xxiv. 6. *I will smite every horse of the people with blindness;* all their warriors in their projecting and consults shall be as full of improvidence, and have as little foresight, as a stark blind man hath of sight to see by.

‖ Or, *There is strength to me and to the inhabitants, &c.* Joel 3. 16.

5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, ‖The inhabitants of Jerusalem *shall be* my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.

The governors of Judah, the counsellors and rulers at home, and the leaders and captains abroad, the Maccabees and others, every one for himself, *shall say in their heart;* shall think, believe, and reckon upon it, and be hearty in it. *The inhabitants of Jerusalem,* though but few and poor, yet they *shall be my strength:* and these shall be ready and forward to go forth against their enemies, with a handful of men to encounter mighty and numerous armies, because their strength and help lieth *in* the name of *the Lord of hosts;* not in their own power, but in the power of the almighty sovereign Lord of all, who can save by few as by many. And because *their God* he will give them victory.

g Obad. 18.

6 ¶ In that day will I make the governors of Judah [g]like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be

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inhabited again in her own place, *even* in Jerusalem.

The governors: see ver. 5. *Like a hearth of fire;* a hearth on which fire is thoroughly kindled. *Among the wood;* the more is laid on, the more is consumed and burnt up: so the enemies of Judah and Jerusalem shall be, their multitudes shall no more save themselves than much wood cast on a great fire in the hearth can preserve itself. *Like a torch of fire in a sheaf;* which immediately sets the whole sheaf on fire, and it is consumed. *They shall devour, &c.;* the governors of Judah with their handful of men shall thus surely and speedily consume their enemies which set upon them. *Jerusalem shall be inhabited again;* as indeed it was, and continued so till Christ's death, and forty years after; for of these times doth the prophet speak, and not of times still to come. *In her own place;* not built as Nineveh, Tyre, Babylon, or Rome, in some place near to the old cities of that name, but in the very same place where old Jerusalem did, shall re-edified Jerusalem again stand. *Even in Jerusalem;* so you shall find Jerusalem in Jerusalem; or thus, spiritual Jerusalem shall be that Jerusalem in which you ought to look, and where you shall find the old typical Jerusalem, which though it lie waste, and I fear must never be built, yet is in more ample manner built up in the church, spiritual Jerusalem.

7 The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify *themselves* against Judah.

Shall save; rescue from the power and rage of the Antiochuses, nay, subdue their armies, and put them to flight before the Jews. *The tents;* the unfenced places, the open country, the shepherd-like cottages or tents of Judah. *Of Judah first;* before he saveth Jerusalem, before he put Jerusalem into arms, or bring her inhabitants into the field, to fight, and help the country and its inhabitants; first the weaker are saved, next the stronger. *That the glory of the house of David,* that the illustrious house of David, and so the glorious citizens of Jerusalem, *do not magnify themselves against Judah;* boast of their power, policy, courage, and forwardness, and how much Judah owed to these for their deliverance: this would exasperate Judah, and provoke God, who would do all this: so that all might magnify their God, none think greatly of themselves.

8 In that day shall the LORD defend
h Joel 3. 10. the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and [h]he
‖ Or, *abject.* † Heb. *fallen.* that is ‖†feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David *shall be* as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

In that day: see ver. 3. *Shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem:* as he had defended and saved Judah, and the tents thereof, so will he also defend Jerusalem and its inhabitants against all their enemies, during the Persian, Grecian, and beginnings of the Roman empire, during which days many wars were raised against the Jews; but most visible was this, when the Maccabees succeeded so far, as to restore religion, and cleanse the temple. *He that is feeble,* reeleth through weakness. *shall be as David:* a mighty man of valour was David; so these, through faith, of weak became strong, as Heb. xi. 34. *The house of David shall be as God;* those of the royal line shall be, for prudence and prowess in the conduct of the armies of Israel, most excellent, expressed here in an hyperbole. *As God;* or, as angels, so *Elohim* is translated Psal. viii. 3; and so I find the French reads it, *comme des anges.* Nay, like *the Angel of the Lord,* which is head of principalities; like Christ, who is Captain of our salvation. In these exploits and in this deliverance of the church they were types, and so must have somewhat in them which may be sufficient to resemble them to him. *Before them:* these excellent ones of the royal line were to be leaders and commanders in these wars, and in their conduct they should show prudence and valour like that of an angel, rather than that of an ordinary man.

9 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that
i Hag. 2. 22. ver. 3 day, *that* I will seek to [i]destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

And it shall come to pass; this also shall certainly come to pass. *That I;* God, the Defender and Saviour of Israel. *Will seek:* this speaks not any difficulty to God in the work, as with men, who sometimes do seek to do what they cannot do; but this implieth God would thoroughly do it, his right hand should find out these his enemies, he will hunt them out. *To destroy;* not to restrain, but to overthrow and destroy. *All nations;* without partiality, every nation that sets itself to oppress and destroy Jerusalem; God will pay them in their own coin: they said, Blot out her name; but God will blot out theirs. Let us, say they, cut them off from being a nation; but this God will turn upon their own heads. *That come against;* combine, and attempt to destroy her; and this was evidently seen upon those that sought to destroy Jerusalem and the second temple before Christ's incarnation; for by the Romans God destroyed the Antiochian power which had often mischiefed the Jews, and destroyed the other kingdoms which had been enemies to the Jews, who were never in danger of being cut off from being a nation, till their horrid murdering of the Lord of life. *Jerusalem;* literally and historically the city which the captives returned from Babylon did build; but mystically the catholic church, which God will never suffer to be destroyed, he will rather destroy all nations than suffer them to destroy his church.

10 [k]And I will pour upon the house of
k Jer. 31. 9. & 50. 4. Ezek. 39. 29. Joel 2. 28. David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall [l]look upon me
l John 19. 34, 37. Rev. 1. 7. whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, [m]as one mourneth for *his* only *son,* and shall be in bitterness for *his* firstborn.
m Jer. 6. 26. Amos 8. 10.

And I; God the Father, so Acts ii. 17, 18; Isa. xliv. 3. *Will pour,* in plentiful measures, as a plentiful rain is poured forth on a thirsty ground: this was fulfilled on Christ's exaltation, when he received gifts for men, and, being glorified, gave the Spirit, sent the Comforter to his disciples and believers; this is daily performed to the children of God, and will be continually performed till we all are made perfect, and are brought to be with Christ for ever. *Upon the house of David;* on some of that royal family; or, typically considered, it is the whole family of Christ, his house, who was the seed of David, and who is called David their King, Ezek. xxxvii. 24; Hos. iii. 5. *Upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* literally understood it was fulfilled extraordinarily, Acts ii. 4, 5; and, no doubt, in the ordinary manner to many of whom no mention is made: mystically, the inhabitants of Jerusalem are all the members of Christ, all believers of all ages. *The Spirit of grace;* which is the fountain of all graces in us, and which makes us lovely in the eye of our God; grace to purify us and to beautify us, that God may delight in us. *And of supplications,* or prayer, which is an early, inseparable fruit of the Spirit of grace: by the Spirit we cry, Abba, Father, and are helped to perform this duty, Rom. viii. 26. *They,* all those who have received this Spirit, *shall look upon me,* with an eye of faith, and turn to Christ, love, obey, and wait for him. *Whom they have pierced:* every one of us by our sins pierced him, but many of the Jews nailed him to the cross, and actually murdered the Lord of life. This, as foretold, so was very punctually fulfilled, and recorded in the account of his death given by John, chap. xix. 34, 35, 37; this hath then a particular respect to the Jews, though not confined to them. *They shall mourn for him;* grieve, and heartily lament the crucifying the Lord Jesus Christ, not only as the sinful, cruel act of their fathers, but as that in which their sins had a great share. *As one mourneth for his only son;* with a very great and deep, with a long and continued sorrow, with an unfeigned and real sorrow, such as is the sorrow of a father in the death of an only son; they shall retain it inwardly, and express it outwardly, as in the funeral mournings on such occasions. *Shall be in bitterness for him:* this speaks the inwardest affection of the mourner; there may be tears in some cases without grief or bitterness in the spirit, but here both are joined; true repentance will bitterly lament the sins which brought sorrows and shame upon our Lord. *As one that is in bitterness for his first-born:* this bitterness is com-

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pared to the grief of one who loseth his first-born, to confirm and illustrate what he had just before spoken of Christians mourning for Christ.

11 In that day shall there be a great [n] mourning in Jerusalem, [o] as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

n Acts 2. 37.
o 2 Kin. 23. 29. 2 Chron. 35. 24.

In that day, when the Jews shall know, own, and mourn for their sins, and for that great sin in crucifying the Lord of glory, *shall there be a great mourning;* a very great mourning, which is expressed by the greatest the Jews ever were acquainted with, and which for its greatness grew up into a proverb: *The mourning of Hadadrimmon*, or the mourning for Josiah slain at Hadadrimmon, a town *in the valley of Megiddon*. Of this mourning see 2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25.

12 [p] And the land shall mourn, † every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of [q] Nathan apart, and their wives apart;

p Mat. 24. 30. Rev. 1. 7.
† Heb. *families, families.*
q 2 Sam. 5. 14. Luke 3. 31.

The land; land put for the inhabitants of it, the land in general for the land of Judea, or that where the Jews dwelt, who should every where bear a share in this mourning. Thus some of the Jews from every country where they dwelt, being met at Jerusalem, were pricked at heart, and did mourn over the crucified Messiah, Acts ii. 5, 37, 41. *Every family apart;* or family by family, expressed in Hebrew, *families, families*. The royal family in both branches of it, Solomon's and Nathan's. This family, as having greatest portion in Christ, should have been most tender of him, who had been heir on the throne if his kingdom had been of this world, and by descent from David: but since they forgot him, neglected to do their duty to him alive, they remember him, and do their duty towards him, dead; they mourn really and truly. *Their wives apart:* the manner of the Jews in mourning was by shutting up themselves, retiring from company and pleasure; here families retire, nay, in the family, wives retire to bewail their sin and their fathers' sin in rejecting Christ. Some there were of this family who believed in Christ, and mourned, when the gospel was first published to the Jews before it was carried to the Gentiles.

13 The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family ‖ of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;

‖ Or, *of Simeon*, as LXX.

The sacerdotal tribe were the most bitter and fierce persecutors of Christ, they hired the traitor, they sought witness; the high priest (head of that family) condemned him to die; for all which they shall one day reckon with God, and therefore above other tribes they are particularly named as chief mourners for their injustice and cruelty to Christ. Here is one particular branch of Levi's family mentioned, the family of Shimei, of whom 1 Chron. vi. 17; xxiii. 10. These two families had been deeply guilty; now they do as eminently concern themselves to mourn for him, to lament the sin, deprecate the fierce wrath of God, and submit to his kingdom, which their fathers did not, would not do. In this family, where most were bitter, bloody enemies to Christ, some had other thoughts of him, and mourned for him.

14 All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

It would be somewhat tedious to repeat every family and their wives once, therefore a general comprehensive account may serve; some of every family of the whole remnant of Israel mourn, believe, look to, and obey Christ the Messiah. So the mourning for Christ bears some proportion to their violent dealing against Christ, and they through faith live by the blood they did spill, and get to glory by him whom they loaded with reproaches. What will not grace do, when it converteth, accepteth, comforteth, glorifieth such offenders!

CHAP. XIII.

The fountain of purgation for Jerusalem, 1. *The extirpation of idolatry and false prophecy*, 2—6. *The death of Christ, and the saving of a third part after a severe trial*, 7—9.

IN [a] that day there shall be [b] a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for † uncleanness.

a ch. 12. 3.
b Heb. v. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Rev. 1. 5.
† Heb. *separation for uncleanness.*

In that day; when the Lamb of God shall be offered up a sacrifice for mankind, and the gospel shall be preached in which the glad tidings of our redemption are published. *A fountain:* by water and ceremonial washings was legal pollution in many cases purged away, and much of the legal service stood in divers washings; but all these were shadows and types; here is that they typified, the matchless healing and purging fountain, i. e. the blood of Christ; here is the true Siloam, which never failed to heal any that rightly used it; it is Christ. *Opened:* the spouse is to Christ a fountain sealed, but Christ is to sinners a fountain opened: under the law he was as the waters of the temple, for the Jew; but now he is opened to us Gentiles, free to all, and of easy access, and of sovereign virtue to heal. *To the house of David;* he was every where nearest to them, and though his own kindred did some of them slight him, and not believe in him, yet some others did, and it may intimate to us the first tender of grace made to his own, to whom he came, though they received him not; or the royal family some of them will be benefited by it, and all of them need it; no outward privilege can secure us against the poison of sin, grace alone, this fountain only, can purge it away in great and noble, or mean and base. *To the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* to all the Jews before the Gentiles, *To you first*, saith the apostle, *God hath sent his Son;* but in that it is opened, it is to us Gentiles also. Jerusalem, as image of the whole church, takes in the Gentiles; so inhabitants of Jerusalem are all to whom the gospel is preached, all penitents. *For sin and for uncleanness;* for purging away of all manner of sins and uncleannesses, of which men repent, and from which they depart, according to that Prov. xx. 9; 1 John i. 9.

2 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will [c] cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause [d] the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

c Ex. 23. 13. Josh. 23. 7. Ps. 16. 4. Ezek. 30. 13. Hos. 2. 17. Mic. 5. 12, 13.
d 2 Pet. 2. 1.

In that day: see ver. 1. *I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land;* utterly destroy idols and idolatry. *Satan fell from heaven like lightning*, as Christ tells us, when the gospel was preached by those he sent; and it is known the birth of Christ silenced the devil, that he could no more give answer to those that inquired at his oracles: the light of the gospel is such, that none of the idols can bear it. The devil put it into the heads of the Romans to keep Christ from being received by public allowance for a God, because he would turn out all the rest of them. *They shall no more be remembered*, with veneration, sacrifices, gifts, erecting of temples, depending on or consulting with them; they shall be remembered and abhorred, whereas before they were remembered and adored. *The prophets;* either those that, being priests to idols, did consult with them, and pretend to foretell future events; or more likely the false prophets among the Jews, who are prophets as idols are gods. *The unclean spirit*, i. e. the devil, which sets the false prophets on work. Christ cast many out of persons possessed, and by his doctrine still doth cast out Satan.

3 And it shall come to pass, *that* when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him [e] shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.

e Deu. 13. 6, 8. & 18. 20.

When any shall yet prophesy; whosoever he be that shall pretend hereafter to prophesy through the instigation of that

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unclean spirit, for it can be from no other, when the Lord shall have fully revealed his mind to us. *His father and his mother that begat him;* his dearest friends, they who are by nature nearest to him, who begat him. *Shall say unto him;* shall discourse to him, and inform him what the law of Moses directeth in this case. *Thou shalt not live;* which I take to be not the sentence condemnatory, for, being private persons, they could not condemn him; but it is a repetition of the law which saith such shall not live, and then it amounts to this: A false prophet ought not to live, Deut. xiii. 6, 8; what then dost thou do to break this law, and endanger thy life? Thou oughtest to die for this by the law. The father and mother thus should admonish and show the matter of law and danger, but not judicially pass sentence, and determine what shall be done. *Thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord;* thou fallest under that law, Deut. xiii. 6. *Shall thrust him through;* or, wound, chastise with stripes that may leave their marks behind them; or rather, shall sharply reprove him, and with cutting words terrify him from the like practice. You read of words that are piercing words, Prov. xii. 18, words that run through as a sword; and the Chaldee paraphrast on this of our prophet allows the father and mother to deal sharply with their son, they shall rebuke cuttingly. Besides, if it were to be understood of killing, the law directs to stone such a one, Deut. xiii. 10, not to run him through with lance or sword.

f Mic. 3. 6, 7.
g 2 Kings 1. 8. Is. 20. 2. Matt. 3. 4.
† Heb. *a garment of hair.*
† Heb. *to lie.*

4 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* [f]the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear [g]† a rough garment † to deceive:

It shall come to pass; by this means it will come to pass, such sharp reproofs, such impartial threats, such convincing arguments, will have a good effect. *The prophets shall be ashamed;* these prophets will see their error, and be ashamed, and give over what they blush at, and is their shame. *Neither shall they wear a rough garment:* such garments the true prophets were wont to wear, and these cheats had used them for a cover to their juggling hypocrisy; but when thoroughly convinced, none shall need pull, they will themselves cast off those garments. *To deceive;* by first seeming to be more holy and strict than they are; and next, on such ill-grounded opinion of the holiness of their persons, draw them into their opinions, religion, and practice. It is an excellent work of the grace of God to recover deceivers, and to make them turn off the deceiver, and deal plainly and faithfully with others and themselves.

h Amos 7. 14.

5 [h]But he shall say, I *am* no prophet, I *am* an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.

This verse is this reclaimed man's recantation, or renunciation of his former course, and his solemn promise to take up his own calling, and become a plain honest man, and live upon his labour, to which he was trained up from his youth, and is sorry he ever left it.

6 And *one* shall say unto him, What *are* these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those* with which I was wounded *in* the house of my friends.

This verse continueth the account of the reclaimed prophet, and supposeth, what is usual, that some will inquire what was the meaning of the marks or impressions on his hands, whether they were not such as appropriated him to an idol, or declared him a professed diviner. *Then he shall answer*, plainly and fully. Not such as you imagine, but *those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends;* the scars of the wounds my stubbornness deserved, and the love of my friends gave me under a severe discipline, to recover me from ruining myself and others by impostures and lies.

i Is. 40. 11. Ezek. 34. 23.
k John 10. 30. & 14. 10, 11. Phil. 2. 6. 1 Mat. 26. 31. Mark 14. 27.
m Matt. 18. 10, 14. Luke 12. 32.

7 ¶ Awake, O sword, against [i]my shepherd, and against the man [k]*that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: [l]smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon [m]the little ones.

Many words are spent by interpreters to show what they think to be the connexion of the words; it is easier to say what are the contents and design of them. It is possible they are subjoined to the former to vindicate Christ from the suspicion of an impostor, though he was wounded, for this his Father did foretell by Zechariah four hundred and ninety years, more or less, beforehand, so that these wounds are not marks of an impostor, but testimonies of his truth, and that he is the Messiah.

Awake: it is God commission, or rather prediction, the imperative put for the future. *O sword;* i. e. afflictions, persecutions, and the cross. *Against my shepherd;* who is my faithful Shepherd, and will lay down his life for my sheep; who became *man*, that he might be my servant and die. *My fellow*, or my equal, who was ever with me, and my delights, Prov. viii. 30. Man my fellow speaks Christ man with us and God with his Father, God-man in one person. *Smite the shepherd;* this great and good Shepherd shall be smitten, i. e. die for my sheep, and before he dieth shall suffer much for them. *The sheep shall be scattered;* as affrighted, destitute of one to look after them, and which must be partakers in sufferings with their Shepherd. *I will turn mine hand:* God will, say some, turn his hand against the little ones, smite them too; but others say this turning the hand is in favour, and for protection; it is a hand turned over them, as if he would keep the blow off them, while others, fitter to bear it, do suffer. *Upon the little ones;* new, and therefore weak converts and disciples.

8 And it shall come to pass, *that* in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die; [n]but the third shall be left therein.

n Rom. 11. 5.

This verse may be a prediction of the great slaughter Titus made among the Jews, and also an emblem of the multitudes of them that perish, and paucity of them that are saved.

In all the land of Judea, or the whole world. *Two parts;* not precisely two, but, more largely, the greater part by far. *Shall be cut off and die*, a temporal death, by the sword of Titus, or an eternal death under unbelief and rejecting Christ. *But the third*, i. e. a remnant, the lesser part, yet as many as are chosen, *shall be left therein;* shall escape or be preserved and saved.

o Is. 48. 10.
p 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.
q Ps. 50. 15. & 91. 15. ch. 10. 6.
r Ps. 144. 15. Jer. 30. 22. Ezek. 11. 20. Hos. 2. 23. ch. 8. 8.

9 And I will bring the third part [o]through the fire, and will [p]refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: [q]they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: [r]I will say, It *is* my people: and they shall say, The LORD *is* my God.

I will bring the third part through the fire; that part that is preserved shall be brought into afflictions, hot as fire. *And will refine them as silver is refined;* these afflictions shall purify them, and so better them, as silver and gold are bettered by the furnace, made fitter to be vessels of honour. *They shall call on my name;* pray to me, and own me for their God. *I will hear;* I will answer them, and own them for my people, my purified people, &c.

CHAP. XIV.

The destruction of Jerusalem, 1, 2. *The coming of Christ, the graces of his kingdom, and the restoration of Jerusalem*, 3—11. *The plague of Jerusalem's enemies*, 12—15. *The remnant shall turn to the Lord*, 16—19. *The holiness of all that belongeth to them*, 20, 21.

a Is. 13. 9. Joel 2. 31. Acts 2. 20.

BEHOLD, [a]the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

Behold: here are things of very great importance, and of very mysterious nature, proposed by the Lord to us, and therefore we are called upon to attend to them. *The day of the Lord*, the day which the Lord hath appointed for punishing the sins of his ancient people, day of his sacrifice, Zeph. i. 8, of vengeance, Joel ii. 1, 2. *Cometh;* hasteth, or will soon overtake you, O sinful, unthankful, bloody

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Jews, who first despised and next murdered the Messiah! *Thy spoil*, all thou hast, O Jerusalem, shall become a prey to thine enemy. *Shall be divided in the midst of thee:* thy conquering enemies shall be such absolute masters of thee, that in greatest security they shall divide among themselves what they take from thee, in the very place where they take it: Jerusalem is their own, and all in it, and where they find their own they will take it; so they reckon.

b Joel 3. 2. 2 For [b]I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall
c Is. 13. 16. be taken, and [c]the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

For: this gives not the reason why, but introduceth an account how, this thing shall be done. *I will gather:* God will summon and bring together his army. They do it themselves by their own counsels, for their own works and ends; God also hath his work for them to do, and by his counsel and at his call they shall come. *All nations;* the Romans, with the power of their empire, which at that time had the rule over all the known world, or over all the nations of that part of the world. *Against Jerusalem to battle;* to make war with the Jews, which lasted some years, and cost many thousand lives, and ended at last as our prophet foretold. *The city shall be taken*, by assault and force, whereby all lay at mercy of the soldiers, who showed little to those who first refused the mercy of their God, and, justly given up by God to their own blind, obstinate wills, refused the mercy of their enemy also. *The houses rifled;* all houses pillaged, and all in them worth taking was taken away. *The women ravished;* wives, widows, and virgins barbarously violated. *Half of the city;* a certain part for uncertain, or, in common speech, many; were it one half precisely it would be but a sixth part of what were before the wars; two-thirds being cut off, as chap. xiii. 8. and one-third remaining, of which one half is for captivity. *The residue of the people;* that small number of the Jews which fled to Pella, and who were spared by Titus. *Shall not be cut off from the city;* literally, were not forbidden to dwell in or about the city; mystically, were not cut off from the church, nor ceased to be a church; this the more likely, for Titus utterly ruined the city.

3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

Then, after that he hath sufficiently punished Jerusalem and the rest of the Jews, *shall the Lord go forth*, out of his holy place, (spoken after the manner of men,) as a warrior prepared for battle. *Fight against those nations*, which had sacked Jerusalem, and oppressed his people. *As when he fought in the day of battle;* as in any of those days past, when God fought for his people and gave them great victories.

4 ¶ And his feet shall stand in that
d See Ezek. 11. 23. day [d]upon the mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the
e Joel 3. 12, 14. west, [e]*and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

Ver. 3. the Lord is said to come forth to fight for his people, this 4th verse tells us where he will take his post, or make a stand, viz. on Mount Olivet, which for its situation, in its height, and nearness to Jerusalem and the temple, might appear a convenient post for succours to post themselves on. God (speaking after the manner of men) promiseth succours to his church, and assureth her of his nearness to her, and of the prospect he hath over all that is about her, or in her; that she might be encouraged to wait on God, who is so near to her. *Before Jerusalem on the east;* a geographical description of the situation of this mountain with respect to Jerusalem. *Shall cleave in the midst thereof;* as if it were sensible of the majesty of God, who stands upon it: this cleaves, Sinai melted, at the presence of the God of the whole earth. *A very great valley;* the consequent of this dividing of the mountain, a mighty valley appears running straight from east to west; so there should be plain and easy access from the place of the feet of the Lord unto Jerusalem. *Half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south;* as if it knew how to comply with the design of God, and withdraw on each hand far enough out of the way, and be no hinderance to the intended relief of the church. So I judge (if these things were not by vision represented to the prophet, which I will not avow, though I may think so) the prophet doth parabolically set forth the future preservation and deliverance of the church of Christ: and suppose we then what wonderful effects the presence of God wrought of old whenever he appeared to rescue his people; how mountains fled, or melted, or sunk into plains, or, as here is said, divided, and made a deep and large valley, i. e. how every obstacle removed, that the relief might be sure and easy; so shall it be with the church of Christ, the gospel Jerusalem, in all times of its troubles; and though Jewish Jerusalem, that ancient city, be ruined, never to be built, yet a more excellent city, the Christian Jerusalem, shall be built, guarded, rescued, and never ruined; for the feet of the Lord shall stand so near to her, as Olivet to Jerusalem, and the way plain and easy before him on purpose to save her. In this manner I understand somewhat of the text, but I cannot suit it with particular accommodation of the events here mentioned, if I look on it as a prediction of what shall be done according to the letter, or be matter of history. Nor do I meet with any that do tell me any such thing hath been done between the time of Zechariah's prophesying and Titus wasting and sacking Jerusalem, nor shall any such thing ever be if material Jerusalem never be built.

5 And ye shall flee *to* the valley of ‖the mountains; ‖for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the [f]earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: [g]and the LORD my God shall come, *and* [h]all the saints with thee.

‖ Or, *my mountains.*
‖ Or, *when he shall touch the valley of the mountains to the place he separated.*
cir. 787.
f Amos 1. 1.
g Matt. 16. 27. & 24. 30, 31. & 25. 31. Jude 14.
h Joel 3. 11.

And ye, you that are members of the church, and whom God doth in wonderful power and majesty come to save, *shall flee;* filled with apprehensions of such strange things, and troubled at the convulsions and strugglings of nations against God and you, shall, as in a great fear, flee to some place of safety and repose; you will flee the valley itself which God maketh: by terrible things in righteousness doth God answer, and his people tremble before him when he cometh to save them. So here are represented to us a people wonderfully saved, and astonished at the methods of it; God makes valleys in the midst of mountains, and they (for whose good they are made) flee those valleys. So the words were better read; our marginal readings and the Gallic version do so read it. *For*, or *although*, or *notwithstanding*, this *valley reach unto Azal*, which speaks, say some, a separate place, i. e. provided of God for their safety, a Zoar for Lot, or Pella for the citizens of Jerusalem. They shall, as is usual in great frights and consternation of mind, not see how safe they are, or whither to go, but some will run for a while from or beyond their refuge. *As ye fled from before the earthquake:* this was some dreadful earthquake, and put the people into a mighty fear, and made them flee in all haste; it is mentioned Amos i. 1; and the prophet tells us, that when God shakes the kingdoms of his enemies, to make a plain and level way for his ransomed ones, it shall make them flee for fear too. *The Lord my God shall come:* as thus rendered it gives reason of this commotion of mind and this hasty flight. But it would be plainer if it were, as it may be, I think, read, *and*, or *yet, O Lord my God, come, and bring all the saints with thee.* As if it were said, Though it will, O Lord, put us into such fears; yet without such wonderful works we shall not have our hopes, nor see thy salvation; therefore, O Lord my God, come, and bring thy saints, holy ones, angels, with thee: and so will this be like that of St. John, Rev. xxii.

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20. shutting up the visions of the new heaven and the new earth, and the appendages of them, with, *Come, Lord Jesus.*

‖ i. e. it shall not be clear in some places, and dark in other places of the world.

6 And it shall come to pass in that day, ‖*that* the light shall not be †clear, *nor* †dark:

† Heb. *precious.* † Heb. *thickness.*

In that day; whilst God is fighting with the enemies of his church, the nations that fought against Jerusalem. *The light;* good estate, peace, and welfare. *Shall not be clear;* unmixed good, all light, it will not be so well with the church. *Nor dark;* not so sad as all darkness, there shall be a temper of both, some peace with some trouble; some prosperity with some adversity; some mercy in midst of judgment to allay the bitterness of judgment, and some judgment with our mercies to allay their sweetness.

‖ Or, *the day shall be one.*

7 But ‖it shall be [i]one day [k]which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, *that* at [l]evening time it shall be light.

i Rev. 22. 5.
k Matt. 24. 36.
l Is. 30. 26. & 60. 19, 20. Rev. 21. 23.

It shall be one day; one continued day, no setting of the sun to make it quite night; God will always act in order to the full salvation of his spiritual Jerusalem. *Known unto the Lord;* the Lord knows when it shall begin, how long last, and how and when it shall (not as other days, end in a night, but) end in glorious light; till then it is enough for us that our God knows this day that is mixed of trouble and of peace. *At evening time,* when other days end, *it shall be light;* this shall be all light and glory, Isa. lviii. 8; Psal. xcvii. 11.

8 And it shall be in that day, *that* living [m]waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the ‖former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

m Ezek. 47. 1. Joel 3. 18. Rev. 22. 1.
‖ Or, *eastern,* Joel 2. 20.

In that day; when the gospel shall be preached, and the days of dark ceremonies among the Jews, and darker ignorance and idolatry among the heathen, shall end. *Living waters;* not only such as springs and fountains afford, living waters in opposition to standing, muddy, and dead waters; but such as give life, Ezek. xlvii. 1, 6, 7; the quickening, saving truths of the gospel, with all its ordinances in purity. *Shall go out,* spread themselves or flow down as currents from good springs, *from Jerusalem;* the church of Christ, the true Jerusalem. *Toward the former sea,* or eastern sea, so far eastward as the sea will give leave; and who knows that sea? *Toward the hinder sea,* or western sea. Synecdochically it is both east, west, north, and south: so from Jerusalem, i. e. the church, the doctrine of the gospel is preached abroad, and runs down as doth living water. *In summer and in winter shall it be;* perpetually, without intermission or interruption, these waters should never dry away, nor ever lose their healing virtue.

9 And the LORD shall be [n]king over all the earth: in that day shall there be [o]one LORD, and his name one.

n Dan. 2. 44. Rev. 11. 15.
o Eph. 4. 5, 6.

The Lord; God, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Shall be King;* acknowledged to be, men shall confess, that as he only is, so he ought to be owned, only true God, and King of his church. *Over all the earth;* over the heathen, the Gentiles or Roman empire, as well as once over the Jewish state. *In that day* of deposing idols, and advancing the true God, all his churches shall cast off idolatry, and agree in worshipping one God, in one way of spiritual worship and hearty obedience.

‖ Or, *compassed.*

10 All the land shall be ‖turned [p]as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and [q]‖inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, [r]and *from* the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

p Is. 40. 4.
q ch. 12. 6.
‖ Or, *shall abide.*
r Neh. 3. 1. & 12. 39. Jer. 31. 38.

All the land; the whole land of Judea, here, is type of the whole earth, seat of the catholic church, filled with the knowledge of God, and abounding in multitudes of converts. *Shall be turned as a plain;* all high, uneven places, all high thoughts and imaginations, all rocky and barren ground, changed into fruitful vineyards. So the church of Christ shall be fruitful, humble, and lovely, as pastures rich in sheep, and rich for sheep. *From Geba,* the north boundary of the land, *to Rimmon,* the south boundary of Judea. *Jerusalem;* which taken here not literally, but mystically, is the church of Christ in gospel days; and by the repair of all parts of this Jerusalem, as here described, is shadowed out the full and complete building of the church on all sides, north, south, west, and east. *It shall be lifted up;* raised out of the dust and rubbish to which enemies had brought her, through God's permission; but never should be able to keep her in that low state, since God was resolved to raise her. *And inhabited in her place:* still it is emblematical of the Christian church. *Benjamin's gate* north-east, *corner-gate* north-west, *Hananeel's tower* south, *wine-presses* north; that is, in brief, completely round the city.

11 And *men* shall dwell in it, and there shall be [s]no more utter destruction; [t]but Jerusalem ‖shall be safely inhabited.

s Jer. 31. 40.
t Jer. 23. 6.
‖ Or, *shall abide.*

Men, i. e. many for number, or eminent for worth, *shall dwell in it:* as it was type, this was verified, say some, when in league with Bacchides and succeeding kings. But in the antitype, to which Zechariah looks, it is now, as it hath been, fulfilled, and more fully shall be, when the fulness of the Gentiles cometh in. *There shall be no more utter destruction;* there may be afflictions and troubles, but no utter wasting of Jerusalem; the gates of hell shall not prevail. *But Jerusalem,* the antitype, the gospel church, *shall be safely inhabited;* not secure from troubles, but secure enough from total destruction.

12 ¶ And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

That have fought against; maliciously to destroy, and waste, and extirpate Jerusalem; the ringleaders, especially such as Antiochus, Herod, &c. *Their flesh shall consume away;* when they are fat, fleshy, and strong, their flesh or strength shall utterly perish. *While they stand on their feet;* either in arms ready to fight, or so suddenly they shall not have time to sit down; a very sudden death is threatened to them. *Their eyes shall consume away in their holes;* a dreadful and exemplary blindness shall seize them. *Their tongue shall consume away in their mouth;* in which member, by strange judgments on them, some persecutors also have felt God's hand.

13 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* [u]a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and [x]his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

u 1 Sam. 14. 15, 20.
x Judg. 7. 22. 2 Chr. 20. 23. Ezek. 38. 21.

In that day; when God punisheth those that invaded and wasted Jerusalem, his church. *A great tumult;* confusion, vexation, and inclination to turn all upside down. *From the Lord;* from the just displeasure of God, and in revenge on them for troubling his people. *Shall be among them,* the bloody, cruel, and insatiable enemies of Jerusalem. *His hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour;* from murmurs and grudgings one against another, they shall at last run into civil wars, and fight one with another, and so destroy themselves, and revenge Jerusalem. As they did, Judg. vii. 22; ix. 23.

14 And ‖Judah also shall fight ‖at Jerusalem; [y]and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

‖ Or, *thou also, O Judah, shalt.*
‖ Or, *against.*
y Ezek. 39. 10, 17, &c.

Judah; the Jews, and particularly those of the tribe of Judah, and possibly Judas Maccabeus might be intended too, as those who in that day were valiant warriors, and successful against the church's enemies. And many such

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have been among the Christians too since those days. *Shall fight*, with courage, good conduct, and success. *At Jerusalem*; both in the land of Judea, and also at Jerusalem. *The wealth of all the heathen*; the nations round about them, who having by foreign war peeled and robbed many nations, had brought it home, and now God gave it to the Jews; and in like manner have many Christians spoiled those that spoiled them.

[z] ver. 12.

15 And [z]so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

Those creatures which the enemy in the wars made use of against the church, shall by the hand of God be suddenly and strangely either destroyed or made useless, neither fit to annoy the church nor to benefit their owners. As God destroyed much of the cattle of the Egyptians by hail, and murrain, &c.; so now shall it be with the cattle of these persecutors, they shall perish with their masters. The horses, as the horsemen, were drowned in the Red Sea.

[a] Is. 60. 6, 7, 9. & 66. 23. [b] Lev. 23. 34. [c] Neh. 8. 14. Hos. 12. 9. John 7. 2.

16 ¶ And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even [a]go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep [b]the feast of tabernacles.

Every one that is left; such as escape the stroke, and are by mercy reserved, very many of them, among all the nations, shall consider God's hand, repent, and submit themselves to his law; they shall, (as many did,) on sight of God's hand for the church, and against the church's enemies, convert, become proselytes and Christians. *Shall even go up from year to year to worship*: by a ceremonial phrase and usage, which shadowed out a better worship, the prophet foretells the constant zeal and care the converted Gentiles should have to worship the Lord. *To keep the feast of tabernacles*; one solemn festival, by a figure, put for all the days consecrated to God for holy worship, and this perhaps with an eye to Christ's tabernacling with us, and may point to the Christian sabbath.

[c] Is. 60. 12.

17 [c]And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

Whoso will not come up, if there be any more remiss than they ought herein, and neglect to worship the Lord, *even upon them shall be no rain*; they shall be punished with want of rain, and with want of the blessings which plentiful and seasonable rain produceth, their land shall be barren.

† Heb. *upon whom there is not.* [d] Deut. 11. 10

18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, †[d]that *have* no *rain*; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Egypt should think, though they had no rain, they should not be much losers by that, having the Nile to water their ground and make it fruitful. God by his prophet answers them, they shall fall under penury and famine, the very selfsame punishment which shall fall on other nations, if they neglected his worship. The Lord hath more ways than one to withhold the fruits of the earth, and send famine among people.

‖ Or, *sin.*

19 This shall be the ‖punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

And what he saith of Egypt, he saith of all contemners of his law and worship; their sin is the same, their punishment shall be the same, for with God is no respect of persons.

‖ Or, *bridles.* [e] Is. 23. 18.

20 ¶ In that day shall there be upon the ‖bells of the horses, [e]HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

In that day; when the nations are converted to God, as it is ver. 16. *Shall there be upon the bells of the horses*; written as it were on every common thing; such as the bells, bridles, or collars, or stables of horses; in these very things, i. e. the use of them, they should make it appear they were for God and for his worship, wheresoever these things may serve or promote it. *Holiness unto the Lord*: this was the inscription on the rich mitre of the Jewish high priest, denoting the great holiness of his office, and how he was dedicated to God, and that he ought to keep himself holy in all things, especially in things of Divine worship. Now in these days of the gospel, when Gentiles are converted to Christ, made priests unto God, are made holy nations, a royal priesthood, the grace of God shall so abound and prevail, that common, ordinary things in the hands of Christians, much more their persons, shall bear the dedicating inscription of *Holiness to the Lord*, and by their study of holiness they shall make good their motto. *The pots*; which were used in the kitchens of the temple, for the use of the priest, and were not accounted so sacred as the utensils nearer to the sacrifices and altar. *Shall be like the bowls*; which received the blood of the sacrifices, and retained it, until the ministering priest had finished his service, and sprinkled it as commanded: now these, as appropriated to be used nearer to the altar, were more esteemed as more holy; so should holiness in these days spoken of exceed the holiness of those former days.

[f] Is. 35. 8. Joel 3. 17. Rev. 21. 27. & 22. 15. [g] Eph. 2. 19, 20, 21, 22.

21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the [f]Canaanite in [g]the house of the LORD of hosts.

Every pot; the utensils of private houses shall be so dedicated to God's service, that without scruple they shall on occasion be used, or might be used, in the worship of God. *In Jerusalem and in Judah*; the types, but the gospel church is the antitype; in the times hereof every family shall be a temple in which God shall be worshipped, and their house-pots in the worship of God shall be in extraordinary cases used without scruples. *Holiness unto the Lord of hosts*: see ver. 20. *All they that sacrifice*: in allusion to sacrifices, the prophet expresseth all religious affections, practice, and worship, which shall be as pleasing to God as were the sacrifices of his people offered up with Divine warrant and approbation. *Shall come and take of them*, freely, without scruple, *and seethe therein*; seethe that part of the sacrifice which pertaineth to the priests and to the offerer to feast on, in their house-pots. *There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts*; any of the accursed nation, or one who makes merchandise of religion. In a word, by allusion used here, we understand that time will come, when scrupulous adhering to ceremonies shall not be, as formerly it was, deemed so necessary, so material in the worship; but all shall know that the Lord hath greatest pleasure in upright, hearty, and sincere love and holiness.

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MALACHI.

THE ARGUMENT.

CONCERNING this prophet, some have thought (but without good and sufficient ground) that he was an angel in the form of a man; others think him to be Ezra; but as it is the plainer, so the surer, opinion that he was a prophet of that name, and a man distinct from Ezra, and sent the last of all the prophets. His time of appearing among the Jews cannot be determined precisely, but it is best guessed to have been about the times of Nehemiah's reforming the strange marriages, Neh. xiii. 23, 28, with Mal. ii. 11, and when he reformed the sacrilegious detaining of tithes, Neh. xiii. 10, 11, with Mal. iii. 8, as Doctor Lightfoot observeth. Now this reformation of Nehemiah was about A. M. 3519, as Doctor Lightfoot, or 3545, as Helvicus, or 3589, as Archbishop Usher's Annals. Whatever was his time of appearing, it is certain he lived in a very vicious age, in which priests as well as people were leavened with either perverse thoughts of the Divine Providence, or brutish atheism, denying the Deity and Providence, contemptuous thoughts of the worship of God, sacrilegious practices, robbing God of tithes and offerings, shameless justifying these their practices, boundless or monstrous unfaithfulness to their wives, casting off Jewish to marry Gentile wives, or else superinducing the Gentile women, and enslaving the Jewish to them; casting off the law of God, or, which is equally bad, if not worse, wresting it to their own sinful sentiments. All which he doth severely reprove, and requires them to reform, and foretells the day of the Messiah's coming to sit as a refiner and purifier; whose appearing such sinners and sins would not be able to bear; and tells them of his forerunner, who in the spirit and power of Elias should come, and prepare a people for the Messiah: till then, (as their duty was,) he commands them in the name and by authority from God, that they remember the law of Moses, which God commanded in Horeb; hereby intimating some great change in the law at the coming of the Messiah; and intimating also, that they should expect no more prophet till the Great Prophet himself should come unto them.

CHAP. I.

God by Malachi complaineth of Israel's ingratitude, 1—5; *and of the profane disrespect shown to God's worship,* 6—13. *The curse of corrupt offerings,* 14.

B. C. cir. 397. THE burden of the word of the LORD to
† Heb. *by the hand of Malachi.* Israel † by Malachi.

The burden: see Zech. ix. 1; Nah. i. 1. Usually it imports sad threats against those concerned in it, though sometimes it may be no more than the message of God. *Of the word of the Lord:* the authority was Divine on which this prophet spake. *Malachi:* my messenger, (saith the Lord,) so the Hebrew sounds. My angel, as some, though they err who take him to be an angel conversing with Jews in the form of a man; but angel, taken in the grammatical sense, i. e. messenger, he was, and God's messenger, the last of the prophets sent to Israel before the great Prophet Messiah came. That he was Mordecai, or Ezra, as some conjecture without good ground, or who he was, of what tribe or family, the Scripture gives us no account, and we make no guess. His prophecy is of Divine authority, and so cited by three of the four evangelists, Matt. xi. 10; Mark i. 2; Luke i. 16; and by St. Paul, Rom. ix. 13.

a Deut. 7. 8. & 10. 15. 2 [a]I have loved you, saith the LORD.
Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?
Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith
b Rom. 9. 13. the LORD: yet [b]I loved Jacob,

I have loved you: God asserts his ancient love, that which he had in many generations past showed: I have, time out of mind, yea, from before the birth of your father Jacob, and in truth before Abraham was, designed more kindness to you than to others, and from the time of Jacob I have undeniably showed it. And this deserved, what I have not found from you, a love corresponding somewhat to mine; but instead of such love, some are ready to say they saw no such thing, or to dispute perversely in what it appeared. *You;* both personally considered and relatively, as you were in your fathers and progenitors. *Saith the Lord:* their ingratitude extorts this solemn protestation, they should readily have owned, and not put God to avow the love he had shown them. *Yet ye say;* or, *and* you do querulously and with ignorance enough object to me, and put me on it to vindicate my love, and expose your ingratitude. *Wherein?* or, for what? is there not some cause? did not Abraham's love deserve a love for us his posterity? Most perverse pride! *Wherein hast thou loved us?* who have been captives and groaned under the miseries of it all our days till of late; is this love to us? Since they are supposed thus to object, by cutting questions, God will give them answer: *Was not Esau Jacob's brother?* had they not one and the same grandfather? was not Abraham as near to one as to the other? did not one father beget them, and one mother bear them? did they not lie together in the same womb? was there not as much of Abraham and Isaac in Esau as in Jacob? Or what of nature, consanguinity, and outward privilege was there in one more than in the other? whatever that was, Esau might claim, for he was the eldest. In Esau's person his progeny is included, as appears next verse. *Yet I loved Jacob;* the younger brother, and your father, O unthankful Jews! I preferred him to the birthright, and this of free love, before any merit could be dreamed of; I did love his person, and have loved his posterity, with an unparalleled love, and showed it to all.

3 And I hated Esau, and [c]laid his
c Jer. 49. 18. Ezek. 35. 3, 4, 7, 9, 14, 15. Obad. 10, &c. mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

I hated; I loved not Esau or his posterity as I loved Jacob and his posterity: this not loving, comparatively, is a hating, God showed not the same kindness to the twin brothers; the one was more enriched with the fruits of God's love, and had cause to be thankful; the other had no cause to complain, for God did him no wrong. *Esau;* containing his posterity with him; for though the hatred or lesser love began towards Esau's person, yet the effects of it appeared more manifestly in Esau's posterity. *His mountains and his heritage;* Mount Seir with the neighbouring mountains given to Esau (Deut. ii. 5; Josh. xxiv. 4) for inheritance, as here it is said, and which he and his posterity did enjoy about one thousand two hundred years. *Waste,* by Nebuchadnezzar's arms five years after the sacking of Jerusalem, as foretold by Ezekiel, chap. xxxv. The people were slain or captivated, or forced to flee from the sword of the enemy, their cities taken, plundered, and burnt. It is possible that they might meet with worse usage than the Jews met with herein; however, their state seems equal, and here is no token of unequal hatred; but what follows doth manifestly discover it, for

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whereas Jacob's captivity returned, and their cities were rebuilt, Esau's never were. *For the dragons;* or jackals, or owls, for the word is so used and explained by some; or all these with dragons, doleful creatures, which delight in desolate places; by which the utter desolation, and the perpetuity of the desolation, of Esau is signified.

4 Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.

We are impoverished: here the prophet introduceth Edom reflecting on its present low condition, and taking up resolutions of bettering their condition: We are now, as the Jews were five years before, exceedingly spoiled by Nebuchadnezzar, who hath rifled our houses, burnt our cities, and captivated our citizens. *We will return;* this speaks their insolence: or *shall;* this speaks their hopes of such a return as Jacob's posterity had after seventy years. *Build the desolate places;* repair their cities, as Jerusalem was repaired by the returned captivity. They may do so for a while, but, saith God, *I will throw it down;* as he did in the times of the Maccabees. *They shall call them, The border of wickedness;* they will be by their flagitious lives, after they a little recover themselves, a most wicked people, and so notorious that all their neighbours shall brand them for it, and presage a curse will follow them. *The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever;* they will so highly provoke God, that his indignation will be kindled against them, and will burn for ever.

d Ps. 35. 27.
‖ Or, upon.
† Heb. from upon.

5 And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, [d]The LORD will be magnified ‖ † from the border of Israel.

You Jews who are now returned from captivity, and are blest with a rebuilt temple and city, who are settled in civil and sacred concerns, *your eyes shall see;* some of you must needs, more will, and all might, observe what I have said, that my love is toward you, whom I plant, build up, and prosper, while I root up, pull down, and destroy your neighbouring kindred Edom. *Ye shall say;* you should in point of duty, and some of you will take notice of it, and confess it. *The Lord will be magnified;* or, Let the Lord be magnified, let his name be great and his praise great for his free love to Israel, for his great displeasure against the border of wickedness, for his truth in both. *From the border of Israel;* let Israel from all his borders give God this praise.

e Ex. 20. 12.
f Luke 6. 46.

6 ¶ A son [e]honoureth *his* father, and a servant his master: [f]if then I *be* a father, where *is* mine honour? and if I *be* a master, where *is* my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that

g ch. 2. 14, 17. & 3. 7, 8, 13.

despise my name. [g]And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?

A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: this is a practical principle engraven on the hearts of mankind, a law which all own, a truth written with a sunbeam, and which is violated by none but unnatural, brutish men. *If then I be a father:* this *if* no way doubts, but it is made a supposition grounded on a confessed, ancient, and peculiar adoption and redemption, by virtue whereof the seed of Jacob had God to their Father and Master; and this undisputed relation, *If I be,* &c., doth more piercingly affect the mind when it is demanded, Where is your performance of duty, where the honour you give me? *Where is mine honour?* the internal, in high apprehensions and esteem with answerable affections; the external, in dutiful behaviour and carriage; where the ready, ingenuous, and delightful obedience, &c.? *If I be a master, where is my fear?* servants do fear their masters, and this fear, though servile, yet is due to a master, it is a quality suiting the relation; and now where is either of them? *Unto you, O priests:* had undutifulness and irreverence been found among the ignorant people who knew not the law, nor were in capacity of knowing me as you, it might have been a little excusable, yet a great sin; but you, O priests, nearest of any to me, whose business is to know me, who live upon my sacrifices, have me in a most peculiar manner your portion, you have, like Eli's sons, despised me yourselves, and made others do so too; thought and spoke contemptibly of what is most venerable. *My name;* God, his sacrifices and oblations, his law and worship. *And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?* proud and hardened, they dispute it with God and his prophets.

‖ Or, Bring unto, &c.
h Deu 15.21.
i Ezek 41. 22. ver. 12.

7 ‖ Ye offer [h]polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, [i]The table of the LORD *is* contemptible.

Ye offer polluted bread; you through covetousness take any the people bring, whether such as the law requires or no. If it answer not the perfection of the law, yet you first make it serve me, through your contempt of me, and then to serve your turn to feed you and yours. *Polluted;* either by ill-managing it, and misordering what is good and allowable, or accepting what is disallowed and forbidden, because of its blemishes. *Bread;* either the shew-bread, of which Exod. xxv. 30; or meat-offerings, Exod. xxix. 41; Lev. ii.; Numb. xxviii. 5; or, in a more large sense, all that was to be offered unto God, sacrifices and oblations. *Upon mine altar:* by this it appears bread is to be expounded here of sacrifices, and not to be confined to the narrow bounds of this one kind. *And ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee?* they stand upon their own justification, and proudly contend with God, either implying they did not offer such polluted things, or if they were defective, and in law sense polluted, yet that this did redound to God, or affect him no more than the perfection of them could add to him. *In that ye say;* perhaps in words, however by your deeds you speak your thoughts and judgment; you think so, and then act so. *The table;* before it was altar, now it is table, not to be opposed each to other, but comprehending both, and all that was offered unto God on both. *Is contemptible;* as if they measured sacrifice and oblation by the splendour and riches of the temple and altar; the first were more pompous than the second, and these priests probably thought they might abate in the qualities of the offerings, as this temple abated in its splendour; they contemned this, and then contemn those offerings.

k Lev. 22. 22. Deut. 15. 21. ver. 14.
† Heb. to sacrifice.
l Job 42. 8.

8 And [k]if ye offer the blind † for sacrifice, *is it* not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, *is it* not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or [l]accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

If ye offer the blind: this *if* implies they had done so, it chargeth them with somewhat in matter of practice among them; the lame and sick also they had offered. *Is it not evil?* is it not against the express command of God, Lev. xxii. 22—24; Deut. xv. 21? The living God should have living sacrifices, and God who is perfect should have perfect sacrifices. But the people bringing such, the priests accepting such, do in effect tell the world they thought such sacrifices good enough for that God they were offered to: so great profaneness runs through this whole carriage. *Offer it now unto thy governor;* not their king, for they had none; but governors they had, and these the Jews reverenced, and would not dare do that to them they do boldly with God daily. *Will he be pleased with thee?* your governor would not thank you, he would be angry with you, and account it an affront; and shall not the Lord of hosts much more account it an indignity offered unto him? People in bringing, priests in accepting, these blemished oblations, which were not good enough for a man, did sin greatly, and spake their apprehensions of God to be contemptible and slight.

† Heb. the face of God.
m Hos. 12. 2.
† Heb. from your hand.

9 And now, I pray you, beseech † God that he will be gracious unto us: [m]this hath been † by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.

And now I, Malachi, *pray you,* O priests, *beseech God that he will be gracious unto us;* intercede with God for this sinful people, among which (with the modesty that is usual

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among God's saints) he rangeth himself; entreat they may find grace with God, and be pardoned. *This* detestable contempt of God, his altar, and worship, *hath been by your means;* you, O priests, have been great occasions of this, it is more your sin, though too much theirs; beg, then, that it may be forgiven, repent and pray, or you will not be regarded. Some think the whole verse to be an irony against those priests and their sacrifices.

10 Who *is there* even among you that
n 1 Cor. 9. 13. would shut the doors *for nought?* [n]neither do ye kindle *fire* on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith
o Is. 1. 11. Jer. 6. 20. Amos 5. 21. the LORD of hosts, [o]neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

Some make this verse to be a kind of wish that there were some among them that would shut up the doors of the temple, and keep out such sacrifices and sacrificers; it would be less displeasing to God, it were better not done at all than so ill done, and so long as it is so ill done God can have no pleasure in it or them. Others make it a reproof of the priests upbraided for their profane contempt of God, and for their inexcusable negligence, while they are so well paid for all their service, be it ever so little and inconsiderable, as the lighting a fire on the altar, or shutting the doors of the temple: Inexcusable dishonesty, to receive large wages, and neglect your work! *I have no pleasure in you;* I cannot be pleased with such servants and services: or it is a meiosis, I am very greatly displeased with you. *Neither will I accept an offering at your hand;* whilst you are thus profane and contemptuous, I will never accept your gifts, but reject you and them.

p Ps. 113. 3. Is. 59. 19. 11 For [p]from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same
q Is. 60. 3. 5. my name *shall be* great [q]among the Gen-
r John 4. 21, 23. 1 Tim. 2. 8. s Rev. 8. 3. t Is. 66. 19, 20. tiles; [r]and in every place [s]incense *shall be* offered unto my name, and a pure offering: [t]for my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

This verse is a very full and plain prediction or promise made on behalf of the Gentiles, that they should be a people to the Lord, and should exalt his name, and worship him in a pure way, and well-pleasing to the Lord. That when he casteth off ceremonial services and carnal ordinances, he will set up spiritual and heavenly, and all nations, from east to west, shall submit to them, and sanctify the holy and reverend name of God in them.

Incense; a law term for a gospel duty; and under this type is contained the prayers and praises, nay, the whole gospel worship is that incense which shall be offered unto God, which is in the verse called a pure offering. *A pure offering;* both sincere, in opposition to hypocrisy, and holy, in opposition to impurity, and purged from superstition and idolatry. The sum of this verse is contained in that John iv. 21—24.

12 ¶ But ye have profaned it, in that
u ver. 7. ye say, [u]The table of the LORD *is* polluted; and the fruit thereof, *even* his meat, *is* contemptible.

But ye, O priests, principally and first; the people next, by their examples; *have profaned it;* used it as a common thing, and valued it at a strange undervalue, as if neither excellent nor useful. *Ye say;* by your deportment you say so; perhaps you do not say so in words, this were two impudent indeed. *The table of the Lord is polluted;* not a sacred thing, or to be revered. *His meat;* either the meat which fell to the priests' share, and was for them to live upon, this they despised; or else the portion which did belong to God himself, and was laid upon the altar; they were neither pleased with that the Lord did reserve to himself, nor with that he gave to them, but they found fault with both. *Is contemptible;* a poor, sordid allowance, scarce fit for meaner persons and less service.

13 Ye said also, Behold, what a weari-
‖ Or, *where at ye might have blown it away.* ness *is it!* ‖and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought *that which was* torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: [x]should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.
x Lev. 22. 20, &c.

Ye said also; to those sins before mentioned, the priests chiefly, and the people with them, added this also, that they openly complained of God's service. *Behold, what a weariness!* what a toil and drudgery is it to observe every point of the law about ordering ourselves and the sacrifices! *Ye have snuffed at it,* in token of discontent, and that you thought it was all needless labour; would not examine your sacrifices as you should. *Ye brought that which was torn, &c.:* for want of value for the ordinance, and patience in examining whether the sacrifice were perfect and according to law, you priests accepted and offered the torn, and blind, &c., which are expressly forbidden to be made sacrifices: see ver. 8. *Thus ye brought an offering;* with such minds, snuffing at my service, and with such sacrifices, unfit for mine altar, have they wearied themselves somewhat, but their God more. *Should I accept this of your hands? saith the Lord,* i. e. it is not at all fit to be accepted, nor will our God receive it.

14 But cursed *be* [y]the deceiver, ‖which
y ver. 8. ‖ Or, *in whose flock is.* hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the LORD a corrupt thing: for [z]I *am* a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name *is* dreadful among the heathen.
z Ps. 47. 2. 1 Tim. 6. 15.

Now comes a thunder-clap from heaven against sinners, who were before reproved. *Cursed be the deceiver;* the hypocrite, that doth deceive man, and would deceive God; the false heart, that intends one thing and pretends another, would seem to offer a sacrifice of the best, but puts God off with the worst. *A male;* a perfect male, such as God requireth and accepteth. *Voweth:* in vows God required very perfect and unblemished offerings, Lev. xxii. 18, 19; but here are jugglers that vow corrupt things, when they have what is perfect, and should vow that. *And sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing;* solemnly sacrificeth the worst, wholly unfit for acceptance. Any thing but the best we have is this *corrupt thing,* for the best we have is justly commanded, and that only is acceptable to the Lord. *I am a great King;* very full of majesty, and therefore will by no means be slighted. *My name is dreadful among the heathen:* heathens reverence this name, and will do so when converted, and you Jews ought not to undervalue it.

CHAP. II.

The priests are sharply reproved for profaning the covenant which was given them, 1—9; *and the people for marrying strange wives,* 10—12, *and treacherously putting away their former ones,* 13—16; *and for impiety,* 17.

AND now, O ye priests, this commandment *is* for you.

This commandment; either this which he had already minded them of about the sacrifices, what ought to be offered and what refused; if the people brought defective sheep or oxen, they who were priests ought not to have admitted, they ought not to have offered them upon God's altar: or this commandment he now brings from God to them, and which is contained in this chapter. *Is for you;* by especial direction it is sent to you, and look to it that you obey it.

2 [a]If ye will not hear, and if ye will not
a Lev. 26. 14, &c. Deu. 28. 15, &c. lay *it* to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay *it* to heart.

If ye will not hear: this *if* to the prophet was dubious, but to God, who sent the prophet, it was not doubtful; but it was for monition to the priests and Jews, and implied a condition of mercy if they would yet hear, but an inevitable curse if they did not hear. *If ye will not lay it to heart;* if you do not consider what you hear, to do the

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good, to forbear the evil. *To give glory unto my name*, by a due and holy manner of sacrificing and offering incense; in neglect of which you have greatly sinned, and dishonoured me, and polluted my name and altar. *I will even send a curse:* it is a comprehensive threat, many miseries in one word; it is a blast on their good hoped for, and it is poison in the good possessed, and when it is, as here, sent of God, it will surely do both, it will be a blast on hopes, it will be poison in what is possessed and should be enjoyed. *Upon you;* all, both priests and people, but especially on the priests. *Your blessings;* all the good, sweet, necessary supports of life, and comforts of yourselves and yours. *I have cursed them already;* you have so long polluted my name, and would not reform, that I have already sent out the curse, and it is in part upon you, though you are not sensible of it, nor will feel it, and this is forerunner of greater curses yet coming, unless you repent. *Because ye do not lay it to heart:* the sin was great in that you polluted my name, but it becomes much greater when you add impenitence to it, and harden yourselves, and will not lay it to heart; therefore the curse is gone out with commission from God to seize you.

‖ Or, *reprove.* † Heb. *scatter.* ‖ Or, *it shall take you away to it.* b 1 Kings 14. 10.

3 Behold, I will ‖ corrupt your seed, and †spread dung upon your faces, *even* the dung of your solemn feasts; and ‖ *one* shall [b]take you away with it.

Behold; note it well, and consider. *I will corrupt your seed;* take away the prolific virtue and strength of it, that it shall bring forth none or little fruit: your seed you make plentiful, but you cannot make your harvest so, nor will I, till you give me the glory I contend for, and will have ere I have done. I will rebuke or check your seed, which will surcease to grow thereupon: though your vices checked thrive still, your seed for harvest cannot grow up under my checks. *Spread dung upon your faces:* it is an expression of greatest contempt cast upon a person; it is a token of utmost undervalue and scorn: so I will expose you, as you have exposed my name to contempt. *The dung of your solemn feasts;* your most solemn days and feasts, which are by you accounted most holy, and in which you think you offer the most holy and acceptable sacrifices, shall be as loathsome to me as dung, and shall make you, who offer them illegally, as polluted, unclean, and loathsome as if I had thrown the dung of those sacrifices into your faces. *One shall take you away with it;* you shall be taken away with it, removed as unclean as the dung itself, as unfit as that to be in the temple, as fit to be cast out to the dunghill; so contemptible shall you be, if you lay it not to heart.

4 And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

And ye. O priests, *shall know*, by sense and feeling, by woeful experience; or, know ye, i. e. but what I speak now, and will do among you. *I have sent this commandment;* admonition, reproof, and exhortation, to look more carefully for the future, that you do not dishonour me, and make mine altar and sacrifices contemptible; but repent of what is past, and for time to come amend all; this I call for at your hands. *That my covenant might be with Levi;* that you do not null the covenant of priesthood made with Levi, and which I would have continued in his posterity, in you, and yours after you, which I would not have your sins and high provocations should abrogate; but if you will not thus confirm, settle, and keep Levi's covenant among you, I will make it firm as to what is on my part to be done herein, to punish the violators of it. *Saith the Lord of hosts;* God Almighty, Lord of hosts, hath spoken this, and will do it.

c Num. 25. 12. Ezek. 34. 25. & 37. 26. d Deut. 33. 8, 9.

5 [c]My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him [d]*for* the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

Here is one covenant that is more particular than any, a covenant of priesthood between God and a particular tribe. *With him:* Levi is named ver. 4, and I will rest there, though I know some would have it be Aaron, or Phinehas. *Of life and peace;* of long life, and prosperous, by covenant under the provisoes therein contained, assured to the Levites in their due ministrations before God. *I gave them*, both lives, (the word is dual,) or life and prosperity. *For the fear wherewith he feared me;* religious fear, or that gracious qualification which appeared in the acts of it, for he feared before God. *And was afraid before my name;* behaved himself with reverence and trembling before God. It is the same repeated for confirmation of the former, or perhaps it may imply the habitual frame of reverence from a contrite heart, which is here pointed at, and commended in this person under the name of Levi.

6 [e]The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did [f]turn many away from iniquity.

e Deut. 33. 10. f Jer. 23. 22. Jam. 5. 20.

The law of truth; the law of God which is the truth, the doctrine of the law according to the true meaning thereof. *Was in his mouth;* he did teach it to the people, he resolved all cases by this law; Aaron, Eleazar, Phinehas, or, as we must understand it, every one of those godly priests or Levites, in what age soever they lived, who, as ver. 5, feared God, and were humble. They taught the people (as was their duty) first to know the law of God, and then to obey it; this by their example, the other by their instruction. The law of truth was in his mouth, he pronounced according to the law truly, pronouncing that unclean which the law determined unclean, and that clean which was clean. *Iniquity was not found in his lips;* he judged not with respect to persons, nor for bribes perverted judgment, nor judged that lawful which was unlawful, or that unlawful which was lawful. *He walked with me;* his whole life was a continual walking with God, as Enoch's was, and Noah's was, and as God required Abraham's should be, in holy fear of his majesty, in true love of his precepts, and reverent observing his ordinances; he lived with God, and to him. *In peace*, with God, and with men; it was his aim to live peaceably towards others, that God might make them peaceable toward him, and God gave him much of that he desired. *And equity;* in rectitude of mind, or in sincerity and uprightness, free from hypocrisy; or else in all righteousness among men. *And did turn many away from iniquity;* by his instructions, and by his excellent example, he converted many from ways of sin.

7 [g]For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: [h]for he *is* the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

g Deu. 17. 9, 10. & 24. 8. Lev. 10. 11. Ezra 7. 10. Jer. 18. 18. Hag. 2. 11, 12. h Gal. 4. 14.

Those forementioned excellent priests did so teach, and so live, forasmuch as they did well consider it was their duty to be well acquainted with, and to have a great insight into, the law of God. *The priest's lips should keep knowledge;* it is that their office binds them to; it is the duty of all God's people to know his law, but the priest's duty to know it more than others, Lev. x. 11, for they were to teach Israel, Deut. xxxiii. 10. *And they*, the people of Israel, *should seek the law at his mouth;* in difficult cases, in controversies, &c., the people were to consult and advise with the priests, and inquire what the law said in the case. *For he is the messenger*, interpreter, ambassador, or legate, *of the Lord of hosts* with the people, lieger among them, and who therefore ought to be advised with about his Lord's mind.

8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye [i]have caused many to ‖ stumble at the law; [k]ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

i 1 Sam. 2. 17. Jer. 18. 15. ‖ Or, *fall in the law.* k Neh. 13. 29.

But ye, priests that now are in office, now live, when I, Malachi, am sent to preach, *are departed*, have shamefully degenerated and turned away from your duty, are apostates, *out of the way* of God's law, and of those holy priests your predecessors; out of the way of truth, holiness, peace, and equity. *Ye have caused many to stumble at the law;* your expositions of the law, your manner of worshipping God, and your manner of living, all together were great scandals to very many; and too many of these, that were offended by these things, these faults of yours, fell to sinning with you. *Ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi*, the covenant of priesthood. (Nehemiah, chap. xiii. 29,

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chargeth them with this sin,) and therefore they have no reason to expect the blessings of this covenant, viz. life and peace, since their making the covenant void on their part had cut off all claim and right to the blessings promised in that covenant, and had exposed them to the curses God threatened them with.

1 Sam. 2. 30.

‖ Or, *lifted up the face against.* † Heb. *accepted faces.*

9 Therefore [1]have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but ‖† have been partial in the law.

Therefore, because you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, and have dishonoured me, and made my sacrifices contemptible, *have I also made you contemptible and base;* I have left you under the contempt of the people, who think basely of you, as you deserve; you have dishonoured me, and I have made, and will make, good my word, you shall be lightly esteemed. *Before all the people;* there are none but account you an unworthy, unthankful, profane, and unjust generation, neither fit to serve God nor guide man. *According as ye have not kept my ways;* your punishment is as your sin; you forsook the law of God, and made his table and his bread contemptible, now I make you contemptible; you were weary of my service, and the people are weary of such priests. *But have been partial in the law;* you have perverted the law to please great men, or to favour yourselves; or, to speak all in few words, you have declined the true judgment of God's law to serve some unworthy design or other, so that none could be sure of a right interpretation, or of a just judgment, or of a safe and sure direction from you.

m 1 Cor. 8. 6. Eph. 4. 6.
n Job 31. 15.

10 [m]Have we not all one father? [n]hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

Have we, we Jews, *not all one father?* either Abraham, or Jacob, (not Adam here intended,) with whom God made the covenant by which the posterity was made a peculiar people, separated from other nations, and on very weighty reasons forbid to join and intermix with strange nations. *Hath not one God created us?* the prophet speaks of that great and gracious work of God, creating them to be a chosen people, a nation formed to show forth his praise, Deut. xxxii. 6, 18; Isa. xliii. 1, 7; and so we Christians are created in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 10, and are in him new creatures, 2 Cor. v. 17. *Why do we?* the prophet was not guilty of the fault, yet speaks as one of the community, partly to take off the envy of the Jews, and to cut off all occasion of quarrelling against his word, and partly to insinuate the sense he had of this thing, and the affection he had for them, though he reproved them. *Deal treacherously;* despise, so some, break our faith in the marriage contract engaged, so carry it disloyally, against the duty we owe to God's law, which equally binds us as our wives to mutual love, honour, and faithfulness; and why then do we take heathen wives, (it is bad if a Jew unmarried do it, but here now the case is worse,) Jewish wives being disliked, rejected, and so greatly despised? Why do we this against the bond of consanguinity? And do we sons of Abraham abuse thus the daughters of Abraham? Why do we so little regard the bond of religion? We are people, sons and daughters, of one God, who hath called us, separated us from the heathen to keep religion pure and unmixed; why then do we transgress thus? *Every man;* the fault was very common, among the people and priests too, and since their return out of Babylon. *Against his brother:* this wrong was done immediately against the wife, but the father, brothers, or kinsmen of the wronged wife are mediately, and by consequence, wronged; the whole family of the wife thus used is perfidiously abused, but brothers, as principal of the family, are named. *By profaning the covenant;* violating the covenant of God, the law, which approves no polygamy, and forbids marrying of idolaters.

11 ¶ Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he ‖loved, [o]and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

‖ Or, *ought to love.* o Ezra 9. 1. & 10. 2. Neh. 13. 23.

Judah: though Judah only is named, yet the rest of the returned captives are included. *Dealt treacherously:* see ver. 10. *An abomination;* such treachery is a very abominable thing, God and all good men abhor it, and yet here it *is committed in Israel*, who are God's peculiar people, and above others should have been holy. *And in Jerusalem;* under the eye of the governors, the high priest and sanhedrim, nay, under the eye of God, who dwelt at Jerusalem; this could not but greatly provoke God. *Profaned the holiness of the Lord:* profanely violated the necessary cautionary law of marriage, confining Israel to marry within themselves, and not to endanger themselves and religion by joining affinity with idolaters, who would draw them and their children from the holy law, worship, and temple of God, which are the holiness that he loved. *Which he loved;* which he, i. e. Judah, once loved; so it was apostacy in Judah. Or which *he*, i. e. the Lord, loved above all; so it is a neglect of a main duty, it is slighting what God so greatly loved. *And hath married the daughter of a strange god:* Ezra, chap. ix. 1, and x. 2, mentions what nations they were whose daughters were by these Jews taken for wives, they were idolatrous nations, and the women were idolatresses when the Jews did marry them. This was bad; but these Jews had wives before, and they cast them off, or else took in these strangers and despised their former wives: this is the treachery and abomination that is here committed.

12 The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, ‖the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, [p]and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts.

‖ Or, *him that waketh, and him that answereth.* p Neh. 13. 28, 29.

The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this; the family of those who do this shall be destroyed utterly by the hand of God, he will punish this crime. *The master and the scholar;* him that calleth and him that answereth; there shall be left neither any to teach nor any to learn, none to call nor any to answer, all the living cut off. *Out of the tabernacles of Jacob:* this points to the people, or laity, who dwelt in the cities of Jacob, they shall be rooted out of the land. *And him that offereth an offering;* the priests that are guilty of this fault shall be put out of the office of priest, and minister no more before the Lord.

13 And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth *it* with good will at your hand.

This have ye done again; beside that first fault, you have committed another, you slight, misuse, and afflict your Jewish wives, whom alone you should have loved and cherished, but you make them drudges and slaves to idolatresses, your new and illegal wives. *Covering the altar of the Lord with tears;* your despised and misused wives flee to the temple, weep, and cry out unto God for redress of their injuries. *With weeping:* this is added to show the abundance of their tears. *With crying out;* with vehemency crying to God against such husbands. *Insomuch that he*, the Lord, who seeth their tears and heareth their cries, *regardeth not the offering any more;* valueth not such offerings made to him by such people and such priests; *or receiveth it with good will at your hand;* is not at all pleased with such offerings, whether expiatory or peace-offerings, none of them from such people shall ever avail them.

14 ¶ Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and [q]the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: [r]yet *is* she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

q Prov. 5. 18.
r Prov. 2. 17.

Yet ye say, Wherefore? though the fault was so great in the nature of it, and so notorious in the evidence of it, these impudent sinners will not see, but dispute what just

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cause God hath to reject their offerings. *Because the Lord hath been witness:* the prophet answers them God was witness both of the matrimonial contract, when you promised other deportment and affections, and he is witness also of your violating this contract, and hath seen how false and perfidious you have been, what inhumanity you have showed against your wives. *Between thee and the wife of thy youth;* whom in thy youth thou marriedst, and hast had the best of her time and strength, and in age shouldst love and deal kindly with. *Dealt treacherously:* see ver. 10. *Yet is she thy companion;* yet she is, what she was by the sacred institution of God made, thy companion, not thy drudge, or slave; thou art most unjust to her, thus to change thy affection and deportment when there is no change in her state and relation. *And the wife of thy covenant:* covenants ought to be very exactly kept, and those especially which are of our own freest and most voluntary making, our covenants; such was this between the unnatural husband and his despised wife: all which, as they should have been arguments to his duty, so they are aggravations of his neglect of duty, and provocations to God. And now judge, ye disputing, quarrelling hypocrites, whether God hath not justest cause to reject your offerings.

o Matt. 19. 4, 5. ‖ Or, *excellency.* † Heb. *a seed of God.* † Ezra 9. 2. 1 Cor. 7. 14. ‖ Or, *unfaithfully.*

15 And °did not he make one? Yet had he the ‖residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek †a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal ‖treacherously against the wife of his youth.

And did he, God our Creator, *not make one,* but one man and one woman? *Yet had he the residue of the spirit;* yet he could have made more men and women; and if it had been good, and well-pleasing to him, he could have made many women for one man; but though by his power he could, yet in his wisdom, goodness, and holiness he would not make more; from the beginning marriage was ordained to be between one man and one woman alone at once. So Christ argued Matt. xix. 4—6. *And wherefore one,* one couple, and no more? *That he might seek a godly seed;* or, a seed of God; either an excellent seed, as the Hebrew expresses the excellency of a thing by the addition of the name God to it; or rather a holy seed, born to God in chaste wedlock, and brought up under the instructions and virtuous examples of parents living in the fear of God, and love of each other, which in polygamy cannot be expected. *Take heed to your spirit;* keep your heart from wandering after strange wives, as you tender your life and souls. *Let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth;* though many have done so, let none now do it any more.

u Deu. 24. 1. Matt. 5. 32. & 19. 8. ‖ Or, *if he hate her, put her away.* † Heb. *to put away.*

16 For ᵘthe LORD, the God of Israel, saith ‖that he hateth †putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

The prophet enforceth his former exhortation, ver. 15, with the arguments laid here close together from the odiousness of the thing he exhorts them to forbear. It is odious to the Lord, who changeth not, but resents this evil practice as much as ever. God, Judge of wrongs and the wronged, hates such wrong. *God of Israel* by covenant, and in peculiar relation, and so much more engaged to punish it; and he now declares his hatred of these things. *Putting away;* divorce, such putting away of wives as these petulant Jews used to make way for some new wives. *For one covereth violence with his garment;* rather, *and covering violence,* &c., which God hates as much as divorcing or putting away. This superinducing of violence by a second wife taken in upon, or with, or over the first wife, called here a *garment,* God hateth. In sum, neither your divorces nor your polygamy may with safety be practised, for God hateth both. *Therefore take heed to your spirit,* and therefore be advised, take heed, as you love your life, your souls, your peace, and welfare, *that ye deal not treacherously;* neither on dislike divorce, nor yet, with unbridled lust, take another wife in to the former; both are perfidious treachery against her, thy covenant, and thy God; and what canst thou expect from such courses that God hateth, but to be cut off?

17 ¶ ˣYe have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied *him?* When ye say, Every one that doeth evil *is* good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where *is* the God of judgment?

x Is. 43. 24. Amos 2. 13. ch. 3. 13, 14, 15.

Ye; ye priests and people, slight in your religion toward God, unfaithful in your covenant with your wives. *Have wearied the Lord* (after the manner of man this is spoken of God) *with your words;* your perverse reasonings, or impious quarrellings against God, among which, one most ungodly and atheistical does come to be remarked on. *When ye say;* when your discourse and reasoning is managed to the overthrow (if it were possible) of all morality and goodness. *Every one,* not one excepted by these illogical atheists, *that doeth evil is good;* that is a wicked man, and doth wickedness, (as you prophets preach to us,) is misrepresented by you; such are good men, and what they do is good. Thus they call evil good: woe then to them! *In the sight of the Lord;* in the account and judgment of God. *And he delighteth in them;* as appears (say these atheists) by his prospering of them: did he not delight in them, would he so enrich and prosper them? *Or, Where is the God of judgment?* or if they be evil, and their ways, designs, and doings be evil, and punishable, where is that God of judgment? or why doth he delay execution of his displeasure against such men and ways? I am apt to think that the irreligious sentiments of the priests, their superficial managing of the solemn worship of God, their adulteries, and multiplying of wives, hitherto unpunished, had brought them either to think there was no such thing as moral goodness or moral viciousness in men's actions; or that if there were, since no punishment was laid on the vicious, nor any encouragement or present reward bestowed on the virtuous, that God did not, nor ever would, concern himself to judge it; and so by an undue way of arguing, had concluded themselves into atheism, the very height of wickedness. That this is likely enough, our age confirms, in which unpunished enormities are atheists' arguments against God and his providence; and unless he damn them, they will not believe the being of a God. But such must remember, they shall know and believe it at last, if not too late.

CHAP. III.

The forerunner, and coming of the Messiah to cleanse his church, and to judge the wicked, 1—6. *The people are warned to repent, and turn from their sins,* 7; *particularly their sacrilege,* 8—12, *and impious blasphemy,* 13—15. *God's blessing promised to those that fear him,* 16—18.

BEHOLD, ᵃI will send my messenger, and he shall ᵇprepare the way before me: and the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, ᶜeven the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, ᵈhe shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

a Mat. 11. 10. Mark 1. 2. Luke 1. 76. & 7. 27. b Is. 40. 3. c Is. 63. 9. d Hag. 2. 7.

The former chapter, as we have it cast, ended with an inquiry made by vicious and ungodly priests and people, who either doubted or denied the present government or future judgment of God over the world. This being reproved in the last verse of the second chapter, now God condescends to give a very full and particular answer to this question, for the instruction and consolation of the good, whatever use the evil will make of it.

Behold: this note in this place, and on this occasion, requires our best attention; consider it well, therefore, all all ye that inquire with doubt, and all ye that inquire with belief, that he will come, who is God of judgment. *I will send;* or, I am sending, I will shortly send: it is Christ who here speaketh, and who sendeth. *My messenger;* John Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, as evidently appears from Matt. xi. 10; Mark i. 2; Luke vii. 27, 28. He is this messenger, whom some by mistake have taken to be an angel; but though the word so signifieth, it

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doth also signify a messenger, and so it is very fitly rendered in this place: see chap. i. 1. *He shall prepare the way before me,* by preaching repentance because the kingdom of heaven was at hand, by baptizing, by calling them to believe on the Messiah, who should now ere long be revealed, &c.: so John Baptist made ready the people to entertain Christ, and to believe in him. This was he who came in the spirit and power of Elias, and such a one the Jews expected. *The Lord;* Messiah, who is Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 36; Lord of lords, Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16. *Whom ye seek;* you ungodly disputers seek, but not aright, for you seek, i. e. inquire whether there be such a God of judgment. Beside these, there are others also, who did seek, i. e. humbly, longing and praying that he would come, and waiting, assured that he will come: it is these chiefly intended. *Shall suddenly come,* after the coming of his forerunner: this *suddenly* in the text is not very fitly interpreted of a time so long as between this prophecy and the coming of Christ, but it very well suiteth to the time between John Baptist's appearing to prepare the way, and Christ's appearing now the way was prepared. *To his temple;* that temple which was the second temple at Jerusalem, lately built by Zerubbabel and Joshua, into which the Messiah was to come; and so he did. There old Simeon met him, there he disputed with the doctors, thither he went to drive out buyers and sellers, and this according to what was foretold of him, Hag. ii. 7; and all the religious Jews, who lived and died before the desolation of this second temple, did believe, and did confess, that the Messiah would come whilst that house did stand. He is then come, for that temple hath been ruined long since by the Romans. *The messenger of the covenant;* the Angel of the covenant, not Elias, but Christ, the Messiah, in whose blood the covenant of grace was confirmed, for whose sake it is performed to us. *Whom ye delight in;* you Jews, among whom few there are who do not please themselves to think of his coming, for the expectation of the best among the Jews was fixed on salvation, as that they hoped for by Christ. Others expected great but worldly advantage by his coming and setting up his kingdom among them. *Behold;* behold again, saith the prophet, consider thoroughly what is foretold. *He shall come,* at the time, to the place, in the manner foreshowed. *Saith the Lord of hosts;* all confirmed by the word of the great God.

e ch. 4. 1. 2 But who may abide [e]the day of his
f Rev. 6. 17. coming? and [f]who shall stand when he
g See Is. 4 4. Matt. 3. 10, 11, 12. appeareth? for [g]he *is* like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope:

But, Heb. *And. Who may abide the day of his coming?* among the Jews were two sorts of inquirers after the day of the Messiah's coming: some inquired with doubt of the truth of the promises, that he should come to set all right, like them chap. ii. 17, *Where is the God of judgment?* Others inquired hoping for preferment in the kingdom of the Messiah: of these, who shall be able to endure, to abide this day, when the unparalleled afflictions of that time shall cut off so many Jews, when the sword of the God of judgment shall destroy the ungodly scoffers, when so many must, as in Zech. xiii. 8, 9, *be cut off,* and so many must *pass through the fire?* This will be a terrible day to these ungodly ones. Nor will it be much better with those who, disappointed of the expected worldly grandeur of the Messiah, shall stumble and fall, and be snared and broken; who will reject that Messiah who appears in a character so extremely different from that they had preconceived; and when God shall punish for the rejecting the Messiah, it will be a dreadful day, as it is described, Matt. xxiv. 6—8, &c.; Mark xiii. 2, 8, 12—14: the righteous will scarcely be saved; what then will become of the sinner? *Abide;* think of, as the Latin Vulgate: the forethought of those calamities would be a burden; who shall be able to stand under the heavy weight of those crosses which in that day will fall on all sorts of men? *The day of his coming:* this day was from his preaching till the utter destruction of the city Jerusalem, about seventy years after the birth of Christ: days they were, had they not been shortened, which would have worn out all; but for the elect's sake they were shortened, Matt. xxiv. 22. *Who shall stand when he appeareth?* an elegant ingemination, to confirm the thing, and to affect us with it. *For he is like a refiner's fire:* some are like metals, which nothing but a fierce fire can purge; such fire shall the troubles of these days be. *And like fullers' soap;* another allusion; though this may express the troubles of those times somewhat more tolerable, yet troublesome enough. The boiling waters into which spotted clothes are thrown, where they lie soaking ere they are taken out; the rubbing of them with the soap, by which the clothes are whitened and cleansed indeed, but withal fretted, weakened, and in time worn out: so that day of the Lord will prove to all a day of great trial, to purge and refine.

3 And [h]he shall sit *as* a refiner and h Is. 1. 25, Zech. 13. 9. purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may [i]offer unto the Lord i 1 Pet. 2. 5. an offering in righteousness.

And he, King Messiah, Christ Jesus our Lord, *shall sit;* as resolved to attend this work, he will set to it vigorously, and continue in it constantly, till it is finished. *As a refiner and purifier of silver;* overlooking the furnace, that it be hot enough to melt down the silver and gold, and to consume the dross, and purify the best part of the gold. *He shall purify;* the effect of this fiery trial, of this scouring, shall be the thorough cleansing of the persons that are to pass through it: these sufferings, together with his word, shall, by the power of the Spirit accompanying them, thoroughly purge the good, and they shall be a fire hot enough to burn up the wicked. *The sons of Levi;* either the Jewish Levites, or all Christians, who are made priests unto God, to offer sacrifices to him, even prayers, praises, and alms, &c.; or such as should minister more immediately to God, in the services of the spiritual temple, as the Levites did in the material temple. *And purge them as gold and silver;* that they may be vessels of honour, purified for holy employments. *That they may offer unto the Lord an offering:* by the law phrase is set forth gospel worship, for it cannot be meant of legal offerings, which the Messiah did abolish at his coming. *In righteousness;* in right manner, purely and uprightly.

4 Then [k]shall the offering of Judah k ch. 1. 11. and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in ‖former ‖ Or, ancient. years.

Then; when the Lord, Messenger or Angel of the covenant, the King Messiah, shall be come, and set up his kingdom, framed his gospel church. *The offerings;* the services and duties required of the church, and performed by it, expressed here in an allusion to the law services: such are now fervent prayers, Psal. cxli. 2, lively praises, thankful memorials of the death of Christ in the sacraments, attentive hearing the word, and giving up ourselves, soul and body, a holy, living sacrifice to God, Rom. xii. 1; and alms, Heb. xiii. 15, 16. *Of Judah and Jerusalem;* the Christian church, expressed by the names of its type. *Pleasant;* delightful, as sweet odours to the smell, as savoury meats to the taste, as comely objects to the eye, every way acceptable to God. *As in the days of old, and as in former years;* this acceptance God will give shall be as great and gracious as ever he gave to any of the services of his saints of old. We need not determine the precise times to which these expressions refer; it is certain God did greatly delight in the sacrifices and offerings of his people, when they offered them in right manner. He will give as gracious acceptance still, which implieth a continuance of these sacrifices which he will accept, and inferreth that this coming of Christ is not his coming to judge the world, his last coming.

5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, [l]and against false swearers, and l Zech. 5. 4 Jam. 5. 4, 12 against those that ‖oppress the hireling ‖ Or, defraud. in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right,* and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.

And I; either God the Father, or Christ the Messiah, to

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whom the Father hath committed all judgment, John v. 22. *Will come near;* you have spoken as if you thought I was far off, but by what I do you shall see I am near to you, and you shall feel my hand, that you may believe I am a God of judgment, and they happy who wait for him, and they miserable who fall under his judgments. *To you.* O Jews; not those very persons Malachi preached to, but those who should be then living when the Messiah cometh, which was more than four hundred years after Malachi's preaching, by which time his hearers were all dead. *To judgment,* against the wicked, to whom he would be what fire is to the dross in the furnace; to the righteous what the fire is to purer parts of the gold: he will consume the wicked, he will refine the good, he will be terrible to both in doing this. *I will be a swift witness:* in that he will be a witness, they may be assured that they should not be quitted in judgment for want of evidence; and in that a swift witness, they may be sure he will come in timely enough against them. And further yet, he that comes near as Judge to call them to an account, was always near them to observe all they did, all they spake, or thought, and he will be near as witness against them. *Against the sorcerers:* sorcery was forbidden, and God testifies his detestation of the sin, and such as practise it, Deut. xviii. 10—14: the people of God, who may consult with their God, his word, and prophets, do very abominably if they consult with the devil; a sin their fathers learnt among the Egyptians, a sin they had learnt among the Chaldeans during the captivity, and practised under the second temple. *The adulterers;* who transgressed the law of nature and of God, Exod. xx. 14; Deut. v. 18; xxii. 22; and were by the law to die for it. *False swearers;* perjury, against which Zech. v. 3, 4, and God hateth this sin, Zech. viii. 17. *Those that oppress the hireling in his wages;* either detaining it, or lessening it, Jer. xxii. 13; James v. 4. *The widow;* who should be relieved, Deut. xxiv. 19—21, not oppressed, Isa. i. 17. *The fatherless:* such are not only those who have lost their fathers by death, but all friendless ones; God requires us to assist and help such, not oppress them, Psal. lxxxii. 1—4. *That turn aside the stranger from his right;* pervert judgment, or wrest the law, or admit false witness against a stranger. Not doing right is ill, though to an enemy, but it is a crying sin to do wrong to a stranger, and God will punish it when it crieth, as he did upon your fathers, Ezek. xxii. 7, with 13—16. *And fear not me;* neither reverence my precepts to keep them, not tremble at my threats to prevent the execution of them by declining the sins I threaten. Irreligion is the root of all these oppressions, and God will punish them.

m Num. 23. 19. Rom. 11. 29. Jam. 1. 17.
n Lam. 3. 22.

6 For I *am* the LORD, [m] I change not; [n] therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

This introduceth the final and full confirmation of what hath been foretold in the verses before, the God of judgment will come, &c. *I change not:* as he loved righteousness, and hath purposed to defend and reward it, yea, hath promised it shall be well with the righteous, so he now loveth righteousness, and purposeth to deal well with them that love and practise it; these may rejoice, I change not. And so on the other hand, I do, as I ever did, hate wickedness, and will, as I have threatened, punish it; I change not, my mind toward the things or persons that are wicked is the same. *Therefore ye sons of Jacob;* either taken for all the natural branches of Jacob, or taken for such as are the sons of Jacob according to the faith, who did indeed fear God. *Are not consumed;* since the same hatred of sin and resolution to punish is accompanied with the same long-suffering and patience, that you, sons of Jacob by nature, (but not by imitation,) who have provoked me, and deserve to be destroyed, might yet have time to repent and amend, since my long-suffering changeth not, you are not yet consumed in your sins. So for the good, though they are oppressed and suffer, yet not consumed, for God changeth not, he now doth love as he ever hath loved them, and preserveth them. In brief, God is the same in his wisdom to order the rewards of good and bad in fittest season, and therefore neither the one or other are consumed, but both preserved to the season appointed of God, the just Judge, and then each shall be dealt with according to what they are.

o Acts 7. 51.

7 ¶ Even from the days of [o] your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept *them.* [p] Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. [q] But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

p Zech. 1. 3.
q ch. 1. 6.

Even from the days of your fathers: we need not fix a particular time or age wherein this apostacy began; it is an old apostacy that is here charged on them, and they were notoriously guilty of it. *Ye are gone away;* are turned away by the examples and by the corrupt doctrines of your fathers and false teachers; yea, you have voluntarily and of choice gone away. *From mine ordinances;* which either directed my worship, or your dealings one with another; so that you have sinned greatly by polluting my temple with your own additions or diminutions, with idolatry, or corrupt manner of performing my service; and you have sinned against one another by injustice, unfaithfulness, and cruelty, since you have gone away from my laws, which direct the way of righteousness and equity. *And have not kept them:* it is a further asseveration, confirming the truth of the charge, and added to make them more sensible of their sin. Some tell us that this chargeth on them their sins against negative precepts, as the other charged them with sins against positive precepts; so the whole law was now, and had long been, broken by their fathers and themselves. *Return unto me;* it is the only course you can take, repent ere it is too late, return whilst there is hope. *And I will return unto you;* I will yet pardon, accept you, establish, and bless you; amend your ways and doings, and I will soon amend the state of your affairs. *But ye said, Wherein shall we return?* as to other, so now to this advice, they return a proud, shameless, and self-justifying question; Wherein, or what is the evil from which we should return to thee? what is our sin?

8 ¶ Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? [r] In tithes and offerings.

r Neh. 13. 10, 12.

Will a man rob God? among the many deviations from God's law (which they do not, because they will not, see) the prophet chargeth them with this kind of sacrilegious theft; they had detained his tithes, shortened him in that portion which he had reserved to himself and for his service, which is, as our version expresseth it, a robbing of God. And as the words lie in the original, they do, by arguing from the less to the greater, aggravate this sin; as they may be read, *Will a man rob a great man,* or, *a judge?* for the word used will bear these notions. Or, *Will a man rob the gods?* i. e. do not heathens abhor the foulness of such a fault, and fear the punishment of sacrilege, and therefore would not rob their idols? as another prophet asked once the question, Have any of *the nations changed their gods, which yet are no gods?* Jer. ii. 11; so now, Have the nations robbed their gods? *Yet ye have robbed me;* but blush, ye shameless priests and Jews, you have robbed not a great man, but the great God; not judges, but the Judge of judges; not an idol, but the living God! How great is your crime! *Wherein have we robbed thee?* a question just like those chap. i. 7; ii. 17; iii. 7, which see. *In tithes:* the people robbed God not paying the full tenth, which God appointed should be paid to him. The priests robbed God in tithes, while they took too much, or it may be all, for their own particular and family use, and did not distribute them to all that by God's law had a right to a proportion of them. *And offerings;* either first-fruits, or other oblations and gifts, which were appointed to be brought to the temple for the service of God; in all which the people and priests had given him less than his due.

9 Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation.

Ye, O priests, your sin, your sacrilege, of which you are guilty, hath provoked me. *Are cursed with a curse;* are greatly cursed, and are likely still to be cursed, the curse shall continue whilst you continue in this your sinful course. *For ye have robbed me;* this brought, increased, and multiplied your curse. Or, as some, *yet ye do rob me!* Strange that you dare sin, whilst I am punishing for this very sin! Or by way of question, and *do ye rob me?* will you go on

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thus to sin when you are under the curse for it? will you, as Ahaz, sin when in distress; or, Pharaoh-like, harden under the judgment? *Even this whole nation:* like priest like people; the priests and Levites did unduly employ the tithes and offerings, and the people did unduly pay: it is like the people observed how much of the tithes were laid out otherwise than the law directed, and they were ready to think they might do well enough to keep that for a use better (as they did think) than the use the priests and Levites put it to, they thought it was ill spent by the priests, and well saved by them; but this, however seemingly excuse them to themselves, it leaves them guilty before God: the whole nation is sacrilegious, and the whole nation cursed for it.

s Prov. 3. 9, 10. t 1 Chron. 26. 20. 2 Chron. 31. 11. Neh. 10. 38. & 13. 12. u Gen. 7. 11. 2 Kings 7. 2. † Heb. *empty out.* x 2 Chron. 31. 10.

10 sBring ye all the tithes into tthe storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the uwindows of heaven, and †xpour you out a blessing, that *there shall* not *be room* enough *to receive it.*

Bring ye: if these persons spoken of be the priests, then they are required not to detain the tithes in their own hands, but, as was their duty, to bring them into the public storehouse. If the people are the persons, *ye, people,* it requires them to make a punctual and full payment of all tithes of corn, wine, oil, &c.: about this did Nehemiah contend with the rulers, and made them honester, and all Judah obeyed and did the like, Neh. xiii. 10—13. *The storehouse;* which was one or more large rooms built on purpose for this use, to lay up the tithes, and to keep them for holy uses. It was some large and stately chamber, for we find that Eliashib had befriended Tobiah, letting him have it for an apartment to dwell in, Neh. xiii. 5—7, &c. *That there may be meat in mine house,* for the priests and Levites to live upon; that they flee not, as many had done, from the service of God in the temple, to take care of their country affairs, and by their industry provide maintenance for themselves and theirs, Neh. xiii. 10. *Prove me now herewith;* make the experiment. The prophet doth in the name of God offer to put it to a short trial: By doing your duty try whether I will not make good my promise, and give you a blessing instead of a curse. *Open the windows of heaven:* this form of speech is used Gen. vii. 11, when those mighty rains that helped to drown the world were poured forth; and now here plentiful and fruitful rains are promised in the same phrase, in a kind of proverbial speech, to express great abundance of the thing intended. *Pour you out a blessing;* first of rain, to water the earth, and to make it fruitful; next a blessing of corn, wine, and oil, and all other products of the earth, for the use of man and beast. *That there shall not be room enough;* your barns and storehouses shall not be large enough to receive it all. Your *fats shall overflow,* Joel ii. 23, 24. Or, as it is Amos ix. 13, you shall have harvest work, and vintage work, and sowing work, as much, or more, than your labourers can well finish in their seasons.

y Amos 4. 9. † Heb. *corrupt.*

11 And I will rebuke yfor the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not †destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

I will rebuke; lay a restraint upon, or prohibit, and the prohibition shall be effectual; if God so check, no creature is or dares be deaf to it; such a check not only quiets the unruly sea, but can dry it up. *The devourer;* all kinds of devourers, the locust, the canker-worm, caterpillar, &c., pests of those countries very often; though they are in mighty armies and incredible multitudes, yet a rebuke from God will check them all at once as if they were but one. *For your sakes;* not for merit in you, but for good to you. *He shall not destroy;* consume and eat up, as those vermin always did wherever they came. *The fruits of your ground;* corn sown by your hand, and grass springing up of its own nature, both which these locusts devour wheresoever they come, and leave penury or famine behind them. *Neither shall your vine cast her fruit;* no blasting or burning winds shall make them drop, no frosts or hails shall destroy your vines. This was once the plague of Egypt, Psal. cv. 33—36. *Before the time;* your vines shall carry their fruit till they are fully ripe. *In the field;* where they had large vineyards and oliveyards planted, and God will make them prosper if this people will return to him.

12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be za delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

z Dan. 8. 9.

All nations, all that are about you, that know you, and see God's dealings with you, *shall call you blessed;* praise the state and condition you are in, and pronounce you to be a very happy people, whose God is the Lord, and whose mercies come thus from God. *Ye shall be a delightsome land;* of delights, or desirable for its pleasantness; a land so good man would desire it; and when purged, it will be a land the Lord will delight in, and give it the name Hephzibah. *Saith the Lord of hosts;* added as an assurance that it shall be according to this promise, forasmuch as he who is Lord of hosts hath engaged his word to do it, and his word will do it, can make all creatures co-operate for that purpose.

13 ¶ aYour words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken *so much* against thee?

a ch. 2. 17.

Your words; your discourses concerning my providences over you and others, your reasonings, censures, and verdicts passed on your own ways, and on the ways of your God. *Have been stout;* proudly justifying yourselves as deserving better usage from God, or insolently arraigning God for his kindness to others, who in your judgment are worse than yourselves, by such words as those chap. ii. 17. *Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?* you think you have spoken nothing so proudly and stoutly, and challenge me to tell you wherein, or with what words you have showed such insolence.

14 bYe have said, It *is* vain to serve God: and what profit *is it* that we have kept †his ordinance, and that we have walked †mournfully before the LORD of hosts?

b Job 21. 14, 15. & 22. 17. Ps. 73. 13. Zeph. 1. 12. † Heb. *his observation.* † Heb. *in black.*

Ye; ye that are the children of forefathers who had this good land given to them, and ever made fruitful while they feared and obeyed their God; you that have been well rewarded for your obedience, or you priests who have tithes, sacrifices, offerings, and first-fruits given you for your services. *Have said;* have thought first, and next have discoursed it; unthankful to your God, you have atheist-like maintained it in disputes, that *it is vain to serve God;* all is lost labour, no profit to God nor any to yourselves; therefore better sit still and do nothing, than to no purpose. *What profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?* while what they have before their eyes is the fruit of God's goodness, and what they want is punishment of their not doing it better; whilst a very unsuitable observing the ordinances of God hath so much profit for you, dare you say there is no profit? Sottish atheists! who will not try what a more agreeable service would do. *And that we have walked mournfully:* so the hypocrites and ungodly object against God, Isa. lviii. 3; yet their dissembled mournings, as Ahab's, had their reward, and infinitely better than they deserved.

15 And now cwe call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness †are set up; yea, *they that* dtempt God are even delivered.

c Ps. 73. 12. ch. 2. 17. † Heb. *are built.* d Ps. 95. 9.

And now, or now therefore; on these false reasonings of these deceived ones, they proceed to further impiety and audacious blasphemy. *We call the proud happy;* we (say they) see before our eyes, and must pronounce what we see, that the proud contemners of God and his law are the flourishing ones; they are at present happiest, and there appears no sign of any change of affairs to them. They do boldly and despitefully oppose God, and yet prosper. And could this be, say they, if there were a God of judgment to call men to account, and to deal with them according to their ways? *They that work wickedness are set up;* who

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contrive, and then work wickedness; who choose it, study it, and glory in it, as the whole of their life; are built up, are advanced to honours, and filled with riches, and have fair probability that all this will last to them and theirs. And could this be, say these priests and Jews, under the eye of a just and sovereign Judge? where is the God of judgment when such disorders are every where seen? *They that tempt God are even delivered;* they that dare him to his very face, that do the highest affronts to God, purposely to prove whether he would or could punish the sinners amongst men. Those escape punishment though the law and prophets threaten them; and would you have us (say these men) believe there is such a God of judgment, when all is so disorderly carried in the world? Thus far the proud behaviour of these against God.

e Ps. 66. 16. ch. 4. 2. f Heb. 3. 13. g Ps. 56. 8. Is. 65. 6. Rev. 20. 12.

16 ¶ Then they [e]that feared the LORD [f]spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and [g]a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

Then; when atheism and bold contempt of God was grown so high, and was so plainly and smartly reproved by the prophet. *They that feared the Lord;* those that were truly religious, that knew God's judgments were a great deep, and that his ways were as high above our ways as heaven above the earth. *Spake often one to another;* discoursed aright of God's mercy, justice, patience, holiness, and wisdom in his government and manage of the sons of men; established one another against the assaults of such proud, contemptuous disputers; encouraged each other to wait for God in the way of his judgments. Though it is not said what they spake, we have reason to believe it was as good of God and his proceedings as the discourse of the wicked was evil. The godly spake things that did as much become the ways of God, as what the wicked spake did disparage the ways of an omniscient, holy, patient, and just God. *The Lord hearkened:* after the manner of man, the Lord is represented as if he did listen to hear more distinctly, and as if he did incline his ear. *And heard it;* clearly, perfectly, and fully understood and observed, and what the godly spake of him and for him. *A book of remembrance was written before him;* a registry was made of the persons and their discourses. This is after the manner of men spoken of God, whose omniscience seeth, knoweth, and remembereth all; but this book is written before the Lord, he will have every good man, every good word of such, and every good thought such have for him, entered under his eye, that they may be assured of a comfortable reward for it. *For them,* on their behalf, *that feared the Lord:* see above. *That thought upon his name,* with love, esteem, and holy admiration.

h Ex. 19. 5. Deut. 7. 6. Ps. 135. 4. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 9. ‖ Or, *special treasure.* i Is. 62. 3. k Ps. 103. 13.

17 And [h]they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my ‖ [i]jewels: and [k]I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

They shall be mine; though now they seem to lie unregarded, as if they were not worth the owning, they shall appear to be mine. *In that day;* the day wherein God will sever between men and men, and between actions and actions, which day, though ye know it not, is well known to the Lord; and beside the great day of final discrimination, God hath several other days of visitation, which are times wherein he will own his, as the good figs, &c., Jer. xxiv. The day that God hath appointed, and will and did bring upon this people in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus Vespasianus. *When I make up my jewels,* or peculiar treasure, that which I highly value and keep most safely; now they are packed up among things of no great value, but when the casket is opened these jewels shall be laid up among the richest treasures: as when they were all sent to Pella, not one Christian left in Jerusalem; and which shall be fully made good in the last great day of final judgment, and in heaven to eternal ages. *And I will spare them;* in the mean time they shall be spared, pitied, preserved, and loved: now their weaknesses covered and pardoned, their good-will approved and accepted; then their worth owned, published, and rewarded. *As a man spareth his own son that serveth him;* as a tender father doth with his son, his own son, that serveth him, so will God spare such as in an atheistical world do speak for God, do fear God, and highly value both his law and government, and so obey him.

18 [l]Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

l Ps. 58. 11.

Then, when that day of the Lord punishing the Jews by the Romans shall come, and he shall do thus for his jewels, *shall ye,* the blasphemous scoffers, proud contemners of God and religion, *return;* return to your reason, enforced by the convincing power of God's judgments to come to yourselves, or to change your opinion of God and his government. *Discern between the righteous and the wicked;* clearly see, with envy towards them, with horror and grief in yourselves, the unexpected escape and happiness of the righteous who served God, and your misery that served him not, but were wicked, and perish now in your wickedness.

CHAP. IV.

God's judgment on the wicked, 1, *and his blessing on the good,* 2, 3. *He exhorteth to the study of the law,* 4, *and telleth of Elijah's coming and office,* 5, 6.

FOR, behold, [a]the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all [b]the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be [c]stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall [d]leave them neither root nor branch.

a Joel 2. 31. ch. 3. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 7. b ch. 3. 15. c Obad. 18. d Amos 2. 9.

The words immediately foregoing (which, as we have the chapters divided, did end the third chapter) foretold a day to come then, though it is now long since past, in which such judgments should be executed upon the Jewish nation, as should make the stoutest contemners of God to see and acknowledge his different respects and providences toward the good and toward the evil. Now in this verse (which continueth the discourse) he accounteth how it should be.

Behold; mark well what now the Lord doth foretell. *The day,* before mentioned, the day of visitation and discerning of men, *cometh;* though it be at some four hundred years' distance from you, yet it is coming, and will overtake you, and overwhelm you too about that time; nay, you shall have some tastes of bitter cups before, some less and shorter troubles, the presage and assurance of that dreadful day I now speak of, saith our prophet. *That shall burn as an oven:* the refiner's fire, chap. iii. 2, is now represented to us as a fire burning more dreadfully, which really was more dreadful in the fulfilling than here it is in the prediction; when Jerusalem and the temple were on fire, and none could quench it; when the fire raged every where, but burnt most fiercely where the arched roofs did make it, as in ovens or furnaces, to double itself, and infold flames with flames, and with dreadful roarings increased its terrors. This day may well be an emblem of the day of judgment, and this place may be accommodated thereto, but it principally speaks of the times of vengeance on Jerusalem in its final desolation. *All the proud;* such as are described chap. i. 13; iii. 13—15. *All that do wickedly:* this is another part of the character of these persons, and explicatory of the former passage; proud men, such as the text mentions, will be wicked workers. *Shall be stubble;* dried and cast into the oven, consumed as soon as cast in. *The day that cometh;* of which already, chap. iii. 17, and in this verse. *Shall burn them up;* totally and speedily consume them. *Saith the Lord of hosts;* added to confirm the certainty of the thing; the Lord of hosts hath said it shall be, and he can do what he saith he will. *It shall leave them neither root nor branch;* in allusion to the utter extirpation of trees for the fire, whose branches lopped off, the body cleft, and the roots stocked up, and all cast into the fire; so that nothing remains but the ashes, into which all is turned: and this was fully accomplished upon the irreligious Jews, when the Romans burnt their city and temple, and destroyed the people.

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e ch. 3. 16.
f Luke 1. 78. Eph. 5. 14. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Rev. 2. 28.

2 ¶ But unto you that e fear my name shall the f Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

You that fear my name; so are they described to us who were written in the book of remembrance, chap. iii. 16; who loved the law of their God, and kept it; who believed his promises, and rejoiced in expectation of the good promised; who believed his threats and trembled at them, that they might rest in the day of trouble, as Hab. iii. 16; who walked humbly with their God. *The Sun;* Christ, who is *the day-spring from on high*, Luke i. 78: or, as most elegantly described Isa. lx. 1—3, who is very fitly compared to the sun; Fountain of light and vital heat to his church, he enlightens and enlivens every one, John i. 4, 9. *Of righteousness;* and of mercy and benignity, for the Hebrew word imports both, and neither may be here excluded. His justice is seen in executions of judgment on the proud and wicked, who are consumed in the fire of his wrath; and his righteousness and mercy are seen in the preservation and remuneration of those that fear the Lord: so greatly different shall this time be to the wicked and the godly; to these a day of benign light and kindly influences through the mercy of God, to the wicked a day of destruction and utter extirpation. *Arise with healing in his wings;* his beams and rays shall bring health and strength, with delight and joy, safety and security: it may be (as some have observed from the word) an intimation of the healing virtue that from Christ went forth to such as in faith touched the hem of his garment, Matt. ix. 20, 21, and is as effectual for the healing of soul maladies and infirmities as of bodily diseases. *Ye shall go forth;* go out of harm's way, out of Jerusalem, before the fatal siege, obeying the call from heaven, *Go hence to Pella*, and that of Christ, Matt. xxiv. 15, 16. *And grow up,* in strength, vigour, and spiritual stature, *as calves of the stall;* where they are safe guarded and well ordered. So will the Lord keep safe and look well to his preserved ones when the wicked are destroyed.

g 2 Sam. 22. 41. Mic. 7. 10. Zech. 10. 5.

3 g And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the LORD of hosts.

And ye: see ver. 2. *Shall tread down the wicked:* now the ungodly, proud, and atheistical despisers of God, providence, and future judgments, do tread down those that fear God and are godly, but it shall not be so always; that word, Psal. lviii. 10, 11, and that, Isa. lxvi. 24, and that, Rev. xviii. 20, shall be fulfilled in the overthrow of the bad, and in the triumphs of the good. But, more particularly, this treading seems to be intended of those who, after the sacking and burning of Jerusalem, should return either to view the ruins, or to dwell there, and so should, in going up and down, tread upon the wicked, either buried in the ruins or consumed to ashes. *For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet:* by this it appears that these preserved ones did not barbarously tread upon the entire bodies of the wicked, but upon the ashes of those bodies, by the fire consumed and turned into ashes, and mixed with the ashes of their houses and goods. *In the day that I shall do this;* burn Jerusalem and the temple, with the citizens and priests whose carcasses were slain by the sword, or their persons, surprised with the flames, shall be burnt up. And so both this and much of the first verse may be literally understood, and was so fulfilled by Titus and his soldiers, A. D. 73.

h Ex. 20. 3, &c.
i Deut. 4. 10.
k Ps. 147. 19.

4 ¶ Remember ye the h law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him i in Horeb for all Israel, *with* k the statutes and judgments.

Now take leave of all prophecy, for you shall have no more till the great Prophet, till Shiloh come; and attend ye diligently to the law of Moses, keep its precepts and directions. *The law;* in the full extent: the moral precepts; rules of a holy and religious life for all. The ceremonial precepts; rules of your worship, so long as your temple shall stand a type of Christ to come. The judicial precepts; whilst you have any government, or power of judicatures. By a due keeping this you may escape future judgments and obtain future blessings, Lev. xxvi.; Deut. xxviii.: besides, by this attending to the law, they might be enabled to see the Messiah, and own him of whom Moses wrote in the law. Now though the law only be expressed, the prophets are included, who also wrote of Christ, Deut. xviii. 15; John v. 46, 47; Acts xiii. 27. This was excellent advice to this people, who (had they taken it) had escaped the sins they ran into and the miseries they fell under; they had not crucified the Lord of glory, nor rejected their own mercy, nor pulled fiery judgments on their own heads, to their utter ruin. *Of Moses;* whose memory you venerate, in whom you glory, whose law therefore you ought to obey. *My servant;* who was my servant, and delivered my commands to you. I do therefore expect that my authority, and Moses's esteem among you, prevail with you to study most carefully this law. *Which I commanded unto him in Horeb,* with most majestic circumstances, to awe you to the observance of all its precepts; and which was an emblem of that terror and majesty wherein the Lawgiver would appear to judge, to give rewards, or adjudge to punishments. *For all Israel;* so long as they should be a people and church. *With the statutes and judgments;* be not partial; statutes and judgments, i. e. the whole law, must you attend to, and remember it as God requires, not turn aside from any of its prescripts.

l Matt. 11. 14. & 17. 11. Mark 9. 11. Luke 1. 17.
m Joel 2. 31.

5 ¶ Behold, I will send you l Elijah the prophet m before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

I will send; though the spirit of prophecy cease for four hundred years, yet at the expiring of those years you shall have one sent, as great as Elijah, and therefore he is now called Elijah, that shall prepare Messiah's way. *Elijah;* not the same in person who reproved idolatrous Israel, who destroyed Baal, though both Jews and many Christians would gladly have it so, in favour of some errors they have adopted and would maintain. But this person here called Elijah was John Baptist, as is clear from Matt. xvii. 12. 13, *Elias is come, and they have done to him whatsoever they listed. Then the disciples understood that he spake of John the Baptist.* And *he was that Elias, if they would receive him,* Matt. xi. 14. Elias, was to come when Malachi lived; Elias was come, and the Jews had ill treated him, and Herod had beheaded him, when Christ here lived; this Elijah then was John the Baptist, who came *in the spirit and power of Elias,* Luke i. 17, and therefore bears his name in this prophecy. *The prophet;* who foretold Christ the true Messiah's sudden manifestation, who indeed was already among them, but had not yet discovered himself; on whom he persuades the Jews to believe, and receive his person and his law, Luke i. 15—17; Mark i. 7, 8; who was greater than a prophet, Matt. xi. 9; nor doth John's denying himself to be a prophet, John i. 21, in their sense contradict this. *Before;* that is, immediately before; so he was born six months before Christ, and began his preaching but few years before Christ began to exercise his public office. *Great:* this day was great indeed, yet it is not the day of the last and great judgment, though the Jews perversely affirm it to evade the acknowledgment of Messiah's being already come. But this day of Messiah was great for the alterations he was to make in worship and church affairs, taking down the Mosaic ceremonies and enlarging the church; great for the miracles he wrought, and empowered others to do; great for the reconciliation between God and man, for the conquering of Satan, and casting him out of his throne. It was great too against the Jews his obstinate enemies. *Dreadful:* it was a time of vengeance executed upon a people whose sins were full ripe; and such sufferings fell on the Jews at that time, as may very well be an emblem of the day of judgment, and which may be remotely meant hereby. But the first, the literal and plain, meaning of the words refer to the times of vengeance upon the Jews from either the birth, or first preaching, or death of Christ to the final desolation of the city and temple, and irrecoverable overthrow of their government, of which Christ speaks at large, Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii.; which places point out first the sad and dismal miseries of the Jews, and next, by accommodation, the end of the world and last judgment. Such a description of this day, Joel ii. 31, by St. Peter interpreted and applied to this day of Christ, Acts ii. 20, more fully clears this. *The Lord;*

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Jesus Christ, preaching to the Jews, calling them to repentance, reproving their sins, encouraging their compliance, threatening their impenitence, and labouring to gather the children of Jerusalem together under his wings, but they would not, Matt. xxiii. 34—39; and therefore at last destroying by the Romans these obstinate and incorrigible sinners.

n Ecclus. 48. 10.

o Zech. 14. 12.
p Zech. 5. 3.

6 And [n]he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and [o]smite the earth with [p]a curse.

And he; John the Baptist, who comes in the spirit and power of Elias. *Shall turn;* it shall be his office and work to turn, as it is the office of every preacher. The success is of God, who also gives it as he pleaseth, and did give it to John's ministry; and so the words include the event of John's preaching, which did, as here it is foretold he should, convert many. *The heart of the fathers to the children:* there were at this time many great and unnatural divisions and quarrels among the Jews, in which fathers studied mischief to their own children; they were divided and spitefully bent against them, in civil matters and on account of religion, and these turned their hearts from the dearest relations. Some by *fathers* and *children* understand Jews and Gentiles, whose souls being converted to Christ, their hearts were turned one to another. *And the heart of the children to their fathers;* undutiful children estranged by the same means and on the same accounts from their fathers, but now, by obeying the call to repentance, embracing the doctrine of the Messiah immediately to be revealed, and baptized into it, religious quarrels cease, and both parents' and children's hearts unite to Christ first, and then to each other, and all to God. *Lest I;* God or Christ, who indeed first tenders the blessings of grace and peace, and gives them to such as accept; but this the Jews would not, the rulers, the priests, the body of the people, refused them: the next thing Christ (Lord and King, rejected and disowned) will do, is to curse and destroy. *Smite the earth,* the land of Judea, and the inhabitants of it, *with a curse;* which brings with it and ends in utter destruction; as at this day we read in the story of the Romans invading, subduing, captivating the Jews, and razing their city and temple. That time is past now one thousand six hundred and forty-four years since a stone was not left upon a stone, as was foretold by Christ, Matt. xxiv. 2, since those unparalleled hardships and miseries befell the Jews, which no heart almost can read and not bleed at reading, (though at this distance of time,) and the sufferers so deservedly endured such a curse as leaveth Jerusalem a desolate heap, and a perpetual monument of God's displeasure against a people that finally sin against his sovereignty and his mercy.

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